


YOUNG  
NORTHWEST



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*YOUNG NORTHWEST*



★ ★ ★

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TO MY MOTHER  
GRANDDAUGHTER OF  
AN OREGON PIONEER OF  
EIGHTEEN THIRTY-SEVEN

★ ★ ★

# YOUNG NORTHWEST

RICHARD G. MONTGOMERY

*Illustrated by*

HAROLD L. PRICE



RANDOM HOUSE : NEW YORK

Other Books By  
Richard G. Montgomery

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PECHUCK:

Lorne Knight's Adventures in the Arctic

THE WHITE-HEADED EAGLE:

John McLoughlin, Builder of an Empire

*YOUNG NORTHWEST*

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## FOREWORD

Many years ago, the noted California historian, Hubert Howe Bancroft, told the story of the Pacific Northwest in several fat volumes. Although he wrote nearly two million words, he did not carry the narrative beyond the late eighties. I have tried to tell the same story—in its entirety—in fewer than 70,000 words! Of necessity, great names have been omitted and significant events have been passed over. Still I believe that the main current of this dramatic narrative will be found on the pages which follow.

I am indebted to various friends who have offered valuable suggestions and to many authors, living and dead, whose works I have consulted. Most of all, I am grateful to Miss Nellie B. Pipes of the Oregon Historical Society, and to Mr. Walter W. R. May of the Portland General Electric Company, who—cheerfully and without a whimper—undertook the thankless task of checking the manuscript.

*Richard G. Montgomery*

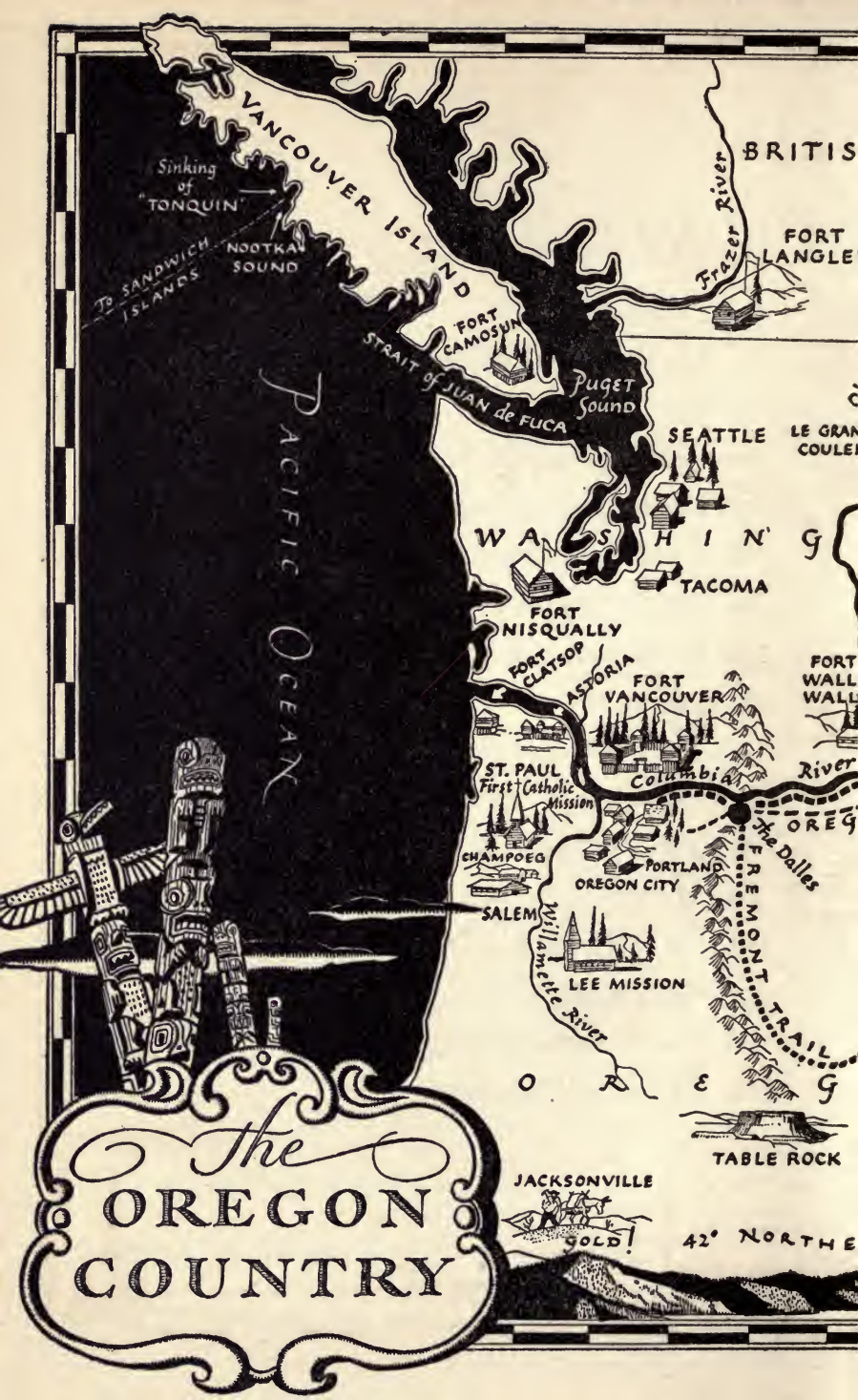
*Portland, Oregon*

*March, 1941*



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Sinking of "TONQUIN"  
To SANDWICH ISLANDS

NOOTKA SOUND

PACIFIC OCEAN

VANCOUVER ISLAND

STRAIT of JUAN de FUCA

Puget Sound

Frazer River

BRITIS

FORT LANGLE

FORT CAMOSUN

SEATTLE

LE GRAN COULE

WASHINGTON

TACOMA

FORT NISQUALLY

FORT CLATSOP

ASTORIA

FORT VANCOUVER

FORT WALL WALL

ST. PAUL First Catholic Mission

Columbia River

River

CHAMPOEG

PORTLAND OREGON CITY

The Dalles

SALEM

Willamette River

LEE MISSION

FREMONT TRAIL

JACKSONVILLE

TABLE ROCK

GOLD!

42° NORTH

# The OREGON COUNTRY



COLUMBIA

Kootenay River

FORT COVILLE

FINAL BOUNDARY OF 1846

SPOKANE HOUSE

KALLYSPELL HOUSE

ROCKY MOUNTAINS

BITTER ROOT MOUNTAINS

Snake River

LAPWAI MISSION

WHITMAN MISSION

RAIL

WALLOWA MOUNTAINS

BATTLE MOUNTAIN  
Rannock Wars  
1878

FORT BONNEVILLE

LEWIS & CLARKE

GOLD!

FORT BOISE

LEMHI PASS

FORT HENRY

FORT HALL

BOUNDARY OF SPAIN - 1819





*CHAPTER I*





## *Dr. Condon's Oregon*

---

**I**t must have amused old Dr. Condon to be asked how he liked living in a youthful land! When Thomas Condon came out to the Oregon Country in the middle of the last century as a missionary, it was a "young" country—a country of pioneers. Thomas Condon devoted himself to preaching the Word of God to man, to helping to build new communities, but there were times when he paused from his work to ask himself questions about the great wild works of nature around him. Had the mountains, the rocks, the trees, always been there? Had there always been a Columbia River? If not, how many millions of years

had it taken to cut this deep gash through the mountains? What would these rocks, along the shore and inland, tell him if he could only find time to study them?

In 1862 the Congregational Church of The Dalles, a little village about ninety miles east of Portland, invited Dr. Condon to be its pastor. The Dalles lay on the south bank of the mighty Columbia River. It was an ideal place from which to ferret out the secrets of the Oregon Country's mysterious and distant past. Dr. Condon became one of the nation's great geologists. To him we owe most of what we know today about a strange land and its even stranger animals and plants—a land that reaches many ages back into the history of the earth.

If you had lived in the very earliest days of the Oregon Country (as all the Pacific Northwest was known just before Dr. Condon's time), you would have had no other choice than to be a fish! . . . Patiently, diligently, taking what time he could from his work as a pastor, Dr. Condon pursued his scientific investigations—and one of his first startling discoveries was that water once covered nearly all of Washington, Oregon and California.

Once, ages ago, the Pacific Ocean hurled itself against the mountains of Idaho. Dr. Condon proved it by finding sea shells and the bones of sea animals high

up on the sides of mountains. There was no other conclusion for him to draw.

How many millions of years the Oregon Country remained submerged, no one can say but, eventually, changes began to take place. A long range of mountains started to rise from the floor of the ocean. First of all, two large islands climbed through the vast water blanket and formed the first land in the Pacific Northwest. One of these islands appeared in the extreme eastern portion of the present state of Oregon and shaped itself into the tops of what we know today as the Blue Mountains. The other reared itself far to the westward—where Oregon and California meet—and present-day maps show the highest portions of it as the Siskiyou Mountains. Dr. Condon wrote a famous book about these early elevations which he called *The Two Islands*. Copies of it are so rare that they are treasures in any library.

For a long time—nobody knows how long—these two islands stood as lonely sentinels keeping watch over a wide expanse of ocean. Then other peaks began to poke their heads above the surface. What Dr. Condon calls a “sea-dyke” slowly rose to the ocean level and then pushed itself upward. In Oregon and Washington, the newly created land became the Cascade Range; in California, the Sierra Nevada. With the Siskiyous, which lay between them, these mountains formed a towering chain which stretched from

Lower California clear up the coast to the Aleutian Islands of Alaska.

For countless ages these mountains endured as a barrier between continuous waters. That, of course, is why the doctor spoke of them, collectively, as a "sea-dyke." But nature never stands still. Beneath this wide inland sea, between the mountains of Idaho and the Cascades, new earth rumblings began. Upward and ever upward these rumblings pushed the water until finally, something drastic had to happen. Fighting for release, these mad currents rushed against the Cascades and, after centuries of heroic effort, carved a deep gorge through them to the Pacific. The majestic Columbia River came into being as a result of this unremitting struggle.

Wide and deep though it was, the Columbia could not drain off all of the inland sea. The river needed further help from the restless earth. There remained, at first, one gigantic lake in this region and later, as more and more land rose to push out the water, a string of smaller lakes. Today there are only a few scattered bodies of water in the eastern portion of the Pacific Northwest—modest descendants of mighty ancestors.

Once he had made certain of these amazing facts about the prehistoric Oregon Country, Dr. Condon turned his attention to the life that had existed on the prehistoric land. He studied and traveled over a period of many years and his discoveries have made it possible

for us to know a little about the strange animals that crawled and lumbered through the early Northwest. The fossil beds of certain sections told him the story—and a weird story it is!

Massive reptiles and snakes came first and they thrived because the water was warm and because the plants, upon which they fed, grew large. The skeleton of one of these giant reptiles, a brontosaurus, was found near the eastern border of the present state of Oregon and it reposes today in the American Museum of Natural History in New York City. Its name comes from "bronto," a Greek combining form meaning



“thunder,” and “saurus,” a Latin suffix meaning “lizard.” From head to tail, the thunder lizard measured over fifty feet! Happily, none of its kind is left anywhere on earth.

Then strapping mammals appeared on the scene to take the place of the reptiles. Among the largest were elephants, mammoths, mastodons and ground sloths. To keep them company and to fall occasionally as their victims were camels, dromedaries, rhinoceroses, saber-toothed tigers, bison and broad-faced oxen. Oddest of all, perhaps, was the little three-toed horse, often no larger than a dog! Difficult as it seems to link these nightmare creatures with the Pacific Northwest of today, we know that they once roamed the countryside. Dr. Condon and his fellow scientists found their bones—just as they found those of their predecessors—in the rich fossil beds of the central and eastern portions of the region.

During the period of the big mammals, the Pacific Northwest was a tropical land. Fossil palms, bananas and giant ferns have all been found. Some say that the coal of Oregon was formed from tropical forests which were once as dense as those of South America. Then came the lava. As the earth's surface cracked in many places, hot rock poured out and found its way into the valleys and lakes of the inland country. It made life unbearable for the monsters who once com-

manded the scene and they, like the reptiles and snakes, disappeared.

The earth rose steadily and, as the land became higher, the air grew colder. Dr. Condon observed that the later soil deposits contained no bones of the mammoth and the sloth. That is how he could be certain that these big fellows had departed for all time. Even the hardy tropical plants had to give up the fight for survival and, as a consequence, their fossil remains—like those of the gigantic beasts that once fed upon them—are not found in the newer deposits of soil.

With the coming of cooler weather, the earth continued to rise. It is claimed that the shores of the Pacific once extended twenty-five miles farther into the ocean than they do today. The beautiful valley of the Willamette was converted into a high plateau and Puget Sound, to the northward, was pumped dry.

Though it took eons, the Oregon Country had been plunged from the tropics into the frigid zone. Invading glaciers advanced from the north and pushed before them massive boulders. Some of these huge rocks are still to be seen in the eastern part of Oregon and it is not uncommon to encounter one that is as large as a big house.

Although the Pacific Northwest was never entirely covered by ice, tremendous glaciers were formed on the Blue Mountains, the Cascades and the Siskiyou. Huge as they were, even larger ones pushed down

upon the present state of Washington from the north and westward from the Rockies.

One of the most dramatic incidents of this remote period occurred toward the close of the ice age. Old Mount Mazama, famous in the lore of the country, broke down and formed Crater Lake, one of the beauty spots of southern Oregon today. Other mountains to the northward, weary of carrying their heavy bulk, fell as time marched on.

The land along the coast began to sink and again much of the Willamette Valley was flooded—so much, we are told, that only a few islands remained above the surface. The present city of Portland was completely submerged and a long arm of the ocean reached far up into the Columbia gorge.

Such violent changes were not to continue forever and there arrived, at long last, a time for nature to go about her work more leisurely. True, the land rose once again but when these last earth face-liftings were complete, the topography of the whole Oregon Country was approximately as it is today. The present coast line was formed at the base of the so-called coast range of mountains. At the extreme northwestern corner of the state of Washington, this range rises to its greatest height to form the Olympics, a rugged, lofty mountain mass. This coast range had been built over a period of many centuries as soil deposits piled one on top of another. Water drained out of the



Between the coast range and the lofty Cascades—where Portland, the Willamette Valley, Seattle, Tacoma and the Puget Sound Valley are all located—there is a slightly different kind of climate. Puget Sound occupies so great an area that its valley, though fertile, is necessarily restricted in size. The Willamette Valley is about sixty miles across at its widest point and it extends from the Washington line southward for two hundred miles. Below it is the more intimate Umpqua Valley, and still farther to the south—not far from California—is the lovely valley of the Rogue. There is farming in all of these intermediate regions, but the farms of the more spacious Willamette Valley are many and large. The soil here is said by some to be the most fertile in all the world.

The picturesque Willamette River flows northward through its own basin and empties into the Columbia near Portland, but the other two streams of western Oregon—the Umpqua and the Rogue—pursue leisurely, meandering courses to the sea. Along its coast line, Washington boasts no streams of any consequence, but Gray's Harbor and Willapa Bay form two sizable indentations.

Within the valleys, sheltered by the coast range, a more moderate climate prevails. Winds from the Pacific drive dark rain clouds against the mountains but, as these water carriers hit the peaks, they lose much of their moisture. The winds, too, are tamed by

the protecting range. The Cascades, at the eastern borders of these valleys, keep out the hot winds which blow westward against them in summer and, similarly, bar the icy blasts of winter. Only occasionally are these mountainous defenses broken through and that is why the Willamette, the Puget Sound and their sister valleys to the southward enjoy a delightful climate.

There is a different story to tell about the eastern two-thirds of Oregon and Washington. Here it is very hot in summer and often bitterly cold in winter. The two big mountain ranges to the westward rob this "Inland Empire," as it is called, of most of the moisture which otherwise would be carried to it by the clouds.

Nevertheless, despite this lack of rainfall, there are magnificent wheat fields along the Columbia River, and elsewhere enterprising farmers have resorted successfully to irrigation. By dint of hard work and faith in the country, they have created many garden spots on this vast, desert-like plateau.

Although that portion of the Pacific Northwest which forms the present state of Idaho did not undergo all of the violent changes of ancient times described by Dr. Condon, its climate is not greatly different from that of eastern Oregon and eastern Washington. The Gem State has many hills and mountains, interspersed with valleys, rugged canyons

and deep ravines, wide upland meadows and wooded peaks. On all sides, the plateau is bounded by mountain masses. Through the southern portion of Idaho, the Snake River, which flows westward to join the Columbia, has cut a deep gorge in its own right.

Idaho temperatures range from well over a hundred degrees in summer to considerably below zero in winter. Rainfall varies in different parts of the state but, in central Idaho, grain is grown without benefit of irrigation.

We spoke of the two great mountain ranges as one joint legacy of importance handed down from ancient times but we must not overlook another. Certainly our Pacific Northwest would not be what it is without the Columbia River. This "River of the West," as it is called in some of the earliest historical records, is the common link which joins the three parts of the Oregon Country.

Some years ago a courageous young man named Amos Burg paddled the full length of this great river in his canoe. In order to find the modest springs which form the source of the Columbia, he had to travel well up into the Canadian Rockies. Speeding southward, through narrow and tortuous channels, he reached the border line between the United States and Canada. There he noticed that the Columbia had really become a river. Continuing on his course, he observed how completely the ever-widening stream adjusted

itself to the country through which it passed. In eastern Washington, he might have been traveling on an aimless desert river! The wide plains provided little incentive for carving deep and rushing swiftly.

When Amos Burg reached Oregon, though, he found a marked change. There the Columbia had begun its ageless job of cutting into huge bare hills. Deeper and deeper became the gash as Burg pressed on. Between the rapids of Celilo and Crown Point, he passed through some of the grandest scenery in all the world. Continuing onward past Portland, he watched the hills grow smaller, the vegetation greener. Finally, in triumph, he paddled his canoe into the Pacific after completing a memorable one-man voyage of twelve hundred miles!

Except for two major changes made by man, the Columbia remains as she always has been. One of these is the huge Grand Coulee Dam of eastern Washington, three times the size of the greatest pyramid, and the other is Bonneville Dam, forty-two miles east of Portland. Before work on the second of these projects was started, it was feared that the salmon could not negotiate such a mighty barrier in their upstream rush. But ingenious fish ladders have made even this possible. Although the Bonneville Dam has formed a big lake and thus has covered some of the landmarks dear to the hearts of voyageurs and pioneers, the old Columbia—even here—will live on in song and story.

It has taken millions of years to make the Pacific Northwest. Nature has done most of the work; man only a little. As we follow the story of what man has done, let us not forget entirely that odd, remote land of bad dreams, giant beasts and great water—"Dr. Condon's Oregon."

## *CHAPTER II*



## *Indians!*

---

**N**obody knows how long the Indians lived in the Oregon Country before the white man came. Scientists have guessed that all Indians came to this continent from Asia over the narrow land bridge that may once have connected the two great continents at the point which is now the Bering Strait. Certainly the Indians, who are known to be all of one stock, do in many ways resemble the Asiatics.

It is possible that these original American Indians even came southward by sea as far as the Columbia River, whose gorge offered easy access to the inland country. If that is true, then all American Indians may



have originally traveled through the Oregon Country.

We do know there has been human habitation in the Northwest for many thousands of years. On the stone walls of the Columbia, especially near Big Eddy, there are carved figures and paintings of the sun in white, yellow and red—apparently the work of ancient sun worshipers. Along the coast there are heaps of bone fragments and stone weapons overgrown with brush and trees. Wherever the earth has been cut into, relics of ancient man have been discovered. Near Lake Abert and in the Warner Valley of Oregon crude implements and primitive paintings have been found beneath layers of lava and volcanic ash. Other indications of early human activity have come to light in the Deschutes region and in the Malheur and Catlow caves of Oregon. From all of this evidence—vague as it is—scientific men have concluded that there was a type of civilization in the Pacific Northwest as long ago as ten thousand years!

Whether or not all these early inhabitants were Indians we do not know. The red men themselves are of no help to us in solving this riddle. They had no writing. All they know about their own history is what their ancestors have handed down by word of mouth. Their most colorful legends are those in which they attempted to explain the origin and form of the geographic features of the country.

Two young braves, one story goes, were in love

with a beautiful girl known as Loowit. She lived on the great natural bridge which most red men firmly believe once spanned the Columbia River at the Cascade rapids. The lovers quarreled, and the gods, in order to punish them, destroyed the bridge. They transformed Loowit into Mount St. Helens and the two braves into Mount Hood and Mount Adams. The falling of the Bridge of the Gods explained satisfactorily to the Indians the huge rocks which lay in the Columbia at the Cascade rapids. (Because of the shallow water, treacherous currents and protruding rocks, the government built the Cascade Locks that steamboats might pass through. Now this entire portion of the river is covered by Bonneville Lake, but happily the legend lives on.)

Many guesses have been made as to the number of Indians who lived in the early Oregon Country. Some put the figure as high as 180,000, others as low as half that number. No one really knows. All agree, though, that the native population varied greatly from time to time. Diseases appeared, spread and took their toll. As these maladies subsided, the number rose again.

During the time of the white man in the Pacific Northwest, a great plague broke out among the Indians living along the Columbia River and destroyed—according to reliable records—three-fourths of the population. A number of the diseases most fatal to the natives were brought west by early trappers and

traders who were themselves immune. Since the red men had had no chance to develop a defense against strange bacteria, they were struck down in hordes when these new enemies attacked them.

Many tribes once inhabited the present states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho but all of them can be accounted for within twelve general groups. Within each of these groups, or "families," a similar language was spoken and certain basic characteristics were common. Even so, it was not unusual for neighboring tribes, living in villages fairly close together, to use utterly different dialects.

Indeed it was not until after the arrival of the white man that the Chinook jargon, the first common language, came into being. This vernacular, so full of harmonious words, was a weird mixture of Indian, French and English and was invented by the Chinooks, who lived near the Columbia's mouth, as a means of conversing with early white settlers. Later it spread to virtually all of the tribes of the Oregon Country.

Even before the invention of the Chinook jargon, the Indians of different tribes managed to make themselves understood to one another sufficiently well to carry on trade. It was inevitable that the Columbia River should become the principal market place since its broad course connected the lands inhabited by the three main types of Indians. Along its banks the red men of the western, middle and eastern sections met

frequently to exchange goods, to drive hard bargains and sometimes to fight.

The Chinook and Clatsop tribes along the coast were the shrewdest merchants. They had learned in a hard school since they had been the first to meet and trade with the white men on any comprehensive scale. Later, remembering their first bitter experiences, they often worsted the taller and prouder Nez Percés and Flatheads from the plateau country.

The Indians who lived near the mouth of the Columbia and along the seacoast were popularly known as "Canoe Indians" because they found it not only convenient but practically imperative to travel by water. The vast forests along the shores of sea and river, full of wild animals and difficult to penetrate, made the natives doubly grateful for their craft.

Those who resided in the plateau regions east of the Cascades, in Washington, Oregon and Idaho, had little opportunity to use canoes and, quite naturally, depended upon horses. They became known as "Horse Indians."

In the Puget Sound, Willamette, Umpqua and Rogue Valleys—between the two ranges—the red men rode horses to some extent but, like their brothers on the coast, made greater use of the canoe.

The coast natives lived principally on fish, roots and berries. Occasionally the Makah Indians, who lived at Cape Flattery in the extreme northwestern corner of



Washington, captured whales. Otherwise, the Columbia River salmon was the favorite food. Each year, in June, the Chinooks opened the salmon season with a fitting ritual. The first one of these fighting fish to be caught was eaten ceremonially and the object of the rite was to insure, if possible, future runs and consequently the perpetuation of the race.

Mainly because of their fishing activities, these Indians were skillful navigators. Their canoes—gaudily decorated—were fashioned out of cedar logs and varied in size from little one-man affairs on up to long, graceful craft capable of carrying from forty to sixty braves. Some of these larger canoes were paddled far out to

sea and up and down the coast. Their owners took great pride in them and it is said that their trim lines suggested to the early white traders the general pattern which was used later in the construction of the famous Yankee clipper ships.

Class distinctions were marked among the coast tribes. Slavery was an established custom and the wealth of a chief was measured, in large part, by the number of slaves he owned. These unfortunate slaves were usually the captives taken in battle or those kidnapped from other tribes. Social position extended even to burial. When a slave or a person of no importance in the community died, his body was cast into the river or the sea without ceremony; but when a free-born Indian reached the end of his life span, his remains were buried with great pomp in his canoe. Wrapped in blankets, the body of the departed was placed in the dugout he had fashioned with his own hands and this strange coffin was deposited on top of a highly decorated scaffold. Invariably the head was faced toward the west so that the departed spirit might more easily make the long journey to "Memaloose Illahee," the land of the dead out toward the setting sun.

These Indians of the coast region lived in large, well-made houses built of thick planks, which were split from big trees with crude native implements. You can imagine the long days of hard labor which must have

gone into their construction. Brightly painted pictures of wild animals often adorned the sides. Great cracks were purposely left in the roof so that smoke from the fires built on the floor inside might escape. Why the Indian, with all his ingenuity, did not conceive a chimney is a source of wonder.

Sometimes a house was occupied by a single family but more frequently several families lived together in a common dwelling. In such cases, each clan claimed its own allotted portion but all used a central fire for cooking. There must have been pandemonium at meal-time what with children playing, women rushing to and fro, young braves swapping stories, old men smoking and reliving the past and dogs barking! Shelves were built around the walls and on these the members of the family—or families—slept upon grass mats, warmly wrapped in blankets. These houses of the Chinooks and Clatsops, as well as those constructed by the Indians of the Puget Sound region, were the finest built by natives anywhere in the West. In line with the prevailing ideas of class distinction, a large and imposing structure was still another sign of wealth.

The men were busy from sunup to sundown during the fishing season. To catch salmon and sturgeon, they used nets and spears. To kill deer and elk, they dug pits in which to trap these swift and elusive animals. They also had their bows and arrows to make and their sturdy

canoes to build. It is hard to believe that they were ever idle.

As for the women, their work was never finished. They were good cooks and tidy housekeepers who never lacked opportunities to practice both arts. They made leggings, moccasins, and shirts from deerskins; and robes from bearskins. It was a part of their never-ending job to pick berries and gather nuts from the near-by forests, to dry and treat the fish and to dress the deer and elk. Their baskets were truly works of art. Made of cedar fiber or tough grass, they were so closely woven that they were actually watertight. True, these copper-colored wives had numerous slaves to help them but, even so, their days were full of dull, hard grind.

With all of these various activities to keep parents busy, the children were allowed to run wild. They had to learn how to make their way swiftly through the great woods, how to build and paddle canoes and how to kill wild animals. Those who failed to master these simple but important arts were lost, drowned or killed.

Just as the valley regions resembled the coast country, so the valley Indians were much like their lower river cousins. Their houses were smaller and could be moved from place to place depending upon the season. During the warm months of late spring and summer, they were left in the open but, during the long rainy season, they were carried back under sheltering



trees. These Indians were also expert bow-and-arrow makers and their canoes, though smaller than the sea-going craft found along the coast, were swift and sturdily built. Otherwise, their mode of life closely resembled that of the Chinooks and Clatsops. Collectively, these valley red men were called the "Multnomahs" but that name embraced numerous tribes.

Now we come to the "Horse Indians." East of the Cascades, on the great plateaus of Washington, Oregon and Idaho, there was little timber for building houses. There the Indians—prior to the arrival of the white man—constructed small huts, covering them with branches and bark and packing mud into the remaining chinks. By the time Lewis and Clark first passed through their country, however, these natives had very largely abandoned the custom of living in huts.

The reason for this abrupt change in a mode of life which had undoubtedly continued for centuries, was the importation of the horse. We are told that these valuable domestic animals became plentiful in the Inland Empire about 1750, and it seems reasonable to suppose that the first ones had fallen into the hands of the plateau Indians after straying from tribes located far to the eastward or, later, from white trapping parties operating near the Rockies. Whatever the source, they proved a boon to the natives.

The horse converted his new owner into a nomad.

On the backs of these fleet and tireless steeds, the Indians could travel to the distant passes of the Rocky Mountains, and even beyond, in search of buffalo. Buffalo skins made excellent tepees, and these portable houses were ideal for the nomadic tribes of the highlands. Whole families traveled with the braves on these wild jaunts.

The squaws were required to set up the skin tents—a job which could be quickly done wherever the cavalcade decided to stop. During the buffalo hunts, these plateau Indians—the Snakes, the Nez Percés, the Cayuses, the Umatillas, the Shoshones, the Bannocks and others—sometimes brushed with tribes living beyond the Great Divide—such tribes as the Blackfeet and the Sioux. As a general rule, though, the red men from west of the big mountains were not warlike and avoided fighting whenever they could.

Like the coast and valley natives, the inland peoples secured much of their food supply from the salmon runs of the Columbia River. Although some used canoes, the greater number preferred rude rafts which were less easily swamped in the turbulent up-river waters. Even these rafts were turned over on occasion and those who manned them had to be good swimmers.

Despite the abundance of fish and game in season, the getting of food was a far greater problem for the plateau natives than for those who lived nearer the

coast where nature provided more bounteously. Pine nuts and sunflower seeds served as a part of their diet as did also the tender inner bark of the pine tree. Bread of a type was made from tree moss. Sometimes the Indians along the Snake River, in Idaho, burned great areas of grass and then, after the fires had subsided, they picked up thousands of scorched grasshoppers. Worked into a jelly-like mass, this questionable delicacy was stored away for the long winter season. Such fare may seem revolting to us, but the early Mormons of Utah were sometimes driven to it in times of great famine.

More active and more robust than their coast brothers, these plateau Indians—notably the Nez Percés—were the equals in intelligence and dignity of red men anywhere in America.

There were, of course, many other tribes living in the various portions of the Pacific Northwest but their customs and characteristics fell, roughly, into the three groups we have already described. In other words, they were either “Horse Indians,” “Canoe Indians” or a mixture of the two.

However greatly the natives of the old Oregon Country may have differed from tribe to tribe, they—like all Indians—had certain traits in common. All, for instance, believed in immortality as well as in future rewards and punishments. They worshiped the “Great Spirit” who represented everything good, just

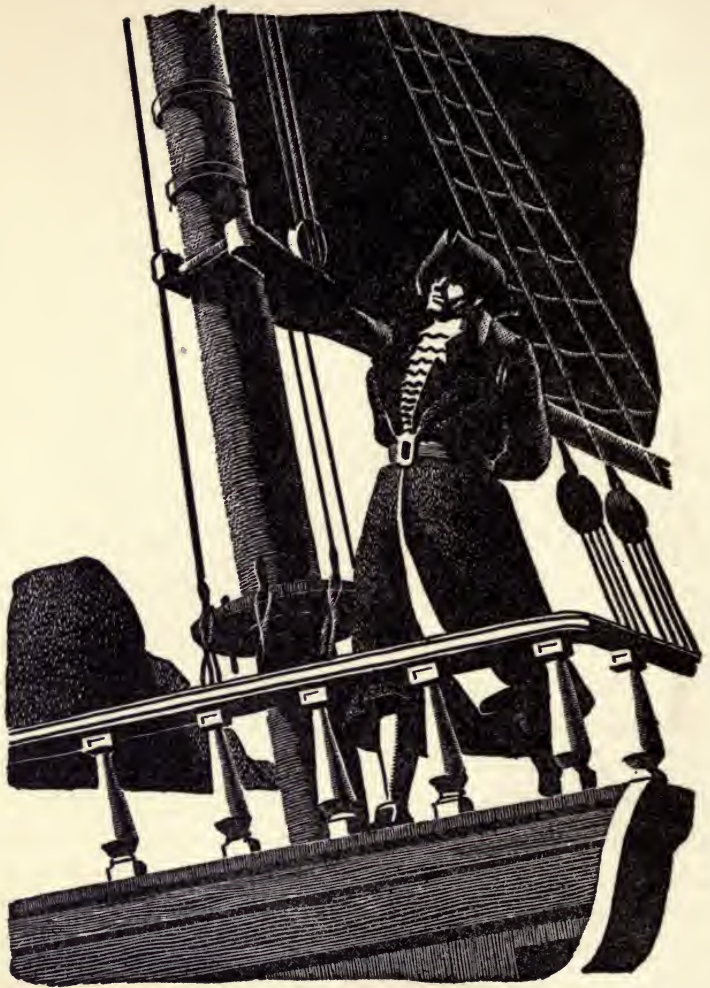
as they feared the "Black Chief" who stood, in their minds, for evil. Like all primitive peoples, they were intensely superstitious. As they reasoned it, each body possessed a soul which in dreams or trances might wander away. If the soul traveled too far from the body, death resulted.

Some of these Pacific Northwest Indians were convinced that animals and trees possessed souls just as did men and women. When an Indian was about to build a canoe, he first addressed—with profound reverence—the tree from which it was to be hewn. So, also, was the first salmon caught each season affectionately saluted before it was devoured.

General Phil Sheridan, of Civil War fame, spent a good deal of time in the Oregon Country as a young lieutenant. He used to say that the only good Indian is a dead one, but this would not be a fair description of the Pacific Northwest native. There were bad ones, to be sure, but so were there bad white men. So many tales of native valor, friendship and loyalty have come down to us that we are justified in remembering the American Indian of this region as the noble red man. He is, sad to say, little more than a memory today.



*CHAPTER III*



## *A Yankee Skipper Finds a River*

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**I**t was unthinkable that so vast a territory could remain forever unknown to the white man. The wonder is that it took so long to find it.

When Columbus, sailing under the flag of Spain, discovered America in 1492, he opened men's eyes to the possibilities of further exploration and conquest. When Magellan, a little later, proved that the world was spherical by sailing his ships clear around it and back to the point from which he had started, he erased from the human mind a fear that had haunted it since the dawn of civilization. The exploits of these two men encouraged the Spaniards—the most powerful people of



their day—to set forth on numerous voyages. They wanted gold and they hoped that this strange New World might provide it.

Fernando Cortez waged bitter warfare against the Aztecs of Mexico and seized their rich stores of gold, silver and jewels. Then came Francisco Pizarro's conquest of the Incas in South America and, with it, the acquisition of treasures even more fabulous. It wasn't long before Spain's stately galleons were sailing back to Europe laden with cargoes of incredible wealth.

Following these initial conquests, Spanish explorers settled down to the business of grabbing as much of the New World as they could. Such intrepid pathfinders as De Soto, Coronado and De Vaca pressed northward into the present territory of the United States. On the foothills of the Rocky Mountains, they built the missions of Santa Fé and Taos in what is today New Mexico. Fortunate in having no competition from other nations, the greedy but courageous Spaniards were soon claiming South America, Central America, the West Indies and a handsome portion of North America. Still, none of these inland explorers came even close to the Oregon Country.

For some time after her brutal seizure of the Aztec and Inca treasures, Spain was kept busy fighting off the natives and consolidating her territorial gains. There was little incentive for further exploration so long as the vast Mexican and Peruvian gold stores held out.

Eventually, though, there were indications that these seemingly inexhaustible stores were running low. Then it was that the Spaniards, eager for further riches, began to cast covetous eyes to the northward in the hope that even mightier hoards of wealth might be theirs for the seeking.

Spanish navigators, sailing ships built on the west coast of Mexico—with visions of gold spurring them on—ventured farther and farther north until Bartolome Ferrelo, in 1543, reached a point off the southern coast of the present state of Oregon. He may have been mildly curious when he sighted land but he was deprived of an opportunity to investigate. Storms and serious illness among the members of his crew drove Ferrelo away from the coast and sent him scampering back to Mexico under full sail. Other Spanish sailors penetrated unknown waters to the northward but the Pacific Northwest stubbornly refused to be discovered.

The Spaniards might have abandoned their fruitless northern voyages had it not been for the persistent plundering, in the vicinity, of the English pirate, Sir Francis Drake. Drake had ventured deep into the Pacific in search of the treasure-laden galleons. He had captured and robbed so many of them that the mere mention of his name was enough to send shivers down noble Spanish backs. Drake was a dreamer as well as a conqueror. In company with a few thinking men of

his day, this dashing red-headed swashbuckler believed that a water passage connected the Pacific and Atlantic oceans and that it ran right through the North American continent.

If he could find this passage, Drake reasoned, he could dash swiftly and safely back to England with the loot he had taken from the Spanish galleons. So, it was in quest of the elusive Northwest Passage that Sir Francis Drake sailed northward along the Pacific coast in 1579. Just how far he penetrated is not known but it is supposed that, like Ferrelo before him, he passed at least a portion of the Oregon shore line. As his ship, the *Golden Hind*, sailed north, the land turned westward and the vessel was thus diverted farther and farther out into the Pacific.

As if protecting the Pacific Northwest from discovery once again, cold weather and violent storms drove the gallant Drake southward. After repairing the *Golden Hind* in a sheltered bay on the coast of California, he gave up his search for the Northwest Passage. He hastened across the Pacific, around Africa, and so home to England. The slim chance of finding the legendary waterway was not worth the risk of meeting an overpowering number of galleons—not even for the most daring pirate of the sixteenth century!

Down in Mexico, the Spaniards had also heard tales of the Northwest Passage. For reasons of their own,

they were as anxious to find it as Drake had been. A shorter route to Spain would have proved a welcome boon indeed. They even believed that the slippery English pirate had found it. In no other way could they account for his sudden escape from their clutches. So, ironically, it was Drake's mysterious journey homeward, by another route entirely, which inspired the Spaniards to renew their search for the Northwest Passage.

Toward the close of the sixteenth century, Philip II, of Spain, ordered his Mexican viceroy to seek the Strait of Anian, as the imaginary passage was sometimes called. In Mexico, the viceroy had problems of his own to attend to, and it was not until the year 1602 that he got around to the business of carrying out the royal decree.

In that year, a Spanish navigator, Viscaino, sailed north as far as latitude forty-two degrees. Disheartened by bad weather, he too gave up the search and returned to Mexico. Viscaino, so the story runs, died a broken-hearted man because he could not persuade the cautious viceroy to let him try again. The Spaniards were to allow a hundred and fifty years to slip by before making further attempts to explore the northern coast.

It is possible, of course, that, during this long "silent" period, white men actually did land on the shores of Oregon and Washington. There are legends which tell of shipwrecks along the Northwest coast and others

which would have us believe that some of these cast-aways lived with the natives. There is even a story about an Indian with freckles and reddish hair who used to visit the old fort at Astoria—a descendant, perhaps, of one of these lost sailors. Before the advent of the white man, great quantities of beeswax were found along the Oregon coast by natives. Since it is known that the *San Jose*, a Spanish ship laden with beeswax, left La Paz, in Lower California, about 1769, and was never heard from again, she may conceivably have been wrecked on the Nehalem beach of Oregon. At all events, the blocks of wax found there were stamped with the initials of Latin phrases well known to Roman Catholics. Yes, white men may have landed, willingly or unwillingly, on the Northwest coast during this long silent period but there are no records to prove it.

We can only be certain that the Spaniards—the most daring adventurers of those remote days—never officially reached the Oregon Country. The mountains blocked them by land and unfavorable weather by sea. They wanted to find gold more than they wanted to find the Northwest Passage. In all probability, they soothed their feelings by concluding that there wasn't any gold in Oregon after all.

But there were men of other nations who refused to be so easily discouraged. Gold was not their watchword—they dreamed, still, of finding the Northwest Passage. Attempts to locate the non-existent channel

were made from the Atlantic as well as from the Pacific. Early in the seventeenth century, such noted explorers as John Davis, Henry Hudson and William Baffin sought diligently for it, in the course of their travels, but their efforts met with no success. Somewhat earlier, a Greek sailor with a Spanish name, Juan de Fuca, claimed to have sailed right into the long-sought passage but there is grave doubt, today, that he even entered the strait which bears his name!

Although the Spaniards had thought only of gold and the Britishers only of short cuts to Europe, it remained for the Russians, quite by accident, to discover a still sounder reason for exploring the Northwest coast.

It seems that Peter the Great, of Russia, used to listen to tall tales about a vast continent which was supposed to lie between Asia and North America. For all his faults, this monarch had an inquiring mind. He wanted to find out about this alleged continent and so he commissioned Vitus Bering, a Danish navigator, to cross Asia to the Pacific, to build ships there and to explore the country.

Dutifully and courageously, Bering carried out his orders. He sailed on the North Pacific, discovered the strait which is named for him and brought home to Peter the amazing news that there was no such continent as the scientists of St. Petersburg had visioned. The scientific men of the Russian capital scoffed at

Bering's report but the Dane persevered until he obtained permission to make another voyage.

After years of hard work and weary travel, Bering again penetrated to the coast of Asia. There he built ships in which to carry on his explorations. The daring Dane reached the Aleutian Islands of Alaska with his tiny fleet but died there—after a winter of horror—without realizing the magnitude of his discovery. His explorations had covered a period of thirteen years—from 1728 until 1741. In the spring, the survivors of Bering's ill-fated party repaired their only remaining vessel and made their way back to Asia and, eventually, to St. Petersburg. They brought word to Peter that, on the New World islands, they had found the true home of the sea otter. There was great rejoicing in the capital. Knowing that these otter skins could be sold to the Chinese at big profits, the Russians bestirred themselves, organized expeditions and descended upon Alaska in substantial numbers.

Many men and ships were lost in this hectic otter stampede but the Russians won through. They established themselves securely in Alaska and took great profits from the country. Farther and farther south they traveled in their quest for otter and, on some of these voyages, they came close to the Oregon coast. Once again, though, the Pacific Northwest eluded discovery and settlement.

Strangely enough, the Russians were able to keep



their new source of wealth a secret from the rest of the world for more than two decades. When the Spaniards finally learned about the good fortune of the Muscovites, they were enraged. Had not the Pope himself granted the whole Pacific to the King of Spain? The Spanish nation clamored for action, and action was forthcoming.

Soldiers of Spain marched northward to capture a good part of California and the Church, thus encouraged, started to build its long string of California missions. Ordered by his viceroy to find out what the Russians were about, Juan Perez, a brave sailor,



cruised up the coast in his ship, the *Santiago*. (This voyage took place in 1774, only a year before the American colonists decided that they had had enough of British rule.) Once again, ill luck prevailed. Perez, although he had sailed with instructions to penetrate at least as far as the sixteenth degree of latitude, well up in Russian territory, was blown far off his course by unfriendly gales.

When he eventually reached land, he was well north of Oregon near what is now Queen Charlotte Island, of British Columbia. Here he made contact with the Indians of the Pacific Northwest, the first white man—so far as we know definitely—to see them face to face.

Even so, Perez's mission was a dismal failure. He found no harbors, no otter and, most discouraging of all, no Russians. Because he failed, he was relieved of his command and replaced by Bruno Heceta. The very next year Heceta journeyed northward with two ships, the *Santiago* and the *Sonora*.

Exciting adventures were in store for the crews of these tiny vessels. They made a landing on the Olympic Peninsula of Washington and there a Spanish priest blessed the cross while Heceta claimed the country on behalf of his sovereign. On shore, some of the men were attacked and brutally slain by hostile Indians before the very eyes of others looking on from the decks of the *Sonora*.

This was enough for Heceta! He hurried down the coast to California without finding either the Strait of Juan de Fuca or the Columbia River. How persistently that mighty stream eluded sailors! True, Heceta did report in his log that he had passed a large bay and, from the currents and color of the water, he concluded "that the place is the mouth of some great river or of some passage to another sea." Perez, though he failed in his mission, actually discovered the northernmost portion of what we call the Pacific Northwest. Heceta nearly found the main portion but he lacked the nerve to investigate.

The Spaniards had their gold and the Russians their otter, but the persevering British still believed in the existence of the Northwest Passage and were determined to find it. One of the romantic figures who resolved to carry on this quest was Captain James Cook, a doughty British mariner who knew no fear. With two ships, the *Resolution* and the *Discovery*, he sailed around Africa, past Australia and on into the broad Pacific. En route to the Northwest coast, in search of the long looked-for passage through America, he discovered the Sandwich Islands.

In 1778, Captain Cook had his first glimpse of Oregon where the town of Newport is now located. He called the place "Cape Foulweather" and his reason can be readily imagined! He missed the Columbia and the Strait of Juan de Fuca but he entered a little inlet,

well up Vancouver Island, which he named Nootka Sound. The daring captain then continued his explorations up into Russian territory before returning to the Sandwich Islands where he was killed by a native. Stories of James Cook's courage are as numerous as were the barnacles on the bottom of his ship! He was one of the brilliant figures of early Northwest exploration.

Things were coming on apace. Cook had been more successful than his Spanish rivals, Perez and Heceta. They had come north to find furs but had found none; he had ventured forth in search of the Northwest Passage but, in its place, had obtained great stores of valuable skins from the Indians of Nootka. After the valiant captain's death, his ships continued on to Canton, China, where these furs were sold at handsome profits. Not so many years later, the whole world was to realize the tremendous commercial possibilities of the fur trade.

No one was more thrilled by these possibilities than was a young American—John Ledyard by name. He had made the long voyage with Captain Cook and, based upon what he had seen with his own eyes, had become inspired to awaken the interest of Americans in the fur trade.

John Ledyard's story is full of drama. First he tried to arouse the officials of our youthful government to action. Failing in this attempt, he visited Thomas Jef-

person, our ambassador to France, and did his best to fire that great man with a little of his own enthusiasm. Next he visited government officials in England, Sweden and even Russia, but his plans came to naught. Just then there were too many other issues, more vitally pressing, in the capitals of Europe.

Had Ledyard but thought to cast his lot with British sea captains, in place of soliciting preoccupied government employees, he might have realized his dream of trade. These hardy sea dogs, even while young John was dashing through Europe, were collecting furs from Nootka and selling them in distant ports.

One of these sea captains, John Meares, did much to further the fur trade and to focus attention on the Pacific Northwest. So active did he become that the great East India Company, recognizing his talents, invited him to become a partner. None better than Meares could have known what a compliment he had been paid. At Nootka Sound, he built a tiny fort and established a base for the trade with China. It was while Meares was in China, in fact, that a Mexican warship appeared at Nootka to demand surrender from the British! In the absence of the English sea dog, the Mexican commander, Martinez, captured several of his rival's ships and built a fort on his own account.

When word of all this reached the East India partner, he decided to act with dispatch. His blood was up! As fast as his sails could carry him, he raced for

London and related his story to the British government. Great Britain complained to Spain and the Nootka controversy, which developed, almost precipitated a world war! When Spain realized that Britain meant business, she backed down and reluctantly agreed that ships of all nations might visit and trade freely in Northwest waters. England had now gained supremacy in the North Pacific. Spain and Russia had been halted and the United States, the baby of the nations, had not earned sufficient prestige to be taken seriously.

Strange as it may seem, it was really the disillusioned John Ledyard who roused America to action. Following his return from the great adventure with Captain Cook, he published a book which told of his voyage and which hinted at the enormous possibilities of the fur trade. But Ledyard, on fire with enthusiasm, was too impatient to wait for his published narrative to take effect. When the businessmen of Boston finally woke up, the restless young dreamer was already in Europe, diligently exploring fields which he hoped might prove more productive.

It was not long before a company was organized in Boston to engage in the North Pacific fur trade, and the ambitious owners of this concern chartered two ships—the *Columbia*, commanded by Captain John Kendrick, and the *Lady Washington*, commanded by Captain Robert Gray. In October, 1787, these two vessels slipped out of Boston harbor on a mission which was to prove of tremendous importance to the United States.

Gray, after a memorable voyage in the *Lady Washington*, reached Nootka Sound in September, 1788. There he saw the *Northwest America*, the first vessel built in the Pacific Northwest, launched by Captain John Meares. Gray waited—none too patiently—for the arrival of Kendrick's ship, the *Columbia*. Then, after swapping commands with his tardy colleague, he amassed a respectable cargo of pelts and sailed, in the *Columbia*, for China where he exchanged his furs for tea.

Toward the latter part of the next year, 1790, Captain Robert Gray reached his home port of Boston, having traveled 50,000 miles. Received as a conquering hero, he was royally entertained by Governor Hancock. Even though the venture had not proved profitable, the Atlantic seaboard was thrilled by the feat of this Yankee skipper who became a celebrity overnight. It was no mean achievement to have carried the Stars and Stripes around the world!

The Boston merchants, though disappointed in the financial return from this first voyage, were determined that their hero should try again. Preparations were rushed. The *Columbia* was completely overhauled and Robert Gray, her commander, was given sea letters by President Washington, Governor Hancock and other dignitaries.

On his second dash to the North Pacific, the Yankee skipper reached Clayoquot Sound, north of Nootka on the coast of Vancouver Island, early in the summer of

1791. Establishing his headquarters at this place, he built—during the winter—a sloop named the *Adventure* to which Captain Kendrick, still a laggard, was assigned as commander. Before the arrival of spring, there were a number of bloody encounters with hostile natives in which several members of each crew were killed. Once, while the *Columbia* was undergoing repair in an improvised dry dock, a party of warlike savages attacked Gray and his men. With incredible speed, the captain launched his vessel so that he might train her guns on his enemies. Amid wild grunts of anguish, the natives dispersed and the day was saved.

With the return of good weather, Captain Gray set forth on a voyage of exploration. He cruised down the coast as far as California and on his way back met Captain George Vancouver, whom the British government had sent out to deal with the troublesome Spaniards at Nootka. During this brief but prophetic meeting, Gray told Vancouver that the *Columbia* had lain, for nine days, off the mouth of a wide river. He even confided to the skeptical Britisher that he meant to return later and explore it. Fortunately for America, Vancouver refused to act upon this hint, so naïvely dropped by the Yankee. He frankly told his rival that he did not believe in the existence of such a stream.

Robert Gray kept his word. He sailed down the coast of Washington and, observing what appeared to be a good harbor, worked his way in. He called this bay Bulfinch Harbor in honor of one of the *Columbia's*

owners, but the name failed to stick. It is known today—and rightly so—as Gray's Harbor. But ambition to find the great "River of the West," about which he had heard so much, still intrigued him and so, after collecting a load of skins from the Indians of Gray's Harbor, he resumed his quest. On the very next day—May 11, 1792—Captain Gray sailed straight into the Columbia!

We can imagine his emotions at this moment—one of the great moments of American history! He knew that he had discovered what others—for three hundred years—had been seeking in vain. He knew that, at long last, he had found the "River of the West."

According to Gray's own log, he sailed thirty-six miles up the stream. He made frequent landings, visited various Indian tribes along both banks and, most important of all, laid the foundation upon which this whole region was later to be claimed by the United States. The Indians proved friendly and eager to trade. By the shrewd Yankee's own admission, he obtained four otter skins for a sheet of copper, a beaver skin for two spikes and two large salmon for a nail. Here was trade of a type to thrill the canny Boston merchants! The captain could hardly wait for a chance to tell them about it.

After nine glorious days in the great river, which he named after his historic ship, Gray reluctantly crossed the bar to resume his travels. Through the summer he cruised in Northwest waters, gathering furs and fighting natives whose demeanor contrasted sharply with



those who lived along the river. At one place, the *Columbia* was nearly swamped, but Captain Gray managed to get her to Nootka Sound where the Spaniards allowed him to make the necessary repairs. With his hold full of skins and his explorations completed, the lighthearted skipper started for Boston, by way of the Sandwich Islands and China, and made his home port on July 25, 1793. Little is known of Robert Gray in the years following his monumental discovery except that he died at sea in 1806.

When Captain Vancouver received word that Gray had actually found the river which he and his fellow Britishers had considered as great a myth as the Northwest Passage, he could doubt no longer. The wonder is that he waited so long to investigate.

At all events, it was not until the October following Gray's triumph that Vancouver sailed south from Nootka with his own ship, ironically named the *Discovery*, and the *Chatham*, a smaller vessel commanded by Lieutenant Broughton. The British captain hovered outside the river's mouth, convinced that his ship was too large to enter, but Broughton safely piloted the *Chatham* across the bar and sailed her a hundred miles up the broad stream to a point near the present city of Vancouver, Washington. Mount Hood, Puget and Walker Islands, and Baker's Bay were all named by the lieutenant after prominent Englishmen of that day.

*CHAPTER IV*



## *Lewis and Clark and Sacajawea*

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**N**ow Spain, Russia, Great Britain and the United States all considered themselves claimants for the Pacific Northwest.

Russia had occupied and explored Alaska. Only the question of how far south her borders extended remained unsettled. Spain had explored and colonized California up to the forty-second degree of latitude—that is, as far north as the southern boundary of the present state of Oregon. Between the established claims of Spain in the south and of Russia in the north—in other words, in the Pacific Northwest of today, Great Britain and Spain both insisted upon certain rights of

possession by virtue of having built rival forts at Nootka Sound.

When the Nootka controversy was amiably settled by a treaty between Spain and England, both nations agreed to base no claim whatever upon the small settlements they had each established on Vancouver Island. Only discovery was left as a basis for demanding title to the disputed territory, and a fairly good case could be made out for either nation insofar as the Nootka Sound country was concerned.

Then, to complicate matters still further, Gray's discovery of the Columbia made it possible for the United States to regard itself as the rightful claimant to the entire region drained by the river.

In this confused state of affairs, it was but natural for men to turn their thoughts to overland exploration as a means of supporting the discoveries which had already been made by sea. Spain and Russia were destined to rest on their laurels and drop from the race, but Great Britain and the United States were fated to engage in long and lively competition.

Mere possession of land was, of course, a mighty factor in the ensuing race to the West coast, but it was not, at that time, the most important consideration. Then, as now, men craved wealth. Rich rewards awaited those with the hardihood to explore the Pacific Northwest country and exploit it!

The era of the sea otter was short-lived. By the year

1820 it was ended and all but forgotten. Even while hardy mariners were cruising up and down the coast and taking great cargoes of otter from it, other men, equally venturesome, were penetrating the Oregon Country from across the Rockies. These explorers, a tiny vanguard of a mighty army to come later, were discovering a prize far more valuable than the otter—the beaver.

In the seeking out of numerous unknown portions of the earth, the beaver has proved a major incentive. The ancient Romans once sought this king of fur-bearing animals as did, later, the Puritans, the Dutchmen and the Virginians of our own country. What, then, could have been more natural than for Britishers and Americans to track down the beaver on the inland streams of the Oregon Country?

When British merchants established the great Hudson's Bay Company in Canada, their sole purpose was to obtain beaver skins. Likewise, when the French entered the St. Lawrence Valley, they were equally intent upon finding these precious little animals. In the vigorous competition which soon developed, the French took an early lead. On their wide St. Lawrence, they could paddle down to the Great Lakes and, from there, travel into the interior of the continent. They made friends with the Indians and often married into their tribes. These natives proved heaven-sent allies in the quest for beaver.

Far to the north, Hudson's Bay men were also successful though they employed different tactics. So bleak and forbidding was the country that there was little incentive to explore it. The canny British traders fell into the habit of buying their furs from the Indians who carried them long distances to the various posts. As time went on, they depended more and more upon the natives and less and less upon their own initiative. Success made them smug. High profits made them greedy.

Had it not been for trouble between these two great powers in Europe, France might have won out in the New World. When the French and Indian Wars, which grew out of these difficulties, finally ended in 1763, France was forced to yield all of her Canadian territory to England.

Enterprising Britishers lost no time in capitalizing on their good fortune. Sturdy Scots moved into the St. Lawrence Valley, the region of the Great Lakes and the valley of the Mississippi. The old French posts as well as the former French fur-trading companies were appropriated and there soon developed a mad scramble to enlarge the fur business. It wasn't long before the North West Company was organized by a group of energetic young traders to compete with the older Hudson's Bay Company. Both organizations were lucky in having a trained band of men ready and eager to enter their service—the *voyageurs* and *coureurs de*

*bois* who had so loyally served the French. The British were riding high!

During this period of feverish activity in Canada, the United States had become a nation. Businessmen of the youthful republic were in no position to organize vast companies for the fur trade but enterprising individuals, like the men who sent Robert Gray to the Pacific, bestirred themselves. Small concerns sprang up in Boston and elsewhere and adventurers started a gradual push across the continent to the Rockies.

It was about this time that the name "Oregon" first attracted wide attention. Who hasn't heard of Robert Rogers? This picturesque soldier, an ex-officer of the British forces in Canada, liked nothing better than to speculate on the great "River of the West" and to dream about making an overland journey in the hope of finding it. Vainly he tried, both in Canada and England, to secure backing for such a dash but the men with whom he talked refused to take him seriously. In his frequent and eloquent appeals, Rogers always referred to this river of his dreams as the "Ouragan." No one knows exactly where he heard the name. However he came by it, it was Major Rogers who gave early publicity to the "River of the West" and who made it come alive in the minds of men.

Interest in the mythical river was heightened by the writings of Jonathan Carver, an American who had fought in the French and Indian Wars and who, later,



served under Rogers at the British trading post of Mackinac. Carver, too, was a wanderer. During his service with Rogers, he explored the headwaters of the Mississippi and became intrigued, on his own account, with the "River of the West." At the conclusion of his travels, he published a book in which he referred to the legendary stream as the "Oregon." Carver died in 1780 but the melodious name he had popularized outlived him. Several decades later, it caught the fancy of the American poet, William Cullen Bryant, who used it in his famous poem, "Thanatopsis." Though Carver's book was widely read, "Thanatopsis" took the country by storm. Thanks to the Bryant poem, the name "Oregon" found its way into the vocabulary of Americans almost overnight. Had it not been for Robert Gray and his proud ship, the Columbia River might conceivably have been christened the "Oregon"!

As the North West Company grew in prestige throughout Canada, it extended its activities ever westward and established a headquarters post in the region of the Great Lakes. Alexander Mackenzie, one of the partners of this youthful concern, became impressed with stories about the western river and decided to investigate on his own. In 1789, he set out with a small party from Athabaska Lake and, after traveling for months through the wildest country imaginable, came upon a river which he hoped might prove to be the one he was seeking.

Mackenzie followed this broad stream for many weary miles only to discover, in the end, that it emptied into the Arctic Ocean. Very properly, it bears his name today. Pleased as he was to find this vast river—one of the four largest in North America—he was far from satisfied. He wanted desperately to track down the real “River of the West”—the one he was certain ended its course in the Pacific.

Three years after the start of his first journey, in the eventful 1792 when Gray entered the Columbia, Mackenzie set forth anew. He and his faithful followers endured months of hardship in the untamed regions of the interior until, finally, they reached the ridge of the Rockies—the Shining Mountains, they were called by the red men. Constantly threatened by hostile natives, who always appeared eager to give him wrong directions, Mackenzie kept his little band together, crossed the mountains and eventually reached the Pacific at a place which he called “Bentnick North Arm.” He was the first white man to reach the Oregon Country by land!

There was little inducement to remain. The weather was cold and rainy and the Indians were either unfriendly or openly belligerent. Much as he wanted to explore the region further, the North West partner could not hold his men, for long, in such an unwelcome atmosphere. He had to satisfy his ambition by painting, on a rock, these memorable words:

ALEXANDER MACKENZIE, FROM CANADA BY LAND, THE TWENTY-SECOND OF JULY, ONE THOUSAND SEVEN HUNDRED AND NINETY-THREE.

Following his famous dash to the Pacific, Mackenzie went to London where he was knighted by his grateful sovereign, George III. Later he returned to Canada to become a power in a new fur company, the XY, which was later to be amalgamated with the North West.

Other courageous Nor'Westers followed the bold Mackenzie in the years immediately succeeding his blazing of the trail. James McDougall was one of these as was also Simon Fraser for whom the Fraser River was named. Fraser built posts and forts in Western Canada and performed yeoman's service in laying a sound claim to that part of the country for Great Britain. Important as were these early travels to the West, the greatest overland expedition of all was yet to come. It was to be led by two Americans, Lewis and Clark.

Had it not been for that great American, Thomas Jefferson, there would have been no Lewis and Clark expedition. When Jefferson became President of the United States in 1801, Napoleon I, then at the height of his career, had obtained the American territory of Louisiana from Spain by means of a secret treaty. Jefferson was well aware of the three thousand miles of ocean which separated this powerful monarch from his

newly acquired land and he was also cognizant of the wars in which Napoleon was engaged at home. Nevertheless, the foreseeing American statesmen realized, more clearly than did most of his countrymen, the potential dangers involved.

Jefferson believed that the United States would soon outgrow its borders—that, in the very nature of things, it would shortly be pushing westward to settle the wild country in which a few adventurers were already attempting to make homes. A foreign possession, blocking western expansion for this country, would inevitably cause war and the President wanted to avoid armed conflict at any cost.

So, to remove the cause of possible trouble with France and to preserve the Union, Thomas Jefferson hit upon two measures of far-reaching statesmanship. First of all, he proposed an audacious plan—a plan to purchase from Napoleon not only the city of New Orleans but also the adjacent land on the east bank of the Mississippi, then called “West Florida.” Such a scheme, if successful, would soothe the irritation of American settlers in these regions and would also open the way for further colonization. Secondly, he suggested that an overland party be dispatched with instructions to explore the Missouri River country and to continue west to the Pacific. In the President’s mind was the hope that such an expedition might open the entire Western country to settlers, block the advance

of the British North West Company in the upper Missouri and Columbia River Valleys and land a sizable portion of the fur trade in American hands. If Jefferson was a dreamer, at least his dreams were practical.

Early in the year 1803, the President set in motion the machinery calculated to bring both of his pet projects to fulfillment. He dispatched Monroe to France where this future President met with surprising success. The great Napoleon was so engrossed with the troubled affairs of Europe that he offered to sell to America the whole of Louisiana—far more territory than even Jefferson imagined could be bought. Overjoyed, the President hastened to recommend this colossal purchase to a sympathetic Congress. A little later, he sent to that same body the famous message which outlined his plan to dispatch an expedition to the Pacific.

Congress acted quickly to ratify both proposals. Louisiana was purchased and funds for the overland journey were authorized. So clearly did Jefferson's message summarize the purposes of the proposed expedition that it is in order to repeat, here, a few of his own words. "An intelligent officer with ten or twelve men fit for the enterprise and willing to undertake it," he wrote, "might explore the whole line, even to the Western Ocean, have conferences with the natives on the subject of commercial intercourse, get admission among them for our traders, as other traders are admit-

ted, agree on a convenient deposit for an interchange of articles, and return with the information required, in the course of two summers." Brave and prophetic words, these—words destined to make history!

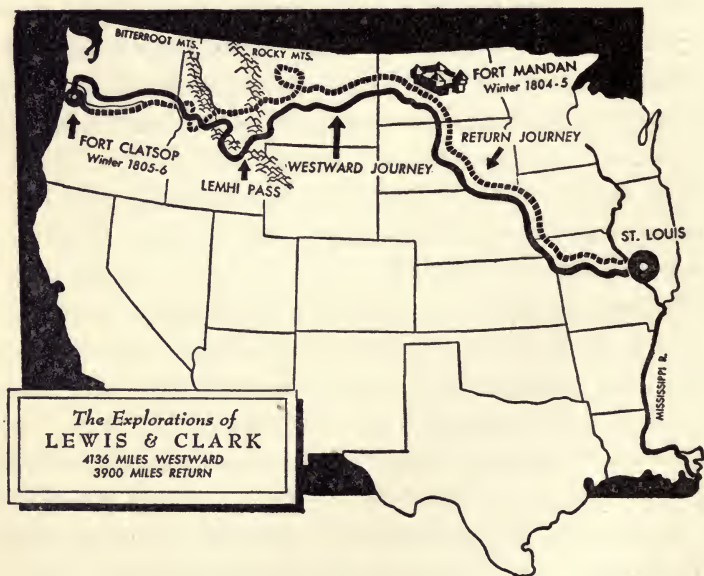
Congress, not so lavish with its appropriations as it is today, voted a sum of \$2500 to cover the entire cost of the journey. So cautious were the lawmakers of those days that every item was budgeted, right down to the last penny. Mathematical instruments accounted for \$217; arms and accoutrements, \$81; camp equipage, \$255; medicine and packing, \$55; and so on down through the modest list of requirements.

For his "intelligent officer" Jefferson selected Captain Meriwether Lewis of Virginia, a man with a brilliant army record behind him, who had served as Jefferson's private secretary. Lewis, in turn, recommended as his associate William Clark, a younger brother of George Rogers Clark. Lewis and Clark were to serve as joint leaders—a unique arrangement and one which was certain to place a severe test upon the loyalty and adaptability of each. Fortunately both had seen military service and both knew how to command and obey. Seldom in history has a happier combination of ability and mutual fealty been achieved. Wise in most matters, Jefferson was never wiser than in this choice.

Acting almost immediately upon his instructions, Captain Lewis left Washington in the summer of 1803

and was joined by Captain Clark at Louisville. At St. Louis, where they went into camp for the winter, the two leaders assembled a motley crew. As finally organized, the party included—in addition to the pair of captains—eighteen soldiers, nine Kentucky hunters, Clark's Negro servant and two French interpreters. Sixteen other soldiers served with the expedition during the first year on the march.

During their sojourn at St. Louis, Lewis and Clark witnessed the solemn "Ceremony of the Flags" which marked the formal transfer of Louisiana from Spain to



France and then, within a few moments, to the United States.

In the spring of 1804, the party set out in a north-westerly direction and continued on the march until it reached a village of friendly Mandan Indians located near the mouth of the Missouri River in the present state of North Dakota. Here the men spent the long winter of 1804-5.

It was during their rest in the Mandan village that they added to their modest personnel a French Canadian named Charbonneau and his young wife, Sacajawea. Sacajawea was a remarkable young Indian woman—a member of the Shoshone tribe—who, as a child, had been stolen from her home in the Shining Mountains by the Blackfeet. With their customary foresight, Lewis and Clark sensed that she might guide them safely through the unknown wilds and help them when they came to the country of the Shoshones, her own people. They were right. Unflinchingly loyal to the white men with whom she was to travel so far, Sacajawea deserves an equal place in history with her red-skinned sister of an earlier day, Pocahontas.

While visiting the Mandans, the two captains gathered valuable information concerning the difficult country ahead and negotiated treaties of peace and friendship with neighboring tribes. On April 7, 1805, the party resumed its journey. They found ample game along the route—grizzly bears, deer and elk. At one



place they had to wait until a massive herd of buffalo had passed.

Eager to reach the Shoshone Indians as soon as possible, Captain Lewis and three men started on a quick march up the Jefferson River while Captain Clark, with the rest of the expedition, followed leisurely in canoes. Lewis eventually found the remote source of the Missouri and later, farther to the west, drank from the waters of the Lewis River, one of the branches of the eagerly sought Columbia. Not far from this point, he encountered several wandering Shoshones who were persuaded to lead him to their village.

The astonished villagers had never before gazed upon white men. Lewis had little trouble in making friends with them and in inducing a few members of the tribe to journey back in his company to the place where he thought Clark had made camp. Clark, though, had experienced unforeseen difficulties and there was a considerable delay before the two captains were reunited. Unable to understand this delay, the Shoshones became suspicious. It was only by giving them their guns as a pledge that Lewis and his companions were able to keep the Indians with them.

Among the red men brought to camp by Captain Lewis was a Shoshone chief named Cameahwait who turned out to be Sacajawea's own brother! Also, among the newcomers, she recognized a girl with whom she had played as a child. Great was Sacajawea's joy at this

happy reunion and great was the good fortune of Lewis and Clark in having made it possible.

The Shoshones gave the travelers several good horses in return for trinkets and gave them, also, helpful directions concerning the mountainous country through which they would have to pass.

Finally, with the help of friendly Flatheads and Nez Percés, the men finished the long hard march and reached the Clearwater, where they built their crude but sturdy canoes. They were greatly aided by a chief named Twisted Hair. This picturesque old native drew a map on white elkskin which traced the course as far as The Dalles. During this part of the seemingly endless trek, the men were often ill and there were times when they had to depend for their diet upon roots, horse meat, dogs, crows and wolves. It was extremely hard going but courage and a determination to complete their task kept them at it.

Two Nez Percé chiefs accompanied the expedition down the Clearwater to the Snake and, on this broad river, the travelers continued alone. Along this famous route, on opposite sides of the Snake, stand the twin cities of Lewiston and Clarkston, as fitting monuments to the men whose names they bear. At the point where the Snake flows into the mighty Columbia, Lewis and Clark were greeted by hundreds of enthusiastic Indians who expressed their friendliness by staging a mammoth native dance. Sacajawea was responsible, in large meas-

ure, for the continuing manifestations of good will accorded the travelers. With each passing mile, her indispensability became more and more apparent.

Down the great "River of the West" paddled Lewis and Clark, impressed by the scenic wonders and thrilled by the knowledge that they were nearing their



goal. Friendlier and friendlier became the natives as they sped along. When they came to the country of the Clatsops and Chinooks, near the Columbia's mouth, they observed how worldly-wise were the Indians living there—natives who had long known the white man from visiting trading ships.

The brave men of the party had their first glimpse

of the Pacific on November 7, 1805. On that memorable day the fog thinned and then disappeared, leaving a gorgeous view of the great ocean. Unbounded must have been the joy of these weary adventurers!

For a few days Lewis and Clark remained on the north bank of the Columbia at its mouth. Captain Clark climbed the steep sides of Cape Disappointment while his partner explored the long stretch of sandy beach to the northward. After a short stay in this region, the leaders—acting upon the advice of Chief Concomly, the famous Chinook—moved across the river. They built a stockade along the banks of what is now known as the Lewis and Clark River near the entrance of that stream into Young's Bay. The stockade was named Fort Clatsop.

It was a hard winter for the travel-worn explorers. Despite much illness among the men, the fort was completed, food was procured and adjacent parts of the country were visited. Several members of the party traveled down to the beach and, where Seaside now stands, they built a salt cairn for the evaporation of salt water. With the arrival of spring, these local sallies became more frequent and extended farther from the fort so that when it came time to return East, Lewis and Clark both had a good general idea of the surrounding country.

The long journey back to civilization turned out to be as thrilling and as difficult as the westward push. In

some respects, it was even more dangerous. Food was often hard to find and there was serious trouble, at one place, with the Indians. In upper Montana, Lewis was forced to fight the treacherous Blackfoot tribe and, in the ensuing battle, two Indians were killed. The memory of this unfortunate clash lingered long in the Blackfoot mind. These red men were turned into such bitter enemies of the whites that for years they blocked the northern entrance to the Oregon Country.

Great was the significance of this overland journey, so successfully accomplished by the two brave captains. Lewis and Clark completed what Robert Gray had begun. By virtue of these two triumphs, the claim of the United States to the Pacific Northwest was strengthened immeasurably.

We must add a last word about the two bold leaders. Lewis was appointed Governor of the Louisiana Territory. Had he lived, he would have achieved even greater honors but unfortunately he was killed in a wayside tavern while going east from St. Louis. Captain Clark became a brigadier-general and, later, Governor of the Missouri Territory. He remained, until his death in 1838, one of the great men of the frontier.

After bidding a fond farewell to the white men she had befriended so courageously, Sacajawea returned to her own people. She lived until 1884. It is believed that, at the time of her death, she was close to a hundred years old.

*CHAPTER V*



## *The Seesaw Race for the Oregon Country*

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**T**he published journals of Lewis and Clark stirred the young nation and aroused a healthy curiosity about the Oregon Country. No sooner had the two explorers passed down the Mississippi on their return journey, than bands of Yankee adventurers began to work their way up that stream in quest of furs.

One of these bands—headed by a man of mystery, Lieutenant Jeremy Pinch—is supposed to have crossed the Continental Divide. Some obscure papers, yellow with age, were recently uncovered in the London Public Records Office. These old documents indicate that



Pinch not only encountered the British in the Western wilds but even attempted to order them out of the country. So vague is his story, though, that it is still looked upon largely as a myth.

A few years later another American, Major Andrew Henry, crossed the Rockies and built a post in south-eastern Idaho on Henry's Fork of the Snake River. This tiny establishment, although abandoned after a year, was the first American settlement west of the Shining Mountains. The Yankees were far from idle.

The first attempt to found a *permanent* settlement on the Columbia was launched in the Boston counting-room of Abiel Winship. The sturdy Winship brothers, Abiel, Jonathan and Nathan, had long been successful in the China trade. They had worked hard and had prospered. It was but natural that their shrewd business minds should discern the vast possibilities of the fur trade in the North Pacific. So, their finances secured and their company formed, they dispatched brother Nathan westward in command of the *Albatross*, an ancient but still seaworthy vessel. Theirs was the first American vision of Western empire.

Carrying a crew of twenty-two men, the stout old *Albatross* rounded Cape Horn, sailed up the coast and entered the Columbia without mishap. Carefully and elaborately did the Winships lay their plans. They were to purchase land from the natives, build a large two-story house, arm it for defense and then proceed to

trade for furs. Captain Nathan sailed about forty miles up the great river before he spied a location which struck his fancy. There, at Oak Point, so named because of the many oak trees near by, he landed and prepared to build his fort. Working diligently, the little company hewed logs and laid the foundations for their buildings.

Just as the project was beginning to take shape, two enemies appeared, quite suddenly, to challenge the enterprise. The June floods threatened to overflow the low-lying ground and the neighboring Indians grew troublesome. The captain might have foreseen the first of these difficulties—the rising of the river, but he could scarcely have anticipated the other. No protest had been made against the building of the fort but when the Indians learned the true purpose of the venture, they became angry. Nathan Winship made it his business to find out what ailed them. For some years, these red men had been doing a good business by obtaining goods from ships at the mouth of the Columbia and by using them in trade with the up-river tribes. Like a modern gangster, Captain Winship, all unknowingly, had “muscle in” on their territory.

Discouraged, the captain of the *Albatross* abandoned the Oak Point venture and decided to trade in the future with the friendly Indians along the coast. Following his return to Boston, Winship discussed matters with his brothers. With deep regret, they decided

to give up their project for good. What finally tipped the scales was a bit of news which had just come to them. They had learned about a rival enterprise—so large and so well-financed—that their own seemed hopeless by comparison.

But long before the *Albatross* sailed back to Boston, the rapid rush of events along the Northwest American coast had caused the British lion to bestir himself.

Slowly but surely he began to take notice. When Captain Gray discovered the Columbia, the great beast opened one eye. When Lewis and Clark set out for the Pacific, he opened the other. Then, when the full import of the Louisiana Purchase dawned on him, he sprang up, threw his head back and roared. So loud was his roar that its echo carried all the way to distant Canada.

Robert Gray's achievement did not worry the British leaders greatly because they looked upon the Yankee claims, based upon his discovery, as no sounder than their own. After all, Broughton had sailed many miles farther up the river. Had France continued to hold the vast Louisiana territory, even the successful journey of Lewis and Clark would not have disturbed these smug Britishers unduly. But Jefferson's acquisition of this huge chunk of land enabled him to send his two captains through American territory on the first leg of their dash. Great Britain realized that, hence-

forth, occupation of the Oregon Country would be less difficult for the United States to accomplish and she realized, further, that occupation would establish a claim much too sound to be successfully disputed. It was time for John Bull to act.

Simon Fraser—as early as 1805—had left Fort Chipewewa and had penetrated to the Fraser River. A few miles west of the point where this stream turns south, he had established a post for the North West Company—the first permanent settlement west of the Rocky Mountains for either of the contending nations.

Fraser was deceived. He believed that his own river was identical with the Columbia and, secure in this conviction, he was satisfied that he had staked out a good claim for his government. Although this early settlement was built well to the northward in “New Caledonia,” as that part of Canada was then called, it seemed—for a time—as if the British, having pushed ahead of the Yankees, might sweep south and head them off from the coast.

Following his return to the East, Simon Fraser retired from the North West Company and settled down to enjoy his modest wealth in Scotland. His work was carried on by David Thompson, an intrepid fur trader and an accomplished geographer, who traveled through the untamed country to the northward, building trading stations and making geographical observations. Equipped with only a ten-inch brass sextant and

the crude nautical almanacs of his day, he drew maps which were marvels of exactitude. Indeed they were so carefully executed that the Canadian government used them officially for many years.

After planting a thin line of posts through the northern portions of the present states of Idaho and Montana, this great pathfinder, David Thompson, pushed farther west. He built a small fort where the city of Spokane is now located. In the spring of 1810, Thompson and his chief assistant, Finan McDonald, were the only full-blooded white men operating within the present boundaries of Washington, Idaho and Oregon.

Meanwhile, the North West Company had heard of the extensive plans of a rival concern which hoped to take possession of the mouth of the Columbia for the United States—that same Pacific Fur Company which had discouraged the Winship brothers. Considerable time elapsed before Thompson could be apprised of the plans of this potential invader. When at last he received the news, he decided to travel down the Columbia and investigate. If he hoped that he might still be able to forestall his adversary and be the first to erect a fort on the coast, his leisurely pace did not indicate any such confidence. It suggested, rather, that he knew his cause to be a lost one. Nevertheless, it must have been a keen disappointment for Thompson, as he rounded Tongue Point near the Columbia's mouth, to

gaze upon the Stars and Stripes flying from a flagstaff on a building rapidly nearing completion.

For, while Fraser and Thompson had been blazing trails for the British North West Company in the Oregon wilderness, a German-born merchant of New York City had been laying his own plans to capture the North Pacific fur trade.

This future millionaire, John Jacob Astor, ran away from his home in Waldorf, Germany, when he was little more than a boy. For a time he lived in London but, while he was still young, he departed for the United States, taking with him a small stock of merchandise. He exchanged his goods for furs, returned with them to England and sold them at high prices. The youthful dreamer convinced himself that he could make a fortune in this attractive new business. If only he could establish a post at the mouth of the Columbia, he reasoned, he could compete successfully with the British. He could develop a lucrative trade with the Russians on the Alaska coast and open an American market for their skins.

So planned John Jacob Astor and so emerged the Pacific Fur Company. Vast was his vision and close, surprisingly close, did it come to success.

Astor's plan involved the sending of two parties to the West coast—one by water around Cape Horn and the other overland. The first to arrive at the Columbia's mouth would establish a combination of fort and trad-

ing post and this pioneer settlement would be but the forerunner of many others. In his dreams, the New York merchant saw a chain of forts extending from the Columbia all the way to the Mississippi!

John Jacob Astor engaged the *Tonquin*, a stout ship of two hundred and ninety tons, for his dash by sea. Because trouble was then brewing between Great Britain and the United States, American vessels were frequently run down and subjected to search. It was thus desirable for Astor's ship to present a formidable appearance in order to discourage marauding British men-of-war. While the *Tonquin* carried only ten guns, she had portholes for twenty and so, to make her seem more redoubtable, sham guns were mounted at the extra portholes. Thanks to these precautions, she made the long voyage in safety, arriving at the mouth of the Columbia in the early spring of 1811.

Wise in most matters, Astor was unfortunate in his choice of master for the *Tonquin*. Lieutenant Jonathan Thorne, the skipper, was either a harsh taskmaster by nature or, as many believed, mentally unbalanced. At all events, during the course of the extended cruise, he made life miserable for the members of his crew and also for his passengers—woodsmen from Canada and various of Astor's partners, including such stout-hearted men as David Stuart, Gabriel Franchère, Alexander Ross, Duncan McDougall, Alexander McKay and others.

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A substantial number of those who sailed on the *Tonquin* were former Nor'Westers—men who were actually more loyal to Great Britain than to the United States. At that time, this circumstance made no difference. Later it was to prove both embarrassing and costly to John Jacob Astor.

En route to the coast, the ship touched at the Sandwich Islands where a number of native Kanakas were taken aboard and signed up to work for the company. Often the friction between the skipper and his fellow voyagers became so severe that open mutiny seemed inevitable. It is a marvel that the *Tonquin* reached the Columbia with this firebrand still in command!

The weather was rough when the Astor ship arrived at the Columbia's mouth, but that did not prevent Thorne from ordering several men, in leaky boats, to tackle the murderous breakers in the hope of reaching the river. In one of these small boats a sailmaker and three of the Canadians were lost and in another a seaman, a sailmaker, an armorer and two Kanakas were swept out to sea with the tide. That evening, the *Tonquin* managed to get into the Columbia and anchor in Baker's Bay. The next day, the armorer and one of the Kanakas were found alive on the beach, but all of the others were drowned. Their bodies were never found. Thorne's brutal treatment of his men caused his stock, already low, to sink lower.

Although the vicinity of Baker's Bay did not sug-



gest itself to Thorne as a suitable place for the building of the Pacific Fur Company's fort, a location immediately across the river—actually no better—met with his instantaneous approval. So eager was he to begin his trading voyage up the coast that he insisted upon landing the cargo forthwith and upon commencing the construction of the post.

He acted impulsively without regard for the protests of at least two of the Astor partners, David Stuart and Duncan McDougall, who wanted to explore farther in the hope of finding a better site. As usual Thorne had his way. Clearings were made, a storehouse and a powder-house were begun and the place was christened Astoria, in honor of the company's founder—all before the *Tonquin* left on its northward journey.

What happened from then on to the blustering master of the vessel and his crew is known only through one man—an Indian interpreter named Kasiascall—who lived to tell the tragic tale after he had made his way back to Astoria with great difficulty. Historians have come to accept his version as an approximation of what actually occurred.

Thorne had sailed the *Tonquin* up the coast to Clayquot Harbor, north of Nootka, in the hope of trading with the Indians and making friends with the Russians. Before any Russians were encountered, though, the hot-headed leader openly insulted an Indian chief

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who had come aboard to trade. Angered, the chief and his followers returned to the village on the shore near by. The next day, five hundred of them came back to the ship, pretending friendship but concealing murderous weapons under their bundles of furs. At a given signal, they fell upon the unsuspecting crew, killing all



but five. Four of these were butchered while attempting to escape but a fifth, mortally wounded, touched off a powder magazine in the hold, blew the vessel sky high and killed two hundred savages. This desperate man may have been James Lewis, the clerk, but even Kasiascall couldn't be certain.

The first white man killed in this bloody battle was Alexander McKay, whose half-breed widow was later to marry Dr. John McLoughlin about whom we shall hear much in subsequent chapters. McKay's death was one of the most severe blows of all to the Astor cause. The loss of the *Tonquin* left Astoria defenseless and weakened, since it had cost the lives of seventeen white men and twelve Sandwich Islanders.

Back in Astoria, the remaining members of the *Tonquin's* original party, saddened by the sinister news Kasiascall had brought them, struggled to complete their fort. In the midst of their feverish labors, Indians of the vicinity brought word that David Thompson, the Nor'Wester, was busy building posts on the upper river and that soon he would reach the mouth. The Astorians redoubled their efforts, resolved that their visitor would receive a surprise upon his arrival. When Thompson finally reached Astoria, he found the Pacific Fur Company's buildings virtually finished!

The fur traders already established at Astoria gave the brave Nor'Wester a cordial welcome. Despite the fact that he was a rival in trade and an admitted spy, Astor's men entertained him royally and provided him with all the necessities for his return journey. As a precautionary measure, however, they saw to it that he was accompanied up the river. David Stuart traveled with him as far as The Dalles—a safe distance from Astoria.

David Thompson remained for a time in the inland country, spending the winter of 1811-12 at Saleesh House, a post he had built in the northwestern corner of the present state of Montana. Having lost out in the race to settle the mouth of the river and having completed his explorations of the Oregon Country, he considered his work in the West finished. In Eastern Canada, he rendered valuable service to his government as astronomer to the International Boundary Commission. David Thompson lived to the ripe old age of eighty-six, honored by all pioneers of the Pacific slope.

As the summer wore on, Astor's men observed that the Indians were gradually retreating from the vicinity of the fort. Not quite able to understand this general exodus but interpreting it as a sign of unfriendliness, the white men became alarmed. They hastened to raise palisades against an expected attack and stood guard night and day with guns in the bastions.

Since this show of force failed to instil fear in the red men, it was evident that some other type of strategy would have to be employed. To the ingenious mind of Duncan McDougall, who had married a daughter of one of the local chiefs, there occurred a clever scheme. If guns could not produce the desired result, a good scare might. Accordingly, he called together a group of suspicious natives and explained to them that he was the smallpox chief. Indeed he boasted that he held the smallpox itself in a bottle which he brandished menac-

ingly before them. If he were so much as to pull the cork, this dreaded disease—already known to the Indians—would destroy them. The decision was theirs. If they chose to remain friendly with the whites, the cork would not be pulled! If not, they would die!

We can scarcely blame McDougall for acting as he did. Had he not done so, he and his associates might have been murdered. Nevertheless his resourcefulness—well as it worked at the time—paved the way for future trouble. Ever after, when smallpox or any other disease descended upon the natives, they insisted that some vengeful paleface had opened the dreaded bottle!

Meanwhile, after spending the winter of 1810-11 in camp on the Missouri River, Astor's overland party, commanded by Wilson P. Hunt, of New Jersey, resumed its westward journey. Hunt, it developed, had a rival of his own on this cross-country dash—Manuel Lisa, of the Missouri Fur Company. Proceeding by slightly different routes, the two parties frequently met and, with each meeting, their mutual bitterness increased. The climax came when Hunt and Lisa quarreled over Pierre Dorion, the Astor party's guide. So violent became the quarrel that a duel between the two leaders was narrowly averted. Madame Dorion, the Indian wife of the guide who had innocently caused the dispute, traveled far into the West with the expedition and, by her heroism on the march, earned a place

in American history almost as renowned as that of Sacajawea.

At last, after enduring hardships which equaled those of the Lewis and Clark expedition, Hunt's weary travelers reached Astoria in February, 1812. It was high time, too, for the men at the lonely outpost were growing more discouraged with each passing month.

With the arrival of reinforcements, the spirits of the Astorians rose. Trade picked up. The ship *Beaver* arrived from New York with needed supplies and additional men. Following a brief rest, Hunt sailed the *Beaver* northward to open negotiations with the Russians while Stuart, who had left earlier with Thompson, continued clear across the continent to report in person to the owner of the enterprise, John Jacob Astor. Prospects augured well for the success of the Pacific Fur Company and the Columbia, once again, seemed to be secure in American hands.

This optimism was soon to be blasted! Word suddenly reached Astoria that two Nor'Westers, John McTavish and Joseph La Roque, had arrived at Spokane House with ominous news. The United States, having suffered unendurable insults, had finally declared war on Great Britain! A British war vessel, according to the Nor'Westers, was already on its way to capture Astor's fort.

Most of the men at Astoria were ex-members of the North West Company and hence British in their sym-

pathies. Now their loyalty was to be put to a severe test. We shall not attempt to pass judgment on them. Perhaps they were cowards—as most Americans believed—or perhaps mere opportunists. At all events, they chose the easy way out and certainly they betrayed their employer by selling his fort to the North West Company without his knowledge or consent. When His Majesty's ship, the *Raccoon*, sailed into the Columbia, the British flag was already flying from the fort. Promptly Astoria became Fort George and there was great rejoicing for everyone except a defrauded tycoon back in New York.

Astor was wildly angry when he heard the news, and rightly so. He had reconciled himself to the loss of his property as a result of the war, but he didn't dream that his own men would sell him out. Thus suddenly did the picture change once more. The British now appeared to have everything their own way. The seesaw race seemed won for all time.

*CHAPTER VI*





## *The Wild Nor'westers*

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**T**he War of 1812 ended in victory for America. Once again, the young republic, aided by a combination of daring and good fortune, had vanquished a powerful enemy on her own shores. The conflict, though, was not formally concluded until the signing of the Treaty of Ghent late in the year 1814.

According to the terms of this historic treaty, all territory taken by either nation from the other, was supposed to be returned. No one had awaited the announcement of these terms with greater eagerness than had John Jacob Astor. When he finally heard the

tidings, he was delighted for he surmised that Astoria would be restored to him without delay. He could hardly wait to resume operations at the mouth of the Columbia.

Mr. Astor requested the officials of our government to lay his claim before the British Minister in Washington with all possible speed. This wholly reasonable petition of the New York capitalist was granted, but the British reply, unfortunately for him, was vague and unsatisfactory. To no avail, negotiations continued. Time dragged on with the result that a long and heated controversy developed between the two governments.

England maintained that Fort George (formerly Astoria) had become the private property of the North West Company when Duncan McDougall, one of Astor's own partners, had sold the fort to that concern. The United States held out for a more liberal interpretation of the treaty. It became evident, after further bickering, that either a compromise would have to be reached or another war declared. But possession of the remote Oregon Country did not seem—just then—to justify further fighting.

Eventually a temporary agreement was worked out by statesmen who were determined to postpone a final showdown. It was decided that Fort George and other established trading posts in the Pacific Northwest should be left in the hands of the North West Com-

pany but that nominal possession of them should be given to the United States as a nation—an arrangement which left everybody exactly nowhere.

To the man who had planned so stupendously and who had lost so much, the action of our government must have seemed as spiritless and as cowardly as McDougall's betrayal. Nevertheless, John Jacob Astor was a realist. He concluded, sadly but wisely, that the North West Company had become so firmly entrenched in the Pacific Northwest that further attempts at competition would be sheer folly. Out in the land of his brief triumph, Astor's star had set as rapidly as it had risen.

Most of the former Astorians were delighted to enter the service of the North West Company. Not only were they Britishers, for the most part, but also they sensed that the vigorous Canadian concern stood to succeed and make them wealthy. A scant few, who were unwilling to make the change, left with the first east-bound brigade to depart from Fort George following the transfer. Among those who chose to stay on were Duncan McDougall, Alexander Ross and Ross Cox—colorful characters, all three. These men, and others, were to become active in the fur trade during the years immediately ahead.

The Nor'Westers, working out of Fort George, were a brave and reckless lot. They toiled diligently to complete the task which Astor's men had begun and

they made progress in both exploration and trade which was brilliant if not always sound. It was the habit of the North West brigades—those companies of voyageurs who carried furs through the wilds and across the continent to Eastern Canada—to travel, in their canoes and on foot, with amazing speed.

These big fellows, most of them French Canadians, were friendly and openhearted. They sang as gayly when they paddled over treacherous streams as when they hauled their heavy burdens over difficult portages. Always, before reaching an important post, they donned their bright-colored plumes, made their costumes trim and arranged their canoes in symmetrical formations. As they came closer, they sang their best songs and drove their boats at full speed toward the landing, adroitly backing just in the nick of time as the bowmen leaped ashore and seized the prows. Others jumped into the water and carried the officers and passengers to dry land.

At the first glimpse of the approaching brigade, the guns of the fort were fired in welcome. This was a signal for everyone at the post to hasten to the landing and greet the new arrivals. For the moment, work was forgotten in the general merriment of the occasion. These voyageurs were a hardy crowd—frivolous and carefree but brave, reliable and steadfastly loyal to their superiors.

So anxious were the Nor'Westers to make this rich

new territory produce wealth for themselves and their company that they were often unwise in their treatment of the Indians. Although the red men had reason to fear and distrust most of the officers, they liked everything about the French Canadian voyageurs except the swift pace they maintained on the march. Earlier traders had journeyed more leisurely—had allowed more time for the ceremony of trading and had been more liberal with trinkets and tobacco.

There were occasions when the natives, hurt by what they considered a lack of courtesy on the part of the whites, held up the brigades by force and insisted upon seeing to it that the amenities were observed! At other times, the lack of understanding displayed by the Nor'-Westers caused real trouble, with pitched battles resulting. The red man of the Oregon Country may have been a savage but it required a neat combination of diplomacy and good manners to win him!

Subsequent Nor'Westers and Hudson's Bay men, profiting by the mistakes of their predecessors, were to develop this neat combination, but these earliest traders out of Fort George consistently antagonized the Indians. Even the arrival of Donald McTavish, the hard-driving new governor of the Columbia district, failed to improve conditions. The natives grew steadily more hostile, bloodshed increased and the annual returns to the company remained unsatisfactory.

There were amusing interludes, however, and one of them must have caused no little excitement at Fort George before it suddenly turned to tragedy. When the North West Company's ship, the *Isaac Todd*, arrived in the Columbia, she brought—in addition to McTavish, the new governor—the first white woman ever to visit the Pacific Northwest.

Jane Barnes was a comely English barmaid who had set sail for the wilderness of North America in quest of adventure. There can be no doubt that she found plenty of it during her brief sojourn at the Columbia post. McTavish, in whose company she had traveled from England, dressed her in expensive broadcloth and proudly paraded her before the astonished Indians and their squaws. Never before had these coast natives gazed on a white woman.

Unfortunately for McTavish, his romance was short-lived. The fickle barmaid soon renounced him in favor of Alexander Henry, another North West partner. Jealousy between the two fur traders was about to assume serious proportions when there appeared, quite unexpectedly, a new contender for Jane's hand. The advent of this interloper caused them to patch up their quarrel, for the nonce, and rise to the lady's defense. This new suitor was a local brave, a son of old Chief Concomly, and his offer of marriage was a princely one. When he arrived at the fort to make his



formal proposal, his face was painted a bright red and his body was reeking with whale oil!

There was nothing, it seemed, that this copper-colored swain was not willing to bestow upon his prospective bride. He promised to send a hundred sea otters to her relatives, to permit her to rule over his other wives, to let her wear her own fashionable clothes, to smoke as many pipes a day as she wished and to be spared all drudgery!

How seriously Jane was tempted by this weird offer, we can't say, but the fact that she declined it aroused the anger of the spurned suitor. Indeed, he threatened to kidnap the lady of his choice, after which her protectors forbade her to leave the immediate neighbor-



hood of the fort. Jane, though, was saved from one calamity only to be plunged into another.

While the irate Indian was still grumbling over the blow his pride had been dealt, McTavish and Henry were accidentally drowned in the Columbia during a gale. Spared the difficult and perhaps dangerous task of choosing between them and finding no other suitable husband at remote Fort George, the exotic Jane Barnes departed for China aboard the schooner *Columbia*. There, she is supposed to have lived on, in luxury, for many years. Her fleeting visit, so rudely terminated, must have left a trail of heavy hearts, both white and native.

Out on the distant Columbia and throughout the Inland Empire, where posts had already been established, the fur traders of the North West Company were entirely on their own. They chose to make quick decisions, to act as conditions demanded and, for the most part, to shoot first and think later.

Nevertheless, there were wise leaders among those wild Nor'Westers. During these rough and ready years on the Columbia, Alexander Ross established for himself a reputation for courage, resourcefulness and fair dealing. There is a gripping story told about one of his periodic dashes into the heart of what is now central Washington.

On this occasion Ross came upon a large tent city in

the Yakima Valley—a settlement of some six thousand natives. He wanted horses and he had reason to believe that these people had large numbers of them to trade. He knew that they were hostile, having been previously warned by Indian messengers. True to the tradition of his company, Ross kept right on, throwing caution to the winds.

Right into the very center of the tent city marched the dauntless Nor'Wester—right on to where the chiefs were gathered in council. Angry scowls greeted Ross and his handful of companions, but they pretended not to notice the atmosphere of hostility into which they had plunged. Deliberately and calmly, the white leader got down to the business of trading for horses.

The angry grunts grew louder and the looks darker. As soon as a transaction was completed, the sullen red men, instead of delivering the horses to Ross and his men, led them away. This ruinous bargaining continued for three long days. There was nothing for the hard-pressed Nor'Westers to do but remain and lose all of the goods they had brought with them. They were forced to go without food during all this time, for the warlike Indians insisted upon overturning their kettles whenever they tried to set them up.

With the Ross party were three Canadians who had brought their native wives along. When, toward the end of the third day, it was whispered to the white leader that these women stood in grave danger of be-

ing seized as slaves, he decided to act. It was a desperate chance, but it was the only one! Under cover of night, the resourceful Ross spirited the three wives out of camp and sent them hurrying northward to Fort Okanogan for help.

The next morning, before aid could arrive, one of the local chiefs, Yaktana by name, jerked a hunting knife from the hands of a French Canadian. Weak from hunger, the poor fellow made a feeble effort to resist. A fatal fight would have followed had not Ross, thinking with lightning speed, produced his own cherished knife and presented it to the astonished Yaktana.

"Here, my friend," said the desperate Nor'Wester, "is a white chief's knife. I give it to you. That other is not a chief's knife. Give it back to the man."

Taken aback, Yaktana accepted the gift and returned the other weapon to its owner. Impressed by the ready wit and courage of Ross, he became a friend on the spot. Nor did he stop there. To his townsmen he made a speech which quickly changed the whole situation. The peace pipe was passed around and a great feast was ordered. Eighty-five horses were returned to Ross and his companions, who were permitted to proceed to Okanogan in safety. Through bitter experience, the whites were learning the ways of the red man.

Another Nor'Wester, who achieved even greater success with the Indians, was Donald McKenzie. A former Astorian, McKenzie had abandoned the ill-

fated Pacific Fur Company and had returned to Canada. There he fell in with some of the leaders of the North West Company. These canny men of business, disgusted with the progress of the fur trade in the Pacific Northwest, sensed at once the one-time Astor partner's qualities of leadership. Forthwith, they put him in charge of all operations in the Inland Empire and ordered him to go West immediately with full power to act.

It was but natural that McKenzie should be looked upon as an upstart by the seasoned veterans of Fort George. Well did he realize how difficult his task would prove. Not only did he have to establish new posts, improve relations with the Indians and build up the trade but, harder still, he had to placate the irate partners in the territory. Any one of them considered himself McKenzie's equal.

At first, as would be expected, the new boss met with opposition on all sides, from the whites as well as from the Indians. Through it all he fought with tact and courage until he achieved a greater degree of success than had yet been seen on the Columbia or in the interior. In the end, everyone in the department was glad to hail him as a great leader.

McKenzie knew, from long experience, how to handle the Indians. He flattered them, praised their children, participated in their ceremonies and treated them as fellow human beings. Were he living today, he

would rank as a master politician! His open and fearless manner completely disarmed the savages.

It was McKenzie's custom, in camp, to keep a hostile band of red men at a safe distance while he talked, on neutral ground, with their chiefs. This bit of ceremony, simple as it was, never failed to work wonders. The native leaders were made to feel that at last an equal had come among them. Another sample of McKenzie's strategy was to detain the principal chiefs in his camp at night. Very cleverly he accomplished a double purpose. He honored his native visitors while he kept them out of mischief!

Donald McKenzie himself went about at will and unarmed through the various Indian encampments he visited but he never allowed his men to cross the line. At night he ordered the boats of his brigade to be carried out of the water so as to form a protecting barricade around his temporary bivouac.

During the course of his extensive trading tours, this greatest of all the early Nor'Westers covered virtually the whole of the Oregon Country, working as zealously as a modern commercial traveler. In the end his tireless efforts bore fruit. Trade picked up to such an extent that the Columbia Department of the North West Company became, for the first time, an asset. There were daring men among the early pathfinders in the Pacific Northwest but none was more daring—nor more successful in trade—than Donald McKenzie.

Although Fort George was the principal headquarters of the North West Company in the Oregon Country, there were other posts scattered through the interior. David Thompson, the ardent pioneer of an earlier time, had built Fort Kootenay in northern Montana and Kallyspell House in northern Idaho. Fort Okanogan, located where the river of that name flows into the Columbia, had become an active trading center in Donald McKenzie's time. Finan McDonald, Thompson's one-time chief assistant, had established Spokane House near the site of the present Washington city. Later, McKenzie built a post near the mouth of the Walla Walla River, which he called Fort Nez Percé. The place was badly christened since there were no Nez Percés in the region, but McKenzie, as the story goes, liked the name. All of these remote interior settlements were links in the long chain which connected Fort George with the Eastern headquarters of the North West Company.

Spokane House, despite the fact that it was off the beaten path, continued for some time to serve as the main depot for the interior. One reason why it remained in operation so long after its usefulness ceased was that it held many attractions. Old records tell us that Spokane House boasted large buildings, one of which contained a ballroom. Beautiful native women came there to dance with the men of visiting brigades. There were fine horses in abundance and the post was

noted throughout the Pacific Northwest for its races. For the weary traveler it was a welcome haven.

One of the most difficult duties assigned to Donald McKenzie was that of closing this popular post. Faithful to his superiors, he concluded that Spokane House, for all its charms, was an expensive luxury which contributed little to the efficiency of the fur trade. He had no choice but to abandon the place but his action did not increase his popularity with his associates.

Meanwhile, back in Eastern and Central Canada, the venerable Hudson's Bay Company and its junior competitor, the North West Company, had been engaging in a bitter fight.

The mighty Hudson's Bay Company, whose exclusive charter dated back to the time of King Charles II, had had things its own way in Canada for a very long time. Toward the close of the eighteenth century, the sudden growth of the Nor'Westers caused the Hudson's Bay men to arouse themselves from smugness and lethargy and to exert, anew, their charter rights.

The two leading actors in this great drama were Lord Selkirk, of the Hudson's Bay Company, and our old friend, Alexander Mackenzie, of the rival concern. Selkirk was a man of vision and a man of action. He wanted to establish a colony in the Red River country and so, with this project in mind, he secured from his company a vast grant of land which extended

from Lake Winnipeg southward into American territory.

Accordingly, Lord Selkirk invited a larger number of Britishers, whose sympathies lay with the older company, to settle in this great area. The Red River Colony grew rapidly and soon became a challenge to the Nor'-Westers for the reason that its geographical position threatened to block their main route of travel from the St. Lawrence to the Pacific. Fighting soon broke out between the rival factions. So violent did it become that the British government was forced to step in and demand peace. Ruin or union was the choice faced by the warring competitors.

In the year 1820, by one of those strange coincidences which occasionally crop up in history, Lord Selkirk and Alexander Mackenzie both died. The last obstacle to peaceful union was removed. Representatives of both concerns met in London where, under the watchful eyes of the British government, they voted for amalgamation. As things turned out, it was an equal settlement without advantage to either side except that the name of the older enterprise was retained. The rival concerns united as the Hudson's Bay Company.

In Canada, the headquarters post was moved from Lake Superior to Norway House on Lake Winnipeg. George Simpson, a talented young clerk in the London office of the Hudson's Bay Company, was named



Governor of all the vast fur trading interests in America—a tremendous responsibility for a man who had never seen the New World.

Automatically, Fort George and all of the inland forts of the Oregon Country came under the sway of the powerful Hudson's Bay Company. Almost as soon as he reached Canada, the new Governor made a careful study of the returns which had been coming in from the Far West. It did not take him long to conclude that they were far from satisfactory. With characteristic wisdom he decided that a lagging territory needed an able head and thus it was that he selected Dr. John McLoughlin for the post.

*CHAPTER VII*



## *King of the Wilderness*

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**O**f all the men who traveled into the early Pacific Northwest and who shaped the course of its subsequent history, John McLoughlin was the greatest. Firm, just and brilliant, he was the recognized leader of the old Oregon Country for more than two decades—a veritable king in the wilderness.

This remarkable empire builder was born, toward the close of the eighteenth century, in the little French Canadian village of Rivière du Loup about a hundred and twenty miles below Quebec, on the south bank of the St. Lawrence River. His father was a poor Irish

farmer but his mother was the daughter of Malcolm Fraser, a powerful Scottish landowner who lived across the great river at Murray Bay.

Young John was educated in large part by this indulgent grandfather who hoped that his protégé might become a doctor. As a youth, John displayed a talent for this profession but, in those days, medical schools were few and far between. He learned "doctoring" by the familiar old method of traveling about with the village practitioner—watching him set a leg, bind a wound or administer a dose of calomel. It wasn't long before he could do these simple jobs as well as his teacher.

John McLoughlin was not satisfied to settle down to the practice of medicine. He enjoyed his work after a fashion but, far more, he craved adventure in distant fields. His uncle, Alexander Fraser, had made a name for himself in the fur trade and John used to revel in the thrilling tales told by this intrepid Nor'Wester. Doctoring might come in handy, reasoned the young Canadian, but trading for furs soon became his real ambition. So, at an early age, he entered the service of the North West Company and worked diligently for that concern until its union with the Hudson's Bay Company. He played no small part in bringing the merger about.

During his years as a Nor'Wester, Dr. McLoughlin was stationed at Fort William on Lake Superior. Here he met and married the half-breed widow of Alexander

McKay, who had been killed on the *Tonquin* out on Clayoquot Sound. A son had been born to Margaret McKay by her former marriage and this son, Tom, had followed his father into the Western country. Tom McKay was to become one of the most colorful figures of the Hudson's Bay regime in the Oregon Country.

Following the merger of the two rival concerns, Dr. McLoughlin was named by Governor Simpson as the resident chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company's Columbia Department. Fort George was to be his new post. In the summer of 1824, the two men—with a sizable party—departed for the mouth of the Columbia, reaching their destination the following November. This famous dash across the continent consumed eighty-four days. Slow as such progress must seem today, Simpson and McLoughlin established a record which was to stand for many years.

A pleasant surprise greeted the Columbia Department's new chief factor at a little station called Jasper House, in the very heart of the Rockies. There, waiting for him and for the other members of the overland party, was his own stepson, Tom McKay, who had grown to young manhood since their last meeting. Already a veteran of the wild Western country, young Tom had built for himself a reputation as an able guide and trapper. He brought letters of welcome to the new governor and to his stepfather from the post at Fort

George, then conducted the Hudson's Bay men safely through the mountains to the Columbia.

Some of the problems these newcomers were soon to face had to do with boundary lines. Since the amalgamation of the two fur trading companies, the British government had given serious consideration to the future of its interests in the vast Oregon Country. Back in 1818, the United States and Great Britain had agreed to open the territory to sailing ships and citizens of both nations for a period of ten years. Under the terms of this treaty, Americans and Canadians were free to travel and to trade at will in the Pacific Northwest. On paper, the arrangement appeared equitable—as fair to the Yankees as to their adversaries, but actually the British were in possession. True—in accordance with the terms of the Treaty of Ghent—they had permitted the United States to sail two warships into the Columbia and to raise the Stars and Stripes over the old fort. It was merely a gesture, though, and it meant little.

Despite the strangle hold they had obtained in the Far Western region, officials of the British government had privately resigned themselves to the ultimate surrender of all territory lying south and east of the Columbia River. If you will glance at a map, you will observe that the "River of the West" flows south through the central portion of Washington and then turns abruptly west to form, from that point to the Pacific, the boundary between Washington and Ore-

gon. To the practical minds of the British, in 1824, the Columbia seemed the logical dividing line between the two countries and they were determined to hold for themselves the spacious quadrangle west and north of the river. This whole situation was well known to Governor Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin as they sped downstream on the last leg of their journey.

Both men realized that Fort George, on the south bank of the Columbia, was not strategically located from the standpoint of British security. As a consequence, they kept their eyes peeled for a site on the north bank which might better serve as the Hudson's Bay western headquarters. Governor Simpson from the first had wanted to locate this new post well to the north in New Caledonia but Dr. McLoughlin, with equal stubbornness, had held out for a site along the Columbia. On the canoe trip down the river, the doctor observed an attractive little plain approaching the north bank of the stream near Point Vancouver, the farthest point reached by Lieutenant Broughton during his upstream dash of 1792. It struck the new chief factor as an ideal spot for the post. During the discussions which ensued that winter at Fort George, he stuck to his guns and eventually won out.

Fort George proved a disappointment to the newcomers. The tiny settlement had been burned several years earlier and had been only partially rebuilt. The soil around the old fort was not suited to the planting



of crops—a serious drawback since Governor Simpson expected each post to be self-sustaining. Even the neighboring Indians had deteriorated as a result of the liquor they had been receiving from the Nor'Westers. Once the wealthiest and most industrious of Oregon natives, they had become, for the most part, drunken barbarians. The place appeared wholly inadequate as a foundation upon which to build a mighty fur trading empire. It was high time to move! Having won his argument with the Governor, Dr. McLoughlin could hardly wait until spring to begin work on the new post at Point Vancouver.

The site was well chosen. It was not only the natural terminus for ocean and inland voyages but was also the starting point for parties traveling southward through the Willamette Valley as well as northward to the Puget Sound Country. The new chief factor and his men built their original fort about a mile back from the Columbia but moved it later to the edge of the stream where the United States Army post, Vancouver Barracks, now stands.

The hard-working doctor preceded his chief up the river and had the fort partially completed when Governor Simpson passed through on his way East. The new Western headquarters post was dedicated with great ceremony, in the presence of the Governor, and was fittingly named in honor of Captain George Vancouver who had explored the country a generation

earlier. As Simpson's brigade moved up the broad Columbia, Dr. McLoughlin stood at the water's edge and watched the departing boats until they disappeared from view. He realized now that he represented the highest authority in the whole West. He knew that his great chance had come—a chance to bring glory to the company and to Britain.

The doctor was equal to the tasks which lay before him. Well over six feet tall, blue-eyed and rosy-cheeked, he was a powerful giant whose very presence radiated strength and confidence. Although he was but forty years of age when he arrived in the Oregon Country, his hair was white as snow. He wore it so long that it reached his shoulders. So magnetic was his personality and so noble his appearance that the Indians soon came to look upon him as a great white chief. They christened him by acclamation the "White-Headed Eagle."

From the very first, Dr. McLoughlin maintained a firm but friendly attitude toward the red men. His manner toward them was like that of a father toward his children. When they behaved and obeyed his laws, he rewarded them; when they were warlike and untrustworthy, he punished them. So successful were his methods that no serious uprisings occurred during his long rule at Fort Vancouver.

At the outset, the natives of the vicinity were curious to discover what manner of leader had come among

them. Like all primitive people, they were quick to evaluate newcomers and slow to change their original opinions, once formed.

So certain was the chief factor of his ability to keep these river Indians friendly that he took no elaborate precautions against them. No blockhouses were built at the new fort and only a few guns were mounted. These, in fact, were intended more for appearance than for use. Nevertheless, the doctor was a realist. Full well did he know that he would have to impress his red subjects favorably from the start. Soon after the post was established, rumors of a disquieting nature came to his ears.

Scouts reported to him that numerous Indian councils were being held in the thick woods across the river. Strange faces were seen among those which had already become familiar to the Hudson's Bay men. It required little imagination to divine what was going on in the minds of the natives. The large accumulations of stores at Fort Vancouver tempted them, made them realize how much simpler it would be to storm the fort and capture the goods than to continue the slower and harder method of trading beaver skins for them. There were many Indians pitted against a few whites. An uprising could end only in disaster.

Dr. McLoughlin accepted the challenge. He sent out native runners with orders to call a council of all the tribes with whom he dealt. They flocked by the score

to the grounds outside the fort, squatted on their heels and waited for the "White-Headed Eagle" to come out and meet them. They were ready for the crucial pow-wow but the canny chief factor was not.

For a whole hour he kept the natives waiting. Superb showman that he was, he wanted these chiefs—the first who had dared question his authority—to know that he was their superior. During this long period of waiting, the doctor ordered a Scottish trader to march slowly back and forth in front of Vancouver's gates and to play mournful tunes on his bagpipes. The wailing notes of the pipes awed and charmed the Indian leaders. Within that hour they came to believe that this bare-kneed Scot, blowing away at his pipes, could produce enough "bad medicine" to kill them all.

The strategy worked. When Dr. McLoughlin finally came among them, he was hailed as a truly great chief—as one capable of living in friendship with them or of destroying them. The Indians were won over completely and were glad to promise peace, friendship and furs to this mighty new leader.

Life for the doctor, during these early years at Vancouver, was full of activity. He was responsible for the building of new forts and for the reconditioning of old ones which had long been used by the Nor'Westers. He had to send out parties of men in various directions to trade for furs. He had to plant crops on the plains

near the fort. This thriving new establishment was no place for loafers.

One of Dr. McLoughlin's predecessors on the Columbia had insisted that nothing could be grown in the vicinity of Vancouver. Here was another challenge for the new chief factor—one which he met with characteristic vigor. His farmers plowed the fields and planted rye, wheat, oats, peas and potatoes. Small fruit trees were placed in the fertile soil with high hope and vegetable gardens were started. Agriculture was soon under way on a scale sufficiently great to take care of the growing needs of the whole establishment.

Later cattle were imported. Some were brought clear from London by sailing ships while others were driven up from Mexican California. Trees were cut down to make way for pasture land and for the planting of still more crops. The logs were hauled to a newly built saw-mill where they were converted into timber to be sold in the Sandwich Islands.

Likewise, there was great activity within the fort itself. Furs had to be beaten and brushed so that they could be shipped great distances in good condition. Stationed at his wicket in the Indian shop, the trader bought furs carried there by the natives and paid for them in blankets, kettles, guns and other articles. In great numbers red men visited the fort, traded in peace and went their way. Swift canoes constantly coming and going, paddles flashing in the sunshine, native

voices raised in strange dialects and French Canadians singing at their work—together, this life at old Vancouver added up to a story-book pageant of color and beauty! Sometimes as many as two hundred men were busy at all manner of tasks within the gates.

A mighty fleet of canoes, bearing furs from the interior, would descend upon Vancouver each June. Away off in the cold North, at the most remote Hudson's Bay outpost, men would leave their winter quarters and carry their furs on horseback to the next station on their line of march. There, more men would join them and the cavalcade, growing in numbers as it advanced, would continue on its way until vast stores of skins from the Inland Empire had been collected.

At the banks of the upper Columbia, these hardy traders would leave their horses, load their precious pelts on canoes and begin their long journey down the river. On they would glide, singing gayly as they paddled. More men and furs would be added as they came to successive forts along the stream. Finally, they would reach Fort Walla Walla, the last station to be passed before ending their heroic downstream dash. To these travel-weary men, Vancouver must have seemed like the very center of the world!

At the headquarters post, men knew about when to expect the Brigade of Boats. A watchman, at the first sight of the approaching fleet, would sound the cry, "The Brigade! The Brigade!" Everyone at the fort,

from Dr. McLoughlin himself down to the lowliest Indian helper, would rush to the river bank to watch the show which the French Canadian voyageurs loved to stage in their final moment of triumph before landing.

On they would come, sometimes twenty abreast, led by the single canoe of the Hudson's Bay officer in charge. From the masthead of this leading canoe the British Union Jack always floated. Dressed in their finest, singing at the top of their voices, the voyageurs would wheel their boats in perfect formation, paddle furiously toward the bank, check their speed just in time and leap ashore. A great celebration would follow. The hard, lonely work of the winter was over. For several weeks, the men would enjoy themselves to the full, swap stories, smoke, loaf and eat to their heart's content.

Work for the French Canadians ceased during this well-earned respite. Others took over the furs, sorted them, counted them and prepared them for shipment. Still others ransacked the storehouse for the guns, kettles and trinkets which the traders would use in exchange for skins during the season ahead.

Too soon it would all be over. Too soon it would come time for the Brigade of Boats to return upstream. On the day set for departure, everyone at the fort would go down to the boat landing. The officers of the

company and the passengers headed for Canada would climb in first and, after them, the French Canadians—still in holiday mood. At the sound of a pistol shot, every paddle would touch the water. In perfect rhythm every man would bend to his first stroke. Up the Columbia would dash these stout-hearted voyageurs, singing as heartily as ever. Those on shore would watch until they could see only small specks on the blue water, until they could hear only the faintest sound of the song. Soon the fleet would be out of sight—off to the wilds for another whole year!

Later in the summer occurred the other red letter event of the year—the arrival of the home ship from England with letters and newspapers for the exiles at Fort Vancouver. It, too, was a great occasion.

Many weary months at sea were required for the Hudson's Bay ship to cover the long journey from London to the Columbia. Once over the bar, the vessel came to anchor in the quiet waters of Baker's Bay. Immediately a longboat was lowered and one of the officers hurried across to old Fort George, now reduced to a lookout station. Indian paddlers were ready and soon the officer, with his packets of mail and newspapers, departed with his red-skinned guides for Vancouver. The Hudson's Bay ship, still lying in the bay, would have to wait for favorable winds—would require several weeks, perhaps, to reach the headquarters post with her cargo of needed supplies.



At Vancouver the watchman was ever on the alert for approaching canoes but he was especially heedful at that time of year when the long-looked-for Indian craft bringing the mail was expected. At the first sight of it, he would sound the welcome call, "The Packet! The Packet!" and, once again, the whole population of the fort would flock down to the landing.

Invariably Dr. McLoughlin was on hand to greet the ship's officer with a warm handshake. He would then conduct his guest through the gates and on to his own residence, there to receive a personal report on the Old World. In the main office of the post, the mail was sorted and quickly distributed to the long line of men waiting eagerly and none too patiently at the wicket.

What a time would follow! After reading their letters and after scanning a few pages of their newspapers, the officers of the post settled down for a lively talk-fest. Conversation ranged all the way from English politics to the doings of friends and relatives back home. It was a holiday and they made the most of it. The Pacific Northwest was forgotten as these exiles spent the rest of the afternoon—in fancy—across the ocean.

That same night, the gala event of Vancouver's year took place—the chief factor's banquet. It is difficult to associate the grandeur of this affair with the untamed West of those early days. At the head of the long table, lighted by candles, sat the "White-Headed

Eagle" in all his glory while, on either side of him, were placed his officers. On down the length of the festive board ranged the rest of the group, seated according to rank.



The meal itself was fit for a king. Venison, beef, vegetables, fruit and other delicacies were served by men in livery. Wine flowed freely on this one brilliant occasion. The higher officers, in evening dress, took pride in the fact that they had carried traditional British manners to this remote corner of the earth.

After dinner, the guests repaired to Bachelor's Hall, as the vast smoking room of the fort was called. Con-

versation ran on into the night and the scope of subjects covered was enormous. The officers talked of Europe, of the fur trade, of prospects for the year ahead and of their chief—the good old doctor. At last the brilliant evening came to an end. The fire in the huge open fireplace was allowed to die and the men took themselves off to their own quarters.

What of the wives of these gentlemen during all this festivity? There were no white women at Fort Vancouver during those early years. All of the officers had married either full-blooded Indians or half-breeds. They were quiet and well-mannered—these dark-skinned spouses. They dressed like white women and made excellent housekeepers, but they always dined separately with their children. Never were they permitted to grace Bachelor's Hall.

Such was the life at old Vancouver during the first years of Dr. McLoughlin's rule. He was the undisputed leader, loved by his own people as well as by the natives. From his throne room at the fort, this mighty king—for he was virtually that—ruled all the territory south into Mexican California, and north into the land of the Russians, yes, and from the Pacific east to the ridge of the Shining Mountains!

Many a monarch of that day would have envied the power of the "White-Headed Eagle," had he but realized the extent of it.

*CHAPTER VIII*



Har-Bill!

## *Passing of the Fur Trade*

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**D**uring the period of the Hudson's Bay Company's supremacy in that portion of the Pacific Northwest which is today a part of the United States, Dr. John McLoughlin was, far and away, the dominant figure. Seldom in history has one man influenced an epoch so completely. This romantic and adventurous era began with his arrival on the Columbia in 1824 and ended shortly after his resignation from the company in 1845.

Of the able men who stood by him and who carried out his orders, Peter Skene Ogden would have stolen first place in almost any other company. He was Dr. McLoughlin's close friend and most active field

officer. None could roam farther than he into the wilds. During his numerous expeditions into the Snake River country, he opened up the rich interior to the fur trade. Ogden was a well-educated man, the son of a former Chief Justice of the Province of Quebec, and he contributed more than his share to the scholarly discussions at Fort Vancouver. So fond of playing practical jokes was this intrepid wanderer that perhaps his victims were relieved by his long periods of absence.

In the old Fort William days, while he was still a Nor'Wester, Dr. McLoughlin had taken under his wing a promising lad, fresh from Scotland. Later, this lad, grown to manhood, joined his one-time benefactor at Fort Vancouver where he rose rapidly in the service. It is not surprising that the chief factor looked upon James Douglas as a son. Able and efficient, he was as active in the administrative work at the post as was Ogden in the field. During the doctor's journey to England in 1838 and '39, "Black" Douglas, as he was known, was left in command. Like Peter Skene Ogden, he was a cultured gentleman. Following the settlement of the boundary dispute in 1846, he became the first Governor General of British Columbia.

Then there was the strenuous John Work who well deserved the name he bore. He was the Hudson's Bay officer chosen by Governor Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin to complete the task of dismantling Spokane House which had been begun by the Nor'Wester,

Donald McKenzie. It was Work, also, who built—on a magnificent site overlooking the upper Columbia—a new fort named in honor of the London Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Andrew Colville. This post, Fort Colville, became one of the most active stations in the whole Oregon Country.

Later, this upper Columbia fort was ruled by Archibald McDonald, another glamorous name in the story of the Pacific Northwest fur trade. McDonald's reputation for lavish entertaining came close to matching that of his superior officer at Vancouver. His son, the colorful Ranald McDonald, became a world traveler, played a strange part in American and Japanese history and returned to die in the Inland Empire.

There were many others whose deeds served to brighten the pages of Hudson's Bay history in the Pacific Northwest—Thomas McKay, the high-spirited stepson of the "White-Headed Eagle"; Pierre Pambrun, the kindly officer in charge at Fort Walla Walla; John Lee Lewes, the Beau Brummel of the fur trade who followed McDonald at Fort Colville; Alexander R. McLeod, who traded southward into the Umpqua; and James McMillan, one of the company's most daring explorers. These are but a few, for the list is long.

While the Hudson's Bay traders toiled in the wilds of the Oregon Country, they realized—as did their chiefs in Canada—that American trappers were draw-



ing closer and closer to their empire. On various of his dashes into the extreme eastern portion of the Snake country, Peter Skene Ogden met some of these venturesome Americans who had crossed the Rockies in quest of furs.

Encouraged by their success in trade, the Yankees advanced farther and farther into Hudson's Bay territory. Gradually the British traders began to feel the pinch of ruthless competition. On one occasion, Ogden lost a substantial number of his men through desertion. Attracted by promises of higher pay, they chose to cast their lot with the Americans.

Dr. McLoughlin became alarmed. He knew that the Oregon Country belonged as much to the United States as to Great Britain. In 1827 both nations had agreed to renew the treaty of joint occupation for an indefinite period, because they could find no better basis for a permanent settlement. Also, he understood perfectly the policies of the Hudson's Bay leaders. These mighty men of business wanted wealth from beaver skins; they were not interested in settling the country. So far so good, but none better than the doctor appreciated the possibilities of the glorious Pacific Northwest. He knew that it was a land ripe for colonization and he had good reason to suspect that the Yankees were eager to settle it. Well, perhaps he couldn't prevent that but, by St. George's Dragon, he'd block them at the fur trade! If they wanted competi-

tion—these Americans—they could have it! The chief factor's Irish blood was up. He was ready to fight!

Knowing that the Americans would, at the very least, demand the territory south of the Columbia and Snake Rivers, the Hudson's Bay men embarked upon a feverish campaign designed to "strip" this whole region of its beaver. It was their intention to create a veritable beaver-desert in Oregon, southern Idaho, Utah and Nevada. The Yankees, if these plans could be carried out, would find it very hard to get through the desert. Indeed, the Pacific Northwest would be saved from them, if not from the settlers who might be expected to come later. Some of Ogden's most heroic efforts were directed toward this task of "stripping" the country.

So the fight was on in earnest but, almost from the outset, it became apparent that the Yankees could not hope to win. For one thing, they lacked unity of purpose. Not content to join forces in a bitter struggle against a gigantic English corporation, they engaged in ruinous competition among themselves. The results were disastrous to all.

With few exceptions, these American trappers were a wild and reckless lot of men, many of them fugitives from justice. Strangely ignorant of native character, they deliberately invited trouble by cheating the Indians and by plying them with liquor. It actually seemed as if these rash adventurers were happiest when

they were fighting the red men. An almost perpetual state of hostility existed between them and the various tribes with whom they came in contact. With the Blackfeet, for instance, they were in constant turmoil.

By contrast, the Hudson's Bay men were ever obedient to the strict discipline maintained by their company. They refused "fire water" to the red men, sought to avoid trouble with them whenever possible and worked earnestly to create common interests. On the other hand, they could be firm when occasion demanded. Never would they permit an act of treachery or bad faith to go unpunished. So completely was the Pacific Northwest Indian won to the British side that he came to think of it as wrong to trade with the Yankees. It is scarcely surprising that the newcomers were all but vanquished even before they started to fight.

Among the American fur traders who invaded Dr. McLoughlin's empire, there were a few outstanding men. The first of these to meet the "White-Headed Eagle" face to face was Jedediah Smith, head of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company. He was a strange bundle of contrasts, this intrepid mountain man. So steeped in religion that, even in the wilderness, he said grace before each meal and so brave that native guns and arrows meant nothing to him, Smith was a character made to order for the early West.

During the course of two discouraging years of

trade and travel in California and the Southwest, Smith and his men were continually attacked by Indians and were frequently harassed by the hostile Mexican government. In the spring of 1828, with only a handful of his original party still at his side, he was ordered out of California by the Mexican officials at Monterey. Weary of his misfortunes in the southland, this tireless American trader decided to head north and to try his luck in the private domain of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Following the Sacramento River to its source, Smith and his companions crossed the border into the Oregon Country—the first Americans to enter the region by land from the south. They made camp along the banks of the Umpqua and carried on a brisk trade with the natives of the vicinity. Within a short time, they had amassed a large store of furs. While Captain Smith was away on a short scouting expedition one afternoon, he was fired upon by Indians. Alarmed, he hurried back to his camp only to find it in the hands of yelling red men. Fifteen of his followers lay dead, his furs were gone and the camp was in flames!

From his place of hiding, the dismayed leader could see that two of his men had escaped—at least they were not among the bleeding corpses strewn about the camp. After uttering a quick prayer for their safety, he hurried away from the ghastly scene with all the speed he could muster and headed for Fort Vancouver.

Early in the evening, a few days later, there was a commotion at Vancouver's gates. There the company's servants found an American, so tired and hungry that he was about to collapse. They had to carry him to the chief factor's residence where the good doctor received him warmly and fed him. This man turned out to be one of Jedediah Smith's party. He told Dr. McLoughlin the harrowing story of the massacre and expressed his belief that he was the only survivor.

But the chief factor, having heard something of the character of Jed Smith, had other ideas. It was his private opinion that this courageous Yankee would not give up without a fight. A searching party must be sent out immediately! What matter if Smith were a rival in trade—what matter if he had the effrontery to invade the sacred domain of the Hudson's Bay Company? He was a human being, he was in distress.

Immediately, he ordered several Indian runners to depart for the Umpqua Country and make a search for the missing trader but, even before the natives could get under way, Smith himself and another of his men appeared at the fort! They were made welcome by the good doctor who believed that his prayer had been answered. The story of Smith's miraculous escape aroused the chief factor's sympathy. He resolved to help the hapless American recover his stolen property.

The very next day he dispatched a strong party of

Hudson's Bay trappers to the Umpqua. Led by Alexander R. McLeod, they ran down the guilty Indians, punished them for their crime and returned to the fort with Smith's stock of furs. Dr. McLoughlin displayed his greatness of character by purchasing all of the American's skins at their market value of about \$5,500. Jedediah Smith, who remained as the doctor's guest through the winter, showed his gratitude by insisting that, in the future, he and his men would search for beaver east of the Rockies, in territory beyond the sway of the Hudson's Bay Company. The "White-Headed Eagle" had won his first bout with an American invader through kindness and generosity.

The fifteen-year period between 1825 and 1840 saw the rise and fall of the American fur trade in the Rockies. It was during this time that such men as General Ashley, Jedediah Smith, William L. Sublette, David Jackson and other Yankee operators enjoyed their heyday. Had the various factions worked more harmoniously together, had they known better how to deal with the Indians and had they been able to secure more solid financial backing, the story might have been different. As things turned out, they fell to fighting among themselves to such an extent that no real progress could be expected.

During these years the mountain men came into prominence. Among the most celebrated of these

dauntless characters were Thomas Fitzpatrick, Joe Meek, Jim Bridger and Kit Carson. As guides and trappers, they served the Americans well, but even their efforts could not change the final result. In 1831, the old American Fur Company began to encroach upon the trapping grounds of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company and the rivalry which developed proved costly to each. Then, too, competition between the Yankees already operating in the region was intensified by the appearance of two newcomers from the East, Captain B. L. E. Bonneville and Nathaniel J. Wyeth.

Captain Benjamin Louis Eulalie de Bonneville, for whom one of the two great dams on the Columbia River is named, was a picturesque soldier of fortune. Bonneville was born in France. His father, who had fallen into disfavor with the government, made secret arrangements for the boy to go to America with his mother. There he secured an appointment to the United States Military Academy at West Point. After his graduation, the youthful French-American army officer—proud of his newly won commission—served at various frontier posts. Inspired by the stories he heard, Bonneville got the urge to engage in the fur trade on his own and, especially, to investigate the Oregon Country.

Acting promptly on his whim, he secured a two-years' leave from the army and was fortunate enough to obtain financial backing for an extended expedition.

Bonneville and his men left Fort Osage, near Independence, Missouri, in the spring of the year 1832. Pushing westward, they made good progress on the march until they came to the Green River in the present state of Wyoming. There, the enterprising soldier—prompted more by romantic than by practical considerations—built a fort which he named for himself. Because of its high altitude and severe winter weather, the location was unfavorable for a permanent post. Abandoned before it was completed, Fort Bonneville was seldom called by its right name. The mountain men preferred to speak of it either as Fort Nonsense or as Bonneville's Folly!

The zealous captain made several attempts to trade in the Columbia region but all of them failed. In fairness to him, it should be admitted that his treatment of the Indians was above reproach and that strict military discipline was maintained in his camps as well as on the march. It is also true that he was extremely popular with his men.

Despite all of the things to be said in his favor, Bonneville was no match for his well-organized competitors, the Hudson's Bay men, who had "stripped" the country through which he traveled. There were simply no beaver left to be trapped! At Fort Walla Walla, the would-be fur trader found Pierre Pambrun, the officer in charge, genial and friendly as long as business was not mentioned. Whenever Bonneville



attempted to discuss the fur trade, however, the subject was immediately switched. At last, Pambrun was forced to tell his guest—flatly—that he could not outfit a rival. Apparently the French-American officer never reached Vancouver and never met Dr. McLoughlin.

Discouraged, he decided to return East with his small party. They made their way, with much suffering, over the Blue Mountains and back to their main depot in Wyoming, rich in experience but poor in furs. Bonneville had overstayed his leave from the army by a whole year but President Jackson, in recognition of his efforts, reinstated him. This colorful pathfinder's contributions to the knowledge of western geography were slight, though he did make several maps which proved interesting to the American public. Another adversary in trade had fallen before the power of the Hudson's Bay monopoly.

Like Bonneville, Nathaniel J. Wyeth—an enterprising Bostonian—wanted to get across the Rockies in the hope of trading in the rich Columbia Valley. He listened long and often to the harangues of Hall J. Kelley, an enthusiastic Boston schoolmaster who had made the colonization of the Oregon Country by Americans his religion.

Taking a leaf out of John Jacob Astor's book, Wyeth arranged to send a supply ship around Cape Horn and to travel overland himself with a band of adventurers. So practical was this New Englander

that he and his followers camped for some time on an island in Boston Harbor in order to harden themselves for the difficult journey ahead.

In the summer of 1832, Wyeth and his men reached Pierre's Hole, near Columbia waters, where dissension developed in their ranks. Before matters could be patched up, the party was attacked by treacherous Blackfeet and, as a result of this bloody experience, a number of the men concluded that life in the wilds was a bit too strong for their blood. Rid of these deserters, Wyeth pressed on, reaching Fort Vancouver in safety.

There, despite a cordial welcome by the gentlemen of the post, bad news awaited the Bostonian. He learned that the ship which was to have met him with supplies had been wrecked at sea. There was nothing left for him to do but return East and try again.

Undismayed, Wyeth raised another fund and dispatched a second ship around the Horn. On his second cross-country journey, in 1834, he built Fort Hall on the banks of the Snake River. At Vancouver he was well received as before and this time his ship sailed safely into the Columbia though it arrived too late to permit any serious trapping that season.

After unloading their stores from the vessel, Wyeth and his followers built a post on Sauvie Island, near Vancouver, which they called Fort William. To challenge the "White-Headed Eagle" at his very doorstep was an audacious act but the good doctor was not wor-

ried. He admired Wyeth's gameness but he knew that the Bostonian's chances for success were slight.

In vain the New Englanders tried to establish themselves in the Hudson's-Bay-dominated Oregon Country. They had counted on the salmon run in the Columbia but had arrived too late for it. During the winter, several expeditions were made in search of beaver but all of them resulted in failure. On one occasion, Wyeth himself led a band up the Deschutes River but four of his men were drowned. Everywhere there was discouragement. Everything went wrong.

Early in 1836, Dr. McLoughlin's newest competitor gave up the fight. Fort Hall was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company and Fort William was allowed to fall a victim to the storms, the rising waters of the Columbia and the fast-growing vines. Soon it was a complete ruin. Notwithstanding his bitter experience in the West, where he was thwarted at every turn by the highly-trained and well-organized British fur traders, Wyeth remained a staunch friend of the man who had engineered the campaign to ruin him. He and Dr. McLoughlin corresponded through many years, though the disillusioned Boston adventurer never again returned to the Oregon Country.

In the middle eighteen-thirties, it seemed inevitable that the British would hold much of the Pacific Northwest which lies today within the borders of the United States. So firmly were these Britishers entrenched, so powerfully were they organized and so skilled were



they in driving out competition, that the chances for a vigorous American advance appeared slim. But within a decade of this period, the British were to find themselves pushed out of all this rich territory—out of the present states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana.

There were two main reasons for this rapid and unexpected change. For one thing, the British, usually zealous colonizers, were not interested in making homes in the Oregon Country. Most of them were attached in one way or another to the mighty Hudson's Bay Company, and this mammoth concern wanted only to exploit the country for furs and for the agricultural products necessary to sustain its posts.

With the Yankees it was different. True, a few of them wanted to participate in the lucrative fur trade. They tried but in every instance they failed. Others, though—many others—wanted to come West in order to establish farms and homes. They wanted to add this rich and fertile section to their rapidly expanding nation. It was their determination, in large part, which carried the day.

The other reason, strange as it may seem, had to do with men's fashions in distant capitals. In the late years of the decade between 1830 and 1840, fastidious gentlemen of Paris, London and New York suddenly turned from beaver hats, which so long had been in style, to the newer headgear made from silk.

Within a very few years, the red men of the Rockies, who did not understand the fashion whims of the whites, were wondering why the traders were offering them fewer blankets and guns for furs. Oddly enough, the beaver was already growing scarce when the fall in prices came. At last the bottom was falling out of this once rich business. The American Fur Company broke up in 1840. The Hudson's Bay Company, with its highly diversified interests, was able to turn its activities into other fields. It is still a vast corporation today but, with the growing scarcity of the beaver, it lost its main reason for operating in the American portion of the Pacific Northwest.

*CHAPTER IX*



## *The Coming of the Missionaries*

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**T**he first citizens of the United States to enter the Pacific Northwest without any thought of personal gain were the missionaries. They wanted only to bring the Word of God to the Indians. The chief factor, who was himself a devout Christian, could not find it in his heart to block the efforts of these sincere workers even though he realized that hordes of settlers might follow in their wake to threaten Britain's claim.

Dr. McLoughlin had always held regular religious services at Fort Vancouver. From the earliest days at the post, he would read a portion of the Church of



England service to the assembled gentlemen on Sunday morning. Later in the day, he would read from his own French Bible to the laborers and voyageurs, practically all of whom were Roman Catholics. Having been baptized into this faith himself, he knew that the French Canadians would not be satisfied to pray in company with their Protestant superiors. With Dr. McLoughlin, it was always the spirit of worship which counted more heavily than the rigid letter of any one creed. It is scarcely surprising that he was so willing to help the Yankee pastors in their labors.

The story of how the missionaries happened to journey across the country to save the souls of red men is as dramatic as it is touching. Christianity was first introduced among the Flathead Indians by a wandering band of Iroquois which had picked up scattered bits of religious information from a Catholic mission near Montreal. As time passed, the Flatheads and Nez Percés grew more curious. They wanted to know more about the Bible—the “white man’s Book of Heaven”—and about the wonderful things it promised.

In 1831, four natives of these two tribes journeyed eastward and came eventually to the Missouri border where they hoped to find General William Clark of the old Lewis and Clark expedition. Two of the Indians were old men. They remembered the general and believed that he could put them in touch with the “black-

robes," their own expressive name for priests of the Catholic faith. If they could but find these reverend fathers, perhaps they could persuade them to come West and teach their people. So reasoned these high-minded tribesmen.

Clark received his native guests with enthusiasm. He lost no time in making them known to the Catholic clergy in St. Louis. As may be supposed, the arrival of the Indians created a great stir throughout the Middle West and East. Their thirst for Christian teaching aroused widespread sympathy.

The two old men of the visiting deputation were unable to stand the excitement of civilized surroundings. Both of them died during the winter, but not before they had been baptized into the Church. Although the other two were younger and stronger, one of them died on his way back to the Oregon Country. Only the fourth—the sole survivor of this remarkable quartet—lived to carry the inspiring story of his pilgrimage back to his own people. His subsequent fate is shrouded in mystery. We do not even know his name.

The effect of this strange visit was electric. The story soon spread throughout the United States and Catholics and Protestants alike became interested in carrying God's Word to the natives of the distant region beyond the Rocky Mountains. The urge to save souls became the watchword in religious circles. There was feverish activity in many cities but the Flatheads

and Nez Percés were not to get their "blackrobes" until later. Although the red men had journeyed East in quest of the Catholic faith, their call was to be answered by the Methodists.

The Reverend Jason Lee, a young elder of the Methodist Church, was the first of a long line of American missionaries to volunteer for service in the Far West. Tall and powerfully built, he was a man of strong purpose. Having resolved to minister to the spiritual needs of the Flatheads and Nez Percés, Lee secured the backing of his church organization and raised the necessary funds for a modest expedition.

In the early part of 1834, while Lee was completing plans for his tiny mission, Nathaniel Wyeth was making the necessary arrangements for his second dash to the Pacific. The enterprising missionary lost no time in applying to the would-be fur trader for permission to travel with his well-organized expedition. Not only was his request granted but he was also invited to send some of his supplies around Cape Horn on Wyeth's ship, the *May Dacre*. In addition to Jason Lee, the mission group included a nephew of the leader, the Reverend Daniel Lee, and several lay companions sympathetic to the cause.

Neither the hardships of the trail nor the rough talk of the fur traders disturbed the devout Methodist crusader. One doubts that he paid much attention to such trifles, so eager was he to reach his destination.

His sincerity of purpose, kindly disposition and high degree of personal bravery won him a place in the hearts of those with whom he traveled.

While the party was making its weary march across the sagebrush plains of Idaho, Lee noticed that a cow had fallen behind. As a boy he had lived on a farm in Canada. The poor beast needed to be milked, he saw, and he stopped to relieve her of her burden while the rest of the cavalcade moved ahead and out of sight.

Just as he was completing his task, a band of Indians came upon him. So stealthy had been their approach that Lee did not see them until they were very close. There was no chance to escape! Turning to face the red men, he said, half aloud, "Unless the Lord wills it otherwise, this cow moves not until her load is lightened." Perhaps he intended this as a prayer! At all events, the Indians turned out to be friendly Nez Percés who were glad to welcome the missionary and allow him to proceed.

At Fort Hall, Mr. Lee preached to a large assemblage of natives, fur traders and mountain men. So well did they receive his sermon that he was encouraged to hope that all of his efforts in the wild western country might prove equally successful. Unfortunately this was not to be the case.

At Fort Vancouver, the mission party was cordially welcomed by Dr. McLoughlin. The King of the Columbia appraised the newcomer and decided that he

liked him. In the quiet of the doctor's study, the two had a long talk. Jason Lee poured out his soul. He explained the nature of his proposed mission and told of his plans to minister to the Flatheads and Nez Percés.

The doctor was impressed by this straightforward story. He indicated his willingness to help but he could not endorse the suggested location for the mission. The Flatheads and Nez Percés were friendly, but other Indians living near them were not. He felt responsible for the safety of all white men living in his empire. It would be better, he argued, for the Methodists to settle in the Willamette Valley where a few French Canadians had already established homes and where the red men were held in check by the Hudson's Bay Company.

Dr. McLoughlin had another reason for insisting that Mr. Lee locate his mission south of the Columbia. The newcomer was a missionary, true enough, but he was also an American citizen. His very presence, in the valley, might induce other Americans to come West and establish homes. Would it not be safer to have him in that part of the territory which Great Britain did not expect to hold permanently? The doctor thought so but he kept such thoughts to himself!

Following the chief factor's advice, the Yankee missionary and his little band of workers established themselves on the east bank of the Willamette River about sixty miles south of Vancouver. Here, on French

Prairie—so named because several French Canadians had built homes there—the missionaries began the construction of a small building. Mr. Lee carved out the window sashes with his own pocketknife!

The men of the little mission were eager to begin their spiritual labors but they soon discovered that the Indians of the valley were in no mood, just then, to listen. Unfortunately the Methodists had arrived during the course of a deadly plague which had taken many native lives. From near-by villages the death wail could be heard day and night. It was not a promising time to attempt the saving of souls.

We can readily imagine how discouraging this first year on French Prairie must have been. Several Indian children, who had been left with the missionaries, died of fever. Naturally superstitious, the natives regarded these unfortunate events as evil omens. To them it seemed that the Great Spirit was displaying his disapproval by causing the death of their young and, as a consequence, the white men were blamed.

Undismayed by these initial setbacks, the missionaries worked on, but their efforts to Christianize the natives amounted to little. Very few were won to the cause. As the mission grew, Mr. Lee devoted less time to the Indians and more to the white settlers residing in the valley. Marriages were performed between the French Canadians and their common law wives and a few schools for the children were conducted. Addi-

tional buildings were erected, fields were plowed and larger herds of cattle were obtained. Eventually these men of God came to dwell exclusively on worldly matters.

Soon a new group of religious workers came out from the East to join the original party. Among them was an attractive young woman named Anna Maria Pittman, who became the wife of Jason Lee. The ceremony was performed in the open and in the presence of a large company by the leader's nephew, the Reverend Daniel Lee. Anna Lee died a year later, following her husband's departure for the East. Dr. McLoughlin, out of the kindness of his great heart, sent an Indian runner to carry the sad news to the missionary. He listened in silence but continued on his way.

Jason Lee's object in making the hazardous trek across the country was to awaken greater interest in his mission. His efforts in the East met with success. When he returned to the Oregon Country by water, in 1840, he brought a substantial number of new workers. With him, on the historic ship *Lausanne*, came a new wife, the former Lucy Thompson. Those who had buried the first Mrs. Lee were angry because they felt that the leader's hasty second marriage revealed a lack of respect for the memory of the woman they had grown to love.

But Jason Lee, the man of single purpose, went right on with the work of his mission. He seemed oblivious

to all criticism—unaware of the growing unrest among his followers. He was enjoying, then, the heyday of his brief career. He had already established a branch mission at The Dalles, on the Columbia, and now he hastened to build another at Nisqually, on Puget Sound. He moved his headquarters ten miles south to a new site where the city of Salem now stands. There an institute, which was later to become Willamette University, was founded. The Indians were almost forgotten. More and more the missionaries turned their attention to politics. Indeed they sent to Congress a memorial urging that the United States establish control over the Oregon Country.

It was about this time that Mr. Lee made his one great mistake. Years earlier Dr. McLoughlin had staked out a land claim near the present site of Oregon City. Later one of the members of the Methodist mission, the Reverend Alvin F. Waller, attempted to take over the doctor's claim and Jason Lee—with dire consequences—abetted him.

This bit of questionable judgment not only brought down upon him the wrath of the Hudson's Bay Company officials but stirred up bitter complaints among the church heads in the East. What business, they grumbled, had a missionary dabbling in such matters? In 1843, Mr. Lee started on his second homeward voyage by way of the Hawaiian Islands. There he was met



by a messenger who brought the painful news of his dismissal as head of the Methodist mission.

In the East, the fighting missionary boldly defended himself before his accusers. Although he was cleared, he soon developed a fatal illness and died without ever seeing the Pacific Northwest again. Strangely enough, Jason Lee's greatest service was not the saving of native souls but rather the awakening of interest in colonizing the Oregon Country!

The second mission to the Pacific Northwest was sponsored by the American Board, representing the Congregationalist, Presbyterian and Dutch Reformed churches. In 1835 this board sent out the Reverend Samuel Parker to make a study of the field. Parker, a scholarly man in his late fifties, induced Marcus Whitman, a young worker in the Presbyterian faith, to make the long journey with him.

In the Nez Percé country, the two missionaries—traveling with a party of trappers—met with a friendly and enthusiastic welcome. So eager were the natives to receive religious instruction that they persuaded Parker and Whitman to establish missions among their tribes. Mr. Parker decided to press on to the coast alone, after dispatching Dr. Whitman east for reinforcements. Familiarly known as the “plug-hat missionary,” Samuel Parker—always immaculately clad—seemed strangely out of place in the wild Indian country. Nevertheless, he became popular with the fur

traders and natives alike and Dr. McLoughlin, at Fort Vancouver, treated him with marked consideration.

The wearer of the plug hat spent the winter in the Pacific Northwest as the guest of the Hudson's Bay Company. He traveled extensively through the territory in search of adequate mission sites. He visited the Methodists, already in the field, and noted their lack of progress with the Indians. During his sojourn at Fort Vancouver, he was invited by the genial chief factor of the post to take a short ride on the *Beaver*, the first steamboat ever to ply the waters of the Columbia. It was a gala day for this was the little steamer's trial trip! The *Beaver* had come out from England under sail but, at Vancouver, had been equipped with engines. The "plug-hat missionary" was mightily impressed with this added bit of evidence that civilization had finally reached the Pacific.

Having proved to his own satisfaction that white men could venture safely into the interior, Mr. Parker selected several locations which he considered feasible for mission settlements. His work done at last, he left for home on the bark *Columbia*, delighted with the treatment he had received and surprised that his host refused to render a bill for his board.

Meanwhile Dr. Marcus Whitman and his beautiful bride, the golden-haired Narcissa, had organized a mission party in the East. By the first of May, 1836, they were waiting on the banks of the Missouri River to be

picked up by a passing steamboat. With them were the Reverend Henry H. Spalding and his wife, Eliza, as well as several other missionary pioneers. The steamboat, filled with trappers who had no sympathy for religious workers, passed by the landing without stopping. It was a cruel blow, but the determined missionaries could not think of turning back! So—day after day, week after week—they trudged on with their wagons and cattle, hoping to overtake the speeding trappers. At last they came upon these rough men of the plains whose prejudices melted when they realized how valiantly the pioneers had struggled to reach them. The long, weary cross-country dash was especially difficult for the women, but at least they had the satisfaction of establishing a record! Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding were the first white women ever to cross the Continental Divide of North America!

Nor was this the only record set by that famous expedition. The Whitmans' wagon was so cumbersome that it had to be abandoned, but the Spaldings' vehicle, after it had been converted into a two-wheeled cart, was driven as far as Fort Boise. No other vehicle on wheels had been brought so far along the trail. Eventually, after untold hardships, the little party reached Fort Vancouver.

As usual Dr. McLoughlin was on hand to extend a hearty welcome to the travel-weary missionaries. Especially popular was Narcissa Whitman with her lovely

singing voice and quiet charm. She spent a great deal of time with the Indian and half-breed wives of the Hudson's Bay officials and it irritated her no end that these loyal women were not permitted to participate in the social gatherings at the fort. During her brief stay, Narcissa Whitman persuaded the gentlemen of the post to ease their stringent regulations.

In the autumn of 1836 Dr. Whitman and the Reverend Mr. Spalding founded their missions. Whitman chose Waiilatpu, on the Walla Walla River, while Spalding selected Lapwai, on the Clearwater. Two modern cities stand quite near the sites of these pioneer settlements—Walla Walla, Washington, near Waiilatpu and Lewiston, Idaho, near Lapwai. As soon as they were reasonably well established at these locations, the missionaries returned to Fort Vancouver for their wives.

Almost immediately the two missions were buzzing with activity. Buildings were erected, fields were cultivated and friendly Indians were taught the rudiments of farming. Whitman and Spalding were more successful, in the early stages of their work with the natives, than the Methodists had been.

During these first years of religious effort, Indian schools were established and a small printing press was brought to the Lapwai mission from the Hawaiian Islands. It was the first press in the Oregon Country.

From its crude type Mr. Spalding ran off several copies of a primer in the Nez Percé language.

Tragedy struck early at Waiilatpu when the small daughter of Marcus and Narcissa Whitman was accidentally drowned in the Walla Walla River. The child had been born to the missionaries during their first winter in the West. It was a cruel blow—the loss of this lovely little girl of two.

Despite the encouraging beginnings at Waiilatpu and Lapwai, the work progressed slowly. There were setbacks and heartaches, not the least of which were caused by quarrels among the various religious workers. At last, in 1842, the American Board ordered the closing of the Whitman and Spalding missions.

Hasty conferences were called at both places. For a time it appeared that all of the hard work done by the missionaries would go for naught but at the eleventh hour the courageous Marcus Whitman resolved to cross the country in the dead of winter to fight for the missions. It turned out to be one of the bravest rides in history!

Dr. Whitman's errand was successful. He persuaded the American Board to continue the missions. On his return to the Pacific Northwest, he fell in with the covered wagon migration of 1843 and, acting as guide, led this great train through to the Columbia to set up still another record. Unwittingly, his kindness in assisting the pioneers was to cause his own death.

Until then the Indians who lived near the missions of the American Board had been friendly, helpful and eager to learn. But when they gazed for the first time upon this vast train of white-topped wagons, led by their trusted friend, Dr. Whitman, they became suspicious. They could accept the presence of a few helpless missionaries but not a whole army of white men. They grew, all too soon, to fear and to hate the civilized invaders.

Usually the first to invade missionary fields, the Roman Catholic fathers were the last to enter the Pacific Northwest. Dr. McLoughlin had much to do with their coming. In 1842, a number of years after the founding of the Methodist and Presbyterian missions, he returned to the Catholic faith into which as a child he had been baptized. Long before this, though, he had become concerned because there were no priests in the Oregon Country to minister to the French Canadian trappers and voyageurs, practically all of whom were Catholics. At length, the retired servants of the company, settled by then in the Willamette Valley, begged him to use his influence to secure missionaries from Canada.

When the good doctor believed wholeheartedly in a cause, he could be counted upon to work wonders. So, acting in the interests of his many Catholic subjects, he

appealed to the church authorities of Eastern Canada. His plea was answered promptly.

The first priests to arrive in the Oregon Country were the Reverend Francis Norbert Blanchet, the vicar-general, and his assistant, the Reverend Modeste Demers. There was great rejoicing when these two fathers reached Fort Vancouver in 1838, and it is a pity that Dr. McLoughlin—the one man responsible for their coming—was not there to greet them. The chief factor, just then, was attending to company business in faraway London.

Unlike the American missionaries, the pioneer Catholic priests in the early Oregon Country refused to take any part in political matters. That may be one of the reasons why they were so successful in their work. Another certainly is that the Catholic faith, with its color and pageantry, appealed mightily to the imaginative mind of the native red man.

The two priests worked diligently in their new fields, establishing missions, building small churches and holding numerous services. They were joined a little later by another famous missionary of their own faith, the Reverend P. J. DeSmet. This hard-working, hard-riding man of God settled in the Flathead country but his parish was virtually the whole interior.

Thus religion came to the Pacific Northwest.

*CHAPTER X*





## *Government Comes to the Valley*

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**B**efore the hustling years of the eighteen-thirties had run their course, three major factions were struggling to get the upper hand in the Oregon Country.

Most powerful of the three was the firmly established Hudson's Bay Company whose leaders so vigorously opposed all attempts to settle the country. Next in importance came the Methodist missionaries who, discouraged by their unsuccessful efforts to save native souls, soon turned to the more worldly business of publicizing the beautiful valley of the Willamette.

It must be remembered that these Methodists were

American citizens. They hoped to induce other Americans to come West and share their good fortune and they hoped, also, to interest the United States government in taking over the entire Pacific Northwest. So resultful were the efforts of these missionaries that within a few years their influence was challenged by the presence of a third faction—the independent settlers.

Among these contending forces a lively struggle for mastery was soon to develop. The Willamette Valley was to become the battleground, and local government the issue. Unlikely as such an outcome must have seemed in the middle thirties, the independent settlers were ultimately to win out. From the time they first presented themselves as a more or less united group, they insisted upon settling the valley—upon building permanent homes. They were as determined in their stand as were the Hudson's Bay men to oppose them.

These two factions, representing extreme points of view, were at loggerheads from the beginning. Eventually, the Methodist mission workers were to lose their identity as a separate party and to become fused with the independent settlers—a hodgepodge group of French Canadian farmers, Yankee adventurers and American mountain men.

The earliest white settlers in the Willamette Valley—and that means in the Pacific Northwest—were French Canadians whose terms of service with the

Hudson's Bay Company had expired. During the early years of their sway in the Oregon Country, the Hudson's Bay leaders refused to allow these retired servants to settle on farms. They feared that too many farmers would drive out the precious beaver and, with the industry then in its prime, they dared not take such a risk.

Later Governor Simpson and Dr. McLoughlin became more lenient. They permitted old Etienne Lucier, who had come out West with Astor's men, to cultivate a tract of land on the banks of the Willamette. Soon other retired company servants—French Canadians all—followed Lucier's example. The area in which they farmed came to be known as French Prairie. It was a flourishing little colony when Jason Lee and his followers established their mission close by.

These happy-go-lucky farmers were a contented and well-behaved lot. The good old doctor at Fort Vancouver helped them in many ways. He supplied them with seed, stock and implements and he built a warehouse at Champoeg where the products of their farms could be gathered after the annual harvest. Indeed, the Hudson's Bay Company was only too glad to purchase all of the grain raised by these enterprising French Canadians.

It is not surprising that they remained loyal to the doctor and to the British cause so long as there continued to be any point in doing so. When, eventually, these stout-hearted farmers were won over to the

American side, they made excellent citizens. Their descendants are a credit to the Pacific Northwest today. So, these one-time company servants formed one important block of the independent settlers.

Then there were the Yankee adventurers! Mostly they came out of curiosity but many remained to



establish homes and to become closely identified with the development of the section.

Not long after Jason Lee founded his mission, there arrived in the valley a band of Americans who had driven a herd of cattle up from California. Among them were two men whose names loom large in the story of the Oregon Country. One was Hall J. Kelley,

the eccentric Boston schoolmaster, who had made the Pacific Northwest his religion; and the other was Ewing Young, a hard-bitten old veteran of the trail.

Both of these newcomers were eager to meet Dr. McLoughlin. Kelley wanted to pay his respects to the man who had actually done the things he had only dreamed about, while Young hoped to establish commercial relations with the Hudson's Bay Company. Ewing Young was a famous character of the Old West—a man about whom a whole book could be written. For many years he had traded furs along the famous Santa Fé trail and he had covered, in his travels, vast sections of the Southwest. Kit Carson, so the story goes, had received his first training from this intrepid wanderer.

Kelley and Young, as ill-assorted a pair as fate has ever thrown together, had heard stories about the old doctor's warm hospitality. The New England scholar and the rough-hewn old trail blazer had every reason to expect the customary cordial reception. But alas, they were due for an unpleasant surprise when they reached the gates of Fort Vancouver.

Dr. McLoughlin met them, right enough, but there was fire in his eye! From the Mexican Governor of California he had received word that Young had stolen the cattle he had driven north. What effrontery—to attempt to sell stolen property to the King of the Columbia! Indeed, the "White-Headed Eagle" would

have no traffic with cattle thieves and so the two visitors were promptly told that they were not wanted at Vancouver.

Young was innocent of the charge which had been brought against him, but he could not make the incensed doctor believe his story. Perhaps it is not surprising that the word of the Mexican governor carried greater weight than did the word of the shabbily dressed old trader. The whole unfortunate affair, as it turned out, was based upon a misunderstanding. Some of the men who had journeyed north with Young had actually stolen cattle, but they had deserted the main party in the Siskiyou Mountains. Not only had the leader taken no part in the thievery but it is a safe guess that he ordered the culprits to go their way when he learned the truth about them. Undoubtedly the Mexican governor had judged the whole band by these few miscreants and had felt duty bound to inform the Hudson's Bay men at Vancouver.

Despite his seedy appearance and his rough manners, Ewing Young was a man of spirit. After protesting his innocence at great length and without result, he told Dr. McLoughlin exactly what he thought of him and of his company! Few men would have dared to address the dignified chief factor in such language! At last, after he had exhausted his picturesque supply of uncomplimentary terms, the enraged trader stormed away from Vancouver and headed for the Methodist

mission where he was accorded an equally chilly reception. Jason Lee had evidently been in close touch with the men at Vancouver.

As for poor Kelley, he had probably never even heard of the cattle thieves. Like a man in a trance, he had wanted one thing only—to get from California to the land of his dreams as quickly as possible. Young's northward march had supplied the chance. Nevertheless, he had to pay the price of associating with what Dr. McLoughlin considered bad company.

To make matters worse, Kelley was quite ill when he reached Vancouver. The chief factor would not allow him within the gates but his great heart would not permit any fellow human being to suffer. Accordingly, he gave the unhappy Bostonian a cabin among the French Canadians who lived outside the enclosure and saw to it that he was not only well fed but nursed back to health. Through the long winter Kelley brooded over the bad treatment he had received. Old Ewing Young sought him out merely to curse him for recommending such an unfriendly country. Poor Kelley's cup of woe was overflowing. He was happy enough to leave the following year when Dr. McLoughlin gave him passage back home by water.

Meanwhile, Ewing Young resolved to square accounts with the autocratic old doctor as well as with the sanctimonious Methodists. Having started a small farm across the Willamette from the struggling mis-



sion and having discovered that he could not obtain needed supplies from either the fur company or the Methodist settlement, he hit upon a unique plan to avenge his wrongs.

Promptly the ingenious old veteran of the trail announced that he intended to erect a still and sell whiskey to the whole countryside. He could scarcely have devised a more diabolical scheme. He knew only too well what liquor would do to the Indians and hence to the fur trade, and he knew, also, how the pious Methodists felt about drinking. Those who had heard tales about the headstrong newcomer realized that he would not hesitate to carry out his threat. Here was a cause to unite all factions against him. Something had to be done—and quickly.

Fortunately, Dr. McLoughlin—in the nick of time—received word from California to the effect that Young was not a cattle thief after all. He had about decided to offer the stormy settler a handsome apology when there arrived at Fort Vancouver an American naval officer who had been sent out by the government to investigate certain charges Hall J. Kelley had made after his return to the states. We can easily imagine what a strong case the irate and eloquent Kelley must have presented against the Britishers. At all events, Lieutenant William A. Slacum was expected to find out how far the Hudson's Bay monopoly had prevented the free settlement of the Pacific Northwest by Americans.

Slacum was a diplomat. He talked with Dr. McLoughlin, with the Methodists and with the stormy Ewing Young, but he spent most of his time listening. From the torrent of words turned loose upon him, he was able to form an accurate picture of conditions as they existed in the valley. There was some right and some wrong in each camp—of that he was certain.

The chief factor showered Lieutenant Slacum with all manner of courtesies. Lee and his followers begged him to secure action from the American government. Young filled him with hair-raising stories about the cruel treatment he had received. The lieutenant kept his head. Satisfied that the old fire-eater, Ewing Young, was the principal cause of valley friction, he promptly conceived a clever plan to ease the tension.

Learning that the settlers needed more cattle, he suggested that a group of them sail with him to California on his ship, the *Loriot*, and drive back—overland—a sizable herd. Slacum not only arranged to have the disgruntled Ewing Young named as leader of the party but induced both the Methodists and the Hudson's Bay men to contribute to the venture. It was a stroke of genius!

Young and his fellow settlers had a desperate experience, however, driving their cattle up the coast. It was necessary for them to pass through a wild country inhabited by hostile Indians. As if fighting these redskins were not enough, they had to blaze their own trails

most of the way. Discouraged by the hard going, by weary marches and hunger, the men were often tempted to rebel. Some of them even threatened to kill several head of cattle but they made this threat only once. Glowering at them, their redoubtable old leader raised his gun and thundered, "Kill at your peril!"

Young's achievement in driving this welcome herd safely through to the Willamette Valley made him a hero. He became the recognized leader of the independent settlers—a man whom the Methodists and Hudson's Bay men alike were forced to treat with respect. His farm prospered and, as time passed, he acquired large herds of stock. Indeed, he was soon to become one of the wealthiest men in the Pacific Northwest.

Even before the arrival of Ewing Young, other Yankee adventurers had come into the Oregon Country. A few had traveled West with Nathaniel J. Wyeth's first expedition of 1834, while others had joined up with him on his second dash two years later. By 1837, there were about forty-nine persons living in the Willamette Valley. This number was about equally divided between the mission workers and the private home seekers. So this second block of independent settlers—with trusty old Ewing Young at its head—began to make its presence felt.

Toward the close of the thirties, when the prices paid for beaver first began to fall, American traders in

the Rockies commenced to speculate in earnest about their future. For them, at least, the fur trade was a thing of the past. Most of these hardy mountain men had come into the wild Western country as mere boys. Many had married half-breed wives who would never fit into the smug society of the East. What ought they to do? Which way should they turn—eastward to settle in the Wyoming Country or westward to make their homes in the Pacific Northwest?

Rosy tales of life in the Oregon Country had reached the ears of these mountain men and some of them, no doubt, had already seen this land of promise with their own eyes. A few chose the bunch grass plains of Wyoming but by far the greater number decided to push westward either to California or to the Willamette Valley. Those who elected the valley formed the third and last block of the original independent settlers. Among these former mountain men were such sturdy future citizens as William M. Doughty, Joseph L. Meek, Joseph Gale, George W. Ebbert, Caleb Wilkins and Robert Newell.

Others, too, came to the Oregon Country during the reign of the "White-Headed Eagle." Soon after Dr. McLoughlin built his fort on the north bank of the Columbia, he was visited by two eminent scientists who arrived as passengers on the Hudson's Bay ship *William and Ann*. Dr. John Scouler and David Douglas were attracted to the Pacific empire through a common in-

terest in botany. Scouler remained only a short time but Douglas, a brilliant Scotchman of many talents, spent nearly ten years in seeking out the wonders of nature. The chief factor became a great admirer of David Douglas and made it possible for him to ramble in safety throughout the length and breadth of his empire. He led the natives to believe that the Scotch botanist was the "grass man" and, as such, "possessed great powers over flowers and shrubs." Thus awed, the red men dared not molest him. Flowers, plants and trees held a great fascination for him and the stately Douglas fir bears his name today.

Later, when Wyeth made his first overland journey, there traveled with him a pair of American scientists—Thomas Nuttall, a botanist, and J. K. Townsend, an authority on birds. These men, like Douglas, roamed the countryside and wrote scholarly reports on their observations. Not only did these writings advance the cause of science but, in addition, they served to keep the Pacific Northwest alive in the minds of Americans back East.

During all this time, both Great Britain and the United States maintained a lively official interest in the Oregon Country. Since the region was jointly occupied, British authorities found it necessary to make frequent visits in order to assure their government that Uncle Sam was playing fair. The United States, too, sent its representatives to investigate British activity.

Lieutenant Slacum was one of these, and Commodore Charles Wilkes was to follow him on a similar errand a few years later. All of these official visitors made extensive reports to their respective governments.

Russians, Spaniards and Frenchmen became curious about affairs along the Columbia in spite of the fact that their governments no longer possessed any claim to the territory. Nevertheless, in the vain hope of establishing trading posts in the Oregon Country and to the great annoyance of the Hudson's Bay men, official representatives of these nations continued to prowl about. One such visitor was Eugen Duflot de Mofras of the French embassy in Mexico, who called at Fort Vancouver and toured the Willamette Valley in 1841. He was mightily impressed by everything he saw, and he left the section with enthusiastic memories of Dr. McLoughlin and the French Canadian settlers. De Mofras went so far as to express the hope that Oregon might set itself up as an independent country—a suggestion which must have worried the Britishers no end. There were other callers—government agents, travelers and mere curiosity seekers.

After Ewing Young had safely brought his large band of cattle over the mountains from California, the British grew more and more alarmed. Then, if not before, the Yankee settlers were established on a self-supporting basis. What could be done to meet this growing

threat? Perhaps it might not be too late to take a leaf out of the book of these hard-driving Americans—to colonize the whole country with British subjects and overwhelm the Yankees in point of numbers. Yes, if only British settlers in the Pacific Northwest could outnumber the Americans, then Great Britain might secure a sounder claim to the whole region. It was a last-minute gamble but it was worth taking.

Accordingly, the Hudson's Bay Company began to work feverishly in the hope of attracting settlers from Canada. These efforts did not bear fruit until the fall of 1841 when there arrived a train of emigrants from the Red River Colony of Central Canada. Twenty-three families located north of the Columbia in the Cowlitz River Valley but, the very next year, a number of them moved southward to join the growing Willamette community. The British plan had been conceived too late. Before further immigrations from Canada could be arranged, momentous events in the valley were to hasten final settlement of the old dispute between John Bull and Uncle Sam.

In the year 1840—the same year in which the Methodists welcomed a substantial reinforcement to their mission—Joel Walker with his wife and five children crossed the plains to establish a home in the Oregon Country. Walker was the first typical pioneer, the first head of an American family to come West for the sole purpose of settling the land. His brave overland jour-

ney, undertaken in the certain knowledge of unbelievable hardships, set the pace for a series of mighty migrations to follow. A few more people arrived in the valley during 1841 but the first real migration came in 1842.

The leader of this substantial party was Dr. Elijah White, who had been one of Jason Lee's original mission workers. A serious disagreement between the two had resulted in White's return to the East where he had managed to get himself appointed to the post of Indian agent. Anxious to return to the Pacific Northwest but unwilling to make the long trip alone, the ambitious and none-too-popular former mission worker organized a large party of pioneers and fired them with enthusiasm for the new country.

Soon after the cavalcade got under way, discord developed to such an extent that White struck out ahead with one faction, while Lansford W. Hastings followed more leisurely with the other. After experiencing the customary discouragements of the trail, the one hundred and twelve persons who comprised the party reached the Willamette Valley in safety, although they had to abandon some of their wagons at Fort Laramie and the rest at Fort Hall. Some came down the Columbia in boats while others struggled overland from The Dalles to Oregon City over a trail which carried them close to Mt. Hood.

Dr. McLoughlin was kindness itself to these early



pioneers as well as to those who followed them in subsequent years. Not a few of them would have perished but for the chief factor's Christian charity. Not only did he give these half-clothed and half-starved colonists the supplies they needed so sorely, but he also helped them to negotiate the last stages of their long journey.

In acting thus, the good doctor was quietly disregarding the wishes of his company. He simply could not stand to see human beings suffer while he had it in his power to help them. None the less, his insistence upon following the dictates of his own conscience was eventually to force his resignation from the Hudson's Bay Company.

With the arrival of the migration of 1842, the Willamette Valley, with its various factions of independent settlers, had become a hustling community. Up to that time, the only force capable of maintaining law and order had been the Hudson's Bay Company, and one can imagine how it must have irritated the Yankee valley dwellers to bow to that authority. These rough and ready farmers believed that the time had come for them to establish a government of their own. They were hungry for power and there were sound reasons why they should have it.

For one thing, the increase in white population was gradually creating a scarcity of food and game for the Indians. Hitherto honest and well-behaved red men were beginning to steal and in other ways to become

troublesome. Some sort of common protection against them seemed imperative. Then, too, there was no provision for dealing with whatever crime might spring up among the valley residents themselves. They all seemed law-abiding but, with so many strangers, one never knew.

Sentiment in favor of organization was widespread, but something was needed to fan the smoldering coals into flame. That something was provided by the death of Ewing Young in 1841. The veteran trader had left a substantial fortune in stock but he had neglected to make a will. Here was a cause around which all of the settlers could rally, for certainly the problem of disposing of Young's estate called for some kind of administrative authority. Shortly after the funeral, a meeting was held at the Methodist mission, but little came of it.

Two long years were to pass before any real progress was made. In the interim, numerous councils were called and various attempts were made to interest the American government in extending its sway to the Oregon Country. These efforts came to naught. The farmers could not agree upon a plan, and the government in Washington could not be aroused. Another factor which delayed action was the attitude of the Hudson's Bay Company. Dr. McLoughlin realized that some of the Americans were suspicious of his company and, as a consequence, he feared what might hap-

pen if their plans for organization were realized. Threats of various kinds had reached his ears! The old doctor, for all his kindness, was only human, so he did what he could to block the program by talking against it to his old employees, the French Canadian farmers. Some of them, at least, would have to be won over before a local government could be formed.

Early in 1843, it became apparent that the movement could not be stopped. Organization was in the air. Oregon City, then called Willamette Falls, was the principal settlement of the valley, and there a debating society was formed which proved highly popular. By encouraging familiarity with legal and political matters, the debates at Willamette Falls served to hasten a demand for government. Still, though, the French Canadian group remained the chief obstacle.

Finally a way was found to interest these former Hudson's Bay servants, unwittingly, in the project so dear to the hearts of the Americans. Wolves, cougars and other wild beasts had been making alarming inroads on cattle in various parts of the valley. Here was a dilemma as certain to worry the French Canadians as their Yankee neighbors. A new series of meetings was called for the purpose of discussing this latest menace and these conclaves, famous in Pacific Northwest history, were known as the "Wolf Meetings."

Toward the close of one of these sessions, W. H. Gray, who had left the Whitman mission to join the

Methodists, sprang up. In a burst of oratory, he insisted that protection from human enemies was far more important than protection from wild animals. His enthusiasm fired the crowd. Resolutions were drawn up and it was agreed to vote upon them at a big meeting called for the second of May at Champoeg.

There, on the appointed day, the settlers—mission workers, former mountain men and ex-Hudson's Bay servants—came together to make history. Only about half of the Americans in the valley put in an appearance, but the French Canadians turned out in force. The vote was certain to be close since, despite the "Wolf Meetings," only a few of the Canadians had been won over.

No building in the whole Willamette Valley was large enough to house the gathering, so the settlers assembled outside the Hudson's Bay Company's grain warehouse along the banks of the river. A motion to accept the resolution was lost but, following another motion for a division on the question of organization, there was so much confusion that it was impossible to determine the vote. Then it was that old Joe Meek, the colorful mountain man, stepped forward. "Who's for a divide?" he bellowed in a voice that all could hear. "All in favor of the report and of an organization follow me!"

The story goes that all of the Americans and two French Canadians followed Meek—enough to carry

the day by a narrow margin. Those on the losing side left the scene immediately, while the winners set about, as best they could, to organize what was to become known as the Provisional Government.

A. E. Wilson was made Judge; G. W. LeBreton, Clerk; J. L. Meek, Sheriff; and W. H. Willson, Treasurer. There were rough days ahead for the primitive government but eventually, after numerous changes, it was to win to its side not only the rest of the French Canadians but even the Hudson's Bay men at Vancouver.

In the end the valley settlers had triumphed! May 2, 1843, lives as one of the great days of Northwest American history!

*CHAPTER XI*



## *The Yankees Take Over*

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**H**ard times hit the Mississippi Valley just before the dawn of the forties. The struggling farmers living there hoped that each succeeding year would bring relief but, as time passed, conditions only grew worse. It was not easy to get crops to centers where they could be sold profitably. Many of the settlements were visited by severe floods and sickness became prevalent. So discouraged were these farmers, by the spring of 1842, that Oregon seemed a paradise worth reaching at any cost.

Trappers, traders and explorers brought back glowing reports of the country on the North Pacific. They told the despairing people of the Middle West about



the wonderful crops that could be raised in the Willamette Valley, about the seaports from which produce could be shipped to the Orient at a profit and, most inviting of all, about the matchless climate. The missionaries and settlers already established in the Pacific Northwest sent word to their families, urging them to come West. They painted a rosy picture, but little persuasion was needed!

Along the whole frontier, "On to Oregon" became the watchword. Rumors were spread—rumors to the effect that the United States government intended to take over the Pacific Northwest and that there would be free land for all if only the race with Great Britain could be won. Orators took the stump in countless communities. Very cleverly, they appealed to patriotic instincts as well as to self-interest and everywhere extensive plans were made to cross the country. Emigrating societies were formed in Ohio, Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Missouri and Kentucky as well as in states as far east as Pennsylvania and Massachusetts. Anything, reasoned the disgruntled victims of "Oregon fever," would be preferable to what they had.

The great migration of 1843 grew out of one of these societies. It was organized by Peter H. Burnett, who was later to take an active part in Pacific Northwest politics and who, later still, was to become the first governor of California. Marcus Whitman had just completed his important errand in the East and was on

hand to help guide this substantial caravan. His presence in the Mississippi Valley, at that particular time, proved a powerful magnet for already his name had become magic. Hundreds of recruits answered Mr. Burnett's call, so that when the party was ready for departure in May, it numbered nearly a thousand persons.

Starting from Independence, Missouri, the wagon train followed the old Santa Fé trail for about forty miles. There the eager pioneers found a signboard marked "Road to Oregon." On they trudged—mile after weary mile—over the old trail which had been blazed by Wyeth and Bonneville. At Fort Laramie the travelers rested and repaired their wagons but they didn't like the place. They were charged a dollar for a pint of flour!

Leaving the plains at last, the train rumbled on through mountainous country—through the rugged valley of the North Platte to a welcome camp on Deer Creek where another long stop was made. Many more days of hard travel brought the emigrants to one of the most famous landmarks of the Oregon Trail, Independence Rock. Here the pioneers of 1843—like the thousands who were to follow them—stopped to inscribe their names on the huge column. Next they came to Devil's Gate, a gap in a massive granite ridge through which the Sweetwater flows. In following the trail, the determined home seekers found it necessary

to cross this picturesque stream at several points. Finally, the wagons reached the top of the mountains at South Pass, 7,500 feet above sea level.

Once over the summit, the trail turned southward and the emigrants had to pass through dry, barren wastes as far as Green River. Over this unpleasant stretch they endured heat and blinding dust until they reached Fort Bridger, a welcome haven which had been established that very year by the famous guide, Jim Bridger. Beautifully situated in the valley of a rushing mountain stream, it had been built especially to provide a place of rest for the overland travelers.

The stout old wagons were making progress but still they had covered only half the distance! Tired but undismayed, the colonists pressed on down the Bear River Valley to Fort Hall on the Snake. From this far-famed old station, where the first of the wagons were abandoned, they continued on to the Hudson's Bay post at Fort Boise, through the beautiful Grande Ronde Valley and then into the Blue Mountains. Once across these difficult heights, the pioneers of '43 followed the Umatilla River to the Columbia upon whose broad expanse they were taken down to Vancouver on boats loaned by the fur company.

Such was the Oregon Trail—the route followed by the great wagon train of 1843 and by the many trains which came rolling along in subsequent years. The hardships of these courageous pioneers have been re-

counted time and again in song and story. On this long trek of two thousand miles, the determined emigrants found civilization only at four isolated trading posts—elsewhere they found parched plains, icy mountains, steep valleys, treacherous streams and, often, hostile Indians.

Not all of these brave people knew how to equip themselves for the long journey. Many of them started with more personal property than they could carry with the result that furniture, stoves, bedding and even provisions were often cast aside. Abandoned wagons were frequently found along the prairie wastes, as were the skeletons of cattle and human beings who had fallen on the march—grim reminders for those to come later. Although the emigrants always buried their dead, the graves of these unfortunates were, from time to time, molested by prowling wolves and Indians.

It was not all misery, though—this memorable dash across America. There were good times along the trail—times when, after the evening meal in camp, great fires were built and violins, flutes and accordions were brought out. More enthusiastic than talented, these rustic musicians would sail into *Old Zip Coon*, *Sweet Betsy from Pike*, *Old Dan Tucker* and other favorite tunes of the early forties while the crowds around the roaring fires would soon catch up the words. Then, later, the music would hit a faster tempo! The young people would dance while their parents would look on

in admiration, swap stories or quietly retire to dream of the paradise they were seeking. To the prowling Indians near by, they must have seemed a strange lot—these hardy souls of '43.

At the end of the weary march there was always Dr. McLoughlin, ready and eager to aid the emigrants. Although he represented a company which insisted that settlers keep out, he stood resolutely against suffering and starvation. He helped these discouraged people in many ways—by loans of food, clothing, boats and cattle, but most of all, we suspect, by his own splendid example of courage.

When the canoes bearing the vanguard of this first great migration came into sight, the old doctor hurried down to the river bank to greet them. Close by stood a little band of Indians and, as the chief factor came nearer, he heard one of them cry out in a loud voice, "It is good for us to kill these people." Noting their warlike countenances and realizing that they were sounding him out in the hope of receiving encouragement, the "White-Headed Eagle" rushed upon them. "Who is the dog that says it is a good thing to kill the Americans?" he thundered. Instantly the red men were cowed for they dared not cross the greatest of all their chiefs! Thanks to the doctor, the Yankees were safe!

It is well that they had such a good friend for many were destitute by the time they reached the Willamette Valley. True enough, some of the more prosperous

among the immigrants helped the less fortunate, and white settlers already established in the valley assisted others. With a less generous leader in charge at Vancouver, though, the human suffering would have been incalculable.

Since the arrival of this great party more than doubled the white population of the region, a heavy burden was imposed upon its none too plentiful resources. Happily, most of the newcomers had come through their ordeal in good health. In one way or another, they managed to get through the winter. Then, with the arrival of a typical Oregon spring—glorious beyond description—their spirits rose and they were able to take their places in a vigorous new country. Soon they scattered over the valley, acquiring land claims and building cabins for themselves and their families.

Year after year, the wagon trains lumbered over the plains and across the mountains to the Pacific Northwest. The road was opened for wagons all the way to the Columbia by the large emigration we have just described. The parties were larger some years than others but, between 1843 and 1852, more than fifteen thousand eager home seekers reached the Oregon Country. No one can say how many fell by the wayside! Broad rolling wheels cut so deeply into the Oregon Trail that, in a few places, the furrows can be seen to this day.

Most of the early covered wagon pioneers chose the

fertile valley of the Willamette, for this section had been widely praised and publicized by the Americans already living there. Naturally, they urged their friends among the newcomers to join them. Then, too, these incoming settlers frequently asked the Hudson's Bay men for advice. Still hoping to fix the international boundary on the line of the Columbia, the British fur traders coaxed the Yankee colonists to locate in the Willamette Valley. They claimed, quite truthfully, that no American had yet ventured to settle in the wilds north of the Columbia.

Nevertheless, several members of the 1844 immigration defied the wishes of the company and established themselves north of the Columbia near the present city of Tumwater, Washington. From 1844 onward, other colonists chose the northern region so that it, like the Willamette Valley, came ultimately to be settled by Americans. Later still, after the Indian troubles following the Whitman massacre had been settled, pioneers ventured into the interior to build their homes.

During the first half of the forties, many towns were laid out by the ambitious settlers but most of them failed to progress beyond the dream stage. A few took hold and grew—towns like Salem, which was founded by W. H. Willson and his fellow Methodists; Eugene, McMinnville, Hillsboro and Portland.

The story of how Portland got its name is typical of the gambling spirit of the pioneers. It seems that the

original tract of 640 acres on the west bank of the Willamette River, the business district of the present Oregon metropolis, was claimed in 1844 by William Overton, a tall Tennessean. The filing fee charged by the Provisional Government was twenty-five cents, but Overton, who hadn't even that much, offered a half interest to his friend from Boston, Asa L. Lovejoy, if he would pay the needed quarter.

Overton soon lost interest in the project and disposed of his share to Francis W. Pettygrove, a merchant from Portland, Maine. When the question of naming the new town arose, Lovejoy wanted to call it





Boston but Pettygrove, equally loyal to his home in Maine, held out for Portland. They settled the matter by tossing a coin. Pettygrove won and that is why there are two major Portlands in America today!

Meanwhile, the Provisional Government in the Willamette Valley was struggling against handicaps. That it survived at all is greatly to its credit. It needed revenue to carry on its work but taxes were hard to collect. People were merely asked to pay—there was no authority strong enough to force them. Naturally, they were slow to come forward with their hard-earned dollars.

Furthermore, the Hudson's Bay Company not only refused to lend its support to the infant government but continued to warn the French Canadian settlers against joining. A few additional laws were passed and several more officers were elected but, during the first year of its existence, the Provisional Government remained a ruling power in name only.

The newly arrived covered wagon pioneers of 1843 decided that the political situation in the valley was not to their liking. In the main, they were headstrong men without marked prejudices. They belonged to a variety of religious denominations and, as a consequence, most of them resented the hold which the Methodist mission had acquired. Missionaries were all right in their place but these Methodists—some of them at least—were too grasping. They had taken large land claims

in the name of their mission and the newcomers didn't like it. Indeed, they were not surprised to discover that they had much more in common with the independent American settlers, the happy-go-lucky French Canadians and even the British Hudson's Bay men! They soon decided to take matters into their own hands and form a government strong enough to be worthy of the name.

With crusading zeal, the valley's new residents rolled up their sleeves and settled down to work. They took over the legislative committee, lock, stock and barrel, and, once in the saddle, they suggested a new plan of government which called for a governor, a house of representatives and more effective courts. Taxes were to be levied by the representatives and a means of collecting them was to be provided. The wings of the mission party were clipped when an old law which granted a township to each mission, was removed from the books.

A prime mover in this project was Jesse Applegate, one of the leading members of the 1843 train. He and his fellow immigrants made friends with the French Canadians and urged them to join the new government without further delay. These overtures were pleasing to Dr. McLoughlin who finally consented to lend the support of his company when Jesse Applegate appealed directly to him. At last, all factions were united.

In a sense, the good doctor's hand was forced, for no

longer was he the undisputed king of the Columbia. He was fearful that further resistance against the local government on his part might result in bloodshed. Despite his many acts of kindness toward the newcomers in the valley, some of them resented him bitterly—not for himself, of course, but for the autocratic power he represented. It was a case of the “haves” and the “have nots.”

A few of the wilder spirits among the settlers had even talked of burning Fort Vancouver, and we can readily believe that rumors of such threats had a way of reaching the chief factor quickly. A further source of worry to the doctor was the fact that upwards of \$30,000 in loans had been advanced to the valley people by the company with only their good faith as security. With so much at stake, it is no wonder that he was concerned!

In 1845, the new government was approved by a vote of the settlers who promptly elected George Abernethy, a merchant of Willamette Falls, their first governor. Dr. McLoughlin and his lieutenant, James Douglas, kept their word and joined the movement on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company. They agreed to pay taxes and, in all other ways, to support the new venture.

Despite his action, the doctor continued to worry about the lawless characters who had arrived with the latest Yankee migrations. His decision to join forces with the revitalized government appealed to him as the

only safe course to follow but privately he felt compelled to take even further steps for the protection of the Hudson's Bay interests. He sincerely believed that skirmishes between his men and the settlers might lead to war between Great Britain and the United States—an outcome he wanted to avoid at all costs.

Accordingly, the harassed chief factor appealed to the British government to protect the fort and its outlying property against the undesirable element in the valley. Eventually a single British warship was dispatched to the Columbia. During the long and anxious wait for this vessel to arrive, nothing untoward happened. When the man-of-war finally put in an appearance at Fort Vancouver, the good doctor was probably as embarrassed as the settlers were frightened!

Slowly but surely the Provisional Government was creating a semblance of order. Its laws were respected by the citizens and its officers were enabled to enforce them. A jail was built at Willamette Falls, which had been established as the capital, and regulations were adopted to control the liquor traffic.

One great problem was what to use for money. At first the principal medium of exchange was either beaver skins or wheat but, after the discovery of gold in California, gold dust found its way into the valley. A pinch of this precious dust counted as a dollar! So awkward was the system that the legislature, in 1849, voted to install a mint at Willamette Falls which, by then, had become Oregon City. W. H. Willson was

elected melter and coiner but failed to serve because the law never became operative.

Coins, however, were minted by a private company. They were issued in five and ten dollar gold pieces, and actually contained more of the yellow metal than did the coins issued in the same denominations by the United States government! Famous in the history of the Pacific Northwest, this medium of exchange was called "beaver money" because each piece bore the image of the little animal which first brought white men into the territory. After the United States took over the Pacific Northwest, "beaver money" became illegal but, during its short life, it proved a great convenience to the settlers.

The Provisional Government worked smoothly until Congress decided to admit Oregon as a territory of the United States in 1848.

Oregon, as the entire Pacific Northwest was known to the American people in the early days, had always had its champions in Washington—men who believed that the area discovered by Robert Gray should be taken over by the United States government. Thomas Jefferson, John Floyd of Virginia, Henry Clay, Andrew Jackson and others had, in various ways, displayed some interest in the Oregon Country. But the region was remote, it must be remembered, and the unsettled boundary issue always provided a ready excuse to delay official action.

The Oregon question was first brought before Con-

gress in 1820 when John Floyd proposed that the Columbia River region be occupied. Though nothing came of his proposal, it was at least a beginning. Much later, Jason Lee and his followers sent a petition to Congress urging that the Federal government take over the Willamette Valley. This was the first of many appeals to be dispatched from the settlers themselves. From then on, the pot was kept boiling both in Oregon and in Congress.

After several futile attempts to interest his colleagues in legislation favorable to Oregon, Floyd finally introduced a bill which called for the establishment of a territorial government and the granting to each settler of a tract of land. This bill was presented way back in 1824, when there were no settlers, but Floyd believed that favorable action on his proposal would shortly attract them. The House of Representatives supported the Virginian but Thomas H. Benton, of Missouri, who was to become Oregon's greatest champion in Congress, failed to win sufficient votes in the Senate. Opposition to the bill was based on the ground that it violated the treaty of joint occupation. Always it was this treaty which blocked the path!

Negotiations between the two governments continued for many years. There were discussions in London as well as in Washington, and some of the leading statesmen of both nations took part in them. At times a solution seemed possible, but more often the powers found themselves as far apart as ever.

The British were more modest in their demands—they were willing to accept the Columbia River as the boundary. The Yankees, though, were ambitious. Their claims varied from time to time but, in their wildest moments, they held out for all the territory up to the line of  $54^{\circ} 40'$ . That was the boundary which had been settled by treaty between the United States and Russia in 1824—a line which marked the northern limits of the old Oregon Country. As a basis for a claim against Great Britain, it was ridiculous. It amounted exactly to asking for everything!

Another outstanding champion of Oregon was Senator Lewis F. Linn. Like Benton, he was also from Missouri. Between 1838 and 1841, Linn introduced a new series of bills in the Senate which revived the question of occupying Oregon. These bills, like those before them, failed—and for the same reason.

The failure of the Linn bills, as well as the publicity given to the various diplomatic exchanges between the United States and Great Britain, aroused American public opinion to a high pitch. In 1844, the Democratic Convention nominated James K. Polk for the presidency and adopted, as one of the campaign slogans, "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!" Feeling against England ran high.

Following his election, Polk himself became an ardent champion of Oregon. He advocated laws and an Indian agency for the region, as well as a line of forts running from the Missouri to the Rockies. He even

recommended that the troublesome treaty of joint occupation be terminated. This could be done legally by the giving of a year's notice. Although war with Mexico had broken out, Congress debated the Oregon issue with renewed spirit. Through a joint resolution, the treaty of 1827 was terminated and notice was forwarded to London. It looked for a time as if there might be trouble with Great Britain but fortunately—almost miraculously—the Oregon question was settled, suddenly and peacefully.

In June, 1846, Lord Aberdeen, the British Foreign Secretary, proposed a treaty making the 49th parallel the boundary to the sea, leaving England all of Vancouver Island, reserving free navigation for her ships in the Columbia and protecting the property rights of the Hudson's Bay Company. President Polk favored these terms. He signed the new treaty and returned it to the Senate, where it was ratified on June 15. Thus quietly ended a long and bitter struggle.

Although the way was open for the taking over of Oregon without further delay, the Provisional Government was in no mood to risk failure. The settlers had been put off so many times that now, with victory within their grasp, they determined to clinch it. Additional memorials were rushed to Congress, complaining of neglect and describing the settlers' inability to deal with the Indians and with criminals. Acting on his own responsibility, Governor Abernethy sent J. Quinn Thornton to Washington to plead, in person,



for recognition. He was courteously received and was even invited to sit in the Senate.

Thornton left Oregon by sea before the Whitman massacre. This horrible atrocity caused so much alarm in the Pacific Northwest that Joe Meek, the old mountain man and the Provisional Government's sheriff, was persuaded to carry the news overland to the nation's capital and to plead for help against the Indians. Meek arrived in Washington, after a hair-raising dash through hostile Indian country, only a few days after Thornton had put in an appearance. It would be hard to imagine two men with less in common than Thornton and Meek, but so well did they coordinate their work that President Polk and Congress were quickly persuaded to take action.

On May 29, 1848, the President laid before Congress a special message in which he urged the immediate organization of a territorial government. Eloquently, Mr. Polk—quoting from the memorial Joe Meek had carried East—pointed out the colonists' dire need of federal aid.

In Congress, the debates were long-drawn-out and bitter—not because there was any objection to the taking over of Oregon, but because the Oregon bill contained an anti-slavery clause. The Southern senators and representatives wanted to see slavery permitted in the new territory, so they opposed the measure with all their might. In the end, they lost.

Finally, the bill creating Oregon Territory was passed about eight o'clock on Sunday morning, August 13, 1848—after a stormy all-night session. President Polk signed it within a few hours of its passage. Vast was the extent of the newly created Territory! It included all of the present states of Oregon, Washington and Idaho as well as the western portions of Montana and Wyoming!

So eager was the President to have the territorial government fully organized before the expiration of his term on March 4, the following year, that he appointed Meek United States Marshal on the spot and delegated him to carry the Governor's commission to General Joseph Lane, of Indiana.

General Lane, who had distinguished himself in the war with Mexico, promptly accepted the commission and made his plans to depart for Oregon. With Meek and a party numbering fifty-five, the general started overland from Leavenworth on September 10, via the southern route. So large was the number of desertions along the way that only the new governor, Joe Meek and five others reached San Pedro in California. From there, they proceeded northward by boat, reaching Oregon City on March 2, 1849. The journey had proved a winning race against time, for President Polk had greatly desired that the new Territory be organized in his administration. Happily, General Lane issued his proclamation as governor on March 3, the

President's last day in office. The long, hard fight had been won—Oregon was safe, at last, within the Union.

Even before the final disposition of the boundary dispute, Governor Simpson of the Hudson's Bay Company decided to transfer most of the equipment from Fort Vancouver to Fort Victoria on Vancouver Island—safely within British territory. This act, perhaps, made it easier for England to accept a compromise in the boundary settlement. Actually, Simpson made no great sacrifice, for the Columbia post had ceased to be important as a headquarters depot for the fur trade.

As for Dr. McLoughlin, his humane policies toward the American settlers had caused so much unfavorable comment in London that he retired from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1846. Immediately he moved to Oregon City, eager to become an American citizen and to spend the rest of his life among the people he had befriended.

Unfortunately, the good man's last years were destined to be unhappy ones. The land claim he had staked out, years earlier, was taken away from him by an act of Congress, passed soon after the Territory was created, and many of the old company debts he had been forced to assume remained unpaid.

Nevertheless, he lived on until 1857—a respected member of the growing American community. With his death, an epoch in the story of the Pacific Northwest came to a close.

*CHAPTER XII*



## *Change*

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**E**ven before Oregon became a Territory of the United States, the resourceful settlers demonstrated their ability to take care of themselves. They fought and won a war.

On November 29, 1847, the Cayuse Indians in the Umatilla Valley rose against the remote Whitman mission and massacred the missionary, his wife and seven others. Five more mission workers were murdered within the next few days. A group of women and children were held as prisoners.

Up to this time the conflict between the white settlers and the Indians had been sporadic and intermit-

tent. Dr. McLoughlin had dealt out swift and certain punishment for any hostile outbreak. Now the Provisional Government was in control and the red men felt less in awe of the new authority. At the same time their wrath against the white settlers was growing. At first the Indians around the mission settlements had been friendly, helpful and eager to learn. But since 1843, when Dr. Whitman had guided the first great covered wagon migration into the Oregon Country, the Indians had watched new wagon trains lumber down the slope of the Blue Mountains every year. Soon, they saw, there would be no part of this great country left to themselves. So at last they turned in primitive fury upon the only white people at hand.

The reaction of the settlers was equally quick and furious. The instinct of self-preservation, and the desire for revenge, fought on both sides. It was becoming more and more apparent that the two peoples could not live side by side.

In the beginning it was the Hudson's Bay men who acted most promptly to put down the uprising. News of the massacre reached the Spalding mission in time for the missionary to escape with his family and other mission workers, and with the help of the friendly Nez Percé Indians, to reach Fort Vancouver. James Douglas, in charge of the Hudson's Bay post there, immediately dispatched Peter Skene Ogden to the scene of the massacre.

Ogden was an old hand at dealing with Indians. He ordered the Cayuse chiefs to meet him at Fort Walla Walla and rebuked them sternly for their failure to control the young hotheads of their tribe. He warned them that the Americans would surely seek revenge. Nevertheless, he made it clear, his company wished to remain neutral in the fight; his only purpose was to rescue the survivors of the Whitman mission.

This was the kind of straight-from-the-shoulder talk the worried red men could understand. In return for a ransom of sixty-two blankets, sixty-three cotton shorts, twelve company guns, 600 loads of ammunition, thirty-seven pounds of tobacco and twelve flints, they surrendered their captives whom Ogden then conducted safely down the Columbia to Oregon City.

Even before Ogden arrived on the scene, the Catholic missionaries near by had tried to intercede. Father Brouillet had rushed to the scene to care for the suffering women and children who had escaped the cruel tomahawks, to baptize the dying and help prepare their graves. At the Umatilla mission, Bishop Blanchet bravely faced the Cayuse chiefs in a vain effort to avoid further bloodshed. Fearing the outcome of a war between the Indians and the whites, he begged the chieftains to surrender the murderers. At last, sadly, he abandoned his negotiations and traveled down to Oregon City with Ogden and the hapless survivors.

News of the tragedy was spreading quickly through



the Willamette Valley. Panic soon gave way to anger. The Provisional Government was weak, but the fear that the Cayuses would rise against the whole region combined with desire for revenge to rouse the valley people to superhuman activity. They determined to make war on the Cayuses and exterminate them.



Under the leadership of Governor Abernethy, the settlers raised a miniature army of five hundred men, fully equipped. Cornelius Gilliam was appointed colonel and the infant town of Portland soon became the rallying ground for the various companies of volunteers. Thomas McKay, the stepson of Dr. McLoughlin,

recruited an armed force of French Canadians—crack fighters, every one.

It was at this very time that Joe Meek made his celebrated cross-country dash to Washington to tell the story of the Whitman massacre and beg for help. So slender were the resources of the Provisional Government that the rugged mountain man was forced to borrow money for his expenses. Aside from his patriotic desire to help the people of Oregon, Meek had a personal account to settle. His own daughter, Helen, had been a Whitman mission victim. Having escaped the Cayuse tomahawks, the girl had died of a serious illness shortly after the massacre. No medical aid, of course, had been available. So, the old fighter was spurred on by a very personal urge when he set out across America for help.

Early in 1848, Colonel Gilliam moved eastward along the south bank of the Columbia, with his little army—an army which made up in courage and enthusiasm for what it lacked in numbers. Oddly enough, a peace commission of three men traveled with the soldiers. Although nobody seemed to know exactly what was expected of this trio, it looked as if the ambitious government officials hoped to win a war and draw up a treaty of peace all at the same time!

Whatever the purpose may have been, Colonel Gilliam was not enthusiastic about having these meddling commissioners with him. He feared that they

would slow up his whole campaign and his fears turned out to be correct. Indeed, the men of peace seized upon every rumor of slackened native activity as an excuse to delay military operations. The Indians took advantage of these respites to rally their forces and to deceive Gilliam by acts of treachery. The commissioners meant well but their presence on the battlefield prolonged the strife. Gilliam was not a man to put up with such interference indefinitely. He managed better after he resolved to fight the war his own way.

There were numerous battles in the Cayuse War, if the wild skirmishes between the settlers and the Indians could be so designated. Poor shots at best, the natives counted heavily upon frightening their enemies with mad charges and bloodcurdling yells. They became dismayed when the resourceful Oregon soldiers employed these same tactics. Colonel Gilliam led his men bravely until he was killed by the accidental discharge of his own gun. From that time forward, Major H. A. G. Lee served as colonel and continued the campaign until its successful close.

In the end, victory came to the determined little army largely because the Cayuses were unable to rally the other tribes of the interior to their cause. They made desperate attempts to induce the Nez Percés, the Spokanes, the Walla Wallas and the Des Chutes to aid them but, fortunately for the Americans, these tribes concluded that the Cayuse fight was not theirs. As a

result, the hard-pressed Cayuses became a hunted people without friends.

Toward summer, the Indians were so completely beaten that Colonel Lee ordered most of his men back to the valley where they were needed to harvest the crops. Only a handful of soldiers remained at The Dalles to keep watch. So quiet was the Indian country that the small emigration of 1848 came through unmolested. Still, though, the Cayuse murderers had refused to give themselves up. Like hunted animals, they were forced to live by themselves in the wilds.

For a time there was peace but soon fresh Indian troubles developed in various sections of the Pacific Northwest.

During the late summer and fall of 1848, two-thirds of the able-bodied men in the Oregon Territory departed for California. Jim Marshall, one of the 1844 emigrants, had struck out for California shortly after his arrival. Now he had found gold at Sutter's mill-race, on the American River. The magic word soon spread throughout the nation and started the famous gold rush of the late forties. First to arrive on the scene were the pioneers of the Pacific Northwest. During the early stages of the rush there were so many of the Oregon Country settlers in the mining country that the Mexicans and South Americans already there referred to all Yankee gold hunters as "Oregon men." Later of course they were lost in the mad rush of the '49'ers. Rumbling

wagon trains arrived overland from the Middle West and Easterners poured in by boat from the long sea trip around Cape Horn. In 1848 only 700 emigrants came to Oregon, and in 1849 the migration to the Northwest fell off to only 400—genuine home seekers, all of them.

This mass exodus to the south left a weakened string of settlements. The canny red men, realizing this, chose that particular time in which to strike. Almost as soon as the Territorial Governor, Joseph Lane, set up the new government on March 3, 1849, he was forced to cope with them. Happily Lane was a strong character, exactly the type of man needed to take charge of affairs in Oregon. As an experienced campaigner, he was eager to get into action against the red men, but he thought it wiser to await the arrival of his regiment of riflemen.

When the men came, their ranks woefully depleted by desertion, the Governor placed them in temporary barracks at Oregon City while he proceeded to settle some minor difficulties with the Indians. First, he restored peace between the Klickitats and the Walla Wallas, and then he adjusted some troubles near the valley settlements. With the coming of early summer, a fresh Indian threat appeared on Puget Sound. Leading his small company of riflemen, augmented by volunteers, the Governor hurried north to protect the settlers against the expected attack.

Before he could reach the scene, though, Chief Pat-

kanim of the Snoqualmis stormed Fort Nisqually but was repulsed by its brave defenders. Two white men were killed in the melee. Had the Snoqualmis been successful, large stores of arms and ammunition would have fallen into their hands and another bloody war would have resulted. Fortunately the settlers held their ground.

By the time Governor Lane reached Tumwater, close by Nisqually, word had reached him of the arrival, in the Columbia, of the United States warship *Massachusetts*, with two companies of artillery. Some of these men were ordered north immediately. In August they built Fort Steilacoom as a further protection for near-by settlers. In the clean-up campaign which followed, two of the chiefs, who had participated in the Nisqually outbreak, were caught and executed, but the rest of the culprits escaped. Oregon's new governor was proving a worthy successor to the "White-Headed Eagle."

Following his activity in the north, Lane removed all of the recently arrived United States troops to new barracks at Vancouver. This decision to concentrate the little army in one place was based upon the Governor's fear that many would desert to the gold fields. Despite all precautions, one hundred and twenty of the soldiers at Vancouver managed to get away, and the Governor had a difficult time rounding them up. He had to make a special expedition south after the deserters. Those

who were overtaken in the mountains of southern Oregon were near starvation and more than glad to return to the service.

Back in Oregon City, Governor Lane had just returned from one of his jaunts through the country when he received word that the Cayuse murderers, weary of living like hunted animals, had given themselves up. The Governor rode with a military escort to The Dalles where he arrested the five fugitives—Tilaukait, Tamahas, Klokamas, Quiamashouskin and Tsaia-chalkis. During the ride back to Oregon City and during the long period of confinement which followed, these natives maintained a proud bearing, revealing no remorse for the bloody deeds they had committed.

To the credit of the Territorial Government, the Indians were given a fair trial. Older settlers, who had strong reason to be bitter against them, were barred from serving on the jury and an able defense was provided. The whole proceeding was an object lesson to Indians in all parts of the Pacific Northwest. It demonstrated that the white man would insist upon justice even for the blackest criminal. Nevertheless, the murderers were found guilty and were hanged on June 3, 1850. Old Joe Meek, the United States Marshal, had his measure of revenge—he presided as executioner.

The hanging of the Cayuse Indians ended the long-drawn-out struggle between the settlers and that warlike tribe. The spirit of these once proud red men was

broken for good. Soon they began to decline in power and prestige and to dwindle in numbers. For their one mad act, they had paid a heavy price!

Despite the fact that peace prevailed at last in the Territory, Protestant missionary work east of the Cascades was over. Efforts were made to close the Catholic missions located there, but they were found to be too firmly entrenched. These missions were north of the section in which the Indian troubles had occurred and hence they had not been involved in them. Then too the Catholic fathers had always been able to work in complete safety among the natives.

Strong as it was, the desire for gold had not been strong enough to depopulate Oregon or even to slow down its progress. Families and farms proved stout ties. They held back many and sped the return of others. In California, Oregonians found a good market for their products and returning miners carried back with them more gold than the home people dreamed existed. Gold poured into the Pacific Northwest in a continuous stream. It was used in exchange for vegetables, beef, bacon and all kinds of food products with the result that the pioneers enjoyed their first wave of prosperity. A bushel of Oregon apples sold for fifty dollars!

One of the first parties to return from the gold fields was a group of about a hundred suddenly wealthy Oregonians. After packing their few belongings and their



gold dust, they embarked for the Columbia River on the ship *Janet*. A few short months in California had sufficed to make their fortunes. Now they were eager to get back to their homes and to take their places in the building of Oregon.

These men were unbelievably careless about their newly acquired wealth. Some carried gold dust through the streets of little Oregon towns in pails! Others used tea tins and even milk cans! It was not uncommon for a returning settler, riding up the valley on horseback, to stop for food at some wayside cabin and leave a sack of gold beside the steps while he went inside to eat. It was an age when men trusted each other.

On March 4, 1849, Zachary Taylor succeeded James K. Polk as President of the United States. Since the new chief executive was a Whig, it was certain that he would replace Governor Lane, a Democrat, with a member of his own party at the first opportunity. The opportunity presented itself in 1850 when President Taylor named Major John P. Gaines as the new governor of Oregon Territory. The office was first offered to Abraham Lincoln, who declined. How different might have been the course of history had he accepted.

Joseph Lane had become immensely popular and the Oregon Democrats, as well as some others, were angered by the change. Nevertheless, Gaines arrived

in due course to assume his new duties and served with distinction until 1853. Later Lane had the satisfaction of defeating his rival in the race to represent the Territory in Congress.

Meanwhile Oregon was growing. One of Joseph Lane's first acts as governor had been to order a census. The count of noses revealed that there were 9,083 people living in the Territory—a rapid growth since the days, only a few years earlier, when the white settlers numbered fewer than one hundred. Lane also ordered an election soon after he assumed office. Members of the Territorial Legislature were chosen and Samuel R. Thurston was elected as Oregon's representative in Congress.

Except for the few small communities on Cowlitz Plains and around Puget Sound, settlement up to 1850 was still mainly in the Willamette Valley. But when the Oregon miners returned to their homes from California, they began to wonder whether the mountains of the Northwest also contained gold. To them it seemed unreasonable that California should have all the deposits of this precious yellow metal.

So without delay Oregonians began feverishly to prospect for gold in their own hills. They were even joined by Californians whose thoughts ran in the same direction. Some of the more daring spirits among these prospectors journeyed across the Cascades into the eastern sections of the Territory, but when gold was found

in southwestern Oregon, they concentrated their efforts in that vicinity. As thousands of miners crowded into these new diggings, the town of Jacksonville suddenly sprang into existence. Nevertheless, these long journeys into various parts of the Pacific Northwest made the settlers realize what a rich country was theirs. In many a mind there was planted a desire to open up the interior.

The settlers had long hoped that Congress would make it possible for them to acquire a square mile of land each. Such a law was finally passed in 1850 and, as the news spread among the farmers of the Middle West, emigration to Oregon again took a jump. Wagon trains once more headed northward. For several years following 1850, the annual overland caravans brought additional thousands into Oregon Territory.

They had to act quickly—these newcomers—for Congress had limited its land law to a period of five years. After 1855, a settler could no longer claim his square mile. So great was the rush that even before the expiration of the law, all of the best land in the Willamette Valley was taken up as well as most of the desirable tracts in the Umpqua and Rogue Valleys. Farms were also established along the coast and in the valleys of lesser streams.

The lawmakers in Washington inserted one interesting “joker” in the Oregon land law. A man had to have a wife before he could qualify for his square mile! Since

men greatly outnumbered women in the new Territory, there soon developed a mad scramble for wives. Girls who had never received any attention suddenly found themselves immensely popular and wedding bells pealed constantly.

Nine counties were established throughout the original Oregon Territory—Tuality, Yamhill, Clackamas, Champooick, Clatsop, Polk, Benton, Linn and Lewis—and their representatives had to travel to Oregon City, the capital, for sessions of the legislature. For various reasons, opposition to Oregon City developed, with the result that the legislature voted to move the capital to Salem. Governor Gaines, though, refused to recognize the constitutionality of the act, and two of the supreme judges of the Territory supported him. For a time, the judges remained in Oregon City with the Governor while the legislature met in Salem.

During this period, many of Oregon's most influential leaders lived in Salem. They became known as the "Salem clique" and, largely because of their power, they incurred the wrath of small newspapers which had sprung up in other towns. In Portland, the *Oregonian* blasted away at the men of Salem, while the *Statesman* of that city printed scathing editorials about the leaders who resided in Portland and elsewhere. The *Oregon Spectator* of Oregon City, the first newspaper west of the Rocky Mountains, had long since accustomed the settlers to these verbal thrusts, for its editor, Colo-

nel William G. T'Vault, was in the habit of writing exactly what he thought.

Not all of Oregon's citizens were satisfied with the selection of Salem as the Territory's capital and, for a number of years, the issue remained unsettled. Oregon City, Salem and Corvallis have, at different times, appeared in school geographies as capitals of Oregon. Over an extended period, the seat of government moved from town to town according to the whims of the lawmakers but finally, through a vote of the people in 1864, Salem was chosen once and for all.

Slowly but surely, Oregon was emerging from its frontier beginnings. Its oldest settlers were men of middle age and over—patriarchs, they must have seemed to the never-ending stream of newcomers. More and more, the newcomers demanded the comforts and privileges to which they had been accustomed in the East. Their energy in making these demands hastened the development of Oregon.

Churches sprang up everywhere. The Catholics and Methodists had been strongly represented from the beginning, but now people of other religious faiths insisted upon having ministers of their own. Soon Baptist, Presbyterian, Congregational, Episcopalian, United Brethren and Christian pastors came West to minister to their flocks and such men as Bishop Scott, the Reverend Joab Powell and the Reverend Thomas

Connor took leading parts in the spiritual growth of the new country.

Grade schools and high schools were established for the children of the pioneers and, surprisingly early, colleges began to appear. Willamette University at Salem, founded by the Methodists, has the distinction today of being the oldest institution of higher education in the Far West. Other denominations were quick to follow the lead of the Methodists and soon the Congregationalists, Baptists, Presbyterians and Quakers had colleges of their own. Many of these institutions are still in existence, though their names have been changed with the passage of time.

Along with religion and education, literature, the theater, music and the arts all displayed healthy signs of growth. Nor did industry lag. Flour mills and saw mills ran day and night to meet the increasing needs of the growing commonwealth, and new ones were continually under construction. Tanneries, too, were established. As lumber became available, carpenters found that they had plenty of work to do.

Already the little city of Portland was showing signs of its future importance. It was the port-of-entry for the whole Columbia River Valley. Shortly after the Territorial Government was set up, Portland was forging busily ahead. Its stores and mills were active and lines of sailing ships lay along its waterfront. The steamboats, the *Columbia* and the *Lot Whitcomb*, had

been built and were running up and down the river.

Along with all this development, the settlements north of the Columbia were increasing in size and influence. Men living in these sections began to talk about seceding from Oregon. They complained about the long distances they had to travel to reach the seat of government and, when the capital was moved from Oregon City to Salem—still farther south—their arguments grew more convincing.

After several preliminary meetings, a convention was held on October 25, 1852, at Monticello near the mouth of the Cowlitz River, to consider the question of breaking away from Oregon. Of the forty-four delegates who attended this meeting, eight came from Seattle, which had already emerged as a frontier settlement. Those present at Monticello, on that historic occasion, drew up a memorial asking that the Territory of Columbia be created by Congress. Strangely enough, the Oregon legislature supported the movement and, later in the same year, adopted a memorial requesting division.

Early in 1853, General Lane, who represented Oregon in Congress, presented the matter to the House where it received a favorable vote. After passage by the Senate, the bill creating a new Territory was signed by President Fillmore on March 2, 1853, just two days before his term ended.

The boundary between the two Territories was to

run along the Columbia River to its intersection of the forty-sixth parallel and thence due east along that line to the Rocky Mountains. Although the people north of the Columbia had asked that the new Territory be named after the great river, one of the members of Congress—for no good reason—suggested “Washington” instead. Lane offered no objection, so the revised name stuck.

The task of naming a governor for the newly-created Territory fell to President Pierce, Fillmore’s successor. He made a wise selection in Isaac Ingalls Stevens, of Massachusetts, who, after an extended overland journey, reached Olympia—the town chosen for the capital of Washington Territory—on November 25, 1853.

Legend has it that Governor Stevens, having struck out ahead of his party, arrived unknown and unheralded in the little settlement. Weary and famished, he found what appeared to be a dining hall and tried to buy a meal. The man in charge wouldn’t allow him to enter. “We’re going to have doin’s here,” he said, “and we can’t feed strangers till after they’re over.”

But Stevens was hungry enough to insist so, after some further conversation, he persuaded the chef to give him a plate of scraps. After consuming these, he walked out into the street where he overheard two settlers complaining about the slow arrival of the new governor.



"Then I suppose I am the man you want," chuckled Washington's tardy chief executive.

"You!" exclaimed the two in astonishment.

Once satisfied that the small, travel-stained man was really Governor Stevens, they lost no time in spreading the word. Men swarmed around the newcomer, rushed him into the dining hall and placed him at the head of the table. There he sat, honored and happy, but unable to eat a bite of the elaborate banquet. He had already dined on scraps!

At last there were two enterprising commonwealths on either side of Columbia. They were friendly rivals from the start and they were destined to be joint participants in the great developments to come.

*CHAPTER XIII*



## *Six More Years of Indian Fighting*

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**I**saac I. Stevens proved an able and energetic executive. After accepting the office of Governor of Washington Territory, he asked to be named superintendent of Indian affairs, a request which was promptly granted. Before starting west with these two important commissions, he insisted upon commanding a party appointed to survey a railroad route from the Mississippi River to Puget Sound. Had there been other work to do, Governor Stevens would certainly have undertaken it. His desire to serve knew no bounds.

As head of the surveying expedition, he led more

than two hundred men over the proposed railroad route which covered an area two thousand miles long and from two to four hundred miles wide. To Secretary of War Jefferson Davis he proved that it would be practical to build a railroad across the continent. Immediately upon his arrival in Olympia, he arranged for legislators to be elected and for a census to be taken. The election was scheduled and the count of settlers revealed that there were 3,965 persons living in the Territory.

Both in Oregon and Washington, further Indian troubles were brewing. The Cayuses had been subdued, to be sure, but other tribes, to the north and east, faced with the threat of the growing white population, were becoming unmanageable.

Even before the arrival of Governor Stevens, the Indians of the Rogue River Valley had risen against settlers in southern Oregon. Although the early stages of this war belonged to history when Washington's Governor reached Olympia, the final stages were fought while he was facing native uprisings in his own Territory.

At the first outbreak of the Rouge River Indians, Governor Lane hastened south with Chief Quatley of the Klickitats, a powerful enemy of the southern tribe. Bravely facing a large number of the Rogue Rivers, Lane won their respect through his calmness in the face of great danger. With the aid of Chief Quatley, he and

his handful of followers captured the enemy leader and held him as a hostage while the rest of the tribe dispersed. After two days in Lane's camp, the Rogue River chief decided that it would be wise to conclude a treaty of peace.

The terms were simple. Governor Lane promised the red men that they would be paid for their lands and that, on reservations, they would be instructed in the knowledge of the white man. This treaty, the first one of its kind, was kept for a whole year.

The second outbreak occurred when the Rogue Rivers could not resist the temptation to attack a small party of miners traveling to Jacksonville from a ship which had dropped them at Port Orford. These men were forced to take refuge on a large rock extending into the sea. They kept the warriors at bay until help arrived from Jacksonville, and the prominence on which they found shelter became known as "Battle Rock."

Further fighting developed when thirty-one Oregon farmers, returning from the California gold mines, were attacked by two hundred braves. Major Phil Kearny, who was later to win fame in the Civil War, led a small detachment of United States soldiers against the red men. Entrenched behind bulwarks on a large eminence called "Table Rock," Kearny finally put the Rogue Rivers to rout after several days of hard fighting. George L. Curry, who had followed John P.

Gaines as Oregon's Territorial Governor, sent a volunteer company south to aid Kearny in rounding up the fleeing natives.

Eventually, a son of one of the chiefs was captured and was held as a hostage to guarantee the attendance of the Indians at a peace council. General Lane, who happened to be in Oregon at the time, was on hand to propose another treaty at this meeting. In the midst of the discussions, the Indians became troublesome and threatened to renew the attack but, as before, the dauntless general kept the upper hand. He promised to punish the murderers and to pay the tribes. After further talk, the natives gave in, glad to accept these terms.

Nevertheless, it had been a narrow escape for the whites. On leaving the scene, Captain Nesmith, of the Oregon volunteers, is supposed to have remarked to the general, "When you have another council of war, I wish to be excused!"

Lane's reply was characteristic. "Captain," he replied, "luck is always better than war!"

The final uprising of the Rogue Rivers, which occurred in 1856, resulted in the battle of Big Meadows and in final defeat for the Indians. They fought bravely against a large force of regulars and volunteers, but the odds were too great. There was no choice left to them but to go on reservations. The repeated attacks of the Rogue River Indians had cost the lives of numerous farmers. Women and children had been slain

without mercy. Throughout this southern valley, Oregon settlers rejoiced when the last of the stubborn Rogue Rivers surrendered.

When Governor Stevens arrived in the Pacific Northwest, the long war against the Rogue Rivers had run only half its course. He could take but little comfort in the fact that this campaign was Oregon's worry for he found the people of his own territory in a restive mood. Indian troubles were rapidly developing there as well.

It was the job of the United States government to solve the Indian question but Stevens sensed little disposition among the settlers to wait for remote federal authorities to make peace with the red men in a systematic and orderly fashion. These people wanted action immediately! As Indian agent for Washington, the Governor was quick to recognize the danger of this situation. Joel Palmer, who had been given a similar commission in Oregon, faced exactly the same problem. Working together in close co-operation, the two men secured authorization from Congress to proceed with the making of treaties with the red men.

Stevens and Palmer fell to work and, during the next few years, they concluded many treaties. According to the terms of these peace pacts, the Indians were to surrender to the whites all of their lands except certain tracts which were to be set aside as reservations. These reservations were to be maintained by the fed-



eral government, which was to supply teachers capable of instructing the red men in farming and other useful arts. The natives were to be allowed to hunt and fish in their old haunts, and Uncle Sam was to pay them a certain sum of money each year.



These treaties seem generous to us today. But if we look at them through the eyes of the proud Indian of the old Oregon Country, we can understand why the natives resented them so bitterly. These people had lived on their lands for centuries and now the palefaces wanted to steal them!

Some of the Indians flatly refused to consider peace

terms on the ground that they *could not* give up their land to the whites. It belonged to the Great Spirit, they claimed, and hence was not theirs to surrender. Other tribes pretended friendship and agreed to the treaties merely to deceive the parties sent out to deal with them. Then, at the proper time, they would attack the peacemakers.

A substantial number of white men lost their lives in these treacherous uprisings and it is little wonder that at times the work of treaty-making seemed hopeless. Nevertheless, most of the tribes throughout the Pacific Northwest came to accept the terms offered by Stevens and Palmer. A few refused and these few, together with others who failed to abide by them, caused no end of trouble.

Governor Stevens completed his first treaties in 1854 with the Nisquallies, Puyallups, Steilacooms, Squawksins and other tribes which resided near Puget Sound. Having lived near American settlements for some time, these Indians realized the futility of resisting the terms, though some were highly displeased with the reservations allotted to them. A few were later to join in the wars against the white people but, in the main, they remained friendly.

In the interior, a different situation prevailed. There the red men had come to resent the increasing number of white settlers and miners but, even so, Governor Stevens was able to arrange a huge council in the Walla

Walla Valley. General Palmer joined him and, together, they parleyed with nearly six thousand braves.

During the talks which lasted three weeks, a plot to kill the peacemakers and to start a general war was revealed to Stevens by a loyal Nez Percé chief. Catastrophe was narrowly averted but, in the end, treaties were made with the Walla Wallas, Cayuses and Umatillas. The grateful Indian agents rewarded the noble Nez Percés by giving them the largest and best situated reservation.

Palmer, meanwhile, had been making treaties with the red men of northeastern Oregon—the John Days, Des Chutes and Wascos. The outlook was promising. Most of the tribes along the coast and throughout the interior had agreed to bury the hatchet. If only they had kept their word, the Pacific Northwest would have been spared a protracted siege of bloody fighting. Unfortunately, such was not to be the case.

It was while Governor Stevens was engaged in making further treaties with the Flatheads, Kootenays and Pend d'Oreilles at Hell Gate, in the Bitter Root Valley, that Indian warfare broke out in earnest elsewhere in the Oregon Country.

Among the Indians who had signed peace pacts reluctantly were the Yakimas. Shortly after the Walla Walla Council, Chief Kamiakin, of this powerful tribe, called a meeting of his principal leaders. Feeling against the treaties ran high. Some of the Yakimas were in

favor of immediate hostilities, but Kamiakin persuaded them to fight only if Americans invaded their country. The Indians warned the whites to keep off their lands, but ambitious miners, eager for gold, would not be dissuaded by threats.

Not long after the powwow at Kamiakin's camp, a nephew of the chief killed five white miners who had defied the warning of the Yakimas. A little later, two more miners were tomahawked to death and then, as the crowning insult, sub-Indian agent Bolon was murdered on his way from The Dalles to join Governor Stevens in the Spokane country. These outrages, together with some minor outbreaks near Puget Sound, brought on the wars.

While the Yakima chiefs were busy stirring up discontent among the tribes of the interior, C. H. Mason—Secretary of Washington Territory and Acting Governor in Stevens' absence—asked for federal troops. Major Gabriel J. Rains, in command at Vancouver, ordered Major Granville O. Haller to move into the Yakima country from The Dalles with a small force. At the same time, he ordered Lieutenant W. A. Slaughter to cross the Cascades at Naches Pass with another detachment.

Haller was left to cope with the Yakimas alone because Slaughter, having been warned that a superior Indian force lay in wait for him at the east end of the pass, turned back toward Puget Sound. Realizing his

own desperate situation, Haller called for reinforcements and both Acting Governor Mason of Washington and Governor Curry of Oregon responded with hastily recruited companies of volunteers. Major Rains headed the troops from Washington, and soon the Yakimas were engaged in battle in their own country. Lieutenant Phil Sheridan, who was later to distinguish himself in the Civil War, took an active part in the series of running fights which followed.

Things went badly for the Americans, so Major-General John E. Wool, in command of the army on the Pacific Coast, came up from San Francisco to direct affairs from Vancouver. He had better have remained in the south for he was an overbearing and uncompromising officer who disliked volunteer troops and who knew nothing of Indian warfare. One of his first acts was to disband a company of Washington volunteers which had been organized to retrieve Governor Stevens, still marooned in the Spokane country. Wool dismissed the matter with the observation that Stevens could take care of himself. Had not the Oregon volunteers, under Colonel Nesmith, gone to the Washington Governor's rescue, he might have been murdered by the Walla Wallas and Yakimas. It was the prompt and efficient action of these Oregonians that enabled Stevens to reach The Dalles in safety.

While Nesmith and his men were busy with Major Rains in the Yakima Valley, Colonel James K. Kelly,

with another force of volunteers, set forth to capture Chief *Peupeumoxmox* who had sworn to kill Governor Stevens and who had pillaged Fort Walla Walla. After following the fleeing red men up the Touchet River, Kelly's men were met by *Peupeumoxmox* himself who approached under a flag of truce. The bloody-minded chief was given the choice of leaving in safety with the knowledge that the American troops would attack his villages or of staying with six of his men until his followers should surrender their arms and ammunition.

*Peupeumoxmox* chose to remain, but his manner suggested treachery. He was allowed to send one messenger to apprise his people of the white men's terms. This messenger failed to return and, the next day, Kelly's men could see the Indians removing their property and deserting their villages—a sure sign that they intended to fight. In these circumstances, the chief displayed no little bravery in remaining with the troops.

Kelly's forces promptly followed the Indians into hostile territory and gave them battle near *Wailatpu*, the scene of the Whitman massacre. Taking cover among the trees and brush, the natives poured a hot fire into the Americans. This engagement came to be known as the "Battle of Frenchtown" because the fighting took place so close to the homes of the settlers. Although the losses on both sides were slight, the

struggle lasted for several days until finally the red men were routed.

During the battle, *Peupeumoxmox* and his fellow captives courted death by calling out orders to the *Walla Walla* warriors! After one of the Indians stabbed an American officer with a concealed knife, the brave but misguided chief attempted to snatch a gun from one of the soldiers. He was promptly shot along with the rest of his men.

Meanwhile, Governor Stevens struggled bravely to complete his peace treaties with the *Flatheads*, *Kootenays* and *Pend d'Oreilles*. His position was precarious for, when he arrived in their country, these Indians were wavering in their loyalty to the whites. It was while he was in the midst of these efforts to pacify the red men that a messenger brought him word of General Wool's refusal to send aid. With this message had come, also, an insolent suggestion that the Governor leave the hostile Indian country immediately and return to *Olympia* by way of *New York*!

General Wool obviously failed to reckon with the courageous character of Washington's chief executive. His highhanded suggestion served as a challenge. It merely stiffened the Governor's determination to travel through his own territory even if to do so meant to fight. Hastily completing his treaties with the northern tribes, he and his little group of followers, with the aid of friendly *Nez Percés*, made their way to the camp

of the Oregon volunteers. There were narrow escapes along the march, but Stevens won through. After thanking the Oregon troops for their heroic work and after making arrangements to organize the settlers for their own defense, he departed for Olympia by way of The Dalles.

Fighting continued throughout the interior during the early part of 1856, but the few volunteers left in the country, following the return of Governor Stevens to his capital, were insufficient to cope with the ever-increasing raids. To complicate matters, terms of enlistment for many of the volunteers were expiring, which required the constant recruiting of new companies. Settlers, eager to develop the country in which they had built their homes, were growing weary of fighting the savages. Then, too, the Indians were gradually becoming more skillful in their methods of attack. No longer were they to fight the white men in force. From then on, they moved in smaller bands and swooped down upon the Americans at unexpected places.

Things had reached a crisis. It was evident that more drastic steps would have to be taken if there was to be peace in the interior. Meanwhile, General Wool had left the Pacific Northwest and had assigned Colonel George Wright to take command in his place. A courageous and enterprising officer, Wright made immediate arrangements to lead a substantial force beyond the



Cascades to deal with the red men. Early in March, at the head of his troops, he was well past The Dalles when ominous news reached him. His haste had given the natives an opening for which they had long been waiting.

The Cascades on the Columbia created a military hazard as well as a transportation difficulty. The long portage slowed down the forwarding of supplies which tended to accumulate there—a rich prize for the watchful savages. A wooden tramway had been built along part of the road, and a blockhouse had been constructed about midway. The settlements above and below the rapids were unprotected. Colonel Wright had left only eight soldiers at the little blockhouse to guard this important and vulnerable area—a grave error in the light of subsequent events!

Wily old Chief Kamiakin of the Yakimas had long been hoping for a favorable opportunity to attack the little settlements along the Cascades and to seize whatever booty he could find there. When the chief's runners brought him word that Colonel Wright and his men, then well beyond The Dalles, had left only eight men at the blockhouse, he knew that his great moment had come.

Kamiakin's plan was to rush a band of his bravest warriors to the scene and then, after they had won the Cascade Indians over to his cause, to have the combined force begin the attack. First, the red men were

to capture and burn two little steamers, the *Mary* and the *Wasco*, which lay on opposite sides of the river above the rapids. Then they were to kill all the whites, seize whatever supplies they could find and await the arrival of Kamiakin himself.

It was a daring plot but it did not work out as the Yakima chief had planned it. Fortunately, several men were on each of the two little steamers. Working heroically under Indian fire, they managed to get up steam and race to The Dalles for help. Some of the settlers at the Upper Cascades were taken by surprise and slain, but most of them managed to reach a two-story log house, on the Washington side, which served as a store for the principal settlement. Fighting bravely against great odds, they held the Indians at bay though a number were killed during the attack.

All of the survivors among the settlers living in the Middle Cascades hurried to the blockhouse where the soldiers repulsed repeated Indian onslaughts. Those residing in the Lower Cascades settlement received warning in time to make their escape to Vancouver in boats.

In the meantime, the alarm had been carried to The Dalles by the valiant crews of the *Mary* and the *Wasco*. Colonel Wright's troops, already on the march to Walla Walla, were recalled and soon they were racing downstream on the steamboats. They reached the

Upper Cascades settlement in time to rescue most of the brave defenders who were huddled in the store.

While Colonel Wright was scouring the woods near the settlements in search of fleeing Indians, Lieutenant Phil Sheridan, with a detachment from Vancouver, hastened up the Columbia on the steamboat *Belle*. After following several false scents, Sheridan and his men came upon a band of Cascade Indians who had been deserted by the treacherous Yakimas immediately after the failure of their plot. Although the captives protested their innocence, they were tried by a hastily summoned military commission and most of them were hanged. Working together, the forces of Wright and Sheridan soon cleared the Cascades region of hostile Indians and restored peace in that section.

Following the massacre at the Cascades, war against the Indians lagged for a time. Some of the settlers and, for that matter, some of the authorities in the national capital, were inclined to give up the war as a bad job and to let the natives have the interior. General Wool, issuing his orders from San Francisco, had one idea, while the Territorial Governors of Oregon and Washington, responsible for the activities of the volunteers, had another. In this state of uncertainty and indecision, it is little wonder that the war dragged.

There were uprisings in the Puget Sound country which might have proved disastrous had not warships of the United States arrived in time to defend the set-

tlers. Their crews, aided by Washington volunteers, succeeded—after a number of engagements—in quelling the Indians of that locality once and for all.

In the interior, where differences between federal and local authorities slowed down operations, the red men were encouraged to believe that all activity against them would be abandoned. As a consequence, they became bolder and their raids increased in number and severity. Their very attitude made it imperative that unified and vigorous campaigns be launched against them. It would require a book many times the size of this one to trace even the barest outline of the numerous battles which followed.

Suffice it to say that Colonel Wright and Lieutenant-Colonel Steptoe, assisted by Governor Stevens and the volunteers of both Territories, waged long and bitter warfare against the savages. During the course of these campaigns, most of the tribes of the Inland Empire were involved, though the Nez Percés, traditional friends of the whites, remained loyal to the last. Before peace was finally restored, General Wool felt compelled to order that all lands of the interior be closed to white men except missionaries and employees of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Two more major uprisings were to occur in the Pacific Northwest before it could be truthfully said that the Indians were finally defeated, but these were

still far off in the future when the campaigns of Wright, Steptoe and Stevens came to a close.

Through all the Indian trouble, Governor Stevens proved a tower of strength. No man could have worked more zealously. Busy as he was with treaty making and campaigning, he still found time to direct the administrative affairs of the Territory he had been sent west to govern. In 1857, the people of Washington showed their appreciation by electing him as their delegate to Congress. There he served with honor and distinction. A soldier to the last, he became a Major-General in the Civil War and fell, fighting for the Union, at Chantilly in 1862. Able men followed him as governors of Washington Territory—McMullin, Gholson, Wallace and others—but none rendered more useful service.

Down in Oregon, where the population had been rapidly increasing, people began to talk of statehood. Opinion was divided, some favoring the idea and others opposing it bitterly. Those in favor were prompted by motives of local pride. California had been a state since 1850—why not Oregon? they argued. Others realized that statehood would mean increased taxes and that the federal government would no longer shoulder a large share of the expense. Men argued violently on street corners, in stores and in their homes, but statehood was in the air.

Three times during the period in which Oregon re-

mained a Territory, the people voted against asking to become a state. By 1858, though, it was clear that a majority favored statehood. Early in that year, the two political parties held conventions for the purpose of nominating state officials in anticipation of the admission of Oregon. In July, the optimistic Oregonians elected a state legislature and state officers while the bill was still before Congress. On February 12, 1859, the measure was passed and, on February 14, President Buchanan signed it. John Whiteaker, who had been chosen as governor in the previous year's election, assumed office as soon as the news reached the coast. Oregon at last was a state—the thirty-third to be admitted.

It required a whole month for the exciting news to reach the Pacific Coast from the national capital. It traveled overland by stage to San Francisco and then up the coast by ship to Portland. The next day it reached Oregon City. Strangely enough, the glad tidings caused no great stir among the people, but one young man, Stephen Senter by name, could scarcely contain himself.

Senter lived in Oregon City. As soon as he heard that Oregon had become a state, he made up his mind to spread the word. So, like a modern Paul Revere, he saddled his horse and galloped up the valley. After thirty hours of hard riding, he reached Salem—the capital of the infant state—after broadcasting the news along the way!



*CHAPTER XIV*





## *Gold in the Northwest!*

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**T**hroughout the sixties and seventies, the Pacific Northwest developed rapidly in many fields and on many fronts. Only in the untamed sections could the residents still be called "settlers." Elsewhere, in the older communities, they had become solid, up-and-coming citizens of the United States.

Oregon had been admitted to the family of states and her boundaries set for all time, but Washington Territory remained as a great sprawling area which included the present states of Washington and Idaho as well as portions of western Montana and Wyoming.

During the long, weary stretch of Indian fighting

there was little incentive for people to move into the interior. For a time, at the end of the war, General Wool's military order specifically forbade them to do so. Nevertheless, a few courageous souls had defied the General's edict in order to seek gold in the neighborhood of Colville. Finally, on October 31, 1858, General Harney removed the ban and, almost immediately, hordes of miners began to pour in. By April of the following year—the year in which Oregon gained statehood—some two thousand homeseekers and miners had spread over eastern Washington. Likewise, smaller finds of gold along the rivers of eastern Oregon attracted other adventurers into those localities. So rapid and so determined was this eastern migration that, by 1861, the population east of the Cascades was two-thirds larger than that on the coast!

The gold strikes created a multitude of small settlements and resulted in the establishment of several new counties. Towns like Colfax, Walla Walla and Lewiston grew rapidly, laying foundations for future trading centers of considerable importance.

Years earlier, Marcus Whitman had found traces of gold in a stream not far from his Waiilatpu mission, but he had been so preoccupied with spiritual matters that the full importance of his discovery scarcely dawned on him. Nevertheless, the Walla Walla Valley, in which he had labored for the Lord, was the first area which miners invaded in numbers following the ces-

sation of Indian hostilities. From the Walla Walla settlement, prospectors worked back into the mountains where time and again their efforts were rewarded by further discoveries. One of them struck a rich vein of the precious metal on the Clearwater River, in Idaho, and soon other finds were made close by.

By 1861, some two thousand miners were camped on Orofino Creek and its tributaries. The wide open mining towns of Orofino and Pierce City sprang into existence almost overnight. Gold was shipped down to Portland in such quantities that traffic on the Columbia became heavy—so heavy that the *Colonel Wright*, which had been operating for several years, could no longer handle it alone. Additional vessels were hastily built. Down in Oregon, further gold discoveries were made on the John Day and Powder Rivers, with the result that Canyon City and Baker City soon blossomed into roaring little mining communities.

Throughout the vast interior, gold was found in ever-increasing quantities. Some of the strikes turned out to be false alarms but others exceeded even the wildest dreams of the prospectors. In the seven years from 1861 to 1867, the Pacific Northwest produced \$140,000,000 in gold, while California, in the same period, produced only \$210,000,000. This comparison may come as a surprise to those of us who have been taught to think of the Golden State as the only great gold mining region of the early West. The natural desire to make

money quickly, at whatever risk, scattered men over the whole interior. Although many of those who came to mine remained to farm, gold provided the impetus for the initial settlement of the Inland Empire.

The early mining towns were raw, untamed communities. During the earlier gold rushes in southwestern Oregon, men had been able to construct crude cabins because there was invariably an ample supply of timber close at hand. But east of the Cascades—where there were few trees—miners had to build their temporary homes out of other materials.

Since muslin was cheap and easily obtainable, the gold-seekers of the interior fell into the habit of using it for the walls of their shelters. These crude huts had no windows. At night, enough light from lamps and candles within the houses penetrated through the transparent walls to illuminate the streets of the frontier mining towns. When the gold rush started, in 1861, these "muslin towns," as they were called, sprang up in a day.

Some of the cabins, despite their muslin walls, were grander than the earlier dwellings of the coast pioneers. Cowskin rugs were nailed to the floors, and some of the residents even boasted books, newspapers and pictures—rare luxuries for the frontier! Although plentiful, food was expensive since it had to be brought in from the Willamette Valley, Utah or California.

As a general rule, the miners themselves were indus-

trious and law-abiding. They were followed, however, by ruthless ruffians who took advantage of the presence of so much wealth to stir up trouble. These men were unprincipled fellows who were inclined to shoot at anything in sight. With stray bullets flying about, it was necessary, after sundown, to protect beds with sacks of flour and sand!

A free and easy lot, most of the miners were hard workers by day and hard drinkers by night. Women were scarce but there were enough of them to keep the dance halls busy, where improvised orchestras played far into the morning hours. A combination of itinerant desperadoes and powerful liquor encouraged shooting scrapes. In order to protect themselves and their property, local residents found it advisable to organize vigilance committees—small groups of miners ready and willing to take the law into their own hands. Brushes between the vigilantes and the bad men often resulted in midnight hangings.

Yes, those were unruly and irresponsible times but the miners reveled in their rough life. Many of them made fortunes which were quickly squandered, while others were prudent enough to take their earnings and settle down to more quiet living in the coast cities.

During the height of the gold fever, a man named Magruder was murdered while he was carrying supplies to camps on the Clearwater and Salmon Rivers. Magruder had been so popular with the people of the

interior that his tragic death aroused the whole countryside. Vigilantes sprang into action everywhere and soon death began to overtake all suspicious characters. Frequently, in lonely thickets, evildoers were found dead. Lariats usually encircled their necks. No questions were asked. Men merely took it for granted that justice had been done. It is possible that innocent persons suffered along with the guilty, but those were days which required stern measures. Gradually, due to the activities of the vigilantes, crime began to decrease.

Meanwhile, Portland had become a busy metropolis. Of the thousands of men who were eager to reach the mining country in the shortest possible time, most found it convenient to travel up the Columbia from Portland. Some, of course, entered from Salt Lake City while others crossed Nevada from California. Portland, though, was the accepted gateway for the greater portion of the gold-hungry army during the early sixties.

In those boom days, the waterfront of the hustling little city on the Willamette was always jammed with traffic. Great lines of drays waited to get their loads aboard boats which were lying at their wharves, ready to steam up the wide "River of the West." It is said that these drays had to wait in line a whole day before they could reach the dock and deposit their burdens of goods destined for the mining camps.

The northern communities of Seattle and Tacoma

were also developing, though their great strides were not to come until later. Arthur A. Denny and Dr. David S. Maynard were closely identified with the founding of Seattle, a city named for a friendly Indian chief who lived on Puget Sound. Tacoma was also an Indian name but it did not belong to a native chief. Beautiful Mt. Rainier was called "Tacoma" by the red men of the Puget Sound country, and so the founders of the town wisely decided to look no further for a name. To this day, residents of the thriving city of Tacoma insist, with some heat, that Mt. Rainier is really Mt. Tacoma!

These two northern towns were to remain rivals for a number of years until Seattle took the leadership both in population and prestige. Her supremacy over Portland, though, was not to be realized until well past the turn of the twentieth century.

The Civil War, so tragic and so real to the people of the East, scarcely touched the Pacific Northwest. The battlefields were remote and issues right at home seemed far more pressing. Nevertheless, the great conflict caused reverberations clear across the nation. Although the residents of Oregon and Washington remained loyal to the Union for the most part, sentiment on the slavery question was sharply divided. Living in the Western country, in those days, were numerous Democrats who had come from the South to make their homes. While they had no desire to introduce



slavery into the Pacific Northwest, they believed—many of them at least—that the Southern states should be allowed to have slaves, or not have them, as they pleased. Some even went so far as to insist that these states should be allowed to secede from the Union. Bitter arguments and street brawls were not uncommon. Even the children in school, supporting the conflicting views of their parents, turned to fighting when the teacher's back was turned.

So violent became the feeling that, for a time, a plot to organize a "Pacific Republic," including Washington, Oregon and California, gained headway. In the end, though, the people of the Pacific Northwest rallied pretty generally to the cause of Abraham Lincoln and, before the end of the Civil War, it became unwise to speak out loud in favor of secession.

Loyal men of the Oregon Country stood ready to answer the war President's call for volunteers but, as it happened, they were needed at home. Once again, the reason was Indian trouble. When the crafty red men realized that all of the regular troops stationed in the Pacific Northwest had been called East to serve in the Union armies, they decided to strike. It was an opportune time, for they knew they would have only untrained volunteers to face.

In eastern and southern Oregon, the natives waged a continual though fugitive war against the miners and stockmen who had settled in those sections. They also

harried the emigrant trains which entered Oregon by the valley of the Snake River. These uprisings, like those which had gone before, were eventually quelled by the brave volunteers of Oregon and Washington, left alone to do their own fighting.

Remote as it was, the Civil War was closely connected with the Oregon Country in another way, for many of the men who were to win high honors in the various battles had already served with distinction in western Indian fights. Such leaders as Sheridan, Kearny, McClellan, Wool, Stevens and Pickett had all seen service in the Pacific Northwest. General Frémont had visited the region, as had also Commodore Wilkes. We have already taken note of the gallant fighting of Governor Stevens which ended in death at Chantilly, and we should also mention one of Oregon's early senators, Colonel E. D. Baker, who lost his life in action at Ball's Bluff. Indian fighting had indeed provided early practice for a number of the great warriors who led charges on both sides.

As early as 1855, missionaries of the Mormon church had traveled northward from their headquarters in Utah to establish Fort Lemhi in the southeastern corner of the present state of Idaho. This little settlement had flourished until 1858 when the missionary settlers were forced to leave because of attacks by the Bannock Indians. But in 1860 the Mormons returned in substan-

tial numbers and founded the first permanent Idaho settlement at Franklin.

Later, as miners began to flock into the western portions of Idaho, population increased sufficiently to turn the thoughts of settlers to local government. The Mormons continued to occupy the southeastern section but the miners, as new gold strikes were found, spread out through the western areas. In time, a bitter feeling was to develop against the Mormons. It was based on the fear that they would ultimately dominate the whole territory. In those days, their strange new faith was looked upon as an evil force. These acrimonious controversies, however, were not to reach their height until the eighties.

Early in 1863, the people living in what is now the state of Idaho sent a direct appeal to Congress with the result that Idaho Territory was organized on March 3 of that year. The original boundaries included more than 300,000 square miles—the present states of Idaho, Montana and Wyoming. This unwieldy arrangement did not last long for, during the very next year, Montana Territory was created and, in 1868, Wyoming took another large chunk out of southeastern Idaho. This last change reduced Idaho to its present size.

As had been the case in Oregon Territory, soon after its organization, Idaho officials had difficulty in agreeing upon a capital. The first governor, W. H.

Wallace, selected Lewiston simply because it was near his own house. The first legislature met there and, after passing an amazing number of laws, elected Governor Wallace to Congress and W. B. Daniels to the position of Secretary of the Territory. Opposition to Lewiston soon developed on the grounds that it was too far from the center of the Territory and too close to the Washington line. A lively battle over the location of the seat of government was shortly under way.

After Caleb Lyon arrived from New York with his commission as Governor of Idaho Territory, the legislature decided to move the capital to Boise City. There were bitter exchanges between those who favored one locality against another, but the new governor wisely went off duck-hunting to avoid the storm. After all, he was a New Yorker and he believed that the people of Idaho should choose their own seat of government. Aided by troops, the new Territorial Secretary, C. De Witt Smith, moved the seal and archives to Boise City where they remained. Although the fight dragged on, amid heated argument and litigation, Boise continued as the capital—illegally, as many thought—until Idaho became a state many years later. Then, at last, the choice was officially sanctioned.

Originally, the name Idaho came from the Shoshone Indians who pronounced it "Ee-dah-how." It is an expression, we are told, which means that a rim of light is descending on the mountains as the sun rises behind

them—a word picture of great beauty. Used as an exclamation by the Shoshone Indians of Wyoming and Colorado, “Ee-dah-how” merely meant that the sun was in the heavens and hence it was time to get up. Others claimed that it meant “Gem of the Mountains” but, whatever the meaning, it made a fittingly appropriate name for the newly-created Territory.

The great gold rush of the Pacific Northwest brought about the golden age of steamboating on the Columbia. As more and more men sought a means of reaching the mines quickly and as more and more gold needed to be hauled down to Portland from the Inland Empire, the demand for steamboats became acute. It must be recalled that most of the residents of Oregon had come from the Middle West where steamboating on such rivers as the Mississippi, the Missouri and the Ohio was in its prime. It was but natural for these people, remembering the rapid development of river traffic back home and sensing an equal need in the West, to turn their energies to boat building.

Even before the hectic gold rush days, steamboats were built on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. By 1850 the *Columbia* was running regularly between Portland and Astoria, as well as the *Lot Whitcomb*, a larger vessel, which was launched at Milwaukie, near Portland, soon after. A little later, the *Jason P. Flint* was put on the run between the Cascades and The Dalles.



Prior to the building of the *Flint*, freight and passengers between the Cascades and The Dalles and on the Columbia above The Dalles were moved by sailboats. Strong winds in the gorge made sailboats a slow but certain means of water transportation. Even before the gold fever took hold, though, the death knell of this type of craft had been sounded. By 1860, there were several steamboats operating on each stretch of the Columbia—the lower, below the Cascades; the middle, between the Cascades and The Dalles; and the upper, above The Dalles.

Water transportation on the great river presented difficulties. There were certain “steps” which had to be

negotiated—steps through which steamboats, in the early days, could not pass. That, of course, is why there were three distinct stretches of river and why boats scheduled to operate in each had to be built where they were to be used. On a few rare occasions, steamboats “shot the rapids” over the Cascades, but such passages were hazardous and impractical.

While enterprising businessmen were building vessels to be operated on these various stretches of the Columbia, other men were busy constructing railways around the “steps” which separated them. The first one of these portage railways was five miles in length. It was completed in 1850, on the Washington side. Having fallen into disuse, it was being rebuilt when the Yakima Indians attacked the Upper Cascades settlement in 1856.

After the defeat of the red men, this little portage railway was put back into operation and, by 1861, a rival line was set up across the river on the Oregon side. It was the job of these diminutive railway trains, drawn by horses and mules, to transfer passengers and supplies from the lower river steamboats to those of the middle river.

With the coming of the gold rush, ruinous competition developed along the Columbia. Not only were the portage railways working against each other, but the steamboats, on their part, were attempting to steal each other's business. Price wars became prevalent, and

harassed steamboat owners soon discovered that they were operating at a loss.

Realizing the gravity of the situation as well as the glorious opportunity afforded by it, a small group of canny businessmen put their heads together and organized the Oregon Steam Navigation Company. Such leaders as J. C. Ainsworth, R. R. Thompson, Simeon G. Reed and Jacob Kamm induced the steamboat men along the river to pool their interests into one gigantic monopoly. Soon all the boats on the Columbia were operating under the flag of the Oregon Steam Navigation Company and the great water highway to the interior was choked with freight and passengers bound for the new towns in the mines of eastern Washington and Idaho. During its life of nineteen years, the company paid over \$2,500,000 in dividends and spent nearly \$3,000,000 in developing its property. It was the second vast monopoly of the Pacific Northwest, the Hudson's Bay Company having been the first.

Shortly after the Oregon Steam Navigation Company was formed, its owners decided that they ought to have better portage facilities around the rapids between The Dalles and Celilo Falls—a fourteen-mile stretch. Promptly, they purchased wagons, horses and mules to the value of \$100,000. Soon the portage road became a scene of unbelievable activity. From sunup to sundown, a steady stream of heavily laden wagons traveled over its course. A little later, though, the com-



pany officials concluded that a railroad would save them money so, with pioneer enterprise, they promptly built one along this upper river stretch.

With all this emphasis on war, politics and business, the lives of Pacific Northwest residents during the sixties and seventies still had their lighter moments.

In Washington Territory, where the population growth was slow at first, there continued to be a lack of white women. Many of the bachelors would gladly have taken wives if only they could have found girls to marry. There were comments about this deficiency in local newspapers, and some of these articles were copied in the East but, despite the hints thus dropped, members of the fair sex hesitated to journey westward in quest of husbands.

Finally, Asa S. Mercer decided to do something about it. Mercer, fresh from an Eastern college, had come out to Seattle to become the first president of the Territorial University located there. At the close of his initial term of teaching, he volunteered to go East in search of wives for the local bachelors. Once his purpose became known, he encountered no trouble in raising funds for the trip!

Mercer was subtle. Since it seemed a bit too brazen to come out frankly with an appeal for brides, he let it be known—in the East—that Washington Territory desperately needed schoolteachers and seamstresses. He believed that many girls, orphaned by the Civil

War, would jump at the chance to find employment in the new country which he described so glowingly.

In Lowell, Massachusetts, this self-appointed Cupid succeeded in recruiting a party of ten attractive young women eager to make the long ocean voyage. In San Francisco, a Boston girl was induced to abandon her notion of remaining in California in favor of joining the northbound procession. Of the eleven prospective teachers and seamstresses who reached Seattle, few remained single long enough to take up their professions. Mercer became a great hero to the grateful husbands!

He was not backward about turning his sudden popularity to good account for, soon after the arrival of his first contingent of "teachers" in 1864, he announced his intention to run for the Territorial Legislature. "Mr. Mercer," ran an article in the *Seattle Gazette*, "is the Union candidate for joint councilman for King and Kitsap counties, and all bachelors, old and young, may, on election day, have an opportunity of expressing, through the ballot box, their appreciation of his devotion to the cause of the Union, matrimonial as well as national." Need we add that he was elected by a sweeping majority?

During the years which followed, Mercer made other trips East in search of wives for the local bachelors. His success as a matchmaker was outstanding! Consistent with his own convictions, he married one of these prospective brides himself. The "Mercer

Girls" became famous in the history of Washington Territory.

Miners were not the only people attracted to the region east of the Cascades by the discovery of gold. Businessmen, farmers, doctors, day laborers, joined the march. Some of these towns soon grew into thriving little cities.

In the first year of the gold stampede, the Walla Walla Valley, of Washington, was almost entirely taken up by farmers. Later immigrations from the Middle West settled the beautiful valleys of the Grande Ronde and Powder Rivers in Oregon. It wasn't long before every well-watered section of eastern Oregon was populated.

This general exodus had its effect on the older settlements of the Willamette Valley. Some of the farmers joined in the mad scramble for gold while others abandoned their hard-won donation land claims either to enter business or to take up steamboating.

This sudden shuffling of the population made for a swifter development of the Oregon Country as a whole.

*CHAPTER XV*



## *The Iron Horse Brings Prosperity*

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**S**hortly after the close of the Civil War, the gold boom of the Pacific Northwest began to slacken. It was difficult, at first, for men to understand how this rich bonanza could ever come to an end. Soon, though, they had no choice but to face the unpleasant fact that it was over.

For a time, living had been easy and profits had been high. The residents of Oregon, Washington and Idaho had found a ready market for their products, first in California and later in the mining districts of the Inland Empire. Wheat, lumber, beef, apples and fish had been shipped out in large quantities and many a pioneer,

who had entered the new country in poverty, had managed to acquire moderate wealth.

When the gold supply began to fail, it failed rapidly. The whole picture changed. The Inland Empire market was the first to disappear and it was soon followed by that of California. True, the farms and industries of the Oregon Country were producing substantial crops and goods, but miners, who were obtaining less and less gold, could not afford to buy them. Californians were prospering but suddenly they found it more convenient to supply their needs from the East. For, in 1869, a golden spike was driven into some railroad ties near Ogden, Utah, and the Pacific Northwest was robbed of its California market.

Feverishly the Union Pacific had been building its line westward from Omaha while the Central Pacific, with equal zeal, had been rushing its road eastward from Sacramento. The tracks met at Promontory Point, Utah, where, on May 10, 1869, the golden spike was driven. A transcontinental railroad had been completed and, from that day forward, California people were able to get their goods directly from the East.

This was a severe blow to the residents of the Oregon Country. Immediately they came to the conclusion that their only salvation was to obtain a cross-country railroad of their own. They had good reason to be envious of California, for they had long been dreaming of a direct line to the East themselves.

As early as 1853, Congress had ordered Pacific railroad surveys with the result that four possible routes were considered. Governor Stevens had explored the northern route and made revealing reports to the War Department. John C. Frémont had journeyed westward in 1845 to examine a central pathway through the country. Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War before the secession of South Carolina and a Southerner himself, had naturally favored a southern route. The fourth possibility had never been seriously considered.

After the outbreak of the Civil War, all plans for transcontinental railroads were, of necessity, abandoned. Certainly there was no possibility of constructing a line through the Southern states! When the war was only a year old, though, Congress authorized the formation of the Union Pacific and agreed to pay the company \$16,000 in government bonds for each mile of track completed. The lawmakers also granted to the Union Pacific every other five sections of land on each side of the track. With such princely backing, it is little wonder that an enterprising group of men seized upon this opportunity to speed a railroad west from Omaha.

In California, another group of wealthy men organized the Central Pacific Railroad and, with subsidies from the federal government similar to those which the Union Pacific had received, began building a line east from Sacramento. Had such a group in the Pacific



Northwest been able to gather together the necessary funds, a road might have been started eastward from there instead. But the Californians took the lead and, as a consequence, the first railroad train across the nation steamed into their state.

The people of the Pacific Northwest realized that, upon the completion of the southern roads, they would be left out on a limb. They knew that it would take years to launch a railroad project across the northern part of the United States and they knew, also, that such an undertaking would require a great deal of money. When their gold supply failed, they didn't have the money so, with their customary resourcefulness, they made plans for the next best solution—a rail line to California to connect with the Union Pacific.

Californians, fortunately, were willing to lend a hand. It was a California company, in fact, which first planned a road from San Francisco to Portland. But the Pacific Northwest pioneers were not satisfied to allow outsiders to carry on operations intended to benefit them. So, very soon, a group of Oregon men took over the plans.

Unfortunately, they could not agree upon a route. One faction wanted the road to be constructed on the west side of the Willamette River, while another, composed mainly of influential citizens living in Salem, held out for the east bank. Both groups sought land grants from the United States to help pay the cost.

The struggle became bitter. It even had to be dragged into the courts but, still, neither side would surrender. Finally, no legal decision having been reached, both roads began to build lines. In May, 1868, the backers of the east-side line broke ground for their railroad in East Portland. Only a few days later, the west-side group began operations across the river. The race was on!

It was at this juncture that Benjamin Holladay arrived in Portland, from California, to take an active part in Oregon railroad building. Shrewd, uncompromising and industrious, he had made a huge fortune by operating the famous "pony express" between California and the Missouri frontier in the early sixties. He had been clever enough to sell out his interests, at a big profit, to Wells, Fargo & Company, just before the driving of the golden spike in Utah.

With some of his wealth, Ben Holladay had bought a line of steamships plying between San Francisco and Portland, but he was not content to stop there. He wanted to try his hand at railroading because he sensed the great need of Oregonians for a rail connection with California. Some of Holladay's financial transactions had been shady, but the people of the Pacific Northwest, desperately in need of an outlet for their products, were in no mood to ask questions.

Immediately upon his arrival in Portland, during the summer of 1868, Ben Holladay sized up the local

situation with cool deliberation. After listening to the arguments of each faction, he decided to cast his lot with the crowd building a road on the east side of the Willamette. Secretly he despatched agents to the national capital. These men remained in Washington until they succeeded in getting Congress to make a land grant to the first of the two roads which could complete twenty miles of track!

The east-side faction won the race by a single day! Victorious, Holladay bought out the west-side group in 1870 and hastened to reorganize his holdings under the name of the Oregon and California Railroad Company. Despite his wealth, his shrewdness and his initial success, he plunged too deeply. He sold more than ten million dollars' worth of railroad bonds in Germany! As a result of all this overexpansion, Holladay soon found himself in serious financial straits.

He had completed his railroad only as far as Roseburg in the Umpqua Valley. That was in 1873 when hard times stalked over the entire nation. Holladay was left virtually bankrupt, unable to pay interest on the vast sums he had borrowed, when German-born Henry Villard appeared on the scene.

Villard had served as a newspaper reporter during the Colorado gold rush and later during various campaigns of the Civil War. Because of his German origin, he had the confidence of hundreds of Germans who had invested their hard-earned money in Holladay's

venture. These people asked Henry Villard to go out to Oregon and look after their property.

These two early railroad magnates of the Pacific Northwest presented vivid contrasts. Whereas Holladay was ruthless, Villard was kindly and well liked. Different in most respects, the two men were alike in one—they both believed in the future of the Oregon Country if only rail connections with the East and South could be realized.

After Ben Holladay gave up the fight, Villard reorganized the Oregon and California Railroad. Under his able leadership, the road was continued southward. In 1887, it reached a connection with San Francisco, but this was some years after Henry Villard ceased to be interested in it.

More and more he was convinced that what the Pacific Northwest needed most was a direct rail route to the East. Once his mind was made up, he was a whirlwind of activity. His first step was to acquire the Oregon Steam Navigation Company from Captain Ainsworth, R. R. Thompson and the other men who had formed it. For this property, the hustling Villard paid \$4,000,000—a sum which left each of the pioneer Oregon steamboat owners with a substantial fortune. Next, he started to build a railroad eastward on the south bank of the Columbia, hoping to join it with a branch line which the Union Pacific was pushing northwestward across Idaho.

The Union Pacific, though, encountered difficulties in connecting its road with Villard's. Legal tangles over leases, jealousies and fear of reprisal by the Central Pacific for extending its road to the coast first, combined to postpone the joining of the rails for several years.

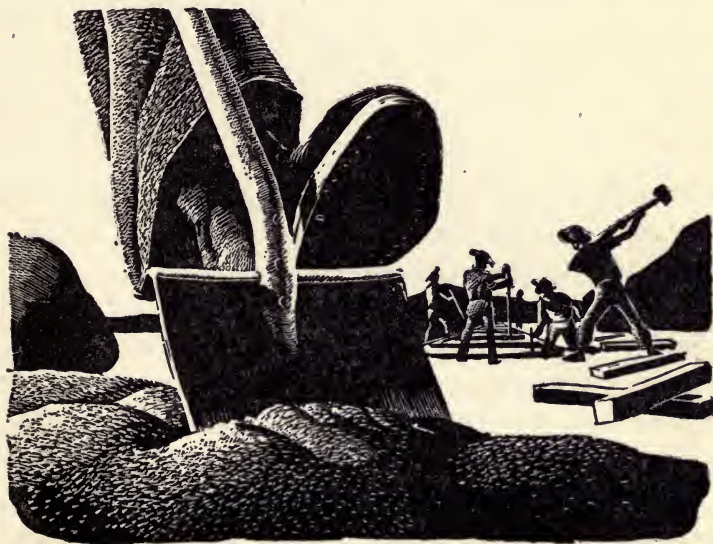
This was a great blow to Henry Villard. He had raced against time to complete his line to the eastern boundary of Oregon and now, on the threshold of victory, he was blocked. No doubt an ordinary man would have been discouraged but Villard was no ordinary man. As soon as he realized that a connection with the Union Pacific would have to be postponed for an indefinite period, he hit upon a scheme which was brilliant in its conception and daring in its execution. Without a moment's hesitation, he sped East and made a demand upon his wealthy friends for \$8,000,000, refusing to tell them why he needed the money! So great was their confidence in him that they subscribed this stupendous sum without delay.

While he rushed the building of his rail line up the Columbia from Portland to replace the steamboats and portage railways he had taken over from the old Oregon Steam Navigation Company, he used his newly-acquired funds to gain control of the Northern Pacific Railroad which had already begun to lay tracks west from Minneapolis. Villard was now in command of

both lines and he sped them to completion with unbelievable energy.

In 1883, another golden spike was driven—this one connecting the Northern Pacific with the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. It was a moment of triumph for Henry Villard. He invited many prominent people to come out to Montana for the ceremony and, after it was over, he took them all down to Portland over the tracks of his new road. At last, the Pacific Northwest had its long-coveted direct connection with the East.

Henry Villard had staked everything on his belief that a cross-country railroad would attract thousands



of newcomers to the Pacific Northwest. They came, it is true, but they did not come in sufficient numbers to make the vast undertaking pay. The cost of building his roads at the amazing rate of three miles a day, including bridges and tunnels, had been ruinously high. Three months after the colorful ceremony near the mouth of the Snake River, Villard's pretentious enterprise failed.

Both he and Holladay had lost heavily in their Western ventures but both had made healthy contributions to the growth of the new country. Holladay had built two hundred miles of track in Oregon while Villard had built seven hundred. Although Ben Holladay passed out of the picture, as far as railroading was concerned, Henry Villard—after his severe setback of 1883—came back into control of the Northern Pacific in 1887.

While the iron horse was forging its way across the plains to unite the East and the Northwest once and for all, the last of the frontier Indian uprisings were being put down.

Among the red men who had never been happy to live on the lands assigned to them were the Modocs. This tribe had been placed on the Klamath reservation and, though its members appeared restive from time to time, they seemed too dissipated and too weak to cause serious trouble. Settlers who came to this conclu-

sion made a mistake for, in 1872, Captain Jack—a fearless and resourceful Modoc leader—decided to lead his people back to their old tribal home.

On their mad dash, Captain Jack and his followers killed a shocking number of white settlers in southern Oregon and northern California. Pursued by soldiers, the Indians took shelter in the near-by lava beds. These lava beds covered an area four by eight miles and the Indians knew every corner of it. The troops, on the other hand, were completely at sea in the labyrinth of ridges.

Although Captain Jack's band numbered only a hundred, he succeeded in giving battle, on several occasions, to a vastly superior force of whites. During one of these engagements, the Indian leader deliberately shot and killed General Canby, a Civil War hero, when that American officer approached under a flag of truce.

After two years of fighting, the red men grew tired of dodging the American troops through underground passages and around long lava ridges. In the end, they had no choice but to surrender. In 1873, Captain Jack and four of his warriors were tried, found guilty and hanged.

Utterly unlike the renegade Jack was Chief Joseph, the great leader of the Nez Percés. The noble Nez Percés had remained loyal to the whites through thick and thin. They had befriended the struggling pioneers



during crucial periods when virtually all the other tribes had turned against them. That war should have broken out between these friendly Indians and the whites is both unfortunate and ironic. It all happened because of a tragic mistake.

For many generations before the coming of the white man, the Nez Percés had occupied the beautiful Wallowa Valley in northeastern Oregon. They loved this part of the country and had come to look upon it as their home. It was only with great reluctance that they had promised Governor Stevens to move into the big Idaho reservation he had selected for them. As the years went by, though, they found reasons to delay.

It was not until 1877 that the Nez Percés decided they could no longer postpone the carrying out of their bargain. Slowly and sorrowfully, they began to move their families and their goods. As soon as they were under way, soldiers in the vicinity—watching them—reached the erroneous conclusion that they had gone on the warpath. Battles soon developed as a result of this stupid mistake. Time and again, Chief Joseph, who wanted only peace for his people, fought against the Americans and defeated them. Although squaws and children traveled with him, he nearly succeeded in getting his tribe through Idaho and Montana into Canada.

The brave Joseph was captured just before he reached the international border. He had never studied

military tactics and had never raised a weapon against the whites until he had been forced to fight. In spite of his lack of training, he came to be regarded as a great general—one of the most brilliant ever to campaign in America! To his captors, upon his surrender, he said, “I am tired of fighting. Our chiefs are killed. . . . The little children are freezing to death. . . . I want time to look for my children and see how many of them I can find. Maybe I shall find them among the dead. Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired. My heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever!”

Chief Joseph kept his word. He fought no more. The troops could not find it in their hearts to punish so gallant a warrior. Joseph and his people were eventually allowed to go and live in peace on the reservation which had been provided for them. He lived to be a very old man, respected by the whole nation. Throughout his long life, he maintained a deep interest in the schooling of the children of his noble tribe. With the defeat of Chief Joseph, in 1877, and the settlement of a Bannock uprising in 1878, the Indian wars came finally to an end.

Meanwhile, marked advances were being made in Washington Territory. The population was growing steadily both in the rural districts and in the cities, and new industries were constantly being launched. The

largest town of the interior, Spokane, dates from the arrival of four persons in 1871. As late as 1880, the population was only three hundred and fifty! After the coming of the railroad, though, Spokane forged ahead by leaps and bounds.

Oregon had gained statehood after remaining a territory only ten years, but Washington was destined to wait a long time before adding its star to the flag of the United States. Growth, at first, had been slow but, by 1867, people were talking of statehood. The Washington legislature of that year first submitted the question of a constitutional convention to the people, but several trials revealed the indifference of the voters.

Finally, in 1876, a majority in favor of the convention was secured. Citizens of the Territory were moved to vote for it because they feared that a new subdivision might be created in the interior. They could not bear the thought of losing any territory! Although the delegates, assembled for the purpose in 1876, drew up a constitution which was adopted by the people, Congress turned a deaf ear. Six years later, Watson C. Squire became Governor of the Territory. He set his heart on gaining statehood for Washington, and his brilliant reports to Congress went far toward changing the views of that body. At last, in 1889, the lawmakers passed an act for the admission of Washington as a state. Elisha P. Ferry was elected the first governor.

The people of Idaho, following a similar series of

unsuccessful efforts to unite on the question of statehood, finally composed their differences and called a constitutional convention in 1889. Idaho was admitted the next year, and George L. Shoup became its first chief executive. Montana had been declared a state by President Harrison's proclamation in 1889. The commencement of the nineties saw all of the Pacific Northwest states established within their present boundaries.

After the completion of the Northern Pacific, railroad building in the Oregon Country went ahead at a more leisurely pace. For several years there were no developments of consequence, though short lines were built in various sections. In time, though, two more gigantic railroad figures appeared on the scene.

One of these was James J. Hill, a rail pioneer whose career challenges the imagination. He well deserved the title which was bestowed upon him by popular approval—the "empire builder." In 1893, Hill completed the Great Northern Railway to Puget Sound, making use of Marias Pass which Governor Stevens, years earlier, had sought in vain. This pass, which afforded an ideal route through the Rockies, was not located until John F. Stevens, one of Hill's engineers, came upon it in 1889. After building the Great Northern, Mr. Hill acquired the Northern Pacific and became, through this formidable combination, the recognized railroad czar of the North. He reached Portland by constructing a road down the north bank of the

Columbia. It is formally known as the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway, but most people refer to it as the "North Bank Road." Completed in 1908, this line opened the vast Inland Empire to the Oregon metropolis, making it possible to ship farm products to the sea over an easy grade.

When James J. Hill decided to invade central Oregon with a railroad running from the Columbia southward through the Deschutes Canyon, he came to grips with another powerful magnate, Edward H. Harriman. While Hill was building his road on one side of the Deschutes, Harriman—who had gained control of the Southern Pacific—was laying the tracks of a rival line on the other. Amid stormy litigation of one kind and another, the competing roads raced across central Oregon until they both reached the town of Metolius. It was then that the two railroad kings saw the folly of their ways. They made an agreement with the result that a single line was built the rest of the way to Bend. Eventually, this road was extended to Klamath Falls to connect with another line in California.

The railroads brought to the Pacific Northwest the vast development of which the pioneers had dreamed. All of the great leaders, from Dr. McLoughlin to James J. Hill, had foreseen a prosperous empire on the shores of the North Pacific and the iron horse had made this dream a reality.

In 1896, the federal government built the Cascade Locks, which overcame the obstruction to river traffic between the lower and middle Columbia. Later, the Celilo Canal was completed—a passage which enabled steamboats to enter the upper river from the middle portion. Thanks to these two projects, river steamers could navigate the Columbia from the ocean to the foot of the Rickey Rapids, a distance of seven hundred and ten miles.

This hard-won victory was soon lost, for the golden age of Columbia River steamboating came to an end with the completion of the railroads. True, steamboats continued to operate for many years, and people just now entering middle age recall such palatial craft as the *T. J. Potter*, the *Bailey Gatzert* and the *Hassalo* with fond memories. Now they are gone—all but a few grimy towboats—but there are those who believe that river traffic may again become a factor in Pacific Northwest transportation.

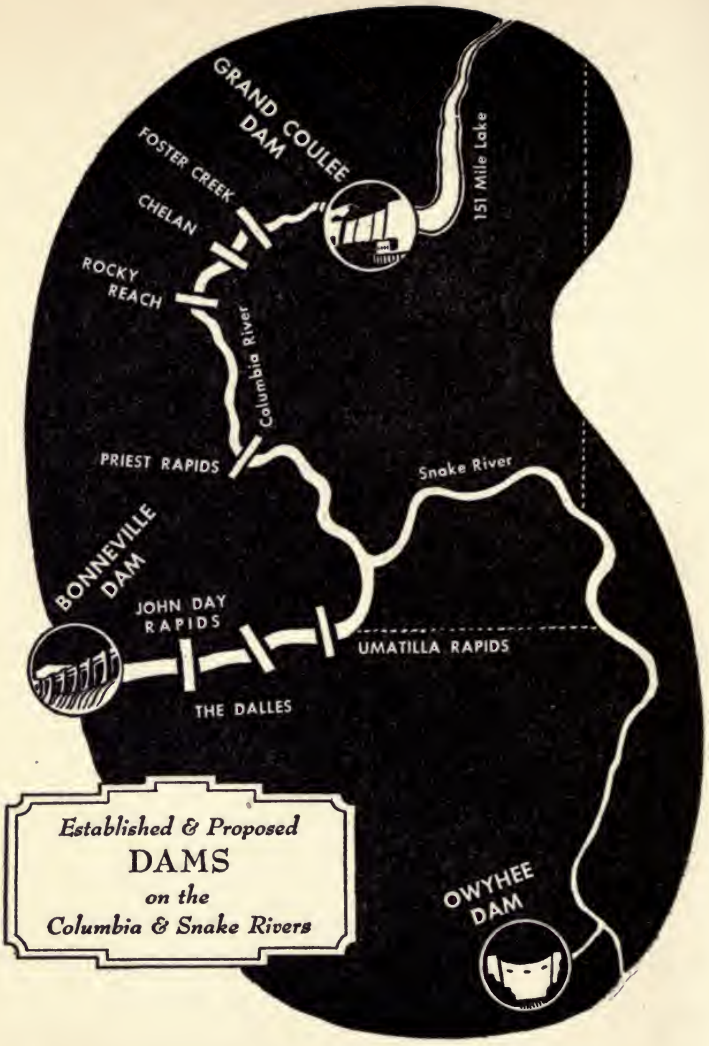
So, year after year and decade after decade, the Oregon Country has developed from its modest beginnings into a mighty empire. The sailing ship, the covered wagon, the steamboat and the railroad have all played mighty parts and, to these, have now been added the automobile, the diesel-driven streamliners and the airplane.

A century of progress was dramatically celebrated

first by the Lewis and Clark Exposition at Portland, in 1905, and later by the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition at Seattle, in 1909. These two great shows served notice on the nation that the Pacific Northwest had grown up.

*CHAPTER XVI*





*Established & Proposed*  
**DAMS**  
*on the*  
**Columbia & Snake Rivers**

## *Today and Tomorrow*

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**I**t is a far cry from the strange land of weird beasts and tropical plants, described by old Dr. Condon, to the modern empire which comprises the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. Although he was able to prove to himself and to his fellow scientists the truth of his amazing discoveries, it must have required no little imagination, even for the pioneer geologist, to picture the brontosaurus and the mastodon roaming through the lush vegetation of the prehistoric Oregon Country.

Still, if by some stroke of magic, Thomas Condon could return to life for a single day and could fly over

vast areas of his beloved Pacific Northwest by plane, he would find it almost as difficult to understand the immense changes which have taken place. This is all the more remarkable in that little more than a generation has passed since his death.

The Oregon Country itself is still the land that Dr. Condon knew. It is still a land of striking contrasts—a land of green trees, fertile valleys, lofty mountains, mighty streams and high plateaus. The glories of nature have not been dimmed by the passage of years but, to them, have been added the achievements of man. Back in 1843, when men were called together to protect themselves against the Indians and the wild animals, only a handful of struggling white settlers could be mustered. Today there are nearly three-and-a-half million people living in this vast empire! They are responsible for the changes that would astound the old doctor could he but gaze upon them.

What are these changes and how have they affected the people of the Pacific Northwest? To discuss in detail even a few of them would require a book many times the size of this one and would require, as well, a staggering array of statistics. The figures are impressive but suppose we leave the bulk of them in the capable hands of local Chambers of Commerce and tell the highlights of our story briefly.

The Cascade Mountains, running north and south, divide the Pacific Northwest into two distinct types of

country. In the fertile valleys west of these mountains, the earliest settlers had no difficulty in raising varied crops. Nor have their descendants, to this day. East of the Cascades, though, only certain sections were adapted to cultivation without irrigation.

Nature has favored the Pacific Northwest by providing all of the necessities for profitable irrigation—freedom from severe storms in the summer time, plenty of snow in the mountains, sizable lakes for the storage of water and innumerable places where artificial reservoirs can be constructed. The Columbia Basin, with its nearly 2,000,000 acres, is the largest area in either of the two American continents which can be economically irrigated.

At first—despite these tremendous natural advantages—reclamation progressed slowly. When the missionaries of the American Board reached the Hudson's Bay Company's post at Walla Walla, they were astonished to discover that the officers of the fort were already using a crude system of irrigation to develop their little vegetable garden. Later, after they had become established, these missionaries taught the Indians how to grow certain crops by employing similar methods.

As the country developed, irrigation fell into the hands of individuals and small companies. Most of these projects failed but some of the companies were taken over by state irrigation districts. In time, the federal

government interested itself in this important activity. Working in cooperation with the various Pacific Northwest states, the government voted funds for the reclamation of sizable areas. Under this pretentious program, several hundred thousand acres of land were reclaimed for agriculture in Oregon and Idaho.

Then came the Reclamation Act of 1902. This important legislation provided for the establishment of a huge fund to be realized from the sale of public lands. The money was to be used for the construction of irrigation works and the reclaimed land was to be made available to homesteaders who agreed to pay for the cost of reclamation in ten annual installments without interest. So successful was the program that, by 1915, the fund amounted to a hundred million dollars!

Much was accomplished in the years which followed the passage of the Reclamation Act. In Oregon, the Umatilla and Owyhee projects have opened many thousands of acres to cultivation. Before the completion of Boulder Dam, in Nevada, the Owyhee Dam—five-hundred-and-twenty feet above its lowest foundation—was the tallest in the world. The Boise and Minidoka projects in Idaho and the Okanogan and Yakima systems in Washington produced similar benefits in those two states.

Dwarfing these earlier engineering achievements, though, is the colossal Columbia Basin Irrigation Project which is larger in scope than all other federal

irrigation projects put together. The program calls eventually for a series of ten dams in the Columbia between tidewater and the Canadian border. Although the construction cost will come to hundreds of millions, the taxable values created will be more than twice the cost. It is believed that the annual production from the land will practically equal the cost of reclaiming it. Residents of the Pacific Northwest have great hopes for this gigantic undertaking. They are convinced that the project will bring another million people into their country and prove of immense commercial benefit.

The Grand Coulee Dam—a part of this great project—is now being constructed, about a hundred and fifty miles downstream from the Canadian border, at a point where the Columbia River doubles back on itself and, for a few miles, flows northward. When completed, this mammoth dam will tower five hundred and fifty feet above bedrock and will raise the level of the Columbia three hundred and fifty-five feet. The river, behind it, will be backed up into the longest man-made lake in the world—a lake which will extend as far north as the Canadian boundary!

Grand Coulee is the mightiest engineering feat ever undertaken by man. Richard L. Neuberger, in his book, *Our Promised Land*, points out that this enormous structure will contain enough concrete to build a standard automobile highway from Philadelphia to Seattle and back by way of Los Angeles!

Two hundred and ninety miles downstream from Grand Coulee, Bonneville Dam—forty-two miles east of Portland at tidewater—is now virtually complete. It is twelve hundred and fifty feet long and one hundred and seventy feet high. Fishways are provided to permit salmon to ascend the Columbia to their spawning grounds on its upper tributaries. Also, a navigation lock enables ocean-going vessels to pass up the river as far as The Dalles. You can imagine how amazed Dr. Condon would be at the very thought of his old home town becoming a seaport!

Between Bonneville and Grand Coulee, eight more dams will eventually be constructed. Such, at least, is the program of the great Columbia Basin Irrigation Project. These gigantic developments are scheduled to bring undreamed-of wealth to the Pacific Northwest. Already, they are beginning to do so.

Although many thousands of acres remain to be reclaimed for cultivation, the record—even now—is impressive. With less than three per cent of the nation's population, the states which have been carved out of the old Oregon Country produce a tenth of the nation's wheat, a fourth of the apples, a fourth of the pears, a fifth of the cherries, a half of the hops and a fourteenth of the wool.

With all this promising agricultural future, lumber remains the leading industry of the section. Indeed some 90,000 workers make their living from it and

one-half of the standing timber of the United States is in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and western Montana.

Although staggering inroads into this vast natural resource have been made, over 750 billion feet of timber remain—enough, it is believed, to supply the country's soft-wood lumber needs for the remainder of this century. Men are working constantly on the problem of reforesting western hemlock—the source of pulpwood and the basis of the growing paper industry in the Pacific Northwest. It is their hope that the region's pulpwood supply can be made virtually inexhaustible. At present, busy mills in Washington and Oregon turn out prodigious quantities of newsprint, wrapping and book paper.

Along the coast are big stands of the majestic Douglas fir, named for the Scottish scientist who used to hobnob with Dr. McLoughlin. Except for the California redwoods, they are the tallest of all trees and they are vastly more important, commercially, than the forest giants of the Golden State. Fifty of these cloud-piercing Douglas firs, scaling an average of 5,000 board feet each, are not uncommon on a single acre. Made into lumber, this represents enough material to build ten five-room houses! Idaho also is rich in Douglas fir. Western larch predominates in the western sections of Montana while the Inland Empire claims forty per cent of the nation's supply of white pine and more than half of its western yellow pine.



Lumbering has been carried on from the distant days when the first sawmill was built near Fort Vancouver soon after the post was established. The early French Canadians—some of them at any rate—became lumbermen. As time passed, this infant industry was taken up by various of the Yankee pioneers and finally, when the Pacific Northwest began to attract the attention of the nation, vast armies of woodsmen from Minnesota, Wisconsin and other Middle Western states began to push westward.

These hardy lumberjacks brought with them the



fascinating legends of Paul Bunyan, the mythical work giant—tales which have been traced as far east as Maine. As the nation grew, so did Paul and faithful Blue Ox, Babe. In his enthusiasm—vast enough to match his gigantic stature—Paul believed that the white pine forests of Wisconsin would last forever. However, fire and wasteful exploitation soon exhausted them.

Paul Bunyan, the urge for logging still strong within him, next turned south to the long pine country. For a time he and Babe made the Mississippi their own private waterway but once again the wanderlust took possession of them. This time they moved into the extensive Douglas fir forests of the Pacific Northwest where these choice “whoppers” have at last found a permanent home.

Some say that the Paul Bunyan yarns are Norse in origin and well they may be. Certainly the lumberjacks who spread them far and wide and carried them west were largely Scandinavians. The “big Swede” of the forests, with his typical lingo, is as much a part of the Northwest lumber world as is Paul himself.

Although agriculture and lumber are the two leading basic industries of the Pacific Northwest, they are not the only ones. Mines and fisheries, though less important, must not be overlooked. Montana is the greatest copper state in the union. Elsewhere in the region, copper production is confined mainly to areas which lie across the international border, in Canada, although

there are limited deposits in the Coeur d'Alene district of Idaho as well as extensive properties on the Snake River in Idaho and Oregon which must await rail connections in order to enjoy their full development.

In the Coast Range of Oregon, in northeastern Washington and in Montana, there are substantial deposits of iron. Some day—when the iron supply of the eastern part of the United States begins to falter—it will pay to extract these ores, for they are high in metallic content. Washington contains the largest deposits of magnesite in the nation while Idaho boasts the richest stores of high-grade phosphate rock in the world. The exciting days of the gold rush are forgotten but gold and silver are still mined in substantial quantities in Oregon, Idaho and Montana. In various sections of the region are found zinc, graphite, gypsum, cobalt, nickel, mica, antimony, tungsten, lead, quicksilver and platinum.

We have already spoken of the importance of Pacific Northwest fisheries. Salmon, of course, is the leading catch. These fighting fish are plentiful along the coast lines of Oregon and Washington, in the Columbia River and in Alaska. Although the output of Alaska is the largest of all, Alaskan fisheries are outfitted from Oregon and Washington, and Alaskan products are largely marketed by these two states. Halibut, too, is an important food staple and so are pilchards, cod, herring, shad and small-sized oysters. All are shipped in

substantial quantities to the Atlantic seaboard, to South America and to Asia.

The gigantic lumber industry has made possible the growth of various allied trades which, year by year, have gained in prominence. Paper, made from pulpwood, is one of these. The manufacture of logging and mill equipment is another. Insulating board, created from pulverized wood waste, and plywood have become essential building materials. Mill waste ground into fire kindling—"hogged fuel"—is burned to advantage in numerous industrial plants. In the large cities of Seattle, Tacoma and Portland, the furniture industry has forged rapidly ahead—so rapidly, in fact, that each of these communities likes to be thought of as "the Grand Rapids of the West." In various towns and cities, small wood-working plants turn out a staggering number of products made from timber—products unheard of a scant few years ago.

The water-power resources of the Pacific Northwest are enormous. With the perfection of long-distance transmission, the region will be able to furnish two-thirds of the hydro-electric power of the nation. There will be electricity for manufacturing plants, for service in lighting, heating, cooking, operating streetcars, pumping water for irrigation and for countless other domestic and industrial uses!

Already the Bonneville Dam has a capacity of 194,000 horsepower and foundations for 626,000 addi-

tional horsepower. Large Eastern plants, which require vast quantities of cheap power, are casting covetous glances toward the Bonneville area. Prominent on the list are aluminum concerns, several of which have already purchased sites along the Columbia. Public Utility Districts for the use of Bonneville power are being organized in several sections of Oregon and southern Washington and private companies are negotiating for the use of power from the dam.

It is estimated that Bonneville and Grand Coulee will ultimately generate fourteen billion kilowatt hours of power—enough to supply the huge industrial state of New York! Who will use all of this power in the thinly settled stretches of the Oregon Country? That is one of the great questions which the people of the Pacific Northwest—and the people of the nation—will have to answer.

On the long, hard stretches between the Snake River and The Dalles—back in the days of the covered wagon trains—a few of the pioneers dropped out. These few were shrewd enough to observe the tall grass on the plateaus and to realize that the sage-clad valleys and rolling hills offered perfect grazing for cattle and sheep. They were the founders of this big industry in the Pacific Northwest. Others from the Middle West and Southwest joined them; later, disappointed gold seekers swelled their ranks.

It didn't take these cattle and sheep pioneers long to

appreciate their rare good fortune—to discover, for instance, that alfalfa producing lands are scattered generously throughout the region. This happy circumstance assured a source of winter feed close at hand. Large areas of pine timber, owned by the government, are available for summer grazing. Today, cattle and sheep owners can maintain their herds and flocks on a surprisingly small amount of privately-owned ground because of the presence of these large public tracts which—at a small cost per head per season—provide adequate grazing facilities during the summer. Because of this unique arrangement, a “home ranch” frequently comprises less than a tenth of the land usually needed for the herds that use it for winter feeding.

These and other natural advantages have resulted in the development of a prosperous livestock industry throughout the Pacific Northwest. Some of the nation’s most elaborate sheep-ranching operations are located in eastern Washington and eastern Oregon. Portland claims the largest union stock yards west of Chicago and a wool market which is second only to Boston’s. The Pacific International Livestock Exposition, an annual affair in Portland, is the most important show of its kind in the entire West.

Coastwise shipping has been a significant factor in the growth of the North Pacific states for many years. It dates back to the romantic era of the sailing ship. As soon as the transcontinental railroads reached the coast,

trans-Pacific shipping began to increase—especially from Puget Sound—which is several hundred miles nearer the Orient than San Francisco.

Seattle is the area's chief port as well as the gateway to Alaska. As a result of the building of a ship canal through Lake Washington, Seattle added a fresh-water harbor to her port. Portland is next in importance as a seaport. For a long time, the shallow and dangerous entrance to the Columbia River provided a major hazard for shipping but the federal government, at great expense, has built jetties on both sides of the river's mouth. These jetties, extending several miles into the sea, have confined the discharge of the Columbia to a limited area and have created a deep channel more than a mile in width. Dredging in the river itself has removed minor obstacles so that Portland has become a keen competitor for shipping supremacy.

Until the outbreak of the present European war, the ports of Seattle and Portland were visited regularly by numerous ships flying the flags of many nations. Now, of necessity, shipping is confined principally to American vessels. When peace comes again to the world, the shipping and foreign trade of the Pacific Northwest will resume their old pace and undoubtedly will set up new records.

There are other industries of growing importance in the region—flour, canned goods, linen, dairy products,

beet sugar, woolens, dried fruit, leather, meat-packing, clothing and shipbuilding—to mention only a few.

From the emphasis we have placed on commerce and industry, the impression might be gained that life in the Pacific Northwest is all work and no play. Few sections of the country can claim so many natural playgrounds, summer and winter. Broad stretches of level sandy beach, picturesque rocks that jut into the ocean, sky-piercing peaks, green-wooded foothills, beautiful lakes and forest trails provide every type of diversion for the summer vacationist—swimming, boating, mountain climbing, hunting, fishing, hiking, riding and many other sports.

So varied is the scenery, from season to season, that it is hard to say which is the lovelier—summer or winter. Seasoned travelers along the Columbia River Highway, from Portland to The Dalles, never cease to marvel that the view is not twice the same. Cloud effects, water and wind combine to produce a kaleidoscopic picture, ever-changing and ever beautiful. Sailing on Puget Sound and among the San Juan Islands is considered by many to be the finest in the world.

As for winter sports, the tourist will find no better facilities anywhere than at Mt. Rainier, in Washington; Timberline Lodge at the base of Mt. Hood, in Oregon; and Sun Valley in Idaho. So popular is the whole section becoming, in this regard, that many of the outstanding ski tournaments of the country are



now held at these and other resorts. Although the state of Washington originally conceived the slogan, "The Evergreen Playground," it has been truthfully applied to the entire section.

What of the people themselves? They are hard-working, conscientious citizens, proud of the Pacific Northwest and its brilliant background, and proud to be Americans. Most of them rejoice that the federal government has chosen to spend vast sums for the further development of their region. Those in other sections who question the wisdom of these expenditures should recall one historical fact that is not generally recognized. The Pacific Northwest was acquired by the United States without cost. A rich empire was gained solely through colonization and diplomacy. Every other chunk of Uncle Sam's territory was either won in battle or purchased!

The residents of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana have built substantial farms, towns and cities. They have established good school systems, as well as superior state universities and private institutions of higher education. Poets and prose writers have gained national recognition. Some of them have employed the rich historical material which their section provides while others have cast far afield for worthy subjects. Gradually, a characteristic literature of the Northwest is emerging. To the nation, this corner of the country has contributed its full share of distinguished men and

women—statesmen, musicians, clergymen, actors, bankers, businessmen, architects, painters, doctors, lawyers, editors, and so on down the list.

The Pacific Northwest has come a long way. It has a great distance yet to go. It is a rich and beautiful land, not quite grown up, but steadily emerging from youth. Its future is an open book but the descendants of those who built the country and the newcomers who join them each year have a solid foundation upon which to build. So far, they have built wisely and well. With the examples of Captain Robert Gray, Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, Jason Lee, Marcus Whitman and Dr. John McLoughlin to inspire them, how can they fail?









