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Old Fort Vancouver, 1824-1829

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The First Buildings

It was probably late in November or early in December, 1824, when the work party sent out by Governor Simpson reached the site selected for the new depot. Under whose supervision the construction was commenced is not known, but undoubtedly McLoughlin visited the scene of operations at frequent intervals. At any rate, the building was pushed forward at a rapid rate.

By March 18, 1825, Governor Simpson was able to note in his diary that the new fort was "well picketted covering a space of about 3/4ths of an acre and the buildings already completed are a Dwelling House, two good Stores an Indian Hall and temporary quarters for the people." [1] From remarks made by subsequent visitors to the post it would appear that the "Little Emperor" used the term "completed" somewhat loosely, but it is clear that substantial progress had been made in the short space of about three months.

Coincident with the first blows of the axe which felled the timber for the new buildings was the laying out of Governor Simpson's cherished farm. Sod was broken on the upper prairie adjoining the construction site, and a field was laid out for potatoes and other vegetables. [2]

Description of the New Post

Beyond the brief word-picture given in Simpson's journal, practically nothing is known of the appearance and ground plan of the new depot. [3] But from certain hints dropped by travelers, a few generalizations may be made.

Dr. John Scouler, who visited the Columbia during 1825 as medical officer on the Company's brig *William and Ann*, mentioned in his journal that the new post was "built on the same plan" as Fort George, but was not so large. [4] While it would be rash to interpret Scouler's words too literally, they would appear to indicate that the establishment at the "Jolie Prairie" was surrounded by a stockade

formed of fir log pickets, each of which was from twelve to fifteen feet in height and about six inches in diameter. This palisade enclosed a rectangle of ground about three-quarters of an acre in area. At two diagonal corners, probably the southwest and the northeast, stood bastions or blockhouses built of stout logs or square-hewn timbers.

The main entrance probably was a large double gate located in the south wall of the palisade, overlooking the river. This gate must have opened into a large square court, around which were ranged the buildings mentioned by Governor Simpson. If the plan of Fort George was followed exactly, the Indian Hall or trading shop and the storehouses formed the east side of the court, while the officers' dwelling and the shelters for the servants ranged along the north and west sides. [5]

Dedication and Naming of Fort Vancouver

Even while construction of the storehouses was going on, lighters and canoes were kept busily traveling up and down the river transferring stores and supplies from Fort George to the new depot. By March 16, all the valuable property had been removed from the former Astoria. On that day, accordingly, when Governor Simpson, with Chief Factor Kennedy and Chief Trader McMillan, left Fort George to begin their long homeward journey to Norway House, there was nothing to keep McLoughlin at the mouth of the river any longer. In company with the Governor, the Doctor set out up the Columbia to assume charge of the new headquarters.

"Belle Vue Point" was reached at eleven o'clock on the morning of March 18. Governor Simpson had nothing but praise for those who had built the post and selected its location. "It will in Two Years hence be the finest place in North America," he predicted, "indeed I have rarely seen a Gentleman's Seat in England possessing so many natural advantages and where ornament and use are so agreeably combined." Evidently the Governor had little objection to "an air or appearance of Grandeur & consequence in a fur-trading post when he himself founded it!

All that night Simpson sat up making last-minute arrangements for the government of the Columbia Department after his departure. And when dawn broke on March 19 there was but one more task to accomplish before he could say farewell to Dr. McLoughlin. His own journal best records the event:

At Sun rise mustered all the people to hoist the Flag Staff of the new Establishment and in presence of the Gentlemen, Servants, Chiefs & Indians I Baptised it by breaking a Bottle of Rum on the Flag Staff and repeating the following words in a loud voice, "In behalf of the Honble Hudsons Bay Co. I hereby name this Establishment *Fort Vancouver* God Save King George the 4th" with three cheers. Gave a couple of Drams to the people and Indians on the occasion. The object of naming it after that distinguished navigator is to identify our claim to the Soil and Trade with his discovery of the River and Coast on behalf of Gt Britain. If the Honble Committee however do not approve the Name it can be altered. At 9 o'Clock A.M. took leave of our Friend the Dr, embarked and continued our Voyage. [6]

In referring to Vancouver's "discovery" of the Columbia River, Governor Simpson had in mind the patriotic, if somewhat novel and specious claim advanced in 1792 by the explorer and his assistant, Lieutenant Broughton. Making "a fine distinction between the river and its estuary," the two British navigators stoutly maintained that Captain Gray had never seen the Columbia and that the true credit for its discovery should go to Broughton. This theory proved too much even for some Britons to swallow, however, and the point was not greatly stressed in later negotiations over the Oregon boundary. [7]

Simpson's choice of a name for the post was not, as some have supposed, an attempt to link the site of the depot with Lieutenant Broughton's "Point Vancouver"-a projection seen by the explorer from the point of his farthest ascent of the Columbia and named by him after his commander. Broughton's "Point Vancouver" was a number of miles upstream from "the Jolie Prairie," and this fact was clearly recognized by the people on the spot in 1825. [8]

The removal of the headquarters and depot to Fort Vancouver was later fully approved by the Committee in London. [9] And evidently the directors also approved of the name selected by Simpson, because no attempt was made to change it. The post remained "Fort Vancouver" as long as it continued its existence, and the name is perpetuated today by the City of Vancouver which grew up on the lands occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company's establishment.

McLoughlin: Supreme Ruler of the Columbia

When Simpson turned his back on Fort Vancouver and struck out for Norway House, he did not feel that his work on the Columbia had been completed. To implement the reforms and "to put the Machine in full play" he believed his presence would be "absolutely necessary on this side the Mountain one more Winter at least." In fact, so engrossed had he become in the affairs of the western department that he hoped the Committee would permit him to spend twelve or eighteen months personally supervising the trade of the Pacific Coast. [10]

Meanwhile, he intended that the administration of the department should be in the capable hands of the man he had selected for the task. Since the days of the union, in 1821, the question of the extent of the authority of a chief factor over other chief factors or even over the chief traders in his district had been a matter of some dispute. Particularly had this been true on the Columbia. In theory the chief factor at Fort George had been entrusted with the superintendency of the department generally, but Simpson found that McLoughlin's predecessors had declined to exercise their authority to its full extent. Every commissioned gentleman in charge of a post had considered "that he alone had the entire control in all matters and arrangements connected therewith" and had treated the chief factor at the departmental headquarters merely as a "store keeper or agent placed there to answer his demands."

Determined to put an end to this state of affairs, the Governor wrote McLoughlin a letter a few days before his departure. Due to the distance of the department from the Committee and Council, he said, it was essential for McLoughlin to take over the direction of the trade. "I beg leave to recommend nay to request the favor of your exercising the powers vested in you," he wrote, specifying further that the Doctor was to have "a certain discretionary or controlling power in the appointments, Outfits, distribution of the people and other important arrangements." Any resistance to his authority was to be reported to the Committee in London. [11]

These orders were undoubtedly a source of much satisfaction to McLoughlin, but actually they did not mean that he had any great freedom of action as far as managing the trade was concerned. Simpson left detailed instructions covering practically every phase of the business, and new orders continued to arrive from the Governor during succeeding years. It was not until much later that McLoughlin began to act on his own responsibility to any appreciable extent, and when he did, his course resulted in what was, in essence, his dismissal from the Company.

Although relations between the Governor and McLoughlin appear to have been perfectly friendly during the winter they spent together at Fort George, and although the two men were in general accord concerning the policies adopted, yet it must have been with some relief that the Doctor watched Simpson disappear up the broad Columbia. A district manager had little opportunity to exercise his

proper functions when the "Little Emperor" was about, and McLoughlin was probably heartily glad that those sharp blue eyes, "ever ablaze in peace or war," were to be directed elsewhere for at least a brief period. Besides, he had already begun to doubt the wisdom of a few of the measures advocated by his chief.

Abandonment of Fort George

When Simpson and McLoughlin started from Fort George for the new depot on March 16, all the property of the old establishment had not yet been transferred. Alexander McKenzie, a clerk who also served as a surgeon and trader, a man named "Cartie" or perhaps "Cartier," and eight other employees were left behind with the expectation that they would remain two or three weeks until the "few remaining articles" were removed. [12]

The transfer took longer than expected, however. A war broke out among the Indians near Fort George, and a large number of them congregated about the former depot. Fearing that they might be encouraged to attack the post when they saw how few men were guarding it, McLoughlin was forced to send down a reinforcement from Fort Vancouver, and the work of transporting property was temporarily halted. On April 24, the brigade bringing the furs from the interior arrived at the new depot, an addition to his staff which enabled the Doctor to renew his lightering operations. Beginning on April 26, he kept all the boats at his disposal "constantly employed" at this task. Nevertheless it was June 7 before the last boats and the last men left Fort George, and only when they reached Fort Vancouver on June 11 was McLoughlin at last able to say that the shift of the departmental depot had been completed. [13]

A visitor to Fort George in September, 1825, found the place "entirely abandoned" by the Company and in the possession of the Indians, who were rapidly reducing it to a state of "ruin & filth." [14] The tender mercies of the savages, aided by fire, brought the once proud fort nearly to complete ruin during the next several years. But during 1829 McLoughlin sent a party to re-occupy the post, and thereafter it continued to operate on a much reduced scale well into the period of American rule of the Oregon country.

Continued Construction at Fort Vancouver

The same factors which had slowed the transfer of property also helped to retard construction work at Fort Vancouver. The necessity of sending reinforcements to Fort George "in a great measure" put a halt to McLoughlin's building operations. Then, on April 11, 1825, the brig *William and Ann*, dispatched by the Company from London with the annual supplies, anchored in the Columbia opposite Fort George. It evidently was not considered feasible at the time to take so large a vessel-about 161 tons-up the river to the new depot. At any rate, the *William and Ann* discharged her cargo at Fort George, and all the goods had to be freighted upstream in lighters, causing a further drain on the manpower available for construction.

In addition, the vessel required extensive repairs. Since McLoughlin had orders from the Committee and from Simpson to employ the *William and Ann* during the summer to make the long-projected voyage of exploration on the Northwest Coast, he directed Alexander McKenzie at Fort George to drop all other activities and aid in getting the ship ready for sea. A caulker was sent down from Fort Vancouver to aid in the task, and iron work and timber were supplied. Perhaps the blacksmithing was done at the forge which, according to tradition, the old Astorian, William Cannon, set up under a majestic fir tree during the construction of Fort Vancouver. [15]

But the arrival of the *William and Ann* did forward the building at Fort Vancouver to a certain extent. In her hold the directors had sent out some bricks and tiles which evidently had been requested by some of the earlier chief factors for use at Fort George. The cost was "trifling," the Committee told Simpson, a fact which became only too apparent to McLoughlin. He found the bricks to be "of a very inferior quality," but seemingly they were used for making chimneys at Fort Vancouver. Also, the two carpenters sent out in the vessel for the new depot did not know how to caulk. Being thus of little use for the repair of the *William and Ann*, they may have been sent up to Fort Vancouver for the summer. They both returned to England in the fall, however. [16]

During most of the remainder of 1825, an acute lack of manpower brought the construction work at the new depot practically to a standstill. McLoughlin was required by his orders to send out all of his available men on the various expeditions projected by Governor Simpson and the Committee. The *William and Ann* sailed for the north on June 2, the brigade for the interior posts left on June 21, and the expedition up the Willamette took its departure on August 20. For some time after this last date, the entire staff of Fort Vancouver consisted of the Doctor, a clerk, two upper-grade servants, and seven "common men." [17]

The lack of progress in building is graphically illustrated by the plight of David Douglas, a botanist who arrived in the *William and Ann* to collect specimens on behalf of the Royal Horticultural Society. Reaching Fort Vancouver on April 20, he found that there were "no houses yet built," words which would seem to indicate that the "temporary quarters for the people" mentioned by Simpson were nothing more than tents. There being no better accommodations available, Douglas was housed in a tent, which was later replaced by a lodge of deerskin. When this structure became too small to house his growing collections, he was placed in a bark hut near the river bank. On Christmas Eve heavy rains flooded this dwelling until there were fourteen inches of water in it. "As my lodgings were not of the most comfortable sort," he noted in his journal, "Mr. McLoughlin kindly invited me to a part of his house in a half-finished state. Therefore on Christmas Day all my little things were removed to my new dwelling." [18]

Even during the next year when he had more men available, McLoughlin did not press the construction of permanent buildings. He knew that it was Simpson's intention to shift the departmental depot to Fraser River as quickly as possible, although he had some doubts concerning the suitability of that location. Furthermore, he believed that should the area south of the Columbia be granted to the United States, the trade of the north side alone would not be sufficient to pay the costs of maintaining any post on the north bank of the river. In order to keep his men from deserting to the opponents when they arrived, he considered it necessary to construct a new depot to the northward before the Americans should get established on the south bank. For these reasons, he told the Committee on September 1, 1826, "I erected only such Buildings at this place as are immediately required." The main effort of his available manpower was directed to the construction of two small vessels to be used in the coastal trade and in moving the headquarters to their new location. [19]

It was not until late in 1827 that McLoughlin received the assuring word from Simpson that no arrangement concerning a boundary was likely in the near future, and probably not until the summer of the next year did he learn that on August 6, 1827, the joint-occupation agreement had been definitely extended. [20] While the matter of the permanent location of the departmental depot had not yet been settled, McLoughlin could now be reasonably certain that the posts on the north bank of the Columbia would not be abandoned altogether.

Perhaps it was this assurance which induced him to go ahead with some additional permanent improvements at Fort Vancouver. It was in 1828, evidently, that a small sawmill was erected on a stream about five or six miles above the fort and almost immediately on the north bank of the Columbia. [21] It is probable, however, that little was done in the way of permanent building within the stockade itself. As shall be seen, before much could have been accomplished along this line, an event occurred which was to change the entire picture of Fort Vancouver's intended destiny.

The only known description of the old Fort Vancouver as it stood at the moment of its greatest development is the very brief one by the American trapper, Jedediah Smith, who spent the winter of 1828-1829 within its hospitable walls. He noted that the establishment housed "mechanics of various kinds, to wit, blacksmiths, gunsmiths, carpenters, coopers, tinner and baker." He observed that the Company had a "good" sawmill on the river above the fort and also a gristmill "worked by hand, but intended to work by water." Since McLoughlin had built two small coasting vessels by the time of Smith's visit, the inference is that there was also a boatyard and perhaps a boatshed down on the bank of the Columbia. In regard to armament, Smith later stated that "twelve pounders were the heaviest cannon which he saw." [22]

The Fort Vancouver Farm, 1821-1829: Field Crops

As has been seen, a portion of the "handsome" upper prairie of some 300 acres on which Fort Vancouver was located had been broken by the plow at about the same time the construction of the post had commenced. Early in the spring of 1825 a large crop of potatoes, two bushels of peas, some beans, and perhaps a few seeds of other garden vegetables were planted. The returns of that first year were heartening, amounting to 900 barrels of potatoes and 9-1/2 bushels of peas.

Late in that same year the fall express from Hudson Bay brought a generous freight of seeds from Governor Simpson. The seed was not of good quality and had been damaged in transit, but it was nonetheless welcome. It was evidently early in 1826 that McLoughlin planted two bushels of spring wheat, an act which is generally held to mark the beginning of wheat growing in the present State of Washington. At the same time he planted two bushels of barley, one bushel of oats, some Indian corn, and a quart of timothy. Although the potato crop for 1826 was poor, the grains and other vegetables yielded well. After the harvest McLoughlin was able to tell the Committee that it would no longer be necessary to import Indian corn into the Columbia department, and he could predict that after 1828 the wheat grown at Fort Vancouver would supply all the flour needed in the Company's establishments west of the Rockies.

Through the expedient of saving and replanting the greater part of the grain yields, the Doctor was able to make his forecast come true. The wheat crop of 1828 amounted to between 800 and 1000 bushels, the kernels "full and plump, and making good flour." That year fourteen acres of peas, eight acres of oats, and four or five of barley were harvested, in addition to the yield from a "fine" kitchen garden. In November, Governor Simpson was able to boast that "we have now a two years stock of Grain on hand, so that we shall not require either Flour or Grain from England in future." [23]

The Fort Vancouver Farm, 1821-1829: Fruit

When Jedediah Smith reached Fort Vancouver in August, 1828, he found "some small apple trees and grape vines" growing at the establishment. Although he probably was not aware of the fact, he was gazing upon the first cultivated fruits in the Pacific Northwest. [24]

Knowledge of the exact origin of these trees and vines has perhaps been forever lost in the tangled mass of fact, tradition, and fiction which over the years has grown up concerning them. But new documents are continually being made public, and hope remains that someday it will be possible to quiet, once and for all, the doubts surrounding the beginnings of fruit culture at Fort Vancouver.

As early as 1836 a visitor to the Hudson's Bay depot on the Columbia heard and recorded the story of the origin of the apple trees and grape vines at the establishment. According to this account, twelve years earlier a gentleman attending a dinner party in London had put the seeds of the grapes and apples which he ate for dessert into his vest pocket. Shortly thereafter he made a voyage to the Columbia, where, discovering the seeds still in his pocket, he left them at Vancouver to be carefully planted. [25]

Essentially the same story, with some romantic embellishments, was in later years told by descendants of John McLoughlin. [26] Undoubtedly it is fundamentally true, and upon its authority some historians have assigned the date 1825, or even 1824, to the beginnings of fruit culture on the Columbia.

Disconcertingly, however, many of these same stories name Lieutenant Æmilius Simpson, superintendent of the Company's shipping on the Pacific Coast, as the man who brought the seeds in his vest pocket. And here again, contemporary evidence seems to substantiate the legend. While on a visit to the Hawaiian Islands, seemingly in 1828 or very early in 1829, Simpson told a missionary about the agricultural possibilities of the Oregon country and the activities at Fort Vancouver. "He says," related the missionary in a letter of February, 1829, "he has himself planted the grape and the apple at that place." [27] But Simpson did not leave England until early in 1826 and did not reach Vancouver, after an overland journey from York Factory, until November 2 of that year. Thus, if he did bring the original apple and grape seeds with him, they probably were not planted before the spring of 1827. [28]

The Fort Vancouver Farm, 1821-1829: Livestock

According to Governor Simpson, the livestock at Fort George at the time of its abandonment numbered thirty-one head of cattle and seventeen hogs, the heritage of the small herds built up by the Astorians and Nor'Westers, chiefly through imports from California and the Hawaiian Islands. McLoughlin himself stated in 1833 that there were only seventeen cows in 1824. These animals, or most of them, were transferred to Fort Vancouver early in 1825. McLoughlin later asserted that the original herd of cattle at the new depot totaled only twenty-seven head, large and small. In addition, a sizable herd of horses was quickly built up at Vancouver, either through transfer from other posts or through purchases from the Indians. A visitor in May, 1825, noted that 120 horses, in addition to the cattle, were grazing on the large plain between the fort and the river.

In order to increase the size of his herds as rapidly as possible, McLoughlin determined that no cattle should be killed, except an occasional bull to supply rennet for cheese-making. This policy received hearty support from Governor Simpson and was rigidly adhered to, despite occasional grumblings from the employees and the sometimes vehement protests of visiting seamen, until 1836, when the first cow was killed for food.

Fort Vancouver quickly proved to be an ideal location for the raising of cattle. Under McLoughlin's wise conservation program, the herds increased rapidly. In March, 1829, Governor Simpson could report that the stock of cattle at Vancouver was 153 head, "independent of calves."

The hogs, on the other hand, got off to a slow start. Four of them died the first year from eating poisonous plants, and wolves devoured several more during the next season. But after 1826 the rate of increase gave no grounds for complaint. By the spring of 1829 there were some 200 hogs at Vancouver, and in addition a substantial number had been slaughtered for consumption as salt pork or to provide fresh meat for the table.

Besides cattle, horses, and hogs, there were about fifty goats at the depot by March, 1829; and a visitor who was at the fort during the winter of 1828-1829 noticed "the usual domestic fowls." Although still dependent to some extent upon imports of salted meat, the Columbia Department by the spring of 1829 was well on its way to becoming the self-sustaining unit which Governor Simpson had planned. [29]

Western Headquarters and Depot

When he returned to York Factory from the Columbia in the summer of 1825, Governor Simpson was still of the opinion that New Caledonia should be outfitted from the West Coast rather than Norway House, but he had changed his mind concerning the immediate use of Fraser River as the route of supply. Perhaps he realized that the depot planned for the mouth of the Fraser could not be constructed during the next year; or, more likely, he had encountered someone who had experienced the turbulence of the middle Fraser and had convinced him that it might at least be well to explore the route further before entrusting the precious outfits and returns to its rushing waters. At any rate, when the Council for the Northern Department met at York Factory in July, it directed the resident chief factor of New Caledonia to take the fur returns of his district to Fort Vancouver in the spring of 1826 and to receive there his supplies for the ensuing season.

These instructions were obeyed, the route used being that opened by the North Westers in 1813. The Fraser was navigated as far as Fort Alexandria, from whence pack horses carried the goods to Kamloops and on to Fort Okanogan. From the latter place, boats were employed to descend the Columbia to Fort Vancouver.

The inauguration of the new system of supply was not too happy. A loss of horses at Alexandria in 1826 made it impossible to ship all the furs to Fort Vancouver, and some returns continued to be sent to York Factory. Because the Columbia could not supply the buffalo and other large skins necessary for fur-trading operations, leather was still sent annually to New Caledonia from east of the Rockies. The new route, however, was generally satisfactory and was used until the Oregon Treaty of 1846 made it necessary to find another north of the forty-ninth parallel in order to avoid American tariffs. [30]

In February, 1826, the Governor and Committee told Simpson that they approved his plan of attaching New Caledonia to the Columbia Department, but Simpson himself appears to have approached the actual amalgamation of the two districts into a single administrative unit with some degree of caution. [31] The action of the Council in 1825 did, in effect, unite the areas for purposes of supply and transportation, but there is no clear indication in the minutes that any closer union was intended. In the minutes of the Council of 1826 the two districts continue to be treated as separate units, and the chief factor of New Caledonia was specifically authorized "to make the requisite appointments of Officers and Servants, to the different Posts and stations as he may see fit." The only indication of a trend toward unity, if it may be called such, is a provision requiring the New Caledonia accounts to be closed and sent to York Factory "in the same manner and on the same principle as those from the Columbia District." [32]

Not until 1827 do the minutes of the Council indicate that another step in the merger had been taken. In the record of the proceedings for that year there is definite mention of "the New Caledonia section of the Columbia Dept^{mt}," and the arrangements for the two districts clearly reveal a tendency to consider all the territory west of the Rockies as a single unit. Most important was the proviso that "the annual Accounts of the Columbia Department including the section of New Caledonia be made up in one complete set and not as heretofore in two distinct sets and that they be forwarded under the charge of the Columbia Accountant p. Express Canoe sufficiently early to be at Edmonton on or before the 10 May." [33] From this date New Caledonia and the Columbia Department were firmly merged for purposes of finance.

As regards the actual administration of trading operations and the supervision of personnel, however, the matter of the degree of unification obtained is not so clear. There was obviously an intent to make New Caledonia a subordinate district of the larger Columbia Department. The term "New Caledonia section of the Columbia Department" was soon abandoned, but New Caledonia appointments generally continued to be listed by the Council under the heading "Columbia Continued-New Caledonia." [34] Not until 1840 did the minutes of the Council specifically state that New Caledonia was "comprehended" within the Columbia Department. Two years later the extent of the larger administrative unit was made crystal clear by the statement that the Columbia Department was "understood to comprehend the Columbia proper, the N. W. Coast, New Caledonia, Sandwich Islands, and the Marine Department." [35]

As early as 1829, Simpson described McLoughlin as the "head factor and chief resident-Manager of the Hudson's Bay Company on the western coast of the continent." [36] Undoubtedly such was the case in theory. In actual practice, however, McLoughlin showed very little interest in the affairs of New Caledonia, and the management of that district was left to its resident chief factor. The practical autonomy of New Caledonia was recognized by the Council of the Northern Department, which generally specifically provided that the chief factor there was to have discretion to assign posts to the personnel within his own jurisdiction.

Much is said in histories of the Hudson's Bay Company about the four great departments into which its territories in North America were divided-the Northern, the Southern, the Montreal, and the Columbia. But it should be borne in mind that the Columbia Department was by no means on an equal footing with the Northern Department. All during the period of McLoughlin's chief factorship, the affairs of the Columbia were under the control of Governor Simpson and the Council for the Northern Department. Indeed, from the minutes of the Council, one gains the impression that for all practical purposes the Columbia and New Caledonia were treated as separate districts and on a par with the regular fur-trading districts east of the mountains. Merely because of his great distance from the seat of government and because of the multifarious nature of the operations under his charge was the chief factor on the Columbia permitted a somewhat greater discretion than was granted to other district managers.

As long as McLoughlin remained the sole chief manager of the Columbia Department, therefore, his jurisdiction for purposes of operations and personnel management consisted of the Columbia district proper and, as they were developed, the Northwest Coast, the coastal shipping, and the outposts in California and Hawaii. And even over this territory he generally merely carried out the policies laid down by Governor Simpson, who, in turn, received his instructions from the Committee in London. These facts must be considered when speaking of Fort Vancouver as the headquarters for all the operations of the Hudson's Bay Company west of the Rocky Mountains.

The matter of the permanent location of the Company's main western depot was likewise slow in being settled. The doubts Simpson had shown at the Council meeting of 1825 concerning the suitability of the Fraser as a route of supply were evidently strengthened during the remainder of that year. "It is not my opinion that it affords a communication by which the interior Country can be supplied from the Coast, or that it can be depended on as an outlet for the returns of the interior," he told a representative of the British government in January, 1826; and at the same time he stated that the free navigation of the Columbia, "the only navigable River to the Interior from the Coast, we are acquainted with," was essential for the conduct of the Company's business west of the mountains. [37]

The London directors also had some doubts on the subject. In February, 1826, they directed Simpson to establish the projected post on Fraser River "next season if possible," and went on to say that the "central situation" of the new establishment would probably prove it "to be the proper place for the principle depot." But Simpson was told not to move the depot to the Fraser "until we have passed at least one year there and acquired a knowledge of the character and disposition of the Natives and ascertained whether the navigation of the River is favorable to the Plan of making it the principal communication with the Interior." [38]

McLoughlin, meanwhile, had been investigating the Fraser River. Late in 1826 and early in 1827 he reported to his superiors that the stream was very dangerous and almost entirely unnavigable in certain sections. [39] Nevertheless, Simpson during this same period swung back to his earlier opinion concerning the northern waterway. In July, 1827, he told McLoughlin that the New Caledonia returns and supplies should be transported by way of Fraser River if the navigation of that stream should be practicable "of which from the various reports that have reached us there can be no doubt." Within a few years, he predicted, the mouth of the Fraser would undoubtedly "become our principal Depot for the country west of the Mountains." [40] While the pros and cons were thus being debated, the depot continued to rest uneasily at Fort Vancouver. Not until the autumn of 1828 was the idea of moving it to the Fraser definitely abandoned.

Development of the Columbia Department, 1825-1829

This uncertainty concerning the location of the depot and the possibility that the country south of the Columbia might pass at any time to the United States made it difficult for McLoughlin to carry out any long-range program during the first years of his incumbency at Fort Vancouver. Only after the renewal of the joint-occupation agreement in 1827 was the way ahead of him somewhat clear. The London Committee made it plain that a still more aggressive policy was to be carried out on the West Coast as a result of the Convention. "It becomes an important object to acquire as ample an occupation of the Country and Trade as possible, on the South as well as on the North side of the Columbia River," Simpson was told. Any American traders appearing in the area were to be vigorously opposed; they were to be undersold until they became discouraged with the trade. [41] It may be assumed that Simpson lost no time in passing these orders on to McLoughlin.

The new policy is revealed in the matter of the transfer of the activities of Spokane House to the new Fort Colville. The shift had finally been made in 1826, but due to the boundary question, McLoughlin had not rushed matters and had been dilatory about making substantial improvements. After an assurance from Simpson in 1827 that there was no possibility of the line being settled for many years, however, the buildings at Colville were pushed ahead more rapidly. As at Vancouver, extensive farming and stock-raising activities were carried on, and with the later introduction of a flour mill and bake shop, as well as the usual blacksmith and carpenter shops, Colville became a center of supply for the upper Columbia and New Caledonia areas. [42]

The Snake brigades continued to extend their operations. Peter Skene Ogden's expedition of 1824-1825 ran into some difficulties. Twenty-three of Ogden's men deserted to an American party encountered on Bear River, and some of the deserters took their furs, traps, and horses with them. Furthermore, the leader of the American party told Ogden to leave the country, saying the territory belonged to the United States. Despite these and other troubles, Ogden returned to Fort Nez Percés in November, 1825, with the "very handsome" returns of 3,188 made beaver. Partly to reap more such profits and partly to hurl the defy at the Americans who had ordered the Company out of grounds open to the citizens of both nations, McLoughlin sent Ogden out again almost immediately. In order to reduce desertions, the Doctor decided to lower the prices on goods sold to the freemen and to raise the prices paid for furs. These changes, effective in the summer of 1826, did much to improve the morale of the men. The reforms were later approved by both Simpson and the Committee, and they were of some importance since, as Dr. W. Kaye Lamb has pointed out, they marked the first occasion upon which McLoughlin "personally intervened decisively in the affairs of the Columbia District." [43]

In 1828 and 1829 Ogden pushed the limits of his operations as far as the Great Salt Lake, the Humboldt River, and Pit River in northern California; and during 1829 and 1830 his party ranged through the San Joaquin Valley. By 1831 a number of new trapping areas had been discovered, and McLoughlin, somewhat too optimistically as it turned out, was able to write that one of the chief

objects of the Snake expeditions had been accomplished. "I broke up the American party in the Snake Country," he boasted, "and I did this simply by underselling them and showing them we could afford to sell the trappers at European servants' prices." [44]

Next to the Snake brigades, the most important trapping expeditions under McLoughlin's jurisdiction were the "Southern" parties. Governor Simpson designated Finan McDonald, a clerk, to lead the first of these revitalized brigades to the Umpqua territory and left instructions that the hunt was to be pushed to the "Banks of the Rio Colorado." Delayed by the Indian troubles at Fort George in the spring of 1825, however, McDonald got a late start. Crossing southeastward to the Klamath Country, his expedition was not a success, and he was forced to finish out the season in company with Ogden's Snake country brigade. In 1826 the command of the Umpqua expedition was turned over to Chief Trader Alexander Roderick McLeod. During the summer of 1826 and the winters of 1826-1827 and 1827-1828, he trapped to the southward, reaching the Klamath in 1827, but achieved no measure of success as far as returns were concerned. After recovering the furs lost by Jedediah Smith's company on the Umpqua during the fall of 1828, McLeod crossed the mountains to the Sacramento Valley during the next year. But on the return journey his company was caught in a severe storm and was forced to cache its furs. These "Southern" parties were outfitted directly from Fort Vancouver and while they never produced large profits, "they served the important strategic purpose of keeping the country occupied, and frequently gave employment to men who would otherwise have been relatively idle." [45]

In addition to the Snake and Umpqua brigades, there were several other trading and trapping parties which operated with some regularity in the Columbia Department. Small expeditions were sent out at intervals, for instance, to carry the trade to the Flathead, Kootenai, Cayuse, and Blackfoot Indians. [46]

The Coastal Trade

McLoughlin did his best to carry out the wishes of the Committee and Governor Simpson concerning the extension of the trade along the coast, but during the first five or six years of his rule on the Columbia he was able to accomplish relatively little in this direction. As instructed from London, he sent the supply vessel *William and Ann* northward during the late summer of 1825, but due largely to the hesitancy and timidity of the ship's captain, the cruise was a failure. Only about four hundred furs were procured, and little knowledge of the shore line was gained. But from the number of American vessels reported by the *William and Ann* to have been on the coast, McLoughlin gained the impression that the trade was definitely worth competing for, and he also learned that the Nass River area was a rich trading center which should be developed in the future.

The experience of the cruise of the *William and Ann* revealed a weakness in the administrative organization of the Columbia Department: McLoughlin found that he had no authority to give direct orders to the captain of the vessel. When Governor Simpson heard of his difficulty, he recommended that in the future captains of ships visiting the Columbia or operating on the coast should be subject to control by the resident chief factor. In the fall of 1826 Lieutenant Æmilius Simpson arrived at Fort Vancouver to take charge of a vessel being sent from England for use in the coastal trade. He was definitely subordinate to McLoughlin. Lieutenant Simpson's arrival marked the actual beginning of the "Marine Department," whose affairs were later to make up such a substantial proportion of the business which centered at Fort Vancouver, although the formal establishment of this division of McLoughlin's district was not made until 1829.

The slow progress made in the coasting trade after 1825 was due principally to the lack of supplies, ships, and men. Because of the necessity of underselling the American opposition, the maritime trade required a large stock of goods, and it was difficult to estimate needs ahead of time. McLoughlin therefore asked the Committee to send him a year's outfit in advance. Not until 1828 did the

directors make any attempt to comply with this request, and then the loss of the *William and Ann* with most of her cargo at the mouth of the Columbia in 1829 largely nullified the effort. It was some time before McLoughlin possessed an adequate supply of trade goods, and in the meantime he often had to find other occupation for such shipping and manpower as he did have available for the coasting business.

In compliance with plans laid down by Governor Simpson, the Doctor soon began the construction of two small wooden vessels at Fort Vancouver. The first, a sloop of thirty tons, was launched on August 17, 1827. Named the *Broughton* in honor of the first European known to have ascended the Columbia as far as the site of Fort Vancouver, she proved too small for ocean service, but was useful on the river and as a tender for the supply ships. The second craft turned out from the Fort Vancouver shipyard was the *Vancouver*, a vessel of about sixty tons. Her launching was long delayed due to a lack of iron work and seasoned timber. It appears to have been 1828 before she was ready for service, and it was an even longer time before she was equipped for duty at sea. The difficulties encountered by McLoughlin in constructing these vessels quite discouraged him with the prospects for successful shipbuilding on the Columbia. Nevertheless, the yard at Vancouver continued to be used intermittently, and as late as 1846 a trim little craft of seventy-four tons and measuring seventy-six feet over all, slid down the ways into the broad stream before the fort. [47]

The dearth of shipping was somewhat relieved in the spring of 1827 by the arrival of the seventy-ton schooner *Cadboro*, sent by the Committee from London to remain permanently on the coast. But the necessity of using the *Cadboro* for the founding of Fort Langley on Fraser River, and the lack of an advance supply of trade goods prevented the new vessel from effectively fulfilling her proper functions in the maritime fur trade. McLoughlin believed the *Cadboro* to be too small and too weakly armed for coastal operations. He desired vessels of about two hundred tons in order to command the respect of the natives.

The Committee in London had arrived at a similar estimate of the situation. In 1828 they inaugurated a program under which three sizable vessels-of about two hundred tons each-would be employed in the Columbia trade. Two of the ships would be occupied making the annual voyages from and to London, while the third would operate on the coast. But here again, it was several years before McLoughlin derived much benefit from the arrangement. The loss of the *William and Ann* in 1829 and the wreck of the *Isabella* at the same spot during the next year greatly hampered the Hudson's Bay Company in meeting the American competition on the Northwest Coast.

Governor Simpson's drastic cuts in personnel were in some degree responsible for McLoughlin's failure to push the coasting operations. He did not have enough men to meet the Americans in the interior and on the Pacific at same time. Simpson later realized his mistake and sent reinforcements overland. Nevertheless, so weak was the complement of the Department that in order to compete with two American vessels which appeared in the Columbia in 1829, he was forced to reduce the staff at the newly established Fort Langley. He had no men available for any further operations up the coast. [48]

Founding of Fort Langley, 1827

Desertions and other personnel problems made it impossible for McLoughlin to carry out Governor Simpson's hope of founding a post at the mouth of Fraser River during 1826. But in July of that year Simpson ordered the Doctor to establish the fort during the next summer. The *Cadboro*, due at Vancouver from London, was to be used for the purpose, and additional men were sent over the mountains to help with the task. [49]

In June, 1827, accordingly, McLoughlin dispatched the *Cadboro* northward with the supplies and equipment for the construction and outfitting of the new post. A few days later James McMillan, now a chief factor, started by way of Cowlitz River with the personnel of the establishment. After firmly establishing a route of communication overland to Puget Sound, McMillan boarded the *Cadboro*, and the combined parties sailed to Fraser River. There, on the left bank of the stream about twenty-eight miles above its mouth, they founded Fort Langley. Thus was established the first of the posts on the Northwest Coast, posts which were eventually to extend the rule of the Columbia Department far up into Russian Alaska. [50]

Development of Industries at Fort Vancouver, 1825-1829

McLoughlin was anxious to have his department show a profit, and he overlooked no possible sources of revenue. During his first season he shipped to London three swan skins and some isinglass "to see what they would Sell for and to know if worth Collecting." [51]

The opportunity to make money by shipping the products of the Columbia directly to other ports in the Pacific was not overlooked. On February 23, 1826, the Governor and Committee suggested to Simpson that the small vessel to be fitted out for the coastal trade might visit the Russian settlements in Alaska "in order to open a communication and make further inquiries." [52] But McLoughlin's thoughts were turned in another direction. As early as September, 1826, he informed the directors that he believed salted salmon could be sold in California. He requested that eight or ten barrels of salt be sent from London for the putting up of forty or fifty barrels of salmon, which could be sent to Monterey as an experiment. A thousand barrels a year could be produced on the Columbia alone, McLoughlin said, and he understood that salmon were even more abundant on Fraser River. Besides, he added prophetically, it was "certain if the Americans come they will attempt something in this way." [53]

In the fall of 1827 the Doctor found that he had no goods with which to outfit the *Cadboro* for further trading on the coast, and rather than have her lie idle, he sent her southward to California. Her chief errand was to get salt and other provisions, but her captain was instructed to investigate the possibility of developing a market for salmon and lumber. Lieutenant Simpson returned with the welcome intelligence that a 250-pound barrel of salmon would bring \$30 in Monterey, while planks would find a ready sale at \$40 to \$50 a thousand feet. [54]

Heartened by this report, McLoughlin put up what salmon he could when salt and men were available. At Fort Langley a large catch was made the first year of the establishment's existence, and the industry developed there on a larger scale and more rapidly than at Vancouver. Nearly 300 barrels were prepared for export at Fort Langley in 1830. McLoughlin shipped to California and the Hawaiian Islands the surplus not needed to feed the Company's employees in the western department, but the industry never produced the substantial profits of which the Doctor had dreamed. [55]

The lumber business ran a somewhat similar course. As has been seen, McLoughlin had a small mill in operation near Fort Vancouver in 1828. When Governor Simpson visited the Columbia during the winter of 1828-1829, he came to share the Doctor's view that the lumbering operations would produce a substantial revenue. In fact, he went so far as to predict that the sawmills might prove as profitable as the entire coastal fur trade. Even the single saw then in operation, he observed, could turn out 300,000 feet of boards a year, and the annual expense of running the mill was but £150. At sixty dollars a thousand feet, he envisioned the realization of "handsome profits," and even at forty dollars, he believed the trade "worthy of our attention." With McLoughlin he visited the falls of the Willamette River and personally selected the site for another mill. There, he said, enough saws could be employed "to load the

British Navy." McLoughlin was directed to prepare the location to receive machinery to be sent from England. By 1832 a mill race had been blasted out and timbers squared for the mill structure. The Doctor later changed his mind, however, and he erected the new mill on the Columbia above Fort Vancouver. [56]

It was in 1829, evidently, that McLoughlin shipped his first load of lumber to the Hawaiian Islands. Substantial quantities continued to be shipped for many years, but the market was never as good as had been anticipated. [57]

Another industry which started early at Fort Vancouver was brewing. From two bushels of barley planted in 1826, McLoughlin received a yield of twenty-seven bushels. These results were so gratifying that the Doctor decided to use only half of the crop for seed. [58] A part or all of the remainder was evidently devoted to an experiment in beer making. A missionary who met Lieutenant Simpson in the Hawaiian Islands wrote in 1829 that the Company soon expected to be able to export beer in small quantities from the Columbia. [59] The available records do not reveal the extent to which this hope was realized, but undoubtedly McLoughlin's experiment marked the beginning of the brewing industry in the Pacific Northwest.

Visitors to Fort Vancouver, 1825-1829

Long before its buildings were completed, Fort Vancouver began to play its role of haven and headquarters for visitors to the Oregon country. The first of the long line of travelers-as distinguished from Company employees-to enjoy McLoughlin's hospitality was David Douglas, a botanist sent by the Royal Horticultural Society of London to collect plants in Northwest America. Arriving at the mouth of the Columbia in the Hudson's Bay Company vessel *William and Ann*, in April, 1825, he soon ascended the river to Fort Vancouver, which became his headquarters for the next two years. From the depot he ranged over most of the Columbia region, sometimes with Company employees, sometimes with an Indian guide, but oftentimes with only his dog for company.

Although not the first botanist to visit the Northwest, he was the first to make the region the subject of a specialized and systematic study. Among the many hundreds of new species he discovered was the "most beautiful and immensely large tree," the sugar pine. His many specimens were classified and prepared for shipment at Fort Vancouver. Not the least of his contributions to human knowledge and enjoyment were the seeds he sent back to England. As a result of his work, clarksia, several species of pentstemons, lupines, and other flowers were soon blooming in English gardens. The magnificent Douglas fir bears his name and commemorates the visit of Fort Vancouver's first guest. [60]

In the spring of 1827 Douglas left with the Company's annual express to return to England by way of Hudson Bay. At the time of his departure he paid tribute to the kindness of the officers and servants at Fort Vancouver. "I cannot forbear expressing my sincere thanks," he wrote in his diary, "for the assistance, hospitality, and strict attention to my comfort which I uniformly enjoyed during my stay with them-in a particular manner to Mr. McLoughlin." [61] And thus began the long line of testimonials to the generous welcome accorded all properly accredited travelers at the headquarters of the Columbia Department.

The next visitor to Fort Vancouver arrived entirely unheralded and with out credentials. At about eight o'clock on the night of August 8, 1828, the inhabitants of the post were astonished to find at their gate a white man, badly wounded and almost destitute of clothing. He announced himself as Arthur Black and believed himself to be the only survivor of a party of American trappers under the command of Jedediah Smith who, while traveling from California up the coast on their way to the Great Salt Lake, had been attacked by Indians on the Umpqua River. Two days later Smith and two other men reached Fort Vancouver, and subsequent investigation revealed that these four men were all that remained alive of Smith's original nineteen.

McLoughlin took the men in and afforded them all the help and hospitality the post could afford. A southern brigade under Chief Trader McLeod was preparing at the time to leave for the general region in which the massacre had occurred, and McLoughlin speeded its departure, instructing McLeod to determine the cause of the attack and to punish the Indians if it should prove "expedient" and "practicable" to do so. McLeod was also to endeavor to recover Smith's property. Finding that Smith's men had in a large measure provoked the Indians to the murders, McLeod did not take any action against them; but other Indians, acting under orders of the Hudson's Bay Company to recover Smith's property, did exact some measure of vengeance. Eventually most of the horses, furs, and trade goods belonging to the Americans were gathered in by the Company, and Governor Simpson later paid Smith a fair price for them. No charge was made for the services rendered in recovering the property nor for the food, lodging, and clothing received by the survivors.

In the spring of 1829 Smith and one of his men set out overland for the American trapping rendezvous in the Great Basin. Upon his return to St. Louis in 1830 he and his partners wrote a letter to the United States Secretary of War, warning the Government of the extensive operations of the Hudson's Bay Company and the "permanent" nature of the firm's improvements in the Oregon country. But even in this letter Smith acknowledged that he had been treated with the greatest of kindness and fairness by Governor Simpson and other representatives of the Company on the Columbia. [62]

Governor Simpson's Second Visit, 1828-1829

Not until 1828 was Governor Simpson able to make his long-planned return visit to the Columbia. Leaving York Factory in July of that year, he crossed the continent by way of Peace River and New Caledonia. After a side trip to Kamloops, he made an exciting and perilous descent of Fraser River to Fort Langley, and from thence he traveled by way of Puget Sound and Cowlitz River to Fort Vancouver, where he arrived on October 25, 1828. [63]

While the coastal trade had not been pushed as he had hoped, and although the profits of the Columbia Department were not great, Simpson was highly pleased with the progress McLoughlin had made during his absence, particularly at Fort Vancouver. On every hand he found evidence of the Doctor's "activity and perseverance." Although the Indian trade at the post was small, the principal object for which it had been founded, "that of rendering ourselves independent of foreign aid in regard to the means of Subsistence," had been achieved. "In short," Simpson wrote to the Governor and Committee on March 1, 1829, "never did a change of System and of management produce such obvious advantages in any part of the Indian Country as those which the present State of this establishment, in particular and of the COLUMBIA department as a whole at this moment exhibits." [64]

"Your whole administration," he told McLoughlin, "is marked by its close adherence to the spirit of the Govr & Committees wishes and intentions, and is conspicuous for a talent in planning and for activity & perseverance in execution which reflect the highest credit on your judgement and habits of business." [65]

With his usual industry, Governor Simpson spent the winter investigating every phase of the trade on the Pacific Coast. Before starting homeward in March, 1829, he gave McLoughlin a detailed set of instructions for the conduct of the business in the immediate future. Among other measures, a new post was to be established up the coast at Nass during 1830. The timber trade was to be pushed vigorously. McLoughlin was directed to build two vessels of 200 tons each for use on the coast and for the transportation of lumber to market. The mill at Vancouver was to be kept constantly busy and was to be moved as soon as possible to the falls of the Willamette, where furs were to be traded, salmon caught, and cattle herded. Farming operations at Fort Vancouver were termed "of vital importance to the whole business of this side the Continent," and were to be expanded "until our Fields yield 8000 Bushels of Grain p

Annum, our Stock of Cattle amounts to 600 head and our Piggery enables us to cure 10,000 lb. of Pork pr Annum." The number of men to be permanently attached to Fort Vancouver was fixed at thirty-two, while the total of officers and men for the department as a whole was fixed at 224. [66]

The Governor also made an attempt to open trade with the Russians in Alaska. On March 21, 1829, he wrote to the Governor of the Russian American Company offering to sell manufactured goods brought from England and as much as 5000 bushels of grain and 10,000 pounds of salt pork and beef per year from Fort Vancouver. This proposal was delivered at New Archangel by Lieutenant Simpson during the course of the year and was favorably received by the Russian governor, but the Company in St. Petersburg refused to approve it. [67]

Fort Vancouver Becomes the Permanent Departmental Depot

As a result of his canoe voyage down Fraser River in the fall of 1828, Governor Simpson came to realize, once and for all, that his dream of supplying the interior posts by that stream was entirely impracticable. In a letter to the Governor and Committee in March, 1829, he freely confessed the error of his previous conceptions. "I should consider the passage down, to be certain Death, in nine attempts out of Ten," he wrote. "I shall therefore no longer talk of it as a navigable stream, altho' for years past I had flattered myself with the idea, that the loss of the Columbia would in reality be of very little consequence to the Honble. Comp. interests on this side of the Continent." [68]

The Convention of 1827 had made it clear that the trade in the area south of the Columbia would not be cut off for a number of years. Since the Columbia would thus continue to occupy a fairly central position in the Company's sphere of operations in the West, and since Simpson now acknowledged it to be the most practicable route for the supply of the interior, it was plain that the most suitable location for the departmental depot was near the mouth of this stream. During Simpson's visit, it was determined to continue the depot at Fort Vancouver on a more or less permanent basis.

Possibly this decision was facilitated by the knowledge that the Columbia was navigable by the annual supply ships at least as far as Fort Vancouver. For a year or two after the founding of the post this point appears to have been somewhat in doubt. In the spring of 1825 the *William and Ann* had discharged her cargo at Fort George without making any attempt to ascend the river. In the fall of that year it had required McLoughlin's specific order to induce the captain of the vessel to come upstream for loading. "My object in wishing him to come as high up the River as possible was to facilitate putting the Cargo on Board and to get all the Information we could regarding the Navigation of the River," McLoughlin reported to the directors. [69]

How far the *William and Ann* came upstream is not clear, but probably she did not come all the way to Vancouver, since the next annual supply ship went only as far as a spot known as "Douglass's Reach." It evidently was not until the *William and Ann's* second visit, in 1827, that an ocean going vessel anchored in front of Fort Vancouver. [70] From that time until 1845 the annual supply ships came directly from England to Fort Vancouver.

Fort Vancouver is Moved to New Location

The location of Fort Vancouver on the bluff overlooking the river plain was not entirely suited to the requirements of a permanent and extensive supply depot. Every article received for storage and every article shipped out to other posts or to England had to be transported by "a high and rugged road" over the mile which separated the fort from the Columbia. There were no springs on the bluff, nor could water be found by wells of practicable depth. In 1885, Dr. William McKay, who had lived at the old fort as a very young child, claimed to remember that "old La Pierre" was kept employed hauling water to the stockade from the Columbia. La Pierre made two trips a day with a wagon pulled by Lion and Brandy, two huge oxen. His load for each trip was only two puncheons or casks. [71] Such an arrangement might have satisfied the needs of a small Indian trading post, but it could not supply the water necessary for a main depot with a large permanent staff. [72]

In addition, some of the reasons for establishing the post on the bluff in the first place were no longer of great importance in 1829. The neighboring Indians had proved to be generally peaceable, and it was no longer felt necessary to maintain a commanding site purely for defensive purposes. Also, experience had shown that not all of the lower plain was subject to flooding as had previously been believed. There were locations closer to the river which appeared to escape even the highest freshets. [73]

For these reasons, therefore, it was decided to shift the post to a site nearer the river. A location was chosen on a high spot on the Fort Plain, about a mile west of the old fort and about four hundred yards from the north bank of the Columbia. A short distance west of the new site a pond led back from the river for about two hundred yards, making a convenient place to water stock and to land small boats.

The chief drawback of the new location was the fact that the lands between it and the river were subject to periodic overflow. In later years a visitor reported that it was "not unusual to have all communication with the Hudson Bay fort cut off except by bateaux and rafts." [74]

In spite of the importance of the move, neither Simpson nor McLoughlin appears to have reported any exact details to the Committee in London. From information available for study to the present time, it is impossible to determine the exact date of the decision or of the start of the work on the new fort. Jedediah Smith later reported that the construction was commenced in the spring of 1829, and by the time he left, March 12, 1829, the work had progressed far enough for him to observe that the new stockade was about three hundred feet square. [75]

In this quiet manner, without fanfare or publicity, was commenced the construction of the establishment which for another twenty years was to be the headquarters and depot for the operations of the Hudson's Bay Company west of the Rockies. This new structure was the Fort Vancouver known to the American emigrants and settlers in the Oregon country; it was the Fort Vancouver whose remains have lately been unearthed and whose memory is perpetuated by Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. [76]

Endnotes

¹Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 124.

²John Scouler, "Dr. John Scouler's Journal of a Voyage to N. W. America," in *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, VI (June, 1905), 174.

³It is understood that an unpublished report by Governor Simpson for the year 1826/27 contains descriptive matter concerning Fort Vancouver. J. Chadwick Brooks to J. A. Hussey, London, January 21, 1948.

⁴Scouler, "Journal," in *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, VI (June, 1905), 174.

⁵For descriptions of Fort George see *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, XIX (December, 1918), plate opposite p. 271; XXXVIII (December, 1937), 414-417.

⁶Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 122-124. In the possession of the Vancouver Historical Society, Vancouver, Washington, is an old Hudson's Bay Company flag-white with the arms of the Company painted on it in colors-which, it has long been claimed, was used at the dedication of Fort Vancouver in 1825. The documentation on this point, however, is not all that could be desired. *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXXIX (September, 1938), 327. (See plate XXXIX).

⁷Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of the Northwest Coast* (2 vols., San Francisco, 1886), II, 324.

⁸David Douglas, *Journal Kept by David Douglas During His Travels in North America 1823-1827...* (London, 1914), 107.

⁹Governor and Committee to G. Simpson, London, February 23, 1826, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 266.

¹⁰Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 122-123.

¹¹G. Simpson to J. McLoughlin, March 10, 1825, as quoted in H. B. S., III, xxxv; H. B. S., IV, lii-liii. McLoughlin's extended powers were later confirmed by a resolution of the Council for the Northern Department.

¹²Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 122. A valuable picture of the freighting operations is given in Nellie B. Pipes, ed., "The Journal of John Work, March 21-May 14, 1825," in *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XLV (June, 1944), 138-146.

¹³J. McLoughlin to Governor and Committee, Fort Vancouver, October 6, 1825, in H. B. S., IV, 5-6.

¹⁴Scouler, "Journal," in *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, VI (September, 1905), 277.

¹⁵S. A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History* (2 vols., Portland, Ore., 1905), I, 184-185; Clinton A. Snowden, *History of Washington; the Rise and Progress of an American State* (4 vols., New York, 1904), I, 477.

¹⁶J. McLoughlin to Governor and Committee, Fort Vancouver, October 6, 1825, in H. B. S., IV, 1-5, 21; Governor and Committee to G. Simpson, London, June 2, 1824, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 210.

¹⁷J. McLoughlin to Governor and Committee, Fort Vancouver, October 6, 1825, in H. B. S., IV, 1-11.

¹⁸Douglas, *Journal*, 106-107, 152.

¹⁹H. B. S., IV, 32.

²⁰*Ibid.*, lv-lvi.

²¹*Ibid.*, lxxiii.

²²J. S. Smith, D. E. Jackson, W. L. Sublette to J. H. Eaton, St. Louis, October 29, 1830, in 21 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 39, pp. 21-23. Smith's statement regarding the armament is interesting in view of the fact that two years before his visit the fort is known to have had two 18-pound cannon. The Fort Vancouver inventory for 1826 listed the following items of artillery as being "in use": 2

carronades, "9 pdrs. p. *William & Ann*"; 2 18-pound guns with carriages; 4 6-pound guns with carriages; 4 4-pound guns with carriages; 7 iron swivels; 2 wall pieces; 1 iron cohorn; and 2 brass 1/2-pounders. Donald H. Clark, "Iron Interpreters," in *The Beaver*, outfit 285 (September, 1954), 51.

²³This account of crop raising at Fort Vancouver is based largely upon contemporary letters, to be found in the following sources: H. B. S., IV, 31, 44, 50-51, 66-67; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 270, 291, 301; 21 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 39, p. 22. See also "Copy of a Document Found among the Private Papers of the Late Dr. John McLoughlin," in *Transactions of the . . . Oregon Pioneer Association; for 1880*, 46; Scouler, "Journal," in *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, VI (September, 1905), 174.

²⁴21 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 39, p. 22; J. R. Cardwell, "The First Fruits of the Land. A Brief History of Early Horticulture in Oregon," in *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, VII (March, 1906), 28.

²⁵Narcissa Whitman, "A Journey Across the Plains in 1836. Journal of Mrs. Marcus Whitman," in *Transactions of the . . . Oregon Pioneer Association for 1891*, 63.

²⁶See Bancroft, *History of the Northwest Coast*, II, 441.

²⁷H. Bingham to J. Everts, February 16, 1829, in George Verne Blue, "Green's Missionary Report on Oregon, 1829," in *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXX (September, 1929), 264-265.

²⁸For a short biography of Lieut. Simpson, see H. B. S., III, 454-455.

²⁹See sources cited in note 23 above; also Hagen, Report, appendix, 48; J. McLoughlin to [J. McLeod?], Fort Vancouver, March 1, 1833, in *Washington Historical Quarterly*, II (January, 1908), 167-168.

³⁰H. B. S., III, lxiv, 106, 115-116; H. B. S., IV, liv; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, p. 76, note 133.

³¹Governor and Committee to G. Simpson, February 23, 1826, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 266.

³²H. B. S., III, 145.

³³*Ibid.*, 187.

³⁴H. B. S., III, *passim*; Oliver, *The Canadian North-West*, I, 637-688; II, 689-871.

³⁵Oliver, *The Canadian North-West*, II, 809, 846.

³⁶G. Simpson to the Manager, Russian American Company, March 20, 1829, as quoted in H. B. S., IV, liv.

³⁷G. Simpson to H. U. Addington, London, January 5, 1826, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 264-266. It should be borne in mind that in this letter Simpson was giving the government material to be used in the boundary negotiations, and he probably magnified the case for the Columbia and against the Fraser to suit the requirements of the occasion.

³⁸Governor and Committee to G. Simpson, London, February 23, 1826, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 267.

³⁹H. B. S., IV, lix.

⁴⁰H. B. S., III, lxxv-lxxvi; H. B. S., IV, lviii.

⁴¹Governor and Committee to G. Simpson, London, January 16, 1828, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 294-295.

⁴²H. B. S., IV, lvi; Winther, *The Great Northwest*, 62.

⁴³H. B. S., IV, lxxv; see also H. B. S., III, lxxvi-lxxviii.

⁴⁴H. B. S., III, lxxix.

⁴⁵H. B. S., IV, lxxviii-lxxix; see also H. B. S., III, 448-450; and Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 88-89.

⁴⁶H. B. S., IV, lxxviii-lxxix; Winther, *The Great Northwest*, 70-71.

⁴⁷*Oregon Spectator* (Oregon City), June 25, 1846.

⁴⁸This sketch of the coastal trade is based almost entirely upon H. B. S., III, lxxix-lxxxi; H. B. S., IV, lxxix-lxxxiv, 29, 61-62.

⁴⁹H. B. S., III, lxxix.

⁵⁰Bancroft, *History of the Northwest Coast*, II, 476-483; H. B. S., IV, 43-44, 53; Robie L. Reid, "Early Days at Old Fort Langley," in *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, I (April, 1937), 71-85.

⁵¹J. McLoughlin to Governor and Committee, Fort Vancouver, October 6, 1825, in H. B. S., IV, 16.

⁵²Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 267.

⁵³J. McLoughlin to Governor and Committee, Fort Vancouver, September 1, 1826, in H. B. S., IV, 37.

⁵⁴H. B. S., IV, lxxiii, 54.

⁵⁵*Ibid.*, xciii; Winther, *The Great Northwest*, 83-84.

⁵⁶H. B. S., IV, xcii; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 298.

⁵⁷H. B. S., IV, xciii, 77.

⁵⁸J. McLoughlin to G. Simpson, Fort Vancouver, March 20, 1827, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 291.

⁵⁹H. Bingham to J. Everts, February 16, 1829, in *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXX, 264-265.

⁶⁰A. G. Harvey, "David Douglas in British Columbia," in *British Columbia Historical Quarterly*, IV (October, 1940), 221-243. Accompanying Douglas to the Columbia in the *William and Ann* was Dr. John Scouler, surgeon of the vessel. He, too, was a botanist, but his chief interest was the fauna of the region. Before the ship sailed for England in the fall, Scouler made two visits to Fort Vancouver, and upon his final departure he recorded in his journal his obligation to "every individual connected with the establishment" for the kind and polite reception he had received. Since he was on the Company's payroll, however, he can scarcely be described as a visitor.

⁶¹Douglas, *Journal*, 242. For a biography of Douglas, with an extensive account of his work in the Northwest, see Athelstan George Harvey, *Plant Explorer: Douglas of the Firs: A Biography of David Douglas, Botanist* (Cambridge, Mass., 1947).

⁶²J. S. Smith, D. E. Jackson, W. L. Sublette to J. H. Eaton, St. Louis, October 29, 1830, in 21 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 39, pp. 21-23. For the story of Jedediah Smith and his stay at Fort Vancouver, see H. B. S., IV, 68-70, and the authorities cited therein. A good account of the incident is in Francis A. Wiley, *Jedediah Smith in the West* (unpublished Ph.D. thesis, University of California, Berkeley, 1941). See also Dale L. Morgan, *Jedediah Smith and the Opening of the West* (Indianapolis and New York, 1953), 267-289.

⁶³For a journal of this journey see Archibald McDonald, *Peace River, A Canoe Voyage from Hudson's Bay to the Pacific by the Late Sir George Simpson . . . in 1828: A Journal of the Late Chief Factor, Archibald McDonald . . .* (Ottawa, 1872).

⁶⁴Hagen, Report, appendix, 48-49; see also H. B. S., IV, lxxv; and Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 229-301.

⁶⁵G. Simpson to J. McLoughlin, Fort Vancouver, March 15, 1829, in Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 308.

⁶⁶*Ibid.*, 308-310.

⁶⁷H. B. S., III, lxxi; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, 311-312, 313-317.

⁶⁸H. B. S., IV, lix.

⁶⁹J. McLoughlin to Governor and Committee, Fort Vancouver, October 6, 1825, in H. B. S., IV, 21.

⁷⁰H. B. S., IV, 35-36, 39.

⁷¹Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History*, I, 182-183.

⁷²Wilkes, *Narrative*, IV, 335.

⁷³*Ibid.*; Emmons, "Extracts from the Emmons Journal," in *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, XXVI (September, 1925), 269.

⁷⁴War Department, Surgeon-General's Office, *A Report on Barracks and Hospitals, with Descriptions of Military Posts* (Circular No. 4, Washington, 1870), 421.

⁷⁵J. S. Smith, D. E. Jackson, W. L. Sublette to J. H. Eaton, St. Louis, October 29, 1830, in 21 Cong., 2 Sess., Senate, Ex. Doc. No. 39, pp. 21-23.

⁷⁶The fate of the old fort on the hill remains somewhat in doubt. Probably some of the buildings were dismantled and reconstructed on the new site. Titian R. Peale, who visited Fort Vancouver with the Wilkes Expedition, later testified that no trace of the old fort was visible in 1841. Br. & Am. Joint Comm., *Papers*, [IX], 345-346. On the other hand, Dr. H. A. Tuzo, Hudson's Bay medical officer at Vancouver, swore that some remains could still be seen at the time of his arrival at the post in 1853. *Ibid.*, [II], 177-178.

Last updated: February 28, 2015

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