Historic Adventure Land *of the* Northwest

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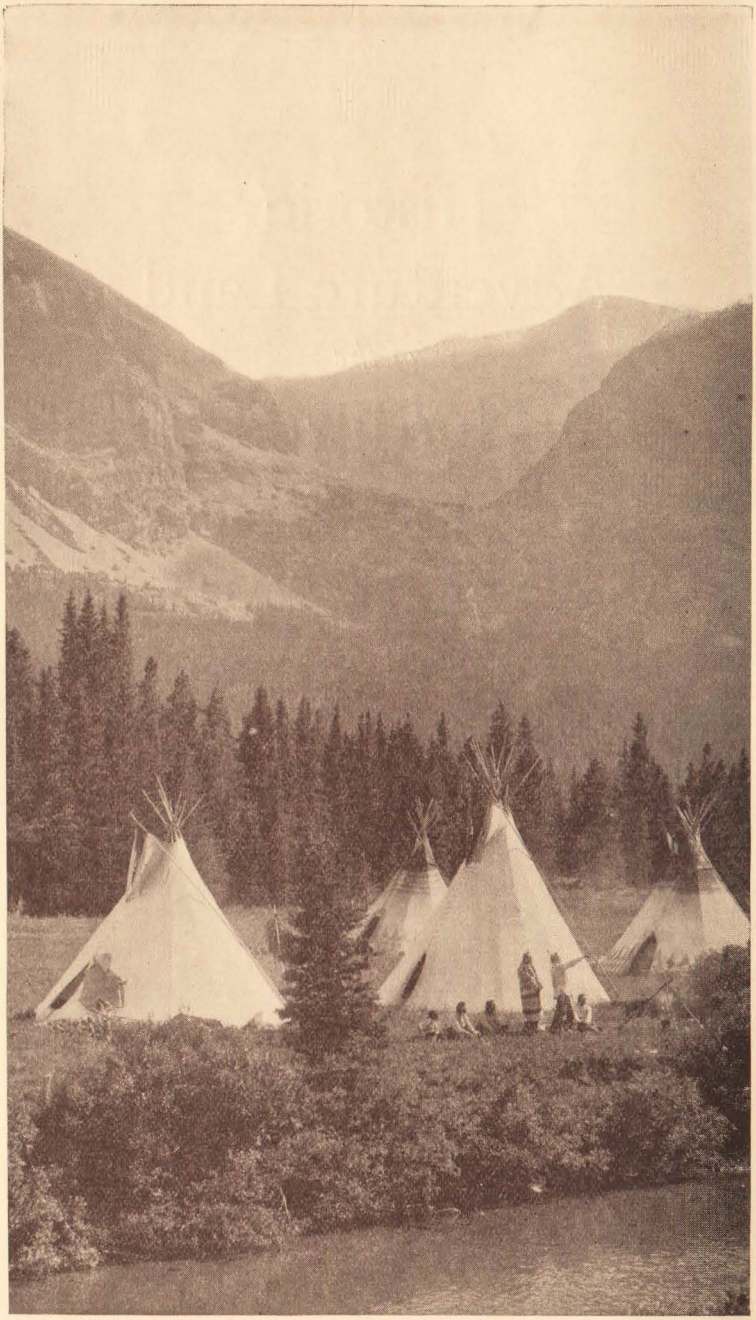
By
GRACE FLANDRAU

Compliments of the
Great Northern Railway



A Pikuni Camp in Cut Bank Valley, Glacier National Park

Bronze in Marquette Bldg., Chicago

TO FOLLOW THOSE WATERS • • • WHICH WILL HENCEFORTH LEAD VS INTO STRANGE LANDS

HISTORIC ADVENTURE LAND OF THE NORTHWEST

Look at the map; westward to the Pacific from Chicago stretch the lines of the Great Northern Railway system through the newest country in the world; through new cities, new fields and farms and through forests only beginning to fall before the steady westward march of population. But the way it takes across the continent is old, and the traveller along this route journeys into a past rich with memories of adventure and heroic achievement.

Columbus, looking for a new trade route to India, stumbled upon a continent; and for many years it remained only an obstacle —something to be got around or through or over to the rich markets of the Orient.

As the centuries passed men gradually found the way across this continent which so inconveniently blocked the ocean highway. Trade routes to India were many and finally they were paved with steel. They had peopled a wilderness, created a commerce and a nation, and the distant goal was obscured by nearer and more vital issues.

The long railed ways that stretch across the continent are haunted with shadow shapes, inheritance of the centuries when through uncharted wilds and among savage peoples, the quest was carried.

Of these historic highways the one which in earliest times was most travelled, is now followed by the Great Northern Railway and the name of its transcontinental train, the Oriental Limited, commemorates the ancient purpose which brought about the discovery of America and much of its early exploration; many of its stations—Chicago, Duluth, Allouez, Sioux City, Verendrye, Fort Union, Meriwether, Kalispell, Spokane, Wishram, Astoria, Seattle, Vancouver and others recall important phases of the past.

The French

The whole of the system, as far west as the Rocky Mountains, runs through what was once French territory, and no one can say how narrowly the people of the middle and northwest of the United States missed being citizens today of France.

Twelve years before the Puritans felled a tree or murmured a psalm on their famous rock-bound coast, Champlain, a gentleman and soldier of France, laid the foundation of Quebec and the French Empire in America. He founded, as it were, an institute of exploration. The pupils were young Frenchmen, their class rooms Indian villages, their study the languages and woodcraft of the savages and such knowledge of the country as the latter possessed. These became the famous voyageurs and coureurs de bois, first white men to appear in the Northwest.

Bronze in Marquette Bldg., Chicago

Robert René Cavalier, Sieur de la Salle

Before the English colonists had gone far enough inland to lose the tang of the sea, the bark canoes of the French slid along the forest-walled streams of Wisconsin and Minnesota and floated on the broad waters of the Mississippi. Led by the passion for discovery, which at all times possessed the French and by the more concrete lure of the fur trade which beckoned with such desperate risks and high rewards, they entered a world which since time began no white man had ever seen.

Scarcely a step behind them followed men in the gray hooded

cassocks and sandals of the Franciscan order, or the black robes of the Jesuits. As early as 1665 the most remote mission of that time was built by Father Allouez near the western end of Lake Superior. The important Great Northern terminal, Allouez, is now situated in the vicinity of that lonely station.

Besides voyageur, missionary priest and soft-footed forest runner came French officers commissioned to take possession of the wilderness in the name of France.

The Jesuit missionary, Marquette, and his companion, Joliet, were the first white men to reach the present site of the city of Chicago in 1673.

For more than half of its splendid scenic journey from Chicago to St. Paul, the route of the Oriental Limited follows the Mississippi. Just before reaching Prairie du Chien it crosses the Wisconsin river, most travelled of the waterways by which these first explorers descended from the Great Lakes to the Mississippi valley. Fourteen years after the Puritans landed at Plymouth, Jean Nicollet, one of Champlain's woodland runners and the discoverer of Wisconsin, appeared on the waters of this river.

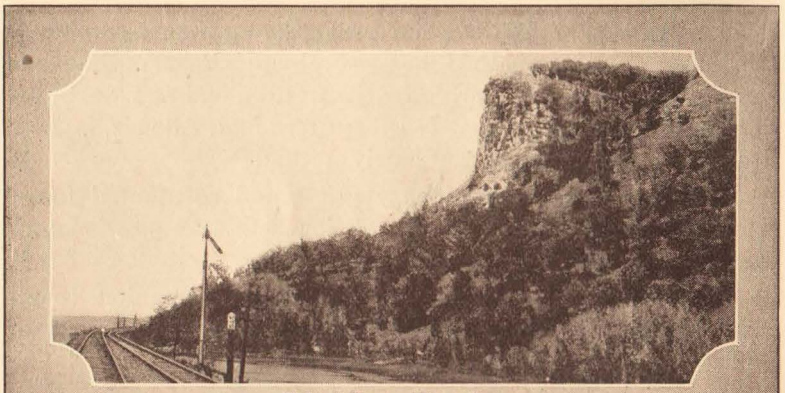
Prairie du Chien was from earliest times an important fur trading center, and French, British and American military posts succeeded each other at this place.

Where the Mississippi broadens to beautiful Lake Pepin, a semi-military post existed a hundred years before the American Revolution. It stood near the present city of Stockholm, Wisconsin. At Prescott the Oriental Limited crosses the St. Croix, another of the important avenues of early travel from the north.

Two French fur traders, Radisson and Groseillers, appeared in what is now the State of Minnesota between the years 1654-60. They encountered the Sioux near the present town of Mora on

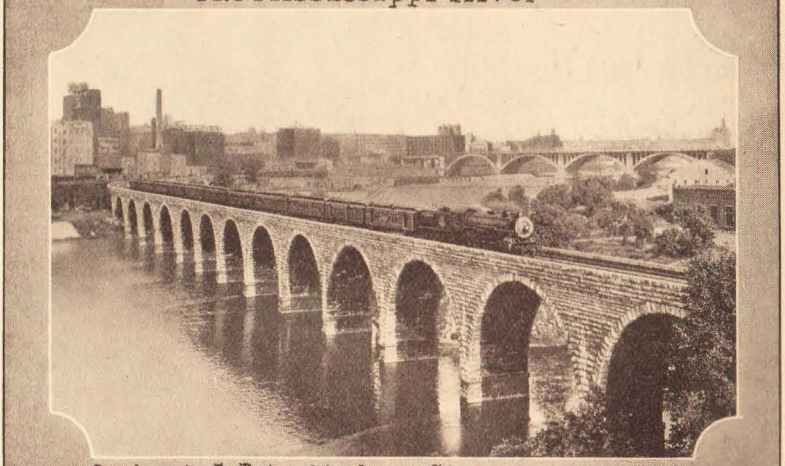
Bronze in Marquette Bldg., Chicago

Daniel Greysolon Du Lhut



Maiden Rock

The Mississippi River



Oriental Limited on Stone Arch Bridge

Following the Father of Waters

the Great Northern Railway, first of all recorded white men to visit this stone age people.

Where the Great Northern Railway crosses the Mississippi by the stone arch bridge between St. Paul and Minneapolis, Father Hennepin came upon the Falls of St. Anthony, and has enjoyed two centuries of fame as their discoverer; he was, but his achievement was quite involuntary as he was conveyed to the Mississippi—a most unwilling prisoner of the Sioux.

Fortunately Du Lhut, a French official and fur trader, happened down the St. Croix with a party of Frenchmen in time to rescue the Recollet friar, so that he might return to civilization and write a highly entertaining account—mostly of things he did not do.

DISCOVERY OF NORTH DAKOTA

Out in that part of the rich wheat lands of North Dakota where the towns are small, because the fields are so big, near the south loop of the Mouse River, there is a station on the Great Northern Railway named Verendrye. Had you alighted there almost two hundred years ago—in the fall of 1738, if dates are important—you would have come somewhere in the vicinity upon an Indian village. Here were neither the bark huts of the woods Indians, nor the graceful leather lodges of the plains tribes. The houses were low, rounded, dome-like affairs, built of mud laid thickly over a frame work of saplings. It was a Hidatsa or Minnetaree town, a people who, like the Mandans, occupied permanent villages and cultivated flourishing crops of corn, beans, sunflowers, squashes and other gourds.

If you had arrived on a certain day late in November, you would have seen the house tops crowded with women and children waiting in mingled excitement, curiosity and terror. From the north appeared a horde of savages—men, women, children and dogs, and in their midst marched a score or more of fabulous beings—white men—the first to appear in North Dakota. Their leader did not walk, he was carried triumphantly (and most unwillingly, we read) on the shoulders of the half-worshipping barbarians.

This was Pierre Gaultier de la Varennes, Sieur de la Verendrye, one of the greatest of the great French explorers. He with his sons added Dakota, the Red River of the North, the Saskatchewan, the upper Missouri, much of the western plains country and

the Black Hills or eastern spurs of the Rockies to the map of America.

Verendrye was a French gentleman and soldier, born in Three Rivers, that cradle of pioneers on the St. Lawrence. He dedicated his life, his four sons and his fortune in an attempt to enlarge the dominions of France in the New World and discover for her the overland passage to the western sea. His task was to penetrate the virgin forest stretching westward from Lake Superior, establish bases of supplies, spend winter after bitter winter in rough log forts hastily thrown up on unknown waterways in the uttermost depths of the frozen wilderness; in summer to resume his westward quest; push on through trackless wastes toward an almost mythical goal; placate and trade with savage people. He must, of course, have a considerable party, and to support this vast undertaking he was accorded only the good wishes of the Crown, and a monopoly of trade in the forbidding Eden! So that added to the difficulties attendant on any expedition in a primitive country, his must support itself, must pause at each milestone to gather enough muskrat and beaver skins to satisfy the merchants in far off Montreal who had backed the enterprise, and had furnished it with supplies. Or who, when influenced by Verendrye's tireless enemies, quite as often failed to furnish them, leaving those who waited so perilously in their remote outposts, without the very necessities of life.

Verendrye Discovering the Upper Missouri River

Verendrye's achievement, in spite of every difficulty and discouragement, forms one of the ringing chapters in our history.

The English

At Verendrye, alongside the right of way of the Great Northern, a monument commemorates another important personage and event in the history of this region.

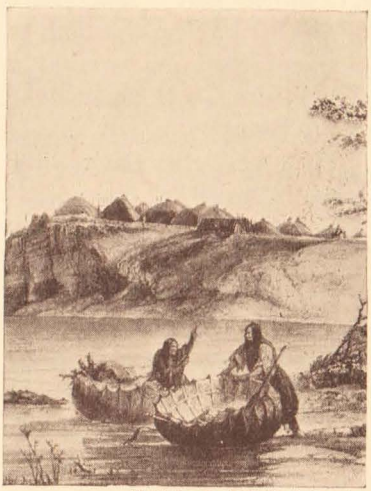
In 1763 France lost all of her North American empire.

Three kings in Europe had been squabbling over the balance of power, and this great misfortune to France was the result. That part of Louisiana lying east of the Mississippi, she was forced to yield to England by treaty; the western part she ceded to Spain the year before, that it might not fall into the hands of her hereditary enemy.

British traders from Montreal succeeded the French in the fur trading posts built by Verendrye and those who came after him. These British merchants formed the North West Company which was to rival and at one time all but ruin, the royal monopolists of Hudson's Bay; although eventually it was absorbed by the latter company.

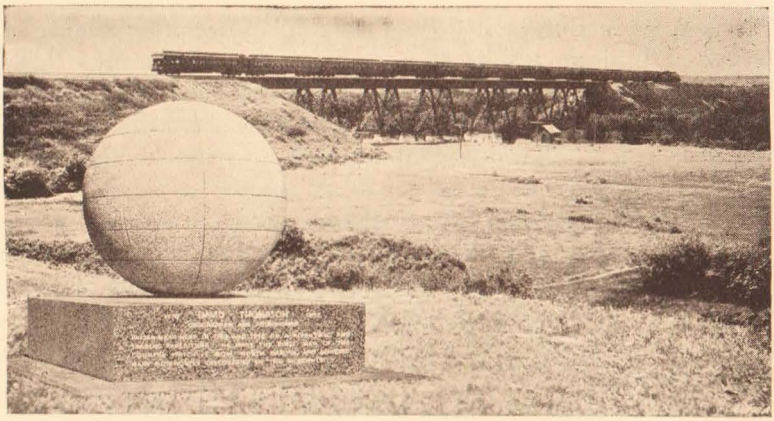
North of the international boundary these organizations carried their trade to the foot of the Rockies and one of their number, Alexander McKenzie, made in 1793 the first overland journey to the Pacific Coast. South of the border they established posts in the present states of Wisconsin and Minnesota, and regularly visited the Indian villages on the Mouse and upper Missouri rivers in Dakota discovered by Verendrye. There was need now of maps, not to guide land hungry men whose presence would destroy the fur business, but for the private use of the companies. Several important surveyors and map makers appeared at this time. Among them was David Thompson, whose character and supreme achievement place him in the front rank of the great men of action who subdued the West.

Thompson was a Welshman born in London, pupil of a charity school. At the age of fourteen he was apprenticed to the Hudson's Bay Company and embarked on a sailing vessel bound for the northern coast of a half savage continent. The journey itself seems bad enough to us now; a tiny ship laboring for months across the stormy Atlantic, devoid of every comfort and all but the barest necessities; with bad food, bad water, crowded quar-



By Bodmer in Maximilian's Travels

Indian Village *Bull Boats*



Monument to David Thompson, Distinguished English Geographer and Explorer, at Verendrye, N. D.

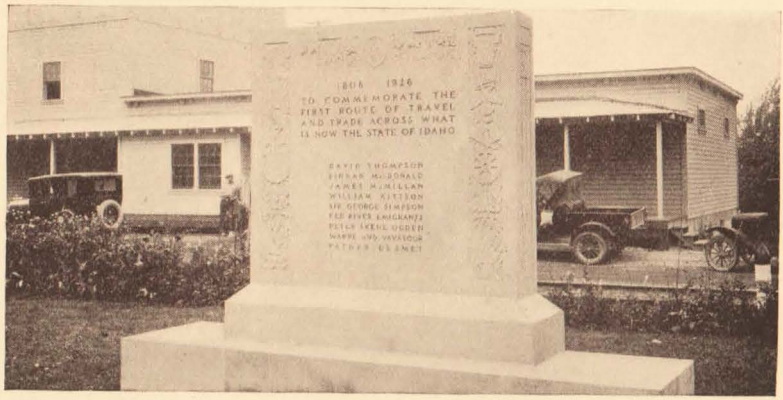
ters, rough seas and rough companionship; and at the end only a lonely log trading post on the arctic shores of Hudson's Bay.

Thompson was a red-cheeked, sturdy, homely little boy with black bangs and bright black eyes, brave, earnest, hard working, honest and intelligent, and he grew up to be just that kind of man. He had a natural bent for astronomy and the science of geography and all one winter at a Hudson's Bay post in the interior, he studied these subjects with the company surveyor. In 1797 he left this company and became associated with the North Westers. During his service with both organizations he explored, surveyed and resurveyed and carefully mapped most of the immense territory occupied by them, including the north part of Minnesota and the trade route through North Dakota to the upper Missouri.

On his way to the Indian villages on Mouse river and the upper Missouri he camped, in 1797, near the present town of Verendrye, North Dakota, on the main line of the Great Northern Railway.

West of the Rockies the Oriental Limited again picks up his trail on the Kootenai river and follows it for more miles than that of any other explorers except Lewis and Clark.

The Great Northern is a river road and of all the waterways it follows—the Mississippi, the Red river of the North, the Mouse, the Missouri, the lovely Flathead, the Pend d'Oreille, the Columbia, to name but some of them—none is more beautiful, more haunted with shadows of the past then the peacock blue Kootenai.



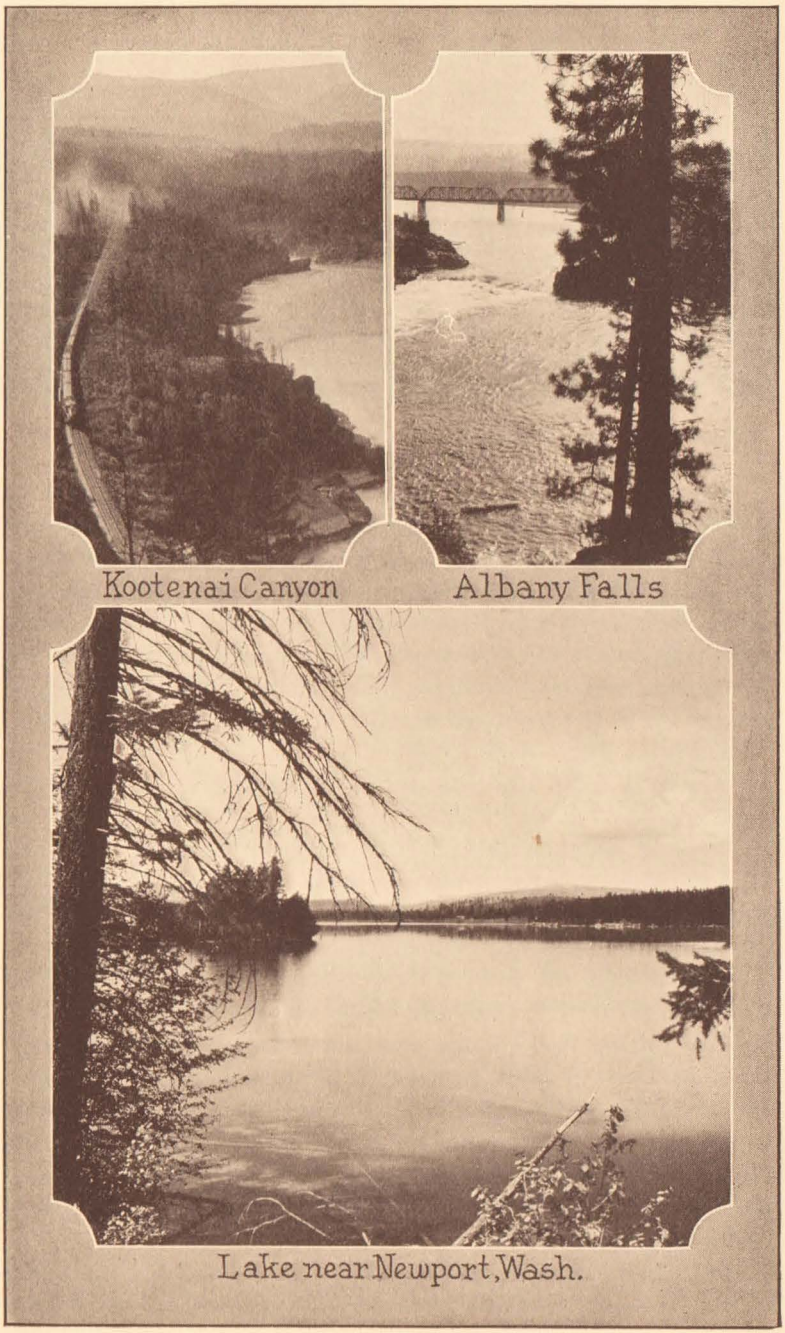
Monument at Bonners Ferry, Idaho

Whether you see it in winter, when each dark branch of the pine trees droops under its white burden of snow, or in spring, when the willows are lace-like with tender green, or in autumn, when the little poplar seedlings growing among the crimson ground vines, are covered with leaflets of pure gold, and the quiet mountains wrapped in filmy scarves of cloud move slowly behind the flying train to form a changing, purple barricade about the river, the beauty of the Kootenai becomes a moving and unforgettable possession.

The very word Kootenai recalls a gracious memory, for the tribe who lived along its shores and gave it their name, were the noblest and most honorable of the primitive Americans. It is said that the Hudson's Bay traders, when obliged to be absent from their post among the Kootenais, left the stores unlocked and unguarded. The Indians brought their furs and took away the exact equivalent in goods. During forty years, writes the Jesuit Father de Smet, the traders could not report the smallest object stolen.

The railway follows the river for a hundred miles through Kootenai canyon from Rexford to Bonners Ferry. At each of these points, as well as at Kootenai Falls, fur trading posts were established and maintained by Thompson, Finan McDonald and later traders. At the present town of Bonners Ferry a monument has been erected to commemorate this first route of travel and trade through what is now the state of Idaho.

At a more modern period gold miners bound for the mines of the Canadian Kootenai, swarmed along the river and steam-



Along the Kootenai Route

boats ran between Jennings, Montana, forty miles below Rexford, and Fort Steele in Canada.

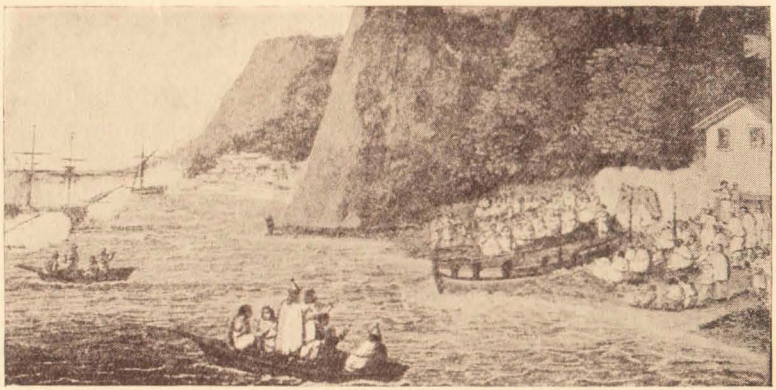
After leaving Kootenai river at Bonners Ferry, the Great Northern follows the shores of Pend d'Oreille Lake and river for some distance. Thompson and his men established trading posts on Pend d'Oreille Lake, on Clark's Fork, some sixty miles southeastward, for trade with the Flatheads and one called Spokane House on the Spokane river about eight miles northwest of the present city of Spokane.

In 1811 Thompson navigated by canoe the entire Columbia river, from its source in the Rockies to its mouth at the Pacific, hoping to secure all that country to Great Britain. Why he did not do so, we shall presently see. His was the first exploration of the entire length of the Columbia. Painstakingly as he went, he surveyed and re-surveyed and, because of his observations of the heavens, the Indians gave him the poetic name "Man Who Looks at the Stars."

Like all those other early travellers, he made these journeys by canoe, on foot, or on horseback, with a handful of French or half-breed voyageurs, among tribes of Indians becoming increasingly hostile to white men; in summer heat and winter blizzards; along tumultuous waterways beset with rapids and whirlpools; through mountain gorges choked with fallen timber, roots, tangled underbrush and broken rocks, where no path lay and no white men had ever been. For many years the great map he made was the only authority on the topography of much of this vast region, and its astonishing accuracy may be verified by comparison with official maps of today.

His material recompense was neglect and direst poverty; his true reward a belated but dawning fame as one of our greatest surveyors and explorers. The first monument to David Thompson in the United States was erected in July, 1925, at the town of Verendrye, by the Great Northern Railway Company and presented to the state of North Dakota. It marks the place where the route of Thompson on his trip to the Missouri in 1797 crosses the railway and also the earlier path of Verendrye.

I have said that Thompson reached the mouth of the Columbia but did not accomplish his purpose of securing the country to Great Britain. The reason was that he found an American establishment there. Let us go back a few years.



From Capt. John Meares' "Voyages"

Launching the Northwest America

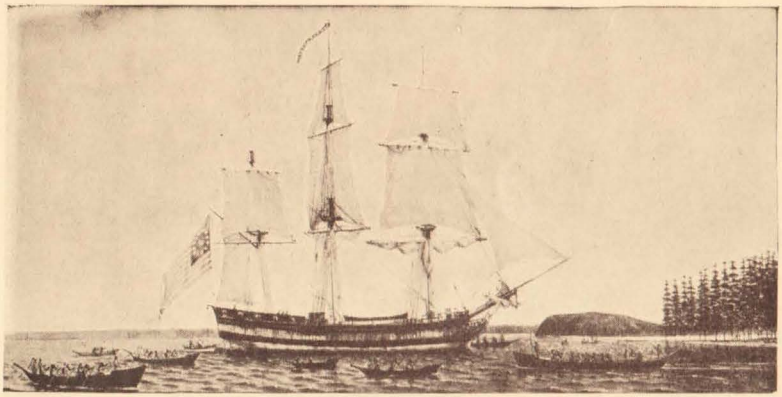
The Americans

West of the Rocky Mountains the traveller on the Oriental Limited enters what was once known as the Oregon country. It comprised what are now Washington, Oregon, Idaho and a part of Montana and British Columbia.

A century and a half after the California coast was well known, this region remained a blank on early maps and existed only in legend—the fantastic kingdom of Quivira and Anian. On many a tossing fo'c'sle, during many an idle hour under the hot suns of Spanish America or in gray seaports of the Old World, tales were told of this imaginary realm, of its fabulous cities, its King Tantarrax—an interesting mixture of fashionable prelate and American aborigine, a benevolent old gentleman with a long beard and crucifix of solid gold.

It was a temperate land, where wild fruits, green grass, flowing water, wild game and all things pleasing to a sea-weary sailor abounded and that nothing be wanting, the Straits of Anian, real and only passage to India, were added to the mythical kingdom.

Gradually as the centuries passed, Spanish and English vessels crept northward up the coast, and, at last, ships flying the flag of the new American republic. Peltries of sea otter and beaver were the lure, to be bought from the Indians for a few trinkets and sold at immense profit in China. There were also, on the part of Spaniards and British, the desire for territorial expansion and for possession of the Straits of Anian, by which they might sail eastward through the continent to the Atlantic.



From a Painting by Fred S. Cozzens

The "Columbia" in the Columbia River

There were rumors, too, of a great river, but both English and Spaniards sailed past its mouth and failed to recognize it, and it remained for an American to make the discovery.

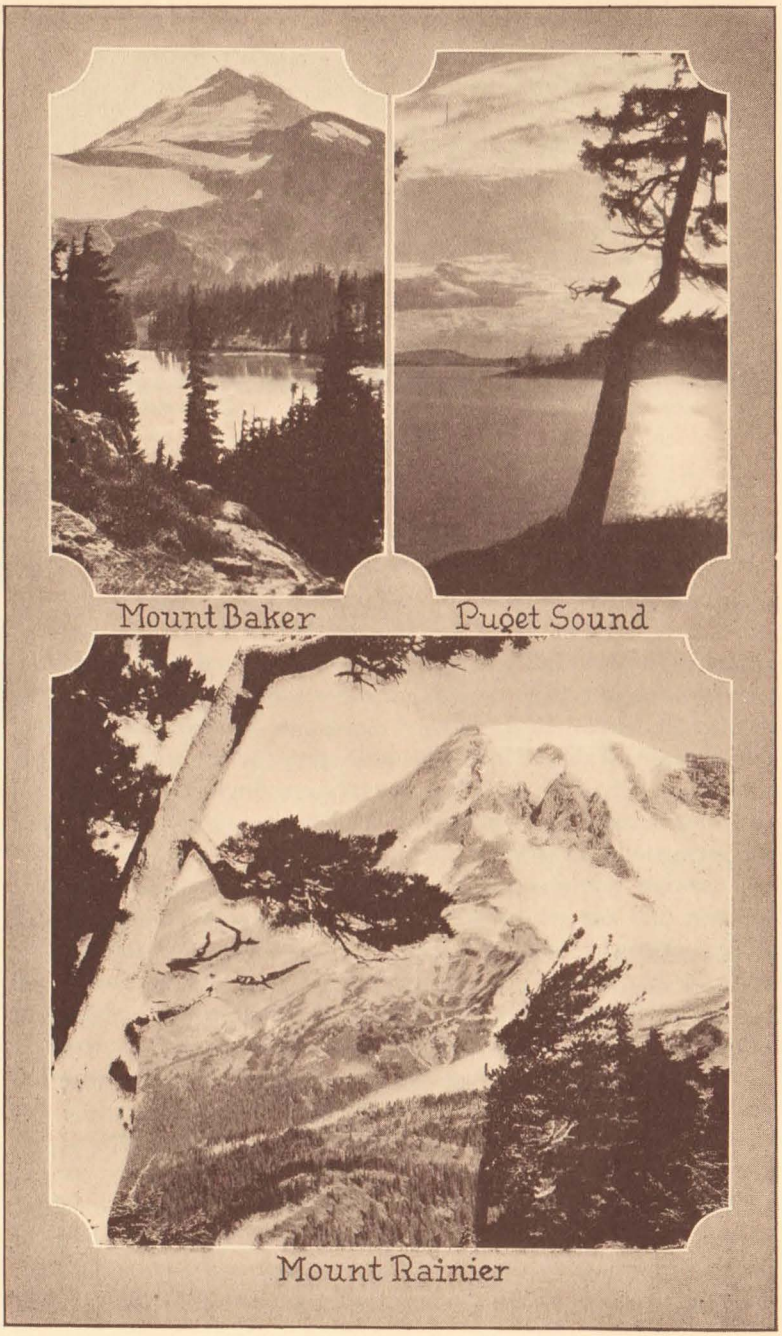
GRAY AND THE COLUMBIA

Early in May, in the year 1792, the full-rigged ship Columbia, nine months out from Boston on a fur trading venture into the Pacific, sailed slowly southward along the coast of Washington. The captain, Robert Gray, was searching for the mouth of this mysterious River of the West, which he thought he had seen on a former cruise, and which weather conditions at the time had not permitted him to examine.

But now came a day of sunshine, light breeze, and a clear horizon, and the white sails of the Columbia bore her directly shoreward toward a dangerous line of foaming breakers, which for centuries had warned vessels away from land. Sounding as she went, the American ship found a safe channel across the bar, and folded her white wings in the tide waters of the legendary river.

Native canoes swarmed out from shore; Indians crowded on board eager to trade, or, when she ascended the river to make further exploration, ran along shore following in amazement the strange craft the like of which they had never seen.

Thus Captain Gray discovered the River of the West, which he called the Columbia. It became a favorite trading place for vessels of all nations, but for almost twenty years no settlement was made there. Farther north the English Captain Vancouver



The Land of Quivira

and his men sailed through the straits of Juan de Fuca into the splendid inland sea of Puget Sound.

LEWIS AND CLARK

With the new century, Spanish Louisiana became a part of the American Republic, and in 1804 an official expedition was sent out to find its way across the vast, unexplored domain of Spanish Louisiana and the Pacific coast region beyond the Rockies.

This party, under the leadership of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, set out from the Spanish-French village of St. Louis, ascended the Missouri for nearly 3,000 miles to one of its sources in the Rockies, crossed the mountains, and descended by the Snake and Columbia rivers to the sea. They left St. Louis in May, 1804, and returned in September, 1806—a journey we make in a few days.

The route of Lewis and Clark first touches the Great Northern Railway at Sioux City, Iowa. A monument has been erected at this place to Sergeant Floyd, the only member of the expedition to die during the journey. At Williston, North Dakota, the most northerly point reached by the Missouri, the railroad again strikes their trail and follows it for many hundreds of miles —south and southwest along the river to Great Falls and Helena and on to Butte in the vicinity of the way taken by them, making in a few hours the distance that took Lewis and Clark three months to traverse. West of Spokane the trail is picked up again when the Snake river is reached near Kahlotus, Washington, and followed to and down the Columbia by the route of the Oriental Limited.

Eliminate for a moment the intervening century. Along the brown Missouri, toiling upstream in their green cottonwood canoes built at Fort Mandan, we see the famous company—a handful of American soldiers, French boatmen and interpreters, an African negro, York, object of admiration and awe to wondering savages, a brave Indian girl, Sacajawea, carrying her baby on her back; and at their head those wise, courageous, true-hearted leaders, Lewis, President Jefferson's secretary and woodsman by birth and training, and Clark, who couldn't spell and did not know what it was to falter or be afraid.

The roar of locomotive drowns the song of the boatmen; the earth shakes as it thunders past lightly trailing its long scarf of steel, and vanishes over the unbroken rim of the horizon before the canoes have advanced by more than their own length;

an inconceivable, an impossible, phenomenon; a fantasy—had the veil of the future been torn for an instant from the eyes of those early wayfarers—to be laughed or shuddered at around the camp fire that glowed each night like a fallen star on the Montana plains.

The Indian girl, Sacajawea, who accompanied them and gave invaluable assistance to the party, is best known to tradition as the Bird Woman; but tradition can add nothing to the romance of her amazing story.

Some years before Lewis and Clark arrived at the Mandan and Minnetaree villages on the upper Missouri, a war party of Minnetarees had made a successful horse stealing expedition to the Rocky Mountains.

Upward curling plumes of smoke and a band of grazing horses, betrayed to them the existence of a Shoshone camp. At daybreak came the surprise attack, the war shouts and the carnage; and when it was over the Minnetaree raiders fled eastward across the plains with their wet scalps, stolen horses and Shoshone prisoners—among them Sacajawea.

A French vagabond voyageur and fur trader, Chaboneau, who hung about the Missouri river villages, bought Sacajawea for wife and slave. Chiefly on her account he was engaged by Lewis and Clark as guide and interpreter for the expedition. In reality it was the Bird Woman who acted in both capacities. Faithful and courageous, she marched with the men, cheerfully shared the labor, endured without complaint the hardships of the great journey. At one time when one of their boats was upset in a sudden squall, due largely to the inexpert handling of the frightened Chaboneau, Sacajawea remained calm and saved the notes Lewis and Clark had written just as they were about to float away. She rendered invaluable services to the party as guide and was at all times helpful and courageous. The early story of the Northwest enshrines

Lewis on the Marais River

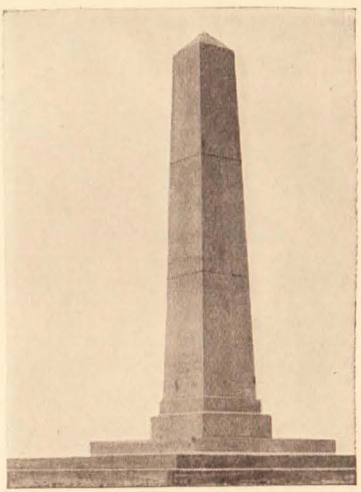
many such Indian women, whose modest and self-effacing virtues have left a gracious and indelible memory.

In the hour of greatest need among the barren defiles of the Rockies, the expedition, by a coincidence which gives to Sacajawea's life a tang of fiction, came upon the very tribe from which she had been stolen and of which her brother was the chief, and obtained the indispensable horses and supplies.

For sixteen months the small band of white men were completely cut off from all communication with or hope of succor from the civilized world. Their sagacity and courage alone stood between them and the perils of the savage wilderness through which they had no guide but rumor, the information chance-met Indians could or were willing to give, and the rough maps they outlined on birch bark for the travellers. Starvation threatened among the rugged, trackless summits of the Rockies; grizzly bears, ferocious as tigers, lurked along the river bottoms. At the mouth of Milk river an encounter with one of these terrible "white bears," as the explorers called the grizzlies, proved almost fatal to a band of unwary hunters; and near the mouth of Sun river, Captain Lewis hunting alone, fled from one of them into the river barely escaping with his life. Not the least of the perils encountered were the hazards of navigation in the frail canoes or clumsy pereogues, through rapids and shoals, among jagged rocks, in terrific wind and rain storms when the river was swollen to a raging torrent. Yet in all that time not a man was lost, injured or seriously incapacitated by illness.

On their return journey from the Columbia, the leaders separated, each to take a different route to the mouth of the Yellowstone.

Captain Lewis' was the more northerly course. It was his purpose to explore Maria's river, a tributary of the Missouri which joins the main stream near Fort Benton some distance below the Great Falls.



Lewis Monument at Meriwether, Montana

The Astoria Column

He wished to learn how far north it rose, and probably to ascertain whether its head waters did not provide a better pass through the mountains than those discovered farther south.

Maria's river led the explorers deep into the dangerous country of the Blackfeet and Gros Ventres Indians. An encounter with a band of Gros Ventres proved to be the only fatal episode of the whole expedition. The Indians attempted to run off with the guns of the Americans and in the fight to recover them two of the Indians were killed, and the white men obliged to retreat with all haste to the Missouri, where they made a fortunate connection with the remainder of Lewis' party.

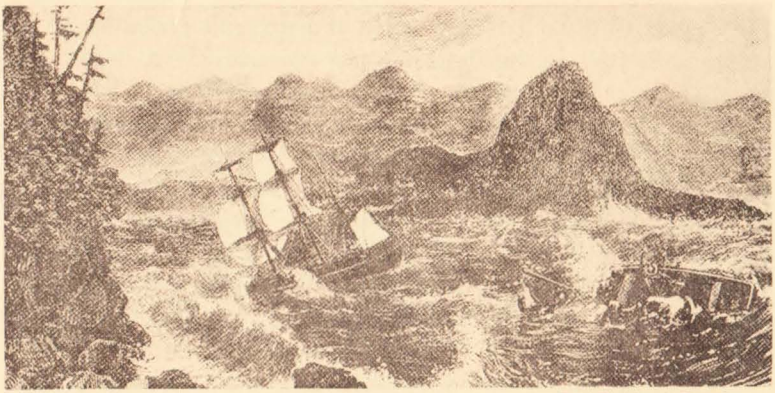
A monument to Captain Lewis erected near the present town of Meriwether, a station on the Great Northern Railway, near Glacier Park, marks approximately the most westerly point on the Maria's reached by Lewis and the most northerly attained by the expedition.

The Blackfeet and Gros Ventres were at that time closely allied and much of the subsequent hostility of the Blackfeet to Americans was attributed to the killing of the two Gros Ventres. Possibly this hostility was somewhat exaggerated but its effect was none the less far reaching. The "terrible Blackfeet" as they were called, became the bugbear of the West, the terror of traders and travellers, and the legend of their ferocity held back the exploration and settlement of this part of Montana until long after other portions of the West were well known.

It is not easy to overestimate the importance of the Lewis and Clark exploration. It revealed to the world a new region of incalculable resource; prairies, plains and foothills which pastured incredible numbers of elk, deer, bear, wild sheep and buffalo, rich valleys, streams swarming with the living treasure of the beaver; and beyond the mountains it discovered a country greener and more sumptuous than legendary Quivira, a land of magnificent forests, smiling meadows, deep harbors, and shining mountain peaks.

ASTOR AND ASTORIA

Commerce eagerly followed Lewis and Clark up the Missouri. In New York the great merchant and fur trader, John Jacob Astor, conceived a truly imperial project. Fur trading posts were to be built along the Missouri and Columbia rivers with a central station at the mouth of the latter river; an overland route



From Franchere's Narrative

The Tonquin Entering the Columbia River

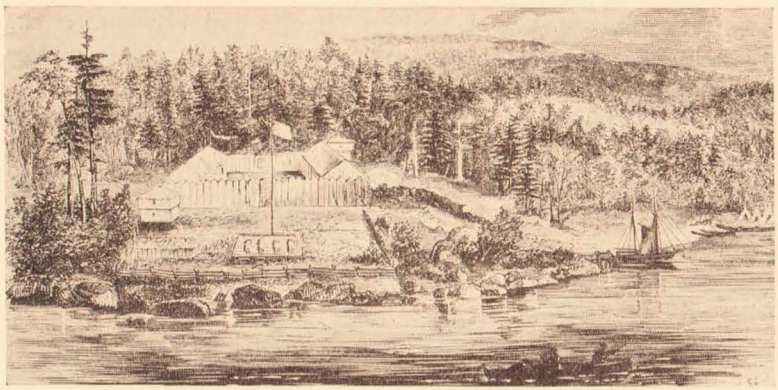
from St. Louis was to be established and vessels with supplies to be sent around the Horn to the post on the Columbia. There the ships were to take aboard the furs and proceed to China, the most profitable market. In Canton peltries were to be exchanged for the teas, porcelains and silks highly prized in England and America.

This plan resulted in the first American settlement on the Pacific coast—the trading station of Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia. This was the community found by David Thompson in the summer of 1811 when he reached the end of his long journey down the great river.

Its establishment was attended with such spectacular adventure, suffering and heroism, as are not surpassed in the whole history of our frontiers.

The overland party, which set out from St. Louis in 1810 under Wilson Price Hunt, spent eleven months in crossing the plains and mountains to the Pacific. They made a southerly detour to avoid the dangerous country of the Blackfeet and endured every extremity of cold, hunger and fatigue before they straggled down the Columbia to the new fort at its mouth. This post had just been put up by the party which had come by sailing vessel around the Horn.

The very name of their ship, the Tonquin, rings like a portent of disaster in the records of time. The Tonquin, leaving Astor's partners and some of the men at the mouth of the Columbia to build Astoria sailed northward to trade for furs on the Island of Vancouver.



From Franchere's Narrative

Astoria in 1813

At Neweetee Harbour, disregarding the orders of Mr. Astor, Captain Thorn permitted the natives to come aboard in large numbers. Antagonized by his severity, the savages, at a given signal fell upon the white men and butchered all but five. Of these, four left the ship during the night; the fifth, who was wounded, refused to accompany them.

The following day he lured the Indians onto the vessel, fired the arsenal and blew up the unfortunate Tonquin and all aboard her, including himself.

The four men, who had gone ashore, met a worse fate. They fell into the hands of the surviving members of the tribe and suffered every lingering agony those expert torturers could devise.

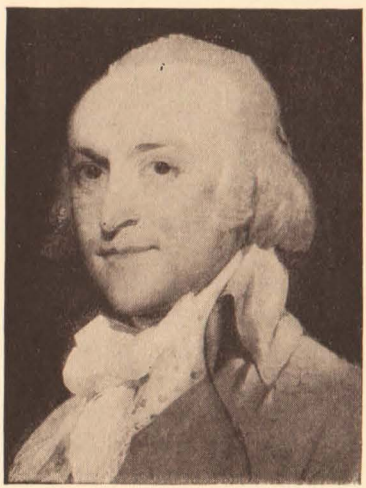
The War of 1812, the disloyalty to Astor of his Canadian partners at Astoria, the subsequent failure of our government to give him adequate aid, caused the ruin of this particular one of Astor's enterprises. The post was sold by the partners in charge to the North West Company in 1813 for a fraction of its value. Shortly afterwards the British sloop-of-war Racoon sailed over the white water of the bar and dropped anchor in the mouth of the Columbia. The loyal Indians presented themselves at Fort Astoria armed for battle. Their chief, Concomly, offered his services to his son-in-law, Duncan McDougal, chief factor of the post, to repel the invaders, but McDougal refused to fight. Concomly it is said was profoundly ashamed of his kinship by marriage with a man he believed to be a coward. Captain Black of the Racoon ordered down the American flag, ran up the Union

Jack, rechristened the place Fort George and proclaimed the sovereignty of his Britannic majesty over the mouth of the Columbia.

This proceeding, which put the finishing touch to the Indians' scorn for the North Westers at Astoria, had a fortunate result for American interests on the Columbia. The treaty of Ghent which followed the war provided that all territories and possessions captured during hostilities should be relinquished. Black's military gesture had lifted the Astorian affair from a commercial transaction to an act of war. Consequently under the proviso of the treaty the fort was formally turned back to the United States in 1818. Although the post was not occupied by Americans this official acknowledgment on the part of Great Britain of a prior American right at this place was an important factor in securing the Oregon country to the United States. From that time the fur trade of the Oregon country, in all but the most southwesterly parts, was in the hands of the British.

The Hudson's Bay and North West Companies united in 1821. Dr. John McLoughlin, a man who played a long and honorable part in the early history of the Oregon country, was sent there in 1824 to take charge of the trade.

The headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company had been Fort George, formerly Astor's post on the site of the present city of Astoria. After McLoughlin's arrival it was supplanted by Fort Vancouver, built a hundred miles up the river where the city of Vancouver, Washington, now stands. From there the fur brigades set out for their distant trading posts, paddles swinging to the rhythm of the voyageur songs. When they returned with their precious cargo of beaver skins, the spacious buildings, fields, gardens and green lawns of the fort offered a grateful welcome after the privations of their long exile.



From painting in possession of the Astor Family

John Jacob Astor

A considerable settlement grew up about the post. Fort Vancouver became the com-

mercial, agricultural and social center of the Oregon country and for many years was the foremost community, not only of the Pacific Northwest, but of the entire Pacific coast.

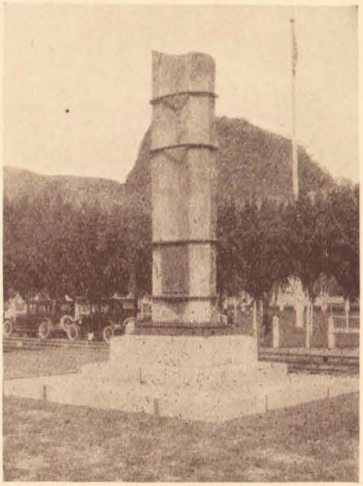
In the spring of 1825, before the buildings of the new fort were completed, a sailing vessel from England brought the first of many distinguished guests who were to be entertained at Fort Vancouver with such memorable hospitality. This was the celebrated Scotch botanist, David Douglas, collector for the Horticultural Society of London. He introduced over two hundred species of American plants and trees into England and studied, collected and reported many hundreds of others. Wild flowers brought by Douglas from the banks of the Snake, the Spokane and the Columbia rivers, still bloom in the gardens of England and tall pines whisper there of the Pacific.

In memory of the great scientific service he rendered, a monument was erected to him by the botanists of Europe; but Douglas has a more splendid memorial in the forests of the Northwest. He was the first to classify and give to the world the magnificent tree which has justly been named in his honor—the Douglas fir.

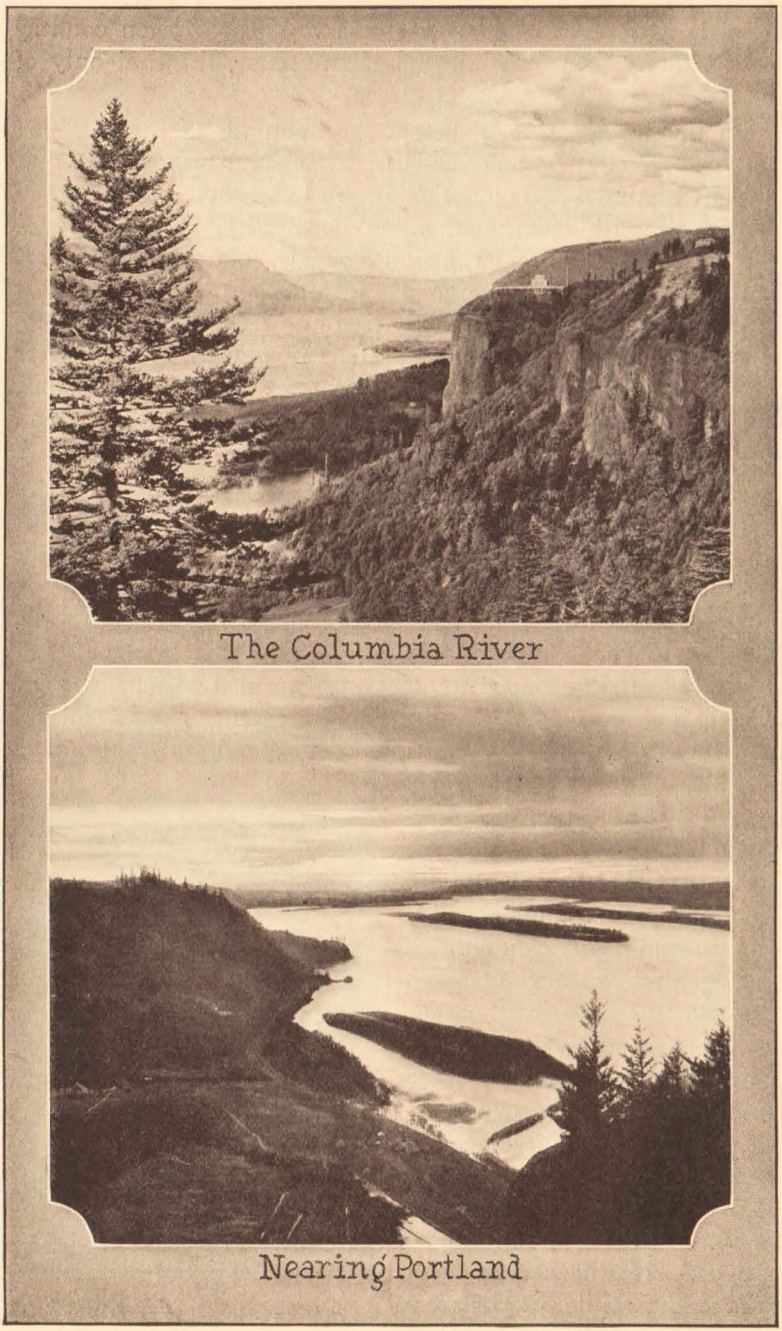
From Fort Vancouver Dr. McLoughlin ruled with benevolent wisdom and firmness over an immense domain. The succor and hospitality he offered the first missionaries and emigrants made possible and hastened the early settlement of this region by Americans.

Until 1843 there had been joint occupancy, under which English and American citizens had equal rights in the Oregon country.

This arrangement which for many years was unsatisfactory to all concerned, was maintained because no mutual satisfactory decision could be reached as to the proper division of territory between the two nations. It was a subject of endless discussion in Congress



Monument at Wishram, Wash



The River of the West

and Parliament and in commissions jointly appointed by the respective governments.

In the early forties the American settlers who were emigrating in great numbers to Oregon clamored for more adequate government than a vague joint occupancy could supply. Aside from the Hudson's Bay Company officials, servants and retired employees, the greater part of the population was by that time American. Great Britain fearing to lose her influence in Oregon matters before the boundary dispute was settled, perhaps believing that no peaceful solution was possible, sent war ships to the Pacific and in 1845 an interesting secret expedition across the continent from the St. Lawrence to the mouth of the Columbia.

The agents of the British government in this instance were Lieutenant H. J. Warre, aide de camp of the Commander of Forces in Canada, and Lieutenant Vavasour of the Royal Engineers. Until recent years the nature of their mission was not known. They were believed to have been sent out by the Hudson's Bay Company to spy on the conditions of its affairs in Oregon, particularly in reference to the assistance given by Dr. McLoughlin to American emigrants—a policy not deemed consistent with the best interests of the fur trade.

But some years ago the official documents relating to Warre and Vavasour were made public and a curious episode in the story of secret diplomacy in America revealed. The purpose of the expedition was to examine the entire border westward from Lake Superior to the Pacific with a view to fortifying it and establishing bases for military operations against American army and fur posts, and settlements. In view of the unbroken peace which has reigned between Canada and the United States for over a hundred years these considerations happily seem archaic and absurd. They were occasioned of course by the disputes over the division of sovereignty in the Oregon country. The lower valley and mouth of the Columbia particularly were to be studied from the military standpoint and certain places such as Cape Disappointment and Tongue Point to be secured—if not already occupied by Americans—ostensibly by the Hudson's Bay Company, but in reality for military purposes.

Warre and Vavasour were to travel by canoe brigade from the Sault de Sainte Marie to the Red River of the North with Sir George Simpson, the able and energetic governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, and to make the journey from there to

From sketch by Capt. Warre, English Army

Fort Vancouver

the Pacific with Mr. Peter Skeyne Ogden, one of the chief traders of the organization. The real character of the mission was known only to Simpson and Ogden. To everyone else Warre and Vavasour were to be "private gentlemen travelling for the pleasure of field sports and scientific pursuits."

From Red river the travellers took the well known fur trade route up the Saskatchewan, across the Rockies by one of the several passes and thence to the Columbia along the trail blazed by David Thompson over thirty years before. This trail, down the Kootenai river to the site of Bonner's Ferry, across by an ancient Indian road to Spokane House near the present city of Spokane, thence to Fort Colville on the Columbia at Kettle Falls and down that river to Fort Vancouver, is followed practically all the way from Rexford to Portland and Astoria by the Great Northern Railway.

This route was also an emigrant trail. Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, encouraged a large number of Red river families, retired Scotch, French and English half-breeds who had belonged to the company, to leave the Selkirk settlements on the Red River of the North, for the Oregon country.

The fur-bearing animals of that region were rapidly being exterminated and the Hudson's Bay people had, contrary to the usual policy of the fur trade, organized a farming and stock raising concern known as the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. The Red river emigrants were to settle on the lands appropriated by

From Harper's New Monthly Magazine

A Red River Ox Cart Train

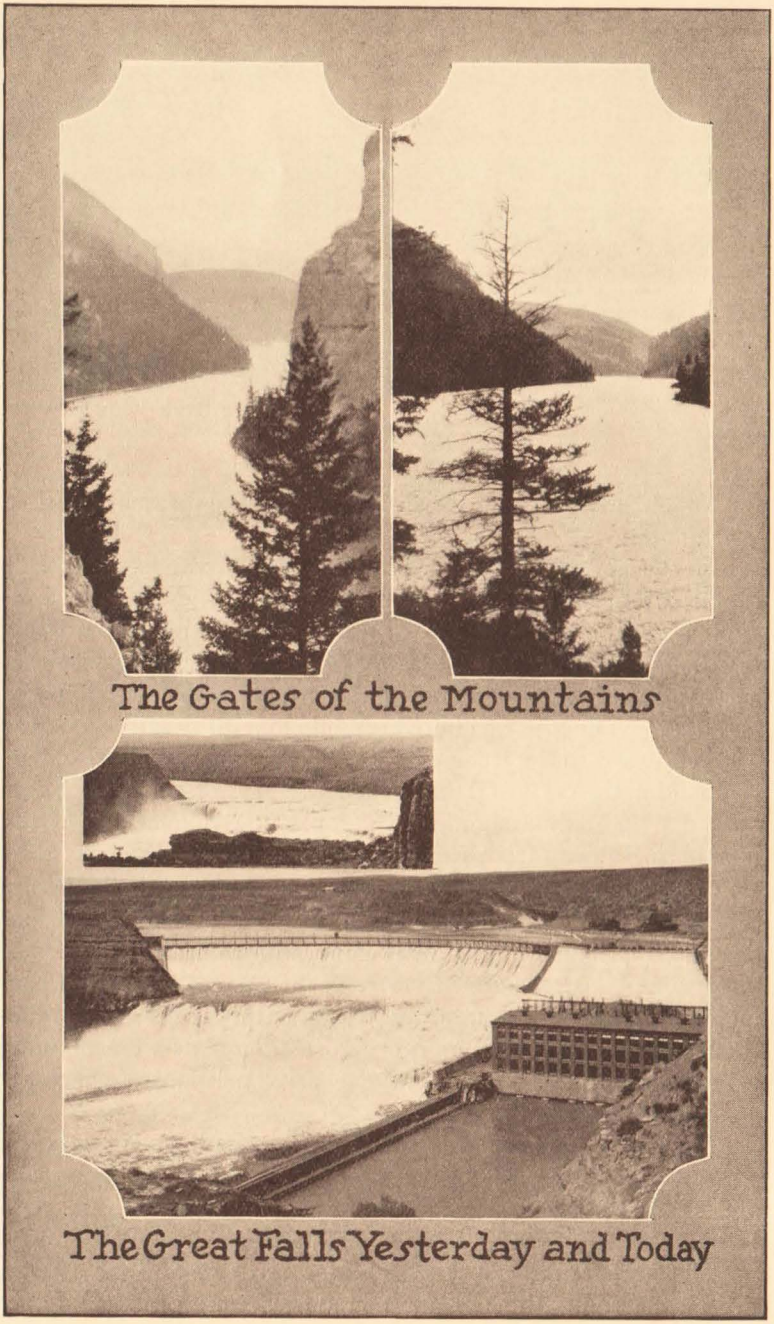
the organization along Cowlitz river in the present state of Washington.

In the spring of 1841 a picturesque caravan set out from the Red River of the North on the long journey; men, women and children in the gay, half civilized dress of the Métis; babies and household goods stowed away in the wooden ox carts—two carts to each family—and pastoral hordes of cattle, sheep, horses and dogs. The great train over a mile long, it is said, wound its way westward to the Rockies. There the emigrants were obliged to abandon the carts and make their way on horseback, afoot and by canoe approximately along the route now taken by the Great Northern Railway from Rexford to the distant Columbia.

Later Warre and Vavasour proclaimed the trail "quite impracticable for the transport of troops with their provisions, stores, etc.," and for any other emigrants than the experienced voyageur pioneers of Red river. Yet it was an important commercial highway for more than half a century, over which many thousand dollars' worth of furs and trade goods were annually transported by the difficult and expensive methods of canoe and pack saddle.

The British emissaries found Cape Disappointment and other strategic points on the lower Columbia occupied by Americans; and reported the fur posts, although strong enough to resist Indian attack, not adequate defenses against disciplined troops.

Their report did not reach London until 1846, after negotiations concerning the Oregon boundaries were practically com-



The Upper Missouri River

pleted; but as they had conferred with other English agents on the Columbia who proceeded directly to England by sea, it is certain that their conclusions had an effect on the outcome of the long fought boundary dispute.

Gray's discovery of the Columbia in 1792, the Lewis and Clark expedition to its mouth in 1805, Astor's establishment of a trading post there in 1811, were the foundations on which our claim to the region was firmly laid. And the great tide of American emigration, resulting in part from the efforts of such early missionaries as the Lees, Whitmans, Spaldings, Parkers and others, aided and encouraged by McLoughlin's generous welcome to a country where he was all-powerful, was a deciding factor.

MISSOURI RIVER TRADE

East of the Rockies the American fur trade grew rapidly. Its headquarters were at St. Louis; its important highway the Missouri river, although it also sent traders up the Mississippi into Minnesota and Wisconsin.

As the Oriental and Glacier Park Limiteds pass through North Dakota and Montana, they touch at many points the devious course of the brown river. Its waters now seem curiously deserted and there is nothing left to recall the varied craft which for almost a century, beat their adventurous way against its swift current.

Dugout canoes; bull boats—round, shallow, unwieldly affairs made of rawhide stretched over a willow frame; flat boats for descending with the current; the imposing keel boat, 75 or 100 feet long, with a covered cabin or cargo box, a mast for sailing, a thousand feet of tow rope or cordelle. When the wind failed or the water was too swift or too shallow for rowing, twenty or thirty men toiling single file along shore, dragged the boat upstream. Last of all came the steamboat, riding high above the murky river and flat surrounding plains; the incredible fire canoe, which moved as if by magic, belching fire and smoke, emitting shrill screams, churning the shallow water with a revolving tail, before which the Indians covered their mouths and fell flat on their faces in terror.

On the Missouri we again see the Canadian voyageur kneeling to his paddle, or laboring at the tow rope, singing his gay boat songs born two hundred years before along the water-

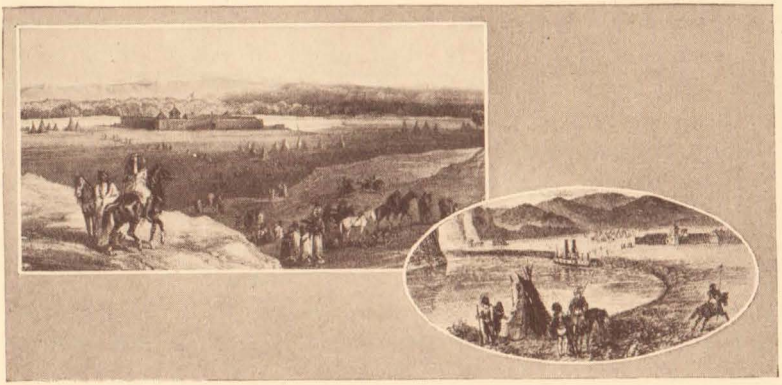
A Keel Boat in the Fur Trade

ways of the North. Here too were the famous mountain men, trappers, fur traders, unofficial explorers, most daring and romantic figures of the early scene; dressed like savages, scalps dangling from their belts, long hair braided and faces daubed with paint; first pathfinders of the West. They penetrated the remotest rivers, streams and mountains, trapping beaver, fighting and fraternizing with the Indians, and later guiding the official expeditions and covered wagon trains.

The Black Robes, too, followed this great water highway to the West. They paused at fur posts to exhort and baptize and passed westward to their work among distant tribes. Men of science came from all over the world, dared the perils and hardships of the Missouri to study the unknown flora and fauna of the West; soldiers came, explorers, and later men bound for the gold mines of Montana and Idaho; pioneers and at last ranchmen and settlers, bringing women and children, to make a world where men would want to stay.

FORT UNION AND FORT BENTON

Where the Great Northern Railway crosses the line from North Dakota to Montana, stood the famous establishment toward which all early commerce and travel of the upper Missouri converged. This was Fort Union. It was built in 1828 by the American Fur Company owned at that time by John Jacob Astor and was for forty years the most important white man's community beyond the frontier.



Fort Union and Fort Benton

It stood in almost unimaginable isolation and the daily life lived within its high stockade—at once colorful, dangerous and monotonous—is the essence of a period now gone forever.

Down from the north over the pastel colored coteaux, down the Yellowstone or eastward from Milk river and beyond came Indians with furs to trade. They brought wives, children, dogs, ponies, travois, and dressed in their gaudy, savage best, approached the fort with beating drums and flying pennants; the bright flag was run up and the fort saluted with its brass cannon. Then the factor surrounded by his retinue, marched out in state to greet them and to invite the chiefs to his apartment where the ceremonial pipe was smoked, presents exchanged and the rum eagerly expected by the Indians, offered to them. Fur trading in its earliest and palmiest days was a ritual, and its conventions carefully observed.

Westward to Fort Union from the Red River of the North, came the caravans of half breed buffalo hunters. Their settlements and way of life form a unique chapter in our history. Twice each summer vast hunting parties collected from all this surrounding country at Pembina, a town on the Great Northern Railway in eastern North Dakota. From there they set out for the western plains following the buffalo—men on horseback, women on foot driving the oxen, children on top of household goods piled high on the two-wheeled wooden carts. Slowly on screeching ungreased axles the long trains, often of a thousand or more carts, plodded across Dakota to and into Montana, the scouts ever on the lookout for grazing herds. Frequently these gypsies of the

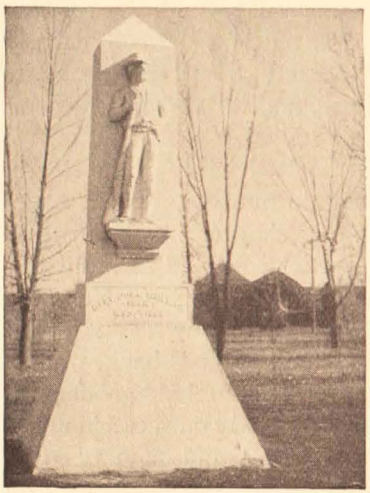
north stopped to rest and trade at Fort Union. When they returned eastward part of their cargo of robes, dried meat, pemmican and tallow, was shipped up the Red river by steamboat to the head of navigation; thence by ox cart to St. Paul and from there to the eastern seaboard.

Fort Benton, established in 1846, below the Great Falls of the Missouri, rivalled Fort Union in importance. It succeeded Forts Piegan and McKenzie, which had been built at the mouth of Maria's river a year or so after the erection of Fort Union; and it survived the latter post many years. After gold was discovered in Montana, and cattle replaced the buffalo, Fort Benton became the great river port of the West. It was also the head of overland travel in that region. The important military and emigrant route known as the Mullan road crossed the Rocky and Bitter Root Mountains from Fort Benton by way of Great Falls and Helena to Walla Walla. A statue to the American army officer who built the road—Lieutenant Mullan—is to be seen at Fort Benton.

But the picturesque river city lost its importance over night when the Great Northern Railway reached there in 1887.

THE BLACKFEET

Fort Benton was the headquarters for trade with the Blackfeet. They were a brave handsome people reigning in great prosperity over the buffalo ranges from which they had driven the Flatheads, Kootenais and many other tribes—forcing them to establish themselves west of the mountains.



Mullan Statue, Fort Benton

It was the Piegan tribe of Blackfeet who occupied this part of Montana. Tradition differs as to what use they made of that beautiful mountain region now known as Glacier Park. Some writers say they feared the mountains. The lofty peaks, the gloom of the pine forests, the roar of waterfalls and shriek of winds in

storm swept defiles were, they believed, the expression of a powerful, malignant force whom it was the part of wisdom to avoid by remaining on the plains—those plains which they loved —whose wide vistas could conceal no lurking enemy, supernatural or otherwise.

Others tell us the Piegans went on many excursions into that matchless hunting ground where elk pastured in the high, flower-starred valleys, and mountain sheep and goat, perched on dizzy ledges, offered a delicate target for their arrows or the trade guns of a later day.

The Piegans now occupy a reservation lying east of Glacier Park along which the Great Northern Railway passes.

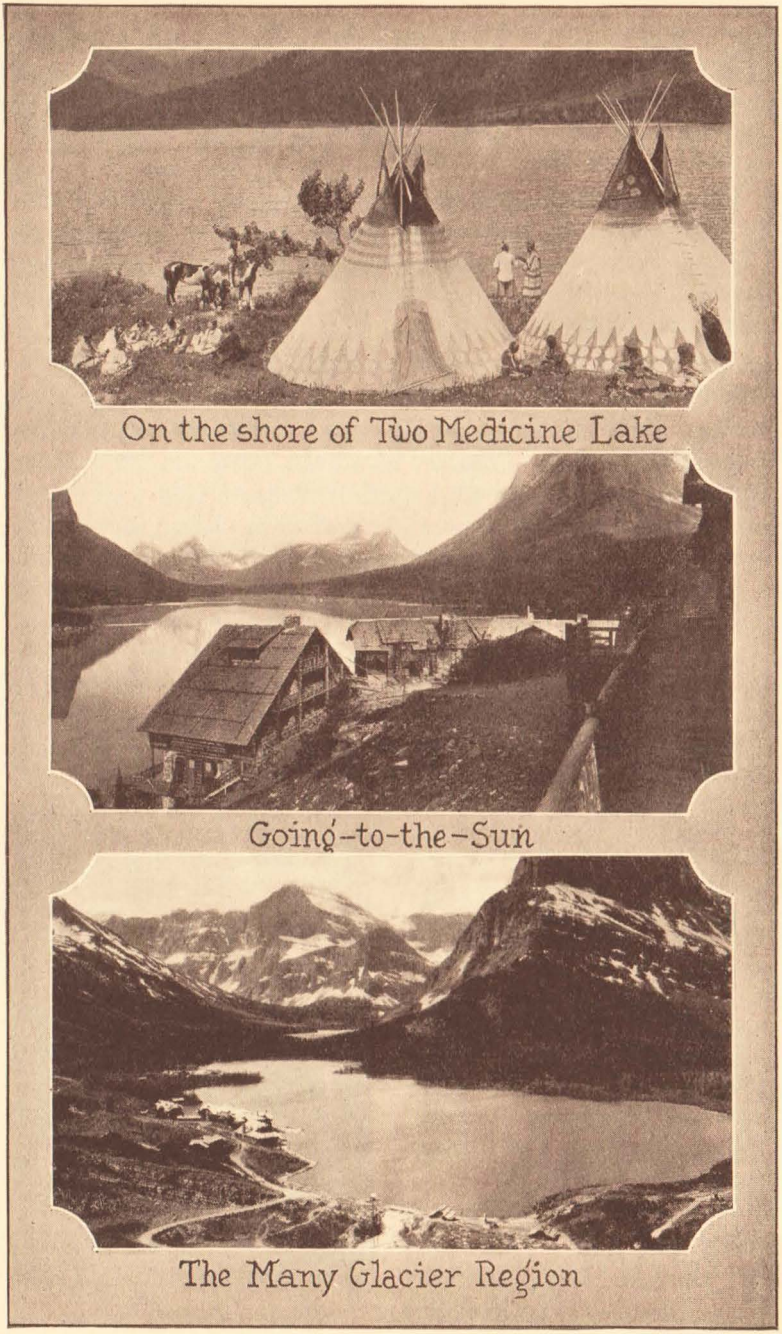
They often make ceremonial visits to the hotels and chalets of the Park. Their costumes of elk and deer skin, rich with ermine, gay with bright patterns of dyed porcupine quills, their war bonnets and necklaces of grizzly bears claws, the pulsing beat of their drums and wild music of their dance recalls the time of their freedom and barbaric splendor. Once more the softly tinted plains which hour after hour have flowed past the rushing train are dark with vanished hordes of buffalo, peopled with strange spirits of earth and air and sky. And, observing the serene haughtiness and dignity of Curly Bear or the patriarchal Mountain Chief, you may still see what it was to be a Blackfoot gentleman.

The traveller will find many parts of Glacier Park almost unchanged from those days when the evil spirits of the Blackfeet spoke in thunder from the mountain peaks.

Along the high passes whistling marmots answer each other with their lonely call; mountain goats skip perversely along suicidal precipices; soft, white ptarmigan, unafraid, scarcely bother to get from under the intruders' feet. Far below a jade green lake lies like a jewel in the valley. The air is clear and

Bodmer in Maximilian's Travels

Blackfeet Hunting Buffalo



Glacier National Park, the Ancient Hunting Ground of the Blackfeet

light, the silence perfect. It is the top of the world, the morning of life, and beneath you, the summits of the mountains, ridge after ridge, march away and lose themselves in the sky.

ISAAC I. STEVENS AND EARLY RAILROAD SURVEYS

In 1853 an expedition of peculiar significance appeared at Fort Union. This was the party under Governor Isaac I. Stevens, commissioned by the government to survey a northern railroad route to the Pacific. The expedition—of which the above mentioned Lieutenant Mullan was a member—set out from St. Paul, a small settlement at the head of navigation on the Mississippi, and followed approximately the present line of the Great Northern through Minnesota, Dakota and Montana to Fort Benton, Great Falls and Helena. This route was recommended by Governor Stevens but his recommendation was not at the time acted upon, probably because the survey passed through the Blackfoot country, and also because it made a detour southward to cross the Rockies, instead of extending directly westward as the Great Northern now does.

While at Fort Benton, Governor Stevens sent a party to the head waters of Maria's river to search for a rumored pass used by the Blackfeet in former times.

The reconnaissance failed to disclose it, but Stevens was convinced that such a pass existed, and, as it was reported to give a remarkably low and easy crossing in a direct line with his surveys to east and west, he felt its discovery to be of the utmost importance. Accordingly, after he had reached the west side of the mountains, he sent a second party back to look once more for the so-called Maria's pass, and once more it eluded discovery, for although a pass was found and called Maria's it was not the one he sought.

While Governor of Washington Territory, Stevens made important treaties with the Indians. One of the most spectacular of these councils took place in Montana near the present city of Great Falls. On a wide plain beside the Missouri eight tribes from east and west of the Rockies, many of whom had never met before, except to kill, torture or rob each other, made camp together. Over feasts of steaming buffalo ribs, with tribal dances and songs and never-ending speeches, friendly agreements were reached and kept by deadliest enemies; and there a treaty be-

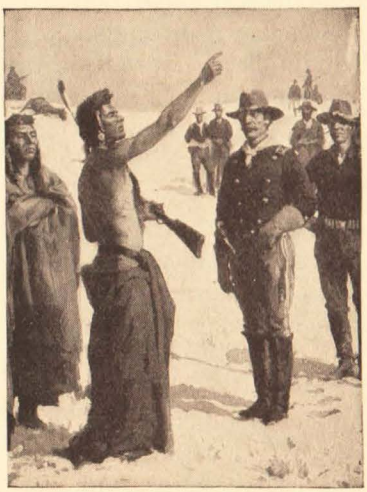
tween the Blackfeet and the United States government was drawn up. Had its terms and those of many other early pacts been faithfully observed by the American government, much ensuing disaster would have been avoided.

CLOSE OF AN EPOCH

Fort Union was abandoned in 1866 and its timbers used to build the military post of Fort Buford, a change highly significant of the times. The remains of some of the buildings of Fort Buford may still be seen just south of the Great Northern main line a mile below the mouth of the Yellowstone. Deprived of their lands and of their means of livelihood, the buffalo—which were rapidly being annihilated by the insatiable demands of the fur trade—the Sioux and other western Indians were in open revolt.

Soldiers now marched along the upper Missouri; Sitting Bull's warriors terrorized the plains; the flying army of Chief Joseph met defeat near the foot of the blue Bear Paws, about fifteen miles south of the town of Chinook on the Great Northern Railway.

There could, of course, be but one outcome. The Indians were subdued and retired to reservations some of which now skirt the Great Northern right-of-way for many miles in Dakota and Montana.



Surrender of Chief Joseph

The fur trade, having taken its heavy toll, withdrew. The plains and prairies stretching between half settled Minnesota and the small mining communities along the foot of the Rockies in Montana, remained, except for a few military and trading posts and Indian agencies, an untenanted waste, virtually as Verendrye had found them a century and a half before.

The amazing fertility of the Red River Valley was ignored. Beyond the Rockies were a few isolated trading posts; farther west flourishing farming com-

munities and towns on the Willamette and Columbia rivers; in Washington a handful of tiny settlements set down in the magnificent forests of Puget Sound. Their only method of communication with the Atlantic seaboard was the long waterway around the Horn, or the difficult journey overland to the Mississippi.

JAMES J. HILL AND RAILROAD REALITY

In 1862 the first railroad in Minnesota crept haltingly westward and northward from St. Paul to St. Anthony (Minneapolis). It reached out to the valley of the Red River of the North, which had long been a part of the much traveled highway between the Canadian settlements on the lower Red river and the head of navigation of the Mississippi.

This railroad was the St. Paul and Pacific, parent of the Great Northern. It failed in 1873 and later was bought and reorganized by James J. Hill and three associates. He soon made a connection with the Canadian Pacific which built south to the border from Winnipeg, and thus it was as an important international carrier that the Great Northern began its remarkably successful career.

Gradually it spread through the rich agricultural regions of Minnesota and Dakota where a quarter section of free land waited for every settler. Emigrants came in hundreds and thousands; the very construction trains were loaded with them; they were hauled in carloads over rails not yet fully spiked to the ties. In 1879 the reconstructed St. Paul and Pacific became the St. Paul, Minneapolis and Manitoba; in less than fifteen years as the Great Northern—which it was then called—it had reached the Western Sea. It followed the old historic highway taken by trader, voyageur, soldier and priest, and crossed the Rocky

Stevens Statue, Summit, Mont.

Mountains by the elusive pass, the existence of which was suspected by Meriwether Lewis, which Isaac Stevens' surveyors failed to find and which was at last discovered by a man celebrated in the annals of American engineering, John F. Stevens.

Mr. Stevens was at that time assistant engineer of the Great Northern Railway. It was midwinter. The half breed guide who was his only companion gave out and Stevens, leaving him in an improvised camp, went on alone. He reached the summit with the thermometer falling to forty below, and, continuing through the low wide valley, reached westward-flowing water. He then knew he had found Maria's pass.

Where Stevens camped that night and tramped back and forth through a runway in the snow till dawn that he might not freeze to death, there now stands, against a solid wall of rose and purple tinted mountains, the statue of a young engineer.

It is the likeness of John F. Stevens and commemorates not only his discovery of the pass, his many distinguished achievements as a world famous engineer, but those others of his profession who were the last pathfinders along the centuries' old trail.

He looks toward the West, toward the imaginary realms of Quivira and Anian, toward the Pacific and toward India.

The railroad goes on down the Pacific watershed, through a treasure land of forest and mines, through fruit lands, wheat lands giving the highest yield per acre in America, through the inland metropolis of Spokane, the beautiful gorges of the Cascades to the sea ports of Seattle, Tacoma, Portland, Astoria, Longview, Everett, Bellingham, Vancouver and Victoria in whose harbors are the ships of every nation.

The settlement and development of this immense region have been brought about almost entirely by the transcontinental railroads, and in that achievement the Great Northern Railway and its builder, James J. Hill, have played a notable part.

THE END

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Pacific Ocean
Lake Winnipeg
Lake Manitoba
Lake Nipigon
Lake Superior
Lake Michigan
Lake of the Woods
Rainy Lake
Red Lake
Vancouver Island
Juan Perez, Spanish navigator, explores the northwest coast, 1774
The blowing up of the "Tonquin" June 1811
1778 Sir Francis Drake sails into the north Pacific
Capt. Gray on the ship Columbia discovers the Columbia River, May 1792
WASHINGTON
OREGON
NEVADA
MONTANA
NORTH DAKOTA
SOUTH DAKOTA
WYOMING
NEBRASKA
IOWA
MINNESOTA
MICH.
Vancouver
Bellingham
Everett
Seattle
Tacoma
Olympia
Wenatchee
Spokane
Astoria
Portland
Wishram
Great Falls
Helena
Butte
Billings
Yellowstone National Park
Glacier National Park
Waterton Lakes Park
Fort Union
Williston
Minot
Devils Lake
Grand Forks
Fargo
Moorhead
Breckenridge
Dembina
St. Vincent
Pembina
Winnipeg
Duluth
Superior
St. Cloud
Minneapolis
St. Paul
Sioux Falls
Sioux City
Council Bluffs
Chicago
Historic Adventure Land of the Northwest
Verendrye
Lewis and Clark
Thompson
Gen. S.S. Stevens
Red River Trails
Oregon Trail
Great Northern Railway
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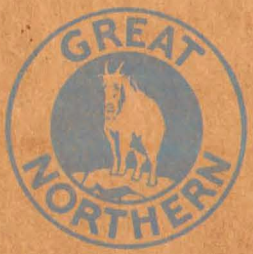
GREAT
NORTHERN