

A Primer of Pacific Northwest History

[UP-TO-DATE]

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Astoria Column.

Dedicated July 22, 1926, by the Columbia River Historical Expedition, to the lives and deeds of Capt. Robert Gray, Merriwether Lewis, William Sack, and John Jacob Astor.

Erected on the summit of Coxcomb hill, in Astoria, encloses a circular stairway leading to an observation platform. The spiral frieze is 535 feet in length, and nearly seven feet wide, picturing local history from 1792 to 1893, the coming of the railroad.

The picturization was made by Electus D. Litchfield, renowned architect from New York, and Attilio Pusterla, sculptor artist from Italy.

A Primer of Pacific Northwest History Up-to-Date

In the Northwestern part of the United States are five states, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming and Montana that figured prominently in the early history of our nation. It is that part of the Northwest that was vaguely referred to as the Oregon country; a land of mountains and obstacles through which burst a mighty river also referred to as the Oregon.

During the year 1792, the American ship "Columbia" from Boston, Mass., commanded by Captain Robert Gray, entered this river and anchored in Baker's Bay on the north shore of the river near the present site of the town of Chinook, Washington.

This was the first vessel to enter and was the first one to establish trading connections with the Indians. These Indians were the Chinooks. After this event the river was named Columbia in honor of this Boston ship. Meanwhile the Hudson Bay company and the Northwest Fur company, two rival British trading companies of Montreal and Quebec, were penetrating the great unknown Northwest near the headwaters of the Columbia, moving toward the ocean.

Lewis and Clark, the American explorers, were the first to intelligently reconnoiter this part of the hemisphere during 1805. Led by the Indian woman Sacajawea, through prairies, deserts and river gorges, over mountain barriers, after experiencing many hardships they eventually arrived at the mouth of the great river which flows into the Pacific ocean. This river is the third largest on the American continent.

Later a great merchant prince, John Jacob Astor of New York, attracted by the lure of wealth in the fur trade, as reported by Lewis and Clark and others, sent out two expeditions to the mouth of this river; one overland and one by ship around Cape Horn.

The Astor ship "Tonquin" arrived

first and anchored near the present site of the City of Astoria. A trading post was here established in 1811. This post was named Astoria in honor of their employer; this ship had on board various merchandise with which to barter furs from the Indians. The ship sailed farther north to explore and to trade. At Nootka Sound on the West coast of Vancouver Island, B. C., through discourtesy to the Indians, the captain and crew incurred their enmity. This led to a massacre of the entire crew by the Indians with the exception of one man. This man wounded and unable to escape from the hold of the vessel, and thirsting for revenge, exploded the powder magazine of the ship, at a time when the Indians were celebrating their victory on deck. Many Indians, and of course the unfortunate survivor himself, were dispatched to eternity. The news of this tragedy was reported many months later at the Astoria post by other Indians.

Meanwhile, in 1812, Astor's land party arrived.

All this was the starting of that famous and wonderful migration of peoples that followed. It had its climax from 1835 to 1850.

The gold rush to California only temporarily lessened the flow to the northwest. Since 1850 a steady stream of settlers has been flowing to the land that was looked upon as rough and forbidding, and transformed it into a land that flows with milk and honey.

The rough mountains, barriers and forbidding river gorges, when looked upon from a scenic point of view, became beauty spots. The obstacles to travel have been overcome with a system of river channels, railroads and highways, that are second to none in the world. The valleys and green forests are yielding to the woodsman's

axe. The rivers and bays produce a wealth of fish. The elk and deer have given place to the cow and horse. The eagle and vultures have given way to chickens and other fowl. Farms, fields and gardens everywhere. Large and growing modern cities with growing population have transplanted the tepees of the Indians, and lo; the poor Redskin is no more, except as a curiosity to the visiting tourist. All this during a space of about a century.

The Northwest boasts of a climate that records the lowest infant mortality in the United States. A climate without oppressive heat or cold, or cyclones. A climate that produces the famous Oregon apples, prunes, pears, strawberries, cherries and cranberries. The land of potatoes, wheat, honey, dairy and garden products. In fact, the latest researchers locate the Garden of Eden right in this spot.

There are preparations going on now to commemorate these events and conditions. Colonel Vincent Astor of New York, and Ralph Budd, president of the Great Northern Railway, are spending thousands of dollars to mark the Oregon Trail and places of interest of the early journeys and early civilization that secured the Northwest to the United States by virtue of first occupancy.

A great concrete Column, 125 feet high, has been erected on the top of the 600-foot high hill on which lies the city of Astoria, Oregon. From this tower a most wonderful panorama unfurls itself to view. It must be seen

to be appreciated. Snow-capped mountains, green wooded hills, valleys, brooks, creeks, rivers and ocean all in one frame; below the City of Astoria in the distance, smaller towns. Beyond a tongue of land in a northerly direction, the town of Chinook.

To the southwest one can see the Lewis and Clark river, on which the winter stockade of Lewis and Clark was located. Beyond this in front of a range of mountains, that terminate in Tillamook Head, in the Pacific ocean, the City of Seaside. Here is where Lewis and Clark manufactured their salt from ocean water. This city is termed the "End of the Trail."

There seems to be something stirring in the Northwest; rumors of a coming "boom," a la Southern California and Florida, are in the air and no doubt the larger cities of the Northwest, Astoria, Vancouver, Portland, Seattle, Tacoma, Bellingham, Everett, Bremerton, Raymond, South Bend, Aberdeen, Hoquiam, Olympia, Chehalis, Centralia, Kelso, Spokane, Corvallis, Salem, Roseburg, Tillamook, Baker, Albany, Medford, Ashland, Eugene, Klamath Falls, The Dalles and that modern marvel mushroom city of Longview will experience a growth in the near future that will command the attention of the people of the world.

In their turns the Mediterranean Sea, the Baltic Sea, the North Sea and the North Atlantic have been the centers of civilization. All indications point to the North Pacific as the next center of activities.



Third Edition