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Historic Overview and Evaluation of Significant Resources

of

Fort Vancouver
Vancouver Barracks
Providence Academy
Kaiser Shipyards

Cultural Resources Study

Prepared for the National Park Service
Pacific Northwest Regional Office

by

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Section I

Historical Overview

Chapter I.

Founding Fort Vancouver: 1824-28

Period Overview

American and British traders became interested in the fur resources of the Pacific Northwest Coast after the journal of British Captain James Cook's third voyage to search for the Northwest Passage, which publicized the sea otter skins found there and sold in China, was published in the 1780s. Traders of both nations began to ply the coast, exchanging manufactured goods for furs with the native population, and, in the case of the Americans, establishing a lucrative trade with the Russians, long-established in Alaska, exchanging basic necessities for furs. From the east, British and Americans also came overland. In 1793, Alexander Mackenzie, of the powerful fur-trading British North West Company operating from Montreal, crossed the interior of British Columbia--then called New Caledonia--to reach the Pacific Ocean. Fur hunters from his company followed, pushing their operations into the Columbia River basin: in 1805 the "North Westers" established Fort McLeod on McLeod Lake, the first inland trading post west of the Rocky Mountains. By 1810 another North Wester, David Thompson, had followed the Columbia River to Astoria, opening up new trade routes.

In 1804 President Thomas Jefferson sent Meriwether Lewis and William Clark west on what became a two year journey of exploration: they spent the winter of 1805-6 at a camp near the mouth of the Columbia River. Their return to the United States stimulated the interest in the profit to be made from furs. A few years later John Jacob Astor of New York organized the Pacific Fur Company, and sent two parties to the mouth of the Columbia, where they began construction of a fur trading post, Fort Astoria, in 1811. For the next two years the Pacific Fur Company established a number of posts west of the Rockies, in competition with the North West Company. The outbreak of war between Great Britain and America in 1812 disrupted supply ships to Astoria's posts. In 1813 the company's interests on the Columbia were sold to its British competitor: in December of that year Great Britain took formal possession of Astoria, renaming it Fort George. In the following eight years the North West Company was virtually unchallenged in its operations in New Caledonia and the Columbia river basin, successfully trapping the Snake and Flathead countries through the use of large trapping parties--brigades--an operational system they developed to protect themselves from Indians. During this period, the company also established a system of provisioning some of their interior posts in New Caledonia and the Columbia district by sea from Boston to Fort George, rather than overland from Montreal, although it was not used regularly.

The war of 1812 was ended with the Treaty of Ghent, in 1814, but the treaty failed to resolve issues surrounding the claims of both Great Britain and the United States to the entire territory lying west of the Rocky Mountains, from the Spanish settlements in the south to the Russian posts in the north. In 1818 a joint occupation convention was negotiated between the two countries, which left the territory west of the Rockies free and open to the "vessels, subjects and citizens" of both countries for a period of ten years; as part of the

settlement, however, Fort George was returned to the United States, although it was never occupied by the Americans during this period, and continued to be used by the North West Company. Up to and after the 1818 Convention, both countries had accepted the concept of partition of the lands in question: disagreement centered on the location of the boundary. The United States proposed the boundary follow the forty-ninth parallel from the Rockies to the ocean. Great Britain wanted the boundary to follow the forty-ninth parallel to the Columbia, and then follow the river's route to the ocean. Uncertainty regarding the resolution of this issue, which left the eventual fate of the lands between the 49th parallel and the Columbia River in doubt, and consequent political strategies on the part of Great Britain during the following decade was later reflected in the founding of Fort Vancouver.

On the east side of the Rockies, the North West Company was struggling with a powerful rival, the Hudson's Bay Company, which had been established by a charter granted by Charles II to his cousin, Prince Rupert, and his associates. The charter granted the company ownership and a trade monopoly of a vast territory drained by the waters running into Hudson Bay in North America. Years of theft, bribery, murder, arson, battles and court litigation over the profits to be had from the fur trade disrupted the operations of both companies. In March of 1821 the two companies were merged to form a new firm. The charter and name of the Hudson's Bay Company were retained, as was the organization of its London headquarters, which directed operations through a Governor and Committee. Under the union, North America was divided into two districts, the Northern Department of Rupert's Land, covering all country north of the boundary with the United States and west of west shore of Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean, including New Caledonia and the Columbia district, and the Southern Department of Rupert's Land, covering the territory east of the Northern Department's boundaries, including Lake Huron and Lake Superior. Each was to be managed by a governor appointed by London, and two councils, comprised of partners in the company--field agents of the two former enemies, "commissioned gentlemen," consisting of chief factors, who generally were responsible for districts within each department, and, as it later worked out, chief traders, who usually managed posts or headed fur brigades. George Simpson, a Scot in the service of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America, was appointed to the governorship of the Northern Department; in 1826 he was also appointed head of the Southern Department, and from that time on, effectively administered all the Company's activities in North America, under direction from London.¹

In the summer of 1824 Great Britain and the United States suspended boundary negotiations, which, while leaving the ultimate settlement of the dispute in doubt, resulted in the Hudson's Bay Company determination to exploit the trade potential in the Pacific Northwest and to reinforce Great Britain's claim to the territory in dispute--the area between the forty-ninth parallel and the lower Columbia River. One of the principal reasons for founding Fort Vancouver was as a political strategy to keep territory north of the Columbia River under British dominion.²

After George Simpson's appointment as governor of the Northern Department in 1821, he embarked on a series of tasks to consolidate and reform operations east of the Rocky

¹The story of the union and reorganization is complex. For more information, see HBRIS IV, pp. xli-xlviii; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. xii-xiii, and the excellent summary by John Hussey, *History of Fort Vancouver and Its Physical Structure* (Olympia: Washington State Historical Society and U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1957), pp. 9-15.

²Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 257-260.

Mountains; with new policies and organization well underway by the end of 1823, he began to consider visiting the Columbia Department to assess it. In July of 1824 the Northern Department council appointed Chief Trader James McMillan to accompany Simpson to the Columbia, and also assigned Chief Factor John McLoughlin to the Columbia district. McMillan, a former North West Company employee, had spent most of his time in the Pacific Northwest, and was able to offer Simpson information regarding it. McLoughlin, also a former North West Company partner, had been in charge of a Company post west of Lake Superior, where he had been successful in driving back American competition.³ McLoughlin left for the Columbia from York Factory in August of 1824; Simpson and McMillan followed three weeks later. In September the parties joined near the Athabaska River, and continued on to Fort George at the mouth of the Columbia, arriving on November 8.

George Simpson's visit to the Columbia resulted in significant and far-reaching changes in the operations of the Company's westernmost district. His first-hand observations, combined with his understanding of the international situation and trade potential of the region resulted in a preeminent British presence in the Pacific Northwest. Included in the changes he instituted during this first trip west was expanding operations into the Snake River Country, and south towards California, before a settlement of the boundary issue should close the rich fur-bearing region to the British, and rigorous economies, including reductions in staff and in all operations of the fur business. One of his goals was to reduce the reliance of the posts on imported foods, and it was during this trip that he determined to develop an agricultural program which would not only supply the needs of the posts, but which would become a profitable branch of the trade, where produce would be exported.

Another decision was to merge the New Caledonia and Columbia departments into one administrative unit which would be operated by a new depot, and at least in terms of supply and provisioning, the merger occurred in 1825.⁴ The location of the new depot was to be at the mouth of the Fraser River, from which Simpson mistakenly believed the rivers would supply easy access to both districts and the coast.

In 1825, he established Fort Colvile, a new post north of Spokane House, which was founded by North Wester David Thomson in 1810 and which Simpson ordered abandoned. In the fall of 1824, soon after his arrival at the mouth of the Columbia River, he ordered the abandonment of Fort George and the construction of a new depot on the north side of the Columbia, in territory it was still possible the British might hold.

Hudson's Bay Company: Fort Vancouver

After Simpson's party arrived at Fort George, on November 8, 1824, Chief Factors Kennedy and McLoughlin were dispatched to find a suitable site for a new post on the north side of the Columbia. Historians assume Simpson either had received direct instructions from London to withdraw to the north side of the river, or he independently reached the conclusion that it was best to enact such a policy, given his knowledge of the international

³HBR III, pp 450-1; HBR, Letters of John McLoughlin from Fort Vancouver, 3 vols. W. K. Lamb intros.

⁴HBR III, p. 145.

situation.⁵ In addition to the greater issues surrounding the disputed territory, Fort George, was, in fact, legally the property of the United States, although occupied by the Hudson's Bay Company. Also, its location was not suitable for large scale farming. Simpson later wrote that the principal reason for finding a new site was to "...render ourselves independent of foreign aid in regard to the means of Subsistence."⁶ Long after the fact, John McLoughlin said the new site was selected because it "...was a place where we could cultivate the soil and raise our own provisions."⁷

The site nearest the Columbia's mouth which McLoughlin and Kennedy deemed suitable was a low-lying plain which projected into the Columbia River about six miles upriver from its confluence with the Willamette River. The site was known as the Jolie Prairie or Belle Vue Point.⁸ About sixty feet above the plain, which appeared to have rich agricultural potential, rose a second terrace of densely wooded land, which offered a commanding view and enough height to establish a defensive position against what were initially thought to be hostile natives. Simpson described the site in March of 1825: "The Establishment is beautifully situated on the top of a bank about 1 1/4 Miles from the Water side commanding an extensive view of the River the surrounding Country and the fine plain below which is watered by two very pretty small Lakes and studded as if artificially by clumps of Fine Timber."⁹

Apparently immediately after the Chief Factors' return to Fort George, a party was dispatched to start construction.¹⁰ Company clerk, John Work, in charge of supervising the move of material and equipment from Fort George to the new fort stated on April 13, 1825: "Came up to the fort early in the morning and had the boats immediately unloaded. Carting the property up to the fort occupied the most of the day..."¹¹ One of McLoughlin's descendants stated: "The new fort was located about 3/4 mile from the River, and for the purpose of transporting goods from the River to the Fort, the Company bought horses from the Indians, and with rudely constructed wagons, the wheels of which were round pieces of Oak sawed from the log with holes in the centre for the Axles."¹² On March 18, 1825 Simpson recorded in his journal: "The Fort is well picketted covering a space of about

⁵According to historian John Hussey, documents found to date do not positively establish that Simpson received direct orders from London. John Hussey, *The History of Fort Vancouver and Its Physical Structure*, p. 36.

⁶*Ibid.*, pp. 105-6.

⁷"Copy of a Document Found Among the Private Papers of the Late Dr. John McLoughlin," in *Transactions of the Eighth Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880* (Salem: R.M. Waite, 1881), p.46.

⁸Referred to as Belle Vue Point in Simpson's early correspondence regarding the site, apparently in the belief it was the same point of land named by Lieutenant Broughton of the British navy, when he surveyed the river in 1792; it is now believed Broughton's Belle Vue Point was further downstream.

⁹Frederick Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire George Simpson's Journal*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931, p 124.

¹⁰HBRS IV, p. 5. October 6 1825, McLoughlin to Gov and Committee.

¹¹John Work. *Journal of John Work*, March 21-May 14, 1825. OHS ms. 319, p. 2 (typescript).

¹²History of Fort Vancouver by J.W. McLoughlin Harvey in PABC, G Or3 H26, handwritten ms., pp. 1-4.

3/4 ths of an acre and the buildings already completed are a Dwelling House, two good Stores an Indian Hall and temporary quarters for the people."¹³ It appears that the quarters for employees consisted of tents and structures made of other non-permanent materials. Botanist David Douglas, who arrived at the new post on a collecting trip for the Horticultural Society of London on the Company ship, *William and Ann* in April of 1825, was housed in a tent, and later a bark hut near the river.¹⁴

There does not appear to be any available information on the evolution of the (first) stockade over the three years of its occupation (winter of 1824-25 to winter 1828-29). It is known that the *William and Ann* brought bricks and tiles in her hold, apparently originally ordered for Fort George: McLoughlin considered them "inferior," but it is believed they were used for chimneys at Fort Vancouver.¹⁵ Perhaps not much was done on the buildings in the stockade proper during this period, since, as noted above, it was not originally intended as the principal depot for the Columbia Department. The water supply on the bluff was a problem: water was hauled from the Columbia to the stockade in a wagon pulled by two oxen.¹⁶ There is no doubt a garden existed by 1828, but its location is unknown. Simpson, in a dispatch to London in the spring of 1829, listed the field crop production at Fort Vancouver for 1828, concluding the list with the statement "...besides that of extensive Gardens," and fur trapper Jedediah Smith, who arrived at the post at the end of 1828 noted the fort had "...a fine garden, some small apple trees and vines."¹⁷

On March 19, 1825, everyone at the new post gathered at sunrise to watch a flag raising ceremony at which Simpson proclaimed the name of the new post, Fort Vancouver. He later wrote London, "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." After the dedication Simpson departed for the east, leaving Chief Factor John McLoughlin in charge of the new establishment.

Between 1824 and 1827, the settlement of the boundary issue still hung over the new post. Also, it is evident McLoughlin knew Simpson planned to establish the principal supply depot for the Columbia Department at the mouth of the Fraser River. McLoughlin limited development of the Fort Vancouver--"I erected only such Buildings at this place as are immediately required..." he told London in a September, 1826 letter--apparently anticipating a settlement in which the Columbia would become the boundary, and fur-trading to the south would become impossible, making Fort Vancouver's location at the south edge of the British territory operationally inefficient. However, in August of 1827 the joint-occupation of the disputed territory was indefinitely extended, and it became clear Fort Vancouver could continue to act as a locus from which fur brigades could be sent south, as well as north and east.¹⁸

In the fall of 1828 George Simpson returned to Fort Vancouver; during his trip to the post, he determined that the Fraser River was unnavigable during his dangerous descent of it, and his plans to establish the Columbia Department's main depot at its mouth were scrapped. During Simpson's stay at the post in 1828, Fort Vancouver was made the permanent

¹³Frederick Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire* George Simpson's Journal, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931, p 124.

¹⁴Douglas Journal, pp. 106-7, p. 152.

¹⁵Hussey, Physical Structure of Fort Vancouver, p. 49.

¹⁶John L. Hussey, History of Fort Vancouver etc. p. 70.

¹⁷Simpson, *Part of Dispatch*, pp. 68-69; Smith, Sublette, et.al, *Letter to J.H. Eaton*, pp. 21-23.

¹⁸HBRS IV, p. 32.

headquarters for the Columbia Department, ensuring its primacy as the principal establishment in the Pacific Northwest and contributing to the decision to move the site of the stockade in 1828-29.

Agricultural operations at the post slowly expanded. McLoughlin later recalled that, "In March 1825, we moved there and that spring planted potatoes and sowed two bushels of peas, the only grain we had, and all we had."¹⁹ From an initial harvest of 900 barrels of potatoes and 9 1/2 bushels of seed peas in the fall of 1825, by 1828, the post was producing between 800 and 1000 bushels of wheat, "making good flour." The first wheat was planted in the spring of 1826, and is considered to be the beginning of wheat cultivation in Washington state. In the winter of 1828-29, Simpson declared that the Columbia Department was "...independent of foreign aid in regard to the means of subsistence."²⁰

The first fields may have been on the bluff overlooking the plain; Dr. John Scouler, a naturalist who arrived with David Douglas in 1825, seemed to make a distinction between the "beautiful prairie" containing "about 300 acres of excellent land, on which potatoes and other vegetables are cultivated," and the "...large plain between the fort and river..." which the fort overlooked, offering "... abundance of pasture to 120 horses, besides other cattle."²¹ At present, it is unclear when crops were first planted on the plain below the stockade. Some--or all--may have been planted on it from the first year; it may first have been cultivated during the expansion reported by Ermatinger in 1828. By 1831, it was almost certainly in production, because a newly arrived clerk at the Fort, George T. Allan, wrote to a firm in London in 1832 that "On the east side of the Fort [1828-29 fort] there is a beautiful plain, great part of which is under cultivation..."²²

Twenty-seven head of cattle were brought from Fort George, probably descendants of cattle purchased in Monterey 1814.²³ Adhering to a policy established by George Simpson of focusing on increasing herd size, McLoughlin reported in March of 1826 "...we have not killed a single calf, and have a stock at present of twenty-seven cows, five three year old heifers--two this spring calves, and we expect this fall to have between eighty and ninety head of cattle of all sizes..."²⁴ There were, in addition the 2 oxen reported to have hauled water to the stockade.²⁵ By late in 1828 Simpson reported the herd "...now Exceeds 150 head."²⁶ Of the 150 horses Scouler saw, 73 arrived with clerk Tom McKay in April of 1825,

¹⁹Copy of a Document Found Among the Private Papers of the Late Dr. John McLoughlin, in Transactions of the Eighth Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880, Salem: R.M. Waite, 1881, p. 46.

²⁰Simpson to Governor and Committee, March 1, 1829, Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 229-301.

²¹John Scouler, "Dr. John Scouler's Journal of a Voyage to N.W. America," *Oregon Historical Society Quarterly* VI (June, 1905), p. 174.

²²George T. Allan, *Reminiscences of Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River, Oregon, as it Stood in 1832...* (Extract from a letter written in 1832 from Fort Vancouver to a Firm in London) Transactions of the Ninth Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association, 1881 (Salem: E.M. Waite, 1882), p. 75.

²³Maloney, the Hudson's Bay Company in California, *Oregon Historical Quarterly* XXXVIII, March 9, 1936.

²⁴McLoughlin to Gov, CF and CTs 20 March 1826, Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, p. 270.

²⁵In another report also dated in March of 1826 McLoughlin reported additional cattle: 3 bulls, 11 steers, 11 yearly heifers. Merk, p. 270. Hussey suggests that some cattle may have been imported from England via the William and Ann, although it is unlikely steers would have been imported, Hussey p.?

²⁶HBRS X 69; Merk, 301;; Lomax, OHQ XXIX je 1828, 103n.

probably from Fort George. The main source of horses at this time were the Indians, particularly the Nez Percés who ranged to the east of Fort Vancouver.²⁷ The farm also had hogs, brought from Fort George, that had originally come from the Hawaiian Islands, according to John Scouler.²⁸ By 1828 McLoughlin was reporting the hogs numbered over 200, "...besides the consumption of the Establishment of fresh Pork and about 6000 lb Salted Pork."²⁹ By 1828 50 head of goats were at Fort Vancouver, although it is not noted where they were kept.³⁰

During this period McLoughlin, under instructions from Simpson and the Company's London headquarters, established the Company's coastal trade, which continued to be directed from Fort Vancouver until the Columbia Department headquarters were moved to Victoria, B.C., in 1849. In 1827 a thirty ton sloop--the *Broughton*-- was built at Fort Vancouver; in 1828 a sixty ton craft, the *Vancouver*, was launched. But the coastal trade was limited until the 1830s, due to lack of manpower, lack of trade goods, and lack of adequate vessels.³¹

In 1827 McLoughlin, under instructions from Simpson, founded the first of a number of new Company posts--Fort Langley--which was to become the Company's principal supplier of salted salmon, used as provisions for the department's posts, and later, as an export item. But that same year McLoughlin shipped some barrels of salted salmon to California from Fort Vancouver, which was the first post to engage in the commercial salmon business. McLoughlin also experimented with brewing, using barley grown at Fort Vancouver, apparently as early as 1827.³² Oral tradition claims the first flour mill in Washington state was built at Fort Vancouver by millwright William Cannon; its location at the post is not known. Sometime around 1828-29, a horse or oxen-powered gristmill was built on the lower plain, north of the site of the new or soon-to-be erected stockade.³³ Also, by 1828, a sawmill was operating on Mill Creek, six miles east of the stockade; plans were already underway to market the milled planks in Hawaii and California.³⁴

²⁷HBCA B 223/b/1 folios 3-7.

²⁸Scouler, p. 166.

²⁹Merk etc.

³⁰ibid.

³¹Hussey, *The History of Fort Vancouver and its Physical Structure*, pp. 61-62.

³²Ibid., p. 65.

³³Clarke, *Pioneer Days of Oregon History I*, p. 185; Snowden, *History of Washington*, I p. 477.

³⁴HBRS IV, p. 54.

Chapter II.

Fort Vancouver on the Plain: 1829-46

Period Overview

The period between 1829 and 1846 encompasses the principal period of development of Fort Vancouver under the Hudson's Bay Company. During this time, which begins with a major site development--the move of the fort proper from its original site to the location of the present reconstruction--Fort Vancouver's economic, political and social influence in the region reached its peak. The boundaries of the site were at their greatest extent. The Fort's administrative importance, as vested in Chief Factor John McLoughlin, was supreme in the Pacific Northwest. While fur-trading activities declined throughout this period, agricultural activity under the Hudson's Bay Company flourished, with Fort Vancouver as the administrative and producing hub of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, a subsidiary of the Hudson's Bay Company. In addition, many early industrial activities were initiated and developed at the fort--including large scale timber milling, salmon fisheries, grain milling--which led to its prominence in Pacific Coast trade, with regular trading connections in Hawaii, California, and Alaska. The fort was the social center for the region throughout most of the period, with balls, plays, picnics and dinners attracting settlers from many miles away. During the latter years of this period, the Company's stores at the fort and cattle, seed, and produce from its fields, provided the first waves of American settlers in the region with the means to establish their farms--in some cases with the means to survive their first winter; these operations had a significant influence on the settlement of the region, from Puget Sound in Washington to the Willamette Valley in Oregon, and east as far as the Dalles, Oregon. Against a backdrop of the influx of American settlers, with attendant political and economic agendas and under a threatened imminent settlement of the northwest boundary dispute between Great Britain and the United States, the period ended with two events of particular significance: first, London's decision to terminate McLoughlin's superintendency of Fort Vancouver; second, a fire which swept the woods and plains of the farm in the fall of 1844.

Early in this period former Company employees and free trappers began to settle in the 150 mile-long Willamette Valley, south of the Columbia River; the first establishments were in the vicinity of Champoege, where it was relatively easy to ford the Willamette River, and where fur traders and trappers had in previous years established camps. One of the earliest to settle there was Etienne Lucier, a free trader who in 1828 approached Chief Factor John McLoughlin, asking for his assistance in establishing a farm. McLoughlin later recalled, "I told him I would loan him seed to sow and wheat to feed himself and family, to be returned from the produce of his farm, and sell him such implements as were in the Hudson Bay Company's store at fifty percent, on prime cost."³⁵ Lucier did not settle in the Valley until 1829 or '30, and it was then that Fort Vancouver, under the aegis of McLoughlin, became involved in the development of farming in the Valley, through its

³⁵"Copy of a Document found among the Private Papers of the late Dr. John McLoughlin," *Transactions of the Eighth Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880* (Salem, Oregon: L.M. Waite, 1881), p. 48. Hereafter referred to as TOPA, 1880.

provision of seed, livestock and agricultural implements to freemen and retired employees.³⁶

In the 1830s and '40s the farm and store at Fort Vancouver provided necessary supplies, livestock and equipment to American missionaries, who were later instrumental in publicizing the attractions of the rich Willamette Valley to land-hungry and restless Americans in the States, and who had a significant role in establishing the Oregon Country as a territory of the United States. Up until 1842-43, Fort Vancouver served as the principal supply for food, clothing, and materials to start a farm for Americans arriving overland: in 1833 John Ball, who arrived at the post in 1832 with American entrepreneur Nathaniel Wyeth, wrote to friends back east, "He [John McLoughlin] has liberally engaged to lend me a plough, an axe, oxen, cow &c."³⁷ Reports of such aid, printed in newspapers in the states, furthered interest in migration. In the following years, reports from missionaries and other early travelers and settlers who found the Oregon country hospitable and fertile, sparked increasing numbers immigrants. Jason Lee, of the Methodist Mission, began to lecture on the advantages of the Oregon Country when he visited the east coast in the late 1830s, and his speeches and the 1838 published journal of his travels contributed to the spread of Oregon fever. By 1841 there were sixty-five Americans in the Willamette Valley, to whom McLoughlin had loaned seed, livestock and agricultural implements. By 1843 over 1,000 American settlers had established themselves in the valley, and the economic base had begun to shift to there from Fort Vancouver. But for most of this period, it was John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver who aided the Americans: his reasons have often been described as humanitarian--without aid, the settlers would almost certainly have starved--but assistance was also forthcoming to avoid confrontations and probable looting. In 1843 the settlers in the Valley voted to form a Provisional Government, which McLoughlin felt obliged to join and pay taxes to, to protect the Company's interests.

In March of 1845, Chief Trader James Douglas wrote to George Simpson: "I am sorry to hear that the Settlement of the Boundary question is likely to drag on, from year to year, without being settled, as the Americans will soon leave nothing to settle..."³⁸

In 1845, a census in the Oregon Territory showed 2,109 white people were living there, most of them settlers who had arrived since 1842. With the growth in population came an accompanying growth in American-operated business, trade and agriculture, which effectively freed the Willamette Valley settlers from dependence on Fort Vancouver for materials and supplies. Thus, even before the boundary was established at the 49th parallel, by the Oregon Treaty of 1846, it was evident that the Hudson's Bay Company's reign of the vast Oregon Country was drawing to a close.

The Oregon Treaty of 1846, signed on June 15, guaranteed the "possessory rights" of the Hudson's Bay Company and other British subjects who occupied land south of the 49th parallel; the Company and British citizens trading with them were also guaranteed free navigation of the Columbia River. Governor Simpson ordered an inventory of the property

³⁶ While McLoughlin later recalled it was in 1829 that Lucier applied to him a second time for assistance in establishing a farm in the Valley, there is some indication the year may have been 1830. For a more complete discussion of this and of early settlement in the Willamette Valley, see Dr. John Hussey, *Champoeg: Place of Transition* (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, Oregon State Highway Commission, 1967), pp.43-61.

³⁷ John Ball's 3rd Letter Part 1 from *Beyond the Rocky Mountains*, printed in *Zion's Herald* 6 Jan 1834, dated Jan 1, 1833. OHS mss 195

³⁸ HBRS VII, pp 178.

of the Hudson's Bay Company on the Columbia, and of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, which was taken in 1846-47 by clerks at Fort Vancouver and elsewhere. After the treaty was completed, the Hudson's Bay Company began to press the United States to purchase their property and rights in the Columbia region. Negotiations dragged on for years, and then became linked with the settlement of the northwest water boundary dispute in the vicinity of the San Juan Islands. Finally, in 1863 it was agreed that a joint commission with representatives from Great Britain, the United States, and an individual selected by both, should be appointed to adjudicate the claims. The Hudson's Bay Company and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company presented a claim for almost 5.5 million dollars; the lands and improvements at Fort Vancouver were valued at over \$1.2 million. It took some years to gather over 2000 printed pages worth of testimony and evidence; finally in September of 1869 the commission filed its opinion and awards: \$450,000 was paid to the Hudson's Bay Company for the transfer of all its rights and claims under the Oregon Treaty, and \$200,000 was paid to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company.

Hudson's Bay Company: Fort Vancouver

When George Simpson's plan to establish the Columbia Department's principal depot on the Fraser River was abandoned, and when Great Britain and the United States agreed in 1827 to indefinitely extend joint occupation of the disputed territory, Fort Vancouver became the permanent supply depot for all of the department's posts in the Columbia and New Caledonia. The location of the original stockade, at least a mile from the Columbia River, was not practical for the increasing amounts of goods and material which would have to be moved in and out of the depot enroute to and from other posts, England, and, if the envisioned agricultural and industrial production plans materialized, Hawaii, California, and possibly the Russians in Alaska. Hauling water to the stockade, with an increased complement of employees stationed there to perform depot duties, would be inefficient. Also, as noted by several later visitors, a high, naturally-defensible site to repel Indians who, as it turned out, were mostly peaceful, was unnecessary.³⁹ Thus, in the winter of 1828-29, or possibly in the early spring of 1829, construction began on a new stockade on the plain lying along the river, about four hundred yards from its bank.⁴⁰

The Stockade

By early March of 1829 the new stockade was complete enough for American Jedediah Smith to observe that its dimensions were about three hundred feet square. The actual dimensions were 320 feet, east-west, and 317.7 feet north south. It was built of closely fitted Douglas fir logs, ranging from five to thirteen inches in diameter, with the larger posts apparently used at the corners of the structure. There was one entrance to the stockade, set approximately in the center of the south wall, 164.5 feet east of the southwest corner.⁴¹ The post was still under construction in September, 1829, when John Warren Dease, in charge

³⁹Wilkes, Emmons.

⁴⁰J.S. Smith, D.E. Jackson, W.L. Sublette to J.H. Eaton, St. Louis, October 29, 1830, in 21 Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Ex. Doc. No. 39, pp. 21-23.

⁴¹Marlessa Gray, "Structural Aspects of Fort Vancouver, 1829-1860: An Historical-Archeological Interpretation, unpublished ms. January 1978, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.; John Hussey, History of Fort Vancouver and its Physical Structure; Louis Caywood, Final Report Fort Vancouver Excavations (San Francisco: U.S. DI NPS, July 1, 1955. Refer to these reports regarding construction techniques, dimensions, and other detailed information.

of Fort Colville, arrived at the fort seeking medical treatment.⁴² He noted on September 6 that he "Got my tent pitched there being no house room: all the gentlemen being in lodges or tents." Towards the end of October he finally procured a room in a "twenty-foot square house, which he shared with two other Company officers, "Not a shelf or bench yet in my house nor the gabled end finished."⁴³

By 1834, the ten to twelve buildings within the stockade were located along the interior edges of the fort, in a U shape, with the open end of the U along the north wall. According to naturalist John Kirk Townsend, who arrived at the post in 1834, the open court in the center was "...a large open space, where all the indoor work of the establishment is done. Here the Indians assemble with their multifarious articles of trade, beaver, otter, venison and various other game, and here, once a week, several scores of Canadians are employed, beating the furs which have been collected, in order to free them from dust and vermin."⁴⁴ It has been hypothesized that the first Chief Factor's house, apparently moved from the site of the first fort on the hill, was centered between the the ends of the U, near the north wall, facing the gate. Buildings included stores, warehouses and shops for trade, all relating to the post's business as a depository and shipping point to London for furs from its own brigades and for those shipped from the Columbia Department's interior posts, and as a supply depot for imported items and provisions for its own use and for shipment to other posts. There was a brick powder magazine, carpenter's and blacksmith's shops, a bakehouse, a medical dispensary, from which Company doctors operated, and quarters to house the "gentlemen" of the Company, which included any employee with administrative duties appointed as an officer of the Company. There was at least one well within the stockade; privies were located behind the buildings, near the stockade walls. Throughout the life of the stockade, fences were located between some building ends and the stockade walls, which served to keep livestock out and to discourage theft of any materials or provisions stored in back of the buildings. A belfry housing a bell to signal work times, church serves and other activities, and a flagstaff were also located within the fort.

As the Columbia Department's operations in fur trading, administration of a growing number of posts, and agriculture and manufacturing continued to grow, more facilities were needed. Between 1834 and 1841 the stockade was enlarged, and during and following that period, new buildings were erected in the interior. W.H. Gray, who arrived with the Whitmans in 1836, later recalled: "The old fort was so much decayed that the new one was being built and portions of the old one replaced."⁴⁵ The dimensions of the stockade until the early 1840s, according to archaeologic studies of the site, were 660.75 feet, east-west, by 317.7 feet, north-south; two new gates were built in the stockade walls at this time: a second gate on the south, near the southeast corner, and a gate located on the north wall, 212 feet from the stockade's northeast corner.⁴⁶ With the stockade's enlargement, the interior configuration was altered to form two courts: the original buildings enclosed the older open space, and new structures were built along the edge of the enlarged stockade walls to the east, forming a ring around another yard. During this period, there were approximately twenty structures within the stockade, and facilities and operations at the post had expanded to include workshops for coopers, wheelwrights; storage of farm produce,

⁴²He was to die at the Dalles in January of 1830.

⁴³Diary of John Warren Dease, Mss 602, PABC. typescript, pp.2-8.

⁴⁴Townsend, pp. 171-2.

⁴⁵History of Oregon 1798-1849, Portland, 1870, p. 150.W.H. Gray

⁴⁶Marlessa Gray, "Structural Aspects of Fort Vancouver, 1829-1860: An Historical-Archeological Interpretation, unpublished ms. January 1978, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich., pp 184-197.

primarily seed for planting and increased storage for departmental supplies and provisions; more permanent quarters for the Company's officers; a Roman Catholic church; a school house, and a store for trade with missionaries and settlers. During this period the second Chief Factor's--or Big House, as it was referred to by employees--was built, "...after the model of the French Canadian, of one story, weather-boarded and painted white. It has a piazza and small flower-beds, with grape and other vines, in front. Between the steps are two old cannons on sea carriages, with a few shot, to speak defiance to the natives, who no doubt look upon them as very formidable weapons of destruction..."⁴⁷

American Thomas J. Farnham, at Fort Vancouver in 1839, described activities at the post:

The blacksmith is repairing ploughshares, harrow-teeth, chains and mill-irons; the tinman is making cups for the Indians, and camp-kettles &c.; the wheelwright is making wagons, and the wood part of plough and harrows; the carpenter is repairing houses and building new ones; the cooper is making barrels, for pickling salmon and packing furs; the clerks are posting books and preparing the annual returns to the board in London; the salesmen are receiving beaver, and dealing out goods...⁴⁸

Between 1841 and 1846, the stockade was again enlarged, reflecting the development of the depot when the Hudson's Bay Company, through Fort Vancouver, had reached its maximum influence in the region. Dugald Mactavish later stated that in 1846, all the buildings were "in good order" and were "substantial." He noted that, "Besides trade with Indians, considerable trade for supplying the settlements on the Willamette Valley, for Agricultural operations alone, the place was larger than necessary."⁴⁹ Joel Palmer, who visited the fort in 1845-46, noted: "Many buildings are large and commodious and fitted up for an extensive business, others are old fashioned looking concerns, and much dilapidated..."⁵⁰ The stockade during this period measured 732.8 to 734 feet east-west, and about 318 feet north-south. New structures included a new bakery--the post's third-- and an octagonal bastion located on the northwest corner of the stockade, under construction in February of 1845. Some new buildings were erected, including a beef storage building and an iron store, and several older buildings were demolished or rebuilt. The interior spatial arrangement of the post was altered by the removal of the buildings dividing the two courtyards. According to a French envoy touring the Pacific Northwest in 1841, the stockade contained "...thirty separate buildings. These include quarters for the governor, the superintendent, and other employes of the Company, together with their families, carpenter, locksmith, and blacksmith shops, forges, storehouses for furs, tanneries, a warehouse for European merchandise, a pharmacy, and a Catholic church that also serves as a school. All of these buildings are constructed of wood, except the powder magazine which is an isolated brick structure."⁵¹ A British lieutenant evaluating the Company's

⁴⁷Wilkes Narrative IV, p 349.

⁴⁸Four Years in the Government Exploring Expedition Commanded by Captain Charles Wilkes....Lieut. Geo. M. Colvocoresses, New York: R.T. Young, 1853 (4th ed.) p. 261.

⁴⁹BAJC v 2 p 226

⁵⁰Journals of Travels Over Rocky Mountains to the Mouth of the Columbia River Made During the Years 1845 and 46 by Joel Palmer, U of O 1852, p 112.

⁵¹Deflot de Mofrás, Travels on the Pacific Coast, Vol. II, translated, edited and annotated by Marguerite Eyer Wilbur. Fine Arts Press, Santa Ana, CA, 1937.pp. 97-98.

posts at the behest of George Simpson and the British Foreign Office, noted the stockade contained accommodations for about 500 men.⁵²

The Site

The plain on which the new stockade was situated came to be called, Fort Plain. It was the functional and approximate geographic center of Fort Vancouver's lands, which, at its greatest extent fronted the Columbia river for about twenty-five miles, and stretched northward from it for distances varying from four to fifteen miles. All principal roads led to and from the 1828-29 stockade, connecting it to the post's other agricultural centers, referred to as farms, to the north, east and west; to its mills six miles to the east; to its employee village and river front activities, west and south of the stockade, and to overland routes connecting the post with the outside world. When the post reached its maximum development in the 1840s, the Hudson's Bay Company farm consisted of three great open spaces in the forest lands they owned along the Columbia River, referred to as Fort Plain, Lower Plain and Mill Plain, and several smaller plains north and east of the post, jointly referred to as the Back Plains. In addition, the Company had a sawmill, grist mill, and associated structures along Mill Creek, six miles east of the stockade.

Fort Plain

Fort Plain was the first area of Fort Vancouver to be developed. It was a long, irregularly shaped meadow with natural terraces extending down to the River, which ran for approximately 3 1/2 miles along the Columbia River, approaching a mile or so in depth at its widest. The lowest terrace was subject to Spring inundations: the 1844 stockade area map shows the high water mark during the river's spring freshets extended almost one-half mile into the plain in places, depending on the topography. There were two permanent lakes, referred to by Simpson, which were located near the center of the plain, east-west, and about four-fifths of distance in width away from the river. The northern and eastern boundaries were defined by dense coniferous forest on rising ground, with bluff or bench, occasionally referred to as the "Upper Prairie," to the northeast, where the original fort was located. The western boundary of Fort Plain was formed by a finger of forest which extended towards the river, separating it from what became known as the Lower Plain to the west.

In the immediate vicinity of the stockade were several additional structures. To the southeast archaeologists have discovered evidence of residential structures that probably date back as far as the 1830s, before the east wall was moved. It has been hypothesized that some employees lived in small dwellings on this side of the stockade fairly early after its establishment on Fort Plain. Outside the wall in the 1840s, there was a cooper's shed, and at least two other structures, probably dwellings.⁵³ There were two buildings located north

⁵²Papers relative to the Expedition of Lieutenants' Warre and Vavasour to the Oregon Territory, Inclosed in Letter from Colonial Office of 3rd November 1846; American, Domestic Various Vol. 457. PABC Great Britain Foreign Office Papers, call # D A G79.2. Typescript, p. 16-17.

⁵³Bryn Thomas and Jerry Galm, Archaeological Testing and Data Recovery Excavations for a Proposed Utility Corridor Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. (Eastern Washington University Reports in Archeology and History 100-57, Archeological and Historical Services, 1987), pp161-2; Unrecorded interview with Bryn Thomas, September 1991; BAJC v 2 176-7; BAJC Vol. 9, pp. 75-77.

of the stockade, at the southeast intersection of the north gate road and Upper Mill Road, one of which, at least, served as a root cellar as early as 1844.⁵⁴ North of Upper Mill Road, which consisting of gradually rising ground to a comparatively small open meadow, the Company located a cemetery, established by 1833.⁵⁵ Other structures above the road included the company's horse or oxen-powered grist mill, built around 1828, and still standing in 1846; and barns for storing grain and a "mammoth threshing machine," which may have existed as early as 1829, but was definitely standing by 1838.⁵⁶ By 1844, construction of two new school buildings were underway north of the stockade, although there it appears the buildings were never used as planned.⁵⁷ In 1844, the Catholic Church was given permission to erect a church northwest of the stockade, which was completed and dedicated in May of 1846.⁵⁸ West of the church were three dwellings for Company servants by 1844, just north of the village where most workers lived.

Just north of the stockade walls a four to five acre garden was established, at least as early as 1831: it was frequently remarked upon by visitors to the post, who were "allowed" to walk in it by Chief Factor McLoughlin. The garden was laid out in a formal fashion, with broad paths and large beds containing garden vegetables, flowers and fruit trees. Oral tradition claims the first peach trees in the Pacific Northwest were set out in the garden in 1829--there is historical evidence peach trees were in the garden by 1832. The garden was also served as the beginning site of the first large-scale cultivation of apples; later, probably in the mid-1830s, a separate orchard was established to the west of the garden in which hundreds of apple --and other fruit--trees were planted. By 1836 a summer house was located at the north end of the garden, and illustrations of the area in the 1840s show small structures along its east edge that appear to have been cold frames or small greenhouses. Henry Spalding, who arrived at Fort Vancouver with his wife and Marcus and Narcissa Whitman in 1836, wrote a friend: "We were soon conducted by the Doct, to his Garden, & be assured we were not a little surprised to see west of the Rocky Mountains, where we did not expect to meet scarcely the first buddings of civilization, such perfection in gardening. About 5 acres laid out in good order, stored with almost every species of vegetables, fruit trees and flowers. A greater variety indeed than is often met with in the States...Everything produces well."⁵⁹ Visitors favored by Chief Factor McLoughlin received seeds and cuttings from the Fort Vancouver garden, which were then taken by their new owners to farms throughout the region.

⁵⁴Lowe Journal, Sept 15, 1844, Fol 17 HBCA etc.; Elliott, p. 35.

⁵⁵Tolmie, p. 173.

⁵⁶HBCA b 223/b/9 s fol 4-4d; Fessett, Thomas E. ed.: Reports and Letters of Herbert Beaver 1836-38. Champoe Press: Portland OR, 1959, p. 79; John Sinclair. Report to Senate Bill No. 206 by Charles Bulfinch. Boston. 4/21/1838, Citation in Bill. Bancroft Library. Report to Senate submitted in Boston, April 21, 1838 to John Davis, Judge U.S. Dist Court Massachusetts District; prepared by Charles Bulfinch in the Senate of the U.S. 25th Congress, 2nd Session, June 6, 1838. The select Committee to which was referred a bill to authorize the President of the U.S. to occupy Oregon Territory, submitted to the Senate the following Report #206.

⁵⁷When the U.S. Army arrived at the post in 1849, they leased the two structures, which were reported by the quartermaster, Rufus Ingalls, as unfinished.

⁵⁸Lowe Journal, May 31, folio 50; Thomas, St. James Mission, p 12. See the section on the Catholic Church in this report.

⁵⁹Hagan, Olaf, ed.: Whitman Mission Correspondence Vol. 1 June 3, 1834-March 4, 1843. NPS Region 4, USDI: San Francisco CA, 1942. p. 86. Fort Vancouver files; compiled for Whitman NM Walla Walla ABC Papers, Cherokee Mission, ms vol 9, item 203

Southwest of the stockade was the employee village, later referred to as Kanaka Village. The village is first mentioned in the historic literature by John Ball, who visited the post in 1832, and noted in his journal that "For the servants and Frenchmen there were little houses outside the fort..."⁶⁰ By September of 1834, according to John Kirk Townsend, there were "...thirty or forty log huts, which are occupied by the Canadians, and others attached to the establishment."⁶¹ In 1839 Thomas Farnham said the village contained fifty-three log houses, and Charles Wilkes, in the spring of 1841 reported "about fifty comfortable log houses."⁶² The village was apparently organized, to some extent, along lanes. In 1834 Townsend said the "...huts are placed in rows, with broad lanes or streets between them, and the whole looks like a very neat and beautiful village."⁶³ Charles Wilkes also observed that the houses were "...placed in regular order on each side of the road."⁶⁴ Some of the buildings were located within enclosures, to keep stray livestock from gardens; there were also stables and outbuildings within the village.⁶⁵ Residence in the village was limited to the Company's lower level servants and their families; native Indians, unless they were married to or children of the Company's employees, did not live there. The ethnic composition of the village was diverse: Hawaiians--"Kanakas"--were imported for specific terms of service with the Company; Scotsmen, Englishmen, and French-Canadians also lived there with their native-born wives.

A complex of agricultural, manufacturing and trade structures were located south of the village, along the river. To support the marine department, boat building facilities were located there, probably by the late 1820s, when two small vessels were built at the post. After the first ship from England to make it up the river arrived in the late '20s, a wharf was built to load and unload cargo. A large salmon house was erected, possibly as early as 1830, to store cured salmon, and a salt house was situated nearby. There were also tanning pits and a cooper's shed. A hospital was located near the complex, possibly as early as 1833, where, according to Thomas Farnham, at the fort in 1839, "those of them [the company's servants] who become diseased are humanely treated..."⁶⁶ The river front area also included a horse stable, an ox byre and pig sheds, the first two probably housed the farm's working livestock. It is not known when the livestock structures were built, although they were there by 1841.⁶⁷ A distillery was also operated near the river, but its location has not been determined; it operated through the mid-1830s, at least, and was still standing in the late 1840s.

Fort Plain also contained cultivated fields, under production by 1832, if not earlier. In 1832, clerk George T. Allan said, "On the east side of the fort there is a beautiful plain, a great part of which is under cultivation and about sixty miles further to the eastward we have a splendid view of Mount Hood, which is covered with snow more or less all the year

⁶⁰John Ball, "Across the Continent Seventy Years Ago: Extracts from the Journal of John Ball, Oregon Historical Quarterly III March 1902, p. 98.

⁶¹Townsend, pp 171-2.

⁶²Four Years in the Government Exploring Expedition Commanded by Captain Charles Wilkes....Lieut. Geo. M. Colvocoresses, New York: R.T. Young, 1853 (4th ed.) p. 260; Wilkes Narrative IV p. 349; Emmons Journal, p. 4.

⁶³Townsend, pp 171-2.

⁶⁴Wilkes Narrative IV p. 349.

⁶⁵BAJC v 2

⁶⁶Thomas J. Farnham, An 1839 Wagon Train Journal Travells in the Great Western Prairies... p. 98.

⁶⁷Deflot de Mofrás, Travels on the Pacific Coast, Vol. II, translated, edited and annotated by Marguerite Eyer Wilbur. Fine Arts Press, Santa Ana, CA, 1937, pp. 98-99.

round."⁶⁸ By 1838, an inventory of the post's lands listed cultivable 457 acres on Fort Plain.⁶⁹ Cultivated fields were enclosed by fencing to keep livestock, pastured on Fort Plain, out. Crops known to have been grown on Fort Plain included wheat, peas, barley, tares, potatoes, and seed clover. There were several large barns in which harvested grain was stored in different locations on Fort Plain, at least one piggery, and in the mid-1840s, a horse stable southeast of the stockade near the river.

Lower Plain

Lower Plain was bounded on the east by a stretch of forest and undergrowth extending from the forests of the north to the riverbank, immediately west of Fort Plain and Kanaka Village, about a mile and one-half from the stockade. It ran for about three-quarters of a mile in a narrow band along the river, and then broadened to three or more miles in width, to the southern tip of Big (Vancouver) Lake. A string of narrow lakes formed the northerly border of this narrow band, north of which was an open meadow on which the Company, fairly early on, established a farm called West Plain Farm, generally considered part of Lower Plain. The plain encompassed two smaller lakes beyond Big Lake--Chalifoux and Wapato Lakes--and continued north in a narrow strip to the mouth of the Cathlapootl (Lewis) River. Even Company employees were not certain of the extent of their claim on Lower Plain: in later testimony Dugald MacTavish said at one point that the frontage of Lower Plain ran for ten miles down river, and at another time, said five miles.⁷⁰ It seems likely that the Company considered any land south and east of the Lake River within its boundaries.

Functionally, the Lower Plain had two uses in its early years of development: the West Plain farm, which contained cultivated fields, and the remainder of the plain, which was used to pasture cattle, horses, some sheep and pigs, and, apparently, goats. By 1844, the narrow stretch of the plain just west of the forest separating Lower Plain from Fort Plain had been developed to include cultivated fields, a piggery and a dairy. The West Plain Farm was situated northeast of the small chain of lakes on Lower Plain, and contained over seventy acres of "good land" on which grain crops were grown. By 1844, there were several barns and other agricultural structures located near the fields--one may have been a dairy--which burned in the fall of that year. There is no evidence the farm was reestablished; by then, American settlers were claiming the Company's land in that vicinity of the Fort Vancouver farm. On the Lower Plain along the river, a dairy had been established by 1844--probably as early as 1836-- which included a complex of several farm buildings, livestock pens, and cultivated fields. In 1845, Americans began to squat on the Company's lands on Lower Plain.

Mill Plain

Mill Plain was an open "prairie" or meadow of "great extent," approximately three miles long and three-quarters of a mile wide, located north and northeast of the Company's sawmill on the Columbia river.⁷¹ It was bounded on all sides by forest, through which paths, and eventually wagon roads were established. Mill Plain was used for some time as

⁶⁸"Reminiscences of Fort Vancouver on the Columbia , River, Oregon, as it Stood in 1832...Extract from a letter written in 1832 from Fort Vancouver to a firm in London. TOPA, 1881, Salem, Or: E.M. Waite, 1882. p. 75. Attributed to George Trail Allan.

⁶⁹HBR IV, p. 238.

⁷⁰BAJC v 1 and 2

⁷¹Approximately in the area of Mill Plain Boulevard and 104th to 164th Avenues today.

pasture for the Company's livestock, prior to the establishment of the Mill Plain Farm, which occurred in the summer of 1841 or early in 1842. In June of 1841 George Emmons recorded that: "About 1/2 mile back from this shore [where the mills were located] is an open high prairie where one of their shepherds resides and looks out for a large flock of sheep a few cattle."⁷² Charles Wilkes, in the same month, noted crossing over "to one of the sheep-walks on the high prairie."⁷³

In 1841, Daniel Harvey, recruited as a miller and farmer by the Company for a term of five years, arrived at Fort Vancouver where he was placed in charge of the gristmill on the Columbia River, and, from later references, was also placed in charge of the Mill Plain farm. Later referred to in Company rolls as a farmer and a miller, he operated both the gristmill and the farm until his retirement in December of 1849.⁷⁴ It appears that the decision to put land on Mill Plain into production was made in order to augment sales and fulfill contracts made by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, established in 1839. Artist Paul Kane, at the fort in the winter of 1846-47, noted that Mill Plain farm produced "... more grain than the fort consumes; the surplus being sent to the Sandwich Islands and the Russian dominions."⁷⁵ Thomas Lowe's journal entries in the mid-1840s, indicate the farm was used principally to grow grain.

By 1844 the Mill Plain Farm had about 1,000 acres of cultivated fields, subdivided into narrow fields. Seven structures--almost certainly wheat sheds--were located in the approximate centers of the fields. A great deal of open space on the plain appears to have been left unenclosed around the edges of the cultivated area, where sheep and cattle were allowed to graze. Dugald Mactavish later said that "Outside the co's fence on this plain was a good deal of open land which was not fenced, for the reason that it was broken up in such a way by the surrounding woods that it was inconvenient to fence it."⁷⁶ Sheep were grazed in these areas of the plain. There were two or three additional farm buildings south of the fields, probably a stable and a residential structure.

Saw and Grist Mills

In the winter of 1828-29, the Company built its first water-powered saw mill, on a stream about 6 miles east of the fort. The stream had one fall capable of generating about 60 horsepower. In 1834, a new saw mill was built, downstream from the first. It was, according to the millwright, William Crate, "...a gang saw mill with nine saws in the gang and two more saws in a sash, altogether 11 saws," housed in a building about 100 by 40 feet. The overshot wheel, 20 feet in diameter and ten feet wide, was manufactured in England. Crate estimated the cost of the mill as about \$80,000; the cranks in the mill, he said, cost £300 each.⁷⁷ The mill, according to Reverend Samuel Parker, visiting Fort Vancouver in 1835, was not particularly efficient: "This mill, though large, does not with its several saws furnish more lumber than a common mill would, with one saw, in the

⁷²Emmons Journal, p. 6.

⁷³Wilkes Narrative IV, p 359.

⁷⁴ Hussey Farm, p 186. Harvey married Eloisa McLoughlin, John McLoughlin's daughter.

⁷⁵Kane, Paul, Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America From Canada to Vancouver's Island and Oregon THrough the Hudson's Bay Company's Territory and Back Again. London: Longman, Brown, Green, Longmans, and Roberts, 1859. p 172.

⁷⁶BAJC vol 1' misc pp 119-120.

⁷⁷Crate, BAJC, pp. 104-118.

United States." ⁷⁸ Some time in the mid 1840s, probably 1845, a third saw mill was erected: a single saw mill about 60 x 20 feet driven by a water wheel in a cistern about 20 by 10 feet, built, William Crate later said, "on the American plan."⁷⁹

By 1835, there were several cottages located near the mills, and by 1844 there was a cluster of fourteen structures east of the saw mill stream, and three small buildings to the northwest of them--the development included cottages, stables and a blacksmith's shop.⁸⁰ The sawmill employed at least a dozen workers in 1841, according to one observer.⁸¹

In the winter of 1828-29, American Jedediah Smith noted "a good saw mill on the bank of the river five miles above, a gristmill worked by hand, but intended to work by water..." at the post.⁸² George T. Allan wrote to a friend in 1832 that a flouring mill and a saw mill were located about six miles above the fort, and that same year Nathaniel Wyeth recorded in his journal the presence of two grist mills at Fort Vancouver.⁸³ The second mill, as has been noted, would have been the oxen and horse-powered mill north of the stockade.

With plans to increase grain and flour production in the late 1830s, it appears the post's managers decided to build a new water-powered mill on Mill Creek. In October of 1838, while Chief Factor McLoughlin was on leave in Europe, James Douglas reported to London that construction of a water powered gristmill, "adapted for two run of 54 inch stones," was underway, with materials prepared for a dam and a mill building. The new mill began operation in May of 1839.⁸⁴

According to William Crate, who was in charge of the mill's construction, Mill Creek, as it is now known, had four falls "within short distance, each power or fall equal to from 21 to 24 horsepower, not troubled by freshets or backwater from the Columbia." It ran in such a way, he said that "you could put one mill every 50 yards or use them all for one mill, all...within 1/2 mile distance." The new mill was located about two or three hundred yards back from the Columbia River.⁸⁵ The mill building, according to William Crate, was 3 1/2 stories high, with two pairs of stones and a wire bolting machine, driven by an overshot wheel. Its construction cost, he said, was £15,000.00. Charles Wilkes called it a "well-built edifice."⁸⁶

In July of 1845 Chief Trader James Douglas had construction started on a new gristmill, which was to be four stories tall. In 1849, the mill was half finished, and the machinery was never completely installed.

⁷⁸Rev. Samuel Parker, *Journal*, p 173.

⁷⁹While Crate testified that he was absent from Fort Vancouver beginning in 1843, he was apparently there in the spring of 1844, when McLoughlin refers to him in a letter to London. See Documentary (Letter) Doctor John McLoughlin to Sir George Simpson, March 20, 1844, introductory notes by Katharine B. Judson, OHQ XVII, Sept. 1916, NO. 3, p 219.

⁸⁰Rev. Samuel Parker, *Journal*, p 138; BAJC v 1 misc pp 119-120.

⁸¹Ayer, ed, *Deflot de Mofrás, Travels on the Pacific Coast*, Vol. II, p. 99.

⁸²J.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.

⁸³Topa Allan Reminiscences, p. 76; Hulbert, *The Call of the Columbia* 152-3.

⁸⁴HBRS IV, p 260-265; HBRS VI, pp. 223-4.

⁸⁵BAJC v 1 pt 4 p 104-106; BAJC v2 p 118.

⁸⁶BAJC v 2 p 118; Wilkes Narrative IV, p.

There were several log structures built near the mills to house the miller and workers; after Daniel Harvey arrived to assume direction of the gristmill, a new house was built for him near the mills.

Back Plains

North and northeast of Fort Plain were the Back Plains, a series of open meadows or prairies in the forests which, during this period, the company used to raise crops and pasture livestock. Thomas Lowe later described their uses: "Lying back of the fort there were several plains separated from each other by belts of timber--those known as the first, second and third plains had each been farmed; the fourth and camass [Camas] plains were used for pasturage."⁸⁷

Two of the plains were cultivated by 1832, and three were apparently periodically cultivated, although the soil was poor and livestock were penned on it to manure the ground.⁸⁸ The plains were also used to pasture cattle and horses, when the Lower Plain area was flooded. The Back Plains were the first of the Company's lands to be successfully occupied by American squatters. In March of 1845 James Douglas wrote that a party of Americans had "taken possession of Prairie du Thé."⁸⁹ By 1849 all the land on the Back Plains were in possession of others.

Sauvie Island

An island in the Columbia River near the mouth of the Willamette River was used by an American entrepreneur, Nathaniel Wyeth, as a base and farm for a fur trading venture he hoped to establish in the region in 1834. He named his establishment Fort William. Wyeth's small venture could not match the already established system of the Hudson's Bay Company, and it failed due to mismanagement and poor luck. By 1838, the Hudson's Bay Company had moved onto the site, operated as an outpost of Fort Vancouver. About one-third of the post's cattle and some horses were grazed on the island, and four dairies were eventually established there. One was operated by a long-time Fort Vancouver employee, Sauve dit Laplante, whose name the island has borne ever since.

Fort Vancouver: Headquarters of the Columbia Department

Fort Vancouver became the supply center and administrative locus for an expanding number of fur-trading posts and two agricultural outposts. Returns from the Columbia Department and New Caledonia fur brigades were shipped via canoe and bateaux to Fort Vancouver, where they were inspected, prepared for shipment and recorded, and then loaded on the annual supply ships sent from London. From Fort Vancouver, annual supplies and trade goods for each post were ordered from London, and repacked, invoiced and shipped out to the posts. Under McLoughlin's direction, fur brigades were sent from the various posts to trap out the areas south and east of the Columbia River region, creating a "fur desert," which, combined with control of the Indians and various sales and bidding strategies for furs, was largely successful in ruining American competitors in the region, among them a young Captain B.L.E. Bonneville, an officer on leave from the U.S. Army who, with a large trapping company he organized, attempted to trap and trade in the Nez

⁸⁷BAJC v 2 p 9.

⁸⁸TOPA p. 74; HBRIS IV, p. 205.

⁸⁹HBRIS VII, p. 178.

Percés region between 1832 and 1835. By the early 1830s the rich fur resources of the Snake River region had decimated by the Company, and by the early '40s, fur brigades to California, which had been conducted annually since 1835, ceased to be profitable.

Over time each post within the Department came to rely more on produce raised "in country," including cattle, grain, and so forth, either from its own location, or from other posts, particularly Fort Vancouver, and later Cowlitz Farm and Fort Nisqually, a result of the policy formulated by Simpson and London to reduce the expense of transporting foodstuffs from London. McLoughlin's letters to chief factors and chief traders at various posts during this period often include specific instructions for agricultural production, for intra-post shipment of produce, seed and livestock, and for repairs of tools, structures and expensive manufactured items.

In 1839 the Hudson's Bay Company established a subsidiary company, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, to handle a contract the company had made with the Russian American Company in Alaska. In exchange for trading rights and a lease to establish posts on the Alaskan coast in the vicinity of the Stikine River and a strip of coast between Cross and Chatham Sounds, the Company agreed to provide the Russians with an annual rent of otter skins and with 8,400 bushels of wheat, wheat flour, barley, peas, salted beef, butter and manufactured items. Neither Fort Vancouver or the only other departmental post producing foodstuffs in any quantity, Fort Langley, could meet the contract. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was incorporated to develop additional farms within the department, and, beyond meeting the needs of the Russians, to develop an international market for produce from the Pacific Northwest. Fort Nisqually established in 1833 on Puget Sound to exploit the fur trade in that region, and Cowlitz Farm, which had been established in 1838 because the Fort Vancouver managers were looking for additional agricultural land on which to expand, were transferred to the new firm, as was most of the livestock and farm implements in the department.

Chief Factor McLoughlin was appointed to head this enterprise, in addition to his continuing duties as administrative head of all the Hudson's Bay Company posts west of the Rocky Mountains. While in theory and in law, the two companies were separate, and separate accounts were kept for each, in practice, the operations of the two were mixed. Farming continued on a large scale at Fort Vancouver, which served as a way station for livestock heading north to the Puget's Sound Company farms, and which was further developed in order to meet the Russian contract: the Mill Plain Farm at Fort Vancouver was established in 1841-42 to help meet the wheat and flour demands of the contract, and almost all of the butter made at the post was shipped to fulfill the contract's demands. In addition, Fort Vancouver served as the primary shipping point for most of the agricultural produce sent to Alaska. Also, the need for wheat made it the principal coin in the settlements of the Willamette Valley, where it was bartered by American growers for goods at the Company's store at Fort Vancouver, and later in Oregon City and at Champoege.

Fort Vancouver also administered a relatively short-lived merchandising venture in San Francisco (1841-45), and a trading establishment in the Hawaiian Islands (1833-1844).⁹⁰

During the first few years of the 1840s, London began to express concern over some of McLoughlin's actions in the Columbia Department, including unauthorized expenditures at Oregon City and the credit advances he had been giving settlers. The Governor and

⁹⁰For further information refer to Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*; Rich, *HBS IV*, Barker, *Letters of Dr. John McLoughlin*; Rich, *HBS VI*, VII. For San Francisco ref OHS article.

Committee were also dissatisfied with the decline in revenues in the Department, and the failure of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company to bring in projected profits. In 1841 George Simpson returned to the Columbia for the first time since 1828-29. He and Chief Factor McLoughlin disagreed on the operations of the coastal trade, and their increasingly bitter discussions ended in a quarrel. Then, in 1842, Simpson found upon revisiting Fort Stikine, where John McLoughlin, Jr., was in charge, that the Chief Factor's son had been murdered by his own men. Simpson's handling of the affair was unacceptable to McLoughlin, who then conducted his own inquiry into the matter, arrested the men involved in his son's death, and insisted they be tried for murder. His letters to the Governor and Committee over the next four years were full of references to his progress, and accusations against Simpson's handling of the affair, including lodging responsibility for the murder with Simpson, who he claimed had left his son in charge of Stikine without adequate help. London directed McLoughlin to resolve his differences with Simpson, but McLoughlin ignored the direction. In 1844 McLoughlin was removed as sole administrative head of the Columbia Department; a joint administrative board for the department was established, to take effect in Outfit 1845, with McLoughlin sharing administrative tasks with Chief Factors James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden. Using McLoughlin's purchase of land in Oregon City--which he made, ostensibly, in the name of the Company to protect its interests under the donation land claim law--as a wedge, Simpson was able to force McLoughlin into retirement. The Chief Factor left Fort Vancouver in January of 1846.

Headquarters of Coastal Trade

To conform with London's policy of maximizing the joint occupation agreement with the United States, Fort Vancouver became the base of operations for an expanded coastal trade, designed to compete with American ships, primarily operated from Boston, that carried on a provisioning and trade goods enterprise with the Russian American Company in Alaska, and to direct trading activity with Indians along the Pacific Northwest coast.

By the mid-1830s seven vessels, including a steamship, the *Beaver*, were operating along the coast, under the direction of John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver; some of these were the annual supply vessels from London, which were dispatched to other Company ports before their return to Europe. The Marine Department also served to move provisions between Fort Vancouver and various trading posts, and were vital links in the industrial development at Fort Vancouver, used to ship lumber, salmon, and other goods--such as flour-- to California and Hawaii, and later, Alaska, to transport livestock, and to import such goods as rice, molasses, and sugar.

Center of Agricultural Production

The farm at Fort Vancouver was the first such large-scale enterprise in the Pacific Northwest. Its establishment was a matter of economics, intended primarily to reduce the reliance of Hudson's Bay Company posts in the country west of the Rocky Mountains on imported foodstuffs, the transportation of which was expensive. John McLoughlin later wrote, "...if it had not been for the great expense of importing flour from Europe, the serious injury it received on the voyage, and the absolute necessity of being independent of Indians for provisions, I would never have encouraged our farming in this Country, but it was impossible to carry on the trade without it."⁹¹ When Governor George Simpson visited the

⁹¹Daniel W. Harmon, *A Journal of Voyages and Travels...* (reprint ed., New York: Allerton Book Co., 1922), p. 167.

Columbia region in 1824-25, he realized the country had untapped potential for exploitation--not only to service the Company's fur trading posts, but to turn a profit by exporting surplus produce, diversifying the Company's operations on the west coast. In addition, it was thought that agricultural development would eventually attract British immigrants, which would in turn bolster Great Britain's claim to the disputed territory.

By the mid 1830s, agricultural production at Fort Vancouver allowed Simpson to tell London that: "The Farm...has enabled us to dispense with imported provisions, for the maintenance of our shipping and establishments, where as, without this farm, it would have been necessary to import such provisions, at an expense that the trade could not afford."⁹² Agricultural production was a major activity at several other posts in the Department--notably Fort Colville, designated as the principal supplier of the inland posts of the upper Columbia, and later, New Caledonia posts, and Fort Langley, which partially provisioned the coast posts with agricultural produce, and provided a substantial percentage of the salted salmon trade. Fort Nisqually (1833) and, later, the Cowlitz Farm (1838), both of which were folded into the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company in 1839, were established as agricultural production centers, both to provision the Hudson's Bay Company posts and to produce foodstuffs for export.

It was, however, the Fort Vancouver farm, that was the center of agricultural enterprise during this period. By 1837, George Simpson was telling London:

The fur trade is the principal branch of business at present in the country situated between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific ocean. On the banks of the Columbia river, however, where the soil and climate are favorable to cultivation, we are directing our attention to agriculture on a large scale, and there is every prospect that we shall soon be able to establish important branches of export trade from thence in the articles of wood, tallow, hides, tobacco, and grain of various kinds.

I have also the satisfaction to say, that the native population are beginning to profit by our example, as many, formerly dependent on hunting and fishing, now maintain themselves by the produce of the soil.

The possession of that country to Great Britain may become an object of very great importance, and we are strengthening that claim to it (independent of the claims of prior discovery and occupation for the purpose of Indian trade) by forming a nucleus of a colony through the establishment of farms, and the settlement of some of our retiring officers and servants as agriculturists.⁹³

The farm at Fort Vancouver generally used hands not assigned to other tasks. However, during planting and harvesting season, all available employees were marshalled to work on the farm. In addition to Hawaiians, French-Canadians, Orkney men and others from the British Isles, local Indians were hired to work in the fields, and after the 1840s, the company came to rely more and more on their labor. They were usually supervised by a clerk appointed to Fort Vancouver by the Company, although occasionally a lower-level appointee--once, a postmaster for a few seasons--would supervise farm operations.

⁹²Simpson to Gov and Comm, 1834, HBCA D 4/100 6-6v.

⁹³George Simpson to J.H. Pelly, dated London, 1 Feb 1837, extract, printed in British and American Joint Commission on the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies' Claims in the Matter of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company Arguments for the United States, C. Cushing, counsel, no date, page 36. at PABC.

Periodically the Company employed farm specialists--shepherds, or dairymen, for example--from England to assist at the post.

Farm production grew steadily at Fort Vancouver, from 120 cultivated acres in 1829 to 1,420 acres in 1846. Overall yields likewise increased, although it is impossible to accurately correlate the percentage increase in cultivated land with the increase in the various crops, due to the absence of yield figures for particular crops in different years, and limited information on the average yield per acre on the various qualities of soil found at the post. Livestock production also rose significantly, although the latter years are hard to assess, since many cattle and sheep at the post were transferred to the farms at Fort Nisqually and Cowlitz. Visitors were almost unanimously impressed with the scale and scope of the farm operations: Silas Holmes, an assistant surgeon with the U.S. Exploring Expedition noted that the post's farming operations in 1841 were conducted on "stupendous" scale.⁹⁴ Soil conservation and enrichment, primarily through the use of penning sheep and cattle on poor soils, and then working in the manure, was practiced at Fort Vancouver. Other farming methods included crop rotation, and selective use of different soils for different crops. Initially seed was sent from London, but as the years progressed, an important part of farming at the post was the threshing of grain, peas and grasses for seed for the next season. Grain harvest seems to have followed typical agricultural practices of the first half of the nineteenth century. By 1840 grain was cut with a scythe and cradle--the cradle at this time was still not in general use in North America.⁹⁵ In 1829, grain was thrashed with horses, "in the circus," probably a wood or dirt treading floor located in a barn.⁹⁶ By 1834 a horse-powered threshing mill was being used on the farm, probably a sweep or lever type of power, with horses walking in a circle to operate a geared arrangement. In the mid-to-late '30s the farm had a "mammoth threshing machine" in one of its barns, but by the 1840s Fort Vancouver was using portable threshing machines; also by the 1840s, if not earlier, the threshed grain was cleaned with fanning mills.

By far the most important cash-barter crop at Fort Vancouver was wheat. Great quantities of it were raised, particularly after the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, and the development of an export trade to the Russians in Alaska. Much of it was also ground into flour in the fort's gristmill; towards the mid 1840s, wheat was shipped into the mill from the Willamette Valley by batteau and barges, and flour shipped out. But great quantities of peas were also raised for provisions for the Department's posts. Barley, oats and buckwheat were also raised, and for some years, smaller crops of Indian corn. Potatoes were another mainstay, and although production figures are often missing for this crop, it is almost certain it was raised throughout this historic period. Acreage was also planted in turnips, upon which sheep were allowed to overwinter, and possibly pigs were also placed on these fields.

At the end of this historic period, in an inventory prepared by the Company in the winter of 1846-47, following the settlement of the boundary dispute between the U.S. and Great Britain, that it held almost 9,000 acres in and around Fort Vancouver. The inventory included 1,419 1/2 acres under cultivation.⁹⁷ This differs from the 1200 acres the British government's military reconnaissance team noted in 1846, and also from the testimony given by Thomas Lowe on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company when a final settlement

⁹⁴Silas Holmes "journal," MS III, 5, Beinecke Rare Book and MS Library, Yale Univ.

⁹⁵Landerholm, Carl, ed.: *Notices and Voyages of the Famed Quebec Mission to the Pacific Northwest*. Champoege Press, Inc.: Portland, OR., 1956, p. 26.

⁹⁶John Warren Dease, Oct 9 1829

⁹⁷T.C. Elliott, *British Values in Oregon 1847 OHQ XXXII*, March 1931, pp 27-45.

was under adjudication regarding the Company's "possessory rights" provided for in the treaty. Lowe indicated that the actual acreage under cultivation was "much more" than the amount in the inventory, but that it was not fenced.⁹⁸

Initially the livestock operation at Fort Vancouver was intended to provide meat for the Company's own posts and coastal vessels in the Columbia Department, in the form of salted beef and pork, and, presumably dairy products. Because horses were required in great numbers as transportation--and sometimes food, in the early years--for the fur trade, and were necessary for large scale farm work, it was apparently decided to breed them at the post, rather than rely on trading for them with the Indians, primarily the Nez Percés. Later salted pork, butter and wool became major export items--plans to export hides and tallow apparently never materialized to any great degree.

An 1829 inventory of livestock at the post listed 43 milk cows; 18 working oxen, 4 bulls; 46 heifers & steers; 43 calves, 1 year; 18 calves this spring; 108 hogs; 74 young pigs; 8 Buck goats; 11 she goats; 14 kids; 22 horses & mares.⁹⁹ By 1839 there were over eight hundred head of cattle grazing in Fort Vancouver pastures; according to one source, by 1846 there were 1,915 cattle at Fort Vancouver.¹⁰⁰ In part, the increase was due to a policy established by George Simpson, which disallowed killing any beef until the herd had increased to 600 in number; it wasn't until the summer of 1836 that the first cattle were killed for meat. In addition, several cattle drives from California had brought the Company an increase in stock. Most of the cattle were rangy Spanish stock, but early on Fort Vancouver imported several bulls, although this was done to improve milk production at the farm's dairies.

Sheep eventually became the most important livestock at the post, due to the desire to export wool in quantities to London after the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. In the 1840s, the number of sheep owned by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company rose from 2,342 reported in 1841, to 10,578, reported in 1846. Between 1842 and 1847 over 60,000 pounds of wool was shipped to London for marketing, as well as a little over 2,000 sheepskins.¹⁰¹ At Fort Vancouver, a serious effort was made to improve the native stock, imported primarily from California, through the use of blooded sheep from England, including Merinos, Saxones and Leicesters, and the the flocks were administered to continuously improve wool production through the use of the imported rams and ewes.

Raising hogs was an early and important agricultural activity at the post, particularly for use in supplying the interior posts with foodstuffs in the form of salted pork, and later to fulfill the contract with the Russian American Company. George Simpson's original goal was to produce enough pigs to make 10,000 pounds of cured pork each year. Because pigs--unlike cattle-- were fast breeding and prolific, McLoughlin was able to report in 1829 that he would salt more than 40 barrels of pork that year.¹⁰² By 1845, British Lieutenants

⁹⁸BAJC Papers II, p. 8.

⁹⁹HBCA B 223/d/22 1829. Inventory of Country Produce, Fort Vancouver, p 11.

¹⁰⁰James Gibson, *Farming the Frontier: The Agricultural Opening of the Oregon Country, 1786-1846*, p. 39. It is unclear from the table in this publication whether the totals listed for Fort Vancouver for each year included cattle pastured on Sauvie Island and in the Willamette Valley; also, after 1839, and the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, cattle were between Fort Vancouver, Fort Nisqually and Cowlitz Farm; the number of cattle reported depended to some extent on the time of year.

¹⁰¹Clark, R.C., ed., "Puget Sound Agricultural Company," *Washington Historical Quarterly* 18, 1927, pp. 57-59.

¹⁰²HBR IV 79.

Warre and Vavasour reported there were over 1,500 pigs at Fort Vancouver.¹⁰³ By 1844 the Company had imported some Berkshire hogs to improve the breed.

Early Industrial and Marketing Center

Governor George Simpson's acute eye noted the rich potential of natural resources in the Columbia region during his 1828-29 visit. During this period, Fort Vancouver became a hub of early industrial activity on the Pacific Coast, and an exporter and marketer of, in addition to furs, a variety of other products to foreign countries. In addition to cured salmon, which was marketed in Hawaii, the Company at Fort Vancouver became a major producer of flour, shipped primarily to Alaska, after 1839, but also to Hawaii and California, as well as to its own departmental posts. There was some trade in hides and tallow, and again, after 1839 and the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, wool, although this principally came from the farm at Fort Nisqually. Nisqually and Fort Vancouver also produced butter for foreign trade. Another major industry at Fort Vancouver was lumber, milled at the post's saw mill, and shipped in the form of planks and deals to Hawaii and California.

Beginning in the 1830s, and expanding rapidly in the 1840s, Fort Vancouver became a merchandising center for imported goods, primarily sold--in exchange for wheat--to American immigrants. In 1833, the Company opened a store in Hawaii. Three additional sales outlets for goods were established under Fort Vancouver's aegis in the 1840s, at Oregon City and Champoege, and in San Francisco.

Crossroads of Civilization

In 1836, Chief Factor Peter Skene Ogden, by then in charge of the New Caledonia District of the Columbia Department, wrote an associate:

When at Vancouver last summer I saw our Steam Boat and made a short trip in her....the Americans had four ships there... amongst the many good things their honours from Frenchurch Street [the Governor and Committee in London] sent us last summer was a Clergyman and with him his wife the Rev'd. Mr. Beaver a very appropriate name for the fur trade, also Mr. & Mrs. Coppindale [Capendale] to conduct the Farming Establishment & by the Snake country we had an assortment of Am. [American] Missionarys the Rev. Mr. Spaulding & Lady two Mr. Lees & Mr. Shephard surely clergymen enough when the Indian population is now so reduced but this is not all there are also five more Gent. [gentlemen] as follows 2 in quest of Flowers 2 killing all the Birds in the Columbia & 1 in quest of rocks and stones all these bucks came with letters from

¹⁰³Papers relative to the Expedition of Lietu's Warre and Vavasour to the Oregon Territory, Inclosed in Letter from Colonial Office of 3rd Noovember 1846; American, Domestic Various Vol. 457. PABC Great Britain Foreign Office Papers, call # D A G79.2. Typescript. Letter from M. Vavasour and Warre to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Fort Vancouver, 1 November 1845, American Domestic Various Vo. 457, p 94

the President of the U. States and you know it would not be good policy not to greet them politely they are a perfect nuisance...¹⁰⁴

During this period, Fort Vancouver served as the principal outpost of civilization in the North Pacific. It was the initial destination for almost all American and European visitors to the Pacific Northwest, including American missionaries and foreign scientists, and later American immigrants.

Scientists and Explorers

Fort Vancouver served both as the destination and home base for British, American and other foreign naturalists, many of whom became internationally-recognized scientists, with reputations based in part on their research from Fort Vancouver. To all Chief Factor McLoughlin extended assistance and aid. Among them, as noted earlier, botanist David Douglas, whose first visit in 1825-27, was followed by a second in 1829-30. Douglas was accompanied on his first trip by physician and scientist Dr. John Scouler. Botanist Thomas Nuttall, who travelled with the Nathaniel Wyeth Expedition in 1834-35 to Fort Vancouver, was recognized as the discoverer of many new genera and species of plants: his association with the Pacific Northwest is memorialized by the name given to the native flowering dogwood, *Cornus nuttallii*. With Nuttall was John Kirk Townsend, a Philadelphia ornithologist, who later acted as a temporary physician at Fort Vancouver.

William Brackenridge, at the post in 1841 with the U.S. Exploring Expedition, collected botanical data which was later published, including an important study of ferns. In fact, many members of the U.S. Exploring Expedition were guests of the Hudson's Bay Company, at Fort Vancouver and at other posts; some of the specimens from the collections of the expedition's naturalists and anthropologists, and the elaborate drawings, many of which were published in following years, were made at and near Fort Vancouver; the collections led to the establishment of the first federally supported museum, in the National Gallery of the Patent Office, later, they were lodged at the Smithsonian. John C. Fremont's overland exploring expedition from the United States, arriving at Fort Vancouver in November of 1843, included a collection of plants later described in a Smithsonian publication.

The Horticultural Society of London maintained close ties with Fort Vancouver via the Company's London office, and many native plants and trees from the Fort Vancouver region found their way into the Society's gardens at Chiswick. ¹⁰⁵

Missionaries and Immigrants

¹⁰⁴Documents, Hudson Bay Company documents furnished by Mrs. Eva Emery Dye from the collection of materials she made in preparation of her book *McDonald of Oregon*, printed in *Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol 2 no. 3, April 1908, p. 260.

¹⁰⁵Erwin F. Lange, "Dr. John McLoughlin and the Botany of the Pacific Northwest," *Madroño*, Vol. 14, 1958, pp. 268-272; Ansel F. Hemenway, "Botanists of the Oregon Country," *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol V., September 1904, No. 3, pp. 207-214; Harold Fletcher, *The Story of the Royal Horticultural Society, 1804-1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), passim; Herman J. Viola and Carolyn Margolis, eds., *Magnificent Voyagers: The U.S. Exploring Expedition 1838-1842* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1985), passim.

"...Vancouver the New York of the Pacific Ocean." missionary Narcissa Whitman recorded upon her arrival at the post in September of 1836.¹⁰⁶ Fort Vancouver, with its supplies of imported goods, agricultural produce, seed and livestock--not to mention its permanent buildings offering comparative comfort to recover from the rigors of travel--became the goal of missionaries, and later settlers, who began to filter into the Pacific Northwest in the 1830s. The missionaries, despite the implications their arrival harbingered, were received "...with a hospitality which knew no bounds, until every want of the traveller was supplied. Innumerable have been the favors conferred by them upon the American missionaries, and their assistance has been rendered at times when great inconvenience and even suffering would have resulted from neglect."¹⁰⁷

A brief sketch of the role Fort Vancouver and John McLoughlin played in the settlement of the Oregon Country has been outlined above. The operations of the post were, of course affected by immigration. Probably the most important impacts occurred during the latter years of this period, from around 1842 to 1846, when the numbers of immigrants and existing settlers in the Willamette Valley reached a certain critical mass. Taking the broadest view, it is obvious that the influx of Americans--some of whom were extremely vocal and had the ear of the likes of Horace Greeley and imperialistic politicians in Washington D.C.-- was eventually bound to tilt the balance in the claims of the United States to the disputed territory. It was apparently hoped by McLoughlin that by steering settlers to the Willamette Valley, the British might yet retain their hold on the lands north of the Columbia River.

In 1837 U.S. Navy purser William Slacum assisted Willamette Valley settlers in driving a herd of cattle from California to the valley, a move which began to wean the settlers from the assistance of Fort Vancouver, at least in terms of livestock. More sheep, cattle and horses were brought north from California in 1842; the policy McLoughlin had established of obtaining repayment on his livestock loans with the increase of the settler's herds began to unravel. Settlers could no longer be relied upon to supervise herd increases for the Company. Until 1842-43, the immigrants had to rely on Fort Vancouver for supplies of clothing, seed and manufactured items. But around 1842-43, certain enterprising settlers in the Valley began to establish their own stores, loosening the monopoly on imported goods offered by the Company store at Fort Vancouver, and one opened later at Oregon City. However, general merchandising from Fort Vancouver continued to be profitable for the Company into the 1850s, until American merchants became firmly established in the towns of Portland and Oregon City. Also in the early '40s, some Americans began to establish their own flour mills, cutting into the milling operations at the post, although the Company remained the biggest purchaser of wheat in the Valley for a few more years, scrambling to fulfill its sales commitments to the Russian American Company in Alaska.

The Catholic Church: St. James Mission

Catholic priests Francois Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers arrived at Fort Vancouver in November of 1838, under a cooperative agreement between the Bishop of Juliopolis at Red River in Canada and George Simpson. Fort Vancouver served as headquarters for the priests, but as missionaries, they were in residence for only a short

¹⁰⁶Lawarence Dodd, ed., Narcissa Whitman, My Journal (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1984, 2nd ed.), p. 48.

¹⁰⁷Rev. Gustavus Hines

period each year; when two additional priests arrived in Oregon Country in the fall of 1842, one missionary was more or less stationed at the post year-round. At first services were held in the chaplain's kitchen/schoolhouse within the Hudson's Bay Company stockade. By 1839, the Company had set aside one of the original stockade store buildings to be used as a church, both by the Catholics and by Protestants. The structure was generally considered to be "unworthy," and by 1844 or 1845 the Company had given Father Blanchet permission to build a new church on land north and west of the stockade.¹⁰⁸

The structure was shown on the 1845 map by British Lieutenant M. Vavasour. In the winter of 1846-47, when the inventory of buildings and structures at Fort Vancouver was prepared at Sir George Simpson's instigation, two structures outside the stockade were listed as associated with the Catholic church: the New Catholic church, and "one dwelling adjoining Cath church, ceiled, 30 x 21 feet." The latter apparently served as a rectory for the church.¹⁰⁹ The church, completed in the winter of 1845-46 and dedicated on May 30, 1846, was named St. James the Greater, and was, according to Thomas Lowe, "one of the most respectable buildings about the place."¹¹⁰ The building was erected at Hudson's Bay Company expense.

The building was a two-story gable-roofed structure, with a twelve-foot wide interior gallery and an angled apse at its north end, with a shed-roofed addition in the rear. The attached rectory, to the east, was a one-story structure with a gabled roof and a shed-roofed addition on the north. The building's north elevation is illustrated in an 1851 sketch by George Gibbs, which also shows that by that year a portion of the grounds around the structure had been enclosed with a zigzag fence.

It is not documented why this particular site was selected for the church location, although it seems likely its proximity to the Hudson's Bay Company employee village was one factor, and the need for access to principal roads leading off the farm, and to the river, may have been another.

¹⁰⁸Hussey, *The History of Fort Vancouver and its Physical Structure*, pp 179-80; 208-213; Thomas, *Archaeological Assessment of the St. James Mission Property*, Vancouver, Washington, 1984, passim.

¹⁰⁹ For a complete discussion of the Catholic mission, see Bryn Thomas, *An Archaeological Assessment of the St. James Mission Property*, Vancouver Washington, Eastern Washington University Reports in Archeology and History 100-37 (: Eastern Washington University, 1984).

¹¹⁰Lowe Journal, May 31, folio 50.

Chapter III.

Period of Transition: 1847-1860

Period Overview

This historic period encompasses a time of political, economic, social, and physical transition at Fort Vancouver. During this period, the vast holdings of the Company at Vancouver were dismantled, as, in the wake of the treaty of 1846, increasing numbers of American settlers laid claims to its fields and buildings. The arrival of the United States Army in 1849 had the most significant effect on the Company depot, as the settlement of the Company's claims dragged on in Washington D.C. and London, and the originally cordial relationship between the U.S. military--which established a reservation on the Fort Vancouver site--and the Fort's managers disintegrated. The headquarters for the Hudson's Bay Company Columbia Department were split, with the principal administrative tasks moved from Fort Vancouver to Victoria on Vancouver Island in May-June of 1849, almost concurrent with the arrival of the U.S. military. In May and June of 1860, all remaining stores and movable equipment and the post were loaded on the steamer *Otter*, and shipped to Victoria, and the Hudson's Bay Company's Fort Vancouver was abandoned to the Americans.

During this period, the population of the "Oregon Country" increased dramatically. In 1845, a census ordered by the provisional government showed a total of 2,109 white people. By 1849, a census of the Oregon Territory, ordered by Governor Joseph Lane, showed a population of 9,083, 8,785 of which were U.S. citizens; 304 of these resided in Vancouver and Lewis Counties, north of the Columbia River. The federal census of 1850 showed a total population of 13,294; 1,049 were north of Columbia River.¹¹¹ In 1845 a new district of the Oregon country, north of the Columbia, was established. In August of 1848 the United States passed an act creating the Oregon Territory, which was signed into law on August 14. By 1852, thousands of immigrants had traversed the Oregon Trail, settling throughout the territory; that year alone close to 13,000 people arrived in Oregon Territory, which included both Clark and Lewis counties, north of the Columbia River. In March of 1853 Washington Territory was created by the federal government, which included the lands on which Fort Vancouver was located. In February of 1859 Oregon was admitted to the Union as a free state. By 1860, the federal census showed a population of 52,465 in the new state of Oregon; Washington Territory that year had a population of 11,594, which included the lands soon to become Idaho Territory.

Looking for free land and opportunities to create better lives for themselves, many immigrants began to view the Hudson Bay Company lands as subject to the Donation Land Claim Law--particularly after news of the 1846 treaty arrived. At Nisqually, Cowlitz, and

¹¹¹The large jump in population between 1849 and 1850 is not attributable to immigration alone; by this time many settlers in Oregon who had decamped en masse to the goldfields of California had returned, with and without gold; many were to establish themselves by selling materials and produce at inflated prices to new Californians still searching for gold.

other former posts--and particularly at Fort Vancouver--the Company fought a losing battle to eject squatters from their lands. In the mid-1840s, in an effort to protect the Company's lands at Fort Vancouver, fourteen employees--among them Thomas Lowe, James Douglas, Forbes Barclay--laid claims of 640 acres each--the maximum allowed under the Donation Land Claim law of the Oregon Provisional Government--to the lands at Fort Vancouver. This effort was largely for naught--although litigation by some individuals such as Forbes Barclay forestalled some claim jumpers for a few years. By 1860, most Company employees had either sold "their" claims, having settled elsewhere, or abandoned them.

In 1848 Henry Williamson, who several years earlier had tried to stake a claim on Lower Plain, and others platted a town site on his claim west of the stockade at Fort Vancouver, naming it Vancouver City. When he left for California in 1849, where he was shot and killed at Sutter's Fort, claim to the town site was established by Amos Short, who had been in dispute with Williamson and a Dr. David Gardner over the site since his arrival. By 1850 the federal census listed 95 houses in the newly established Vancouver County, of which Vancouver City was the county seat. In the ensuing decade, town development included two schools, a ferry service, saloons, boarding houses, a courthouse, a livery stable cum dance hall and theater, and other buildings. In 1857 the town was incorporated, and in 1859 it was a serious, although unsuccessful, contender for the Washington Territorial capitol.

Despite the assistance offered immigrants passing through Fort Vancouver by McLoughlin in the early 1830s and '40s, there was a great deal of resentment towards the Hudson's Bay Company by settlers. With an effective monopoly established on imported, manufactured goods, as well as control of agricultural material necessary for survival--seed, agricultural implements, and livestock--the Company was viewed as a barrier to progress and civilization. The policy of taking part of the settler's production of wheat and increase in cattle, in exchange for the original loan by the Company, has already been discussed. In addition, until the early 1840s settlers were obliged to process their wheat into flour at the Company's mills at Oregon City and Fort Vancouver, and to trade produce or borrow on credit from Company stores at Champoege, Oregon City and Fort Vancouver for any manufactured goods. Father J.B.Z. Bolduc noted in 1845:"...Since the country has been inhabited not a bit of fabric has been made; which compels a recourse to the Company for lesser things as well as for those that are important...there is no money at all, everything is done by barter. The things which the farmers give for the merchandise that is furnished them are various grains, and particularly wheat, for which they receive only the value of three shillings per minot...From this it comes about that many are poor and in debt."¹¹²

By 1846, a number of Americans had established stores and mills, at which paper money they floated could be redeemed for goods. However, even then the Company stores were the best stocked and most reliable. Pioneer William Barlow stated that in 1846:

All the merchants floated more or less paper money, which was only redeemable at their own store, and you had to take just what they had to sell or take nothing. That was what made some a great deal better than others. Abernethy's [in Oregon City] was considered the poorest paper, though you could get flour and lumber at his mills, gunflints and remnants at his store.

¹¹²Landerholm, Carl, ed. Notices and Voyages of the Famed Quebec Mission to the Pacific Northwest Champoege Press, Inc. Portland, OR, 1956. p.145. for Oregon Historical Society Fova library 917.95 Noti

Ermatinger, or the Hudson's Bay store, was gilt-edged. You could get all kinds of substantial goods at that store if you had their paper. The way this paper was floated was through the agency of Dr. McLoughlin. He had a large flour mill, three run of fine French burrs and they made as good flour there then as any mill does in Oregon today. He bought the bulk of all the wheat that was raised in Oregon at that time, paid the farmer or whoever had the wheat with paper on Ermatinger or the Hudson's Bay store. They in turn would pass it to the credit of the wheat man, then he would draw orders in favor of any person or persons to the full amount due him and those orders were good until they were taken in. It made no difference how many hands they had passed through or when it was presented, it would be put to your credit; and you could draw on it a dollar at a time or take it all up then if you wished..."¹¹³

By 1850, with an increase in the number of American ships entering Oregon, the development of reliable money, and the increase in settlers, and subsequently merchants and manufacturers--and concomitant number of available goods in the territory--the Company's monopoly was effectively broken. The number of mills and stores owned and operated by Americans had increased dramatically. The principal town in Oregon Territory was Portland, which superseded Oregon City, the original goal of most immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s, due to its more favorable location as a port for deep sea vessels and its relative ease of access to the interior of the country. Most rural settlement occurred in the Willamette Valley, for the same reasons McLoughlin had, in the late 1820s, recommended it to his retiring engagés: ease of access via rivers, fertile soil, moderate climate, and the like. Small towns sprang up throughout the valley, including Salem, established as the territorial capitol in 1854-5; McMinnville; the communal settlement at Aurora; Marysville (by 1853, Corvallis); Albany, and many others, often centering on grist or saw mills, or missionary institutions. Some were situated due to favorable transportation networks, such as Champoege, established, like Oregon City, by the Hudson's Bay Company, before any significant number of Americans had entered the country.

Hudson's Bay Company: Fort Vancouver

With the retirement of Chief Factor John McLoughlin in 1846, the superintendency of the Columbia Department fell to the two remaining members of the Board of Management appointed by London, James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden. In the spring of 1849, the Columbia Department was split in two; Chief Factor James Douglas was moved to Fort Victoria in June to administer the principal activities of the Company's west coast operations, and a succession of managers at Fort Vancouver were appointed to administer the post there. In 1853, the split was formalized, with the Oregon Department Headquarters located at Fort Vancouver, and the Western Department Headquarters at Fort Victoria. This administrative split was to continue, with the Oregon Department of decreasing importance within the Company's operations, until the abandonment of Fort Vancouver in 1860.

The discovery of gold in California greatly reduced the size of the work force at the Company's Vancouver post. The number of servants listed on the rolls between 1846 and 1849 decreased by over two-thirds, as employees headed south to try their luck in the gold fields. The price of labor raised the cost of producing crops and raising livestock, leading

¹¹³ William Barlow, "Reminiscence of Seventy Years," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol XIII, Sept 1912, No. 3, pp 278-9.

some Company managers to suggest that provisions could be bought for less than the cost of raising them.¹¹⁴ Theodore Talbot, a U.S. army officer who arrived in May of 1849 at Fort Vancouver wrote to his mother on May 25:

It is next to impossible to get a white person to work steadily, for the highest wages. The H.B. Company have lost nearly all their employees being obliged to hire Indians and even they charge 4 and 5 \$ a day for their paltry services. Mr. Douglas the R. Governor of the H.B. Compy. has left this place since our arrival to assume command of their new Head Quarters, at Victoria, Vancouver's Island. Peter Ogden Esq. succeeds in the charge of Fort Vancouver. We have found them very kind and willing to furnish us every assistance, but the present state of things renders them almost helpless. They are very anxious to leave the American part of Oregon.¹¹⁵

By 1850 fur trading at Fort Vancouver had become a minor--if not insignificant part of the company's business there. Even by 1846 the trade had been on the decline, and the Whitman Massacre in 1847, the Cayuse War, and the Indian wars of 1855-56 affected communication with inland posts and consequently the fur trade. The stockade played a brief role during the mid-50s Indian wars, when settlers in the area, erroneously anticipating the battles might extend downriver, briefly sought shelter within the fort's pickets.

The depot remained an important sales center until at least the early 1850s: in 1849 Fort Vancouver profits on sales exceeded £17,000.¹¹⁶ However, as noted earlier, competition from merchants in Portland, in other Oregon towns, and in the growing Vancouver City appears to have affected the post's ability to maintain profits even in this aspect of its operations. By 1853, however, even the merchandising operations at the fort appear to have become somewhat desultory. On March 28, a young army officer, Bradford Ripley Alden wrote to his wife, "These English people in the Hudson's Bay store are unlike any business people we have seen. In their large store every thing lies about open and neglected. They manifest no anxiety to sell you anything altho' they are very polite. The store, too, is shut up for an hour at 12 M. and closes altogether at sunset."¹¹⁷ Agricultural operations began to decline soon after the treaty was signed, with American squatters taking up possession of most of the lands beyond the immediate vicinity of the stockade, and with the U.S. army gradually altering the landscape beyond the stockade to suit its purposes. By the mid 1850s the Company was essentially occupying the post and what acreage it could protect in the immediate vicinity of the stockade, in order to assert its claims before the British and American Joint Commission.

The Stockade

During this period of transition, the managers of the Hudson's Bay Company post had neither the manpower, material resources, or even much reason, to keep the assemblage of structures within the fort, built to support its fur trading--and later agricultural--enterprises, in good repair. Some time around 1848 the south wall of the stockade was shifted 6 feet south, and the southeast entrance to the stockade was shifted to the west. When

¹¹⁴Rich, ed. London Correspondence Inward from Eden Colville, 1849-52 HBRs XIX 10.

¹¹⁵Hine, Rbt and Lottinville Savoie, eds. Soldier in the West: Letters of Theodore Talbot (Norman: U of Oklahoma Press 1972) 126-7.

¹¹⁶T.C. Elliott, "British Values in Oregon, 1847, OHQ XXXII March 1931, p. 43.

¹¹⁷"The Oregon and California Letters of Bradford Ripley Alden," California Historical Quarterly, Vol XXVIII 1949 Calif Historical Society, San Francisco, pp. 199-231.

construction of this new wall was complete, the stockade had reached its greatest dimensions, approximately 732 feet long and 325 feet wide.¹¹⁸

Three or four buildings were constructed within the stockade between 1846 and 1860. They included a watchman's house, a new kitchen for the Chief Factor's house to replace on that burned around 1852-53, and possibly a new harness and/or butcher's shop.¹¹⁹ In January of 1848 clerk Thomas Lowe recorded the construction of a second bastion, apparently located on the southeast corner of the stockade: "A Bastion has been put up to day in front of the Fort, which the men have been working at for some time past, and they have put the two long eighteen pounders in the lower, part, but there will be little or no room to work them properly."¹²⁰ This structure, for which little archaeological evidence has yet been found, and the 1846 bastion on the northwest corner, were the only ones built at the Fort Vancouver stockade. Several visitors to the site in the late '40s and early '50s noted the presence of two bastions.¹²¹

Several structures were vacated by the Company during this period, as activities at the post began to falter. In October of 1849, U.S. Army Quartermaster Rufus Ingalls rented the lower half of the Company's fur store within the stockade, to serve as a storehouse for the army's quartermaster and commissary departments; the rental of this space continued until 1859, although a new army storehouse was completed near the river in 1858. The building, according to Ingalls, was "never fit for the storage of valuable property."¹²² At least four buildings were demolished within the stockade: the "old" office, the last building to divide the two courts, was finally demolished in 1847. The beef store was gone by 1854, and the former school house and second chief factor's kitchen were demolished prior to 1858. Also, one building in the northeast corner of the stockade--possibly a harness shop--may have disappeared between 1859 and 1860.¹²³ By late 1853 or early 1854, according to Isaac Stevens, the buildings within the stockade were "...old and

¹¹⁸For a discussion of the walls see Marlessa Gray, "Structural Aspects of Fort Vancouver, 1829-1860: An Historical-Archeological Interpretation, unpublished ms. January 1978, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.; John Hussey, History of Fort Vancouver and its Physical Structure; John Hussey, Historic Structures Report, Vols I and II; Louis Caywood, Final Report Fort Vancouver Excavations (San Francisco: U.S. DI NPS, July 1, 1955.

¹¹⁹For a detailed discussion of these buildings, see Hussey, History of Fort Vancouver and Its Physical Structure and Hussey, Historic Structures Report Vols I and II.

¹²⁰Lowe Journal HBCA fol?

¹²¹Jennings Original Manuscript, mf 428 Wa Hist Soc form original at Yale p. 6; Brevt Brig Gen E.A. Hitchcock, 9/29/51 to C.M. Conrad, Secretary of War, as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Joint Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: M'Gill & Witherow, 1867. p. 371-3; Ibid., Letter of I.I. Stevens to W.L. Marcy, Dept of State, June 21, 1854, submitted by James Mason, Chairman of Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate, p. 218-228.

¹²² The fur storage and shipment functions of the Columbia Department had, by this time been shifted to Fort Victoria. Ingalls to Maj Genl Thos Jessup WA DC Dec 23 1856 NA RG 92 B1176; HBCA 223/z/5 Fols 72-77; Amount of Rent Collected by the HBC from the US Quartermaster for buildings at Ft Vanc WT from 1849-60.

¹²³John Hussey, The History of Fort Vancouver and its Physical Structure, p. 157.

considerably decayed, only the repairs necessary to keep them in tenantable order having of late years been expended."¹²⁴

After the Company abandoned Fort Vancouver in June of 1860, a board of army officers was convened by General Harney to evaluate the stockade buildings. The board did identify and list twenty-two structures still standing within the fort at the time of its abandonment. Of all these buildings, only the office, noted as in "tolerable repair" was assessed as of some possible use to the military, on a temporary basis.¹²⁵ Within the next decade, and mostly within the years immediately following 1860, the buildings within the stockade, and the stockade itself, disappeared. William Crate later testified that after Fort Vancouver's last manager, James Grahame, left in June, "I saw the soldiers taking down the buildings inside the fort, though not all."¹²⁶ Demolition was halted in late June or early July by order of the Secretary of War, who sent an order to the commander of the Department of Oregon on June 7 to suspend actions leading to the termination of the Company's occupation. By then, some structures had been demolished, and others were partially dismantled. That summer the U.S. army lodged noncommissioned officers, the band and laundresses of the Ninth Infantry in part of the stockade buildings still standing.¹²⁷ By 1863, Crate said part of the stockade and a few buildings were still extant; that same year civilian J.W. Nesmith said in later testimony, the pickets and structures had "nearly all rotted away and fallen down."¹²⁸

The Site

The Fort Vancouver farm was largely dismantled by the end of this period.

U.S. Army Impact on the Site

The U.S. Army arrived as the Company was experiencing a high rate of employee desertion in 1849. In the fall of 1849, Peter Skene Ogden, as manager of Fort Vancouver and the Oregon Department, rented vacant and under-used buildings to the army in and around the stockade, including the two fairly new school houses, a house and stable northwest of the schools, the first floor of the fur store within the stockade, several dwellings in Kanaka Village, and the stables erected by the crew of the *Modeste* near the river on Fort Plain. In 1850, several additional structures were rented to the army in Kanaka Village and along the river, including the Company's hospital. In 1849 the army built a few structures on the rising ground north of the stockade, after being granted permission from the Hudson's Bay Company. At the time, the managers of Fort Vancouver believed the U.S. Army could help protect their lands. For a few years the military did assist the Company in evicting squatters.

¹²⁴Letter of I.I. Stevens to W.L. Marcy, Dept of State, June 21, 1854,, submitted by James Mason, Chairman of Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate, as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Joint Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: McGill & Witherow, 1867. p. 218-228.

¹²⁵BAJC v. 9, pp74-77; map printed in Hussey structures rept vol I plate XXX.

¹²⁶BAJC v 2 p111-12.

¹²⁷Hussey, physical structure pp 159-160.

¹²⁸BAJC v 2, p 116; BAJC v 9 pp. 24-25.

In May of 1850 the army leased or purchased an eight acre wheat field about one-quarter of a mile north of the stockade on which to erect military structures, with the understanding that the Company's right to the soil be acknowledged: that year a number of military buildings, primarily officer's quarters and barracks, were erected in a ring around the former field, which was to become the army's parade grounds.¹²⁹ The army also built five structures along the west edge of Kanaka Village to serve as a quartermaster's depot. Army building activity slowed somewhat until 1856, when the military began to demolish Hudson's Bay Company structures in the vicinity of the stockade, beginning with a fence enclosing the Company's cemetery, which was inconveniently located to the southwest of the new parade grounds, where the army wished to build a road to some new structures. A Company employee at the post at the time said, "The fences, and some of the head boards in the co's graveyard, were removed by some of the soldiers of the garrison at various times, and portions were used as fuel at their quarters. The graveyard became gradually almost obliterated. The authorities ran a fence through it, enclosing a portion within the parade ground, and excluded the rest."¹³⁰

The relationship between the military and the Company continued to deteriorate over the next two years. On March 12, 1860, soldiers and government employees, acting on orders from Brigadier General W.S. Harney, commander of the Department of Oregon, began removing the fences of Hudson Bay Company fields west and southwest of the fort. Between March 16 and March 27, the army burned an old house used as a hay house, the Company pig house, a house still occupied by a Hawaiian, William Kaulehelehe, and several other buildings in the Kanaka Village area. In addition, the military removed fencing around a Kanaka Village residence, the Company's hospital on the river bank, a house in the river front area which had been rented in 1855-56 by the volunteer quartermaster as an office, the Company's stable and its "cow house," or ox byre. Some materials removed from the dismantled buildings--posts, sills, windows and doors--and one entire building occupied by a Hawaiian, were hauled to the army's ordnance reserve, apparently for re-use there. Other materials were given to "citizens" or supplied to "houses in the garrison for firewood."¹³¹

After the army's actions, A.G. Dallas, in May of 1860, wrote a bitter letter to Harney, protesting the army's lack of regard for the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, and notifying him that the Company would be vacating Fort Vancouver "...as soon as necessary arrangements can be made."¹³² On May 1, Charles William Wilson, a royal engineer with the British North West Boundary Commission survey team, arrived at Fort Vancouver. He wrote:

...the Fort is now surrounded by the Garrison of American troops under General Harney of San Juan renown; alas the poor old Fort once the great depot of all the western fur trade is now sadly shorn of its glories, General Harney having taken forcible possession of nearly all the ground round & almost confined the H.B.C. people to the Fort itself; the H.B. Company are going to give up their post here as most of their business is now transacted in Victoria & in consequence of General Harney's disregard of the treaty of 46 which secured

¹²⁹Ogden, Ingalls, 28 May 1850, NA RG 92 file 1175; Extracts from British Foreign Office Documents Ms. in Fort Vancouver folder, vertical file, PABC.

¹³⁰Mactavish BAJC v 2 p 215; Tuzo BAJC v 2 p 180

¹³¹HBCA Memoranda by John Work, clerk HBC and Acting agent, 28 March 1860, HBCA B223/z/5 fol 65-66. See also Fol 69 (testimony of Kaulehelehe).

¹³²A.G. Dallas to Brg Genl W.L. Harney, May 1860, HBCA B223/z/5 fol 62-63.

them their rights; it is most annoying to them to see all the fields & land they have reclaimed from the wilderness & savage gradually taken away from them; we have at present the use of the buildings which are nearly empty now, what a place it must have been in the olden time!¹³³

Squatters and Claims

The Bishop of Nisqually, A.M.A. Blanchet, filed a claim to 640 acres at Vancouver, centered around St. James Catholic Church in May of 1853, based on the Oregon Territory Organic Act, passed by Congress in 1848, which basically guaranteed the claims of any religious mission made prior to the passage of the law.¹³⁴ Chief Factor Ogden vigorously protested the claim to the surveyor general, pointing out that the church occupied Company land.¹³⁵ In January of 1854, Isaac Ebey noted, "...The claim of land upon which Fort Vancouver stands is at this time claimed by Bishop Blanchette, bishop of Nisqually, as a Catholic mission, by virtue of a provision in the act of Congress organizing Washington Territory, approved March 3, 1853. The bishop has notified the surveyor general of Oregon of his claim, embracing six hundred and forty acres. The same tract...is claimed by James Graham, chief clerk to the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver...There may be other claims upon this tract ..by citizens under the donation law; if so, I was unable to find them."¹³⁶

In fact, the east edge of the Short claim overlapped the west edge of the St. James Mission claim, and the army reserve encompassed much of the mission claim as well. Army Quartermaster Rufus Ingalls noted in 1859 that it was an "...attempt on part of subsequent post commanders to curtail the Mission enclosures authorized to be put up by Col Bonneville that made the Bishop fly to the President and the Press...no officer ever dreamed that this mission would put forth so preposterous a claim as the one in question..."¹³⁷ In addition, Clark county laid claim to portion of the area for a county seat, and a claim to most of the area claimed by the mission was also made on behalf of the town of Vancouver in 1859. And, of course, underlying all these claims were the Hudson's Bay Company's possessory rights guaranteed by the 1846 treaty. The mission's claim was not to be resolved until 1895, when, through the appeals process, it reached the United States Supreme Court: the final ruling limited the claim to the land actually occupied--less than four and one-half acres--in 1848.¹³⁸

Gradually over this period, the size of the Company's farm shrank. With most employees gone, abandoned Kanaka Village dwellings gradually fell into ruin. 1854 maps show approximately twenty four structures that could be considered Hudson's Bay Company dwellings on the site. In 1854 Governor Isaac Stevens reported to the U.S. State Department,

¹³³Journal of Service of Lieutenant Charles William Wilson, R.E., with Boundary Commission, April 20, 1858-June 11, 1860, Vol. I, transcribe by G.M. Fray, PABC, pp. 88-90.

¹³⁴Carey, General History of Oregon, p 334-5.

¹³⁵Hussey, Histo of Fort Vanc Phys Structure, p. 210.

¹³⁶Letter of Isaac Ebey enclosed in Letter of I.I. Stevens to W.L. Marcy, Dept of State, June 21, 1854, submitted by James Mason, Chairman of Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate, as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Joint Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: M'Gill & Witherow, 1867. p. 230-238.

¹³⁷BAJC v 2 pp 356-9.

¹³⁸Thomas, St. James Mission, p. 15, 20, 33.

on behalf of the U.S. in the settlement, that outside the stockade there were "...about twenty cabins, occupied by servants, Kanakas and Indians. These cabins are, with few exceptions, built of slabs. Most of them are untenanted and left to decay."¹³⁹ By 1859 there were only a few buildings left in the village; their fate has already been addressed. Elsewhere on Fort Plain, squatters began to grab Company land and improvements. By 1854 squatter William Ryan had made a claim and begun improvements along the river and at the west end of the cultivated field in the southeast end of Fort Plain; it appears that he also appropriated the barns west of the field. Dugald Mactavish later testified that Ryan, "...close to the fort, ran fences across Fort Plain where the Company's stock used to pasture and which had all been sown with timothy...Some proceedings were taken by me against ...Ryan but with little effect."¹⁴⁰ A squatter named Nye claimed fields and pastures to the east of Ryan, including Mud Lake.¹⁴¹ Alexandre Pambrum claimed land north of Ryan; for some years he and Ryan were in dispute over some Company fields east of the fort.¹⁴² By 1859 the dwellings and the *Modeste* stable were encompassed within the claim of squatter O.B. McFadden, who had apparently laid out a cultivated field in a long narrow strip along the river at least as early as 1855. In 1855 McFadden's claim was somewhat smaller, but he apparently waited out another claimant, a "Lovelace," to the east, and had incorporated Lovelace's strip along the river into his claim by 1859.

By 1858, Dr. Henry Tuzo said, east of the fort "...several barns and sheds, Dundas Castle and what remained of old Fort Vancouver, all were in the occupation of settlers."¹⁴³ Company clerk John Work testified that when he left in 1860, all that was left of the holdings at Fort Vancouver were "...two fields east of the fort containing about 50 acres and two small enclosures of land in front of the fort, containing about 12 acres, and the garden, about 4 acres. A portion of this land was claimed by 2 parties under the donation law, and the remainder was on the military reserve..."¹⁴⁴

By 1849-50, all of the Back Plains were occupied by "others," according to later testimony by Company employee Archibald McKinlay. During those same years, most of Lower Plain fell to squatters. Assistant quartermaster Rufus Ingalls later wrote that [Amos] Short was one of four Americans "...living and cultivating within the limits of the [military] reservation on the 31st October, 1850. He is an American citizen, called A.M. Short. He had at that date improvements not to exceed \$1,500 cash value, though he has kept

¹³⁹Letter of I.I. Stevens to W.L. Marcy, Dept of State, June 21, 1854,, submitted by James Mason, Chairman of Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate, as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Joint Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: M'Gill & Witherow, 1867. p. 218-228.

¹⁴⁰BAJC v2 p 215; Grahame to Simpson 92/59 HBCA b.223/b/42 146d-147d; Grahame to Fraser 9/19/59 folios 148-150d.

¹⁴¹BAJC v 2 p. 111

¹⁴²Pambrun was an older son of Pierre Pambrun, a chief trader for the Company. Alexandre and siblings grew up at Fort Vancouver, and later moved to Oregon City, where he married the daughter of Chief Trader Samuel Black in 1851. He apparently returned to Fort Vancouver, where he took up a claim east of the fort, claiming the same land, according to William Crate, that William Ryan claimed. After his wife's death, some time soon after 1859, he placed a surviving child in a convent school in Oregon City and left for Montana. Munnick A61-62.

¹⁴³BAJC v 2 p 176

¹⁴⁴BAJC v 2 p 192

on regularly increasing the number and value of his improvements subsequently, against the frequent and most positive warnings of myself and the commanding officer of this post....this man was a trespasser upon the possessory rights of the Hudson's Bay Company...I have been informed he was forcibly ejected under the old provisional government of this territory...¹⁴⁵ Short's house and enclosures were at the easternmost edge of Lower Plain; he had Vancouver City platted to the east of his farm, on what is really Fort Plain, near the west edge of the Kanaka Village site and the U.S. Army quartermaster's depot, in 1850.

Although some settlers attempted to establish claims on the Mill Plain Farm, Fort Vancouver's managers persisted in hanging on to the post's most recent farmland, which was still needed to produce wheat. In 1855 some new buildings were erected near the Company's fields there, which, according to Chief Factor Dugald Mactavish, was the principal reason the fort posted a fiscal loss for that year.¹⁴⁶ In February of 1859 Chief Trader James Grahame reported that although the Mill Plain farm had been uncultivated for several years, the Company still had a servant living on it, and the fences were still maintained. However, that year the farm at Mill Plain suffered a series of incursions by squatters, who began to run fences through the Company's land there; one tore down a Company fence and used the rails to build a new fence inside one of the Company's fields. By the end of the year the Company farm was no longer in its hands.¹⁴⁷ By 1853-54, the mill sites were claimed by several individuals. Dugald Mactavish said that, by 1858, the saw mills were "virtually in possession of a man named Taylor," but that one of the flour mills was in fair condition and still working.¹⁴⁸

Company Operations

According to a Company Chief Factor, Archibald McKinlay, who testified on behalf of the Company to the British and American Joint Commission, crops were raised at Fort Vancouver until 1849 or 1850. McKinlay, who had charge of purchasing grain from the American settlers said that the wheat raised to fill the contracts with the Russians in Alaska was raised at Fort Vancouver until 1846, and that the contracts after that year were "filled by me at Oregon City and Champoege by purchase. The farm, he said, "...from 1846 and upwards...began to be ruined." While staying at the fort in 1849-50, he observed that compared with 1840, "...comparatively there was very little land under cultivation."¹⁴⁹

Beset by squatters appropriating fields and improvements on all lands beyond the immediate vicinity of the stockade, suffering from a reduced labor force due to desertions, laboring under taxes and duties imposed by the territorial government, and facing

¹⁴⁵Rufus Ingalls, Capt AQM to Major Cross, Chief Quartermaster, Pacific Division, SF, dated Columbia Barracks, Or, July 16, 1852; as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Joint Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: McGill & Witherow, 1867. p. 354-8

¹⁴⁶Mactavish to Simpson 6/30/55 HBCA B223/b/41 fol 81d-82; Mactavish to Simpson 8/4/55 folios 85d-86d; Results of Trade, Oregon Dept, Outfit 1858 in HBCA A.11/71 ms fol 961.

¹⁴⁷HBCA B. 223/b/42/ Letters of James Grahame to Simpson and Fraser, February-November 1859, ms. fol. 113-115; 146d-150d; 155-157.

¹⁴⁸BAJC 2 p 202-3.

¹⁴⁹BAJC HBC vs US Evidence for Claimants v.2 (Washington D.C.: McGill & Witherow, 1867), p. 84.

increasing competition from settlers no longer beholden to the Company, the managers of the farm during this period attempted to maintain a holding action on its operations. By the early 1850s it was apparent the farm could no longer operate at a profit--the cheap labor supply was gone, and ability to use hands on the payroll for the fur trade during the off-season was no longer possible. The ability of the farm to absorb disasters like drought or flooding was reduced, along with the acreage cultivated. When the various managers reported excessive costs to Simpson and London, and urged either the sale of the lands or the cessation of farming altogether, they were told to continue the agricultural operations as a strategy to protect the Company's claims. The governor and committee foresaw that land not cultivated would be viewed as "abandoned," or "vacated," and that maintaining possession was the principal means by which the Company could be assured of a favorable settlement with the United States government. Sowing and harvesting, then, for at least the last eight years of Fort Vancouver's operation, continued, although at an increasing loss to the Company.

In 1855 Chief Trader James Grahame wrote in reference to squatters that "If the military [was] not here, [the] company would not have one inch of ground left." In June Fort Plain was flooded. The Depot, Grahame reported, suffered a "very large loss for the year."¹⁵⁰ In 1856 Dugald Mactavish, then in charge of the post, reported to Simpson that the expense of the farm was "still great," and the following year he reported the farm incurred the "usual expenses."¹⁵¹ In 1858 the farm at Vancouver reported a loss of over £300, and the following year Grahame reported to Simpson that the farm at Vancouver "resulted in more outlay."¹⁵²

In the spring of 1847, the total number of livestock on the Fort Vancouver farm included 1,915 head of neat cattle--272 more than the previous spring; 517 horses; 7-800 pigs, and 3,000 sheep. These totals excluded 263 cattle that had been sold or slaughtered by the Company. Ogden and Douglas reported to George Simpson that spring that it would be necessary to move the cattle to other posts because there were too many for the available pasturage, especially when the Columbia rose and reduced the range at the Lower Plain, and because settlers were "crowding in upon our pastures and restricting us to narrower limits each year." In August, 300 head of cattle and horses were driven to a stock farm being established near Thompson's River. By the following spring 1600 cattle, 140 horses and the pigs and sheep were left at Fort Vancouver, "...the range is still eaten lamentable close, an evil increased by the number of Americans who have settled on every side of the company's pastures though not actually occupying and land that we claim."¹⁵³

In November of 1852 John Ballenden wrote to William Tolmie at Nisqually that he had decided to send to Nisqually "...all the sheep which still remain here...I shall this year finally close the accounts of the P.S. Co. in so far as regards live stock or other property remaining at Vancouver, charging whatever weder or wedder lambs may then remain to account of Fort Vancouver--Western Department, outfit 1853...I cannot help feeling glad to see the last of the P.S. Co's stock taken away from the place as in consequence of the

¹⁵⁰Grahame to Mactavish, 6/18/55, ms in Fort Nisqually Collection

¹⁵¹Mactavish to Simpson 7/22/56 fols 114d-116; Mactavish to Simpson 8/18/57 hbca b 223/b/41 fol 139d-141

¹⁵²Results of Trade, Oregon Dept Outfit 1858 HBCA A.11/71 ms fol 961; Grahame to Simpson, 9/4/59 HBCA b 223/b/42 fols 133d-135d.

¹⁵³Ogden and Douglas to Simpson 3/15/47 HBCA b223/b/35/ fol 66d-67; Ogden and Douglas to Gov and Comm 9/20/47 HBCA b223/b/36 fol 75-84d; Ogden and Douglas to Simpson 3/16/48, Baron Strathcoma Papers, OHS Mss 1502, Box 1 8 pages.

lawless population of this neighbourhood, and the impossibility of getting good and careful shepherds they had not received that attention during the last few years which they well merited. The number sent...is 840 of all kinds." Ballenden also reported that the farm had only enough horses left at Vancouver that were required for its own use.¹⁵⁴

For the most part, by the end of 1852, the large herds and flocks, so carefully nurtured at the farm since its inception, were gone. A.C. Anderson, who served as an assistant at Vancouver between 1851 and 1853 later testified that "The large herd of cattle which had formerly roamed upon the pastures had been, some removed to positions of greater security, otherwise branded and stolen by squatters, some wantonly shot, and the remainder driven into the woods, where, from want of the ordinary herding, they gradually became wild...During my residence as second in command at Vancouver, in the winter of 1852-53, I was present during the settlement of a contract with Colonel Chapman of Oregon City, I think, who on the payment of a certain sum per head, purchased the privilege of slaughtering the cattle which had been driven to a distance, and were then in a wild state."¹⁵⁵

The California gold rush brought a brief period of prosperity to the Company's stores. In the 1860s, Thomas Lowe testifying on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company to the British and American Joint Commission, said that soon after the discovery of gold, an "extensive trade" in lumber, pickled salmon, flour and dairy produce" was developed by the post in San Francisco.¹⁵⁶

For some years, the saw and grist mills continued to operate, apparently at capacity. The Company, to some extent, was shifting its operation to emphasize manufacturing, taking advantage of the increased demand for flour and milled lumber, at first to fulfill the contracts with the Russians in Alaska and to meet the demands of the growing number of settlers, and later to take advantage of the California markets, spurred by the discovery of gold. Wheat bateaux and boats continued to carry grain from the Willamette Valley to the Company's gristmill on the Columbia until enterprising Americans began to erect their own mills.

The 1846 saw mill Douglas had built, and the large gang saw mill built in the early 1840s, operated until 1849; the large gang mill, which had high labor requirements to operate efficiently, was, according to millwright William Crate, shut down in 1849--the year after employees began to desert the post--and for several years the Company relied on the small single-saw mill built under the direction of James Douglas. In June of 1849 Chief Factor Ogden agreed to deliver 100,000 feet of boards, planks, joists and other milled materials to the newly arrived Quartermaster, Rufus Ingalls, for building structures at Camp Vancouver, above the stockade. The army paid \$60 per thousand feet, and supplied soldier labor to log and raft the lumber downriver from the saw mill. The Company also sold the army shingles for roofing the structures.¹⁵⁷ By December of that year, Ingalls had erected his own "patent saw mill" at Fort Vancouver.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁴John Ballenden to William F. Tolmie, Vancouver, 1 Nov 1852. In William F. Tolmie Add Mss 557, v. 1, A/c/40/1321 folder 1, Correspondence inward, typescript pp1-4.

¹⁵⁵BAJC HBC vs US v. 2 1867 p 45.

¹⁵⁶Thomas Lowe testimony BAJC v. 2 p. 11, 31.

¹⁵⁷PABC ms Vancouver folder, mf D-19, set 1, Reel 49.

¹⁵⁸Dec 3 1849, Ingalls to Maj General T.S. Jesup, QM Genl, US Army WA DC, NA RG 92, file 1175.

In 1851 a new--and apparently less labor-intensive-- saw mill was built below the one erected in 1846. The new saw mill building, was about 60 by 20 feet, and cost about \$15,000 to erect. It included one sash saw, driven by an overshot wheel, originally with single motion, but later altered to double motion. According to William Crate, it would cut between 3 and 4,000 feet of timber in twelve hours "without any driving." Crate reported that when the mills were running regularly, thirty to forty men were employed, producing about 1,800,000 feet of lumber for sale each year. Apparently, when begun, the construction of a new sawmill was justified, as lumber prices in 1849-1850 reached a peak of \$100 per thousand feet; by the end of that year, prices had fallen to \$50 per thousand feet, and later dropped as low as \$20 per thousand.¹⁵⁹

At least one saw mill remained in operation until 1856, when the lands on which they were located were claimed by an American settler. In November of 1850 James Ballenden leased one of the mills for six months to a James Leach. In 1854 Ebey reported to Isaac Stevens that a saw mill, "built since the treaty" was still in operation; he also noted that the 1836 gristmill was "now nearly worthless," and that the new gristmill, the one to which Crate made reference "has never been completed."¹⁶⁰ Dugald Mactavish, said, however, that one of the grist mills was in fair condition and still working when he left Fort Vancouver in 1858.¹⁶¹

United States Army: Camp Vancouver/Columbia Barracks/Fort Vancouver

From the time of the arrival of the United States Army at Fort Vancouver, in 1849, until around 1856, the U.S. Army and the Hudson's Bay Company existed side by side in amity. However, the rapid increase in population in the area--due principally to immigration from the States--the establishment of American government and laws, and the establishment of American social institutions greatly altered the political, economic and social climate: by 1860 the Hudson's Bay Company was considered an interloper with no practical claim to the vast holdings it had controlled for decades. At the end of this period, under increasing strained relations between the U.S. Army and the Company's employees at Fort Vancouver, the Hudson's Bay Company vacated the post.

In May of 1846 the United States Congress authorized the President to establish a line of military posts along the route settlers were following from the Mississippi to the Columbia for protection of emigrants. In 1848 the Secretary of War directed the commanding officer of the stations along the route to establish a ten mile square reservation on the Columbia River, near the mouth of the Willamette River. In the spring of 1849 Brevet Colonel W.W. Loring left Fort Leavenworth with a column of mounted riflemen for Oregon country, and Companies L and M of the First Artillery under the command of Captain and Brevet Major

¹⁵⁹BAJC HBC vs US fv 2 1867 p 113-115; Vinton to Smith, October 1 1849, Fort Vancouver, D.H. Vinton to Genl P.F. Smith, NA RG 92, file 1175, Vinton reported the usual price of lumber at \$20 per thousand, but said "At present these prices are advanced five fold..."

¹⁶⁰Letter of Isaac Ebey enclosed in Letter of I.I. Stevens to W.L. Marcy, Dept of State, June 21, 1854,, submitted by James Mason, Chairman of Committee on Foreign Relations, Senate, as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Join Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: M'Gill & Witherow, 1867. p. 230-238.

¹⁶¹BAJC v. 2 pp 202-3.

J.H. Hathaway embarked in the steamer *Massachusetts* from New York for the Columbia River, via the Straits of Magellan. The artillery companies arrived at Fort Vancouver in the middle of May, and established a camp on the hill behind the Hudson Bay Company stockade at Fort Vancouver, with Peter Skene Ogden's permission. He felt the military's presence might discourage squatters, who were establishing claims on increasing amounts of Company land.

In September and October, Loring's command arrived in three separate detachments, after "an arduous march."¹⁶² Loring's command, according to a civilian who lodged at the post in March of 1851, "was raised expressly for Oregon, and put under the command of Col. Loring, a young army officer who served in Mexico, and where he lost his arm. The ranks of the Regiment are made up of the meanest and most unprincipled set of fellows that ever disgraced an Army..."¹⁶³

Captain Rufus Ingalls, an assistant quartermaster in the Department of the Pacific Division, with headquarters in California, had been directed in April of 1849 to proceed to Oregon and report to the senior officer in charge; his principal task was to make preparations for quartering the men assigned to the new post, which was called Camp Vancouver.

During the summer of 1849 the command camped in tents on the high ground behind the Fort, and built log structures for shelter the following winter. Troops, local mechanics and Indians were engaged in the construction. Officer Theodore Talbot wrote his mother in June that "The Quartermaster I believe intends to employ some of our men in the erection of buildings etc. giving them the high market wages for labor, the Captains of Companies giving them short furloughs for that purpose. This plan may have a good effect towards keeping them. I doubt it myself."¹⁶⁴ That summer four buildings were erected: an eleven room log building for the officers of the First Artillery, which they apparently built themselves; a building divided into two rooms--kitchen and servant's room; two buildings with two rooms each, containing the company mess room, a kitchen, a hospital kitchen and a bakehouse.¹⁶⁵ The latter two were arrayed in a cluster just north of the school houses, in and around a small grove of fir trees with some deciduous vegetation below. The officer's quarters were farthest west, beyond the grove of trees. Also, a building serving as a guard house--desertion was a significant problem for the army, due to the call of the gold fields of California--was either built or rented from the Hudson's Bay Company. Some troops and provisions were housed in structures rented from the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver and in Oregon City.

In April of 1850 six companies of Mounted Riflemen arrived at the post--A,D,G,H, I and K--and one more company, F, arrived in June. Company L of the First Artillery, under Hathaway, was sent to occupy Fort George (Astoria) in May, where Captain Ingalls had been attempting to put together suitable quarters for them. In November Company B of the Mounted Riflemen arrived at Fort Vancouver. In May of 1850, Ingalls entered into an agreement with Ogden on behalf of the U.S. government and the Hudson's Bay Company for the use and appropriation of an 8 acre field about one-quarter of a mile north of the

¹⁶²D.H. Vinton to Genl P.F. Smith, October 5, 1849, Fort Vancouver; NA RG 92, file 1175.

¹⁶³Jenning's Original Manuscript Journal of the Overland Trip from Oregon City to Fort Hall and Salt Lake....Mf 428, Wash St Hist Soc Tacoma, from original at Yale Western Americana. p. 3

¹⁶⁴Soldier in the west, pp. 129; 132-3.

¹⁶⁵Talbot Journal, p 134

stockade, planted in wheat. In exchange for \$1,000--later adjusted to \$872.40-- for the loss of the crops and with the specification that the Company's right to the soil be acknowledged, the army obtained a site on which to construct barracks to house the increased military population.¹⁶⁶ That year twenty-six buildings were erected, primarily by "citizen carpenters" employed by Ingalls; most were located in a ring around the former wheat field, to become the parade grounds, including log structures for officers and two two-story log barracks buildings. Several structures were built in the Kanaka Village area, and near the River, to serve as the Quartermaster's Depot: from south to north, they were the quartermaster's office and quarters, where Ingalls resided; a quartermaster's stable and hay shed; a house for quartermaster's employees; a carpenters' shop and a storeroom, and a quartermaster's blacksmith shop. The blacksmith shop was located north of Upper Mill road, west of the Catholic mission enclosure.

On October 31, the army formally proclaimed the establishment of a military reservation of about four square miles, which included the Hudson's Bay Company stockade and the land and improvements about two miles to the east and west of it; the announcement stated the reservation was "subject only to the lawful claims of the Hudson's Bay Company," as guaranteed by the Treaty of 1846.¹⁶⁷ That year the post was given the official title of Columbia Barracks. The extent of the military reservation immediately raised political and policy questions, prompting Washington D.C. to reconsider its size, despite the concerns expressed by subordinates on the West Coast. In 1851 Brevet Brigadier General E.A. Hitchcock wrote from the Pacific Division headquarters in Benicia, California, to C.M. Conrad, the U.S. Secretary of War, describing the Hudson's Bay Company post at Vancouver and reported:

...when the United States troops reached there...by an amicable arrangement between the agent of the Company and the United States commander, the troops were encamped and subsequently erected quarters, upon grounds cleared by the Company, immediately in the rear of the picket-work and enclosed grounds of the Company; a portion of said enclosed grounds being relinquished ...for the convenience of the troops, to be paid for on certain terms agreed upon...A questions was raised by settlers ...as to the extent of the "possessory" rights of the Company; some giving the opinion that those rights did not extend beyond actual enclosures. In this view a settler established himself and has built a house on the river bank about a mile, or perhaps a mile and a quarter, below the picket-work of the Company, against the remonstrances and repeated efforts of the agent of the Company to prevent it...The county authorities, taking the same limited view of the rights of the Company, have laid off a town and have disposed of lots, taking in the actual buildings occupied by the employes of the Company, and are only restrained from actual occupancy by the site falling within the declared military reservation; and if now the reservation should be restricted to narrow limits it could not fail to bring about a most unpleasant state of things...¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶Ogden, Ingalls, 28 May 1850, NA RG 92 file 1175; Extracts from British Foreign Office Documents Ms. in Fort Vancouver folder, vertical file, PABC.

¹⁶⁷A Military History of Vancouver Barracks, Washington Territory, Fort Lewis Army Museum files, WA n.d. (Bryn Thomas copy) typescript p 18.

¹⁶⁸Brevt Brig Gen E.A. Hitchcock, 9/29/51 to C.M. Conrad, Secretary of War, as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Joint

Ultimately the military bowed to political pressure. In October of 1853, the Secretary of War was obliged by an act of Congress to reduce the reserve to 640 acres, subject to the claims by the Company as guaranteed by the 1846 treaty. The new boundaries were surveyed by Brevet Lieutenant Colonel B.L.E. Bonneville, who arrived at Fort Vancouver in September of 1852, when he assumed command of the post. Bonneville was already a noted explorer, having served in Oregon in the 1830s. In July of 1853, the name of the post was changed to Fort Vancouver; it operated under this designation until 1879 when it was redesignated Vancouver Barracks.

In May of 1851 the eight Mounted Riflemen companies were sent to California, leaving a small detachment under the command of Lieutenant Theodore Talbot at Fort Vancouver until the fall, when reinforcements -- Company L of the First Artillery from Fort George, and a detachment from Company M, stationed at the Dalles, arrived; the command of the post was placed under Brevet Major Hathaway in November. Bonneville arrived in the fall of 1852, with companies C, E, G and H of the Fourth Infantry; in 1853, Company L of the First Artillery was disbanded, and several infantry companies moved elsewhere. Between July of 1853 and June of 1854 the garrison consisted of companies G and H of the Fourth Infantry, and Company L of the Third Artillery joined the post in June of that year. In 1854 and '55, a new spurt of building activity took place in the vicinity of the parade grounds.

Brevet Captain Ulysses S. Grant, was stationed at Fort Vancouver in the early 1850s, serving as regimental commissary officer, and later as regimental quartermaster. In 1854 and '55, a new spurt of building activity took place in the vicinity of the parade grounds, including construction of an "insane soldier's quarters", a small log barracks building, several frame structures serving as officers housing and post office, and several new kitchens.¹⁶⁹

In 1855 and '56, and to some extent through 1858, Fort Vancouver served as a staging area for the regular army engaged in what is generally referred to as the Indian Wars, a series of uprisings and battles ranging from the Puget's Sound in Washington Territory to southern Oregon, and both east and west of the Cascade mountains. During this period, a series of companies from the Dragoons, Artillery, and Infantry were lodged at the post. During the winter of 1855-56, some of the volunteers called up by the territorial governor to protect settlers were housed at Fort Vancouver, although they were not part of the regular army, and there was considerable friction between the military and the volunteers.

Colonel George Wright, who was largely responsible for bringing the wars to a close in 1858, was placed in command of the military district of Oregon and Washington, with headquarters at Vancouver. He arrived with eight companies of the Ninth Infantry, in January of 1856 at Fort Vancouver. Under Wright, new military posts were established in Yakima and Walla Walla. In 1858, following a new outbreak of Indian actions, including one near Walla Walla where the military post there was defeated by Indians, the military department of the Pacific was reorganized into two districts--the California and the Oregon departments, and Major General William S. Harney was assigned to the command of the latter, with headquarters at Fort Vancouver, replacing Wright.

Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: M'Gill & Witherow, 1867. p. 371-3

¹⁶⁹Thomas L. Brent Capt. Report of Public Buildings June 30, 1854, Fort Vancouver, NA RG 92, File 1175

Until the Indian Wars began in earnest, military life on the post at Vancouver appears to have been somewhat boring, at least for young officers stationed there. Theodore Talbot wrote to his sister in March of 1852, "I live in a house by myself and for days and days, indeed, almost weeks, have only ventured out of my shell or cell for a few minutes each day to get my meals, not having the society of a living thing except at these times. This retirement has been part voluntary, partly enforced, from bad weather and want of sociability or inclination for out door wanderings."¹⁷⁰ A year later, Bradford Ripley Alden wrote his wife: "Two Indians are before my door, with two rugged and kittenish looking little bear cubs. One of the companies has bought them for pets, I hear. Officers and soldiers often are wondrous lonely and low-spirited at all out of the way stations. Pets are natural enough amusements for lonely men..."¹⁷¹ There were often one or two musicians in each company assigned to the post, and early on a structure was designated for the regimental band's quarters. In April of 1853, Bradford Alden wrote his wife, "Three nights since, the band gave me a serenade, and then went round to the other houses."¹⁷²

In 1856 the U.S. Congress approved the establishment of an Ordnance Reserve on twenty acres of land adjoining the east boundary of the military reservation. The Hudson's Bay Company protested the establishment of permanent buildings for an arsenal on the reserve, and the military acquiesced, erecting temporary buildings on the site, some of which ending up standing for many years.

Following Bonneville's departure in 1855, the military post at Vancouver experienced a succession of commanding officers, sometimes alternating depending on duty assignments. In the late 1850s two new two and one-half story framed barracks were built in the garrison area, one on each side of the parade grounds, just south of the earlier log barracks. In 1858 a new two-story hospital building with a piazza was built on the east side of the parade grounds. Also by 1858, two large stables had been built west of the parade grounds.

Beginning in 1856, the amicable relationship between the Hudson's Bay Company and the army began to deteriorate. At that time, the Hudson's Bay Company doctor, Henry Atkinson Tuzo, later said, "...the military authorities commenced and continued to call in question the rights of the Co....Some of their buildings outside the fort were taken possession of by persons in the employ of the various military departments. Several were burnt or otherwise destroyed while in the occupation of these persons; the Company's corrals were made use of at first, and finally altogether removed by the quarter master's department. The landing jetty on the river was removed, and a large warehouse and wharf erected by the Govt on its site. The fences, and some of the head boards in the co's graveyard, were removed by some of the soldiers of the garrison at various times, and...used as fuel at their quarters..."¹⁷³ The Company's protests went largely unheeded. Between the fall of 1857 and the spring of 1858, a new quartermaster's storehouse was erected at the River, near the Hudson's Bay Company Salmon House. By the spring of 1860, as has already been discussed, the army had levelled almost all of Kanaka Village and Company structures at the river.

¹⁷⁰Soldier in the West, p 167.

¹⁷¹"The Oregon and California Letters of Bradford Ripley Alden," California Historical Quarterly, Vol XXVIII 1949 Calif Historical Society, San Francisco, pp. 199-231.

¹⁷²Ibid.

¹⁷³BAJC v. 2 p. 180

The Catholic Church: St. James Mission and the Sisters of Charity

Between 1847 and 1860, the Catholic Church at Fort Vancouver expanded the space it occupied, erecting enclosures and additional structures to the north and west. When settler P.W. Crawford arrived at the fort in 1847, he noted that the "Catholic Church outside This Collection [the stockade]" stood southwest of the fort, "...1/8 mile Priests French Canadians."¹⁷⁴ Honore-Timothee Lempfrit, who arrived in October of 1849 noted the priest was Mr. Delivaut (Delévaud, V.), "a young Savoyard priest to whom we were introduced..."¹⁷⁵ Delévaud served as a priest at Fort Vancouver from the fall of 1847 through the fall of 1850, when he apparently was replaced by J.B.A. Brouillet. The U.S. Army rented space from the Company for its officers in the Church rectory between the time of its arrival, in 1849, and at least 1852.

In the fall of 1850, the Rev. A.M.A. Blanchet, Bishop of Nisqually, apparently established his residence at Fort Vancouver, at least part time. ¹⁷⁶ Quartermaster Ingalls later said, however, that no priests were in permanent residence after the arrival of the army until invited to Fort Vancouver by Colonel Bonneville, who arrived in the fall of 1852. Hudson Bay Company's millwright, William Crate, later testified that the "Catholic priest occupied the house built by the Company for him and the church which the company erected," although he did not specify a date--it would have been after Crate's return in 1849.¹⁷⁷

U.S. Army quartermaster Rufus Ingalls said in 1859 that it was "...not until after, under the auspices of a Catholic Post Commander [B.L.E. Bonneville], the priests were allowed many privileges and were permitted to make improvements within certain defined limits which they now wish to extend...What he [Colonel Bonneville] granted was by way of favors, and of course his successor had the right to withdraw them when the public service required it..."¹⁷⁸

By May of 1853 the church had filed a claim to 640 acres around the site of the church, one of many claimants to the Hudson's Bay Company farm under the donation land claim act. In later testimony Dugald Mactavish said the church "with adjoining dwelling house had passed into the hands of R.C. mission who made some claim to the place."¹⁷⁹ By the time of the survey to reduce the military reservation to 640 acres, conducted under Bonneville's command, the church was located at the south end of a large enclosure, subdivided into several areas by zig zag fencing. Henry Tuzo, a Hudson's Bay Company employee at Fort Vancouver between 1853 and '58, noted that the church had "...several dwellings and other buildings attached to it."¹⁸⁰

In 1856, Bishop Augustine Magliore A. Blanchet, in charge of the dioceses of Walla Walla, Fort Hall and Colville since the mid 1840s, requested a mission from the Sisters of Charity of the House of Providence in Montreal: five volunteered, arriving by ship via Panama in

¹⁷⁴Crawford, Description of Fort Vancouver as it was in 1847, PABC, pp 78-81.

¹⁷⁵Patricia Meyer, Honore-Timothee Lempfrit, O.M.I., His Oregon Trail Journal.

¹⁷⁶Hussey, History of Fort Vancouver and Its Physical Structure, p. 210.

¹⁷⁷BAJC v2 p 110-111.

¹⁷⁸BAJC v 2 Exhibit B14, Ingalls to Maj Gen Thos Jessup QM Gen US Army WA Jan 15 1859, p 356-9.

¹⁷⁹BAJC v 2 202-3

¹⁸⁰BAJC v 2 p.?

December of that year. The nuns--three professed sisters and two postulants-- were apparently initially lodged in the attic of the St. James Mission's bishop's house. Legend says that by the spring of 1857, the nuns established a convent in a fur storage building within the stockade of the Hudson's Bay Company, or in an "old fur storage building abandoned by the Hudson Bay Company and later turned into a barn."¹⁸¹ This does not correlate with the U.S. army inventory of Hudson's Bay Company structures in 1860, which makes no mention of any stockade building's use as a convent, nor does there appear to be any reference to it in any communications from Company employees at the stockade through 1860. What does seem likely, is that the convent was established in the rectory of the church: it is located there on a map prepared in 1866. Also, the 1860 census of Clark County lists a building associated with the St. James Mission as occupied by eleven nuns, twenty-two female orphans, and six domestic servants.

The superior of the Sisters of Charity mission was Esther Pariseau, Sister Joseph of the Sacred Heart. She was born in Quebec in 1823, and joined the Sisters of Providence in Montreal in 1843. Daughter of a carriage-maker, she was proficient in carpentry and woodworking; later her skills in planning and organization would become evident as well. Mother Joseph is credited with erecting a series of small structures, referred to as "the Providence enclosure," apparently on the site of the St. James Mission, to minister to the needs of the area's population--both native and white.¹⁸² Rufus Ingalls, in January of 1859, noted that "Most of the improvements which pertain to the Mission have been created with our consent [the army's] by Mr. Brouillet the Vicar General of the Dioceses, since my return here in 1856. This gentleman has opened fine schools for both sexes, has a hospital for the indigent sick."¹⁸³ The school apparently began operation in 1857 under the supervision of Mother Joseph, who also organized an orphanage for both boys and girls. As noted above, the 1860 census noted twenty-two female orphans lodging with the nuns; it also listed a third structure with two "perceptors" and fifteen male orphans. The latter structure, which can be seen on an army map prepared under the command of Brigadier General W.S. Harney in 1860, later became known as Holy Angels College.

During this period of transition, care of the civilian sick was practically non-existent. The Hudson's Bay Company hospital was apparently still in operation, at least until 1859, under the direction of Dr. Henry Tuzo, but it was demolished in 1860, along with most other Company structures beyond the stockade. The U.S. army also operated a hospital, in various structures, until a hospital building was erected in 1858 on the post; it is unlikely civilians were treated there. By the 1860s, only the army's hospital was in operation. Some time during this period Mother Joseph adapted a bakery structure at the northern end of the Mission enclosure to house the sick, with the assistance of a Ladies of Charity Volunteer group organized from women in the town of Vancouver.¹⁸⁴ The hospital was the first of many she would establish throughout the northwest, and is considered the beginning of the Saint Joseph Hospital, still operating in Vancouver. Also during this period--in 1858--Mother Joseph incorporated the Sisters of Providence; it is the second oldest corporation registered in the State of Washington.¹⁸⁵

¹⁸¹"The Legacy of Mother Joseph," Clark County Historical Society vertical file in Sisters of Charity of Providence.

¹⁸²*The Legacy of Mother Joseph*, n.p.

¹⁸³BAJC v 2 Exhibit B14, Ingalls to Maj Gen Thos Jessup QM Gen US Army WA Jan 15 1859, p 359.

¹⁸⁴*The Legacy of Mother Joseph*, n.p.

¹⁸⁵*The Legacy of Mother Joseph*, n.p.

Chapter IV.

Growth and Progress: 1861-1918

Period Overview

During this period the military forces at Fort Vancouver/Vancouver Barracks were generally engaged in enforcing domestic policies throughout the Pacific Northwest. In the 1860s and '70s soldiers stationed at the post were primarily engaged in battles with Indians throughout the region and in escorting them to reservations. In the '70s and '80s, commanders at Vancouver Barracks organized and directed survey and exploring expeditions of Alaska, which had been purchased from Russia in 1867. During the late '80s and throughout the depression of the last decade of the Nineteenth Century, the forces stationed at Vancouver Barracks primarily served as a police force, in Alaska and in Washington during episodes civil strife. Meanwhile, the St. James Church and mission added a number of new buildings in its compound; foreseeing or fearing the possible loss of the claim the church had made to 640 acres of Hudson's Bay Company land, Mother Joseph built a new structure to house her orphans and school on land purchased largely through donations she raised traveling through rough western country to mining towns. In 1887 the army evicted the Catholic church from the St. James Mission compound; the Holy Angels College building was used for a number of years by the army. In 1889 the old St. James church burned down. In 1895, the Supreme Court of the United States ruled the church was entitled only to the lands occupied by the mission--about one-half an acre--and not the 640 acres originally claimed, effectively ending an almost fifty year dispute between the church and the United States government over what had once been Hudson's Bay Company land.¹⁸⁶

United States Army: Vancouver Barracks

In 1861, the Departments of Oregon and California were folded into the Department of the Pacific, with headquarters in San Francisco. In 1865 the Department of the Columbia was established, with headquarters at Vancouver Barracks, which included Oregon and Washington and Idaho territories, under the Division of the Pacific. The Department of the Columbia's headquarters were moved to Portland in 1867, and remained there until 1878. Alaska was placed under the jurisdiction of the Columbia department in 1870. In 1878, the Department of the Columbia headquarters were returned to Vancouver Barracks, where it remained until the U.S. Army reorganized in 1913. In 1879, the post's name was changed from Fort Vancouver to Vancouver Barracks, which it has been known as ever since.

Although Fort Vancouver fostered the careers of many young officers who were to become famous in the Civil War, troops stationed at the post during the war years had little contact

¹⁸⁶The diocese spent another ten years trying to get Congress to overrule the Supreme Court.

with the bloody battles raging a continent away. Most of the regular army units left the post for the war. To replace troops shipped east, the post was at first manned by companies from the California Volunteers; later it was garrisoned by volunteers recruited from Washington Territory and Oregon. The troops were generally occupied escorting immigrants enroute to Oregon and Washington and skirmishing with Indians whose lands were being appropriated. After the war ended, regular army units were once again sent to the post. Early in 1866 the Department of the Columbia was staffed with one battalion of the Fourteenth Infantry, three companies of artillery and seven volunteer infantry companies. One of the artillery companies was stationed, ironically, at American Camp in the San Juan Islands, where Great Britain and the United States had each posted troops pending the final settlement of the water boundary between Canada and the United States--a political remnant of the dispute which had led to the founding of the Hudson's Bay Fort Vancouver over forty years earlier.

In 1869 the post's appearance was not too much different from what it had been a decade earlier, with the exception of St. James Mission, located within the reservation, which had many new structures within its enclosures, principally due to the work of the Sisters of Charity.¹⁸⁷ By 1865, a some new buildings had been erected, probably in response to the reassignment of regular army troops to the post and funds made available to western posts after the war ended. The two westernmost of the log officer's buildings along what is now called Officer's row had been demolished, and three new frame structures built on their site; a fourth officer's quarters had been built just south of the hospital--by 1869 it was used to house the hospital steward; two other framed officer's quarters had been built on the west edge of the parade grounds, north of the old log barracks and in line with the 1850s frame buildings. A new guard house--soon to be heavily used--was built in 1864, on the south side of the parade grounds, opposite the post commander's house. Several new company kitchens had been built behind the barracks. Near the quartermaster's depot, a new blacksmith shop had been built, replacing the older one, which had burned, just north of the wagon shed complex on the opposite side of old Upper Mill Road. In the depot, two new granaries and an employee mess house had been built, and a new dwelling for the quartermaster officers had been erected south and west of the quartermaster's residence. At that time, between one and three Hudson's Bay Company village structures were still standing: the Fields house was located within an enclosure east of the pond near the river, and one building at the west edge of the military reserve, near the quartermaster's house, may also have been a village dwelling. In 1865, the Ordnance Department began to build some structures east of the parade grounds.¹⁸⁸

In the late 1860s, the continuation of the post was in some doubt; the Department's headquarters were moved to Portland in 1867, and some army inspectors questioned its viability. In 1866, Brigadier General James F. Rusling, inspector for the Quartermaster's Department gave Fort Vancouver a scathing report: "Militarily considered it has ceased to be of value because of heavy settlement in that region and disappearance of Indians. As a depot of supplies facts and figures prove it useless. As a school for "practice" if such be deemed advisable on the north west Pacific coast it may be well to retain it, but San Francisco or Portland is preferable. Recommend early abandonment of Fort Vancouver as practically valueless to the Govt."¹⁸⁹ While at the post, Rusling noticed that "...a little

¹⁸⁷See the section on the St. James Mission for additional information.

¹⁸⁸Location, Extent and Construction of the Buldings in Charge of the Quartermaster's Dept. at Fort Vancouver, W.T., 1864, National Archives, RG 92 file 1176.

¹⁸⁹Report of Inspection of the Depot and Fort Vancouver WT Dept of the Columbia by Brig Gen James F. Rusling, inspector QM Dept Nov and Dec 1866; NA RG 92 Box 1176

southwest of the parade ground I observed several others [graves] that Col. Hodges told me were those of the HBC men. They were unenclosed and offended the eye by their publicity. I recommended these graves be removed to the post cemetery and that the cemetery grounds be at once put in complete order." That year, three large new forage houses--barns--were built east of the quartermaster's depot; one of them stood until well into the 1930s. The easterly log barracks, built in 1849, had been demolished.

By 1869 the entire reservation was fenced. With the exception of the quartermaster's depot, the new forage barns, enclosed by fencing, and a hospital garden just east of the barns, the site below Upper Mill Road was devoted to pasture. To the east, on the arsenal grounds, a number of structures had been built, including a warehouse, a small workshop for blacksmiths and carpenters, and some quarters for the blacksmith, armorer and laborers. Within the arsenal grounds, just south of lower mill road, was a fenced magazine. Behind the east barracks several new laundress' quarters had been built, and an artillery shed had been erected south of the barns. A loop road had been built behind the quarters and offices on the west side of the parade grounds, and additional laundress' quarters erected there. A small dwelling had been built for the ordnance sergeant on the site of the old Hudson's Bay Company graveyard. The easterly log barracks, built in 1849, had been demolished. The old artillery officer's quarters built in 1849 had been converted to a commissary and storehouse. The post cemetery, situated west of the parade grounds, a grubby affair in 1866, had been enclosed with a paling fence and shrubs had been planted and walkways established.

In the nine years between 1869 and 1878, when the Department of the Columbia headquarters were moved back to Fort Vancouver, and when the fate of the post was still in doubt, practically no changes were made to the post site or buildings, although some functions were shifted. In the early '70s a new set of officer's quarters were built east of Officer's Row in the Ordnance Reserve, which also had a new guardhouse and several additional buildings, including two new warehouses.

Between the mid '60s and the early 1880s, troops stationed at the post were largely engaged in rounding up the few remaining bands of Indians not living on reservations, or putting those who had escaped and were rebelling back onto the lands assigned to them. The first significant engagements in which Fort Vancouver troops participated during this period was the Modoc War on the south Oregon border, during which Major General Edward Richard Sprig Canby was murdered while on a peace mission to the Modocs, who refused to enter a reservation.¹⁹⁰ In 1863 the government attempted to persuade the Nez Percés to relinquish Wallowa, the lands granted them by treaty in 1855 when gold was discovered in the region; a smaller reservation in the Lapwai Valley was offered to their leader, Chief Joseph. The matter had simmered for some years, but the valley was finally ceded to the Indians in 1873. A change in policy reversed that decision in 1875, and, following a meeting in which a holy man of the tribe was arrested for stating he would not go to Lapwai, a band of Nez Percés, under the command of Chief Joseph's son, also named Chief Joseph, attacked settlers in the Salmon River country. Fort Lapwai sent two cavalry companies to engage the Nez Percés, one of which was almost annihilated in a battle in June. The Department of the Columbia mobilized six hundred soldiers, including troops from Vancouver Barracks, to capture Chief Joseph's band. In September, the Nez Percés were captured while attempting to retreat to Canada for the winter. In 1878 soldiers from Fort Vancouver were dispatched again to fight the Bannack Indians in Idaho and eastern

¹⁹⁰Charles Carey, *General History of Oregon* (Portland, Oregon: Binfords and Mort, 1971 (3rd ed.)), pp. 644-646.

Oregon. Some Indians captured in those battles were brought to Fort Vancouver and placed in the guardhouse.¹⁹¹

In 1879, after the headquarters were moved back to the post, a number of new buildings were erected, and some changes were made in the organization of the site, the most significant of which were the establishment of roads and entrances to the east and west of the reserve, one on the alignment of the present Anderson Street, which led west to the town of Vancouver, and one extending the road past Officer's Row, now McClelland Road, to the east, through the arsenal reserve. In addition, all buildings were cleared from the west end of the parade grounds: two of the frame buildings were moved, one to the west end of Officer's Row, and one to the east end. The westerly 1849 log barracks were demolished, and the frame barracks were moved to the south edge of the now enlarged parade grounds. New buildings for the department were built to the south of the present McClelland Road and west of the present McLoughlin Road, just north of the old stables and gun shed, which were demolished before final plans were made for the location of the new buildings. They consisted of three sets of double officer's quarters, and a large residence for the commander of the Columbia Department. The latter structure stands today. A new barracks building was erected south of the parade grounds, in line with the guardhouse. A new stable was built south of the parade grounds, and a new commissary building was erected south of the old log structure which had stood since 1849; the new commissary burned soon after completion and was rebuilt within a year. The sutler's store was converted to use as a theater, and the former ordnance sergeant's quarters became the department headquarter's printing office. A building used to house quartermaster employees in the depot area was moved west of the quartermaster's house.

In the 1881 General Nelson Miles arrived at Vancouver Barracks as the new commander of the Department of the Columbia. His aide-de-camp was First Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka, already known for his leadership in an exploring party that found the remains of Sir John Franklin's ill-fated Northwest Passage exploring party of 1847. Under orders from General Miles, Schwatka took part in an 1882-83 expedition to Alaska, crossing the Chilkoot Pass in 1883, and arriving at the source of the Yukon, which he navigated to its mouth. Other expeditions organized at the post included Lieutenant Symons' 1881 survey of the Upper Columbia drainage, and Lieutenant Henry T. Allen's 1885-86 reconnaissance expedition into the Copper River and Tanana Valley region, living off the country with his party. These early surveys provided information that later led to the Alaskan gold rushes, including the famous Klondike gold rush of 1897.¹⁹²

In the 1880s the first major upgrading of the post facilities and site occurred; the changes made in the early part of this decade are still visible in Officer's Row. It began with an appropriation for \$56,000 "...to construct and repair officers quarters at Vancouver Barracks in Washington Territory."¹⁹³ During this decade, the post assumed an air of grace, with gardens, landscaping, and recreational facilities for soldiers. Military duties were not tasking, and soldiers were set to work on such duties as improving roads and cultivating gardens. The most significant spatial element was the addition to the post of

¹⁹¹Vardis Fisher, *Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture*, (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1937), pp. 46-52.

¹⁹²Frederick Schwatka, *Military Reconnaissance in Alaska* (Washington, D.C., Military Service Institute, 1885), *passim*; Merle Colby, *A Guide to Alaska, The Last American Frontier*, American Guide Series, (New York: MacMillan Company, 1941), *passim*.

¹⁹³March 1 1880, HR 4871, National Archives: RG 92 Box 1176

the Arsenal grounds. The Arsenal was discontinued on December 14, 1881, and the grounds reverted to the quartermaster's department. Buildings on the east edge of the parade grounds were moved, and the expanse of the central open space was extended to the edge of the military reservation. A large arsenal storehouse was moved to near the center of the east end of the open space and remodeled to serve as the Department of the Columbia Headquarters in 1881.¹⁹⁴ Near it were a cluster of other buildings, most of them re-used arsenal structures, including a barracks which at first served as quarters for the light battery, and later for the artillery, a gun shed and a mess building, and some latrines. The arsenal's guardhouse was moved further east to become part of the group. In 1883 the stable built in 1879 just north of Upper Mill Road was moved to a location south of the new Departmental headquarters. Initially used by the light battery, it was later occupied by cavalry horses, and then, after the turn of the century, when it was enlarged, by the artillery.¹⁹⁵

A new series of officers quarters were erected alongside of the 1849 log officers quarters on Officer's Row. More officers quarters were built on the same alignment to the east, and to the west. Construction on these buildings began in 1885 and finished in 1889. Between 1887 and 1889 all but one of the log quarters were demolished--the old post commander's office, now referred to as the Grant House, was left standing and remodeled. The Departmental Commander moved into one of the new structures, now referred to as the Marshall House. In addition, two more sets of officer's quarters were built north of the 1879 officers quarters. The line of Officer's Row now extended almost from the west boundary of the reserve to the east. The buildings were enclosed with picket fences; hitching posts were installed in front of them. A boardwalk was installed between the fences and the road, and a fountain was built in front of the Grant House.

New infantry barracks were built in line with the guard house along the south side of the parade grounds, and a new band quarters building was erected towards the east edge of it. A small theater was built in 1881 on the west end of the row, later used as a post school. A new post headquarters building was erected north of the guard house, jutting slightly into the parade grounds, and a flagstaff was erected in front of it. The old printing office was converted into a school building. The old sutler's store which had been used as a theater was converted to a quartermaster's store house, and commissary stores were moved into the quartermaster's 1879-80 building. The old artillery officer's log quarters were used as a mess house for a few years, and then demolished in 1878-88. To the west of the south parade ground building line, three new infantry barracks were built. A new hospital was built near the east edge of the reserve, above what is now Hathaway Road.

What is now East Fifth Street was realigned. Above it, on the east edge of the reserve, new workshops were built. A new house for the chief ordnance officer was built in the depot area; it was later moved to the east of the quartermaster's house. The quartermaster's residential area was improved with a semi-circular road leading from McLoughlin Road, and a bridge was installed to cross the ravine; all the yards were enclosed with picket fences. A new magazine and ordnance building were erected in the field to the east of McLoughlin Road.

¹⁹⁴Report of Inspection of Headquarters of Dept of Columbia, Sept 20-24 1882 by Maj Breckenridge, dated 9/24/82. National Archives: RG 139, 1882, 1060-1250; 1128/82.

¹⁹⁵The following discussion is not a complete list of structures and changes at the post; only the principal alterations are addressed.

A new road on a raised grade was built in 1883, running from the east side of the reservation across the former pasture to McLoughlin Road. It was mostly washed away by a flood in June of 1894. To the south of it was a large fenced pasture; to the north, company gardens were installed; in 1882 it was estimated 60 pounds of vegetables were harvested from the gardens daily.¹⁹⁶ West of the company gardens and east of McLoughlin Road, a gymnasium was built within one of the forage houses built in the 1860s; it was demolished in 1889. A canteen was located in a building moved to location just north of the new gymnasium; it, too, was demolished in 1889. Trees were planted along McLoughlin Road, and along the edges of the parade grounds.

In 1892 Vancouver Barracks sent five companies, part of a massive twenty company force of infantry called up by President Benjamin Harrison to control violence erupting as a result of a union strike against the Mine Owner's Protective Association (MOA) in Coeur d'Alene Idaho. The following year, Vancouver Barracks soldiers were ordered up to control a large group of unemployed Puget Sound workers who joined Coxey's march on Washington, and in 1894 troops were sent out to assist the Northern Pacific Railroad during the Pullman strike, part of a federal call up by President Grover Cleveland when the American Railway Union strike spread to twenty-seven states and territories.¹⁹⁷ Other policing actions by Vancouver Barracks-based soldiers included escorting relief pack trains to Alaska during the turbulent gold rush years of the late '90s.¹⁹⁸

Very few adjustments were made to the post's physical plant during the '90s. In 1892 a frame buildings was erected at the southeast corner of McLoughlin Road and McClelland Road to serve as a library, lecture hall and post chapel. It was later converted to barracks for the artillery band, but in the '30s reverted to use as a chapel. A few miscellaneous latrines and an oil house for the quartermaster's yard were built during the decade. Revetments were built in the southeast corner of the lower pasture, by 1891 converted to a skirmish range for artillery practice.

After the outbreak of the Spanish-American War in 1898, the Fourteenth Infantry, which had been stationed at Vancouver Barracks for 14 years, and all other units of the regular army at the post were transferred, and the establishment was garrisoned by volunteer troops. During the conflict with Spain, the post was an important mobilization and

¹⁹⁶National Archives, RG 159, 1193-82:

¹⁹⁷52nd Cong., 2nd Sess., House of Reps., Doc. 1, Part 2, Report of the Secretary of War, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), pp. 106-8; 53rd Cong., 2nd Sess., House of Reps., Doc. 1, Part 2, Report of the Secretary of War, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893), pp. 152-3; 53rd Cong., 3rd Sess., House of Reps., Doc. 1, Part 2, Report of the Secretary of War, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894), p. 148. The MOA had used an increase in railroad rates as an excuse to back out of an agreement with the miner's union regarding wages. When the union struck, the MOA brought in scabs, many of whom were peaceably convinced by the union to leave. However, ill feelings eventually erupted in violence, and Idaho Governor Willey declared a state of martial law in Coeur d'Alene, and called upon President Harrison to supplement the Idaho National Guard. See Richard Lingenfelter, *The Hardrock Miners: A History of the Mining Labor Movement in the American West* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 197-218; Regarding the Pullman Strike, see Freeman Hubbard, *Railroad Avenue* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945), pp. 174-182.

¹⁹⁸-----, Fort Vancouver Historic Building Survey, (Seattle: United States Army Corps of Engineers, n.d.), p. 1.4.

training center for Oregon and Washington volunteers. After the war, troops were sent from Vancouver Barracks as part of the occupying force in the Philippines used to suppress the nationalist movement. Several well-known regiments--the Second Oregon and the Thirty-fifth Infantry Volunteers were recruited, organized and trained there. In 1906, artillery troops from Vancouver Barracks were sent to Cuba to intervene in the nationalist movement rising there. In the mid-teens Vancouver soldiers were sent to Mexico to support U.S. intervention in that country's affairs, after Francisco Villas's March, 1916, raid across the U.S. border in New Mexico during the on-going Mexican revolution. In 1913, the military abolished the Department of the Columbia in a reorganization. Vancouver Barracks became the headquarters of the Seventh Brigade, reporting to Third Division headquarters in San Francisco. One regiment was stationed at Vancouver Barracks. By 1916, as a result of troops sent to the Mexican border, about 150 soldiers were left at Fort Vancouver, later supplemented by recruiting drives as the war in Europe continued. During the war, the barracks was a recruiting station from which the 318th and Fourth Engineers and the 44th Infantry were formed and sent to France, but its principal role was to serve as an airplane materials manufacturing center under the direction of the Spruce Division of the Army Signal Corps.

During this period, the pasture and skirmish range south of what is now East Fifth Street and east of the quartermaster's depot was primarily used to pasture army livestock; much of the south and southeast portion of the plain was still subject to flooding, as it had been since the early days of the Hudson's Bay Company. In 1901, a new regiment--the Twenty-Eighth, was formed and recruited at Vancouver; in November they were shipped to the Philippines, but that summer most of the one-thousand plus man regiment had to be lodged in tents on old Fort Plain, due to insufficient housing at the post. In 1901-02 many soldiers had to live in tents or the old and disintegrating structures, such as the old battery quarters--later the calvary barracks, near the east edge of the reserve.¹⁹⁹

After the war, the military was reorganized and the size of the standing army increased. Vancouver Barracks was selected to house an infantry regiment and two batteries of artillery. Funds were authorized for a major construction program to upgrade the facilities. Beginning in 1902-3, and continuing through 1910, the organization of the site was clarified through new construction, and thousands of square feet of new structures were erected, derived from standardized plans originating from the Office of the Quartermaster General in Washington, D.C. Like other military installations upgraded during the period, the majority of the post's new buildings were designed in the Colonial Revival style. A number of structures dating from this period stand on the grounds today. The principal developments were as follows:

1. The mess of old ordnance buildings and structures located at the far east end of the reserve's parade grounds, which had been re-used as the headquarters building for the Columbia Department and associated functions, including a calvary barracks, were demolished, although the most of the network of paths that had been established to the west of it was retained until well into the 1930s.
2. An east-west line of buildings, primarily double barracks capable of housing 188 soldiers was built along the south edge of the parade grounds, north of what is now McClelland Road between 1903 and 1907. The old post headquarters built in 1885, the only structure that had previously jutted into the south edge of the parade grounds was moved

¹⁹⁹"Report of the Department of the Columbia," *Annual Reports, War Department, 1902*, Vol. IX (Washington: Government Printin Office, 1902), p.30.

further south to serve first as the Office of the Constructing Quartermaster, and later, in 1914, as headquarters for the Seventh Brigade. In its place a new administration building was erected in 1905-6. By 1914, a path had been constructed along the north edge of this line of structures.

3. In the area east of McLoughlin Road and west of the old Non-Commissioned Officer's Quarters above East Fifth Street, a series of adjustments were made in the uses of some buildings, and a few structures were demolished and others erected. The old band barracks was either demolished or moved to a new site, east of, more or less in line with the new infantry barracks.²⁰⁰ A gymnasium, a new fire station, and anew bakery were built. In 1899 a bathhouse had been built near the northeast intersection of McLoughlin Road and East Fifth Street; in 1910 the building was converted to a laundry to serve the post; it was altered many times over the following years, but stood on the site until February of 1992, when it was demolished. The quartermaster's yard north of East Fifth Street was enlarged and rehabilitated; with four new buildings erected between 1905 and 1910; also a coal shed to the east of the yard was built in 1904.

4. North of East Fifth Street, towards the east end of the reserve below the parade grounds, artillery support services were developed. Beginning in 1902, with a major addition to the old artillery stables, by 1906 the area included an artillery guard house and a new stable capable of housing 134 mules and horses. On the opposite side of East Fifth Street a new ordnance store house was built in 1904. A large polo field was built west of the ordnance storehouse; it was in use at least as early as 1905, and continued as a playing field until 1918, when the site was transformed by the construction of a spruce mill.

5. In 1903 the military granted an easement to the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railway along the south edge of the reservation: between 1906 an 1908 the railroad company built their "North Bank" (of the Columbia) line, located on a berm--to raise it above flood level--along the easement, crossing the reservation to the town of Vancouver. On June 15, 1908, the steel work for a new railroad bridge between Vancouver and Oregon was completed, and the first trains crossed the bridge in November of that year. A rail spur on an elevated trestle which gradually sank to grade was built to service the southwest end of the military reservation 1906-07; it swung into a curve just east of McLoughlin road, and then doubled back to terminate near East Fifth Street. The army built a hay shed and granary along the east side of the spur's curve, opposite the quartermaster's stables, in 1905-06; in 1907 two shed-roofed coal shed were built along the spur, followed in 1908 by two shed-roofed wood sheds near the terminus of the spur, where fuel for the post, now delivered by rail, was stored. In 1910, a scale and gable-roofed building to shelter it was added to the west of the coal sheds. By 1915 a wire fence has been installed along the spur, enclosing these service buildings and the two remaining 1866 forage store houses, to keep livestock out of the service area. The S P & S moved two army buildings, with the army's permission--the 1886-87 residential structure in the old quartermaster's residential area was moved to the east side of the old Ingalls house in 1906; the subsistence depot was moved further north in 1905.

6. The old Quartermaster's Depot area underwent a major transformation. Three of the small frame buildings dating back to the 1860s, used for granaries and other functions,

²⁰⁰Army records say the old structure was demolished, but a comparison between the 1880s band barracks and the one standing on the new site in 1907 are remarkably similar in size, massing and detail; it is possible--even probable-- the structure was dismantled and reerected on its new site.

were moved to the east of the old quartermaster's stable, and a yard opened up, on the edges of which two new wagon sheds were built in 1906. The undeveloped area to the west of the wagon yard was fenced, and two long guns sheds built within it in 1904. A new quartermaster's stable was built just south of the old one in 1909--the older structure, consisting of two buildings with an attaching shed, continued to stand until razed in 1935.

7. West of McLoughlin Road, several major new structures were erected. A new hospital was built north of the 1883 hospital in 1903-4, and the old hospital converted into barracks for hospital personnel; several residential structures were built or moved for the use of hospital personnel in the same area, and the hospital's stables, built in the 1880s, was moved further south to serve a cow barn. In 1910, an older was moved across the street from the hospital and remodeled for use as a dental office. North of the new hospital, and just south of the main entrance to the reserve, a new guard house was built in 1903-04. The old workshops at the west edge of the reserve above East Fifth Street were remodeled. At the northwest corner of McLoughlin Road and East Fifth Street, on the site of Saint James Church and the mission claim, another artillery stable was built in 1910. Two smaller structures near the stable were built in 1903-4, later used as artillery storehouses. South of the 1880s infantry barracks located west of McLoughlin Road, a large new artillery barracks was built.

8. At the far east end of officer's row, a new set of officer's quarters was built in 1905, and several new non-commissioned officer's quarters were built in the older residential complex north of officer's row.

In 1909 the army leased three thousand acres of land about thirteen miles northeast of Vancouver for use as a maneuver area and rifle range. The site was later purchased and named Camp Bonneville. In the 1930s the Civilian Conservation Corps built a number of structures on the grounds. The site was used for reserve training camps, and still serves that purpose, in addition to recreational use by the military and non-profit civilian groups.

Beginning in 1911, the army allowed a few civilians to use the polo grounds for experimental trial flights with airplanes, which were, in the first few years, packed and hauled to various sites in the Pacific Northwest, where they were then reassembled and "fitted up" for trial and exhibition flights. In June of 1911 Fred Walsh, a member of the recently-established Aero Club of America, tested a modified Curtiss biplane for a company chiefly owned by the Manning family of Portland, in two short flights over the polo grounds and the barracks. Despite a mishap in landing on the pasture, where "small hummocks" jolted the plane's wheels, Walsh said the "...Polo field here is the best for aviation in any of the three coast states." Several days earlier Walsh had tested an airplane in Seattle.²⁰¹

Silas Christofferson, a race car driver and boating enthusiast, tested an Antoinette monoplane on the polo grounds that same month, although his attempt to fly that year was apparently unsuccessful. In May and June of 1912 Christofferson returned to the Vancouver Barracks polo grounds from Oakland, California, "where he has been flying," to test a Curtiss biplane for S. "Fred" Bennett, an automobile dealer and airplane enthusiast: he became the second man to fly over Vancouver in May, and later in the month, carried two women passengers on a short flight over the grounds. In June Christofferson and Bennett prepared a promotional stunt, timed to coincide with Portland's Rose Festival: The biplane was disassembled and hoisted to the top of the Multnomah Hotel

²⁰¹Vancouver Daily Columbian, June 14, 16, 1914.

in downtown Portland, where it was reassembled and launched off the roof. The plane was flown to Vancouver for landing.²⁰² In August Bennett sponsored another demonstration with an aviator named Walter Edwards, hired to test a new plane belonging to Bennett. Edwards carried a load of mail from the Waverly Country Club in Portland to Vancouver Barracks; the letters were taken to the Vancouver post office, and exchanged for mail from Vancouver, which was taken to the plane for a return flight to Portland.²⁰³ In 1915 Louis Barin, a Portland druggist, made some flights over Vancouver, and in 1917 a machine from the O.K. Jeffrey Company Airplane Factory of Portland was tested at the polo field.²⁰⁴

The Largest Spruce Plant in the World

When war broke out in Europe in 1914, the Allied Forces were woefully short of airplanes, which, along with tanks, poison gas and submarines, had become the new weapons of war. Specially milled wood from particular trees was required to building airplanes: the wood had to be strong, light, and resilient. The Pacific Northwest had one of the world's best and most accessible stands of old growth trees, large enough to be milled in the proper fashion. More importantly, it had the species of trees required and requested by Great Britain, France and Italy--Sitka spruce.²⁰⁵ An inventory of Sitka spruce made by the U.S. Forest Service in late 1917-18 which showed Washington and Oregon had close to eleven billion feet of spruce timber in stands throughout the two states.²⁰⁶ Lumber mills in Washington and Oregon began to cut and saw spruce to fulfill Allied demands. In May and July of 1917, after America had entered the war, congress passes series of bills appropriating \$694 million for aeronautical activity, including the establishment of an aircraft production board. But in the summer of 1917, production in the Pacific Northwest mills was far lower than demand. In addition to poor management and inefficient operations, some mill owners were holding back on supplies, to increase prices. Also, the mills were hampered by a labor strike by the Industrial Workers of the World and the American Federation of Labor, demanding better living and working conditions, and an eight hour day.²⁰⁷

A former army captain, Brice Disque, was given a secret assignment by U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General Pershing, to investigate the situation in the Pacific Northwest and see if it could be resolved. Disque reported that production was unlikely to increase, and could possibly worsen by 1918. His recommendation that soldiers be used in the woods to speed production with authorized by the army, and Disque was reinstated into the army and sent to Portland to meet with unions and mill owners.²⁰⁸ By the fall of 1917, recruitment of spruce soldiers began, initially pulling experienced loggers from other Army cantonments in the country, and later, when the strength of the Division was increased from a little over one thousand to over twenty-eight thousand in the Spring of 1918, from any of the Army's lower draft status classes, as long as they were in good enough physical condition to log or build railroads.

²⁰²Vancouver Daily Columbian, May 20, 24, 1912; June 12, 1912.

²⁰³Vancouver Daily Columbian, August 9, 10, 1912.

²⁰⁴Vancouver Columbian, July 26, 1915.

²⁰⁵Brice Disque, *History of Spruce Production Division, United States Army and United States Spruce Production Corporation* (Portland, Oregon: Kilham Stationary and Printing Co., c. 1919), p. 3.

²⁰⁶Mississippi Valley Lumberman, p. 38.

²⁰⁷Harold Hyman, *Soldiers and Spruce: Origins of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumberman* (Los Angeles: Institute of Industrial Relations, 1963), p. 52.

²⁰⁸Ibid.

In November of 1917 the United States announced the formation of the Spruce Production Division, part of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, at Vancouver Barracks, with headquarters in Portland, Oregon. It was a home front activity designed to supply high quality spruce wood for the production of allied combat airplanes. At the time, Vancouver Barracks was to serve as a training center for soldiers enroute to the forests of the Pacific Northwest, and to that end, infantry regiments stationed at the post were removed to make room for the thousands of "spruce" soldiers Disque planned to employ. However, early in 1918, the Barracks also became the site of the Cut-up Plant, the principal spruce mill of the Division, built and operated by spruce soldiers. Disque later said "There was not a commercial mill on the coast that was equipped to saw straight-grained spruce in the quantity demanded, and remain in business."²⁰⁹ Ultimately, there were six districts and sub-districts of the Division, located in Oregon and Washington, and many dozens of soldier camps, most of which were near lumber company camps, logging or building the miles of railroads necessary to reach remote stands of the premium Sitka spruce.

The only logical location for the mill at Vancouver Barracks was on lower Fort Plain, which was already served by the S P & S railroad spur, and only had a few structures located along the spur towards the west end: the polo grounds were sacrificed to the war effort. By December 20, construction of the Cut-up Plant was underway, supervised by an Oregon mill owner, H.S. Mitchell, whose mill on the Columbia at Wauna, Oregon, was considered a model saw mill.²¹⁰ Local mills supplied construction materials, and machinery was shipped in at great expense, and with haste, from all over the country. By January 7 the local newspaper was reporting that the mill was "...growing so rapidly and in such large proportions that the landscape is changed almost every twenty-four hours."²¹¹ At that time four of the mill's six units were "well along;" the frame for the fifth was in place, and the foundation was being poured for the sixth.

Operations at the mill began on February 7, 1918, complete with opening ceremonies featuring local politicians and army officials. It had been forty-five working days from the time ground was broken at the plant.²¹² It was a huge building, 358 by 288 feet; each of the six units contained two circular saw rigs, two table edgers, two re-saws and eight trim saws. The plant turned out between four and six hundred thousand feet every twenty-four hours, processing four to six inch flitches or cants shipped there from the region's forests: the milled lumber was then shipped to aircraft production plants out of state. At its peak, the mills saw between 35 and 40 railroad cars of rived cants and sawn timber arrive daily. About seventy percent of the timber processed at the plant ended up as useful for aircraft; the remainder was used for smaller airplane parts, or was sold for commercial use.

The Division also extended a series of railroad spurs across the site to service the mill and kilns. Before the mill was completed, the Spruce Division approved the construction of a battery of drying kilns--the kilns covered an 100 by 350 foot area, and the drying sheds were 300 by 350 feet in size-- on the site to season the cants, built within a two-month period. According to Disque, the cost of the entire plant was \$825,000.²¹³ Those parts of the 50 acre site not covered by the mill, the kilns, timber sheds, and the thousands of tents and dozens of support buildings housing spruce soldiers, were devoted to storage of milled lumber and

²⁰⁹Disque, *History of Spruce Production*, p. 46.

²¹⁰Vancouver *Daily Columbian*, December 20, 1917.

²¹¹Ibid., January 7, 1918.

²¹²Vancouver *Daily Columbian*, February 7, 8, 1918.

²¹³Disque, *History of Spruce Production Division*, p. 56.

timber awaiting processing. Major facilities built on top of the Hudson's Bay Company stockade site included a planing mill, part of a loading platform, and several railroad spurs.

The Vancouver Barracks mill was the first of four mills that were to have been built in Oregon and Washington: two, one at Toledo, Oregon, and one at Port Angeles, Washington, were under construction in the summer of 1918, but were only around seventy percent complete when the armistice was signed. A fourth, to be erected in Washington's Clallam County from a dismantled mill in British Columbia, was in the process of being shipped when the war ended. The materials for the mills were later sent to Vancouver for storage and later auction.

The impact of the mill and the thousands of spruce soldiers that descended upon Vancouver Barracks was significant. A cantonment, erected in 1917 by Grant, Smith and Compay of Chicago, which featured tent cabins and temporary structures, was built a mile north of the site, above officer's row, to house a regiment of engineers recruited at Vancouver, and the Vancouver District's military headquarters were located there; when the size of the Division was upped, hundreds of tents were erected on the site of the mill, and a variety of support buildings, including offices, mess halls, and latrines, were erected around the mill to service them.

Special "Provisional Regiments" were formed--to operate the mill at Vancouver; to provide guard duty, and to provide motor transport. Major J.D. Reardan was placed in charge of the Second Provisional Regiment, responsible for building and operating the plant and kilns, including installing a sewage plant, and lighting system: by July of 1918, there were 2,400 troops housed at the mill site. The First Provisional Regiment was initially housed in the Upper Cantonment, and later transferred to the Barracks, where it provided guard and military police duties. The Third Provisional Regiment was primarily comprised of automobile mechanics and drivers, about half of which was stationed in the forests to keep trucks, cars, and ambulances running. A fourth regiment was stationed, briefly, at Yaquina Bay near Toledo, Oregon. The mill ran continuously, night and day; the soldiers worked six hour shifts.

When the armistice was signed in November of 1918, the Cut-up Plant had been in production for less than a year. Operations in the woods ceased on November 12, and all contracts with private mills were cancelled. Any timber already felled, or cants already manufactured was shipped to Vancouver. Some--but not all--Spruce Division Railroads throughout the two states were torn up and the equipment warehoused. Demobilization of the spruce soldiers began on December 3. When the war ended, the Cut-up mill at Vancouver Barracks had over four million feet of select airplane stock ready for shipment, and a portion of between twenty-five and thirty million feet of the commercially-suitable by-product ready for delivery. Eight hundred soldiers were kept at Vancouver Barracks to inventory and store the materials and equipment at the plant and those being shipped to the plant from the forests. The Division formed a Sales Board to market all major equipment and materials through sealed bid. It was, Disque claimed, "...the largest sale of Government property ever advertised, only the sale of equipment from the Panama Canal excelling it in number of items and valuation."²¹⁴ The bids were low, and only about \$200,000 --valued at \$12 million--of government property was sold. Some logs, the commissary stores which supported the spruce soldiers, and the commercial lumber that was the mill's by-product were disposed of, primarily through negotiation with private firms.

²¹⁴Disque, *History of Spruce Production Division*, p. 103.

Later, the remaining equipment and real property was sold. The cantonment remained standing, and was later used for Civilian Military Training camps. The Cut-up plant and its related structures stood on the site until 1925, when it was disassembled. Four of the Spruce Mill buildings were moved further east, to house reserve air squadron and other army air services that began after the war.

During and after the war several additional structures were built at the post, including the Victory Theater, built in 1918, north of officer's row near the cantonment, which during World War II served as a recreation building. An athletic field was used by the spruce soldiers, and later the soldiers stationed at the barracks, in the vicinity of the cantonment; it was later named Koehler Field. A morgue was built west of the hospital in 1918.

The Catholic Church: House of Providence

By 1866, there were a number of buildings within the St. James Mission enclosure, apparently built under the direction of Mother Joseph, including the aforementioned bakery and college, a laundry, a carpenter shop, one building each for orphaned boys and girls, and a store building. The facilities, which, according to legend, were partially built with timber salvaged from abandoned Hudson's Bay Company structures, were apparently crowded. Also, the validity of the claim made by the church to 640 acres of land around the mission site was in doubt; it was one of many overlapping claims to the Hudson's Bay Company lands, and it was located on the reserve established by the army.²¹⁵ It seems likely that, at the very least, the practical Mother Joseph realized the courts would not uphold the extensive claims made by the church; the mission's enclosure was bounded on all sides by army structures.

In 1866 a house on Eighth Street within the town of Vancouver was converted by Mother Joseph and the Sisters into an asylum for the mentally ill, but it was a short-lived effort, apparently failing due to lack of funds. Beginning in the mid-60s, Mother Joseph, accompanied by a younger nun, began a series of tours throughout the northwest to raise funds to purchase a lot and build a permanent structure to house the mission's activities: the focus of the tour was apparently the mining camps, where she could raise several thousand dollars, but smaller donations were accepted from many individuals throughout the region. In the 1860s the Sisters purchased a large seven acre lot west of the army reserve, and plans were made for construction of a self-sufficient compound, the center piece of which would be "the largest building on the northern coast, the Court House in Portland or the Willamette University not excepted."²¹⁶ The central building would house the convent, an orphanage, and a school. The cornerstone for the new structure, Providence Academy, was laid by Bishop A.M.A. Blanchet in a ceremony in September of 1873, and the new school, the Young Ladies Academy, opened in September of the following year, although the building was, at the time, unfinished. In addition to serving as a day school, it was eventually to house orphans of both sexes.

The Academy building was designed by Mother Joseph, who also oversaw its construction. The three-story masonry structure was built with bricks made by Lowell Hidden and a partner, Mr. Ginder, at a brick yard seven blocks from the site; much of downtown

²¹⁵The mission's claim was not to be resolved until 1895, when, through the appeals process, it reached the United States Supreme Court: the final ruling limited the claim to the land actually occupied--less than four and one-half acres--in 1848.

²¹⁶*Vancouver Register*, September 14, 1867.

Vancouver's brick buildings were subsequently built with bricks from the Hidden yard. The building had a symmetric cruciform plan; at the crossing a wood-framed octagonal bell tower surmounted by a lantern was built. The building's pedimented central pavilion with main entry faced south, towards the Columbia River; the south elevation was articulated with pilasters and corbelled belt courses. Fenestration was primarily segmental arches with four over four wood sash. The style was Georgian Revival, typical of the region's institutional buildings of the period, but somewhat altered by the presence of three story wood galleries supported by slender wood columns, which encircled the structure.

In January of 1883 the Academy's chapel, located on the second floor of the structure, was completed and dedicated. The two and one-half story room was finished in the Gothic Revival style; its external windows, unlike the rest of the structure's fenestration, had lancet tops. The interior of the chapel included gothic inspired woodwork; statues, carved benches, and carved alters are said to have been made by Mother Joseph in her workshop.²¹⁷ In 1891 an addition was made to the west wing of the building, which included an auditorium.

The Academy's seven acres of grounds included gardens, orchards and outbuildings, including a laundry and a root cellar. Its landscape included paths, parterres and ornamental shrubs and trees; a heart-shaped drive lead to the Academy's main entrance.²¹⁸ The original Providence School house was moved to the site some time during this period, and was later used as a print shop. In 1909 the sisters erected a new building for St. Joseph's Hospital, adjacent to the Academy site.

Mother Joseph's activities were not limited to the establishment of the Academy at Vancouver. During her forty-six year tenure in the Pacific Northwest, she oversaw the establishment and construction of eleven hospitals, seven academies and Indian schools and two orphanages in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. Among the institutions she and the Sisters of Providence established were St. Vincent Hospital in Portland, which opened in 1875; Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane, Washington (1886); Providence Hospital, Seattle (1877); St. Clare Hospital, Fort Benton, Montana (1886); Providence Hospital, Wallace, Idaho (1891); schools and orphanages at Steilacoom, Washington (1863); Walla Walla (1861); Tulalip, Washington, Indian Reservation (1868); Colville, Washington (1873); Yakima, Washington (1875); Olympia, Washington (1881); Missoula, Montana (1885); Sprague, Washington (1886).²¹⁹ She is credited with the design of many of these structures, and the construction supervision of most of them. Mother Joseph died at the age of 79, in January of 1902.

²¹⁷A *Brief Historical Sketch of the Academy* (Vancouver: The Academy and Hidden Brick Company, 1977).

²¹⁸National Register form, 1978.

²¹⁹*Mother Joseph's Legacy*. See for complete list; A *Brief Historical Sketch of the Academy*.

Chapter V.

In Peace and War 1919-1947

Period Overview

As in the rest of the country, the Vancouver region experienced the post-war slump in business, followed by a gradual rise in economic power and growth of the middle class. Military action at Vancouver Barracks was virtually non-existent; most building activity related to activities of the Army reserve units--both the air corps and the Citizen's Military Training Camps. Life in the 1920s on the post seems to have been punctuated periodically by such recreational events as air shows at the army's new airfield, and polo matches at the post's new polo grounds. Because of Vancouver's proximity to the many national and state forests, Vancouver Barracks became an important district headquarters for a number of Civilian Conservation Corps camps, beginning in 1933. When war broke out in Europe, the post was revitalized. But it served primarily as a port of embarkation, operated out of Portland; thousands passed through, but few stayed. The institution which had the most significant and far-reaching impact on Vancouver since the Hudson's Bay Company was the U.S. Maritime Commission, which contracted with the Kaiser Company to build three shipyards in the Portland-Vancouver area, one of which was located on the point of old Fort Plain. The yards brought thousands of workers to the area between 1941 and 1946; at its peak, the Kaiser Shipyard at Vancouver employed over 38,000 people, many of them from out of state. Many new housing developments were built, at government expense, to shelter the shipyard employees, and, in Vancouver, new schools, health care centers, shopping centers and libraries seemed to appear overnight. The influx of workers during these years forever altered the region's physical and social fabric.

Providence Academy

During these years the Academy continued to operate as a school, but other institutions gradually assumed the various other functions the structure served. The orphanage was discontinued in 1916-1917. The home for the elderly moved to Spokane in 1925, and the provincial headquarters and novitiate were moved to Seattle in 1924. In the 1930s a one-story gymnasium was built east of the main building. The Academy experienced a brief resurgence in attendance when the Kaiser Shipyards and other World War II-associated industries brought a huge influx of workers and their families to Vancouver.

United States Army: Vancouver Barracks

In Peace: 1919-1940

During the years between the war, military activity at the post was low. Prior to the war, Pierce County had purchased 62,000 acres of land between Tacoma and Olympia, and presented it to the military for use as a cantonment, later named Fort Lewis. While Vancouver Barracks served to house functions relating to the spruce mill during the First World War, Fort Lewis assumed the principal military functions for the region--there

were over 30,000 soldiers stationed in hastily built wooden barracks on the site during the war--a primacy it never relinquished.

At Vancouver Barracks, a series of units were transferred into and out of the garrison, among them the Forty-Ninth, First, Thirty-Second, Fifty-Ninth regiments. The Seventh Infantry returned to the post in 1922, and remained until it was moved out to the war in 1941.²²⁰

Just after the war, the Red Cross opened its first recreational house (636) for convalescent soldiers in the northwest. It was completed in March of 1919, and was situated on Barnes Street, just west of the old artillery barracks; the structure is still standing today. In 1934 it was used as a service club. Nearby, a hospital storehouse was erected the same year, later remodeled to serve as barracks for the CCC. Also built this year, was a large Non-Commissioned Officers barracks, located at the west edge of the reserve on Hathaway Road. A motor repair shop, which stands today, was also built in 1919 on the east side of McLoughlin Road north of the post laundry. Shortly after the war, polo games began again at the barracks: a new field with grandstands was built north and east of the railroad spur.

In 1923 the Bureau of Public Roads and Department of Agriculture built temporary storehouses just south of the railroad spur, west of the still standing Cut-up Plant. The buildings were later surrounded by the Civilian Conservation Corps camp.

In 1925-26 a group of structures--primarily mess halls and latrines--were built just north of Officer's Row to house the Citizen's Military Training Camps, which were given statutory authority in the National Defense Act of 1920. The camps, held for two weeks each summer at posts throughout the country, were designed to give civilians grounding in military practice in various branches of the service--for example, cavalry, field artillery, and engineers, and classes were generally conducted by reserve officers. The camps in Washington and Oregon were administered by the Ninety-sixth Division headquarters in Portland. In 1928 the camp got its own storehouse.

In the 1936-38, seven new brick duplexes were built for non-commissioned officers, a result of Congressional appropriations made in 1937. They were located near the west edge of the barracks, on both sides of Hathaway Road, near the earlier, 1919 noncommissioned officers barracks. All seven are standing today, although several were moved when Interstate 5 was built.²²¹

Brigadier General George C. Marshall was assigned the command of Vancouver Barracks and the Army's Fifth Brigade on October 3, 1936. He served at the post until June 19, 1938, when he left to take a place on the General Staff.^{222S}

Army Air Field

In the early 1920s, the U.S. Army Air Service began to operate at Vancouver Barracks. The Barracks' original polo field had been obliterated by spruce mill structures, many of which

²²⁰Royce Pollard, "The Presence and Missions of the United States Army at Vancouver Barracks, Vancouver, Washington, 1849-1988," unpublished paper in files, Vancouver Barracks, Washington.

²²¹*Oregonian*, February 13, 1937.

²²²*Oregonian*, Oct 4, 1936; June 25, 1938.

stood until 1925. A new polo field was built in the southwest area of the reserve, just east of the rail spur curve. Beginning in 1921 the army airplane forest patrol, a cooperative venture between the U.S. Forest Service and the Army Air Service which was directed out of the Ninth Corps headquarters in San Francisco, used Vancouver Barracks as a base of operations for the Portland-Vancouver region. It initially operated out of Portland, since, on the day it was slated to commence patrolling the region, the landing area at Vancouver was under water--a not atypical June occurrence on the old Fort Plain. It was reported that the Vancouver army field would probably be used after the waters receded because "...the government is prepared to take care of the planes in the matter of hangers, gasoline, and oils, besides the government owned fields have their own means for protection of the planes while not in use." This was the first organized use--albeit periodic--of the site as an airfield by the military. The patrols were established to spot forest fires. A 5,000 square foot wood clad temporary hangar was built to protect the planes.²²³ In 1923 the Vancouver airfield was used as a repair base for an aerial mapping and photography expedition of local ports and army installations, part of a nation-wide survey for the United States Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors and the United States Shipping Board. Supervision of the local effort was under the command of the Ninety-first air squadron headquarters in Portland.²²⁴

Pearson Field

Late in 1923 Lieutenant Oakley Kelly was assigned as an air officer of the Ninety-sixth Division of the Organized Reserves. That year, the Division included the 321st Observation Squadron, which that year, apparently, was based at Vancouver Barracks with three airplanes, under the command of First Lieutenant James Powell. Under Powell's direction, the air reserve officers took part in war games in Portland in May, 1923. By 1925, the 321st Observation Squadron Headquarters were located in the Ninety-sixth Division Headquarters, in Portland, under the command of Captain Howard French. In March of that year he reported that, in addition to the 321st Division squadron, an Observation Group had been allocated to Portland, which would accommodate unassigned Air Service reserve officers. Kelly, who had made the first non-stop transcontinental flight in May of 1923, and was co-holder of the world's flight endurance record, arrived in the Pacific Northwest in February of 1924. Kelly was a tireless and energetic supporter of the use of airplanes for both commercial and military use, and the development of the Vancouver Barracks site as a military airfield, and the establishment of its regular use, began under his direction.²²⁵

In March of 1924, the field at Vancouver barracks served as a pre-flight stop for the "World Fliers," an army-commissioned around-the-world flight slated to begin from Seattle. In October of that year the airfield hosted a reception for them on their return trip to California. As part of the general celebration, two planes from Vancouver, one flown by Lieutenant Kelly, participated in an air circus in Seattle, and upon the World Fliers'

²²³*Vancouver Evening Columbian*, April 19, 1921, June 15, 1921, July 23, 1921. The National Defense Act of 1920 had reorganized the United States Army, defining it as consisting of the Regular Army, the National Guard, and the Organized Reserves; the entire country was divided into corps areas, each one of which was to include at least one division of Organized Reserve troops. Portland and Vancouver fell in the Ninth Corps area, with headquarters in San Francisco.

²²⁴*Vancouver Evening Columbian*, April 12, 1923.

²²⁵*Vancouver Evening Columbian*, May 1, 1923; December 26, 1923; February 1, 1924; *The Columbian*, March 31, 1925 Vol V., No. 1, Portland, OR

return visit to Vancouver in October, the 321st squadron flew in formation above Vancouver to herald their arrival at the site.²²⁶ In May Kelly took the opportunity of a polo tournament held at the barracks to hold a flying tournament before the assembled tournament crowd.²²⁷ That year, in addition to practice flights held at the airfield by the air reserves, the squadron participated in a number of air circuses in Washington and Oregon.²²⁸ In the fall of that year, Kelly made a number of presentations on the future of aviation to local civic organizations.

In the summer of 1924 Kelly announced plans to raze the spruce mill and enlarge the landing field. Work continued on the field through the spring of 1926, although, by the fall of 1925, it was considered far enough along for the field's dedication ceremonies, which included an air circus for air reserve squadrons and fliers from around the country. Most of the spruce mill structures were razed at that time, and the grounds were graded. "The entire field has been plowed, harrowed, dragged and rolled by the liberal operation of Holt tractors and steam rollers working under the direction of Lieutenant H. C. Miller. The grading was made possible by the courtesy of the Bureau of Public Roads and Clark County officials who loaned the tractors and other grading implements," the 321st squadron headquarters reported in March of 1925.²²⁹

Facilities and structures were built just west of the ordnance storehouse on the east edge of the reservation, below East Fifth Street, and a graveled road was installed leading from the public road to the new facilities. The landing field was located south of the structures. In March of 1925, a new 66 by 140 foot corrugated iron-clad, steel hangar, paid for by the army and erected by a private contractor, was built to the east of the ordnance storehouse for about \$13,500.00. It could hold nine planes. Two small gable-roofed wood-frame structures that had been built in 1918 as part of the spruce mill were also moved to the new airfield service site, some time between 1925 and 1928, to serve as an office and storehouse. They were located north of the new hangar. In December of 1925, after the dedication ceremonies, the temporary hangar used in the early '20s was moved to a location just south of the new steel hangar, and remodeled into a warehouse and shop with a concrete floor, although part of it still served as a hangar.

A request to name the Vancouver airfield Pearson Field was made to the War Department, probably through the air reserve channels and on April 6, 1925, the Secretary of War issued an order to that effect. The field was named in honor of Lieutenant Alexander Pearson, Jr., who had been an air service instructor, a test pilot and participant and winner of a number of speed races, and who had made the first flight through the Grand Canyon on a survey for the Department of the Interior. Pearson had attended high school in Vancouver and had graduated from the University of Oregon. His parents' home was located in Portland. In 1924 Pearson lost his life in an air crash when practicing for a race at Wilbur Wright Field in Ohio. The dedication ceremonies and accompanying festivities, organized by Lieutenant Kelly, were held on September 16, 1925. The dedication and air circus drew "a monster crowd" to Vancouver Barracks; most businesses in the town shut down early to allow their employees to attend. The air circus brought over sixty fliers from around the country to Vancouver, who flew in mob formation over Portland and

²²⁶Vancouver Evening Columbian, March 19, 1924; October 17, 1924

²²⁷Vancouver Evening Columbian, May 3, 8, 10, 1924.

²²⁸Vancouver Evening Columbian, August 22, 25, 27, 1924; September 9, 22, 1924.

²²⁹The Columbian, bulletin of the 96th Division, March 31, 1925 Vol V., No. 1, Portland, OR

Vancouver prior to the dedication ceremonies, and after participated in a number of speed races and flying stunts.²³⁰

In 1929 a wood-framed office building which had been left standing on the spruce mill site, and had been located just north of the cut-up mill, was moved to the west edge of the airfield's facilities complex. It initially served as a storehouse, but was soon converted to serve as a clubhouse and squadron headquarters for the 321st Observation Squadron. In 1936 an addition was made to the rear of the building.

In the late 1920s, Pearson field served as a training site for the 321st and other air reserve units in the area, who took part in two-week training camps as part of their reserve duties, at the post. Additional aircraft were brought in from other fields on the Pacific Coast for training, and the planes stationed at Pearson were loaned to other fields on occasion.²³¹ In 1927 Charles Lindbergh circled Pearson Field on a west coast flight, but landed at Portland's new airfield on Swan Island. In 1929 a U.S.S.R. goodwill flight in the craft, *Land of the Soviets*, touring the United States unexpectedly landed at Pearson Field when the plane developed mechanical problems. The flight had been well-publicized, and the landing attracted a large crowd. Assisted by the field's commander, Lt. Carlton Bond, the plane was repaired and continued its flight the following day.²³² In 1929 the air reserve unit at Pearson participated in the search for missing civilian pilots on two separate occasions, and performed such tasks as flying supplies to a United States Geological Survey project, in 1931.²³³ For a brief time in 1934-5, the army replaced private contractors in providing national air mail service; Pearson Field served as a maintenance and hangar facility, where nine mail service planes were stored for two northwest routes. In 1937 the *Stalinskiy marshrut* left the Soviet Union in an attempt to break the long distance world record on a route from Moscow to San Francisco over the North Pole. In the final hours of its flight, fog forced the plane back towards the Pacific Northwest, and crowds swarmed to Portland's Swan Island Airport, in anticipation of seeing it land there. But the plane swept over the field, and headed to Pearson Field, where it landed, 350 miles short of the world record, and almost the same amount of miles shy of San Francisco, but still a record holder for the first transpolar flight. The Vancouver Barracks commander, Brigadier General George C. Marshall--of later World War II fame--invited the unexpected Soviet fliers to breakfast, while crowds and press thronged to the airfield to view the plane.²³⁴

In 1934 the army installed an underground gasoline fueling system for aircraft: the pits were located slightly southwest of the hangars, and were supplied by a 25,000 gallon tank located near the end of the rail spur line west of the facilities. At the same time, the small spruce mill office was designated the "Flight Surgeon's Office," and the small storehouse was designated a "Guard House," apparently for the protection of the mail service. In 1936, the ordnance storehouse built in 1905 was remodeled to serve as a air corps storehouse; it was covered with corrugated iron siding at that time. The principal runway, which was linked to the municipal field, was turf; it was situated near the Columbia River, and most of it was on municipal land. A second runway only used during high water was located

²³⁰Vancouver Evening Columbian, September 15, 1925.

²³¹Vancouver Evening Columbian, July 10, 1927.

²³²Vancouver Evening Columbian, October 14, 16, 18, 19, 1929.

²³³Vancouver Evening Columbian, February 28, March 13, 1931.

²³⁴Von Hardesty, "Soviets Blaze Sky Trail Over Top of World," Air and Space, December 1987-January 1988, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 48-54.

across the Hudson Bay Company's stockade site. The runways were not paved until 1966, when the lower runway was raised and paved with asphalt.²³⁵

District Headquarters for the CCC

During the 1930s Vancouver Barracks became the headquarters and dispersing agency for from twenty-seven to thirty-two Civilian Conservation Corps camps in Oregon and Washington.²³⁶ The CCC was created in March of 1933, as the Emergency Conservation Work program established by Public Act Number 5. The act gave President Franklin Roosevelt the authority to establish a chain of forest camps that would employ young men to protect, improve and conserve the nation's natural resources. He established the official existence of the CCC by Executive Order #6101 on April 5, 1933. The program involved the cooperation of the Department of Labor, working through state and local relief agencies, which was responsible for selecting applicants to the program; the War Department was assigned to enroll, feed, house, clothe, condition and transport them; various departments of the Department of Agriculture and the Interior were to select the projects, administer the camps and supervise the work. The CCC developed policy and coordinated the other agencies.²³⁷

The CCC was divided into nine corps areas, plus the United States territories and a special unit on Indian Reservations. The corps areas were managed by the the War Department. The Pacific Northwest fell within the Ninth Corps Area, administered by the U.S. Army from San Francisco, which also oversaw operations in Nevada, Montana, California, and Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming. Vancouver Barracks was one of six military centers in the National Forest Service's Region Six--Washington and Oregon--where enrollees were enlisted; the others were Fort Stevens in Oregon, and Forts Lewis, Worden, George Wright and Lawton in Washington. Enrollees in the region were sent to the nearest army post and given physical examinations. Most were then sent to Vancouver Barracks for distribution to camps in forests and parks. Enrollees from out of state were primarily sent directly to Fort Vancouver, and then distributed to camps.

In addition, Vancouver Barracks was a district headquarters, administering and supplying all camps within its district, which included most of northern Oregon and the Columbia National Forest in Washington state. As a district headquarters, Vancouver Barracks was responsible for purchasing and shipping all supplies to the camp, including temporary housing and whatever building materials were necessary for enrollees to erect permanent camps; arranging for educational advisors and material, including traveling libraries; providing recreational equipment, medical care, and religious services. The district headquarters also had a finance office to purchase materials and supplies, and pay the salaries of officers and enrollees. The camp officers were principally army reserve officers--many assumed active duty when World War II broke out, and were never replaced. In its role as distribution center, Vancouver Barracks processed enrollees being sent to other Ninth Corps areas from out of state, and shipped those who had completed their term of duty within the Ninth Corps home.

²³⁵Jane Merrit, *Pearson Airpark and Its Relationship to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site*, draft (National Park Service, 1991), p.3.

²³⁶The numbers changed over the years. Twenty eight were planned in 1933; by 1939 thirty-two were in operation; *The Columbian*, September 25, 1939.

²³⁷John A. Salmond, *The Civilian Conservation Corps, 1933-1942: A New Deal Case Study*, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1967), pp. 12-31.

On April 10 of 1933, Washington State's welfare director notified the Vancouver Garrison commander that the barracks had been named as the training camp for 800 Northwest forest workers. The barracks were named as the base for the Thirty Ninth Battalion of the CCC. Two barracks at the reservation were evacuated to accommodate the imminent arrival of an anticipated 300 enrollees, and plans were made to house additional CCC enrollees when they arrived.²³⁸ In May, Vancouver Barracks was told to establish twenty two camps, in addition to four already in preparation at Zig Zag and Friend, in Mount Hood National Forest, and at Hemlock and Sunset in the Columbia National Forest.²³⁹

By 1942, there were around 4,000 CCC enrollees in the camps in Oregon and Washington, primarily engaged in national forest work, including fire fighting and road construction, although six camps were directly engaged in war-related work at Vancouver Barracks and other military posts in the region. In July of that year the district commander, Colonel Ralph Hall, was notified that all Civilian Conservation Corps activities would cease, per congressional action which withdrew funding from the corps on June 30. Enrollment in the district was already down by 1,600, due to the war, a circumstance replicated across the country as enrollees entered the army or found civilian employment war-related industries.

Vancouver Barrack's physical plant was significantly impacted by the establishment of the district headquarters, but it was not until January of 1935 that a building was built specifically for the CCC: a garage, at the southeast corner of East Fifth Street and McLoughlin Road. In the fall of 1935, and continuing for about a year, a series of large structures were built to house CCC functions, north of the new polo grounds, which were eliminated by 1935, and east of McLoughlin Road, at the west end of the former spruce mill site. Eventually the structures incorporated the storehouses built in 1923 by the Bureau of Public Roads. In rapid succession, the army built over a dozen structures, most of them portable and temporary, but a few permanent buildings as well. The site was organized in four clusters, linked by unpaved roads and boardwalks: towards the end of the '30s, there were a few trees planted in front of some buildings, but generally speaking, the site appeared to be what it was, a temporary camp. Along the rail spurs, warehouses were built. Just south of East Fifth Street and north of the rail spur was a motor pool, with a motor repair shop, garages, and a gas pump. Additional warehouses were built south of the motor pool and rail spur, encompassing the buildings erected by the Bureau of Public Roads. Three large barracks, each capable of housing 100 men, an office, a mess hall and a recreation building were erected southwest of the warehouses, and east of McLoughlin Road; in 1938, a large portable building was put up east of the barracks, which served as the CCC District Headquarters building--prior to that, the headquarters had been lodged in a building in Vancouver Barracks proper. The structures were wood frame, with composition shingles and drop wood siding. One permanent CCC building was erected west of the Vancouver Barracks hospital on the Barracks grounds proper--a "Contagious Hospital," completed in October of 1935. A second permanent CCC building--an office building--appears to have been built in the CCC Barracks Complex--it can be seen on a map there in 1936--and moved sometime during the war to the south side of McClelland Road; the building still stands today. Almost all the buildings were later used during World War II, and most stood until the fall of 1963, when they were razed in a mass demolition; six still stood, primarily along the edge of East Fifth Street until 1973.

²³⁸Vancouver Evening Columbian, April 10, 1933.

²³⁹Vancouver Evening Columbian, May 16, 1933.

In 1941, after the outbreak of the Second World War, the 321st Observation squadron, which had long-practiced at Pearson Field, was called to active duty. During World War II, flight operations were curtailed at Pearson Field, and at the neighboring municipal field. All civilian and military flights operated from Portland's new airport on the Columbia River, completed in 1941. It was built with a bond issue approved by Portland voters in 1936, and partially financed by a Works Progress Administration grant of 1.3 million dollars.²⁴⁰ In 1945, according to drawings and aerial photographs of the army air field, the United States Army intended to develop the Pearson Field site for housing: a grid of streets had been plotted, named and graded on the inactive field. After the conclusion of the war, in December of 1946 the army announced that most of Vancouver Barracks, including Pearson Field would become surplus property. In July of 1946 Pearson Field and the municipal airport were united operationally, physically linked, and renamed Pearson Airpark by the City of Vancouver, although the field had not yet been officially declared surplus; the act was not official, until the title to the army field was released by the War Assets Administration to the City of Vancouver on April 25, 1949.²⁴¹

In War: 1941-47

Increasing military activity as a result of the outbreak of the war in Europe led to plans to construct a new, 750 bed hospital on the north end of the military reserve at Vancouver Barracks. The facility was designed to serve military personnel throughout the Pacific Northwest. It was completed in April of 1941.²⁴² In January of 1941 the Seventh Infantry, which had been stationed at the post off and on for years, left the post forever, after engaging in war games at Camp Bonneville. They were replaced by the Eighteenth Engineers, sent a little over a year later to build the Alaskan Highway. The Garrison continued to increase in strength, with the addition of draftees. War games were held on the Columbia River: a pontoon shed was built below Pearson Field that year to house the equipment used in the games.

After December of 1941, Vancouver Barracks came under the control of the Ninth Service Command, with headquarters at Fort Douglas Utah. The post then served as a staging area for the Portland Support of embarkation, and as a training center for certain units; in January of 1843, the army's first training center for quartermaster units began at Vancouver Barracks.²⁴³

As the war progressed, the garrison size increased. To accommodate new troops, going to and from the Pacific Theater, temporary barracks were built late in the summer of 1942, near the north end of the reserve. In December the barracks were named Camp Hathaway.²⁴⁴ By 1944 both Vancouver Barracks and Camp Hathaway were brought under

²⁴⁰Now Portland International Airport. E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Growth of a City: Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1915-1950* (Portland: The Georgian Press, 1979), pp. 502-504; Foresight Group, Inc., *Draft Master Plan Report for Pearson Airpark* (Corvallis, Oregon: Foresight Group, Inc., 1987), p.3-10.

²⁴¹Foresight Group, Inc., *Draft Master Plan Report for Pearson Airpark* (Corvallis, Oregon: Foresight Group, Inc., 1987), p.3-10; Jane Merritt, *Pearson Airpark and Its Relationship to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site*, draft (National Park Service, 1991), p. 3.

²⁴²*Oregonian*, November 28, December 17, 1940; April 2, 1941

²⁴³*Oregonian*, April 6, 1943.

²⁴⁴*Oregonian*, August 14, 1940; Dec 7, 1942

the wing of the Portland Subport of Embarkation; the headquarters of the subport was moved to Vancouver Barracks on January 1, 1946. A few weeks later, Vancouver Barracks was declared excess to the needs of the Army Transportation Corps.²⁴⁵

During the war, the Civilian Conservation Corps camp south of East Fifth Street was retained and used to support wartime activities. The old quartermaster's depot buildings from the 1849-50 site were largely removed and replaced by new structures. There were few alterations to the remainder of the site, other than the aforementioned construction of Barnes Hospital and Camp Hathaway on the north end of the military reservation.

City of Vancouver: Vancouver Municipal Airfield

In 1925 the Vancouver Chamber of Commerce leased 70 acres of Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad land adjacent to the east edge of the military reserve with the intent of establishing a civilian airport; at the time, it was thought the city or port of Vancouver would operate the field, but the Chamber airport boosters were unable to convince the city to assume operation at the time. One impetus for the establishment was a 1925 army ruling restricting the use of the army airfield--soon to be Pearson Field--to the military, excluding civilian use. Another was the possibility of securing an air mail contract. A third was Lieutenant Kelly's desire to extend the landing strip at Pearson Field, and his communicable enthusiasm for the future of the civilian air business. Even before the lease was signed, a fence separating the SP & S land from Pearson Field was torn down under Kelly's direction, and the area was graded.²⁴⁶

In 1926 Pacific Air Transport Company, a firm owned by an Oregon bus line operator that had secured the federal contract for the Seattle to Los Angeles route, established its air mail operation at the Chamber's field, and also operated a passenger service. The Company moved its air mail operation to Portland in 1928, a short time after that city's new airfield on Swan Island was completed. Other businesses located at the field included the Rankin Flying Service, which carried passengers and offered aviation instruction. The firm, however, soon moved its operation to another field in Portland.²⁴⁷ There were a few additional businesses located on the grounds, operating schools and passenger service in the mid to late 1920s. By 1928 there were four wood framed hangars on the Chamber field. In November of that year, the City of Vancouver signed a one-year lease with the railroad, and assumed operation of the Chamber of Commerce airfield.²⁴⁸ In January of 1930 the City signed a five year lease with the railroad for the airfield land; at the time there were seven hangars and a shop building on the site, five of which were owned by the city. By the end of April, the local newspaper reported thirteen new hangars had been built, electric lights were installed in the hangars, a gravel road to the field had been installed, and a taxi lane had been graded, rolled and oiled.²⁴⁹ On May 25, 1930, the city dedicated the

²⁴⁵*Oregonian*, April 6, 1943; Feb 2, 19, 1944; Dec 28, 1945; Jan 25, 1946

²⁴⁶Charles Rohlfing, *National Regulation of Aeronautics* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1931), as cited in Jane Merritt, *Pearson Airpark and Its Relationship to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site*, p. 2; *Vancouver Evening Columbian*, May 14, 15, 1925.

²⁴⁷*Vancouver Evening Columbian*, March 26, 1926; April 5, 16, 1926; May 1, 21, 24, 1926; September 15, 1926; July 13, 1928, September 27, 1928; October 8, 1928.

²⁴⁸*Vancouver Evening Columbian*, November 20, 1928.

²⁴⁹*Vancouver Evening Columbian*, January 2, 7; February 21; March 14; April 10, 14, 30 1930.

airfield as the Vancouver Municipal Airport, in a dedication ceremony accompanied by an air circus, which drew an estimated crowd of 10,000. The event included a formal flag-raising ceremony and a series of aerial stunts and performances.²⁵⁰

As noted earlier, aviation activity virtually ceased at the airport during World War II. When the U.S. Army announced that Pearson Field would become surplus property in December of 1945, the City of Vancouver proceeded to link the two fields and operate them as one, although the City did not receive title to the field until April of 1949. The combined fields were renamed Pearson Airport.

Kaiser Shipyards

In 1940 the Aluminum Company of America built a reduction plant on 215 acres on the west side of Vancouver, the first of its plants to be located west of the Mississippi. Its construction was linked to the completion of the Bonneville Dam, 39 miles east of the city, which was to furnish cheap power for industrial development; the huge plant was the first to make large-scale industrial use of Bonneville power, signing a contract with BPA for 32,500 kilowatts of power in January of 1940. Power purchase by Alcoa was subsequently increased to 162,500 kws; later the company received government contracts to build three more plants in the northwest to meet the wartime emergency.

The Alcoa plant was important in regional and national power politics, but its impact on Vancouver, initially employing only 300 workers, was minimal compared to the next major war-related industry to be established in Vancouver and in Portland, Oregon.²⁵¹ The Allies' need for ships prompted the British to contract with Henry Kaiser in November of 1940 to provide 31 cargo vessels. Henry Kaiser eventually selected Portland, Oregon as the site for the shipyard, where, in 1941, in association with former business partners, he built the Portland Shipbuilding Company--later the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation--on about 90 acres north of Terminal 4 on the north bank of the Willamette River. The site was later expanded to 300 acres. With a subsequent contract with the U.S. Maritime Commission, in January of 1942 a 400 acre Kaiser shipyard was opened in Vancouver, followed in March by Swan Island shipyards. The yards were owned by the United States Government; the latter two were operated solely by Kaiser Company, Inc.²⁵²

Henry Kaiser had started business in Spokane, Washington, in 1914, when he established a sand and gravel business. With his subsequent Kaiser Paving Company, he procured contracts for major highway construction projects in Canada, and by 1930, had joined with

²⁵⁰*Vancouver Evening Columbian*, May 26, 1930.

²⁵¹By 1842, due to increased orders for aircraft production, the number of employees rose to 850.

²⁵²The Kaiser yard was not the first in Oregon to obtain a shipbuilding contract: Willamette Iron and Steel Company was awarded the first in June of 1940; for more information see E. Kimbark MacColl, *The Growth of a City: Power and Politics in Portland, Oregon 1915-1950* (Portland, Oregon: The Georgian Press, 1979), pp.571-573. Also, the Portland-Vancouver yards were not the first to build ships for the second world war--the Seattle-Tacoma Shipbuilding Corporation (Sea-Tac) was built in Tacoma in 1939-40, and the Todd-California Shipbuilding Corporation built a yard at Richmond, California, which began operation in December of 1940, building ships for the British.

five other construction firms, referred to as the "Six Companies," to successfully bid on and build Boulder (Hoover) Dam, which was finished in half the scheduled time. With his reputation for handling large projects and completing them ahead of schedule, Kaiser secured the contract to build Grand Coulee Dam, and also the general contract for Bonneville Dam. With an urgent need for ships for the war, the British turned to Kaiser in the fall of 1940. Kaiser, in association with various members of the "Six Companies," proceeded to build a total of seven shipyards up and down the Pacific coast, at first contracting with the British, and then with the U.S. Maritime Commission. Four of the yards were operated in partnership with other companies, and three were controlled solely by Kaiser Company. Henry's son, Edgar, was in charge of the three shipyards built in the Portland-Vancouver area.²⁵³

The Vancouver physical plant sprawled over 400 acres of land along the Columbia River, on the site of a former dairy farm. Much of the low-lying land, still subject to the inundation that had plagued the Hudson's Bay company 100 years earlier, was raised an average of ten feet with fill. Most of the yard was bounded on the north by U.S. Highway 830, and on the south by the Columbia River. To the west, the parcel narrowed to a point where it intersected the east-west line of the Spokane, Portland and Seattle Railroad, which ran along the northern edge of the site. The easternmost boundary was the Vancouver City Limits in the early 1940s. A large thirty or forty acre parking area was located north of the railroad tracks. Its topography was basically flat. The main entrance to the yard was via an underpass beneath the railroad berm towards the west end of the site.

Construction began on January 15, 1942, with site clearing and fill work. By March, the piles for nine shipways had been driven, and the building ways had been decked; construction was reported as ahead of schedule.²⁵⁴ At the time, over 2,000 workers were already employed on site. The yard was ready for production within 80 days.

The necessity for speed of construction--both for the allies, and for the U.S. Navy after the bombardment of Pearl Harbor in December of 1941--prompted a new method of shipbuilding, based on what was essentially an assembly-line technique. The Kaiser yards have been credited with pioneering production methods which were later used in all yards. The key to production was prefabrication, with an entire assembly of, for example, a deckhouse--a seventy ton unit--made in one location and then lifted by cranes onto the hull waiting in the shipway. While the deckhouse was under construction, other parts of the ship were simultaneously being prefabricated for installation. The physical plants were organized to speed the process; the yards were laid out like assembly lines. At Vancouver, the flow was from the SP & S railroad tracks south to the shipways on the Columbia River; eight ways had been originally planned, but within a few months, twelve were built. Other methods to speed production included the selection and design of a very large site, which enabled massive amounts of materials to be moved efficiently, and the introduction of fast welding techniques, which limited the amount of labor-intensive and time-consuming riveting.

The site at Vancouver was schematically organized in three sections. Tracks on which giant gantry cranes moved, linked various buildings and functional areas. Approximately half the site, to the east, was devoted to production. Huge steel plate racks and storage for steel shapes and other materials were located at the north edge, near the railroad tracks, where steel was received in carload lots. The material was then moved

²⁵³MacColl, *Growth of a City*, p. 572.

²⁵⁴Bos'n's Whistle..

south, to the plate shop, a massive building lit by monitors and flanked by offices and workers lockers--where steel was cut, bent, drilled and flanged into pre-assembly parts--or to the mold loft. The parts were then moved to the 850 foot long assembly building, with its underslung cranes, where they were welded or riveted into sections for storage in front of the shipways, and later placement on the ship structures, located in the shipways to the south, on the river. This routing of materials was initially designed for the liberty ships produced at the yard; later it was adapted to other types of ships built there.

To the west and north of the shipways was a pipe shop, a sheetmetal shop, and a large structure devoted to deckhouse erection, where much of the assembly for small aircraft carriers--"baby flat tops"--was done. Each shipway was flanked by craneways, on which pairs of cranes operated to lift the massive assemblies onto the ships. Also located on the western half were power substations, an oxygen plant, an acetylene building, a field office, a first aid station, and other support buildings. Thousands of tons of steel were processed through the yard during its lifetime: in June of 1942 the *Bo's'n's Whistle*, a Company publication for the yard workers, reported that more than 200 tons of steel was being processed in the plate shops and forty tons of inner bottoms and bulkheads were fabricated each day.

The central portion of the site was generally devoted to buildings housing shops with specific functions, including warehousing structural steel, a general stores building, a garage, and various shops, including a forge shop, a large machine shop, a pipe shop, and a sheetmetal shop. To the immediate west of these buildings were a carpenter shop and lumber storage.

The westerly section of the site included administrative offices and buildings with employee-related functions, including a cafeteria and a training building along the river. It also was the location most of the outfitting functions, operated by the Buckler Company, which fabricated and installed the ships' internal fittings, such as furniture, bulkheads, doors, hardware, storeroom and shop equipment, insulation, deck covering and hatch covers. Most of these materials were made off-site and trucked to the Vancouver yard, where Buckler Company joiners installed them. The buildings related to this function included an office, a rigging loft, and an outfitting building, which lay close to an outfitting dock on the river, over 3,000 feet long. Also in this area was a huge hammerhead crane and an area devoted to mast and boom assembly. By 1946, a new electric warehouse had been built to the west of the rigging loft. A large parking area with space for over 5,000 vehicles, was located at the westernmost end of the site, near the entrance to the yards.

The buildings were primarily frame structures, clad in sheetmetal. The largest buildings--the Assembly Building, the Plate Shop, and a few others were steel frame structures, necessary to support the huge underslung cranes mounted within them. The remaining buildings were wood frame. The minimal fenestration at ground level was generally metal sash awnings. A few of the more public structures, including the administration building, were stuccoed, with a Streamline Moderne appearance, including such features as vertical glass block strips and horizontal metal trim.

The Portland (Oregon) Shipbuilding Company contracted with the British to produce 31 cargo ships: In May of 1941 the liberty ship *Star of Oregon* was launched from one of the Company's eight ways. The Vancouver Shipyards contracted with the U.S. Maritime Commission to produce sixty steel liberty ships, the first of which, the *George Vancouver*, was built in 80 days from the time its keel was laid, while the yard was still under construction. It was launched on July 4, 1942, the same day the *John McLoughlin*, the forty-

eighth liberty ship to go down the ways at the Oregon Shipbuilding Corporation in Portland was christened and launched.²⁵⁵ That spring, the Maritime Commission secretly contracted with Kaiser to shift production from the original liberty ship contract to a new "offensive" ships--ocean-going vessels with shallow drafts capable of landing on enemy beaches to disgorge tanks and soldiers. The contract was for thirty Landing Craft, Tanks (LSTs), the first of which was laid down in the ways on June 15, 1942. It took 180 days to build and launch the thirty ships, the last of which was delivered to the Maritime Commission in March of 1943.

The yard also obtained a contract to build fifty "vest-pocket carriers," a newly-designed small aircraft carrier intended to escort convoys through submarine-infested waters and provide defense against air attacks. These "Baby Flat Tops" were comparatively small, with 500-foot flight decks, and could be produced quickly at the Vancouver yard--they were "basically a cargo ship with a flight deck."²⁵⁶ The first carrier keel was laid on November 3, 1942; *Casablanca* was launched on April 5, 1943, with a christening provided by Eleanor Roosevelt.²⁵⁷ After that, the yard turned out approximately one each week. The design, construction and organization of fabrication for these ships was more complex than that of the liberty ships and LSTs: they were, in effect, sea-going airfields, requiring such features as aircraft repair and storage areas, fuel tanks and gas stations. Because the ships were designed to carry over one thousand men, their outfitting required galleries and kitchens to serve large numbers of meals and store food, laundries, medical offices, and all other services required while the ships were at sea.

As designs were adjusted for the new carriers, the yard took a new contract to produce eight more liberty ships: towards the end of 1942, there were three different types of ships under construction at Vancouver. In 1944-45 the yard produced thirty-one attack transports, twelve C-4 troopships, eight C-4 cargo vessels and two 14,000 ton drydocks, one of which was moved to Swan Island, and the other to California. The Vancouver yard also outfitted seven ships from California shipyards.²⁵⁸

The assistant general manager of the yard was Mike Miller, a long-time Kaiser engineer, who assisted Edgar Kaiser in establishing the Oregon Shipbuilding Company yard; the general superintendent of the yard was John Hallett, also a long-time engineer for Kaiser who had served as yard superintendent at the Portland yard. Most shipyard employees were members of the Metal Trades Department of the AFL. Principal jobs included loftsmen, who created patterns and templates for steel shapes; welders; painters, shipwrights; grinders for sharpening tools; shipfitters; teamsters, riggers, crane operators, sheet metal workers, blacksmiths, boilermakers, warehousemen. As noted earlier, Kaiser had a large building which housed the Vocational Training Department,

²⁵⁵Portland *Oregonian*, July 5, 1942, Vol. LXI, No. 27, page 1.

²⁵⁶*The Kaiser Story* (Oakland, California: Kaiser Industries Corporation, 1968), p. 29.

²⁵⁷The ship actually had three names during her lifetime; she began as the *Ameer*, with the designator AVG; on January 23, 1943 she was renamed *Alazon Bay*, after she became ACV-55. On April 3, two days before launching, she became the *Casablanca*, and became CVE-55 on July 15, 1943; *Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships*, Vol I (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations, Naval History Division, 1959), p. 44.

²⁵⁸*The Kaiser Story* (Oakland, California: Kaiser Industries Corporation, 1968), pp. 28-30; *Pacific Northwest Goes to War* (Washington: Associated Editors, State of Washington, 1944), pp. 139-141; James Houlihan, *Western Shipbuildings in World War II* (Oakland, California: Shipbuilding Review Publishing Association, 1945), pp. 37-91.

which offered "In-plant" training for specific tasks and "Supplementary" training to assist workers in learning new skills. There were full-time trainee programs in arc welding, pipe welding, riveting, sheet metal welding, and classes in ship construction, pipefitting, shipwrighting, and so forth. The War Production Board also sponsored a short course called Job Instructor Training" for supervisors, or "leadmen."²⁵⁹

The establishment of the Vancouver yard brought thousands of workers to the town, and had a significant impact on its development. In 1940, the town of Vancouver and its suburbs had a population of less than 25,000; it had more than doubled by early 1943, due to the establishment of the Kaiser yard. Initially, Kaiser Company had projected employing 8,000 workers, but by the fall of 1942 there were 13,000 workers employed at the yards, and by early 1943 the number had grown to more than 27,000, working three shifts. During its peak operation, in December of 1944, the number of employees at the yard reached 38,000; twenty-eight percent of them were women.²⁶⁰ The workers came from all over the country, many recruited by offices set up by Kaiser in such cities as Minneapolis.

Early in 1942 the mayor of Vancouver established the Housing Authority of the City of Vancouver, which, under the Lanham Act--the defense housing act--of 1938, and under Washington State enabling legislation, authorized federally-funded housing construction to be managed by local housing authorities and rented "without regard for income limits."²⁶¹ During the war years, the Vancouver Housing Authority erected 12,396 housing units, which could shelter around 46,000 people. The initial plan had been to erect about 4,000 temporary houses and 1,000 permanent units--almost as many as already existed with the town of Vancouver--funded by 18.5 million dollars of federal funds. As workers continued to pour into the shipyard, the number of units was increased; nonetheless, waiting lists for shelter were long. The units were primarily built on large sites purchased by the housing authority--the first to be placed under construction were 5,500 temporary houses in a planned development called McLoughlin Heights, built on 1,000 acres east of the city. Others included Bagley Downs, built on a former racetrack course, which by the war's end had 2,100 row houses; Burton Homes, 1,500 row houses; Ogden Meadows, 2,000 apartments; Fourth Plain Village, 200 permanent houses. The developments were north and east of the city. Most of the units were prefabricated, and intended as temporary housing; after the war, many were demolished, salvaged, or sold and moved to other locations. Permanent houses were later sold to occupants or veterans.²⁶²

The shipyard workers also had a significant impact on the city's infrastructure: police and fire, the public utility district, cultural resources, such as libraries, and schools. The population influx due to the yard also raised social issues--such as integration--health care concerns, and transportation problems. Because transportation was a problem--Kaiser offered bus service to its employees to and from the site, but other needs, such as shopping, health care, and recreation, were not addressed by the Company--recreation centers, gymnasiums, branch libraries, and shopping centers were built near or in the housing developments. One shopping center at McLoughlin Heights, designed by Portland architect Pietro Belluschi, received national recognition from the New York Museum of

²⁵⁹*How'dy Stranger* (Vancouver: Kaiser Company, Inc., n.d.), passim.

²⁶⁰*Pacific Northwest Goes to War* (Washington: Associated Editors, State of Washington, 1944), p.142.

²⁶¹*Housing in War and Peace: The Story of Public Housing in Vancouver, Washington* (Vancouver: Housing Authority of the City of Vancouver, Washington, 1972), p. 3.

²⁶²See *Housing in War and Peace* for additional information.

Modern Art, as a harbinger of the future. Eight new schools were built by the government, and later turned over to the City's public school system; seven day care centers were established. After the war, the city annexed the federal projects, and began redevelopment on most of the sites, already provided with roads, sewers, power and water service paid for by the federal government.

In addition to the Vancouver housing units, two dormitory complexes were erected for the Maritime Commission to house single men and women near the shipyard. One, Hudson House, had over 5,000 beds in seven dormitory buildings; the other, Columbia House, housed 7,000 workers. The Hudson House complex also had a movie theater and an administration building. A number of workers at the Vancouver yards found housing in Portland, primarily at the Portland wartime city, Vanport, and commuted by ferry to the shipyard's ferry slip at the southeast end of the site. The Kaisers built and operated a brick and stuccoed hospital, the Northern Permanente Foundation Hospital, just east of the shipyard, staffed by twenty doctors.

When the war ended in Europe, workers began to leave the yard; by July of 1945 the number of employees had fallen to 25,000. By November, after Hiroshima, the number had dropped to 10,000. Early in 1946 the last two ships from the Vancouver yard were delivered; in the spring, the yard's activities focused on decommissioning U.S. Navy vessels at the outfitting dock. In all, the yard produced ten Liberty ships, 30 LSTs, 50 aircraft carriers, 12 C-4 troopships, 31 AP5 troop transports, and eight C-4 cargo vessels. The yard also built two 14,000 ton drydocks, one of which was hauled to Swan Island in Portland, and the other to California.²⁶³

²⁶³Houlihan, *Western Shipbuilders in World War II*, p. 115.

Chapter VI:

A New Era: 1948-Present

Period Overview

For the resources considered in this study, this period might be characterized as a period of restoration and renewal. Providence Academy was closed, then rescued from vacancy and restored by a prominent Vancouver family. Kaiser shipyards was used periodically as a manufacturing and industrial site, losing many of its original buildings during the process; most of the site was ultimately sold and has since undergone redevelopment, with many new manufacturing and distributing facilities, a few of which are housed in the few remaining shipyard buildings. During this period, the size of the military reserve of Vancouver Barracks was significantly reduced, and its operations refocused primarily on reserve military activities. In a series of land transactions over a period of years, the Department of the Interior acquired most of the south part of the reservation, below East Fifth Street. On June 19, 1948, Congress designated part of the site of the Hudson's Bay Company, including the stockade area, as a National Monument. On June 30, 1961 the boundaries were revised, and the monument was redesignated Fort Vancouver National Historic Site. Beginning in 1947, extensive archaeologic and historic research relating to the Hudson's Bay Company site was performed for the National Park Service, and reconstruction of the historic stockade to the period 1846, began. The City of Vancouver expanded its municipal airport onto the former military reserve, and a number of new facilities were built.

Providence Academy

During the 1950s the grade school and boarding school at the Academy were dismantled, as suburban parish school were built. Its last class of 28 students graduated in 1966, and the building stood vacant for three years, until purchased by descendants of Lowell Hidden, the building's brickmaker. The building has undergone renovation, and presently houses shops and offices; a restaurant was built in front of the Academy's east wing in 1976. Most of the grounds are now paved.

United States Army: Vancouver Barracks

Late in January of 1946 the Army Transportation Corps announced Vancouver Barracks excess to the needs of the army and post ceased to be active army installation; on April 30, the property was placed in the custody of the Corps of Engineers; the reservation was slated for transfer to the War Assets Administration late in 1946 for disposal, but various areas were later withdrawn by the army. In March of 1947, around 64 acres were reactivated as a military post and designated to serve as headquarters for reserve training in the Pacific Northwest.²⁶⁴ The post served as home to the 104th "Timberwolf" Division. In the late

²⁶⁴*Oregonian*, January 27, 1946; March 23, April 8, 1947; July 17, 1948.

1940s the Camp Hathaway staging area was demolished. Barnes Hospital was converted to the Veterans Administration Hospital. By June of 1949 the post included headquarters of Sixth Army's Northern Military District, embracing Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana. Vancouver Barracks did not participate in the Korean War in any major way.²⁶⁵

The Oregon Military District was phased out under a reorganization of the army on February 1, 1958. That year, Vancouver Barracks became a satellite of Fort Lewis, Washington, maintained by a detachment of the garrison from that post. The Oregon Sector of the Tenth U.S. Army Corps became the post's chief tenant. The post did not participate in the war in Vietnam.

In addition to the garrison headquarters and the Oregon Sector of the Tenth U.S. Army Corps, by 1970 Vancouver barracks served as home for two units of the Washington National Guard, and for Air Reserve Center. The buildings south of East Fifth Street served as vehicle maintenance and storage facilities for the army, the U.S. Air Reserve Center, and the national guard. Barracks buildings were converted to offices and storage. Family housing was confined to the 1930s duplexes, and two historic buildings on McClelland Road were used by the post commander and deputy post commander. At that time, there were 82 buildings and structures on the barracks grounds; eighteen were slated for surplus.

In 1986 the U.S. General Services Administration deeded Officer's Row to the City of Vancouver, to be preserved as an historic site. The buildings underwent a two year rehabilitation and were dedicated on November 11, 1988.

Vancouver Barracks is an army installation under the command of Fort Lewis, and occupies 52 acres of the original military reserve. As of 1988, in addition to the Vancouver Barracks Headquarters, with a small staff of military and civilian personnel, the post is home to the 104th Division of the U.S. Air Reserve, the Washington Army National Guard 146th Field Artillery unit and recruiting; and several 124th Army Command Units.²⁶⁶

City of Vancouver: Pearson Airpark

In March of 1947 the War Assets Administration, appointed trustee to distribute the surplus property of Vancouver Barracks, transferred a portion of the site to the City of Vancouver for an air park by quit-claim deed. The deed was not recorded until 1949, due to conflicting claims with the National Park Service, which wanted to obtain the historic Hudson's Bay Company lands for a National Monument. The western half of Pearson Airpark became city property in April of that year. On three separate occasions in the 1950s the Vancouver City Council considered closing the airpark: throughout most of the decade, the field had

²⁶⁵*Oregonian*, January 27, 1946; March 23, April 8, 1947; July 17, 1948.

²⁶⁶Information for this section on Vancouver Barracks was largely derived from: Royce Pollard, "The Presence and Missions of the United States Army at Vancouver Barracks, Vancouver, Washington, 1849-1988," unpublished paper in files, Vancouver Barracks, Washington; "Report for the Sixth United States Army Real Property Utilization Survey Team Visit to Vancouver Barracks, Washington (Fort Lewis, Washington: Headquarters, U.S. Army Training Center, Infantry, and Fort Lewis, c. 1972); "Utilization and Retention of Real Property, Vancouver Barracks, Washington," (Fort Lewis, Washington, c. 1958).

fiscal problems, and State law prohibited the city from issuing revenue bonds for airport improvements.²⁶⁷

In 1961 the airpark lost a major tenant, a Piper products distributor. In 1964 the city extended the lower turf runway an additional 800 feet to the west. In 1966 the runway was paved, in an attempt to improve the airpark's business.

Throughout most of the '60s negotiations between the city and the National Park Service focused on the sale of the western portion of the airpark; the city needed the funds to purchase the eastern half of the site from the S, P & S successor, the Burlington Northern Railroad, and the Park Service wished to complete reconstruction of the Hudson's Bay Company stockade. The latter effort had begun in 1966, but was stalled due to restrictions dating from the Park Service's acquisition of the site in the 1940s. In March of 1972 the National Park Service purchased the western half of Pearson Airpark; the statutory warranty deed included a reservation clause allowing the City to use the site for thirty years. At that time the City purchased the leased east half of the airpark from the Burlington Northern. From the 1960s onward, the Federal Aviation Administration has periodically advised Vancouver to search for a new site for a municipal airport, expressing concern regarding safety its proximity to Portland International Airport.

As of 1987, there were twenty-four structures associated with the airpark; one city hangar has since burned. There are a total of twenty-three structures today, excluding the 3,200 foot-long paved runway and parallel taxiway, and aircraft parking aprons. Three of these--possibly four--are older than fifty years. One--the old ordnance storehouse, later the air corps storehouse--dates to before the establishment of the army airfield. One, the former squadron headquarters, originally a spruce mill building, also pre-dates the airfield, and was moved to the site in 1928-29. The third is the temporary hangar which was moved to its present location in 1925 to serve as a storehouse/hangar. All of the structures have been altered, and one is in very poor condition. There is, in addition, a small gable-roofed building just north of the storehouse/hangar, which was not listed in the 1987 Master Plan Report list of facilities at the airpark, probably because it is now and no doubt was then in a dilapidated state. This building may have been the original army airfield office, a 1918 spruce mill building, moved to the site around 1925, and situated opposite the air corps headquarters.

None of the remaining buildings are over 30 years old. As of 1987, there were nineteen hangars, most of which are located on the former army airfield site, a wind "T," several structures serving as offices, and a restaurant. In the past forty years, the site has been radically altered, with the addition of new hangars, a taxiway and parking aprons, and support buildings.²⁶⁸

Kaiser Shipyards

The Kaiser Shipyards at Vancouver sat vacant for a number of years. In the late 1950s, the property was leased by Gilmore Steel Company, which sublet some of the buildings to various tenants. In the 1970s the site was developed as a business park by Columbia and

²⁶⁷The principal source of information about Pearson Airpark from 1947 through the present is from Jane Merritt, Draft of Pearson Airpark and Its Relationship to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, passim. See the report for more detailed information.

²⁶⁸Foresite Group, Inc., Master Plan Report for Pearson Airpark, Draft (Corvallis, Oregon: Foresite Group, Inc., 1987), passim.

Associates, which utilized a number of the old Kaiser buildings, and built five new concrete tilt-up structures with aggregate finishes. In 1981, 258 acres on the east side of the site were purchased by Hillman Properties Northwest, which also leased on a long-term basis the remaining 113 westerly acres from the long-time owners, the Hidden family of Vancouver.²⁶⁹ The company renamed the site The Columbia Business Center, and began a long-term investment program. A number of old Kaiser structures were demolished, and to date, new structures totalling 850,000 square feet erected; these are concrete tilt-up buildings with smooth stuccoed finishes. The site serves as a manufacturing, distribution and office center. A 15 million dollar capital improvement program has significantly altered the historic appearance of the yard, including a network of paved roads and sidewalks, lighting, extensive landscaping, and installation of underground utilities. Two private barge slips have been built on the river, and the site is also serviced by railroad spurs with switching handled by the Burlington Northern Railroad Company.

Today, eight of the fifty original shipyard structures still stand on the site, although most have been altered. They include the plate shop; the mold loft; the salvage building; the massive assembly building; the first aid building; the deckhouse erection building; the rigging loft, and the later electric warehouse.

National Park Service: Fort Vancouver

In 1915 the War Department had designated the site of the Hudson's Bay Company fort as a national monument under the authority of the Antiquities Act, but the recognition was allowed to lapse or was withdrawn. During the 1920s and '30s, as the centennial of the fort's establishment approached, a federation of local citizens, historical societies and governmental agencies attempted to obtain Congressional authority and money to restore the Hudson's Bay Company stockade, resulting in the passage of two laws authorizing construction, in 1925 and in 1938, but with no funding provisions. When the War Assets Administration declared Vancouver Barracks Military Reservation to be surplus, local and state historical societies lobbied for legislation to obtain the site. In March of 1947 the War Assets Administration transferred a portion of the site to the City of Vancouver for an air park by quit-claim deed. The deed was not recorded until 1949, due to conflicting claims with the National Park Service. On June 19, 1948 by Congressional action, Fort Vancouver National Monument was established (62 Stat. 532), including 90 acres of land; as part of the agreement leading to enactment of the bill, the National Park Service granted the City of Vancouver an aviation easement over the site of the old stockade. The agreement was made necessary as a requirement before the War Assets Administration would release the site. On May 19, 1949, the WAA transferred administration of 53.453 acres of the military reservation to the Department of the Interior. It consisted of two parcels of land--approximately 8 acres in the vicinity of the stockade site, and a little over 45 acres between East Fifth Street and East Evergreen Boulevard, including most of the Vancouver Barracks parade grounds. An aviation easement for the city of Vancouver was part of the transfer, and a restriction was placed on the Park Service which disallowed any buildings or structures above ground. In the 1950s the U.S. Army was permitted to use almost three acres of National Park Service land on which several barracks were located; as part of the agreement, the Department of the Army transferred a little over nine acres to the Park Service, which included the rest of the stockade site. On June 30, 1954 the Secretary of the Interior officially established Fort Vancouver National Monument.

²⁶⁹Unrecorded telephone interviews with Robert Hidden and Christine Wamsley, March 10, 1992.

Meanwhile, funds were appropriated in fiscal year 1948 for an archeological exploration of the site, to attempt to pinpoint the stockade's location before the boundary lines were drawn in 1949. The work began on September 17, 1947, under the direction of Louis Caywood; all four corners of the stockade were found. At the same time, a historical investigation was begun to assist in interpreting the physical structure found during excavations, conducted by historian John Hussey, who subsequently prepared a two volume historic structures report on the site as well. The summary of additional archeological excavations conducted by the National Park Service is summarized in the archeological section the report to the Historic Review Commission.

In 1957 an additional six and one-half acres, situated on a narrow strip of land between the Columbia River and Columbia Way were transferred from the General Services Administration to the National Park Service. The city of Vancouver was granted a permit to use the property as a public park and boat launching ramp. The Park Service also acquired the land on which the railroad right-of-way is situated, about eight acres. In June of 1961 Presidential approval of another Act of Congress (75 Stat. 196) changed the name of the site to Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, and removed some restrictions on the Park Service in relationship to the site. In 1963 the Park Service acquired 14 1/2 acres west and southwest of the Hudson's Bay Company stockade site, which included part of Kanaka Village.

In February of 1962 the city of Vancouver and the Secretary of the Interior signed an agreement reducing the avigation easement; as a result, the Park Service was able to begin reconstruction of the north and east walls of the stockade, which occurred in 1966.

In 1972 the city of Vancouver and the National Park Service, in consultation with the Burlington Northern and the Federal Aviation Agency, reached an agreement through which the city sold the National Park Service 72.57 acres of land it had received from the WAA, and then purchased 61.8 acres owned by the Burlington Northern to the east of its airport. The agreement allowed the city to lease back the 72.57 acres, which constituted the west half of the airport. It also required the city to eliminate the use of its sod runway and extended avigation easement over the stockade site. After this agreement was concluded, the Park Service was able to finish reconstruction of the stockade wall and open the site for public use.

In 1975 a little over two acres of Coast Guard station property adjacent to the strip of land along the river acquired in 1958 was deeded to the National Park Service by the General Services Administration. In 1974 the National Park Service traded a little over one and one-half acres of land needed by the Washington State Department of Highways for construction of an interchange south of the Park, for a strip of two and one-half acres south of Pearson Airpark.

The stockade, 1846 bastion, chief factor's house, chief factor's kitchen, bakery, blacksmith shop and Indian trade store have been reconstructed on the site of the Hudson's Bay Company's stockade. As of this writing, the fur store is presently undergoing reconstruction.

Section II

Evaluation of Significance

Chapter I

Fort Vancouver National Historic Site

The Fort Vancouver National Monument was established by an act of Congress on June 19, 1948 (62. Stat. 532). On June 30, 1961 the boundaries of the site were extended and it was redesignated as the Fort Vancouver National Historic Site, by an act of Congress (75. Stat. 196). It was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1972; at that time the site was determined to be significant in the areas of agriculture, commerce, education, industry, military, political, and transportation. The evaluation for significance as outlined below is based on the present form, used by the National Register of Historic Places, revised in 1986.

Periods of Significance: 1824-1860

Significant Dates: 1824-5; 1829 1860

Significance of this property in relation to other properties has been considered nationally.

National Register Criteria: A, B, D

Criteria Considerations: Criterion E

Areas of Significance: Agriculture; Archaeology; Commerce; Exploration/Settlement; Industry; Education; Politics/Government; Social History; Landscape Architecture; Maritime History

Significant Person: John McLoughlin; Peter Skene Ogden; James Douglas

Statement of Significance

Fort Vancouver, established on the north bank of the Columbia River in the winter of 1824-25, and abandoned in 1860, was a part of Great Britain's international geo-political schemes in the early nineteenth century, as three great powers attempted to establish or maintain control of the rich resources of the Pacific Northwest. Although not initially intended as such, it became the chief administrative headquarters of the Columbia Department of the Hudson's Bay Company; within a decade it became the hub of all Company activities west of the Rocky Mountains, including international trade, for which the foundations were laid during the years 1824-28. Chief Factor John McLoughlin supervised the construction of many new Company posts in the Pacific Northwest--eventually extending its dominion as far as Alaska--and all Company maritime activities along the Pacific Coast. The post was the site of a vast farming enterprise, the first large-scale agriculture in the Pacific Northwest. At Fort Vancouver, the first school in the region began; the earliest formal garden was established, and the first large-scale cultivation of fruit trees begun; the first wheat was grown in Washington state; the first commercial salmon industry was established; the first flour in the state was milled, and many other early industries were started. Many famous botanists and explorers visited the post and made discoveries in its vicinity, which furthered their significant contributions to the prolific body of nineteenth century scientific research in many fields. The first settlements in the Oregon Country began under the auspices and control of Fort Vancouver. Beginning in the 1830s, Fort Vancouver became the initial destination of missionaries and land-hungry Americans, all of whom received material assistance from John McLoughlin in the form of agricultural tools, seed, and livestock; for some

years, early settlers relied on Fort Vancouver for supplies and material goods, and on the post's milling facilities. It was also the principal outpost of civilization in the Pacific Northwest, and the setting for dances, horse races, and other recreational activities. None of the original Hudson's Bay Company structures are extant; the post as it appeared during its zenith, 1844-46, has been partially reconstructed. The site has, since 1948, yielded, and continues to yield, important archeologic information on the events, processes, design and construction methods, settlement patterns and lifeways of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America, and Fort Vancouver in particular. The park has a vast collection of items representing the material culture of the historic period. Many archeologic studies in the past forty years have revealed the character of the post, and many deposits have been found to retain their original content and spatial relationships, yielding important information on the Hudson's Bay Company and Fort Vancouver.

Fort Vancouver and International Strategy

The published journal of Captain James Cook's voyages in the late 18th century, which noted the rich otter furs to be found in the Pacific Northwest, and the market for them in China, sparked a European and American race to the Pacific coast of North America, to exploit the vast fur riches of the northwest. Among the earliest of these new adventurers were a former lieutenant in the British Navy, John Meares, and an English trader named William Douglas, who under the flags of England and Portugal, established a post at Nootka, Alaska, in 1788, later challenged by Spanish naval forces. Later that year Americans Robert Gray and John Kendrick, financed by a Boston syndicate interested in the fur trade, arrived in Northwest waters: in 1792 Robert Gray passed through the entrance to a great river, which he named for his vessel, the *Columbia Rediviva*. During this same year, George Vancouver was sent to the Pacific Northwest as a commissioner to represent Great Britain in negotiations with Spain over Nootka Sound; prior to his meeting with the Spanish representative at Nootka, Vancouver discovered and explored Puget Sound in what is now Washington State. Following Lewis and Clark's 1804-6 overland expedition to the Pacific, American John Jacob Astor organized the Pacific Fur Company. In 1811, this firm established a fur trading post near the mouth of the Columbia River, Fort Astoria, later followed by other posts in the region, in competition with a Canadian firm, the North West Company, a powerful fur trading firm based in Montreal.

England and the United States began a long contest of ownership for the Oregon country, bounded by the Spanish territories to the south, the Rocky Mountains to the east, the Pacific Ocean, and extending indefinitely to the north. The United States rested its claim on the voyages and discoveries of Robert Gray; Great Britain's interests were based on rights ceded by Spain after the Nootka controversy, on the expeditions of Vancouver and Meares, and on an 1793 overland trip made to the coast of British Columbia from Montreal by Alexander Mackenzie of the North West Company. In principal, both countries accepted the idea of partition, however disagreement over the location of the boundary left the territory between the Forty-Ninth parallel, where the United States wanted the line established, and the lower Columbia River, where Great Britain claimed the boundary should be located. This left in doubt the future ownership of the lands between what is now the Canadian border and the Columbia River.

When news of the war in 1812 reached Fort Astoria, the Astorian firm, already plagued by mismanagement and poor luck, sold its interests to the North West Company, which

then occupied the post, which was renamed Fort George. The Treaty of Ghent, ending the war, was signed in 1814; although it did not resolve the boundary dispute between the two countries, a provision in the treaty reassigned Fort George to the Americans, who never took practical possession of it. The fort continued to operate as a North West Company post. In 1818 a joint occupation convention was negotiated between Great Britain and the United States, which left the territory west of the Rockies free and open to the "vessels, subjects and citizens" of both countries for a period of ten years.

On the east side of the Rockies during this period, the North West Company was engaged in a battle with its powerful rival, the Hudson's Bay Company. The latter firm had been established by a charter granted in 1670 by Charles II to his cousin, Prince Rupert, and his associates, which included instructions to work for the discovery of the Northwest Passage and to find trade in furs and "other considerable commodities." The grant included ownership and a trade monopoly of a vast territory drained by the waters running into Hudson Bay in North America. In March of 1821 the two companies were merged to form a new firm. The charter and name of the Hudson's Bay Company were retained, as was the organization of its London headquarters, which directed operations through a Governor and Committee. Under the union, North America was divided into two districts, the Northern Department of Rupert's Land, covering all country north of the boundary with the United States and west of west shore of Hudson's Bay to the Pacific Ocean, including New Caledonia--now British Columbia-- and the Columbia district, and the Southern Department of Rupert's Land, covering the territory east of the Northern Department's boundaries, including Lake Huron and Lake Superior. Each was to be managed by a governor appointed by London, and two councils, comprised of partners in the company--field agents of the two former enemies, "commissioned gentlemen," consisting of chief factors, who generally were responsible for districts within each department, and, as it later worked out, chief traders, who usually managed posts or headed fur brigades. George Simpson, a Scot in service with the Hudson's Bay Company in North America, was appointed to the governorship of the Northern Department; in 1826 he was also appointed head of the Southern Department, and from that time on, effectively administered all the Company's activities in North America, under direction from London.²⁷⁰

George Simpson's first visit to the Columbia, on a tour of assessment of the Company's Columbia and New Caledonia districts, resulted in significant and far-reaching changes in the operations of the Company's westernmost region. His first-hand observations, combined with his understanding of the international situation and trade potential of the region resulted in a preeminent British presence in the Pacific Northwest. Included in the changes he instituted during this first trip west was expanding operations into the Snake Country, and south towards California, before a settlement of the boundary issue should close the rich fur-bearing region to the British; the intent was to create a "fur desert," stripping the regions of their fur resources and thus discouraging American business there. In addition, Simpson instituted rigorous economies, including reductions in staff and in all operations of the fur business. One of his goals was to reduce the reliance of the posts on imported foods, and it was during this trip that he determined to develop an agricultural program which would not only supply the needs of the posts, but which would become a profitable branch of the trade, where produce would be exported.

²⁷⁰The story of the union and reorganization is complex. For more information, see HBRS IV, pp. xli-xlivii; Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. xii-xii, and the excellent summary by John Hussey, *History of Fort Vancouver and Its Physical Structure* (Olympia: Washington State Historical Society and U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, 1957), pp. 9-15.

Another decision was to merge the New Caledonia and Columbia departments into one administrative unit which would be operated by a new depot, and at least in terms of supply and provisioning, the merger occurred in 1825.²⁷¹ The location of the new depot was to be at the mouth of the Fraser River, from which Simpson mistakenly believed the rivers would supply easy access to both districts and the coast, but during Simpson's first visit, the Fraser site was not explored. In the fall of 1824, soon after his arrival at the mouth of the Columbia River, he ordered the abandonment of Fort George and the construction of a new post on the north side of the Columbia, in territory it was still possible the British might hold, and to which supplies could be delivered directly from the sea, rather than overland. The North West Company had instituted the use of Fort Astoria as a periodic depot to supply its interior posts. Simpson was looking for a new site that could serve the same function.

Meanwhile, in the summer of 1824 Great Britain and the United States suspended boundary negotiations, which, while leaving the ultimate settlement of the dispute in doubt, resulted in the Hudson's Bay Company determination to exploit the trade potential in the Pacific Northwest and to reinforce Great Britain's claim to the territory in dispute--the area between the forty-ninth parallel and the lower Columbia River. One of the principal reasons for founding Fort Vancouver was as a political strategy to keep territory north of the Columbia River under British dominion.²⁷² In reporting the establishment of Fort Vancouver to George Canning, the British Foreign Office Secretary, late the following year, Hudson Bay Company Governor J.H. Pelly wrote: "In compliance with a wish expressed by you at our last interview, Governor Simpson, when at the Columbia, abandoned Fort George on the South side of the River and formed a new Establishment on the North side."²⁷³

After Simpson's party arrived at Fort George, on November 8, 1824, Chief Factors Alexander Kennedy and John McLoughlin, who accompanied him, were dispatched to find a site for a new post on the north side of the Columbia. In addition to locating the post on the north bank, Simpson directed his subordinates to find a place where, as McLoughlin later put it, "...we could cultivate the soil and raise our own provisions."²⁷⁴ The site nearest the Columbia's mouth which McLoughlin and Kennedy deemed suitable was a low-lying plain which projected into the Columbia River about six miles upriver from its confluence with the Willamette River. The site was known as the Jolie Prairie or Belle Vue Point.²⁷⁵ About sixty feet above the plain, which appeared to have rich agricultural potential, rose a second terrace of densely wooded land, which offered a commanding view and enough height to establish a defensive position against what were initially thought to be hostile natives. Governor Pelly later told the Foreign Office Secretary that Simpson reported that:

²⁷¹HBRS III, p. 145.

²⁷²Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 257-260.

²⁷³Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 257-260.

²⁷⁴"Copy of a Document Found Among the Private Papers of the Late Dr. John McLoughlin," in *Transactions of the Eighth Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880* (Salem: R.M. Waite, 1881), p.46.

²⁷⁵Referred to as Belle Vue Point in Simpson's early correspondence regarding the site, apparently in the belief it was the same point of land named by Lieutenant Broughton of the British navy, when he surveyed the river in 1792; it is now believed Broughton's Belle Vue Point was further downstream.

He considers the soil and climate of this place [Fort Vancouver] so well adapted for agricultural pursuits that in the course of two or three years, it may be made to produce sufficient Grain and animal Provisions to meet not only the demands of our own Trade but almost to any extent that may be required for other purposes and he considers the possession of this place and a right to the navigation of the river Columbia to be quite necessary to our carrying on to advantage not only the Trade of the upper parts of the Columbia River, but also that of the country interior from the mouth of the Fraser River and the coasting Trade, all of which can be provisioned from the place.²⁷⁶

Fort Vancouver, soon to become the Company's administrative headquarters west of the Rocky Mountains, was the reason for Great Britain's preeminence in the region for the next twenty years. From it, a great network of fur trading posts in the Pacific Northwest Region were established, largely successful beating back American competition for furs and trade. Ironically, it was also Fort Vancouver, under the aegis of its long-time administrator, Dr. John McLoughlin, that offered aid and assistance to an ever-increasing influx of land hungry American immigrants who would eventually overrun the region and lead to the settlement of the boundary at the Forty-Ninth parallel.

Main Depot of the Columbia Department

Apparently immediately after the Chief Factors' return to Fort George, a party was dispatched to start construction.²⁷⁷ A stockade was built about a mile from the river bank on the bluff overlooking the river plain. On March 18, 1825 Simpson recorded in his journal: "The Fort is well picketted covering a space of about 3/4 ths of an acre and the buildings already completed are a Dwelling House, two good Stores an Indian Hall and temporary quarters for the people."²⁷⁸ It appears that the quarters for employees consisted of tents and structures made of other non-permanent materials. Botanist David Douglas, who arrived at the new post on a collecting trip for the Horticultural Society of London on the Company ship, *William and Ann* in April of 1825, was housed in a tent, and later a bark hut near the river.²⁷⁹ There is no doubt a garden existed by 1828, but its location is unknown. Simpson, in a dispatch to London in the spring of 1829, listed the field crop production at Fort Vancouver for 1828, concluding the list with the statement "...besides that of extensive Gardens," and fur trapper Jedediah Smith, who arrived at the post at the end of 1828 noted the fort had "...a fine garden, some small apple trees and vines."²⁸⁰

On March 19, 1825, everyone at the new post gathered at sunrise to watch a flag raising ceremony at which Simpson proclaimed the name of the new post, Fort Vancouver. After the dedication Simpson departed for the east, leaving Chief Factor John McLoughlin in charge of the new establishment.

²⁷⁶OHS mss. 1502, HBC Misc. J.H. Pelly to George Cumming, Hudson Bay House, London, 9 Dec. 1825, pages 2-4.

²⁷⁷HBRS IV, p. 5. October 6 1825, McLoughlin to Gov and Committee.

²⁷⁸Frederick Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire* George Simpson's Journal, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1931, p 124.

²⁷⁹Douglas Journal, pp. 106-7, p. 152.

²⁸⁰Simpson, *Part of Dispatch*, pp. 68-69; Smith, Sublette, et.al, *Letter to J.H. Eaton*, pp. 21-23.

Between 1824 and 1827, the settlement of the boundary issue still hung over the new post, as did Simpson's plans to establish a new depot at the Fraser River. McLoughlin limited the development of the Fort Vancouver--"I erected only such Buildings at this place as are immediately required..." he told London in a September, 1826 letter--apparently anticipating a settlement in which the Columbia would become the boundary, and fur-trading to the south would become impossible, making Fort Vancouver's location at the south edge of the British territory operationally inefficient. However, in August of 1827 the joint-occupation of the disputed territory was indefinitely extended, and it became clear Fort Vancouver could continue to act as a locus from which fur brigades could be sent south, as well as north and east.²⁸¹

Main Depot of the Columbia Department

In the fall of 1928 George Simpson returned to Fort Vancouver; during his trip to the post, he determined that the Fraser River was unnavigable during his dangerous descent of it, and his plans to establish the Columbia Department's main depot at its mouth were scrapped. Fort Vancouver became the permanent supply depot for all of the department's posts in the Columbia and New Caledonia. The location of the original stockade, at least a mile from the Columbia River, was not practical for the increasing amounts of goods and material which would have to be moved in and out of the depot enroute to and from other posts, England, and, if the envisioned agricultural and industrial production plans materialized, Hawaii, California, and possibly the Russians in Alaska. Hauling water to the stockade, with an increased complement of employees stationed there to perform depot duties, would be inefficient. Also, as noted by several later visitors, a high, naturally-defensible site to repel Indians who, as it turned out, were mostly peaceful, was unnecessary.²⁸² Thus, in the winter of 1828-29, or possibly in the early spring of 1829, construction began on a new stockade on the plain lying along the river, about four hundred yards from its bank.²⁸³

By early March of 1829 the new stockade was apparently complete enough for American Jedediah Smith to observe that its dimensions were about three hundred feet square. There was one entrance to the stockade, set approximately in the center of the south wall, 164.5 feet east of the southwest corner.²⁸⁴ The post was still under construction in September, 1829, when John Warren Dease, in charge of Fort Colville, arrived at the fort seeking medical treatment.²⁸⁵ He noted on September 6 that he "Got my tent pitched there being no house room: all the gentlemen being in lodges or tents."²⁸⁶ By 1834, the ten to twelve buildings within the stockade were located along the interior edges of the fort, in a U shape, with the open end of the U along the north wall. According to naturalist John Kirk Townsend, who arrived at the post in 1834, the open court in the center was "...a large open space, where all

²⁸¹HBRS IV, p. 32.

²⁸²Wilkes, Emmons.

²⁸³J.S. Smith, D.E. Jackson, W.L. Sublette to J.H. Eaton, St. Louis, October 29, 1830, in 21 Congress, 2nd Session, Senate Ex. Doc. No. 39, pp. 21-23.

²⁸⁴Marlessa Gray, "Structural Aspects of Fort Vancouver, 1829-1860: An Historical-Archeological Interpretation, unpublished ms. January 1978, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich.; John Hussey, History of Fort Vancouver and its Physical Structure; Louis Caywood, Final Report Fort Vancouver Excavations (San Francisco: U.S. DI NPS, July 1, 1955. Refer to these reports regarding construction techniques, dimensions, and other detailed information.

²⁸⁵He was to die at the Dalles in January of 1830.

²⁸⁶Diary of John Warren Dease, Mss 602, PABC. typescript, pp.2-8.

the indoor work of the establishment is done. Here the Indians assemble with their multifarious articles of trade, beaver, otter, venison and various other game, and here, once a week, several scores of Canadians are employed, beating the furs which have been collected, in order to free them from dust and vermin."²⁸⁷

Although not initially intended as such, it became the chief administrative headquarters of the Columbia Department of the Hudson's Bay Company; within a decade it became the hub of all Company activities west of the Rocky Mountains, including international trade, for which the foundations were laid during the years 1824-28. Buildings included stores, warehouses and shops for trade, all relating to the post's business as a depository and shipping point to London for furs from its own brigades and for those shipped from the Columbia Department's interior posts, and as a supply depot for imported items and provisions for its own use and for shipment to other posts. Throughout the life of the stockade, fences were located between some building ends and the stockade walls, which served to keep livestock out and to discourage theft of any materials or provisions stored in back of the buildings. A belfry housing a bell to signal work times, church serves and other activities, and a flagstaff were also located within the fort.

As the Columbia Department's operations in fur trading, administration of a growing number of posts, and agriculture and manufacturing continued to grow, more facilities were needed. Between 1834 and 1841 the stockade was enlarged, and during and following that period, new buildings were erected in the interior. The dimensions of the stockade between 1834-36 and 1841, according to archeologic studies of the site, were 660.75 feet, east-west, by 317.7 feet, north-south; two new gates were built in the stockade walls at this time: a second gate on the south, near the southeast corner, and a gate located on the north wall, 212 feet from the stockade's northeast corner.²⁸⁸ With the stockade's enlargement, the interior configuration was altered to form two courts: the original buildings enclosed the older open space, and new structures were built along the edge of the enlarged stockade walls to the east, forming a ring around another yard. During this period, there were approximately twenty structures within the stockade, and facilities and operations at the post had expanded to include workshops for coopers, wheelwrights; storage of farm produce, primarily seed for planting and increased storage for departmental supplies and provisions; more permanent quarters for the Company's officers; a Roman Catholic church; a school house, and a store for trade with missionaries and settlers. During this period the second Chief Factor's--or Big House, as it was referred to by employees--was built. Between 1841 and 1846, the stockade was again enlarged, reflecting the development of the depot when the Hudson's Bay Company, through Fort Vancouver, had reached its maximum influence in the region. The stockade during this period measured 732.8 to 734 feet east-west, and about 318 feet north-south. New structures included a new bakery--the post's third-- and an octagonal bastion located on the northwest corner of the stockade, under construction in February of 1845. Some new buildings were erected, including a beef storage building and an iron store, and several older buildings were demolished or rebuilt. The interior spatial arrangement of the post was altered by the removal of the buildings dividing the two courtyards. According to a French envoy touring the Pacific Northwest in 1841, the stockade contained "...thirty separate buildings. These include quarters for the governor, the superintendent, and other employes of the Company, together with their families, carpenter, locksmith, and blacksmith shops, forges, storehouses for

²⁸⁷Townsend, pp. 171-2.

²⁸⁸Marlessa Gray, "Structural Aspects of Fort Vancouver, 1829-1860: An Historical-Archeological Interpretation, unpublished ms. January 1978, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Mich., pp 184-197.

furs, tanneries, a warehouse for European merchandise, a pharmacy, and a Catholic church that also serves as a school. All of these buildings are constructed of wood, except the powder magazine which is an isolated brick structure."²⁸⁹ A British lieutenant evaluating the Company's posts at the behest of George Simpson and the British Foreign Office, noted the stockade contained accommodations for about 500 men.²⁹⁰

The plain on which the new stockade was situated came to be called, Fort Plain. It was the functional and approximate geographic center of Fort Vancouver's lands, which, at its greatest extent fronted the Columbia river for about twenty-five miles, and stretched northward from it for distances varying from four to fifteen miles. All principal roads led to and from the 1828-29 stockade, connecting it to the post's other agricultural centers, referred to as farms, to the north, east and west; to its mills six miles to the east; to its employee village and river front activities, west and south of the stockade, and to overland routes connecting the post with the outside world.

Legend maintains the state's first grist mill was built and operated at Fort Vancouver in the early years of its establishment. In 1828-9, a horse and oxen powered grist mill was definitely located just north of the new stockade; a water-powered grist mill was later built six miles east of the post. To the west and south of the stockade the company's lesser employees were lodged in a "village," which eventually grew to number around fifty structures, arranged along streets, or paths. To the south, along the river, a complex of industrial and agricultural buildings were erected, including boatsheds, warehouses, tanning pits, and stables for the working livestock of the farm. A hospital was also built near the river.

During this period McLoughlin, under instructions from Simpson and the Company's London headquarters, established the Company's coastal trade, which continued to be directed from Fort Vancouver until the Columbia Department headquarters were moved to Victoria, B.C., in 1849. In 1827 a thirty ton sloop--the *Broughton*-- was built at Fort Vancouver, on the river about 1/4 mile from the stockade; in 1828 a sixty ton craft, the *Vancouver*, was launched. In the 1830s and '40s the marine department of the depot continued to grow. By 1836, the Company had seven vessels employed on the coast in a continuing program to drive the Americans from the coast, including the pioneer steamship *Beaver*; in annual voyages to and from London, and in trade missions to California and Hawaii. In the post's river front complex, a "salmon store," which served to house barrels of salted salmon, a salt store, and a cooper's shop were built to house provisions to be shipped to the Department's interior posts and to foreign ports. A wharf or landing jetty was erected to move the shipments of furs and goods in and out of the depot.

In 1827 McLoughlin, under instructions from Simpson, founded the first of a number of new Company posts--Fort Langley--which was to become the Company's principal supplier of salted salmon, used as provisions for the department's posts, and later, as an export item. But that same year McLoughlin shipped some barrels of salted salmon to California from Fort Vancouver, which was the first post to engage in the commercial salmon business. During the years after 1829, the posts maintained by the Company through the

²⁸⁹Deflot de Mofrás, *Travels on the Pacific Coast*, Vol. II, translated, edited and annotated by Marguerite Eyer Wilbur. Fine Arts Press, Santa Ana, CA, 1937. pp. 97-98.

²⁹⁰Papers relative to the Expedition of Lieutenants' Warre and Vavasour to the Oregon Territory, Inclosed in Letter from Colonial Office of 3rd November 1846; American, Domestic Various Vol. 457. PABC Great Britain Foreign Office Papers, call # D A G79.2. Typescript, p. 16-17.

Fort Vancouver depot included Fort George--reoccupied in 1829; Chinook or Pillar Rock; Cape Disappointment; Fort Umpqua; Fort Nez Percés; Fort Boise; Fort Hall, Fort Okanagan; Fort Colville; Kootenai Post; Flathead Post; Coweean, and later, Champoe in the Willamette River valley. Under the Hudson's Bay Company's later subsidiary, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, two additional posts were supervised from Fort Vancouver: Cowlitz Farm and Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound. For many years Fort Vancouver served as the collection point for furs from these posts, and as the distribution center for supplies and trade goods from London, agricultural produce and equipment from Fort Vancouver, and items manufactured "in country" at Fort Vancouver, necessary to keep the posts operating.

Chief Factor McLoughlin, as head of the Columbia Department at Fort Vancouver, presided over the establishment and operations of a general trading post in San Francisco between 1841 and 1845, and had jurisdiction over an agency established in the Hawaiian Islands in 1833.

Also, by 1828, a sawmill was operating on Mill Creek, six miles east of the stockade; plans were already underway to market the milled planks in Hawaii and California.²⁹¹ Later new sawmills were built on the same stream to continue the export trade in planks and deals; in 1849, the mills shipped lumber to California. McLoughlin also experimented with brewing, using barley grown at Fort Vancouver, apparently as early as 1827, and a distillery near the river was in operation through the mid 1830s.²⁹²

Large Scale Farming

When the post reached its maximum development in the 1840s, the Hudson's Bay Company farm consisted of three great open spaces in the forest lands they owned along the Columbia River, referred to as Fort Plain, Lower Plain and Mill Plain, and several smaller plains north and east of the post, jointly referred to as the Back Plains. In addition, the Company had a sawmill, grist mill, and associated structures, six miles east of the stockade.

Fort Plain, where the stockade was located, was the first major agricultural area of Fort Vancouver to be developed, in production at least as early as 1832. It was a long, irregularly shaped meadow with natural terraces extending down to the River, which ran for approximately 3 1/2 miles along the Columbia River, approaching a mile or so in depth at its widest. The lowest terrace was subject to Spring inundations: the 1844 stockade area map shows the high water mark during the river's spring freshets extended almost one-half mile into the plain in places, depending on the changes in topography. The northern and eastern boundaries were defined by dense coniferous forest on rising ground, with bluff or bench, occasionally referred to as the "Upper Prairie," to the northeast, where the original fort was located. The western boundary of Fort Plain was formed by a finger of forest which extended towards the river, separating it from what became known as the Lower Plain to the west.

Just north of the stockade walls a four to five acre garden was established, at least as early as 1831: it was frequently remarked upon by visitors to the post, who were allowed to walk in it by Chief Factor McLoughlin. The garden was laid out in a formal fashion, with broad paths and large beds containing garden vegetables, flowers and fruit trees. Oral tradition

²⁹¹HBRS IV, p. 54.

²⁹²Ibid., p. 65.

claims the first peach trees in the Pacific Northwest were set out in the garden in 1829--there is historical evidence peach trees were in the garden by 1832. The garden was also served as the beginning site of the first large-scale cultivation of apples; later, probably in the mid-1830s, a separate orchard was established to the west of the garden in which hundreds of apple --and other fruit--trees were planted. Various visitors in the 1830s and '40s noted the presence of, in addition to common vegetables and flowers, citrus trees, plums, pears, cherry, quince and fig trees. By 1836 a summer house was located at the north end of the garden, and illustrations of the area in the 1840s show small structures along its east edge that appear to have been cold frames or small greenhouses. Visitors favored by Chief Factor McLoughlin received seeds and cuttings from the Fort Vancouver garden, which were then taken by their new owners to farms throughout the region.

By 1838, an inventory of the post's lands listed cultivable 457 acres on Fort Plain.²⁹³ Cultivated fields were enclosed by fencing to keep livestock, pastured on Fort Plain, out. Crops known to have been grown on Fort Plain included wheat, peas, barley, tares, potatoes, and seed clover. There were several large barns in which harvested grain was stored in different locations on Fort Plain, at least one piggery, and in the mid-1840s, a horse stable southeast of the stockade near the river.

Lower Plain was bounded on the east by a stretch of forest and undergrowth extending from the forests of the north to the riverbank, immediately west of Fort Plain and Kanaka Village, about a mile and one-half from the stockade. It ran for about three-quarters of a mile in a narrow band along the river, and then broadened to three or more miles in width, to the southern tip of Big (Vancouver) Lake. A string of narrow lakes formed the northerly border of this narrow band, north of which was an open meadow on which the Company, fairly early on, established a farm of several hundred acres, called West Plain Farm, generally considered part of Lower Plain. Functionally, the Lower Plain had two uses in its early years of development: the West Plain farm, which contained cultivated fields, and the remainder of the plain, which was used to pasture cattle, horses, some sheep and pigs, and, apparently, goats. By 1844, the narrow stretch of the plain just west of the forest separating Lower Plain from Fort Plain had been developed to include cultivated fields, a piggery and a dairy.

Mill Plain was an open "prairie" or meadow of "great extent," approximately three miles long and three-quarters of a mile wide, located north and northeast of the Company's sawmill on the Columbia river.²⁹⁴ It was bounded on all sides by forest, through which paths, and eventually wagon roads were established. Mill Plain was used for some time as pasture for the Company's livestock, prior to the establishment of the Mill Plain Farm, which occurred in the summer of 1841 or early in 1842. By the mid 1840s, the farm had over 1,000 acres under cultivation, probably all in wheat.

With plans to increase grain and flour production in the late 1830s, it appears the post's managers decided to build a new water-powered mill near the 1828-29 mill. In October of 1838, while Chief Factor McLoughlin was on leave in Europe, James Douglas reported to London that construction of a water powered gristmill, "adapted for two run of 54 inch stones," was underway, with materials prepared for a dam and a mill building. The new mill began operation in May of 1839.²⁹⁵ The mill building was 3 1/2 stories high, had two pairs of stones and a wire bolting machine, driven by an overshot wheel. There was a

²⁹³HBRS IV, p. 238.

²⁹⁴Approximately in the area of Mill Plain Boulevard and 104th to 164th Avenues today.

²⁹⁵HBRS IV, p 260-265; HBRS VI, pp. 223-4.

small residential complex located near the mill for the miller and mill workers. Construction on yet another flour mill began in July of 1845, but it was never completed.

The Back Plains consisted of a series of open meadows or prairies in the forests north and northeast of Fort Plain on which the company raised crops and pastured livestock. Some of these plain were in production by 1832, but their use for cultivation was sporadic, given their reportedly poor soil. After 1838, the Company pastured cattle and horses on an island in the Columbia River, near the mouth of the Willamette River. It became the principal location of the farm's dairies; at one point, four dairies were situated there. One of the Company's dairymen, Sauve dit Laplante, gave the island its name--Sauvie Island.

Agricultural operations at the post slowly expanded. McLoughlin later recalled that, "In March 1825, we moved there and that spring planted potatoes and sowed two bushels of peas, the only grain we had, and all we had."²⁹⁶ From an initial harvest of 900 barrels of potatoes and 9 1/2 bushels of seed peas in the fall of 1825, by 1828, the post was producing between 800 and 1000 bushels of wheat, "making good flour." The first wheat was planted in in the spring of 1826, and is considered to be the beginning of wheat cultivation in Washington state. In the winter of 1828-29, Simpson declared that the Columbia Department was "...independent of foreign aid in regard to the means of subsistence."²⁹⁷ By 1837, George Simpson was telling London:

The fur trade is the principal branch of business at present in the country situated between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific ocean. On the banks of the Columbia river, however, where the soil and climate are favorable to cultivation, we are directing our attention to agriculture on a large scale, and there is every prospect that we shall soon be able to establish important branches of export trade from thence in the articles of wood, tallow, hides, tobacco, and grain of various kinds.

I have also the satisfaction to say, that the native population are beginning to profit by our example, as many, formerly dependent on hunting and fishing, now maintain themselves by the produce of the soil.

The possession of that country to Great Britain may become an object of very great importance, and we are strengthening that claim to it (independent of the claims of prior discovery and occupation for the purpose of Indian trade) by forming a nucleus of a colony through the establishment of farms, and the settlement of some of our retiring officers and servants as agriculturists.²⁹⁸

The farm at Fort Vancouver generally used hands not assigned to other tasks. However, during planting and harvesting season, all available employees were marshalled to work on the farm. In addition to Hawaiians, French-Canadians, Orkney men and others from the British Isles, local Indians were hired to work in the fields, and after the 1840s, the

²⁹⁶Copy of a Document Found Among the Private Papers of the Late Dr. John McLoughlin, in Transactions of the Eighth Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880, Salem: R.M. Waite, 1881, p. 46.

²⁹⁷Simpson to Governor and Committee, March 1, 1829, Merk, *Fur Trade and Empire*, pp. 229-301.

²⁹⁸George Simpson to J.H. Pelly, dated London, 1 Feb 1837, extract, printed in British and American Join Commission on the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies' Claims in the Matter of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company Arguments for the United States, C. Cushing, counsel, no date, page 36. at PABC.

company came to rely more and more on their labor. They were usually supervised by a clerk appointed to Fort Vancouver by the Company. Periodically the Company employed farm specialists--shepherds, or dairymen, for example--from England to assist at the post.

Farm production grew steadily at Fort Vancouver, from 120 cultivated acres in 1829 to 1,420 acres in 1846. Livestock production also rose significantly, although the latter years are hard to assess, since many cattle and sheep at the post were transferred to the farms at Fort Nisqually and Cowlitz. Visitors were almost unanimously impressed with the scale and scope of the farm operations: Silas Holmes, an assistant surgeon with the U.S. Exploring Expedition noted that the post's farming operations in 1841 were conducted on "stupendous" scale.²⁹⁹ Soil conservation and enrichment, primarily through the use of penning sheep and cattle on poor soils, and then working in the manure, was practiced at Fort Vancouver. Other farming methods included crop rotation, and selective use of different soils for different crops. Initially seed was sent from London, but as the years progressed, an important part of farming at the post was the threshing of grain, peas and grasses for seed for the next season. Grain harvest seems to have followed typical agricultural practices of the first half of the nineteenth century. By 1840 grain was cut with a scythe and cradle--the cradle at this time was still not in general use in North America.³⁰⁰ In 1829, grain was thrashed with horses, "in the circus," probably a wood or dirt treading floor located in a barn.³⁰¹ By 1834 a horse-powered threshing mill was being used on the farm, probably a sweep or lever type of power, with horses walking in a circle to operate a geared arrangement. In the mid-to-late '30s the farm had a "mammoth threshing machine" in one of its barns, but by the 1840s Fort Vancouver was using portable threshing machines; also by the 1840s, if not earlier, the threshed grain was cleaned with fanning mills.

By far the most important cash-barter crop at Fort Vancouver was wheat. Great quantities of it were raised, particularly after the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, and the development of an export trade to the Russians in Alaska. Much of it was also ground into flour in the fort's gristmill; towards the mid 1840s, wheat was shipped into the mill from the Willamette Valley by batteau and barges, and flour shipped out. But great quantities of peas were also raised for provisions for the Department's posts. Barley, oats and buckwheat were also raised, and for some years, smaller crops of Indian corn. Potatoes were another mainstay, and although production figures are often missing for this crop, it is almost certain it was raised throughout this historic period. Acreage was also planted in turnips, upon which sheep were allowed to overwinter, and possibly pigs were also placed on these fields.

At the end of this historic period, in an inventory prepared by the Company in the winter of 1846-47, following the settlement of the boundary dispute between the U.S. and Great Britain, that it held almost 9,000 acres in and around Fort Vancouver. The inventory included 1,419 1/2 acres under cultivation.³⁰² This differs from the 1200 acres the British government's military reconnaissance team noted in 1846, and also from the testimony given by Thomas Lowe on behalf of the Hudson's Bay Company when a final settlement was under adjudication regarding the Company's "possessory rights" provided for in the

²⁹⁹Silas Holmes "journal," MS III, 5, Beinecke Rare Book and MS Library, Yale Univ.

³⁰⁰Landerholm, Carl, ed.: *Notices and Voyages of the Famed Quebec Mission to the Pacific Northwest*. Champoege Press, Inc.: Portland, OR., 1956, p. 26.

³⁰¹John Warren Dease, Oct 9 1829

³⁰²T.C. Elliott, *British Values in Oregon 1847 OHQ XXXII*, March 1931, pp 27-45.

treaty. Lowe indicated that the actual acreage under cultivation was "much more" than the amount in the inventory, but that it was not fenced.³⁰³

Initially the livestock operation at Fort Vancouver was intended to provide meat for the Company's own posts and coastal vessels in the Columbia Department, in the form of salted beef and pork, and, presumably dairy products. Because horses were required in great numbers as transportation--and sometimes food, in the early years--for the fur trade, and were necessary for large scale farm work, it was apparently decided to breed them at the post, rather than rely on trading for them with the Indians, primarily the Nez Percés. Later salted pork, butter and wool became major export items--plans to export hides and tallow apparently never materialized to any great degree.

An 1829 inventory of livestock at the post listed 43 milk cows; 18 working oxen, 4 bulls; 46 heifers & steers; 43 calves, 1 year; 18 calves this spring; 108 hogs; 74 young pigs; 8 Buck goats; 11 she goats; 14 kids; 22 horses & mares.³⁰⁴ By 1839 there were over eight hundred head of cattle grazing in Fort Vancouver pastures; according to one source, by 1846 there were 1,915 cattle at Fort Vancouver.³⁰⁵ In part, the increase was due to a policy established by George Simpson, which disallowed killing any beef until the herd had increased to 600 in number; it wasn't until the summer of 1836 that the first cattle were killed for meat. In addition, several cattle drives from California had brought the Company an increase in stock. Most of the cattle were rangy Spanish stock, but early on Fort Vancouver imported several bulls, although this was done to improve milk production at the farm's dairies.

Raising hogs was an early and important agricultural activity at the post, particularly for use in supplying the interior posts with foodstuffs in the form of salted pork, and later to fulfill the contract with the Russian American Company. George Simpson's original goal was to produce enough pigs to make 10,000 pounds of cured pork each year. Because pigs--unlike cattle--were fast breeding and prolific, McLoughlin was able to report in 1829 that he would salt more than 40 barrels of pork that year.³⁰⁶ By 1845, British Lieutenants Warre and Vavasour reported there were over 1,500 pigs at Fort Vancouver.³⁰⁷ By 1844 the Company had imported some Berkshire hogs to improve the breed.

In 1839 the Hudson's Bay Company established a subsidiary company, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, to handle a contract the company had made with the Russian American Company in Alaska. In exchange for trading rights and a lease to establish posts on the Alaskan coast in the vicinity of the Stikine River and a strip of coast between Cross and Chatham Sounds, the Company agreed to provide the Russians with an annual

³⁰³BAJC Papers II, p. 8.

³⁰⁴HBCA B 223/d/22 1829. Inventory of Country Produce, Fort Vancouver, p 11.

³⁰⁵James Gibson, *Farming the Frontier: The Agricultural Opening of the Oregon Country, 1786-1846*, p. 39. It is unclear from the table in this publication whether the totals listed for Fort Vancouver for each year included cattle pastured on Sauvie Island and in the Willamette Valley; also, after 1839, and the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, cattle were between Fort Vancouver, Fort Nisqually and Cowlitz Farm; the number of cattle reported depended to some extent on the time of year.

³⁰⁶HBRS IV 79.

³⁰⁷Papers relative to the Expedition of Lietu's Warre and Vavasour to the Oregon Territory, Inclosed in Letter from Colonial Office of 3rd November 1846; American, Domestic Various Vol. 457. PABC Great Britain Foreign Office Papers, call # D A G79.2. Typescript. Letter from M. Vavasour and Warre to The Secretary of State for the Colonies, Fort Vancouver, 1 November 1845, American Domestic Various Vo. 457, p 94

rent of otter skins and with 8,400 bushels of wheat, wheat flour, barley, peas, salted beef, butter and manufactured items. Neither Fort Vancouver or the only other departmental post producing foodstuffs in any quantity, Fort Langley, could meet the contract. The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was incorporated to develop additional farms within the department, and, beyond meeting the needs of the Russians, to develop an international market for produce from the Pacific Northwest. Fort Nisqually established in 1833 on Puget Sound to exploit the fur trade in that region, and Cowlitz Farm, which had been established in 1838 because the Fort Vancouver managers were looking for additional agricultural land on which to expand, were transferred to the new firm, as was most of the livestock and farm implements in the department.

Chief Factor McLoughlin was appointed to head this enterprise, in addition to his continuing duties as administrative head of all the Hudson's Bay Company posts west of the Rocky Mountains. While in theory and in law, the two companies were separate, and separate accounts were kept for each, in practice, the operations of the two were mixed. Farming continued on a large scale at Fort Vancouver, which served as a way station for livestock heading north to the Puget's Sound Company farms, and which was further developed in order to meet the Russian contract: the Mill Plain Farm at Fort Vancouver was established in 1841-42 to help meet the wheat and flour demands of the contract, and almost all of the butter made at the post was shipped to fulfill the contract's demands. In addition, Fort Vancouver served as the primary shipping point for most of the agricultural produce sent to Alaska. Also, the need for wheat made it the principal coin in the settlements of the Willamette Valley, where it was bartered by American growers for goods at the Company's store at Fort Vancouver, and later in Oregon City and at Champoege.

Sheep eventually became the most important livestock at Fort Vancouver, due to the desire to export wool in quantities to London after the establishment of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. In the 1840s, the number of sheep owned by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company rose from 2,342 reported in 1841, to 10,578, reported in 1846--this included sheep at Fort Nisqually, Cowlitz Farm and Fort Vancouver. Between 1842 and 1847 over 60,000 pounds of wool was shipped to London for marketing, as well as a little over 2,000 sheepskins.³⁰⁸ At Fort Vancouver, a serious effort was made to improve the native stock, imported primarily from California, through the use of blooded sheep from England, including Merinos, Saxons and Leicesters, and the flocks were administered to continuously improve wool production through the use of the imported rams and ewes.

New York of the Pacific Coast

Missionary Narcissa Whitman recorded upon her arrival at the post in September of 1836, that her party had arrived at "...Vancouver the New York of the Pacific Coast."³⁰⁹ Fort Vancouver, with its supplies of imported goods, agricultural produce, seed and livestock--not to mention its permanent buildings offering comparative comfort to recover from the rigors of travel--was the initial destination of scientists, missionaries, and later settlers, who traveled to the north Pacific. The post also was the center of social life in the region. Almost every visitor who recorded the daily events of his or her life at the post mentioned picnics, horseback rides, and tours of the farm, of which the Chief Factors was undoubtedly

³⁰⁸Clark, R.C., ed., "Puget Sound Agricultural Company," Washington Historical Quarterly 18, 1927, pp. 57-59.

³⁰⁹Lawrence Dodd, ed., Narcissa Whitman, My Journal (Fairfield, WA: Ye Galleon Press, 1984, 2nd ed.), p. 48.

proud. Dances were held within the stockade, and race tracks were laid out on Fort Plain for the amusement of visitors and on occasional post holidays.

In 1835 Rev. Samuel Parker wrote, "Half of a new house is assigned me, well furnished, and all attendance which I could wish, with access to as many valuable books. There is a school connected with this establishment for the benefit of the children of the traders and common laborers, some of whom are orphans whose parents were attached to the company; and also some Indian children, who are provided for by the generosity of the resident gentlemen..."³¹⁰ The school was established in 1832, with John Ball, a young American who had arrived with Nathaniel Wyeth's first expedition, teaching McLoughlin's son and other boys at the fort to read. Instruction was given under a succession of teachers. Some students boarded at Fort Vancouver, in the school house--later the Owyhee Church--sent by officers and clerks from throughout the Columbia District. For some years the education was apparently free of charge, but by the mid-30s, some students, at least, were required to work on the farm to help defray the expenses of keeping them. It seems the school may have been discontinued for a time, beginning in 1843, although it may have resumed on a reduced scale in 1844. Late in 1843 or early in 1844, Chief Trader James Douglas, in consultation with George Simpson, began to plan for a school which would be supported by subscription to pay the salaries of a teacher.³¹¹ Douglas directed the construction of two new school buildings north of the stockade, anticipating the new school, but these structures were still unfinished when the U.S. army arrived at the post in 1849.

It was Company policy to require all residents of the posts in the Northern Department to attend religious services on Sunday. At Fort Vancouver, two services were held on that day in the dining hall of the Manager's Residence, or Big House; one was conducted in English by McLoughlin or a designated employee according to the Episcopal ritual, and one was read by McLoughlin in French for Roman Catholics. Visiting missionaries were invited to preach at Fort Vancouver, after they began to arrive in the mid 1830s. In 1836 London sent the Rev. Herbert Beaver, an ordained minister of the Church of England, to Fort Vancouver. During the course of the minister's two year sojourn at the post, antipathy developed between Beaver and Chief Factor McLoughlin regarding religious instruction of the fort's children and the "fur trade" marriages of the post's employees; when McLoughlin left on leave in the spring of 1838, originally satisfactory relations between Chief Trader James Douglas and the reverend disintegrated. Beaver and his wife set sail for England upon hearing of McLoughlin's return from his furlough in Europe.³¹² On November 24, 1838, two priests, Francois Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers, arrived at Fort Vancouver, dispatched by the Bishop of Juliopolis near the Red River in Canada, after negotiations with Governor Simpson and London. The first Catholic mass in "lower" Oregon was held the following day. The priests were given a building to use as a church within the stockade; the building was also occasionally used for Episcopal services. The priests resided at the fort when not administering to the missions and other Columbia Department posts; in 1842, two additional priests arrived in Oregon Country. Around 1844 the Company offered Father Blanchet a tract of land north of the stockade, and in 1845-46 a new church was built beyond the confines of the stockade.

³¹⁰Rev. Samuel Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour Beyond the Rocky Mountains Under the Direction of the A.B.C.F.M. Performed in the Years 1835, '36, and '37....* Ross and Haines: (Minneapolis, Minn.: Ross and Haines, 1838), p.159-161.

³¹¹Hussey, HSR Vol II, p 301-3.

³¹²Hussey, Fort Vancouver Physical Structure, p. 173.

Fort Vancouver served both as the destination and home base for British, American and other foreign naturalists, many of whom became internationally-recognized scientists, with reputations based in part on their research from Fort Vancouver. To all Chief Factor McLoughlin extended assistance and aid. Among them, as noted earlier, botanist David Douglas, whose first visit in 1825-27, was followed by a second in 1829-30. Douglas was accompanied on his first trip by physician and scientist Dr. John Scouler. Botanist Thomas Nuttall, who travelled with the Nathaniel Wyeth Expedition in 1834-35 to Fort Vancouver, was recognized as the discoverer of many new genera and species of plants: his association with the Pacific Northwest is memorialized by the name given to the native flowering dogwood, *Cornus nuttallii*. With Nuttall was John Kirk Townsend, a Philadelphia ornithologist, who later acted as a temporary physician at Fort Vancouver.

William Brackenridge, at the post in 1841 with the U.S. Exploring Expedition, collected botanical data which was later published, including an important study of ferns. In fact, many members of the U.S. Exploring Expedition were guests of the Hudson's Bay Company, at Fort Vancouver and at other posts; some of the specimens from the collections of the expedition's naturalists and anthropologists, and the elaborate drawings, many of which were published in following years, were made at and near Fort Vancouver; the collections led to the establishment of the first federally supported museum, in the National Gallery of the Patent Office, later, they were lodged at the Smithsonian. John C. Fremont's overland exploring expedition from the United States, arriving at Fort Vancouver in November of 1843, included a collection of plants later described in a Smithsonian publication.

The Horticultural Society of London maintained close ties with Fort Vancouver via the Company's London office, and many native plants and trees from the Fort Vancouver region found their way into the Society's gardens at Chiswick. 313

Fort Vancouver's Influence on Settlement

Early in this period former Company employees and free trappers began to settle in the 150 mile-long Willamette Valley, south of the Columbia River; the first establishments were in the vicinity of Champoege, where it was relatively easy to ford the Willamette River, and where fur traders and trappers had in previous years established camps. One of the earliest to settle there was Etienne Lucier, a free trader who in 1828 approached Chief Factor John McLoughlin, asking for his assistance in establishing a farm. McLoughlin later recalled, "I told him I would loan him seed to sow and wheat to feed himself and family, to be returned from the produce of his farm, and sell him such implements as were in the Hudson Bay Company's store at fifty percent, on prime cost."³¹⁴ Lucier did not settle in the Valley until 1829 or '30, and it was then that Fort Vancouver, under the aegis of

313Erwin F. Lange, "Dr. John McLoughlin and the Botany of the Pacific Northwest," *Madroño*, Vol. 14, 1958, pp. 268-272; Ansel F. Hemenway, "Botanists of the Oregon Country," *Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol V., September 1904, No. 3, pp. 207-214; Harold Fletcher, *The Story of the Royal Horticultural Society, 1804-1968* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), passim; Herman J. Viola and Carolyn Margolis, eds., *Magnificent Voyagers: The U.S. Exploring Expedition 1838-1842* (Washington D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1985), passim.

314"Copy of a Document found among the Private Papers of the late Dr. John McLoughlin," *Transactions of the Eighth Annual Re-Union of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880* (Salem, Oregon: L.M. Waite, 1881), p. 48. Hereafter referred to as TOPA, 1880.

McLoughlin, became involved in the development of farming in the Valley, through its provision of seed, livestock and agricultural implements to freemen and retired employees.³¹⁵ From this nuclear settlement, fostered and encouraged by Chief Factor McLoughlin, the Oregon Territory developed.

In the 1830s and '40s the farm and store at Fort Vancouver provided necessary supplies, livestock and equipment to American missionaries, who were later instrumental in publicizing the attractions of the rich Willamette Valley to land-hungry and restless Americans in the States, and who had a significant role in establishing the Oregon Country as a territory of the United States. Up until 1842-43, Fort Vancouver served as the principal supply for food, clothing, and materials to start a farm for Americans arriving overland: in 1833 John Ball, who arrived at the post in 1832 with American entrepreneur Nathaniel Wyeth, wrote to friends back east, "He [John McLoughlin] has liberally engaged to lend me a plough, an axe, oxen, cow &c."³¹⁶ Reports of such aid, printed in newspapers in the states, furthered interest in migration. In the following years, reports from missionaries and other early travelers and settlers who found the Oregon country hospitable and fertile, sparked increasing numbers immigrants. Jason Lee, of the Methodist Mission, began to lecture on the advantages of the Oregon Country when he visited the east coast in the late 1830s, and his speeches and the 1838 published journal of his travels contributed to the spread of Oregon fever. By 1841 there were sixty-five Americans in the Willamette Valley, to whom McLoughlin had loaned seed, livestock and agricultural implements. By 1843 over 1,000 American settlers had established themselves in the valley, and the economic base had begun to shift to there from Fort Vancouver. But for most of this period, it was John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver who aided the Americans: his reasons have often been described as humanitarian--without aid, the settlers would almost certainly have starved--but assistance was also forthcoming to avoid confrontations and probable looting. In 1843 the settlers in the Valley voted to form a Provisional Government, which McLoughlin felt obliged to join and pay taxes to, to protect the Company's interests.

In March of 1845, Chief Trader James Douglas wrote to George Simpson: "I am sorry to hear that the Settlement of the Boundary question is likely to drag on, from year to year, without being settled, as the Americans will soon leave nothing to settle..."³¹⁷ In 1845, a census in the Oregon Territory showed 2,109 white people were living there, most of them settlers who had arrived since 1842. Probably the most important impacts occurred during the latter years of this period, from around 1842 to 1846, when the numbers of immigrants and existing settlers in the Willamette Valley reached a certain critical mass. Taking the broadest view, it is obvious that the influx of Americans--some of whom were extremely vocal and had the ear of the likes of Horace Greeley and expansionist politicians in Washington D.C.-- was eventually bound to tilt the balance in the claims of the United States to the disputed territory. It was apparently hoped by McLoughlin that by steering settlers to the Willamette Valley, the British might yet retain their hold on the lands north of the Columbia River.

³¹⁵ While McLoughlin later recalled it was in 1829 that Lucier applied to him a second time for assistance in establishing a farm in the Valley, there is some indication the year may have been 1830. For a more complete discussion of this and of early settlement in the Willamette Valley, see Dr. John Hussey, *Champoeg: Place of Transition* (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, Oregon State Highway Commission, 1967), pp.43-61.

³¹⁶ John Ball's 3rd Letter Part 1 from Beyond the Rocky Mountains, printed in *Zion's Herald* 6 Jan 1834, dated Jan 1, 1833. OHS mss 195

³¹⁷ HBRS VII, pp 178.

In 1837 U.S. Navy purser William Slacum assisted Willamette Valley settlers in driving a herd of cattle from California to the valley, a move which began to wean the settlers from the assistance of Fort Vancouver, at least in terms of livestock. More sheep, cattle and horses were brought north from California in 1842; the policy McLoughlin had established of obtaining repayment on his livestock loans with the increase of the settler's herds began to unravel. Settlers could no longer be relied upon to supervise herd increases for the Company. Until 1842-43, the immigrants had to rely on Fort Vancouver for supplies of clothing, seed and manufactured items. But around 1842-43, certain enterprising settlers in the Valley began to establish their own stores, loosening the monopoly on imported goods offered by the Company store at Fort Vancouver, and one opened later at Oregon City. However, general merchandising from Fort Vancouver continued to be profitable for the Company into the 1850s, until American merchants became firmly established in the towns of Portland and Oregon City. Also in the early '40s, some Americans began to establish their own flour mills, cutting into the milling operations at the post, although the Company remained the biggest purchaser of wheat in the Valley for a few more years, scrambling to fulfill its sales commitments to the Russian American Company in Alaska.

By 1849, a census of the Oregon Territory, ordered by Governor Joseph Lane, showed a population of 9,083, 8,785 of which were U.S. citizens; 304 of these resided in Vancouver and Lewis Counties, north of the Columbia River. The federal census of 1850 showed a total population of 13,294; 1,049 were north of Columbia River.³¹⁸ In 1845 a new district of the Oregon country, north of the Columbia, was established. In August of 1848 the United States passed an act creating the Oregon Territory, which was signed into law on August 14. By 1852, thousands of immigrants had traversed the Oregon Trail, settling throughout the territory; that year alone close to 13,000 people arrived in Oregon Territory, which included both Clark and Lewis counties, north of the Columbia River. In March of 1853 Washington Territory was created by the federal government, which included the lands on which Fort Vancouver was located. In February of 1859 Oregon was admitted to the Union as a free state. By 1860, the federal census showed a population of 52,465 in the new state of Oregon; Washington Territory that year had a population of 11,594, which included the lands soon to become Idaho Territory.

Looking for free land and opportunities to create better lives for themselves, many immigrants began to view the Hudson Bay Company lands as subject to the Donation Land Claim Law--particularly after news of the 1846 treaty arrived. At Nisqually, Cowlitz, and other former posts--and particularly at Fort Vancouver--the Company fought a losing battle to eject squatters from their lands. In the mid-1840s, in an effort to protect the Company's lands at Fort Vancouver, fourteen employees--among them Thomas Lowe, James Douglas, Forbes Barclay--laid claims of 640 acres each--the maximum allowed under the Donation Land Claim law of the Oregon Provisional Government--to the lands at Fort Vancouver. This effort was largely for naught--although litigation by some individuals such as Forbes Barclay forestalled some claim jumpers for a few years. By 1860, most Company employees had either sold "their" claims, having settled elsewhere, or abandoned them.

³¹⁸The large jump in population between 1849 and 1850 is not attributable to immigration alone; by this time many settlers in Oregon who had decamped en masse to the goldfields of California had returned, with and without gold; many were to establish themselves by selling materials and produce at inflated prices to new Californians still searching for gold.

In 1848 Henry Williamson, who several years earlier had tried to stake a claim on Lower Plain, and others platted a town site on his claim west of the stockade at Fort Vancouver, naming it Vancouver City. When he left for California in 1849, where he was shot and killed at Sutter's Fort, claim to the town site was established by Amos Short, who had been in dispute with Williamson and a Dr. David Gardner over the site since his arrival. By 1850 the federal census listed 95 houses in the newly established Vancouver County, of which Vancouver City was the county seat. In the ensuing decade, town development included two schools, a ferry service, saloons, boarding houses, a courthouse, a livery stable cum dance hall and theater, and other buildings. In 1857 the town was incorporated, and in 1859 it was a serious, although unsuccessful, contender for the Washington Territorial capitol.

By 1846, a number of Americans had established stores and mills, at which paper money they floated could be redeemed for goods. However, even then the Company stores were the best stocked and most reliable. Pioneer William Barlow stated that in 1846:

All the merchants floated more or less paper money, which was only redeemable at their own store, and you had to take just what they had to sell or take nothing. That was what made some a great deal better than others. Abernethy's [in Oregon City] was considered the poorest paper, though you could get flour and lumber at his mills, gunflints and remnants at his store. Ermatinger, or the Hudson's Bay store, was gilt-edged. You could get all kinds of substantial goods at that store if you had their paper. The way this paper was floated was through the agency of Dr. McLoughlin. He had a large flour mill, three run of fine French burrs and they made as good flour there then as any mill does in Oregon today. He bought the bulk of all the wheat that was raised in Oregon at that time, paid the farmer or whoever had the wheat with paper on Ermatinger or the Hudson's Bay store. They in turn would pass it to the credit of the wheat man, then he would draw orders in favor of any person or persons to the full amount due him and those orders were good until they were taken in. It made no difference how many hands they had passed through or when it was presented, it would be put to your credit; and you could draw on it a dollar at a time or take it all up then if you wished..."³¹⁹

By 1850, with an increase in the number of American ships entering Oregon, the development of reliable money, and the increase in settlers, and subsequently merchants and manufacturers--and concomitant number of available goods in the territory--the Company's monopoly was effectively broken. The number of mills and stores owned and operated by Americans had increased dramatically. The principal town in Oregon Territory was Portland, which superseded Oregon City, the original goal of most immigrants in the 1830s and 1840s, due to its more favorable location as a port for deep sea vessels and its relative ease of access to the interior of the country. Most rural settlement occurred in the Willamette Valley, for the same reasons McLoughlin had, in the late 1820s, recommended it to his retiring engagés: ease of access via rivers, fertile soil, moderate climate, and the like.

In 1846 Chief Factor McLoughlin was forcibly retired from his duties with the Hudson's Bay Company, and administration of the post was lodged in a board of management, which for several years included Chief Factors Peter Skene Ogden and James Douglas. After the

³¹⁹ William Barlow, "Reminiscence of Seventy Years," Oregon Historical Quarterly, Vol XIII, Sept 1912, No. 3, pp 278-9.

1846 Treaty of Oregon was signed, establishing the boundary between Great Britain's territory and the United States at the Forty-Ninth parallel, the Company moved its main depot to Fort Victoria in British Columbia, in 1849. Despite this shift, the financial center of the Company's operations west of the Rockies remained at Fort Vancouver, where its stores and mills were still operating, at that time shipping goods and materials south California, where a gold rush was in progress, and also making some sales to the United States Army, which arrived at the site in the spring of 1849.

The Hudson's Bay Company and the U.S. military were to exist amicably, side-by-side at Fort Vancouver for a few years; the Company saw the U.S. army as a means to enforce their "possessory rights" to land and improvements guaranteed by the 1846 treaty. Gradually, however, the military began to expand beyond the sites it had occupied near the stockade with the Company's permission; by 1856, when soldiers tore down part of a fence enclosing the Company's graveyard, the army had generally ceased to ask permission from the Company before engaging on building projects. Finally, in 1860, the army, under directions from General Harney, engaged in a demolition frenzy in which all but a few houses in the village were leveled, and most of the Company's structures at the river were razed.

After the army's actions, A.G. Dallas, president of the Council of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America, in May of 1860, wrote a bitter letter to Harney, protesting the army's lack of regard for the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, and notifying him that the Company would be vacating Fort Vancouver "...as soon as necessary arrangements can be made."³²⁰ Soon after, all remaining stores and equipment were packed on board a vessel and shipped to Victoria, and the Company abandoned the post. On May 1, Charles William Wilson, a royal engineer with the British North West Boundary Commission survey team, arrived at Fort Vancouver. He wrote:

...the Fort is now surrounded by the Garrison of American troops under General Harney of San Juan renown; alas the poor old Fort once the great depot of all the western fur trade is now sadly shorn of its glories, General Harney having taken forcible possession of nearly all the ground round & almost confined the H.B.C. people to the Fort itself; the H.B. Company are going to give up their post here as most of their business is now transacted in Victoria & in consequence of General Harney's disregard of the treaty of 46 which secured them their rights; it is most annoying to them to see all the fields & land they have reclaimed from the wilderness & savage gradually taken away from them; we have at present the use of the buildings which are nearly empty now, what a place it must have been in the olden time!³²¹

Important Archeologic Information

Please refer to the Archeologic Component of the report to the Commission.

³²⁰A.G. Dallas to Brg Genl W.L. Harney, May 1860, HBCA B223/z/5 fol 62-63.

³²¹Journal of Service of Lieutenant Charles William Wilson, R.E., with Boundary Commission, April 20, 1858-June 11, 1860, Vol. I, transcribe by G.M. Fray, PABC, pp. 88-90.

Chapter II.

Vancouver Barracks

Vancouver Barracks was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on ____, 1986. It is considered significant for its association with the military. The evaluation for significance as outlined below is based on the present form, revised in 1986, used by the National Register of Historic Places.

Periods of Significance: 1849-1940

Significant Dates: 1849, 1880, 1918, 1936

Significance of this property in relation to other properties has been considered nationally.

National Register Criteria: A,B,C

Criteria Exceptions

2 buildings moved

Areas of Significance: Exploration/Settlement; Military; Conservation

Significant Person:

B.L.E. Bonneville

Ulysses S. Grant

George Marshall

Architect: Office of Quartermaster General, WA. D.C.

Evaluation of Significance

Vancouver Barracks has served almost continuously since its establishment in 1849 as a military post to defend settlement of the Oregon Territory, which at the time included the present states of Washington and Oregon, and, until World War I was the United States Army's principal administrative center in the Pacific Northwest. It served a major role in the defense of the Pacific Northwest, and as headquarters of the Oregon Department, it served as a central command and supply post for actions associated with the Pacific Northwest Indian wars of the mid Nineteenth Century. A number of young officers stationed at the post throughout its years of operation went on to achieve high command positions nationally, including Joseph Barnes; Philip Sheridan; George McClellan; Benjamin Alvord; Ulysses S. Grant; George Wright; George Marshall. It also was the base for a number of significant military exploration and survey expeditions in the Northwest and Alaska in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, and later served to police civil strife resulting from the depression of the 1890s. In the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth centuries, the post served as a recruitment, mobilization and training facility for the Spanish American War and other foreign engagements. During World War I, Vancouver Barracks was the principal district for the U.S. Army Signal Corps' Spruce Division, and the site of the Division's Cut-up Plant, at the time, the world's largest lumber mill; activities of the Spruce Division in the region left a lasting impact on the region's lumber industry, particularly in the area of labor relations. In the 1930s, the post

became a district headquarters for the Ninth Corps of the Civilian Conservation Corps, and played an important role in the enrollment, training, and supply of the Pacific Northwest's network of CCC camps, directly supervising between twenty-eight and thirty-two CCC camps in both Oregon and Washington. Work done in camps under Vancouver Barrack's command had a long-term impact on the national forests of the Pacific Northwest. In World War II the post served as a port of embarkation for the Pacific Theater. The post's architecture reflects a range of historic styles, typical and representative of military post architecture in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The spatial organization, massing, and some of the vegetation from the late nineteenth century post's landscape is largely intact.

Settling the Territory

Vancouver Barracks--first called Camp Vancouver--was the principal military establishment in the Pacific Northwest until World War I. During its early years its role was to protect American settlers flooding into the Oregon country via the Oregon Trail from hostile natives, who, until the mid-1840s, had lived peacefully under the control of Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Vancouver, and head of all its operations west of the Rocky Mountains. With McLoughlin's enforced retirement, and the increasing numbers of land-hungry immigrants from the United States, Indian tribes in the west began to take action to protect their lands. Settlers in the Oregon Country, had formed a provisional government in the years between 1837 and 1843, at first to deal with issues relating to land claims and community security, and later, to draft a code of laws, elect community officers, and ultimately, to petition the United States to extend its jurisdiction over the country. Marcus Whitman, a missionary who had been helped by the Chief Factor in establishing his mission in what is now Walla Walla, Washington, traveled to Washington D.C. in 1842 to lobby officials for forts to protect emigrants enroute to the Oregon country. In 1846 Congress authorized President James Polk to create a regiment to establish military reservations along the Oregon Trail, but the regiment was diverted to participate in the war with Mexico and was not released from its duties there until 1848. In the 1848 Congress passed a bill establishing the territory of Oregon, sparked in part by the news of the murder of Whitman, his wife, and twelve others at his mission, at the hands of Indians in 1847.. It was not until 1849 that U.S. army troops were sent to the North Pacific Coast.

Almost from the time of its inception, the Hudson's Bay Company post at Fort Vancouver had served as the administrative headquarters for all of the great British fur trading company's operations west of the Rocky Mountains. It had been established on the north bank of the Columbia River to reinforce Great Britain's claim to the lands in 1824, a period when the location of the boundary between United States and British territories in the Pacific Northwest was in doubt, and by 1828, had become, due to its location near a river navigable by ocean-going vessels and its agricultural potential, the Company's principal supply depot for western posts, many of which were established in succeeding years. Up until a few years before the the Oregon Treaty of 1846 was signed, which established the boundary at the 49th parallel, and not, as Great Britain had for many years expected or wished, along the route of the lower Columbia River, Fort Vancouver had been the principal settlement in the Pacific Northwest. The post controlled thousands of acres of land, on which it raised agricultural products and livestock for use by the Company's establishments and for export to foreign markets, and was the principal supplier of imported goods to the growing number of American immigrants settling in the territory. It also had manufacturing concerns, particularly grist and saw mills, which for years had led to its control of the economic commerce of the region. After the treaty was signed, which

guaranteed the Company's "possessory rights" to its lands and improvements south of the 49th parallel, plans were made to move the administrative headquarters to Victoria, British Columbia. This was effected in May of 1949, a few days after the arrival of the U.S. army. Still, the post and farm continued to operate until 1860, with decreasing efficiency and with loss of most of its lands to squatters, when, after a series of army actions which demolished much of the post's remaining property, the Company abandoned the stockade and the remnants of the Company farm and moved its remaining goods to Victoria.

In May of 1846 the United States Congress authorized the President to establish a line of military posts along the route settlers were following from the Mississippi to the Columbia River region for protection of emigrants. In 1848 the Secretary of War directed the commanding officer of the stations along the route to establish a ten mile square reservation on the Columbia River, near the mouth of the Willamette River. In the spring of 1849 Brevet Colonel W.W. Loring left Fort Leavenworth with a column of mounted riflemen for Oregon country, and Companies L and M of the First Artillery under the command of Captain and Brevet Major J.H. Hathaway embarked in the steamer *Massachusetts* from New York for the Columbia River, via the Straits of Magellan. The artillery companies arrived at Fort Vancouver in the middle of May, and established a camp on the hill behind the Hudson Bay Company stockade, with the permission of the post's manager, Chief Factor Peter Skene Ogden. In September and October, Loring's command arrived in three separate detachments, after "an arduous march."³²² Loring's command, according to a civilian who lodged at the post in March of 1851, "...was raised expressly for Oregon, and put under the command of Col. Loring, a young army officer who served in Mexico, and where he lost his arm. The ranks of the Regiment are made up of the meanest and most unprincipled set of fellows that ever disgraced an Army..."³²³

Camp Vancouver was administered by the Department of the Pacific Division, with headquarters in California, under the command of Brevet Major General Persifer Smith, which had been established in response to the gold discoveries there.

During the summer of 1849 the command camped in tents on the high ground behind the Fort, and built log structures for shelter the following winter, under the direction of assistant quartermaster of the Pacific Division, Captain Rufus Ingalls, who had arrived from California late in the spring. Troops, local mechanics and Indians were engaged in the construction. That summer four log buildings were erected by soldiers north of the Hudson's Bay Company stockade: an eleven room log building for the officers of the First Artillery, which they apparently built themselves; a building divided into two rooms--kitchen and servant's room; two buildings with two rooms each, containing the company mess room, a kitchen, a hospital kitchen and a bakehouse.³²⁴ Some officers and provisions were housed in structures rented from the Hudson's Bay Company at Fort Vancouver, and in Oregon City. In April of 1850 the garrison size was increased when six companies of Mounted Riflemen arrived at the post--A,D,G,H, I and K--and one more company, F, arrived in June. Company L of the First Artillery, under Hathaway, was sent to occupy Fort George--another Hudson's Bay Company post--in Astoria. In November Company B of the Mounted Riflemen arrived at Fort Vancouver.

³²²D.H. Vinton to Genl P.F. Smith, October 5, 1849, Fort Vancouver; NA RG 92, file 1175.

³²³Jenning's Original Manuscript Journal of the Overland Trip from Oregon City to Fort Hall and Salt Lake....Mf 428, Wash St Hist Soc Tacoma, from original at Yale Western Americana. p. 3

³²⁴Talbot Journal, p 134

In May of 1850, Ingalls entered into an agreement with Ogden on behalf of the U.S. government and the Hudson's Bay Company for the use and appropriation of an 8 acre field about one-quarter of a mile north of the stockade, planted in wheat. In exchange for \$1,000--later adjusted to \$872.40-- for the loss of the crops and with the specification that the Company's right to the soil be acknowledged, the army obtained a site on which to construct barracks to house the increased military population.³²⁵ That year twenty-six buildings were erected, primarily by "citizen carpenters" employed by Ingalls; most were located in a ring around the former wheat field, to become the parade grounds, including log structures for officers and two two-story log barracks buildings. Several structures were built in the Kanaka Village area, and near the River, to serve as the Quartermaster's Depot.

On October 31, the army formally proclaimed the establishment of a military reservation of about four square miles, which included the Hudson's Bay Company stockade and the land and improvements about two miles to the east and west of it; the announcement stated the reservation was "subject only to the lawful claims of the Hudson's Bay Company," as guaranteed by the Treaty of 1846.³²⁶ That year the post was given the official title of Columbia Barracks. The extent of the military reservation immediately raised political and policy questions, prompting Washington D.C. to reconsider its size, despite the concerns expressed by subordinates on the West Coast. In 1851 Brevet Brigadier General E.A. Hitchcock wrote from the Pacific Division headquarters in Benicia, California, to C.M. Conrad, the U.S. Secretary of War, describing the Hudson's Bay Company post at Vancouver and reported:

...when the United States troops reached there...by an amicable arrangement between the agent of the Company and the United States commander, the troops were encamped and subsequently erected quarters, upon grounds cleared by the Company, immediately in the rear of the picket-work and enclosed grounds of the Company; a portion of said enclosed grounds being relinquished ...for the convenience of the troops, to be paid for on certain terms agreed upon...A questions was raised by settlers ...as to the extent of the "possessory" rights of the Company; some giving the opinion that those rights did not extend beyond actual enclosures. In this view a settler established himself and has built a house on the river bank about a mile, or perhaps a mile and a quarter, below the picket-work of the Company, against the remonstrances and repeated efforts of the agent of the Company to prevent it...The county authorities, taking the same limited view of the rights of the Company, have laid off a town and have disposed of lots, taking in the actual buildings occupied by the employes of the Company, and are only restrained from actual occupancy by the site falling within the declared military reservation; and if now the reservation should be restricted to narrow limits it could not fail to bring about a most unpleasant state of things...³²⁷

³²⁵Ogden, Ingalls, 28 May 1850, NA RG 92 file 1175; Extracts from British Foreign Office Documents Ms. in Fort Vancouver folder, vertical file, PABC.

³²⁶A Military History of Vancouver Barracks, Washington Territory, Fort Lewis Army Museum files, WA n.d. (Bryn Thomas copy) typescript p 18.

³²⁷Brevt Brig Gen E.A. Hitchcock, 9/29/51 to C.M. Conrad, Secretary of War, as recorded in Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claims of the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies Pending before the British and American Joint Commission for the Final Settlement of the Same, Miscellaneous, Wa DC: McGill & Witherow, 1867. p. 371-3

Ultimately the military bowed to political pressure. Relations between the military post and citizens were already strained; the conduct of the Mounted Riflemen offended many settlers, and citizens had successfully petitioned for their removal. In October of 1853, the Secretary of War was obliged by an act of Congress to reduce the reserve to 640 acres, subject to the claims by the Company as guaranteed by the 1846 treaty.

The new boundaries of the military reservation were surveyed by Brevet Lieutenant Colonel B.L.E. Bonneville, who arrived at Fort Vancouver in September of 1852, when he assumed command of the post and the headquarters of the Fourth Infantry regiment, which was to serve in the region throughout most of the 1850s. Bonneville was already noted as an explorer, having served in Oregon in the 1830s.

In July of 1853, the name of the post was changed to Fort Vancouver; it operated under this name until 1879, when it was redesignated Vancouver Barracks. Brevet Captain Ulysses S. Grant, was stationed at Fort Vancouver in the early 1850s, serving as regimental commissary officer, and later as regimental quartermaster.

In 1854 and '55, a new spurt of building activity took place in the vicinity of the parade grounds, including construction of an "insane soldier's quarters", a small log barracks building, several frame structures serving as officers housing and post office, and several new kitchens.³²⁸ During these years posts were established at Steilacoom, Washington, Fort Dalles, Fort Orford and Fort Lane, under direction from Fort Vancouver. Major G.J. Rains led regular and volunteer troops against Indians in eastern Washington in 1854.

In 1855 and '56, and to some extent through 1858, Fort Vancouver served as a staging area for the regular army engaged in what is generally referred to as the Indian Wars, a series of uprisings and battles ranging from the Puget's Sound in Washington Territory to southern Oregon, and both east and west of the Cascade mountains. During this period, a series of companies from the Dragoons, Artillery, and Infantry were lodged at the post. During the winter of 1855-56, some of the volunteers called up by the territorial governor to protect settlers were housed at Fort Vancouver, although they were not part of the regular army, and there was considerable friction between the military and the volunteers.

Colonel George Wright, who was largely responsible for bringing the first period of Indian wars to a close in 1858, was placed in command of the military district of Oregon and Washington, with headquarters at Vancouver. He arrived with eight companies of the Ninth Infantry, in January of 1856 at Fort Vancouver. Under Wright, new military posts were established in Yakima and Walla Walla. In 1858, following a new outbreak of Indian actions, including one near Walla Walla where the military post there was defeated by Indians, the military department of the Pacific was reorganized into two districts--the California and the Oregon departments, and Major General William S. Harney was assigned to the command of the latter, with headquarters at Fort Vancouver, replacing Wright.

Following Bonneville's departure in 1855, the military post at Vancouver experienced a succession of post commanding officers, sometimes alternating depending on duty assignments, and Indian activities in the region. Beginning in 1856, the amicable relationship between the Hudson's Bay Company and the army began to deteriorate. At

³²⁸Thomas L. Brent Capt. Report of Public Buildings June 30, 1854, Fort Vancouver, NA RG 92, File 1175

that time, the Hudson's Bay Company doctor, Henry Atkinson Tuzo, later said, "...the military authorities commenced and continued to call in question the rights of the Co....Some of their buildings outside the fort were taken possession of by persons in the employ of the various military departments. Several were burnt or otherwise destroyed while in the occupation of these persons; the Company's corrals were made use of at first, and finally altogether removed by the quarter master's department. The landing jetty on the river was removed, and a large warehouse and wharf erected by the Govt on its site. The fences, and some of the head boards in the co's graveyard, were removed by some of the soldiers of the garrison at various times, and...used as fuel at their quarters..."³²⁹ The Company's protests went largely unheeded. Between the fall of 1857 and the spring of 1858, a new quartermaster's storehouse was erected at the River, near the Hudson's Bay Company Salmon House. By the spring of 1860 the army had levelled almost all of Company structures outside the stockade. In May, the Company removed the last of their goods and left for their Victoria headquarters.

During 1859, under Harney's command, troops at Fort Vancouver built roads between Fort Vancouver and Fort Steilacoom, and between the post and The Dalles. Harney, as commander of the Oregon Department, was also responsible for garrisoning the American post in the San Juan Islands after hostilities erupted between settlers and the Hudson's Bay Company post on the main island. The fate of the islands at the time were still subject to boundary negotiations, which would establish the westernmost line between Great Britain's territory and the United States, and which had not been dealt with in the Oregon Treaty of 1846.

In the spring of 1860 Colonel Wright returned to the Oregon department, when Harney went on leave. The following year Wright was called to California to head Union troops preparing to leave for the Civil War, and most regular army troops were removed from the region. In 1861, the Departments of Oregon and California were folded into the Department of the Pacific, with headquarters in San Francisco. In 1865 the Department of the Columbia was established, with headquarters at Vancouver Barracks, which included Oregon and Washington and Idaho territories, under the Division of the Pacific. The Department of the Columbia's headquarters were moved to Portland in 1867, and remained there until 1878. Alaska was placed under the jurisdiction of the Columbia department in 1870. In 1878, the Department of the Columbia headquarters were returned to Vancouver Barracks, where it remained until the U.S. Army reorganized in 1913. In 1879, the post's name was changed from Fort Vancouver to Vancouver Barracks, which it has been known as ever since.

Although Fort Vancouver fostered the careers of many young officers who were to become famous in the Civil War, troops stationed at the post during the war years had little contact with the bloody battles raging a continent away. To replace troops shipped east, the Fort Vancouver was at first manned by companies from the California Volunteers; later it was garrisoned by volunteers recruited from Washington Territory and Oregon. The troops were generally occupied escorting immigrants enroute to Oregon and Washington and skirmishing with Indians whose lands were being appropriated. After the war ended, regular army units were once again sent to the post.

Among those stationed at the post who later earned national recognition were: Joseph Barnes, who served as U.S. surgeon general during the Civil War; Philip Sheridan, a Second Lieutenant in the cavalry at Fort Vancouver, who in 1883 was named Commander

in Chief of the U.S. Army; Captain George McClellan, later commanding general of the Union Troops in the Civil War; Benjamin Alvord, who became the U.S. Army's paymaster in 1872; Ulysses S. Grant, destined for Civil War fame and the Presidency of the United States. The post became famous in military circles as the "mother" of the Army, in affectionate recognition of its role in fostering young officers who later gained fame.³³⁰

Between the mid '60s and the early 1880s, troops stationed at the post were largely engaged in rounding up the few remaining bands of Indians not living on reservations, or putting those who had escaped and were rebelling back onto the lands assigned to them. Troops at Fort Vancouver participated in the Modoc War on the south Oregon Border, and in tracking down Chief Joseph's Nez Percés band in 1875. In 1878 soldiers from Fort Vancouver were dispatched again to fight the Bannack Indians in Idaho and eastern Oregon. Some Indians captured in those battles were brought to Fort Vancouver and placed in the guardhouse.³³¹ In 1867, the Department of the Columbia Headquarters were moved to Portland, although it continued to operate as a military facility. When the headquarters were moved back to the post in 1878, the first major period of expansion of the post's physical facilities since the 1860s began.

Exploration and Surveys

In the summer of 1853, Vancouver Barracks served as quarters for Army Corps of Engineers Captain George B. McClellan's Pacific railroad surveys. In the 1881 General Nelson Miles arrived at Vancouver Barracks as the new commander of the Department of the Columbia. His aide-de-camp was First Lieutenant Frederick Schwatka, already known for his leadership in an exploring party that found the remains of Sir John Franklin's ill-fated Northwest Passage exploring party of 1847. Under orders from General Miles, Schwatka took part in an 1882-83 expedition to Alaska, crossing the Chilkoot Pass in 1883, and arriving at the source of the Yukon, which he navigated to its mouth. Other expeditions organized at the post included Lieutenant Symons' 1881 survey of the Upper Columbia drainage, and Lieutenant Henry T. Allen's 1885-86 reconnaissance expedition into the Copper River and Tanana Valley region, living off the country with his party. These early surveys provided information that later led to the Alaskan gold rushes, including the famous Klondike gold rush of 1897.³³²

Policing Civil Unrest

In 1892 Vancouver Barracks sent five companies, part of a massive twenty company force of infantry called up by President Benjamin Harrison to control violence erupting as a result of a union strike against the Mine Owner's Protective Association (MOA) in Coeur d'Alene Idaho. The following year, Vancouver Barracks soldiers were ordered up to control a large group of unemployed Puget Sound workers who joined Coxey's march on

³³⁰"Vancouver Barracks--Outpost of the Ole West," *Oregon Sunday Journal*, August 30, 1931.

³³¹Vardis Fisher, *Idaho: A Guide in Word and Picture*, (Caldwell, Idaho: Caxton Printers, Ltd., 1937), pp. 46-52.

³³²Frederick Schwatka, *Military Reconnaissance in Alaska* (Washington, D.C., Military Service Institute, 1885), passim; Merle Colby, *A Guide to Alaska, The Last American Frontier*, American Guide Series, (New York: MacMillan Company, 1941), passim.

Washington, and in 1894 troops were sent out to assist the Northern Pacific Railroad during the Pullman strike, part of a federal call up by President Grover Cleveland when the American Railway Union strike spread to twenty-seven states and territories.³³³ Other policing actions by Vancouver Barracks-based soldiers included escorting relief pack trains to Alaska during the turbulent gold rush years of the late '90s.³³⁴

Foreign Engagements

During the conflict with Spain, the post was an important mobilization and training center for Oregon and Washington volunteers. After the war, regular troops were sent from Vancouver Barracks as part of the occupying force in the Philippines used to suppress the nationalist movement. Several well-known regiments--the Second Oregon and the Thirty-fifth Infantry Volunteers were recruited, organized and trained there. In 1906, artillery troops from Vancouver Barracks were sent to Cuba to intervene in the nationalist movement rising there. In the mid-teens Vancouver soldiers were sent to Mexico to support U.S. intervention in that country's affairs, after Francisco Villas's March, 1916, raid across the U.S. border in New Mexico during the on-going Mexican revolution.

In 1913, the military abolished the Department of the Columbia in a reorganization. Vancouver Barracks became the headquarters of the Seventh Brigade, reporting to Third Division headquarters in San Francisco. One regiment was stationed at Vancouver Barracks. By 1916, as a result of troops sent to the Mexican border, about 150 soldiers were left at Fort Vancouver, later supplemented by recruiting drives as the war in Europe continued. During the war, the barracks was a recruiting station from which the 318th and Fourth Engineers and the 44th Infantry were formed and sent to France, but its principal role was to serve as an airplane materials manufacturing center under the direction of the Spruce Division of the Army Signal Corps.

Vancouver Barracks and the Lumber Industry

Vancouver Barracks was the principal site of a unique and often overlooked outgrowth of the first World War: the Spruce Production Division of the U.S. Army Signal Corps. It

³³³52nd Cong., 2nd Sess., House of Reps., Doc. 1, Part 2, Report of the Secretary of War, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1892), pp. 106-8; 53rd Cong., 2nd Sess., House of Reps., Doc. 1, Part 2, Report of the Secretary of War, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1893), pp. 152-3; 53rd Cong., 3rd Sess., House of Reps., Doc. 1, Part 2, Report of the Secretary of War, Vol. I (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1894), p. 148. The MOA had used an increase in railroad rates as an excuse to back out of an agreement with the miner's union regarding wages. When the union struck, the MOA brought in scabs, many of whom were peaceably convinced by the union to leave. However, ill feelings eventually erupted in violence, and Idaho Governor Willey declared a state of martial law in Coeur d'Alene, and called upon President Harrison to supplement the Idaho National Guard. See Richard Lingenfelter, *The Hardrock Miners: A History of the Mining Labor Movement in the American West* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1974), pp. 197-218; Regarding the Pullman Strike, see Freeman Hubbard, *Railroad Avenue* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1945), pp. 174-182.

³³⁴-----, Fort Vancouver Historic Building Survey, (Seattle: United States Army Corps of Engineers, n.d.), p. 1.4.

was an odd alliance between lumber companies of the Pacific Northwest and the military, which needed spruce from northwest forests for the production of Allied airplanes. While none of the structures from this period are extant at the Barracks today--there are three, possibly four on National Park Service land to the south of the barracks, part of the Fort Vancouver Historic Site--the physical remains of the Division can be seen in railroads built by the Spruce Division in Pacific Northwest Forests, and the social impact of the army's involvement in logging and milling influenced labor relations in the lumber industry for many years.

After war broke out in Europe in 1914, the Allied Forces found themselves woefully short of one of the most recently developed and potentially lethal machines in the world--airplanes, the technology for which was still in its infancy. It was generally agreed that Sitka spruce, found primarily in the states of Oregon and Washington in isolated stands, was the best material with which to build the planes--the wood was strong, light, and resilient. Lumber mills in Washington and Oregon began to cut and saw spruce to fulfill Allied demands. In May and July of 1917, after America had entered the war, congress passes series of bills appropriating \$694 million for aeronautical activity, including the establishment of an aircraft production board. But in the summer of 1917, production in the Pacific Northwest mills was far lower than demand. In addition to poor management and inefficient operations, some mill owners were holding back on supplies, to increase prices. Also that summer, the mills were hampered by a labor strike by the Industrial Workers of the World and the American Federation of Labor, demanding better living and working conditions, and an eight hour day.³³⁵

A former army captain, Brice Disque, was given a secret assignment by U.S. Army Chief of Staff, General Pershing, to investigate the situation in the Pacific Northwest and see if it could be resolved. Disque reported that production was unlikely to increase, and could possibly worsen by 1918. His recommendation that soldiers be used in the woods to speed production was authorized by the army, and Disque was reinstated into the army and sent to Portland to meet with unions and mill owners.³³⁶ By the fall of 1917, recruitment of spruce soldiers began, initially pulling experienced loggers from other Army cantonments in the country, and later, when the strength of the Division was increased from a little over one thousand to over twenty-eight thousand in the Spring of 1918, from any of the Army's lower draft status classes, as long as they were in good enough physical condition to log or build railroads.

In November of 1917 the United States announced the formation of the Spruce Production Division, part of the U.S. Army Signal Corps, at Vancouver Barracks, with headquarters in Portland, Oregon. It was a home front activity designed to supply high quality spruce wood for the production of allied combat airplanes. At the time, Vancouver Barracks was to serve as a training center for soldiers enroute to the forests of the Pacific Northwest, and to that end, infantry regiments stationed at the post were removed to make room for the thousands of "spruce" soldiers Disque planned to employ. However, early in 1918, the Barracks also became the site of the Cut-up Plant, the principal spruce mill of the Division, built and operated by spruce soldiers. Disque later said "There was not a commercial mill on the coast that was equipped to saw straight-grained spruce in the quantity demanded, and remain in business."³³⁷ By December 20, construction of the Cut-up Plant was

³³⁵Harold Hyman, *Soldiers and Spruce: Origins of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumberman* (Los Angeles: Institute of Industrial Relations, 1963), p. 52.

³³⁶Ibid.

³³⁷Disque, *History of Spruce Production*, p. 46.

underway on 50 acres of land below the barracks, the site of the 1829 Hudson's Bay Company stockade. Construction was supervised by an Oregon mill owner, H.S. Mitchell, whose mill on the Columbia at Wauna, Oregon, was considered a model saw mill.³³⁸ Local mills supplied construction materials, and machinery was shipped in at great expense, and with haste, from all over the country. Operations at the mill began on February 7, 1918, complete with opening ceremonies featuring local politicians and army officials. It had been built in forty-five working days. In addition the the Cut-up Plant, the Spruce Division erected a battery of drying kilns and drying sheds. Later, thousands of tents and support facilities for soldiers working at the plant were erected around the mill area. In addition, a cantonment was built just north of Officer's Row, which housed a regiment of the Spruce Division.

The plant operated for less than year, terminated by the armistice in November of 1918. During its existence, Vancouver Barracks military operations were subordinated to the demands of the Spruce Production Division. The mill-associated buildings stood until 1925, when most were razed, and three or four were moved to the east to provide facilities for the reserve army air corps. The cantonment was razed, with the exception of the Victory Theater, which was still in use in the late 1920s. When the Spruce Division operations ceased, most of the materials, equipment and supplies at the Division's forest camps and partially-completed additional mills in Oregon and Washington were shipped to Vancouver Barracks, where they were inventoried and prepared for auction, which was, in the words of the Division's commander, Colonel Brice Disque, "...the largest sale of Government property ever advertised, only the sale of equipment from the Panama Canal excelling it in number of items and valuation."³³⁹

During its operation, the Spruce Division had managed to use seventy percent of the all lumber shipped to its mill for aircraft purposes--the milled wood was shipped to other states for aircraft assembly. This compared favorably with the ten percent wood useful for aircraft after milling when private firms had been filling war production contracts before the Division's formation and involvement in the process. The Army later claimed that during the course of the Spruce Division's operation, 143 million board feet of spruce was shipped from Northwest forests--including two small units in Alaska and California. In addition to the Cut-up mill and regiments stationed at Vancouver Barracks, there were five other districts and sub-districts of the Division, located in Oregon and Washington, controlling many dozens of soldier camps, most of which were near lumber company camps, logging or building the miles of railroads necessary to reach remote stands of the premium Sitka spruce.

Over 18,000 soldiers were employed in the Pacific Northwest, several thousand of which were located at Vancouver Barracks, operating the milling operations and providing support services. The rest were either working in logging camps or employed in building railroads. Both unions and mill owners were initially opposed to the army's involvement; the government was viewed as a strikebreaker by the unions, and mill owners believed that army restrictions on production and prices would hamper their operations. As it worked out, soldiers were useful to the mills in controlling the unions, in protecting the forests, and in supplying additional manpower for logging and milling. Because of the army's involvement, working and living conditions improved in the camps, the eight-hour day was instituted, and army-controlled wages stabilized an industry with work force turn-over. Because the focus of the Spruce Division was on increasing production of

³³⁸Vancouver Daily Columbian, December 20, 1917.

³³⁹Disque, *History of Spruce Production Division*, p. 103.

airplane-quality wood, many aspects of the Pacific Northwest lumber industry were restructured. An outgrowth of the army's involvement in the lumber industry was the establishment of the Loyal Legion of Loggers and Lumbermen, formed under army auspices to supplant the unions, particularly the I.W.W. Through patriotic appeals and a skillful marketing program, eventually 100,000 workers joined this new union, severely crippling the I.W.W.'s activities. The Legion continued to operate in the Pacific Northwest, albeit with increasing weakness, until the New Deal policies of Franklin Roosevelt were established in the 1930s. Through the army's intervention, labor unrest in the logging industry was squelched for over a decade; however, the some positive practices and procedures established by the Spruce Division continued to function until the 1930s and the Depression.

The Spruce Division's operations also served to open up billions of board feet of previously inaccessible lumber to future development. Permanent rail lines built at government expense continued to operate in the Pacific Northwest for decades, under private management.

Post War Activities

After the war, the military was reorganized and the size of the standing army increased. Vancouver Barracks was selected to house an infantry regiment and two batteries of artillery. Funds were authorized for a major construction program to upgrade the facilities. As in the rest of the country, army reserve units increased enrollment, and Vancouver Barracks served as a site for Civilian Military Training Camps, and as a air training field for the 321st Observation Squadron of the Ninety-Sixth Division of the Organized Reserves. Although after the first few years, headquarters for the Ninety-Sixth were located in Portland, Oregon, the lower pasture of the Vancouver military reserve was used as an air training field, particularly after 1925, when the Spruce Mill buildings which occupied the site were razed. On April 6 of 1925 the airfield was named Pearson Field, in honor of an army flier who had attended high school in the town of Vancouver. In 1929 a U.S.S.R. goodwill flight in the craft, *Land of the Soviets*, touring the United States unexpectedly landed at Pearson Field when the plane developed mechanical problems. For a brief time in 1934-5, the army replaced private contractors in providing national air mail service; Pearson Field served as a maintenance and hangar facility, where nine mail service planes were stored for two northwest routes. In 1937 the *Stalinskiy marshrut* left the Soviet Union in an attempt to break the long distance world record on a route from Moscow to San Francisco over the North Pole; forced to land at Vancouver Barracks because of weather conditions, the first transpolar flight crew was welcomed by Vancouver Barracks commander, Brigadier General George C. Marshall--of later World War II fame.³⁴⁰

Vancouver Barracks and the National Forests

As a district headquarters for the Ninth Corps of the Civilian Conservation Corps, Vancouver Barracks played an important role in the enrollment, training, and supply of the Pacific Northwest's network of CCC camps. It directly supervised between twenty-eight and thirty-two CCC camps in both Oregon and Washington, most notably, but not limited to the Columbia National Forest and Mount Hood. As a headquarters and dispersing agency,

³⁴⁰Von Hardesty, "Soviets Blaze Sky Trail Over Top of World," *Air and Space*, December 1987-January 1988, Vol. 2, No. 5, pp. 48-54.

the headquarters at Vancouver Barracks expanded rapidly; by 1936 there were sixteen structures built specifically to house CCC activities, including three barracks housing one hundred men each, a recreation hall, and a large portable administrative building. The bulk of the CCC structures were located towards the west end of the former spruce mill site, below what is now East Fifth Street. Two CCC buildings were erected north of East Fifth Street, however: one, the "Contagious Hospital," was razed when Interstate 5 was built; the second, an office building, still stands today.

The bulk of the work done by CCC camps administered by Vancouver Barracks focused on forest fire protection, recreation, transportation and structural improvements in the region's national forests. Many of the camps erected campgrounds, trails and shelters for skiing and hiking: Clackamas ranger station compound at Mount Hood was built during this period. Forests within Vancouver Barracks' district, as in those of the rest of the Pacific Northwest, received long-term benefits from CCC activities, including reforestation, forest stand improvement, and control of tree diseases and insect pests.

World War II to the Present

Increasing military activity as a result of the outbreak of the war in Europe led to plans to construct a new, 750 bed hospital on the north end of the military reserve at Vancouver Barracks. The facility was designed to serve military personnel throughout the Pacific Northwest. It was completed in April of 1941.³⁴¹ After December of 1941, Vancouver Barracks came under the control of the Ninth Service Command, with headquarters at Fort Douglas Utah. The post then served as a staging area for the Portland Subport of embarkation, and as a training center for certain units; in January of 1943, the army's first training center for quartermaster units began at Vancouver Barracks.³⁴²

As the war progressed, the garrison size increased. To accommodate new troops, going to and from the Pacific Theater, temporary barracks were built late in the summer of 1942, near the north end of the reserve. In December the barracks were named Camp Hathaway.³⁴³ By 1944 both Vancouver Barracks and Camp Hathaway were brought under the wing of the Portland Subport of Embarkation; the headquarters of the subport was moved to Vancouver Barracks on January 1, 1946. A few weeks later, Vancouver Barracks was declared excess to the needs of the Army Transportation Corps.³⁴⁴

In March of 1947, around 64 acres were reactivated as a military post and designated to serve as headquarters for reserve training in the Pacific Northwest.³⁴⁵ By June of 1949 the post included headquarters of Sixth Army's Northern Military District, embracing Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana. Vancouver Barracks did not participate in the Korean War in any major way.³⁴⁶ The Oregon Military District was phased out under a reorganization of the army on February 1, 1958. That year, Vancouver Barracks became a satellite of Fort Lewis, Washington, maintained by a detachment of the garrison from that post. The Oregon Sector of the Tenth U.S. Army Corps became the post's chief tenant.

³⁴¹*Oregonian*, November 28, December 17, 1940; April 2, 1941

³⁴²*Oregonian*, April 6, 1943.

³⁴³*Oregonian*, August 14, 1940; Dec 7, 1942

³⁴⁴*Oregonian*, April 6, 1943; Feb 2, 19, 1944; Dec 28, 1945; Jan 25, 1946

³⁴⁵*Oregonian*, January 27, 1946; March 23, April 8, 1947; July 17, 1948.

³⁴⁶*Oregonian*, January 27, 1946; March 23, April 8, 1947; July 17, 1948.

In addition to the garrison headquarters and the Oregon Sector of the Tenth U.S. Army Corps, by 1970 Vancouver barracks served as home for two units of the Washington National Guard, and for Air Reserve Center.

In 1986 the U.S. General Services Administration deeded Officer's Row to the City of Vancouver, to be preserved as an historic site. The buildings underwent a two year rehabilitation and were dedicated on November 11, 1988.

Vancouver Barracks is an army installation under the command of Fort Lewis, and occupies 52 acres of the original military reserve. As of 1988, in addition to the Vancouver Barracks Headquarters, with a small staff of military and civilian personnel, the post is home to the 104th Division of the U.S. Air Reserve, the Washington Army National Guard 146th Field Artillery unit and recruiting; and several 124th Army Command Units.³⁴⁷

Post Architecture

The Vancouver Barracks Historic District is located on sixty-two acres of land in the city of Vancouver, Washington. forty structures are located within the Historic District Boundaries identified in 1986. Since the nomination was prepared in 1986, three structures listed in that survey are no longer extant. Thirty-two buildings were listed as contributing structures: two no longer standing were on that list.

The buildings within the district demonstrate the evolution of building styles at the post, from the 1880s to the 1930s. There are three extant buildings from the construction activity initiated at the post after the Department of the Columbia returned to Vancouver Barracks in 1878. They include the Post Commandant's Quarters (1881), an Infantry Barracks (1885), and and Hospital Steward's Quarters (1887-8), which was moved from its original site in the 1950s due to freeway construction. A post chapel, built in 1891 post-dates this construction activity. There are a series of barracks, a post hospital, and several additional structures that date from the next major wave of construction, between 1903 and 1907, and are representative of the types and styles of military structures built throughout the country during this period. There are four mess halls and a post exchange erected in 1914, and a cluster of buildings to service the quartermaster's yard ranging in date from 1905-6 to 1910. Several World War I related structures still stand; several storehouses, and a motor repair shop and a red cross building, both erected in 1919.

There are seven brick duplexes which date to the mid 1930s, but they were not considered contributing buildings in the 1986 nomination.

The site today reflects the evolution of the post, both in terms of function and spatial organization. The street system and trees along McLoughlin Road date to the 1880s.

³⁴⁷Information for this section on Vancouver Barracks was largely derived from: Royce Pollard, "The Presence and Missions of the United States Army at Vancouver Barracks, Vancouver, Washington, 1849-1988," unpublished paper in files, Vancouver Barracks, Washington; "Report for the Sixth United States Army Real Property Utilization Survey Team Visit to Vancouver Barracks, Washington (Fort Lewis, Washington: Headquarters, U.S. Army Training Center, Infantry, and Fort Lewis, c. 1972); "Utilization and Retention of Real Property, Vancouver Barracks, Washington," (Fort Lewis, Washington, c. 1958).

Officer's Row

Officer's Row was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on ____, 1974. It is considered significant for its association with the military. The evaluation for significance as outlined below is based on the present form, revised in 1986, used by the National Register of Historic Places.

Periods of Significance: 1849-1906-7

Significant Dates: 1849

Significance of this property in relation to other properties has been considered nationally.

National Register Criteria: A, B, C

Criteria Exceptions: None

Areas of Significance: Architecture; Exploration/Settlement; Military

Significant Person:

Ulysses S. Grant

George Marshall

Evaluation of Significance

The twenty one buildings comprising Officer's Row were built over a period of fifty years, beginning in 1849, however most of the structures date to the 1880s and were constructed after the Department of the Columbia headquarters were moved back to Vancouver Barracks from Portland. They are significant for their association with Vancouver Barracks, which was the principal military post in the Pacific Northwest from the time of its establishment, in 1849, to World War I, when Fort Lewis, to the north assumed that position. A number of officers who later became nationally prominent were associated with the buildings, including Ulysses S. Grant, who served as a quartermaster at Fort Vancouver in the early 1850s, and George Marshall, later supreme Allied commander in World War II, secretary of state, and author of the Marshall plan, who was the post's commander between 1936 and 1939. The structures, which underwent restoration in the 1980s, are representative of the architectural styles employed at military posts in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, and as an ensemble, present an evolutionary history of military residential housing for that period.

Initially, nine officers quarters were erected on site in the year following the military's arrival at the Hudson's Bay Company Fort Vancouver in 1849. The construction was supervised by Captain Rufus Ingalls, an assistant quartermaster with the Division of the Pacific, based in California. Of these first buildings, only one remains: it served as the post commandant's residence, and later as a library and bachelor officer's quarters, and then as an officer's club. It features a hip roof and double wrap-around veranda reminiscent of southern plantation architecture. It was remodeled in the mid 1880s.

In the 1860s, two of the original officers quarters were demolished and replaced by three small frame quarters, two of which are extant today, built in 1865. In 1879, as preparation for major construction activity, two additional frame quarters, which had been located on the west side of the post's parade grounds, were moved to the Officer's Row line: they had both been built in the 1860s: one stands today on the Row, just west of the so-called Marshall House.

In the 1880s, as part of a major construction effort at the post, fifteen new quarters were built on the Row, and the remaining log quarters were destroyed; many of these newer structures were "double sets," and still serve as duplexes today. Soon after their completion, each unit was enclosed with a picket fence and a boardwalk was installed the length of the row. The grounds were also landscaped.

Another wave of construction activity began at the post after the turn of the century; at this time the post assumed the design features which are most clearly evident today, which includes a series of double barracks across the parade grounds from Officers Row. At this time, a set of double officers quarters was built at the far east end of the row, and a second set was built near the west end. The row was then complete; one of the 1865 buildings erected on the site of Officer's Row was demolished in 1911. The westernmost 1860s residence that had been moved from the parade grounds was demolished in 1949 to make room for a widened street.

The ensemble retains a remarkable integrity of location, design, setting, and materials. Very little about the building massing, proportions and spatial relationships have changed.

Chapter III.

Providence Academy

Providence Academy was listed on the National Register of Historic Places on December 1, 1978. It is considered significant for its architecture, and its association with education, exploration/settlement, religion and social history. The evaluation for significance as outlined below is based on the present form, revised in 1986, used by the National Register of Historic Places.

Periods of Significance: 1873-1966

Significant Dates: 1873, 1891

Significance of this property in relation to other properties has been considered statewide.

National Register Criteria: A, B

Criteria Exceptions: A

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Education, Religion, Exploration/Settlement, Social History

Significant Person: Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Architect/Builder: Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart

Evaluation of Significance

The Academy is the earliest extant example of the many schools and hospitals built by the Sisters of Providence; while many of the institutions they founded throughout the Pacific Northwest survive to the present, Providence Academy is the earliest and one of the few to remain intact and on its original site. While the building has undergone some alterations, and the grounds and outbuildings associated with it have been changed and demolished, its exterior is largely intact, and retains, for the most part, its principal design features, including massing, structural system, fenestration pattern, general arrangement of spaces, materials and ornamental detailing. The workmanship required to build the structure is still in evidence, particularly in the brickwork and the interior Gothic chapel. The building is similar in style to other surviving educational and cultural institutions of the period in the northwest, and is a good representative of its type.

The Academy is significant for its association with Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, whose works in the forty-six years of her life in the region included the establishment of eleven hospitals, seven academies and Indian schools and two orphanages in Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana. Many of these institutions survive today: Providence Hospital in Seattle is a world-famous medical center, noted for its heart research; Sacred Heart Hospital in Spokane serves a large area in eastern Washington; St. Vincent's Hospital in Portland, Oregon, is also a major health care center.

The Sisters of Providence were among the pioneering Catholics to establish early educational institutions in the Pacific Northwest. They were preceded by the establishment of St. Joseph's College at St. Paul in the Willamette Valley, established by Fr. Blanchet in 1843, and an academy for girls at the same location, operated by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, opened in 1844. In 1848, the Sisters of Notre Dame opened a second school at Oregon City. These schools, however, did not survive the impact of the gold rush on the Oregon country, and closed in 1852 and 1853. The Sisters of Providence, arriving in 1856, were the next Catholic missionaries to establish educational and

charitable institutions in the region, beginning with the orphanage and school at St. James Mission, and many of their institutions were to last to the present day. Their schools were among a number of both denominational, subscription and community-supported educational institutions established throughout the region in the 1830s, '40s and '50s, most notably the Methodist mission near Salem--later Willamette University; a short-lived school established by Solomon Smith at the farm of Joseph Gervais in the Willamette Valley in 1834; The Tualatin Academy at Forest Grove, Oregon, later Pacific University; the Portland Academy and Female Seminary; Columbia College, established by the Cumberland Presbyterians in Eugene, Oregon; the Presbyterian school in Olympia; the Methodist Puget Sound Institute in Olympia, and many others.³⁴⁸ The Sisters of Providence, then, are representative of a significant historic movement in the northwest to bring education to early settlers: their work, with Mother Joseph at their head, brought education to remote areas, including Indian reservations. They also established early institutions for the care of the aged and orphaned, beginning with their work in 1857 at St. James Mission.

In addition to her charitable and educational missions, Mother Joseph is known for her architectural work and building and woodworking skills. Many of the building projects the mission initiated were designed and supervised by Mother Joseph, as was Providence Academy. In 1953 the American Institute of Architects recognized Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart as "The First Architect of the Northwest." The West Coast Lumbermen's Association honored her as the first non-native northwest artist to work in the medium of wood. Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart is represented in National Statuary Hall: the second Washingtonian to be so represented.

³⁴⁸See Charles H. Carey, *General History of Oregon*, pp. 709-712 for other schools established during this period.

Chapter IV.

Kaiser Shipyard

Evaluation of Significance

The Kaiser shipyards at Vancouver were part of a massive national war effort to rebuild the United States Navy. By December 7, 1941, the nation's merchant fleet consisted of 1,375 ships, and by July of 1942, enemy attack had reduced the number to less than 1,300. The Kaiser shipyard at Vancouver was one of 81 American shipyards on the Pacific and Atlantic coasts that, by the end of the war, had increased the fleet size to 3,800 vessels, excluding the many that had been lost during the course of the war, and had brought America to preeminence on the seas. The story of the yard at Vancouver, and its social and physical impact on the city of Vancouver is virtually identical to that of all Pacific Coast cities where shipyards were built and thousands of wartime workers converged upon them in the years between 1941 and 1945: the impact of this mass population movement forever altered not only Vancouver, but the Pacific Coast as a whole. As one of the seven shipyards managed by the efficient Kaiser operation, the Vancouver yard set a number of shipbuilding records, many of which were then matched or equalled by other Kaiser yards. The yard was one of the nation's centers for production of the escort aircraft carriers, the "Baby Flat Tops," and it was at the Vancouver yard that design for this new type of warship was refined. As a whole, the Kaiser-operated shipyards built twenty-seven percent of the total United States Maritime Commission construction, and built their ships in less time and at less cost than other shipyards in the nation. The Portland-Vancouver area was an important shipbuilding center during the war, but it was not the most significant center of shipbuilding production: the San Francisco Bay Area had the largest concentration of naval ship repair and construction facilities in the world, with thirty separate shipyards.

Locally, the Vancouver shipyard had a significant impact on the economy, social fabric, and development of the city of Vancouver. Although other industries, such as the Aluminum Company of America, brought a large number of workers to the area, it was the Vancouver yard that was responsible for more than doubling the population of the city in just a few years. It is clear, however, that the other two Kaiser-managed shipyards in the vicinity, Swan Island in Portland, and the Oregon Shipbuilding Company, also in Portland, brought even more workers to the area, leading to the "instant" wartime city of Vanport on the outskirts of Portland.

Today, eight of the fifty buildings of the Kaiser Shipyard at Vancouver are still standing. They include the 214,804 square foot plate shop; the 42,900 square foot mold loft; the salvage building; the massive, 491,200 square foot assembly building; the first aid building; the 70,760 square foot deckhouse erection building; the rigging loft, and the later electric warehouse. Most have been altered to some extent, although the original massing, structural systems and cladding have been retained on most; most of the buildings have been re-roofed, and some siding has periodically been replaced with similar material. The first aid office has undergone the most significant alterations, with the addition of a mansard roof, new siding and fenestration. The concrete walls supporting the craneways, which flanked the shipways are still extant; about 250 lineal feet of the shipways remain, although covered with silt and generally visible only at low tide.

The site's historic design, setting, spatial relationships, and configuration have been altered to an extent that it is no longer sufficiently intact to convey its association with the historic yard. Today it has components that do not share the historic associations of the district, than those that do. In addition to the loss of most of the original Kaiser structures, the site now has over fifteen new buildings, constructed since the mid-1970s, designed to serve the site's new function as a manufacturing, distribution and office center. The post-historic buildings, primarily manufacturing and distribution buildings and office structures, are mostly one-story tilt-up concrete structures, finished with aggregate or smooth stucco. Most of these buildings have large rectangular footprints, ranging in size from around 30,000 to almost 200,000 square feet. The site's organization has been significantly altered, and its present configuration bears little resemblance to the yard as it stood in the 1940s. A number of new paved roads and sidewalks have been installed, which have no association with the yard's original traffic patterns, and landscaping, while appropriate to a present-day industrial park, has no relationship to the site's historic appearance.