

Extracts from the journal of Lieut George Foster Emmons,
U.S. Navy, attached to the U.S. Exploring Expedition; who
after the wreck of the Sloop-of-war "Peacock" at the mouth
of the Columbia river, July 18, 1841 took charge of a party
of Scientists of the Expedition, and others, and made his
way overland through a comparatively unexplored
country to San Francisco Bay, rejoining the Squadron.

The following pages are descriptive of Fort Vancouver
where the party outfitted and of the courtesy and
kindly offices of Mr Douglas (Sir James Douglas) and
Dr John McLaughlin, Chief Factors of the Hudson's
Bay Company in charge of that Post.


George Thornton Emmons
Lieut U.S. Navy Ret.

Princeton, New Jersey, ^{omit}
February 15 - 1925.

1.

July 25 - 1841.

About 3 P.M. boarded the American Brig "Thos Perkins" (3)
Capt Varney, at anchor in the river abreast of Vancouver, for the pur-
-pose of ablution & changing our clothes prior to paying our respects to the
H. B. Co' officials at the Fort. At the same time made arrangements with
Capt V- to receive and mess my men on board of his brig. As soon as
church service was concluded, visited the Fort where we were received
by Dr McLaughlin and Mr Douglas (both Chief Factors of the Co), and con-
-fortably quartered in a large wooden building within the picketed
enclosure. Upon making the object of my visit known to Dr McLaughlin,
I received an assurance from him that he would afford me every facility
within his power to forward my plans. This being one of the most important
stations of the Co, I will now add a few facts in connexion with a Dia-
-gram which will convey some idea of its plan & importance, although I
do not vouch for its being correct in every particular (5)
(Insert plan of Fort Vancouver and page A of references)

The whole enclosure about 700 feet by 400, the posts forming the stockade
being of pine, from 8 to 10 inches in diameter and about 20 ft long, 2 or 3
feet of which is buried in the earth to support the upright & as an ad-
-ditional support pieces of scantlings are pinned together on either side
near the top and bottom, running the whole length, and from the upper
row of these an occasional brace led to the ground forming a
lateral support like  nearly all the posts
are more or less decayed at the surface of

of the earth, and will soon require replacing by others.

Independent of this there is a Hospital near the river bank, also stockaded, a Coopers shop, Boat-House and several other out-buildings about the premises, besides a small village of about 30 buildings occupied by the servants of Co. and their families. All of these buildings are wood, generally hewn logs, like the Universal log House of Canada. There is also a spacious garden just back of the stockade, which now produces a large variety of vegetables, Apples, Pears, Gooseberries, Strawberries cucumbers &c.

July 26-1841.

Weather warm & sultry, during the day a light air from the N.W. Obtained equal altitude sights to regulate a pocket chronometer that had been saved from the wreck and was furnished me without a rate. Mr Douglas kindly took me about the fort to show me the interior of the different buildings and residences of the Co. Found quite a large variety and quantity of stores and furs on hand, much order and system in the general arrangement, and the strictest attention and obedience observed by the subordinates to the directions of their superiors.

Clear at night got obs^(north star) of the (Y*) for Lat. Mr Drayton ⁽⁶⁾ arrived from Malla Malla. A rumor reached the fort that a Party under Capt Walker ⁽⁷⁾ (an old mountaineer mentioned by Washington Irving in Capt-Bonnevilles work), had been cut off by the Indians and all was sacred somewhere near Fort Hall.

July 27-1841.

Weather much the same, generally cloudy in the morning clearing up by noon and remaining clear during most of the night. Very busy in collecting together the necessary articles to equip the Party. The Co. being unable to furnish enough pack saddles & parfleches. Dispatched Mr Rodgers to the Qualakin settlement to endeavor to engage the necessary number & at the same time to make definite arrangements with the residents there, who had already volunteered to accompany our party - to be ready at such a time to meet me at the disembarking place on the bank of the Malamat, bringing with them their animals. Mr Drayton was to have accompanied Mr R; but found the canoes too small. Dispatched Mr Burnes' canoes back to Fort Geo with a letter to Capt Hudson, and towards sunset Capt Milke's canoe left under charge of his servant, accompanied by a battuan furnished by Dr McLaughlin, to convey articles purchased for the "Peacocks" officers and crew to Astoria, owing to the recommendation of the Co' Officers. Purchased dressed deer skins and had them smoked previous to being made into trousers and moccasins for each of the party - these being considered quite necessary to resist the scratches that one is subject to in travelling much in mountainous portions of this country. One of my men sick, the remainder running balls, making provision bags see Scientific gentlemen variously occupied. Dr Mc C - thinking to make me more comfortable, insisted upon my vacating a small room

in No 9 + taking No 3, where he frequently called to see if his servants had attended to all my wants - agreeable to his instructions - Thus they were sure to do, for his power is despotic here, and all have learned to obey - and possessing as I believe he has, a good heart + general knowledge of the world + mankind, enables him to anticipate nearly all our wants - which are ^(none) now the less for having lately been shipwrecked. His equal alt. of the sun + at night got an alt. of Polaris.

July 28 - 1841.

No material change in wind or weather, heat rather oppressive during the day, the thermometer standing at 86° in the shade at sunset. Dr McLean - furnished me an apparatus for determining the heights of mountains by boiling water - such as has lately been used by the Co's officers in crossing the Rocky mountains, principally on account of its portableness - by several experiments made the boiling point at Vancouver 213 ²⁵/₁₀₀ ^{-degrees} but not knowing its gage at the level of the sea am unable at present to estimate the alt. of the Fort above the latter upon such data. - - - - - Men employed working at saws, bags, hapolins and fitting are below. Capt Varney lost a man by desertion - The Co. do not countenance men who leave vessels under such circumstances and will lend their aid in detecting them. Accompanied Dr McLean to their mills about six miles up the river on the N-bank, both situated directly on the bank on beautiful never failing streams of water which spring from the earth near by, so near that soon after leaving the mills drawk from the source of one, both the flour mill and the Saw mill

are carried by overshot wheels, the former has one set of stones, which more than answers all the present demands of the Co. The latter runs 9 saws, & I think Dr. Mc S. - told me - turned out 2500 feet of lumber daily - employing from 25 to 30 men, and about 12 yokes of oxen. Most all of these men I observed were Sandwich Islanders, their ration consists principally of smoked salmon & sea biscuit, and the pay of each £17 per an. Thus the Co. is selecting the choice timber from our forests - and supplying the Sandwich Island & California market - their vessels coming up the river and loading at the mill, about 1/2 mile back from this shore is an open high prairie where one of these shepherds resides and looks out for a large flock of sheep & a few cattle

29 & 30 July 1841.

Mathew mended the saws. Ther 88° in the shade not well. The N.B. Co. Sloop Victoria arrived from Fort Geo bringing an addition to our party of Corporal Hughes, private Marsh & Smith and 6 lbs of ^{bacon} pork for use of party, only had occasion for 1 1/2 lbs, stored the remainder. Heard the Vincennes would be off the Bar by the 1st of Aug. Obtained a Bowditch from Capt Tarney. Mr Smith & wife attached to the American B.C.F. Mission, who for some time had been staying here, removed on board the Sho. Perkins to take passage in her to the Sandwich Islands. Afterwards learned that during the last 6 years, American Missionaries had frequently stopped here for weeks & months with their wives partaking of the Company's hospitality and attended by

The Company's servants gratis. During this day measured the alt.
 of the high prairie land back of the fort and about $1\frac{1}{4}$ mile from the
 River upon which old Fort Vancouver formerly stood. originally selected
 on account of its commanding position, at a time when the sur-
 -rounding Indians were hostile, but vacated when the latter became
 friendly & no longer required watching - for the present location which
 possesses superior advantages on account of its nearer approxi-
 -mation to the River which is the great thoroughfare of the country.
 Found it 61 feet above the low bottoms immediately skirting the River
 & the latter about 15 feet above the river water when at a low stage.
 Upon this first bottom stands a small lake well stored with fish.
 Much of it is however subject to inundation - when the Co's crops
 are liable to suffer. That portion of it lying in a line with Mt
 Hood from the fort being quite level, I measured a base nearly
 the whole length of it - 9220 feet. for the purpose of obtaining
 some data for estimating the alt. of the Peak, it being the most prom-
 -inent one in this portion of the country. my \angle 's however from
 either end of this base only differed $10''$ & being obliged to depend
 upon the correctness of my eye for a level, concluded that I
 might as well depend upon the general estimated distance (which
 I had no opportunity of measuring a longer base) which being
 55 miles would make its altitude above Tawcoawee 13090 feet
 or if 60 miles as some suppose - it would be 14390 feet
 bearing 67° Comp. $N 89^{\circ} 40'$ East.

July 31st 1841.

Cloudy until 10 AM. Then clear and warm the re-
-mainder of the day, with light variable winds. Capt Varney took
his departure for Fort George in the Brig Thos Perkins, when Dr
McL. - furnished me a house on the bank of the river for my men
to mess in, had various duties that kept the latter continually em-
-ployed. Mr Rodgers returned from the settlement having en-
-gaged the services of several Americans & obtained the promise
that others would be ready, with the material required to
complete our equipment as soon as we met at the appointed
rendezvous in the Mahomet. Having this assurance, I was de-
-termined to leave here the earliest possible time, as the Indians were
just commencing to burn the country, thereby interposing an
obstacle that increased with my delay.

August 1st 1841

Trid and weather the same, Being Sunday
Episcopal and Catholic services was performed within the fort,
Mr Douglas officiating in the former at his residence & Dr Mc
Laughlin in the latter at the Chapel. I was present at the former and
witnessed a very respectable and general attendance, principally the
Co's - Officers and their families. - - The choir was led by a band
of little boys & girls, generally half-breeds and worthy orphans
who have come under the patronage of the Co. in various ways
and are being educated and instructed in a manner that
will doubtless confer reciprocal benefits in time. Towards evening
accompanied Dr McL. - to his wheat fields and sheep farm down

the river. The farms were quite ready for harvesting, yielding
beautiful crops averaging probably 30 bushels to the acre, low
prairie ground. While upon this subject I will mention a fact
which may not be common -- adjoining the Fort there is a
small bed of wheat that Dr. McL. - sowed for a sample, among
this I saw 88 distinct shoots or spears of wheat springing from
one seed and upon counting the kernels in one head found that they
averaged about 60 making a total increase of 5279 kernels. (14)

The sheep were attended by a shepherd, all in excellent order -
of several different-breds but principally Californian. Many had
been imported from England at considerable expense, and were
among the largest that I have ever seen. Upon the prairie farm
there is a lake or narrow sheet of still water that connects with
the Columbia many miles below and during high water is generally
ascended by the Indians in their canoes to avoid the rapid current
in the river, the portage at the head of this lake being narrow
is easily overcome with light canoes. It was here that I first
learned that pig would voluntarily dive under water. Dr. McL.
assuring me that he had frequently witnessed this curious anomaly
and watched them until they reached the shore & dispatched
their prize which was nothing more, ^{or less} than a species of clam
or oyster. Just above this lake and upon the lower part of the
prairie cool & wholesome water bubbles from the mother earth at
the rate of about 5 galls per minute. At this place we were
refreshed with some lemonade, one of the Cos. servants having
arrived with the necessary ingredients. Saw several families

by the H.B. Co. where they have a large stock of cattle and horses 10,
and make butter for a foreign market.

End here

(Having proceeded some distance received orders from Capt. - Melles the
Commander of the Exploring Expedition to return in person to Fort Van-
-couver to confer with Dr McLaughlin regarding some changes and
getting necessary)

August 25th 1841. - - - - - Reached Vancouver

this night - - - Learned that the Governor Sir Geo Simpson & suit. - con-
-sisting of Dr Rowan - & his father a Chief Factor of the Co. who had never yet
seen salt-water, Mr Von Freeman, Sect. of the Russian Fur Co. and the Gov. Clerk
had arrived from across the Rocky Mountains

August 26th 1841

Dr McL. arrived from Nasqually, conferred with him, was
presented to Gov Simpson who like the former expressed a desire to be of any
service to myself and party

(Sept 7th The expedition finally got off en route for California)

September 16th 1841 - - - Found Fort Umpqua a protected ex-
-closure something like Vancouver, but on a smaller scale,
standing upon an extensive level piece of ground about 150
yards back from the river, and defended by 5 men, 2 women
and 9 dogs. Noticed on my way from the river to the fort many
Ludians sneaking about among the bushes, and up enquiry
was told by Mr Gagnare that an unusual number had

encamped in his neighbourhood. and had lately threatened 11,
to attack him and burn his fort. Their hostility arising towards
the Co and Whites generally from their losses by the smallpox which
was first introduced among them by the H.B. Co. party under
Michael and McKay and having lately been increased from the
Cos. Agents having discontinued selling them powder and balls which
they had reason to expect would soon be used against them.

This being the case Mr G — had not ventured out of the fort for
many days and had kept up a vigilant watch both night & day.
of late had become so much alarmed by the increasing numbers
and menacing attitude of the Umpqua Indians that he was about
dispatching a messenger to Fort Vancouver to inform Dr McLaughlin
of his situation.

(The Expedition left Fort Umpqua on September 17th and travelling
overland reached San Francisco Bay October 24 and rejoined
the Squadron.)