

## WASHINGTON FORTS OF THE FUR TRADE REGIME

For our better understanding, let us consider this period of our history as a drama in three acts. The first act is entitled "The Pacific Fur Company, or Astoria." The second act is "The North-West Company, or Spokane House." The third is "The Hudson's Bay Company, or Vancouver." It may be well also to consider a prologue called "The Spanish Dream" and an epilogue, "Uncle Sam's Army Arrives on the Scene."

The first establishment in our state was by the Spaniards at Neah Bay in March, 1792. The settlement was called Nunez Gaona. It was built by the Spaniard Fidalgo, acting under orders from Bodega y Quadra at Nootka. At the height of the famous Nootka<sup>1</sup> controversy it looked as if the British would win all lands north of the Straits of Juan de Fuca and that the Spaniards could hold the country south of the Straits only by actual and immediate occupation. Out of this necessity grew the expedition under Fidalgo to Neah Bay in March, 1792, shortly before Vancouver and the Spanish explorers Galiano and Valdez entered the Straits.

But the Spanish had orders, or at least advices, from their government not to enter the fur trade and not to promote any company or organization for the fur trade. Aside from mere occupation, the establishment was an agricultural experiment. The buildings in course of construction were of Spanish brick, on the slight rise just north of Washburn Brothers' general store at Neah Bay. The establishment was abandoned in October,<sup>2</sup> for Bodega y Quadra had found some of Meares' claims so flimsy that he now had hopes of holding even the region north of the Straits for Spain.

In the scant eight months that Nunez Gaona was occupied it boasted an abundance of cattle, poultry, hogs, sheep, goats, etc.<sup>3</sup> The Spanish friars were very active in missionary work, baptizing and teaching among the various Makah tribes. This missionary work seems to have begun at least a year before Fidalgo arrived at Neah Bay in the *Princessa*, for Gray in 1791 found Indians south of Cape Flattery who proved beyond doubt that they had been baptized into the Catholic faith. The chief rebuked Gray's crew for their irreligious<sup>4</sup> manner of life. All this did not, however, prevent the usual clash be-

<sup>1</sup>Bancroft, *History of the Northwest Coast*, Vol. I., p. 286.

<sup>2</sup>New Vancouver Journal, p. 32.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.

<sup>4</sup>John Hoskins, *Narrative of a Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America and China, 1790-93*. Transcript in Provincial Archives, Victoria, B. C. See p. 99.

tween Spaniards and natives at Neah Bay. As the unknown author of the newly discovered Vancouver journal puts it:

"The first pilot of the *Princessa*,<sup>5</sup> going on shore with his fowling-piece, to amuse himself shooting, after proceeding a little distance from where he landed, was dragged by a party of the natives (with whom till that time they had been on most amicable terms) into the woods, where they stripped him naked, and taking his gun from him, which was loaded with ball, they shot him dead with it. No provocation was known to have been given. Seigr. Fidalgo therefore determined very properly to punish these savages for so atrocious a crime in a manner that it well deserved and with a severity that would make them ever remember it and deter them from committing such for the future. He fired indiscriminately on the whole tribe, laid the village waste, and routed them so successfully that they fled to the opposite side of the Straits."

Such is the account of the first establishment in our state and the third battle with the Indians.<sup>6</sup> From the Spanish attempt to settle nothing permanent resulted.

The second establishment within what is now our state was by the British overland from Canada. Gradually the North-West Company of Montreal had pushed over the Rockies under the leadership of their great explorer, David Thompson. He established Kootanae House, at the very source of the Columbia, in 1807<sup>7</sup>. In 1809<sup>8</sup> he built Kullyspell House near the present Hope, Idaho, and Saleesh House<sup>9</sup> near Thompson Falls, Montana. In the late summer of 1810<sup>10</sup> two of his men, Finlay and McDonald, entered the present state of Washington and established the famous Spokane House. To Jaco Finlay<sup>11</sup> probably belongs the credit for selecting the site and erecting the first buildings at Spokane House. The spot is about ten miles northwest of the city of Spokane, about one-half mile up the Spokane river from the junction of the Little Spokane, and on the north bank of the river. On this sheltered, flat peninsula between the two rivers Indians were accustomed to gather<sup>12</sup> in great numbers to dry their fish. Spokane was always the most important trade emporium of the North-West Company this side of the Rockies.

<sup>5</sup>New Vancouver Journal, p. 32.

<sup>6</sup>The first was the fight between Quadra and the Quinaults in 1775; the second between Captain Barkley and the natives near Destruction Island, 1787.

<sup>7</sup>David Thompson, Narrative of His Explorations in Western America, p. 375.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 410-11.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. XCI and p. 417-18.

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 464.

<sup>11</sup>Journal of David Thompson, note by T. C. Elliott, Oregon Hist. Soc. Quart., Vol. XV., p. 125.

<sup>12</sup>Mr. T. C. Elliott's note in Thompson's Narrative of His Explorations in Western America, p. 46.

But you will remember that I set out by calling the North-West Company the second act in the drama; and as we haven't had the first act yet I am ahead of my story, except in a chronological sense. The first act was played by the Pacific Fur Company, usually known as the Astor Company. One year after the building of Spokane House, a fairly well equipped expedition<sup>13</sup> landed at the mouth of the Columbia and during the summer built Astoria, just beyond the borders of our state. But the company's most successful operation was within our state. During the same summer of 1811 a small party under David Stuart built Okanogan Post,<sup>14</sup> the third establishment in Washington. The site of this house is the southeast bank of the Okanogan river one-half mile from its junction with the Columbia.<sup>15</sup> The post consisted of only a small dwelling, 16x20, with storage for goods. Other buildings were added from time to time during the next three years.

Scarcely had the first building been completed when Stuart pushed on into the wilds of New Caledonia to the north, leaving only his clerk, Alexander Ross, in charge of the Okanogan trading. Winter set in and cut off Stuart's return, and Ross was alone with the Indians for 188 days. As he writes,<sup>16</sup> "Man was made to endure, and my only consolation was in my Bible." We may suspect, however, that he found some consolation in his collection of "1,550 beavers, besides other peltries, worth in the Canton market, 2,250 pounds sterling."<sup>17</sup>

In April, 1812, Robert Stuart came up the river leading a strong party with supplies for his uncle at Okanogan.<sup>18</sup> More important still, John Clarke led an expedition<sup>19</sup> by the way of the Snake and the Palouse to Spokane, where he had the daring to establish Fort Spokane alongside the Spokane House that David Thompson's men had built two years before for the North-West Company. This opposition led to a very lively trade war, which was certainly not diminished when the United States that same year, 1812, declared war on Great Britain. Fort Spokane, an Astor establishment, may be thought of as American; Spokane House, built by the North-West Company, was British. The two were contiguous<sup>20</sup> to each other, according to Ross; alongside, according to Ross Cox and others.

During the ensuing year, 1813,<sup>21</sup> Astoria was on tenter hooks. With news of the declaration of war, which was brought overland from

<sup>13</sup>See Ross, Franchere, Cox, and Irving's Astoria.

<sup>14</sup>Ross, Oregon Settlers, Ch. VII. and VIII.

<sup>15</sup>Judge Brown's "Old Fort Okanogan and the Okanogan Trail," in Oregon Historical Society Quarterly, Vol. XV., p. 14.

<sup>16</sup>Ross, Oregon Settlers, p. 146.

<sup>17</sup>Ibid., p. 150.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid., pp. 186 and 199.

<sup>19</sup>See Ross Cox and Alexander Ross.

<sup>20</sup>Ross, Oregon Settlers, p. 202.

<sup>21</sup>See Alexander Ross, Ross Cox, Gabriel Franchere, Irving's Astoria, and Dr. Coues, "New Light on the Early History of the Great Northwest."

Canada, came the information that a privateer and a man-of-war were both headed for the mouth of the Columbia river. This was in January. In February the partners decided to abandon their establishments. In March they were on the verge of famine. In April a brigade of North-Westerners arrived and encamped under the guns of the fort. In May the Astorians secretly bought up horses to transport their rich stores of fur overland. In June the Okanogan and Spokane brigades came in with the richest returns yet, and the partners decided to keep up the establishment for another year. In July the North-Westerners, starved out by the non-arrival of their privateer, retreated to Spokane House. In September they returned with ten canoes, flying the British flag. In October the North-Westerners promised to buy Astoria; but expecting every day the arrival of their privateer, they held off, hoping to save their bills of exchange. In November the Astorians, fearing a ship of war hourly, loaded their cannon, pointed them at the North-Westerners' camp, and with lighted matches forced them to buy. Thus Astoria was delivered up November 12, 1813, and the first act of our drama, the Pacific Fur Company, comes to an end.

In addition to Astoria, which they renamed Fort George, the North-West Company now had command of the two important posts within the boundaries of Washington; namely, Okanogan and Spokane House, with which Fort Spokane was now merged. The North-West Company in the Oregon country had no opposition; but, due to poor leadership, little development was attempted. The first improvement<sup>22</sup> was the rebuilding of Okanogan post under Ross Cox in 1816. The new post was one and one-half miles southeast<sup>23</sup> of the old. It was across the peninsula, and therefore on the banks of the main stream, the Columbia. Cox made fair progress, and by September he had completed a new dwelling, two good houses for his men, and a spacious store for furs and merchandise. Most of these buildings were of timber, though some adobe was used. The whole was surrounded by palisades fifteen feet high. The palisades were flanked by two bastions, each with a light four-pounder below and loopholes for musketry above.

For some years Alexander Ross and Donald McKenzie, better known as "Perpetual Motion" McKenzie, had contended for the establishment of a new post<sup>24</sup> at the forks of the Columbia, because the main North-West emporium, Spokane House, was an out-of-the-way place. To this, however, the bourgeois at Fort George said nay.

<sup>22</sup>Ross Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia*.

<sup>23</sup>Judge Brown's "Old Fort Okanogan and the Okanogan Trail," p. 19.

<sup>24</sup>Ross, *Fur-Hunters of the Far West*, Ch. IV.

Finally, in 1817, the partners in the great council house at Fort William on Lake Superior<sup>25</sup> ordered the new post built. Still the bourgeois at Fort George delayed furnishing the needed men, and it was not until 1818 that the new fort, Nez Perce, later known as Fort Walla Walla, was erected.<sup>26</sup> The site chosen was one and one-half miles west of the present town of Wallula. McKenzie and Ross, with ninety-five men, reached Walla Walla river July 11, 1818. They located about a half mile from the mouth of the Walla Walla, on the east bank of the Columbia. The site is a peninsula in ordinary stages of the river, but something like an island at flood.

Although the Indian report gave this as the exact spot where Lewis and Clark a dozen years before had celebrated a perpetual peace<sup>27</sup> with the Indians, the builders found the natives hostile, chiefly because John Clarke of Spokane House had hanged one of their relatives for a petty theft.<sup>28</sup> Furthermore, the builders found no timber; they had to collect the logs one hundred miles away and float them down the Walla Walla. First a temporary inclosure was made for the protection of the stores. When the fort proper was completed it was the most formidable<sup>29</sup> in the Northwest. It was surrounded by palisades of sawed timber twenty feet long, two and one-half feet wide and six inches thick. On top was a range of balustrades four feet high, which served the double purpose of ramparts and loopholes. A strong gallery five feet broad extended all around. At each angle was placed a reservoir sufficient to hold two hundred gallons of water, as a security against fire. Inside the wall were ranges of store houses and dwellings for the men. In front of these buildings another wall, twelve feet high, also with portholes and slip-doors, divided the buildings from the open square inside. Thus, should Indians at any time get in, they would see nothing but a wall before them on all sides. They could have no intercourse with the people inside unless by their consent. The outer gates opened and shut by a pulley; two more double doors also helped to secure the entrance. The natives were not admitted except on special occasions. All trade was carried on by means of an aperture in the walls, eighteen inches square, secured by an iron door. There were four mounted cannon, ten swivels, sixty stand of muskets, and bayonets, twenty boarding pikes, and a box of hand grenades. There were four strong wooden towers or bastions, and a cohorn or small mortar was above the gate. Ross proudly called his work "the Gibraltar of the Columbia, a triumph

<sup>25</sup>Ibid., Ch. VI.

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., Ch. VI.

<sup>27</sup>Ibid.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid. Also Ross Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia*.

<sup>29</sup>Ross Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia*, Ch. VII.

of British energy and enterprise." Such was the third, and in many ways the strongest<sup>30</sup> fort erected within the boundaries of our state.

The North-West Company was going forward slowly on the Columbia, because it was carrying on open war in the Red river district and other parts of Canada with the Hudson's Bay Company. This war itself did not affect our forts, but the outcome of it did; for in 1821 the two companies suddenly gave up the struggle and amalgamated, keeping the name of the older, the Hudson's Bay Company. Thus closes the second act of the drama; the North-West Company is no more.

The new chief factor for Hudson's Bay, Dr. John McLoughlin, began the third act of the drama with wonderful foresight and indomitable energy. Three new posts were to be established at once, and Spokane House and Fort George at Astoria were to be abandoned. One of the new posts, near the mouth of the Willamette, was to be the commercial center of the vast empire which had fallen to Hudson's Bay. After most painstaking surveys the three new posts were located at Vancouver, Kettle Falls, and Nisqually.

The first site of Fort Vancouver, selected by Governor Simpson in the winter of 1824-1825 was the spot<sup>31</sup> where the state asylum for the deaf now stands. It was partly constructed in 1825,<sup>32</sup> so that the goods and effects at Fort George were removed to the new post. It was finished in 1826. It was named Vancouver because it was thought to be near the place named Point Vancouver by Lieut. Broughton in 1792; but Point Vancouver was in reality some miles up the river, opposite Corbett, Oregon. Notwithstanding the careful survey, the new fort was no sooner completed than found inconveniently located, because it was too high above<sup>33</sup> and too far from the river for portage purposes, and water was obtainable only with great difficulty. Within two years a second post, the Fort Vancouver well known to the settlers, was in process of construction. It was built on the low flat just below the parade grounds of Vancouver barracks. This fort was a parallelogram<sup>34</sup> 226 yards long, 106 yards wide, enclosed by a picket wall fifteen feet high. Originally there was a bastion at the northwest corner, but cannon were always more a matter of ornamentation than of use. In the interior were about twenty-five buildings, all of wood except the powder magazine, which was of brick and stone.

<sup>30</sup>See Warre and Vavasour's Report, Ore. Hist. Soc. Quart., Vol. X., p. 42.

<sup>31</sup>See Warre and Vavasour's Map, Ore. Hist. Soc. Quart., Vol. X., No. 1.

<sup>32</sup>Journal and Letters of David Douglas, Ore. Hist. Soc. Quart., Vol. V., p. 248.

<sup>33</sup>Lieut. Vavasour's Engineering Report, Ore. Hist. Quart., Vol. X., p. 85 and p. 46.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., p. 85.

A short distance west and near the river landing a village<sup>35</sup> of about fifty houses for mechanics and servants was built in rows so as to form streets. Here also were a hospital, a boat house, a salmon house, and near by were barns, threshing mills, granaries, and dairy buildings. The hall within the stockade has been called "an oasis in the vast social desert of Oregon." It was a fairy land to early travelers and settlers.

In the same year that Vancouver was begun, a force of mechanics squared the timbers for the new fort above Kettle Falls, Fort Colville. During the summer of 1725 Governor Simpson staked out the site on the flat or "little nick," as John Work called it, just south of the present city of Marcus, within sound of Kettle Falls still farther to the south.<sup>36</sup> Fort Colville was not extensively fortified. It was first occupied in 1826; Spokane House was abandoned at the same time. From the first Colville was strongly interested in agriculture as a matter of self-preservation, for Governor Simpson had said that no food supply from Vancouver would be transported to a post so distant.

The last of all the fur-trade posts of our state was built at Nisqually in 1833. The region had been hastily explored by John Work<sup>37</sup> nine years before; more definitely by Archibald McDonald in the spring of 1833. The complete story of the founding of this place is told in the *Journal of Occurrences at Nisqually House*, ably edited by Mr. Clarence Bagley of Seattle and published in the *Washington Historical Quarterly*, Vol. VI, nos. 3 and 4, and Vol. VII, nos. 1 and 2. In the spring of 1833, McDonald, on a trading expedition to the Sound, erected a trading house<sup>38</sup> and naval depot, 15x20, and left three men there to clear the ground and plant seed. This first store was just south of the mouth of Sequelichew creek. May 30, having come from Vancouver by the Cowlitz, McDonald arrived again at his embryo establishment<sup>39</sup> and immediately set his men to work building a farm house on the edge of the plain above the high bank, one-half mile from the store. Ten days later the schooner Vancouver arrived with supplies and within two weeks from McDonald's arrival we have this picture from the *Journal*<sup>40</sup>:

"A good deal of stir about the little establishment this afternoon; canoes arriving by sea—dozens of horses and riders by land, two plows at work on an endless plain, and a ship riding at anchor before the

<sup>35</sup>Ibid., p. 46.

<sup>36</sup>Journal of John Work, Sept. 7, 1825-Sept. 15, 1826. *Washington Hist. Quarterly*, Vol. V. and Vol. VI.

<sup>37</sup>Journal of John Work, November and December, 1824. *Wash. Hist. Quart.*, Vol. III.

<sup>38</sup>Journal of Occurrence at Nisqually House, Vol. VI., p. 180.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., p. 182.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., p. 186.

camp, is a scene I venture to say not very common in the Indian country; far less at a new establishment.”

In a few days McDonald left the work in charge of Dr. Tolmie until the arrival of Chief Trader Heron. The first fort erected was to be a temporary affair, at the immediate summit of the bank. Scarcely had the ground been cleared when a better place was found in the woods to the south. Here a temporary store was erected, the Indians carrying the goods up the bank. July 21, 1833, the observation of Sunday was instituted amongst the neighboring tribes. In August the temporary posts were torn down and the timbers carried to the new site. The schooner *Cadboro* now arrived, and Chief Trader Heron, who had been partial to Whidby Island<sup>41</sup> as a site to answer for both Fort Langley and Fort Nisqually, embarked on her for another reconnoissance of Whidby. After his return Dr. Tolmie made his botanizing excursion towards the mountain, and was the first to view the great glaciers there.<sup>42</sup>

At the new post, after the store was well under way, dwellings and stockade were the next concern. Indians were employed to bring clay from the island (apparently Anderson) for the chimneys.<sup>43</sup> The main house was 55x20 with twelve-foot walls. October 20 a gale blew down the newly erected stockade, but did not damage the store and dwellings. During October a road was built from the beach to the fort. By November the erection of the stockade was completed. In December the squaring of timbers for bastions was begun. These were to be used either at Nisqually or at Whidby, as might later be determined upon.<sup>44</sup> When Nisqually House was completed it consisted of the usual bastioned stockade, store, dwellings, kitchen, Indian hall, and farm buildings of all descriptions. Later another Indian hall was built outside the stockade for stranger Indians. Although the success of Nisqually as a fur post was approved by the big wigs at Vancouver,<sup>45</sup> yet a reader of the journal always feels the greater importance of the agricultural part of the establishment.

Such were the six primary posts: Spokane House, Okanogan, Nez Percés, Vancouver, Colville, and Nisqually, ruled by the Hudson's Bay Company. There were minor establishments at Chinook, Cowlitz landing, and the mouth of the Cowlitz, but they depended upon the greater posts. Soon after his arrival Dr. McLoughlin abolished the traffic in liquor. Regarding this first prohibition movement, the first

<sup>41</sup>Wash. Hist. Quart., Vol. I., pp. 77-81.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid.

<sup>43</sup>Journal of Occurrences, Vol. VI., p. 195.

<sup>44</sup>Ibid., p. 273.

<sup>45</sup>Ibid., p. 160.



time our territory went "dry," the two English spies, Warre and Vavasour, wrote in their report of 1845<sup>46</sup>:

"The total abolition of the sale of intoxicating liquors has done much for the good of the whole community, white as well as Indian; and so long as this abstinence (which can hardly be called voluntary) continues the country will prosper. When prohibition is withdrawn, and the intercourse with the world thrown open, such is the character of the dissolute and only partially reformed American and Canadian settlers that every evil must be anticipated, and the unfortunate Indian will be the first to suffer."

At three of the establishments, Colville, Vancouver, and Cowlitz, Catholic churches were established; by Jesuits at Colville, by itinerant priests from Red River at Vancouver, and by Oblate Fathers at Cowlitz. At other posts, notably Nisqually, though no priests came for a long time, the chief traders or the clerks taught religion regularly. Under date of December 22, 1833, Sunday, Chief Trader Heron<sup>47</sup> records:

"Several Indian families came in as usual to get some religious instruction—I began to give them some instruction soon after my arrival which they treated with much indifference, but I have at length succeeded in altering their savage natures so far that they not only listen with attention to what I tell them, but actually practice it."

In August of the next year McDonald<sup>48</sup> enters under Sunday, the 10th:

"The natives assembled and requested me to point out to them what was proper for them to act in regard to our Divine Being. I told them that they should endeavor to keep their hands from killing and stealing, to love one another, and to pray only to the Great Master of life, or as they say, the Great Chief who resides on high. In fact I did my best to make them understand good and evil. They on their part promised fair, and had their devotional dance, for without it they would think very little of what we say to them."

In 1846 the treaty between the United States and England left all these posts stranded south of the 49th parallel of latitude. By 1869 the arbitration treaty settlement arranged that the United States should pay the Hudson's Bay Company \$450,000 and the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, a subsidiary, \$200,000 for all their property.<sup>49</sup> Thus ends the third act of the drama.

There remains only for us to see what finally becomes of these old posts after the United States soldiers came upon the scene.

<sup>46</sup>Ore. Hist. Soc. Quart., Vol. 10, p. 57.

<sup>47</sup>Journal of Occurrences, p. 272, of Vol. VI.

<sup>48</sup>Ibid., Vol. VII., p. 70.

<sup>49</sup>Mr. Bagley's Introduction to Journal of Occurrences.

Spokane House, first built, was likewise first abandoned. It was never reoccupied except occasionally by Indians and hunters. When Uncle Sam's troops came to the region the fort was established near Spokane Falls, ten miles up stream, and named Fort Wright. Of the first settlement in our state nothing remains but four cellar holes or chimney bottoms, in the midst of which a log cabin of certainly later date looks as if it might be a relic of the first Spokane House.

Of the next oldest, Okanogan, nothing remains of either fort but cellar holes and fragments of the foundation and chimneys.<sup>50</sup> The older, or Astor fort, is better marked than Fort Okanogan of the Hudson's Bay Company, which was so long the company's gateway to New Caledonia. The last Caledonian brigade came down the Okanogan Trail in 1847<sup>51</sup> Because of the boundary settlement and the Cayuse war, thereafter the brigades went over the Fort Hope trail to Fort Langley.<sup>52</sup> General McClellan<sup>53</sup> passed Okanogan in 1853 on the Northern Pacific Survey, and called it a "ruinous establishment." A few years later came the gold rush; soon after, the buildings at Okanogan disappeared, probably to build miners' fires and to make sluice boxes. No military post was established in this vicinity.

The third post established, Nez Perces, or Fort Walla Walla, was burned to the ground in spite of the precautions of the four great reservoirs of water. This was in 1841, while the Red River immigrants were encamped about the fort. These immigrants<sup>54</sup> came on to Cowlitz prairie and Nisqually and became the first settlers in the neighborhood of Tacoma. The Hudson's Bay Company immediately rebuilt Fort Nez Perce, but this time it was built entirely of adobe and stone. The bricks were made of clay procured near by; also the wild rye used in the adobe grew near the spot. This adobe fort was the one known to settlers. It was from here that rescue came at the time of the Whitman massacre. This fort remained standing until about 1894, when it was washed away by the flood. Only the foundations can be seen at the present time. When United States troops came they were established at a different place, near the present city of Walla Walla, whereas the old fort was at the present Wallula.

Of Fort Vancouver, so far as I know, nothing remains. Walking about Vancouver Barracks, near the landing, you will see an apple tree bearing a legend to the effect that it is the oldest apple tree in the Northwest and was raised from seed planted at Vancouver in

<sup>50</sup>Judge Brown, "Old Fort Okanogan and the Okanogan Trail," p. 35.

<sup>51</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>52</sup>Ibid., p. 29.

<sup>53</sup>Exploration for a Railroad from the Mississippi to the Pacific Ocean, Vol. XII, Part I.

<sup>54</sup>Warre and Vavasour's Report, p. 48.

1826. Though the post by the present barracks was not begun till 1828, the story is still possible, as the tree would have been transplanted from the first site; but most accounts agree in locating the orchard much farther back from the river. The site of the second fort has been a United States military post since 1849, known first as Fort Columbia and now as Vancouver Barracks. The Hudson's Bay Company left in 1863.

Fort Colville was abandoned about 1872; the remnant of it, McDonald's dwelling, burned a few years ago, so that nothing but a few brick and some scattered lumber mark the spot. When United States troops came into this region they were sent not to Fort Colville, but to Mill creek, some fifteen miles east, where a government fort, also called Colville (spelled with two ls this time) was built about 1858 or 9, to protect the settlers who had built the town which, soon after it was built, was moved four miles south to the present city of Colville. Of the United States government Fort Colville nothing is left but the fragments of the foundations, for the present owner of the farm got tired of tourists tramping over his field and burned the building to the ground.

There remains only Nisqually to dispose of. In 1845 the British secret agents, Warre and Vavasour, visited the place, and in preference to all the other posts recommended Nisqually as a landing place for troops in case of war over "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight." Here are their exact words:

"At Nisqually I would recommend a blockhouse or defensible guard house overlooking the Sound, and commanding the road from the landing place, the banks on the shore being too steep to be easily ascended except at this point. Any description of work can be thrown up (such as a bastioned redoubt), on the large plain near the Sequality stream, with barracks, etc., for the accommodation of troops."

It may be interesting to note parenthetically that instead of England's sending troops and war supplies to this spot, this spot is now sending vast quantities of war munitions to England; and that the government's choice of this region for its new army post confirms the wisdom of England's secret agents.

About three years after the visit of Warre and Vavasour, or about 1848, the post was moved about a mile farther inland, to the present site of the old Huggins house, on the old Olympia road. Where the old fort stood and where the wheat fields flourished of old, there now grow fir trees two feet in diameter, so long ago was the post abandoned. The place of the stockade can be easily traced. Over

at the new site at the Huggins house, part of the picketing and one of the gates still stand. When troops came into this region they were stationed at Fort Steilacoom, some distance to the north.

The three most influential men in the actual building of old Nisqually were Archibald McDonald, Dr. William Fraser Tolmie, and Chief Trader Heron, all of whom have descendants living. Last summer I talked with George Heron, who was born at Nisqually the first year of its existence. He is now in his 84th year, blind and feeble, living near Curlew, north of Republic. Three sons and three daughters of Dr. Tolmie live in Victoria, B. C. One of McDonald's grand-nephews I met in western Montana last summer. After the Hudson's Bay left Nisqually in 1869, Mr. Huggins became an American citizen and took over the site as his homestead. His estate sold it to the Dupont Powder Company about ten years ago.

Eighty years and more ago, when chief trader or chief clerk was preaching to the Indians gathered about the post at Nisqually, the Indians complained sometimes that they could not remember it all when the preacher told them so much. Therefore a rule was made that when anyone felt that he had heard as much as he could remember he should stand up in meeting and say so, and the sermon would stop forthwith. Now I feel sure that some of you are wishing that you had the same privilege of standing up in meeting and crying "Enough!" I therefore take mercy on you and quit.

Tacoma, March 19.

O. B. SPERLIN.