

The Washington Historical Quarterly

INDEPENDENCE DAY IN THE FAR NORTHWEST

The following few extracts taken from logs, narratives, and journals of American seamen, explorers, traders, and travelers, in the Oregon territory, and the Pacific Northwest, have no great historical significance. They are a recital of the manners in which the anniversary of Independence Day was observed by those intrepid men, long ago.

As to what constitutes a Fourth of July celebration, each individual must be his own judge.

The celebrations hereinafter mentioned, whether attended by few or many, by simple or elaborate ceremonies, were equally inspired by patriotism and the means employed to celebrate were the best their respective circumstances would permit.

During the time that George Washington was presiding over the deliberations of the Convention of 1787, certain Boston merchants, attracted no doubt by the prospects of immense profits to be derived in the fur trade of the North Pacific Ocean, purchased and fitted out an expedition, the ship "Columbia" of 212 tons burden, John Kendrick, commander; and the ninety-ton sloop "Washington," Robert Gray, commander. Sailing from Boston in the autumn of 1787, they arrived on the Northwest Coast the following year.

It is said that between the years 1782-1792 at least thirty American ships, mostly from New England, were engaged in the fur trade in the North Pacific Ocean."¹ This was the beginning of the golden age of the American merchant marine, when American built ships, fleet and staunch,

¹Among the number were Captains Magee, in "The Margaret"; Crowell, in the "Hancock"; Coolidge, in the "Grace"; Roberts, in the "Jefferson"; Metcalf, in the "Elmira"; Ingraham, in the "Hope," and Cole, in the "Florinda" of Macao. "The most miserable thing that was ever formed in imitation of the Ark," according to Haswell, one of the Columbia's officers.

flying the American flag, were to be seen on every sea, however remote.²

Some of the above mentioned ships were on this coast during those years on the anniversary of Independence Day. Captains Kendrick and Gray were at or near Nootka Sound on July 4, 1789. Some of these officers and seamen had served in the Revolutionary War. We know that Captain Kendrick "did considerable privateering" and that Captain Gray "was an officer in the American navy during the Revolutionary War." And no doubt they observed so important an event as celebrating every Fourth of July in a proper manner. There may be records of such celebrations.

JULY FOURTH, 1791

The following is an extract taken from the log of the ship "Hope," Captain Ingraham, recording such a celebration held on Queen Charlotte Island, named Washington Island by Captain Ingraham, July 4, 1791. George Washington was then serving his first term as president; the western boundary of the United States was then the Mississippi River. Michilimackinac, on Lake Michigan, Detroit, Fort Erie, Niagara, Oswego, Oswegatchie, Port-au-fer, and Dutchman's Point were garrisoned by British troops and English officers still exercised jurisdiction over the adjacent territory. Neither Kentucky, Tennessee nor Ohio had as yet been admitted into the Union.

While the English and American governments did not agree as to the division of the territory, it was generally understood by both claimants that the Oregon country included all the territory west of the Rocky Mountains, north of latitude 40° to 54° 40' north, and included Queen Charlotte and Vancouver Islands.

"Thursday, the 16th Sept., 1790, the Brigantine Hope being ready for sea under my command, destined on a voyage round Cape Horn to the N. W. coast of America, from thence to China and back to Boston, making the circuit of the globe. Having experienced much tempestuous weather on my last voyage in doubling Cape Horn, I was under some apprehension as to the safety of the Hope being only 70 Tons burthen

²Rev. Edward G. Porter, referring to the North River, Massachusetts, where the "Columbia" was built, said:

"One who sees it today peacefully wandering through quiet meadows and around fertile slopes would hardly believe that over one thousand sea-going vessels have been built upon its banks." Transactions of the Twentieth Annual Reunion of Oregon Pioneer Association for 1892. Portland, Oregon, 1912, p. 63.

³While the English and American Governments did not agree as to the division of the territory, it was generally understood by both claimants that the Oregon Country included all the territory west of the Rocky Mountains, north of latitude 40° to 54° 40' north, and included Queen Charlotte and Vancouver Islands. See map in Twiss (Sir Travers) Oregon Question Examined in Facts and the Law of Nations. London, 1846. Greenhow (Robert), History of Oregon and California and the Other Territories on Northwest Coast of North America, second ed. Boston, 1845, p. 21.

and slightly built. However I conceived it the time to make Hay while the sun shone. The trade to China from N. W. being lucrative and in its Infancy it was not to be long neglected especially as since the return of the Columbia many of our enterprising seamen seem'd bent towards an Adventure to try what could be done notwithstanding the ill success of the first attempt, and when I considered these things I was determined to be among the first that Embark'd—at all events altho I had been on shore but 5 weeks since my last voyage round the world which instead of an elevation only tended to embitter my situations being only a mere dream of Felicity from which I was loth to be awakened; however Fortune is not alike kind and propitious to all therefore with as good a grace as possible I submitted to my fate—and on the morning before mentioned several Gentlemen of the Company who fitted my vessel and others of my acquaintance accompanied me on board in order to sail out in the bay with us and to return in the pilot boat."⁴

The brig "Hope" was fitted out by Thomas H. Perkins, of Boston, who carried on a great commercial business, chiefly with the Northwest of America, China and Boston, in the early part of the nineteenth century. No private firm in the world transacted more business in China.⁵

The "Hope" left the Sandwich Islands for the Northwest Coast of America June 1st, 1791.

July 28, 1791—" * * * * We saw part of Washington Island bearing N. E. * * * ."

June 29—" * * * * We saw 3 openings which we had observed on the preceding evening. I stood for the northermost which had the most promising appearance and bore N. E.e of us. When we got within a league of the entrance I sent an officer with a boat mann'd and arm'd to examine it ere we entered in with the vessel. In the meantime I had the Brig by the wind and lay off and on. At 11 o'clock the boat was seen coming out with a Jack flying which was the signal if in case it proved a good Harbour. We bore away and met her in the entrance of a fine sound; at 4 O'clock we moored in a snug cove in the East arm of the sound as I never had any Information that there was a sound or Harbour where we fortunately found so good a one. I tho't it necessary it should have a name. I therefore nam'd it Magee Sound, after Captn

⁴Journal-of-The Voyage of-The Brigatine "Hope"-From Boston To-The North-West Coast of America-1790-1792—By—Joseph Ingraham—Captain of the "Hope." Book 2, p. 1.

Copy used is a Photostat copy in the Library of the University of Washington, taken from Original in Library of Congress (hereinafter cited as Log of the ship "Hope.")

⁵Weeden (William B.), Economic and Social History of New England, 1620-1789, v. 2, p. 822. Boston. 1890.

James Magee, of Boston and one of the Company which own'd the Hope under my command."⁶

"July 4th [1791]—* * * * On the 4th. being the anniversary of American Independence I caused a Hog of 70 lbs. weight to be roasted whole on which we all din'd on shore. I with my Officers and seamen drank the president's health and made the forest ring with 3 cheers, after which every one return'd to their several employments as we could not spare time to set longer after dinner * * *."⁷

Magees sound is situate in the Lat 52° 46' North; Longe 61" 16' West of Boston, or 131-46 West of London. It is on S. E. side of Washington Island on what the English term Prince Edwards or Charlotte Isles thus named by 2 different Captains on their first falling in with them.⁸

JULY FOURTH, 1792

Captain Ingraham, in ship "Hope," returned to the Northwest Coast of America and was at the Washington Islands in July, 1792, where he again celebrated the anniversary of American Independence, as following extract from his journal shows:

"July 2 [1792]—Lat. 53°-54 No.; Long. 224°-25E.

"* * * * We saw part of Washingtons Islets bearing E. B. N. Dist'ce 8 leagues. I intended anchoring in Cove Duglas or Crab Cove. I keep off to N. leaving all the highlands to the South, or on the starb'd hand.

"At noon our Lat. was 54°-5 N. at which time Cunneyohs straight bore N. E. 4 leagues we stood in under all sail * * * * at 4 in the afternoon we anchored in 15 fathoms water nearly in same place we did on our last voyage."

July 4 [1792]* * * * "being the anniversary of American Independence in order to celebrate it in the best possible manner our situation would admit of I had as on my last voyage a Hog of 60 pounds weight roasted whole on the beach and invited Capn. Croel and his officers to dine with me at 12 Oclock we fir'd a gun hoisted our colours and gave 3 Cheers—which the Hancock return'd. As the Hope was on Careen we din'd on shore under a Tree near the beach. Old Cunneyah was one of our guests—however the day did not end so pleasantly as it began for in the afternoon when Capn Croel and his officers were return'd on board and we were trading with the natives some of the Hancocks men who

⁶Log of Ship "Hope." Book 2, p. 79.

⁷Ibid. Book 2, p. 81.

⁸Ibid. Book 2, p. 82.

⁹Ibid. Book 3, p. 162.

were cutting wood on shore lost an axe (perhaps by carelessness). However they challenged the Natives with the Theft and seiz'd several skins and 2 spear's on which I saw the Indians which had taken their temporary abode near us, embarking on hearing the cause, I repair'd on board the Hancock to inform Capn Croel that he might take proper care of his men. Capn Croel immediately went on shore and brot the men off with him leaving the skins with my chief Officer. Shortly after 2 or 3 natives return'd to the beach and Captn Croel desir'd me to give orders that the skins might be given to those people which I did after the men were possess'd of the skins they offer'd them for sale for a Jacket & Trousers which one of the men was trying on when a man came alongside the Hancock and said the skins were his on which Capn C. desir'd I would hail again & give orders that the skins might be given to the man who claim'd them last this I did likewise.

The man that was bargaining for them seeing the right owner coming to receive them endeavor'd to run off with the Jacket and Trousers on which my Chief Officer gave orders to pursue him and the Centinals on the beach to fire which they did 2 muskets were fir'd before I was able to stop the men from persuing, the Jacket was recover'd and the Trousers the man carried off. I was very sorry it Happened. I was on board Hancock at time as the native informm' me the man was wounded in the side which had I been on shore I should have prevented so might the Officer had he been trading where he ought to have been (on board the Brig) etc etc."¹⁰

Captain Ingraham subsequently entered the navy of the United States as a Lieutenant, and was one of the officers of the ill-fated brig Pickering, of which nothing was ever heard after her departure from the Delaware in August, 1800."¹¹

The location of this, the second celebration of Captain Ingraham, is not quite so clear. It probably was on the North West point of what is now known as Graham Island (of the Queen Charlotte group) or the small island, just northwest; or it may have been on one of the Prince of Wales Islands, then called Douglass, or on mainland just north of Portland Canal. If at either of last two mentioned, it was held in what is now Southeastern Alaska.

Between the years 1790 and the beginning of the War of 1812 numerous American ships annually visited the Northwest Coast. And it

¹⁰Ibid. Book 3, p. 164.

¹¹Greenbow (Robert), *History of Oregon and California*, 2nd ed. 1845, p. 237.

is safe to assume that where you find Americans on July 4th you will find them celebrating the anniversary of American Independence.

JULY FOURTH, 1806

The Lewis and Clark Expedition left the River a Dubois, opposite the mouth of the Missouri River, Monday, May 4th, 1804,¹² on their overland journey to the Pacific Ocean. They passed their first Fourth of July [1804] near present site of Fort Leavenworth.¹³ On July 4th, 1805, they were at the Great Falls of the Missouri River.¹⁴

Having reached the Pacific, where they passed the winter of 1805-1806, they were now returning to the States.

They reached the Bitter Root Valley on July 3, 1806,¹⁵ where they separated temporarily, Captain Lewis to take a short cut to the Missouri River, Captain Clark to explore the Yellowstone.

Captain Clark's camp on July 3, 1806, was nearly opposite where the town of Carvallis, Montana, is now located.¹⁶

This was in the Oregon territory and formerly a part of the Territory of Washington.

Captain Clark makes the following entry in his journal:

"Friday, July 4-1806.

I ordered three hunters to Set out early this morning to hunt & kill some meat, and by 7 A. M. we collected our horses took breakfast and Set out; proceeded on up the Valley on the West Side of Clarks river crossing three large deep and rapid Creeks, and two of a smaller size to a small branch in the Spurs of the mountain and dined; the last Creek or river which we pass'd was so deep and the water so rapid that several of the horses were sweped down some distance and the Water ran over several others which wet several articles. After crossing this little river, I observed in the road the tracks of two men whome I prosume is of the Shoshone nation. Our hunters joined us with 2 deer in tolerable order. On the side of the Hill near the place we dined saw a gang of Ibex or big horn Animals. I shot at them running and missed. This being the day of the declaration of Independence of the United States and a Day commonly scelebrated by my Country I had every disposition to secelebrate this day and therefore halted early and partook of a Sumptious Dinner

¹²Original Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806. Reuben Gold Thwaites, Editor. N. Y., 1904. Vol. I., p. 66.

¹³Ibid. Vol. I., p. 16.

¹⁴Ibid. Vol. 2, p. 211; Vol. 7, p. 110.

¹⁵Ibid. Vol. 5, pp. 183, 245.

¹⁶Ibid. Vol. 5, p. 246, note 2.

of a fat Saddle of Venison and much of Cow (roots). After Dinner we proceeded on etc etc."¹⁷

Clark was accompanied by twenty men, besides the Indian woman, Sacajawea, and her Child. Nathaniel Pryor, John Shields, George Shannon, William Labiche, Richard Windov, Hugh Hall, George Gibson, Charbonneau, Pierre Courzatte, John Colter, John Collins, Alexander Willard were of the party.

JULY FOURTH, 1807

"William Tufts, Esq.,¹⁸ of Boston, * * * * * who was on the coast as supercargo of the ship Guatimozin, of Boston, in 1807-8, writes me from Boston, February 6th, 1857, that he was on the Coast for eighteen months, from the 20th of March, 1806, to the 24th of September, 1808. * * * *

"I was in the Columbia River from about the first to the middle of July, 1807. Our dinner on the 4th of July was roast moose and boiled salmon."

Mr. Tufts also procured at the same time a medal given to the Indians by Lewis and Clarke. It was pewter, and with inscription upon it * * * * *

The ship Guatimozin, of Boston, Captain Glanville, master, owner by T. Lyman, was on Northwest Coast in 1807-1808, and was wrecked on coast of New Jersey, February 3, 1810.¹⁹

JULY FOURTH, 1810

The following is a condensed statement taken from a speech by Hon. James G. Swan delivered before the Washington Pioneer Association at Port Townsend in 1887:

Captain Nathaniel Winship in the ship "Albatross" of Boston entered the Columbia in the latter part of May 1810, and attempted the construction of the first trading establishment on the Columbia River, and "planted the first seeds in the virgin soil." Discouraged by floods and the hostility of the natives, they abandoned the settlement and left the Columbia River July 19th, 1810.²⁰

¹⁷Original Journal of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, 1804-1806, Dr. Thwaites, Editor. N. Y., 1905, Vol. 5, p. 246.

¹⁸William Tufts was an uncle of James G. Swan. Transactions of the Washington Pioneer Association for the years 1883 to 1889, inclusive, with Constitution and By-Laws, also Annual Addresses and other matter of interest to Pioneers. Compiled by Charles Prosch. Seattle, 1894, p. 98.

¹⁹Swan (James G.), *The Northwest Coast; or Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory.* N. Y., 1857, p. 406. *Ibid.*, p. 424.

²⁰Transactions of the Washington Pioneer Association for years 1883 to 1889, inclusive, with Constitution and By-Laws, also Annual Addresses and other matter of interest to Pioneers. Compiled by Chas. Prosch, Seattle, 1894, pp. 98, 99.

If Franchere, Ross Cox, Alexander Ross or Irving mentions any 4th. of July celebration among the "Astorians" I have not found it. It is said that in all the Association there were but five native-born American citizens, and of these one was manager, three were clerks, and one cooper. This doubtless refers to the Company of the ship Tonquin. That there were more Americans in the overland party of Mr. Hunt seems certain, though of the total number they were a very small minority. Even this small number doubtless celebrated Independence Day.

JULY FOURTH, 1811

The following celebration, though not held in the Oregon country, is, however, worthy of mention, owing to the fact that some of those present afterward became prominent in the history of Oregon.

Mr. Astor's overland party, under command of Mr. William P. Hunt, consisted of nearly sixty persons. In this party were John Bradbury, the English naturalist; Mr. Nuttall, the naturalist, and Donald McKenzie, Ramsey Croats, Joseph Miller, Robert McLellan, partners; John Reed, clerk; John Day, hunter, etc., etc. Forty were Canadian "voyageurs" or "engages."

They embarked at Nadowa, near junction of the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, early in March 1811, "in four boats, one of a large size mounting a swivel and two howitzers," bound for Astoria. Shortly after, Manuel Lisa, the well-known head of the Missouri Fur Company, also fitted out an expedition of twenty-one well-armed and selected men to make a trip to the Rocky Mountains and visit his forts on the Missouri River, and had a swivel and two brass blunderbusses mounted in his boat.

Mr. H. M. Brackenridge, a well-known writer, and Sacajawea, her husband, and child were in the party. Speaking of her, Brackenridge says: "We had on board a Frenchman named Charbonet with his wife, an Indian woman of the Snake Nation, both of whom had accompanied Lewis and Clark to the Pacific and were of great service. The woman, a good creature, of a mild and gentle disposition, greatly attached to the whites, whose manners and dress she tries to imitate; but she had become sickly, and longed to revisit her native country."²¹

Lisa's party left St. Charles April 2, 1811, more than twenty days after Hunt's party.

Realizing the danger to a small company passing through the hostile Sioux Nation, Lisa put forth every effort to overtake and join Hunt's

²¹Brackenridge (H. M.), *Views of Louisiana, Together With a Journal of a Voyage Up the Missouri River in 1811.* Pittsburgh, 1814, p. 202.

party before they reached the Sioux Country. They succeeded in overtaking Hunt, soon after he had entered it.

Chittenden says: "This remarkable keel boat race, covering a period of just two months and a distance of about eleven hundred miles, is one of the notable events in Western history."²²

The parties traveled in company up the river, the leaders mutually distrustful and suspicious of each other. They later quarreled. Afterwards became partly reconciled. They finally arrived at Fort Lisa, situated on the Missouri River, near the Mandan Villages near where the present town of Stanton, North Dakota, is now situated—where on July 4th, 1811, they celebrated Independence Day, probably the first ever observed in Dakota.

Brackenridge, who was with Lisa says: "On the Fourth of July, we had something like a celebration of the day. The two principal chiefs happened to be with us. The borgne is one of the most extraordinary men I ever knew. The description of Abelino might give some idea of the man. He sways with unlimited control all the villages, and is sometimes a cruel and abominable tyrant. In stature he is a giant, and his one eye seems to flash with fire. I saw him on one or two occasions treat She-he-ke with great contempt. Mr. Lisa citing something which She-he-ke expressed, "What," says the other, "does that bag of lies pretend to have any authority here?"²³

Mr. John Bradbury, who was present, says:

4th [1811]—"This day being the anniversary of the independence of the United States, Mr. Lisa invited us to dine on board his boat, which was accepted by Messrs. Brackenridge, Lewis, Nuttal and myself; and as Le Borgne and the Black Shoe, the two Minetaree chiefs, called at the Fort before dinner, they were invited also. They ate with moderation and behaved with much propriety, seeming studiously to imitate the manners of the whites."²⁴

JULY FOURTH, 1823

There is a famous old landmark known to many of the fur traders, trappers and pioneers coming overland on the old Oregon trail—Independence Rock. It is an immense oblong block of oval, but irregular shape, along the southern base of which lay the river (Sweetwater) and along the northern base the old Oregon trail. A monument raised by Nature

²²Chittenden (Hiram Martin), *American Fur Trade of Far West, Etc.*, New York, 1902. Vol. I., p. 185.

²³Brackenridge (H. M.), *Views of Louisiana, Together With a Journal of a Voyage Up the Missouri River in 1811*. Pittsburgh, 1814, p. 261.

²⁴Bradbury (John), *Travels in the Interior of America in the Year 1809, 1810 and 1811, etc.*, 2nd ed., London, 1819, p. 163. Same, *Early Western Travels*, Vol. V., p. 167, Cleveland, 1904, Dr. Thwaites, Editor.

and which was dedicated to commemorate a Fourth of July here celebrated by the first party of whites who made the journey by South pass. "The name is of early date, probably before 1830, and if so, coming from the Ashley Expedition. The incident which gives rise to it is well-known, from various references all of which indicate that a party of hunters encamped at the base of this rock on a Fourth of July and here celebrated the anniversary of the Country's Independence."²⁵ Sage says that "it derives its name from a party of Americans on their way to Oregon under lead of one Tharp, who celebrated the Fourth of July at this place²⁶—they being the first company of whites that ever made the journey from the States via South Pass." As Oregon then included everything west of South Pass, this may very likely refer to the first Ashley party that followed the route probably in 1823." * * *²⁷

Sage says further that "the surface (of the rock) is covered with names of travelers, traders, trappers, emigrants engraved upon it in almost every conceivable part for the distance of many feet above its base—but most prominent among them all is the word 'Independence' inscribed by the patriotic band who first christened this lone monument of Nature in honor of liberty's birthday." This is confirmed by Farnham,²⁸ who refers to the rock as "a large rock, oval in form on which the old trappers many years ago carved word 'Independence' and their own names."

It is also mentioned by Father DeSmet, who passed "Independence Rock" July 5th, 1841.²⁹

JULY FOURTH, 1832

Speaking of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth's first expedition to Oregon, his kinsman, John B. Wyeth, said that Captain Wyeth was greatly influenced to undertake this venture by the writings of Hall J. Kelley. Of the latter he says:

"He believed all he read and was firm in the opinion that an Englishman and American, or either, by himself could endure, and achieve anything that any man could do, with same help. That a New England man or 'Yankee' could with less."³⁰

²⁵Chittenden (Hiram Martin), *American Fur Trade of Far West, Etc.*, New York, 1902. Vol. I., p. 471.

²⁶Sage (Rufus B.), *Rocky Mountain Life, Etc.*, Boston, 1859, p. 164.

²⁷Chittenden (H. M.), *American Fur Trade of Far West, V. I.*, p. 472.

²⁸Farnham (Thomas), *Travels in Great Western Prairie, Etc.*, Vol. I., p. 108. Same, *Early Western Travels*, Dr. Thwaites, Editor, Vol. XXVIII, p. 112, Cleveland, 1906.

²⁹DeSmet (P. J., S. J.), *Letters and Sketches, with a narrative of a year's residence among the Indian tribes of Rocky Mountains*. Philadelphia, 1843, p. 79.

³⁰Wyeth (John B.), *Oregon, or a Short History of a Long Journey, Etc.*, Cambridge, 1833, p. 4. Same, *Early Western Travels*, Thwaites, Ed., Vol. XXI., p. 24.

That party consisted of Capt. Wyeth, and company of twenty-one. They left Independence, Mo., in May, 1832, at which place they were joined by William Sublette, and a party of sixty-two.

July 4th. [1832]—"Decamped and at noon crossed the divide and drank to my friends with mingled feelings from the waters of the Columbia mixed with alcohol and eat of a Buffaloe cow. Made this day 30 miles and 25 yesterday. The snow clad mountains now entirely surround us, the streams this side increase rapidly. One bear seen this day. The grass much better and some fertile land here the earth in places was frozen snow yesterday and today. Three of my men are sick and I have no spare animals for them."³¹

John B. Wyeth, who was one of Captain Wyeth's party, says:

"On the 4th of July, 1832, we arrived at Lewis' fork, one of the largest rivers in these Rocky Mountains." (Probably Hoback's River, a branch of Lewis or Snake River in Western Wyoming just south of Yellowstone Park.) He says further:

"This being Independence Day, we drank the health of our friends in Massachusetts in good clear water, as that was the only liquor we had to drink in remembrance of our homes and dear connexions. If I may judge by my own feelings and by looks of my companions, there was more of melancholy than joy amongst us."³²

July 12th John B. Wyeth and several others of Captain Nathaniel Wyeth's party decided to return, which they did, joining Captain William Sublette's party, and later returned to the States. He lacked the proper qualifications to become a pioneer. Captain Wyeth continued his journey and reached the Pacific Coast.

JULY FOURTH, 1834

Capt. Wyeth's second expedition to Oregon.

In the party were John K. Townsend, Thomas Nuttall, Jason and Daniel Lee, the missionaries. They left St. Louis in March, 1834, and had reached the Bear River, near the border of Washington, Wyoming and Idaho.

July 4th, 1834—"This being a memorable day, the liquor kegs were opened, and the men allowed an abundance. We, therefore, soon had a renewal of the coarse and brutal scenes of the rendezvous. Some

³¹Sources of History of Oregon. The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, 1831-6, Vol. I., Parts 3 to 6, inclusive, p. 158.

³²Wyeth (John B.), Oregon, or a Short History of a Long Journey, Etc., Cambridge, 1833, p. 39. Same, Early Western Travels, Thwaites, Ed., Vol. XXI., p. 60.

of the bacchanals called for a volley in honor of the day, and in obedience to the order, some twenty or thirty 'happy' ones reeled into line with their muzzles directed to every point of the compass, and when the word 'fire' was given, we who were not 'happy' had to lie flat upon the ground to avoid the bullets which were careening through the camp."³³

Captain Nathaniel Wyeth made the following entry in his journal:

"July 4th [1834]—Moved up the Creek about 1 mile, then leaving it made W. by N. over a divide and by a pass which occurs in lowest part of a high range of hills 7 miles then W. 13 miles down a ravine which had a little water in it to its junction with another small run and the two are called Muddy. Here we celebrated the 4th. I gave the men too much alcohol for peace, took a pretty hearty spree myself. At camp we found Mr. Cerry and Mr. Walker, who were returning to St. Louis with the furs collected by Mr. Bonneville's Company, about 10 packs and men going down to whom is due 10,000\$."³⁴

JULY FOURTH, 1835

At Fort William, Wyeth's New Settlement on Wappatoo Island, which is about fifteen miles from lower mouth of Willammet.

1835—"July 4th.—This morning was ushered in by the firing of cannon on board our brig, and we made preparations for spending the day in festivity, when, at about 9 o'clock, a letter was received from Mr. Walker, who has charge of the fort at Wappatoo island, stating that the tailor, Thornburg, had been killed this morning by Hubbard, the gunsmith, and requested our presence immediately, to investigate the case, and direct him how to act. Our boat was manned without loss of time, and Capt. L. [ambert] and myself repaired to the fort, where we found everything in confusion. Poor Thornburg, whom I had seen but two days previously, full of health and vigor was now a lifeless corpse; and Hubbard, who was more to be pitied, was walking up and down the beach with a countenance pale and haggard from the feelings at war within etc."³⁵ The brig referred to was the "May Dacre," Captain Wyeth's vessel.

³³Townsend (John K.), *Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains to the Columbia River*, Philadelphia, 1839, p. 80. Same, *Early Western Travels*, Dr. Thwaites, Ed., Cleveland, 1905, Vol. XXI, p. 198.

³⁴Sources of the History of Oregon. The Correspondence and Journals of Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, 1831-6, Vol. I, Parts 3-6, p. 225.

³⁵Townsend, *Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains*, p. 223. Same, *Early Western Narratives*, Thwaites, Ed., Vol. XXI, p. 323.

JULY FOURTH, 1836

The missionary party, consisting of Marcus Whitman and wife, H. H. Spaulding and wife, W. H. Gray and the two Nez Percé boys, had overtaken the caravan of the American Fur Co. late in May, 1836, at Loup Fork of the Platte River. The overland caravan consisted of about two hundred persons.

"On the Fourth of July [1836] they entered the famous South Pass, where the Rocky and Wind River Mountains almost come together."³⁶

"July 4th they entered the South Pass of the Rocky Mountains, the dividing line between the Atlantic and the Pacific Slopes. There on Independence Day, they alighted from their horses, and kneeling down, with the Bible and the American flag in their hands they took possession of the Pacific Coast as the home of American mothers and for the Church of Christ."³⁷

There is some doubts as to whether this party had reached the South Pass on July 4, 1836.

JULY FOURTH, 1841

Part of the United States exploring squadron under the command of Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, U. S. N., was on Puget Sound during part of the spring and summer of 1841, and they were present and took part in the great Fourth of July celebration held near Fort Nisqually in 1841. This was a large celebration and according to modern formula, nothing was omitted. They fired salutes with cannon, sailors and marines³⁸ marched to music. With flags flying, the Declaration of Independence

³⁶Barrows (William), *Oregon, the Struggle for Possession*, 3rd ed., Boston, 1885, p. 132. Cites no authority.

³⁷Eells (Rev. Myron, D. D.), *Marcus Whitman, Pathfinder and Patriot*, Seattle, 1909, p. 34. Cites no specific authority. For Whitman's trips across the continent he gives Messrs. Parker, Gray, Lovejoy, and Mrs. Whitman as his authority. Mowry (William A.), *Marcus Whitman and Early Days of Oregon*. N. Y., 1901, p. 72. Cites H. H. Spaulding, in the *Chicago Advance*, December 1st, 1872. Gray, W. H., *History of Oregon, 1792-1849*. Portland, 1870. Says, p. 120: "About the 20th of July." *Transactions of the Nineteenth Annual Reunion of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1891*. Portland, O., 1893. *Journal of Mrs. Marcus Whitman*, p. 44, July 27: "Had quite a level route today—came down Bear River."

³⁸"Captain Charles Wilkes was the officer of the day. Prayer was offered by Dr. Richmond. The Declaration of Independence was read by sergeant of marines; the Scriptures were read by Captain Wilkes. Two songs were sung, viz: 'The Star Spangled Banner' and 'My Country 'Tis of Thee.' * * * * The oration was delivered by Dr. Richmond."

From an article entitled "Missionaries Participating in the Original Celebration at This Place, 1841," by Rev. A. Atwood, published in "Commemorative Celebration at Sequelitchew Lake, Pierce County, Washington, July 5, 1906, at 2 o'clock P. M., under auspices of the Pierce County Pioneer Association." Compiled by R. L. McCormick and W. H. Gilstrap, pp. 27, 30. This book contains a splendid and complete account of this celebration and of those who took part therein. Unfortunately the book is not easy to get.

was read, a Fourth of July oration delivered. They had athletics, horse racing, feasting, and the usual Fourth of July casualty.

Captain Wilkes says:

“Wishing to give the crew a holiday on the anniversary of the Declaration of our Independence, and allow them to have a full day’s frolic and pleasure, they were allowed to barbecue an ox, which the Company’s Agent had obligingly sold me. They were permitted to make their own arrangements for the Celebration, which they conducted in the following manner: The place chosen for the purpose was a corner of the Mission Prairie, before spoken of. Here they slaughtered their ox and spitted him on a sapling supported over the fire, which was made in a trench. The carcass could thus be readily turned, and a committee of the crew was appointed to cook him. Others were engaged in arranging the amusements etc. All was activity and bustle on the morning of the 5th, as the 4th fell on Sunday. Before nine o’clock all the men were mustered on board in clean white frocks and trousers. And all including the marines and musicians were landed shortly after to march to scene of festivity about a mile distant. The procession was formed at the observatory where we all marched off with flags flying and music playing, Vendovi and the master-at-arms bringing up the rear. Vendovi was dressed out after Feejee fashion. It was truly gratifying to me to see them all in such good health and spirits, not a man sick, and their clothes as white as snow, with happy and contented faces. Had it not been for want of news from the Peacock and the consequent apprehension in relation to her fate I should have felt and enjoyed the scene much more than I did. But the continual feeling that the ship might have been lost on some coral reef and the idea of the suffering her officers and crew would, in such case, undergo, tended to repress all other thoughts. This anxiety was not only felt by myself but officers and crew partook of it in a great degree. It was impossible to conjecture her fate. Yet her continued absence and detention beyond the time of her anticipated arrival naturally excited many fears and surmises, which as time passed on, made each one more certain that some disaster had befallen them.

“Two brass howitzers were also carried to the prairie to fire the usual salute. When the procession reached Fort Nisqually they stopped, gave three cheers and waited sailor like until it was returned. This was done by only a few voices, a circumstance which did not fail to produce many jokes among the seamen.

“On reaching the grounds various games occupied the crew, while the officers amused themselves in like manner.

"At the usual hour dinner was piped when all repaired to partake of the barbecue. By this time the Indians had gathered from all quarters and were silently looking on at the novel sight and wistfully regarding the feast which they saw going on before them. At this time a salute was fired, when one of the men, by the name of Whitehorn, had his arm most dreadfully lacerated from sudden explosion of the gun.

"This accident put a momentary stop to the hilarity of the occasion. Dr. Fox, who was on the ground, thought that an amputation of the arm above the elbow would be necessary, but it was deemed better to delay it for a time. The wound was dressed as well as it could be, and a litter made on which he was at once sent under charge of his messmates to the ship.

"Men-of-War's men are somewhat familiar with such scenes, and although this accident threw a temporary gloom over the party, the impression did not last long, and the amusements of the morning were now exchanged for the excitement of horseracing, steeds having been hired for the purpose from the Indians. This sport is always a favorite with sailors on shore and in pursuit of it they had not a few tumbles, but fortunately none were seriously hurt. At sunset they all returned on board in same good order they had landed.

"All the officers, together with Mr. Anderson, Capt. M'Niel and Dr. Richmond, dined with me at the Observatory, and we were in hope of having the company of Dr. McLaughlin, but owing to his having lost his way he did not arrive til following morning. He was gladly welcomed, and it gave us all great pleasure to acknowledge the attentions that had been heaped upon us by his orders, and the kindness of the officers of the fort."³⁹

Joseph G. Clark, who was a seaman with the Wilkes Expedition and present at the celebration at Nisqually, July 4, 1841, says:

"July 4th [1841] coming on Sunday we celebrated the 5th. Commencing in the morning with a national salute of twenty-six guns which were fired at the Observatory on shore. Capt. Wilkes gave a dinner and invited the officers to it. An ox was roasted whole for the crew on a plain about one mile from the ship. At 9 o'clock every man and officer was ordered on shore, except Mr. Vanderford, who was left in charge of the ship. On landing the men proceeded up the hill to the Observatory, where Capt. Wilkes was residing, there to await his orders. At 10 o'clock the procession was formed and marched in order, the star-

³⁹Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition During Years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841 by Charles Wilkes, U. S. N. Philadelphia, 1845, Vol. 4, p. 411, etc.

board watch in advance, the marines in center, the larboard watch bringing up the rear. We proceeded through a narrow strip of woods for about half a mile, when we came to the Company's fort; there we halted and formed in front of it, and gave three cheers which were returned by people in the fort, and answered by us. The procession was again formed and marched as before, about one mile further when we came to a deep valley, crossing which we came to a plain several miles in circumference in which Doct. Richmond's house is situated. Here was the place intended for the exhibitions of the day; various kinds of amusements were proposed, in which Capt. Wilkes took an active part. Everything went well for a time and bade fair for a day of recreation and pleasure, but soon an accident occurred which could not but disturb the feelings of all. At 12 o'clock, when firing a salute Daniel Whitehorn, Jr., gunner, while loading one of the guns it accidentally discharged and lacerated his forearm very seriously. All the integuments, from midway of the forearm to wrist, were blown off—the carpal extremity of the ulna exposed for about two inches upon outer face. All the tendons for about three inches from corpus were much torn. The surgeon having thoroughly examined the wound decided that it was his duty to recommend the removal of the limb. At the time the accident happened the weather was quite warm and tetanus was to be apprehended. All the large blood vessels were either carried away entirely, or much injured and the consequence of an attempt to save the arm was much to be dreaded. Dr. Richmond, physician to the mission family, was called upon who agreed in opinion with our surgeon, that amputation was the only means to insure life. The doctors then stated to the patient their views of the case and recommended an operation. He declined for the present and chose to risk an attempt to save the limb.

“The amusements proceeded but not with that spirit with which they were commenced; a deep melancholy seemed to mark the countenance of many. Whitehorn was much esteemed by all his shipmates.”⁴⁰

He survived.

JULY FOURTH, 1846

The following extract is from an address of Hon. S. F. Chadwick before the first annual reunion of the Pioneers of Oregon, at Butteville, Marion County, Oregon, November 11, 1873:

“On the 4th of July, 1846, months before you received the news of the adoption of the treaty of the 15th of June preceding, and while

⁴⁰Clark (Joseph G.), *Lights and Shadows of a Sailor's Life*. Boston, 1859, p. 218. For another account see George M. Colvocoresses' "Four Years in a Government Exploring Expedition" [New York, 1852], p. 236.

you were yet ignorant of what had taken place in regard to Oregon, you celebrated, in a heavy rain, the Anniversary of American Independence. The Oregon Rangers, a military company organized in May previous, were out in force, and despite the inclemency of the weather, acquitted themselves creditably. There is nothing in rain to deter an Oregonian from pleasure or duty. There may be some of that company here today. This celebration was not for display. It was not mere pomp and parade to gratify the applause of men, for this small band embraced a good portion of the Settlers. Nor was it an idle pastime. It was social in its nature, sincere in its object and eminently patriotic. These pioneers were repeating for the purpose of preserving, the traditions of their fathers in a land which, for aught they knew was still claimed, as it had been, by Great Britain, and liable to fall in part or wholly into her hands through the skill of diplomacy, or by arbitrament of war. What a Fourth of July that would have been to you, had you but known that your own land—your Oregon—had, like that of your fathers, been conceded to you by the only adverse claimant among the powers of the earth; that the Government of your fathers was now yours, and that the day you were celebrating was legitimately a day for Oregon.”⁴¹

JULY FOURTH, 1852

The following extract is taken from W. H. Gilstrap's paper read before Pierce County Pioneers' Association, July 5, 1906:

“While there may have been social gatherings, horse racing or a dance on Fourth of July anniversaries by the early settlers, the first regular Fourth of July celebration, held in what is now the State of Washington, after American citizens settled here, was held in Olympia, July 4, 1852.

“It was a great event; a celebration that would be a credit in older communities. Quite elaborate preparations were made. One of the streets was set apart for the occasion. An arbor was made by setting posts in the ground and putting poles across, on which were placed fir boughs. This arbor was the width of the street and about 150 feet long. One or more oxen were barbecued. The celebration attracted settlers from all parts of Northern Oregon and from the down-Sound settlements.

“The late Daniel R. Bigelow of Olympia was the orator of the day. Simpson P. Moses read the Declaration of Independence and Frank Shaw acted as marshal. After the ceremonies of the day had been concluded,

⁴¹Constitution and Quotations from the Register of the Oregon Pioneer Association, 1875. Salem, Oregon, 1875, p. 18.

an enthusiastic meeting was held and the division of the territory discussed."⁴²

JULY FOURTH, 1853

The following is an interesting account of a Fourth of July celebration held at Shoalwater Bay, Washington Territory, as recorded by Hon. James G. Swan, who was present:

"After my return [to Shoalwater Bay, Washington Territory] from Chenook, nothing of any particular interest transpired till toward the first of July, when it was announced to me that the boys, as the oystermen were termed, intended celebrating the 4th of July at my tent; and accordingly as the time drew near, all hands were engaged in making preparations; for it was not intended that I should be at the expense of the celebration, but only bear my proportionate part.

"The day was ushered in by a tremendous bonfire, which Balat and myself kindled on Pine Island, which was answered by everyone who had a gun and powder blazing away. Towards two o'clock they began to assemble, some coming in boats, others in canoes, and a few by walking round the beach, which they could easily do at any time after the tide was quarter ebb.

"Each one brought something, one had a great oyster pie, baked in a milk-pan; another had a boiled ham; a third brought a cold pudding; others had pies, doughnuts, or loaves of bread, and my neighbor Russell came brining with him a long oration of his own composing and half a dozen boxes of sardines. When all were assembled, the performances were commenced by the reading of the Declaration of Independence by Mr. St. John, extracts from Webster's oration at Boston on Adams and Jefferson, then Russell's oration, which was followed by a banquet and after that a feu-de-joie by the guns and rifles of the whole company. These ceremonies over, it was proposed to close the performance for the day by going on top of the cliff opposite and make a tremendous big blaze. This was acceded to, and some six or eight immediately crossed the creek and soon scrambled to the top of the hill, where we found an old hollow cedar stump about twenty feet high. We could enter this on one side, and found it a mere shell of what had once been a monster tree. I had with me a little rifle which measured stock and all but three feet long. With this I measured across the space and found it was six lengths of my rifle, or eighteen feet, and the

⁴²Commemorative Celebration at Sequalitchew Lake, p. 46.

tree undoubtedly when sound, must have measured, with bark on, at least sixty feet in circumference.

"We went to work with a will, and soon had the old stump filled full of dry spruce limbs, which were lying about in great quantities, and then set fire to the whole. It made the best bonfire I ever saw; and after burning all night and part of next day finally set fire to the forest, which continued to burn for several months, till the winter rain finally extinguished it. The party broke up at an early hour and all declared that, with the exception of the absence of a cannon, they never had a pleasanter 'fourth.'"⁴³

Mr. Thomas W. Prosch has contributed a paper to the Pierce County Pioneer Association on Later Celebrations in Pierce County, Washington.⁴⁴

GEORGE W. SOLIDAY.

⁴³Swan (James G.), *North West Coast, or Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory*, New York, 1857, p. 133. Swan also mentions following persons living on Shoalwater Bay at the time: Joe, a Dane, p. 43; Captain James S. Parrington, p. 49; Captain Russell, p. 33; Joel L. Brown, p. 64; Samuel Woodward, Henry Whitcomb, Joel Bullard, Mark Bullard, Captain Jackson, James Wilson, Captain Charles Stewart, Captain David K. Weldon and (the first lady), p. 64; George Walkins, p. 65; George G. Bartlett, Stephen Marshall, p. 69; John W. Champ-Baldt., p. 97.

⁴⁴Commemorative Celebration at Sequalitchew Lake, Pierce County, Washington, under auspices of the Pierce County Pioneer Association. Compiled by R. L. McCormick and W. H. Gilstrap, p. 15.