

SURVIVOR OF THE INDIAN AND OTHER WARS

My advanced age and physical decadence render it very difficult for me, of late, to evolve and hold in intellectual paragraphic form, thoughts that spring up in my mind, and which I desire to commit to manuscript page for the benefit of valued friends, who beseech me to favor them with a line bearing upon my protracted years and diversified life. Often dear ones plead with me to give them, for publication, items from the pages of my "Memoirs" that are to be published after I shall have "shuffled off life's mortal coil," of what I witnessed and in which I bore an active part, in the Mexican war of 1846 and 1848; also of what I passed through in the Indian war of Oregon of 1853, known as the "Rogue River Indian War"—and later of the Indian war of Oregon and Washington, of 1855 and 1856, and lastly, the bloody four years conflict known to those of us who served at the front throughout said conflict, as "The Slaveholders Rebellion." I would be glad to furnish the information sought were my vitality and mentality equal to the task; but I am too old and feeble now to essay such an undertaking, although the labor would be pleasing to me.

There are times when I am "all alone" and fall into a reminiscent mood, my mind goes back to the days spent upon the plains and engaged in the beneficent labor of "making good Indians" of those who were upon the warpath. Deprived of food and forced to subsist, for the time being, upon mule meat stuffed with truffles, and washed down with rare old Johannesberger, drank from a buffalo wallow filled with tadpoles and pollywogs is a salient incident in my life on the "American Desert" of the long ago. But those were not hard times; indeed, I would rejoice to hear again the sharp crack of the old "Hawkins" rifle, or listen to the singing of the Indian "arrer" in the air, to be as young and virile as I was in those stirring days of my young and sturdy manhood. But the times have changed and we have changed with them. There are no more Rocky Mountains, no more buffalo, no more Indians, and the "Great American desert" has disappeared. Come to think of it, did they ever exist or were they, in fact, only an iridescent dream?

Your great commonwealth, bearing the honored name of Washington, since March 2nd, 1853, when it was erected into a territory, had a population, all told and in round numbers, of 3,965 inhabitants. Since then a marvelous change in population, character of the people who have settled therein since the admission of the Territory into the American Union as a sovereign State, have taken place. The causes thereof are not far to

seek, but for prudential and personal reasons I shall decline to discuss them, stating en passant that I resided in Washington Territory from 1853 to 1861, and returned after the close of the civil war to Puget Sound and, during the year 1869 I resided in Olympia. My previous residence in the Territory was (barring the period when I was engaged in the Indian war of 1855 and 1856, and as a special Indian agent in 1858, in St. Marys Valley, now Idaho), upon Whidbey Island. Puget Sound, then regarded as the garden and granery of Washington Territory.

Upon visiting Whidbey Island in the early part of the year 1853, I found the following named pioneers, who were occupying Donation Homesteads: In the vicinity of Coupeville, the present County Seat—situate upon Penn's Cove; and a few of the Donation Claims faced the waters of Puget Sound—and these claims were owned and cultivated by the Crockett family—father and mother, a venerable couple, and their sons, John, Samuel, Charles, Hugh and Walter. John and Samuel occupied their respective homesteads, with their wives and children. Then there were the Hill brothers, Nathaniel D., Robert C., and Humphrey Hill, and associated with them there was William B. Engle. Lying in juxtaposition to the Hill lands were the broad acres (640) of Col. Isaac N. Ebey, the then Collector of Customs at Port Townsend. Then a full section of land, owned and occupied by the Alexander family, from Springfield, Illinois, the home of the Immortal Abraham Lincoln, and with whom the Alexanders were close neighbors and intimate friends. Then hard by there resided Chas. H. Ivins and his beautiful wife, from Indiana, Captain Thomas P. Coupe, a sea captain, and his wife and family. Next to them there were the brothers-in-law—Joseph H. Smith, John Kinneith, and Captain Robertson—all three of whom had their families with them; then came Captain P. B. Barstow and his brother-in-law, Samuel Libbey; then Dr. Richard H. Lansdale of the then County Seat Coveland, which Dr. Lansdale owned as a part of his 320 acres Donation Claim, lying near to the head of Penn's Cove. Then came the claims of Daniel Show, an aged and peculiarly fanciful ancient pioneer, and his nephew, Jacob Heinbaugh; then there were Isaac N. Power and family, Thomas Hastie and family, Richard B. Holbrook, Samuel D. Howe, George W. L. Allen, and Jacob Smith and family. Not far remote, and facing the waters of Penn's Cove, there were several donation claims held by one Bolte; another by one Basil, afterwards owned by Captain Eli Hathaway; then John Condra and Major John G. Sewall.

Upon Oak Harbor there were the following donation settlers: C. M. Ford, Ulrich Freund, Martin Taftezon, a man named Summers, Samuel Walker and family, Samuel and Thomas Maylor, Captain Edward Barrington, Charles C. Phillips. On Church Prairie there were two

bachelors, Thomas Hutchins and Alfred M. Miller; then on Crescent Harbor there were William Wallace and family on a donation claim of 640 acres all open prairie land, and two nephews, Milton L., and James M. Mounts, and there adjoining the Wallace land was a Mr. James Buzby and family. I should have also mentioned a widow lady and her family who owned a donation claim adjoining that of Isaac N. Power, a Mrs. Maddox.

There were at that time the following named parties who were engaged in cutting and supplying the San Francisco, California, Harbor Extension Corporation with piles and hewn cross timbers, viz., Lawrence Grennan & Co., including a number of laborers. There were later the Terrys, Captain Ford, Captain Swift; at Skagit Head, Robert S. Bailey, two brothers, Samuel and Benjamin Welcher.

JUNIUS THOMAS TURNER.