

## The Washington Historical Quarterly

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### THE COWLITZ CONVENTION: INCEPTION OF WASHINGTON TERRITORY

Historians have fallen into peculiar confusion as to dates, persons and events associated with the subdivision of Oregon Territory, events lying at the very foundation of the Commonwealth of Washington.

Reasons for the confusion may be found in these facts: two Fourth of July orations were delivered in Olympia, one in 1851 and one in 1852; after each of such orations meetings of citizens were held and agitation made for a separate territorial government north of Columbia River; and in each case the agitation led to a regularly constituted convention; each of such conventions memorialized Congress in behalf of the object sought to be achieved.

The first convention was held at Cowlitz Landing, near the present Toledo, August 29, 1851 and the second at the home of H. D. Huntington, "Uncle Darby", at Monticello, near the mouth of the Cowlitz River, on November 25, 1852. No correct valuation of those two conventions has been made and from that fact has arisen the confusion of the historians.

There was no newspaper north of the Columbia during the Cowlitz convention of 1851. However, on September 11, 1852, Volume I., Number 1 of *The Columbian* appeared in Olympia. In that issue of the first newspaper published north of the Columbia River, Daniel R. Bigelow's Fourth of July oration was printed in full. It was eloquent and patriotic and for the rest of his life Mr. Bigelow was praised as the orator who helped to lay the foundations of a State. During its first year *The Columbian* occupied itself with the calling of meetings and advocating the organization of a separate territory to be called the Territory of Columbia.

The very name of the paper was a part of the agitation. As stated, there was no newspaper to print, even tardily, John B. Chapman's Fourth of July oration of 1851 and no paper to urge attendance at the Cowlitz convention of that year. The oration is lost and too little attention has been given to the proceedings and results of the convention. Both conventions were important but it is high time that certain errors should be definitely corrected.

In a recent checking of the situation, it was found that Clinton A. Snowden in his *History of Washington, The Rise and Progress of an American State*, Volume III., pages 197-198, 203-206, ignores the convention following Chapman's oration and puts both conventions in 1852. Hubert Howe Bancroft in his *Works*, Volume XXXI, *Washington, Idaho and Montana*, gives the membership of the Cowlitz convention of August 29, 1851, and mentions a memorial to Congress, pages 48-49. However, on pages 60-61 of the same volume, he says that Joseph Lane, Oregon's Delegate to Congress, immediately on receiving the Monticello memorial, made his request for the Committee on Territories to inquire into the expediency of dividing Oregon. That was a physical impossibility at the time which will be shown below. Mr. Bancroft frequently cites with approval the works of Elwood Evans of Tacoma. That is well, for Mr. Evans was usually accurate. However, in his large work, *History of Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington*, Volume I., page 337, he gives a very brief mention of John B. Chapman, says nothing of his Fourth of July oration of 1851 and, on pages 348-349 of the same volume, he credits Mr. Bigelow with making the first oration which led to the Monticello convention, and caused Delegate Lane to begin the work in Congress. Edmond S. Meany, *History of the State of Washington*, pages 156-157, says: Delegate Lane had acted on the Monticello document. On the first day of the second session of the Thirty-second Congress, December 6, 1852, Mr. Lane, by suspension of the rules, introduced a resolution requesting the Committee on Territories to examine into the expediency of dividing Oregon Territory and reporting by bill or otherwise."

The physical impossibility of Delegate Lane's acting on the Monticello memorial is easy to see. The Monticello convention was held on November 25 and the Delegate introduced his resolution on December 6, 1852. At that time there was no known way of sending such a document from Oregon to Washington City in

eleven days. The *Congressional Globe* shows that Delegate Lane introduced his well known resolution on December 6, 1852, and he must, therefore, have acted on his own volition or upon the initiation of some other source, possibly from the Cowlitz convention of 1851.

In discussing the matter with William P. Bonney, of Tacoma, Secretary of the Washington State Historical Society, it was found that he had also noticed the puzzle and had found its solution. It is perfectly natural that Mr. Bonney should be interested. He loves history, he has lived all his life on the shores of Puget Sound and on August 17, 1882, he was married to Miss Eva Bigetow, of Olympia, whose father was the famous Fourth of July orator of 1852. Mr. Bonney concluded that the memorial of the Cowlitz convention of 1851, though slighted or overlooked by historians, was really the one used at first in Congress. He wrote to Congressman Albert Johnson to search the records for that document. It could not be found but Mr. Bonney wrote again and urged that the papers of Delegate Lane in the Library of Congress be searched. Congressman Johnson was enthusiastic over the success there achieved. The manuscript memorial was found and with it were two Oregon newspapers, *The Oregonian*, Volume I., No. 42, September 20, 1851 and *Oregon Spectator*, Volume VI., No. 3, September 23, 1851. Across the top margin of the latter was the address "Hon. Dan'l Webster." Each of the newspapers contained on the front page full proceedings of the Cowlitz convention of August 29, 1851. The proceedings were regularly dated and signed by the president and two secretaries.

Congressman Johnson had the manuscript memorial and the two newspapers photostated and forwarded to Mr. Bonney, who filed them in the archives of the Washington State Historical Society, where they bear the number 2684, 2685 and 2687. These documents permit a complete readjustment of the initiative leading to the creation of Washington Territory. They are of sufficient importance to be reproduced in full.

The manuscript memorial has two endorsements: "To Gen'l J. Lane, Petition to Congress. A Petition to divide Oregon Territory. Com. on Territories, Lane;" and "Oregon Territory. The petition of Citizens and the proceeding of a public Meeting in Oregon Territory in relation to the division of said territory. Dec. 30, 1851. Referred to the Committee on Territories. Mr. Holli-

day. Gen'l Lane." These endorsements, on two sides of the back as the document was folded, indicate that the memorial was before the Committee on Territories one year before Delegate Lane moved his important resolution of December 6, 1852. There seems to be no record of the memorial in the *Congressional Globe* of December 30, 1851. When the next, or Monticello, memorial appeared, more than a year later, it was printed in full in that official publication. This, of course, is another reason for the historical distortion.

The manuscript memorial is as follows:

To the Honorable The Senate and Speaker of the House of Representatives of the Congress of the United States of America at Washington City Assembled.

The undersigned respectfully beg leave to represent to your Honorable body. That at a regular constituted Convention of Delegates of the people of Oregon Territory North of the Columbia River holden on the 29th of August 1851 (a copy of the proceedings of which convention are here forwarded accompanying this memorial and prayed to be considered as a part thereof)<sup>1</sup> a Resolution passed said Convention Resolving That a separate Territorial Government ought to be organized North of Columbia River and That John B. Chapman, M. T. Simmons & F. S. Balch be appointed a committee to draw up a suitable memorial to Congress on That subject.

The Committe have had the same under consideration and directed me to report The following petition to Congress.

That Government and order is contemplated for the convienience and benefit of the people, and That every community and settlement of Citizens participating in the burthens of Government are entitled to its benefits and protection; and That when ever any portion of That Community, from locality and Geographical position are left out of the existing rule & order in concequence of That Government, It then becomes [Ms. Page 2] the duty of the Supreme power from which those rules of order emanates to re-establish those systems of protection and Government, by placing the power and the means in the ability of this seperated & neglected portion of the whole community; for the reestablishment and organization of a Government, for their own convenience & protection.

They beg leave to further state that the Inhabitants North of the Columbia River receive no benefit or convenience whatever from the Territorial Government of Oregon as now administered. They maintain positively that it costs more for a citizen in the North of Oregon Territory to travel to a clerks office or to reach a District Judge than it does for a man to travel from S. Lewis, Missouri to Boston, Masachussetts and back; and, much longer;

It is true that Judge Strong, resides on the North Bank of the Columbia River, but in such a position and obscure situation near Astoria, that he cannot be reached under any emergency under several days travel from the interior. The great body of the Indians of Oregon inhabit the North side of the Columbia River, no Indian agent has ever been known to be north of the River except Gov. Lane while superintendent.

The Committe further state that the Geographical extent of the American or U. States Territory is too well known by your Honorable body to require comment by the Committe, but the Committe beg leave to State other facts in regard to said Territory which they know [Ms. Page 3] to have been

<sup>1</sup> Evidently the same proceedings which appeared in the *Oregon Spectator*, which will be reproduced following this document.

misrepresented, That is the availability of said Territory for civilized and domestic purposes; The Committe beg leave to State from personal knowledge that in the forty thousand square miles of Territory beginning at the British line [an extra stroke is given to the "n" making the word literally "lime"] North: that one half the whole eare [area?] is good tilable land, and that the great portion of the other half is valuable Timber Land. Coal mines, & Gold mines, which have but verry recently been the least developed, and what may appear more astonishing to your Honorable body is no less a fact, that that small extent of Territory North of the Columbia River has a face of good Sea Board Navigation exceeding one thousand miles, with not less than twenty five good safe Harbours & Bays, that the largest Ships can clear from any day, for any part of the whole world, and that the greater portion of the land bordering on this Sea-Board is as fertile & productive as any in the United States, containing immense quantities of Timber of the first qualities for Ships, buildings or Domestic use.

The numerous Rivers and small Streams of Fresh water emptying in to this extensive Sea Board Navigation affording numerous sites for Hydrolic power is conclusive that such a country will admit of a dense population. But that this whole Country is very thinly settled for so many good qualities the undersigned admit, and for the best of reason. One of the finest portions of the Country at the very Head of "Pugets Sound" is [Ms. Page 4] claimed by a British Trading Post, known as the Hudson Bay Co. to the extent of Sixty miles by Thirty all that fair and beautiful region lying between the Nisqually & Puyallup Rivers, etc., & South & East Six [ty, Portion of word obliterated in photostat copy.] miles to Mt. Renier, that Company has never pretended to carry on an agricultural persuit, the rural part from the Trading post was Stock, Cattle, Horses, & Sheep. The American Settlements from the States was inimical to the grazing persuit of the Hudson Bay Co. hence all the emigrants from the States who attempted a settlement in that region of Country on Pugets Sound, was compelled to do it over the heads of that Company like an army Storming a Castle, hence but few was willing to incur the displeasure of a large monied institution, and a *British Fort* at *That*: and inconcequence of so many being deterred from settlement it caused another verry great reason for the nonsettlement of the Country. That is, no Wagon Roads have yet been made from the Columbia or else where, to the interior of the Territory and hence wholly inaccessible except by water: and all the commerce of the North being monopolized by the Hudson Bay Co. there was no inducement for American Vessels, hence no means of conveyance as the Company Vessels were never allowed to carry an American Citizen. by this monopoly and influence of the H. Bay Co. over some U. S. Officers, the Emigrants from the States have been untill this day, literally excluded from the Northern Territory of Oregon.

The Committe beg leave to represent and show Congress. That there is now about three thousand Souls North of the Columbia. That they have raised a large amount of produce, Wheat, Oats, potatoes, onions, &c for exportation, but with the many abuses of their rights [Ms. Page 5] and neglected condition in their civil immunities as Citizens it is impossible for them to prosper in commerce, or advance one step in the improvement of Roads & highways.

The Seat of Government at present is distant about three hundred miles from the principle Settlements North; The entire Legislative power is South of the Columbia River & from Locality and Geographical position the South has no interest in common whatever, with the North, and in conciquence of the immense expensive travel, from Oregon City to the North of Columbia; Government Officers but seldom if ever visit the North; under the present condition of things, the rights of Citizens must go unredressed crimes and injuries unpunished.

Notwithstanding all these inconveniences and obstacles the Emigrant is

daily surmounting all barriers and settling in our midst and loudly calls for the rights and privileges of a citizen, for the protection of himself and family.

In consideration of the premises and many inconveniences of the present inhabitants and in compliance with the resolution of said Convention

The Committee most respectfully request that Congress will pass an act organizing a separate Territorial Government North of the Columbia River; with the immunities & privileges of her [Ms. Page 6] most favoured Territories, and that Territory be known and designated as "Columbia Territory" and, That the Seat of said Territorial Government be fixed as near the centre of the Territory North and South as convenience and circumstance will admit of. All of which is most respectfully submitted for the consideration of Congress.

J. B. Chapman

Chairman Com  
and corresponding Com

That document and the accompanying proceedings, familiar to Delegate Lane from December, 1851, to December, 1852, are sufficient to explain his prompt action when the new session opened on December 6, 1852. Of the two copies of the proceedings that in the *Oregon Spectacular* is selected for reproduction, as from the older of the two papers. The account is checked with that in the *Oregonian* and with other sources, corrections being indicated in brackets. At the top of the article appears the words "For the Spectator."

*Cowlitz Convention.*

COWLITZ, LEWIS Co., O. T., )  
August 29, 1851. )

The following are the proceedings of a convention of delegates in Oregon Territory, north of the Columbia River, which was called by a previous constituted arrangement of the citizens of said district of country, calling said convention and selecting delegates to attend the same, to take into consideration the propriety of organizing a separate Territorial Government, and such other purposes as the demands and wants of the people required.

The convention met in compliance with the order of the election of the delegates, at the Cowlitz, in Lewis county, on the 29th day of August, 1851. The convention was called to order by Thos. M. Chambers, Esq., when the following gentlemen came forward and presented their credentials as delegates duly elected from the several precincts in said Territory, and took upon themselves the duties of members of said convention: Messrs. Catlin, Burbie, Huntress, Warbass, Jackson, Frazer, Bernier, Bosit [Borst], Dellabrough, Chapman, Plomondo, Poe, Crosby, Chambers, M. T. Simmons, Maynard, Brownfield, Broshears, Bradley, Edgar, Balch, Wilson, Saunders, A. T. [J] Simmons, Cochran, and Ford.

The convention then proceeded to ballot for officers, which resulted in the unanimous choice of the Hon. Seth Catlin for President, and F. S. Balch, Esq., and Alonzo Poe, Esq., for Secretaries.

The President, on taking the chair, addressed the convention in an appropriate manner, and stated the object of the convention, then announced the convention ready for business.

Mr. Jackson then offered the following resolution, which was adopted.

*Resolved*, That parliamentary rules be observed by this convention for their government, in so far as the same may not be altered by this convention.

Mr. Chapman introduced the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the following standing committees be appointed by the President.

1. A committee of five on Territorial Government.
2. A committee of eight on Districts and Counties.
3. A committee of three on the Rights and Privileges of citizens.
4. A committee of three on Internal Improvements.
5. A committee of three on Ways and Means.

Mr. Simmons then moved an adjournment until 10 o'clock, which was carried.

According to adjournment the convention met, when the President appointed the following gentlemen on the several committees:

Committee on Territorial Government—Messrs. Chapman, Jackson, M. T. Simmons, Huntress, and Chambers.

Committee on Districts and Counties—Messrs. Brownfield, Wilson, Crosby, Jackson, Burbie, Plomondo, Edgar, and Warbass.

Committee on Rights and Privileges of citizens—Messrs. Huntress, Maynard, and Chapman.

Committee on Internal Improvements—Messrs. M. T. Simmons, Burbie, and Borst.

Committee on Ways and Means—Messrs. Frazer, A. T. [J.] Simmons, and Bradley.

Mr. Chapman then submitted the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the Committee on Territorial Government report to this convention the propriety of memorializing Congress for the organization of a Territorial Government north of the Columbia River, in Oregon Territory.

Mr. Chapman then introduced the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the committee on Districts and Counties, do report to this convention the propriety of petitioning the Legislature of Oregon, to lay out the Northern Territory in suitable boundaries for counties, and that such boundaries be designated by the committee, ["convention" in *Oregonian*] leaving each district and county to organize whenever the citizens of such districts and counties may think proper.

Mr. Balch submitted the following resolution, which was adopted:

Resolved, That the committee on Internal Improvements, report to this convention the propriety of memorializing the next Legislature of Oregon, for constructing a plank road from some point on Puget's Sound to the Columbia River near the mouth of the Cowlitz River.

Mr. Chapman offered the following:

Resolved, That the committee on the Rights and Privileges of Citizens are hereby required ["requested" in *Oregonian*] to report to this convention for its consideration, a suitable memorial to Congress, requesting that in the organization of a Territorial Government north of the Columbia River, all male citizens over the age of 18 years, six months a resident, and 30 days in the county in which they vote, be allowed the right of suffrage; and that all natural and naturalized male citizens over the age of 18 years, north of the Columbia River, be allowed the benefit of the act of Congress donating land to the people of Oregon.

Mr. M. T. Simmons submitted the following amendment—That after the words 18 years, "Except Negroes and Indians" to be inserted.

After an exciting debate, in which Messrs. Chapman, Simmons, Huntress, Balch, Maynard, and Wilson, participated, upon the question for the adoption of the amendment being put, it was adopted. Then upon the question for the adoption of the resolution as amended, being put, it was lost: Yeas 7; nays 14.

Mr. Poe moved the adjournment of the convention until Saturday morning at 8 o'clock, which was adopted.

SATURDAY MORNING, 8 o'clock

According to adjournment the convention convened. The Secretary read the proceedings of the preceding day, and the minutes were adopted.

Reports from committees being in order, Mr. Chapman, chairman of the committee on Territorial Government, offered the following report:

Mr. President—The committee on Territorial Government, to whom was referred the resolution requiring them to report to this convention the propriety of organizing a Territorial Government north of the Columbia River, have had the same under consideration, and directed me to make the following report:

That the committee are unanimously of the opinion that a Territorial Government ought to be organized by Congress, north of the Columbia River, The propriety of such an organization arises from the demand and necessity of the occasion. That the Government is contemplated for the benefit of the people. The vast extent of territory north, well adapted to agriculture, commerce and manufacturing; the total absence of all municipal law or civil officers, the great distance from the seat of the present government, and the isolated situation of this part of the territory therefrom, and many other reasons too well known to require repetition, conspire to convince the committee that there is much propriety in the organization of a separate territorial government, and that no time ought to be lost in demanding the same from Congress.

Therefore the committee offers the following resolution for adoption:

*Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed by the President of the convention, to prepare a suitable memorial to Congress on that subject, and that the same be forwarded to the delegate in congress from Oregon territory, requesting him to use his influence in procuring the organization of a separate territorial government.

The question on the adoption of the resolution being put, was unanimously adopted.

Mr. M. T. Simmons, chairman of the committee on Internal Improvement, presented the report of that committee in favor of memorializing Congress to open a territorial road from some point on Puget's Sound towards Walla Walla ["fort Walla Walla" in the *Oregonian*] on the Columbia River, over the Cascade Mountains. Also in favor of the construction of a plank road from some point on Puget's Sound to the most eligible point on the Columbia River near the mouth of the Cowlitz river, and the committee offered the following resolution, for adoption.

That our delegate ["in Congress"—*Oregonian*] be and hereby is instructed and required to use every exertion possible to procure an appropriation of One Hundred Thousand Dollars by Congress, for the opening of a territorial road from Puget's Sound to the Walla Walla, on the Columbia River; and that the committee appointed to draft the memorial on a territorial government, also forward a memorial on the subject of said appropriation, which resolution was unanimously adopted.

Mr. Maynard then submitted the following resolution, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That our representative be and hereby is instructed to use all honorable means in the next Legislature of Oregon, to obtain a charter for a plank road from Olympia, on Puget's Sound, to the nearest and most eligible point on the Columbia river near the mouth of the Cowlitz river.

Mr. Huntress moved an adjournment to half past two, P. M., which was carried.

According to adjournment the convention met: when the President, as authorized, appointed the following gentlemen to compose the committee to send a memorial to Congress on the subject of organizing a new territorial government north of the Columbia River: Mr. J. B. Chapman, Mr. F. S. Balch, and Mr. M. T. Simmons.



Mr. Brownfield, chairman of the committee on Districts and Counties, submitted the following report:

Mr. President—The committee on Districts and Counties, to whom was referred the resolution requiring them to district the territory north of the Columbia river into suitable county boundaries, have had the same under consideration, and directed me to make the following report:

That no doubt but much good may result by having the territory properly bounded, the metes and bounds designated and those districts not sufficiently inhabited for organization can be attached to other counties which are sufficiently populated. Such regulation is calculated to harmonize settlements and communities. They come to the country knowing what is a judicious arrangement for future counties. Therefore they have fixed the following boundaries:<sup>2</sup>

1. Whitby's [Whidbey] island, one county.
2. From the Strait of [Juan de] Fuca to the Sinhomas [Snohomish] River, including all the country north ["south". This error was evidently in the document, itself, for it is repeated by both the *Spectator* and *Oregonian*.] of the British line, one county.
3. From the mouth of the Sinhomas River, up the Sound to the north side of the Pugallup [Puyallup] River, thence due east to the Cascade Mountain, one county.
4. From the north side of the Pugallup, beginning on the Sound, running due east with County No. 3, to the Cascade Mountain, thence south with said Cascade Mountain until the line reaches the dividing ridge between the waters of the Cowlitz and Nisqually river; thence westwardly with said dividing ridge sufficiently far until a line due north will strike the mouth of the Nesqually river; thence west in the channel of the Sound, sufficiently far to include the islands lying north of Nesqually and west of the Pugallup river, thence to the place of beginning, at the mouth of Pugallup, shall form the bounds of one county.

The 5th county shall be as follows, beginning at the mouth of the Nisqually river, running west with the Sound to Poe's point, thence across the arm of the Sound to the west bank of Budd's Inlet, thence up Mud Bay [Eld Inlet] west fifteen miles, thence southeast to the forks of the road leading to Yilm [Yelm] and Olympia; thence to the southwest corner of county No. 4, thence north with said county line No. 4 to the place of beginning at the Sound, to be the bounds of said county.

6. The following bounds to form county No. 6, to wit; beginning at the north end of Shoal Water [Willapa] Bay, thence up said Bay to Cedar Creek, [probably North River] then up said Cedar Creek until a line north will strike the Wanouchie [Wynoochee] river, then up said river to the boundary of county No. 5; thence west to the Red Salmon Fishery; thence south with the shore of the Pacific Ocean to the place of beginning, shall form one county.

7. The following bounds shall form county No. 7: To include all that district of country lying between Cape Flattery on the Pacific, and Hood's Canal, and south to county No. 6, shall form the bounds of one county.

8. The following bounds shall form county No. 8, to wit: All that district of country lying east of No. 6, and west of No. 5, to the mouth of Black river, and west to the dividing ridge between the Ghehalis [Chehalis] and Columbia rivers.

9. The following bounds shall form the county bounds No. 9, lying between the mouth of the Black river, up the Ghehalis river to the east end of Old Channel at the Land Slip, including all the territory not otherwise appropriated in county No. 5, and to the dividing ridge of the waters of Columbia and Ghehalis [Chehalis] rivers.

<sup>2</sup> This is the first attempt at designating an adequate subdivision of the large area into units for local government. It is remarkable to observe how closely the first rough draft was followed in the subsequent creation of counties.

10 The county boundaries of No. 10 shall be as follows, to wit: Beginning at the corners of counties No. 4 and 5, and south with the dividing ridge between the Skucum Chuck [Skookumchuck] Nowancoon [Newaukum] and the waters of Nisqually and Cowlitz rivers, until it strikes the dividing ridge between the Nowancoon [Newaukum] and Cowlitz rivers; thence along said ridge until a west line will strike the east end of Nowancoon plains, thence south to the dividing ridge of the waters of the Gehalis [Chehalis] river and the Columbia river; thence west with said dividing ridge until it strikes the boundary of county No. 9; thence with said county boundary to the place of beginning.

11. That the following bounds form the county No. 11: Beginning at the forks of the Cowlitz; thence up the right hand fork to its source; thence north to the head branches of the left-hand fork of the Cowlitz; thence west and north with the dividing ridge between the waters of the Nesqually, [Nisqually] Cowlitz and Gehalis [Chehalis] rivers, until it intersects the eastern boundary of No. 10; thence parallel with said east boundary to the southwest corner; thence south to the place of beginning, at the forks of the Cowlitz.

12. That the following bounds constitute county No. 12: Beginning at the north end of Dear island, on the Columbia river; thence northeast to the head branches of the right-hand fork of the Cowlitz, intersecting the boundary of No. 11; thence down said right-hand fork of Cowlitz to the forks; thence northwest with line No. 11 ["to the northwest corner of No. 11"—*Oregonian*]; thence with the dividing ridge of the Columbia and Gehalis waters to Pacific county; thence with the line of Pacific county to the Columbia river; thence up the middle of the channel of said river to the place of beginning, shall constitute the bounds of one county.

Be it further *Resolved*, That our representative be and he is hereby instructed to procure the division of said territory, as above designated; and to organize such districts as may be petitioned for by the inhabitants thereof, ["therein"—*Oregonian*] and to attach such other districts for judicial purposes to those organized, until such time as they may have sufficient inhabitants to organize.

Previous to the question of the adoption of the resolution being put, Mr. Chapman Submitted the following amendment, which was adopted: To attach to county No. 5, all that portion of unappropriated territory not embraced in the bounds of any county lying between No. 5 and Hood's Canal, and that the north line remaining west when it reaches Budd's Bay, instead of up Mud Bay, [Eld Inlet] to say across Mud Bay.

Mr. Warbass also proposed the following amendment, which was adopted:

That the boundaries of County No. 11, be so altered as to include the whole of county No. 10, and that the said county be known by the name of Lewis county.

Mr. Warbass also proposed the following amendment, which was adopted:

That all that portion of territory lying east and south of the main Cowlitz river, now included in the county No. 11, be known as St. Helen's county.

Upon the question for the adoption of the report as amended, being put, it was adopted.

Mr. Balch proposed that county No. 4, be called Strilacoom [Steilacoom] county. Adopted.

Mr. Maynard proposed that county No. 5, be called Simmons' county. Adopted.

Mr. Wilson proposed that county No. 7, be called Clalam [Callam] county.

Mr. A. J. Simmons moved an adjournment until 8 o'clock in the evening, which was carried.

In accordance with the adjournment the convention met, when Mr. Chapman submitted the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

*Resolved*, That our delegate to Congress be instructed to use his influence with the Congress of the U. S., that in the organization of said territorial government to have said territory designated as Columbia Territory, and that the name of Columbia Territory is most especially solicited and required

Mr. Maynard submitted the following resolution, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That when this convention does adjourn, it adjourns to meet on the third Monday in May next, at Olympia, then and there to form a State constitution, preparatory to asking admission into the Union as one of the States thereof, provided that Congress has not at that time organized a territorial government.<sup>3</sup>

Mr. Brashears submitted the following preamble and resolution, which was adopted:

That whereas, ships and foreigners are in the habit of coming into our seaboard and cutting timber off the unsettled lands, and shipping the timber away for commerce to foreign ports, to the great detriment of future settlements of the country; therefore,

*Resolved*, That our delegate in Congress be instructed to enquire of the Department at Washington City whether or no the Government cannot take such measures under the existing laws as to prevent those trespasses by non settlers, and that the committee on correspondence forward this resolution.

Mr. Warbass offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

*Resolved*, That the President appoint a committee to request the editors of the several newspapers of Oregon to publish the proceedings of this convention.

Whereupon the President rose and appointed the following gentlemen as members of said committee: Mr. Warbass. Mr. Jackson, Mr. Frazer.

Mr. Huntress introduced the following resolution, which was adopted.

*Resolved*, That our representative to the legislature be instructed, and hereby is so, to use his influence to obtain the enactment of a law for the appointment of an inspector of flour at Oregon City, and in other places where Inspectors are needed; and also for a law regulating the weights of all kinds of grain.

A resolution from Mr. Chapman being offered to instruct our delegate in Congress to use his influence to procure an amendment to the land bill, so as to take off the restrictions of sale of any part of said donation, was rejected.

Mr. Balch then moved that the convention adjourn, which was carried.

SETH CATLIN, Prest.

F. S. BALCH, A. M. POE, Secretaries.

It is apparent that the committees were active after the convention adjourned. A copy of the proceedings was sent to Oregon City for the *Oregon Spectator* and another copy to Portland for the *Oregonian*, the two best vehicles for publicity. At least one copy each of the papers was sent to Washington City. And the special committee formulated and forwarded the memorial or petition to Congress. It is shown in the document that the committee consisted of John B. Chapman, M. T. Simmons and F. S. Balch, and that the committee directed Mr. Chapman to "report the following petition to Congress." The memorial or petition is officially

<sup>3</sup> The May meeting thus provided for was not held and the agitation was begun anew after the Fourth of July celebration of 1852.

signed by J. B. Chapman. In this and in the transactions of the convention, it is evident that John B. Chapman, who had given the Fourth of July oration in 1851 and had stirred much enthusiasm by referring to the proposed new Territory of Columbia, had followed the matter up with vigor. For all this he deserves credit. He seems not to have enjoyed the appreciation of his contemporaries. Though very prominent in the Cowlitz convention of August 29, 1851, he was not a member of the Monticello convention of November 25, 1852. His unlettered but successful colleague, Michael T. Simmons, was a member of both conventions.

H. H. Bancroft, (*Works*, Volume XXXI., page 50) refers to "the ubiquitous Chapman" and in footnote 19, page 50 of the same volume he scolds Chapman roundly as follows: "Chapman, in his autobiography in Livingston's *Eminent Americans*, Volume IV., page 436, says that, after much exertion, 'he obtained a convention of 15 members, but not one parliamentary gentleman among them, hence the whole business devolved upon him'; that he 'drew up all the resolutions' and memorial, though other members offered them in their own names, and so contrived that every name should appear in the proceedings, to give the appearance of a large convention; and that neither of the men on the committee with him could write his name. Autobiographies should be confirmed by two credible witnesses. In this instance Chapman has made use of the circumstance of Simmons' want of education to grossly misrepresent the intelligence of the community of which such men as Ebey, whose private correspondence in my possession shows him to be a man of refined feelings, Goldsborough, Catlin, Warbass, Balch, Crosby, Wilson and others were members. As to Simmons, although his want of scholarship was an impediment and a mortification, he possessed the real qualities of a leader, which Chapman lacked; for the latter was never able to achieve either popularity or position, though he strove hard for both. The census of 1850 for Lewis county gives the total white population at 457, only six of whom, over twenty years of age, were not able to write. It is probable that not more than one out of the six was sent to the convention, and he [Simmons] was appointed on account of his brain power and consequent influence."

While that is an unfortunate showing for Chapman in history, it is probable that his failure to acquire popularity and the qualities of real leadership may account to some degree for the lack of appre-

ciation for the Cowlitz convention and its memorial to Congress. Apparently Chapman entered the employ of the British company, of which his memorial complained, then left Puget Sound before the new territory was organized. In the *Evidence for the United States in the Matter of the Claim of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company Before the British and American Commission*, page 140, is the following deposition, under date of November 23, 1866: "John Butler Chapman, aged 68 years, residence Washington, D. C., and I am a clerk in the Treasury Department. I have been in Washington Territory in 1851 and 1852. I made a survey of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company's [subsidiary of the Hudson's Bay Company] lands."

Whatever may have been the opinions held of Chapman at the time, we now know that his memorial of the Cowlitz convention reached Delegate Lane and was by him filed with the Committee on Territories as early as December 30, 1851, and that Lane evidently acted on that memorial and the accompanying papers by introducing his effective resolution on December 6, 1852,, before it was at all possible for him to know anything of the Monticello convention of November 25, 1852.

Having adjusted the credit due Mr. Chapman and having shown the importance of the Cowlitz memorial, it is well to discuss briefly the better known and more popular Monticello memorial.

Even so careful and so just a man as Arthur A. Denny allowed his feelings toward the Monticello document to lead him into the error common among local historians. He was a member of the Monticello convention and prized a copy of the memorial. When Congress passed the enabling act to admit Washington Territory to statehood, the old pioneer sent his copy of the memorial to the Post-Intelligence on March 22, 1889, with an article in which he said: "The bill for the formation of Columbia Territory, in answer to this memorial, was earnestly supported by Delegate Lane." In truth the memorial was an incident to, rather than the cause of, the bill mentioned.

There should be little wonder that the Monticello convention was more popular than its predecessor. It was larger and more representative. It was suggested, advocated, approved and praised by the only newspaper north of the Columbia River. It reflected the popular desires and the people knew all about it.

As already stated, a meeting of citizens followed Mr. Bigelow's

Fourth of July oration of 1852, but the real impulse came when *The Columbian* began publication in Olympia on September 11, 1852. In the first issue Mr. Bigelow's oration was printed. In the third issue, September 25, there appeared an article "To the Residents of Northern Oregon," signed "Elis", advocating that, at the meeting to be held at the home of John R. Jackson on October 25, arrangements should be made for the election of delegates to a convention to be held at Monticello. In the fifth, sixth and seventh issues there were printed editorials advocating the proposed new Territory. In the ninth issue, November 6, there was an editorial article headed: "Prepare! Prepare!" and giving a full account of the meeting at John R. Jackson's home on October 27 and calling a convention to be held at Monticello on "the last Thursday of November." In following up this start, *The Columbian* published urgent editorials under such headings as "Turn Out! Turn Out!" and "Rally! Rally!" In the thirteenth issue, December 4, there appears a full account of the Monticello convention of November 25. In the issue of December 11, there is printed an address delivered by Quincy A. Brooks, one of the delegates.

These articles in a regularly succeeding series fix the dates beyond cavil, and yet Historian Bancroft (*Works*, Volume XXXI., page 52) who frequently cites *The Columbian* as a source, says the meeting was held on September 27, instead of October 27 and that the convention was called for October 25, instead of November 25. His errors have been often repeated by subsequent writers.

The convention met as urged and adopted a memorial which was forwarded to Delegate Lane. While it was traveling on its way across the continent, Delegate Lane acted on the impulse from the former documents and got his resolution adopted requesting the Committee on Territories to report "by bill or otherwise." That Committee reported by a bill to create Columbia Territory, which bill was known as "H. R. Number 348." The bill did not come up for debate in the House until February 8, 1852.

On that day Delegate Lane made a long and earnest speech in favor of the bill. At its conclusion, Representative Richard H. Stanton of Kentucky moved to amend the bill by changing the name from Columbia to Washington as an honor for the "Father of His Country." The amendment was quickly accepted. During his speech, Delegate Lane offered a "memorial of sundry citizens of Northern Oregon, adopted at a convention held near Puget

Sound." That was the Monticello memorial which made its appearance in Congress eleven weeks after its framing in Monticello instead of the eleven days indicated in so many local histories. The clerk read the memorial and it was published in the *Congressional Globe*. There, however, only the first nine signatures were printed. In the copy saved by Mr. Denny all the signatures are given. In that more complete form it is here reproduced:

*To the Honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States, in Congress Assembled:*

The memorial of the undersigned, delegates of the citizens of Northern Oregon, in convention assembled, respectfully represent to your honorable bodies that it is the earnest desire of your petitioners, and of said citizens that all that portion of Oregon Territory lying north of the Columbia river and west of the great northern branch thereof, should be organized as a separate territory under the name and style of the Territory of Columbia.

In support of the prayer of this memorial your petitioners would respectfully urge the following among many other reasons, viz:

1. The present territory of Oregon contains an area of 341,000 square miles, and is entirely too large an extent of territory to be embraced within the limits of one state.

2. The said territory possesses a seacoast of 650 miles in extent, the country east of the Cascade mountains is bound to that on the coast by the strongest ties of interest; and, inasmuch as your petitioners believe that the territory must inevitably be divided at no very distant day, they are of opinion that it would be unjust that one state should possess so large a seaboard to the exclusion of that in the interior.

3. The territory embraced within the boundaries of the proposed "Territory of Columbia," containing an area of about 32,000 square miles, is, in the opinion of your petitioners, about a fair and just medium of territorial extent to form one state.

4. The proposed "Territory of Columbia" presents natural resources capable of supporting a population at least as large as that of any state in the Union possessing an equal extent of territory.

5. Those portions of Oregon territory lying respectively north and south of the Columbia river, must, from their geographical position, always rival each other in commercial advantages, and their respective citizens must, as they now are and always have been, be actuated by a spirit of opposition.

6. The southern part of Oregon territory, having a majority of voters, have controlled the territorial legislature, and Northern Oregon has never received any benefit from the appropriations made by congress for said territory, which were subject to the disposition of said legislature.

7. The seat of the territorial legislature is now situated, by the nearest practicable route, at a distance of 400 miles from a large portion of the citizens of Northern Oregon.

8. A great part of the legislation suitable to the South is, for local reasons, opposed to the interests of the North, and inasmuch as the South has a majority of votes, and representatives are always bound to reflect the will of their constituents, your petitioners can entertain no reasonable hopes that their legislative wants will ever be properly regarded under the present organization.

9. Experience has, in the opinion of your petitioners, well established the principle, that in states having a moderate sized territory the wants of the people are more easily made known to their representatives, there is less danger of a conflict between sectional interests, and more prompt and adequate legislation can always be obtained.

In conclusion, your petitioners would respectfully represent that Northern Oregon, with its great natural resources, presenting such unparalleled inducements to immigrants and with its present large population constantly and rapidly increasing by immigration, is of sufficient importance, in a national point of view, to merit the fostering care of congress, and its interests are so numerous and so entirely distinct in their character, as to demand the attention of a separate and independent legislature.

Wherefore your petitioners humbly pray that your honorable bodies will, at an early day, pass a law organizing the district of country before described under a territorial government, to be named the "Territory of Columbia."

Done in convention assembled at the town of Monticello, Oregon Territory, this 25th day of November, A. D., 1852.

|                 |                            |                                      |
|-----------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                 | R. V. WHITE,<br>Secretary; | G. N. McCONAHA,<br>Pres. of the Con. |
| C. S. HATHAWAY, | L. B. HASTINGS,            | D. S. MAYNARD,                       |
| A. COOK,        | B. C. ARMSTRONG            | WM. PLUMB,                           |
| A. F. SCOTT,    | S. S. FORD,                | SETH CATLIN,                         |
| WM. N. BELL,    | W. A. L. McCORKLE,         | S. PLAMONDON,                        |
| L. M. COLLINS   | N. OSTRANDER,              | C. C. TERRY,                         |
| N. STONE,       | H. MILES,                  | G. DREW,                             |
| C. H. HALE,     | E. L. FERRICK,             | H. A. GOLDSBOROUGH,                  |
| E. J. ALLEN,    | Q. A. BROOKS,              | H. C. WILSON,                        |
| J. R. JACKSON,  | A. A. DENNY,               | J. FOWLER,                           |
| F. A. CLARKE,   | E. H. WINSLOW,             | H. D. HUNTINGTON,                    |
| A. WYLIE,       | G. B. ROBERTS,             | A. CRAWFORD,                         |
| J. N. LOW,      | L. L. DAVIS,               | C. F. PORTER,                        |
| A. J. SIMMONS,  | S. D. RUDELL,              | P. W. CRAWFORD,                      |
| M. T. SIMMONS,  | A. B. DILLINBAUGH,         | S. P. MOSES.                         |

The bill, with its amended name, passed the House on February 10 and was sent to the Senate where Stephen A. Douglas, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Territories, offered an amendment that the name be changed to "Washingtonia" to avoid confusion in the mails with the name of the National Capital. He later withdrew the amendment and the bill passed the Senate and was signed by President Millard Fillmore on March 2, 1853.

Ten days after the Monticello convention the Territorial Legislature of Oregon met at Salem and strongly reflected the sentiments of the northerners as revealed in their two conventions. The north had as representatives F. A. Chenoweth and Isaac N. Ebey. They found their colleagues from the southern counties willing to adopt Ebey's resolution that Congress be asked to appropriate money to build a road across the mountains from Steilacoom to Walla Walla as advocated in the Cowlitz convention. Four new counties, Island, King, Pierce and Jefferson, were created following in the main the boundaries suggested in the Cowlitz convention, though the names chosen were different from those approved. In accordance with both the northern conventions, the Legislature adopted a memorial offered by Mr. Ebey asking for the division of Oregon Territory as follows



Your memorialists, the Legislative Assembly of the Territory of Oregon, legally assembled upon the first Monday in December, A. D., 1852, would respectfully represent unto your honorable body that a period of four years and six months has elapsed since the establishment of the present Territorial government over the Territory of Oregon; and that in the mean time the population of the said Territory has spread from the banks of the Columbia River north along Puget Sound, Admiralty Inlet, Possession Sound, and the surrounding country to the Canal de Arro; and that the people of that Territory labor under great inconvenience and hardship, by reason of the great distance to which they are removed from the present Territorial organization.

Those portions of Oregon Territory lying south and north of the Columbia River must from their geographical position, difference in climate and internal resources, remain in a great degree distinct communities, with different interests and policies in all that appertains to their domestic legislation, and the various interests that are to be regulated, nourished, and cherished by it:

The communication between these two portions of the Territory is difficult, casual, and uncertain, although time and improvement would in some measure remove this obstacle, yet it would for a long period in the future form a serious barrier to the prosperity and well-being of each, so long as they remain under one government.

The territory north of the Columbia River, and west of the great northern branch of that stream, contains sufficient number of square miles to form a state, which in point of resources and capacity to maintain a population will compare favorably with most of the States of the Union.

Experience has proven that when marked geographical boundaries, which have been traced by the hand of nature, have been disregarded in the formation of local governments, that sectional jealousies and local strifes have seriously embarrassed their prosperity, and characterized their domestic legislation.

Your memorialists, for these reasons, and for the benefit of Oregon, both north and south of the Columbia River, and believing from the reservation of power in the first section of the organic act that Congress then anticipated that at some future time it would be necessary to establish other Territorial organizations west of the Rocky Mountains, and believing that that time has come, would respectfully pray your honorable body to establish a separate Territorial government for all that portion of Oregon Territory lying north of the Columbia River and west of the great northern branch of the same, to be known as the Territory of Columbia.—Journal of the Oregon House of Representatives, Appendix, pages 34-35.

That cordial and dignified document was adopted in the House on January 14 and in the Council on January 18, 1853. Judging from the time it took to transmit the Monticello memorial, the bill creating Washington Territory would have been passed by Congress and signed by the President about four weeks before the Oregon Legislative memorial arrived in Washington City. However, it is an interesting link in the chain of events leading up to the creation of an American Commonwealth.

EDMOND S. MEANY.