

MARKING HISTORIC SITES*

On the 29th day of August, 1851, citizens living in the Northwest part of Oregon Territory met in convention at Cowlitz and formulated a petition to the United States Congress asking for division of territory, and the erection of a new commonwealth north of the Columbia river, to be known as "The Territory of Columbia." Several other things were asked for by the members of the convention: one of great importance was an appropriation of \$100,000 for the construction of a road across the Cascade Mountains from Puget Sound to Fort Walla Walla. Congress of course could hardly do just what the people most intimately concerned wanted done; but they did appropriate \$20,000 for the construction of a military road from Fort Steilacoom to Fort Walla Walla via the Naches Pass, and they did enact a law creating a new Territory north of the Columbia, with much greater expanse than was asked, then too they called it Washington instead of "Columbia." We of today, however, have no quarrel with Congress relative to either one of those digressions from the original petition.

Deeming that the date and facts of the Cowlitz Convention were of sufficient importance to be remembered, not only by the people of today, but also by those of generations yet to come, the Washington State Historical Society has erected, on the Pacific Highway, near the bank of the Cowlitz river, at Toledo, a granite monument, inscribed as follows: "August 29, 1851, a convention held at Cowlitz, 1 mile South, formulated a petition asking Congress to divide Oregon. Acting on this, Washington Territory was created. President Fillmore signed the act March 2, 1853. This memorial erected by Washington State Historical Society, 1922."

Some nine miles north of this marker is another historic spot known as "Jackson's Prairie." Mr. John R. Jackson visited the prairie in 1844, and at that time decided that was the location he wanted for a future home. The next year he began improvements on the place and gave it the name of "Highland." In the fall of 1847 Mr. Jackson employed Leander Wallace, a carpenter,

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to assist him in the construction of a house. The house being completed in the spring of 1848, Mr. Jackson went to Oregon City where he married Mrs. Matilda Koontz, and brought her and her boys to "Highland."

The Jacksons prospered and in the course of time acquired 2200 acres of land; they raised grain, vegetables and live stock for the market.

It is said that Lieutenant U. S. Grant (who was quartermaster at Fort Vancouver) visited the Jackson home during the summer of 1853 and purchased provender for the use of the soldiers stationed at the Fort. Being directly on the highway between Puget Sound and Columbia River settlements, Jackson did a profitable business feeding and lodging travelers. After the death of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson, the farm passed into other hands. In 1915, Mr. Augustine Donahoe, then being the owner, deeded to the Washington State Historical Society the plot of land on which the old house stands; the St. Helens Club of Chehalis repaired and renovated the building; the Historical Society constructed a stone wall along the front and placed an iron gate at the entrance in front of the house. Over the gate-way is an arch, with letters reading: "1847 Jackson Home" "1850 Court House." The first date refers to the time that the house was built, the second to the year it was first used as a court house. In the gate posts are granite tablets suitably inscribed.

At Tumwater another monument has been erected marking the site where Michael T. Simmons and his party of thirty-one people unyoked their oxen, October, 1845. They were the first American settlers on Puget Sound. Simmons took a land claim where the falls of the Deschutes river are and gave the name "New Market" to the place (now known as Tumwater). The marker is an imposing one, being a large cut-granite boulder with a bronze tablet insert. The granite was furnished by the Schmidt Estate. The bronze tablet 28 by 34 inches in size, has a bas relief of a party of immigrants cutting a road for their wagon train through the forest, with the inscription: "The arrival at Tumwater of the first American Colony on Puget Sound, October, 1845. Michael Simmons, Mrs. Elizabeth K., their children, George Washington, David Crockett, Francis Marion, McDonald, Christopher C.: George Bush, Mrs. Isabella J., their children, William Owen, Joseph Talbot, Riley Bailey, Henry Sanford, Jackson January; James McAlliter, Mrs. Martha S., their children, George,

America, Martha, John, James; Gabriel Jones, Mrs. Keziah B., their children, Lewis Morris, Elizabeth; David Kindred, Mrs. Talitha, their child, John Karrick; Samuel Crockett; Jesse Ferguson.

"In commemoration of that event and in honor of that party, this tablet has been placed by the Washington State Historical Society, The Thurston County Pioneers and the town of Tumwater, July 12, 1916."

Beside the Pacific Highway, in the Nisqually Valley, stands a cut and carved granite, lettered as follows:

"She-Nah-Nam Medicine Creek Treaty. 1¼ miles Northwest is a bronze tablet placed by Sacajawea Chapter D. A. R. marking site where Governor Stevens held council with Nisqually, Puyallup and Squaxon Indians December 24-26, 1854. This stone erected by Washington State Historical Society, 1922."

Just across the Pacific Highway from American Lake railroad station, at Camp Lewis, by the side of Clark Way, is a split granite boulder with bronze tablet insert, telling of the first wagon road established in Pierce County. This road, first used by the Hudson's Bay Company in 1833, has been in continuous use ever since. For many years it was known as the Huggins-Greig Road, and is now Clark Way through Camp Lewis. Just to the left of the main entrance into Camp Lewis are three trees that were planted by Generals Leitch, Muir and Alexander. These trees were planted in memory of the men who went from Camp Lewis to the World War with these commanding officers and never returned. At the base of each of these trees the Washington State Historical Society has placed granite boulders with suitable inscriptions.

On a corner of "Mission Prairie" between Lakes Sequelitchew and American Lake, stands a splendidly carved granite stone with letters reading:

"1841 Fourth of July 1906. Commemorating the 65th. anniversary of the first public observance of our National birthday on the Pacific Coast or West of the Missouri river by Capt. Charles Wilkes, U.S.N., and the officers and marines of his fleet on Monday, July 5th. 1841.

"Erected by the Pierce County Pioneer Association, assisted by the Washington State Historical Society, Washington State Pioneer Society, Daughters of the American Revolution, Sons of the American Revolution, Loyal Legion and G.A.R.

"Mr. and Mrs. George Lyon, Jr., of Nelson, Nebraska, donated the site."

At Steilacoom, just back of the Post Office, is a built-up granite monument, marking the site where the first Protestant Church was built north of the Columbia river; the church was built under the direction of Rev. John F. Devore, who came to Steilacoom in 1853. Hanging in the archway on top of the marker, is the old church bell.

A granite boulder with bronze tablet insert is in the corner of the yard of the church of the "Immaculate Conception," an old Catholic church, still standing in Steilacoom.

On the Mountain Highway, between Parkland and Spanaway, is a cobblestone pyramid with granite tablet reading: "First Military Road in Washington, from Fort Steilacoom to Fort Walla Walla via Naches Pass, crossed the Highway here; located 1853-1854 A.D. This memorial erected by the Washington State Historical Society, A. D. 1922."

About one-half mile up the Clover Creek road, which branches off from the Mountain Highway at Brookdale Station, is a granite marker with bronze tablet, directing to the site where the immigrants of 1853, who were the first pioneers to come directly across the Cascade Mountains to Puget Sound, made their last general camp. This was the train of 1853 that had such a hard time coming over the Naches Pass.

On the East Road between Seattle and Auburn are two carved granite markers; one where the Indians massacred eight persons in October, 1855; the other where Lieutenant W. S. Slaughter and Corporals Barry and Clarendon were killed by the Indians on December 4, 1855.

W. P. BONNEY.