Extracts from the journal of Lieut. George Foster Emmons, U.S. Navy, attached to the U.S. Exploring Expedition, who, after the wreck of the sloop-of-war "Peacock" at the mouth of the Columbia River, July 18, 1841, took charge of a party of scientists of the Expedition, and others, and made his way overland through a comparatively unexplored country to San Francisco Bay, rejoining the Squadron.

The following pages are descriptions of Fort Vancouver where the party outfitted and of the courtesy and kindly offices of Mr. Douglas (Sir James Douglas) and Dr. John McLaughton, Chief Factors of the Hudson's Bay Company in charge of that Post.

George Thornton Emmons

Proctor, Tufts, May
February 15 - 1845.
July 25, 1841.

About 3 P.M. boarded the American Brig "Joth. Perkins" Capt. Van Nest, at anchor on the river abreast of Vancouver, for the purpose of ablution & changing our clothes prior to paying our respects to the H.B. Co. officials at the fort. At the same time made arrangements with Capt. V. to receive and mess my men on board of his brig. As soon as church services was concluded I visited the fort where we were received by Dr. McLaughlin and Mr. Douglas (the Chief Factor of the Co.), and some-what comfortably quartered in a large wooden building within the walled enclosure. When making the object of my visit known to Dr. McLaughlin, I received an assurance from him that he would afford me every facility within his power to forward my plans. This being one of the most important stations of the Co. I will now add a few facts in connection with a diagram which will convey some idea of its plan & importance, although I do not warrant its being correct in every particular.

(Diagram of Fort Vancouver and paper of references)

The whole enclosure about 700 feet by 400, the posts forming the stockade being of pine, from 6 to 10 inches in diameter and about 20 ft. long, and 8 ft. of which is buried in the earth to support. The upright as an additional support, pieces of masts,隆重举行 are pinned together on either side near the top and bottom, running the whole length, and from the upper rows of these are occasional treco led to the ground forming a lateral support like this. Nearly all the posts are more or less decayed.
of the earth, and will soon require replacing by others.

Independent of this there is a hospital near the river
bank, also Stockade, a Cooper shop, depot house and several other
out-buildings about the premises, besides a small village of about
30 buildings occupied by the convicts of Co. and their families. All of these
buildings are wood, generally ancient logs, like the universal log house of Can-
da, there is also a spacious garden just back of the Stockade, which now
produces a large variety of vegetables, Apples, Pears, Gooseberries, Strawberries currants

July 30, 1841.

There was no reality, during the day a light air from the
W.N.W., obtained equal altitudes sighted to regulate a pocket chronometer
that had been saved from the wreck and was furnished me without a
rate. Mr. Douglas kindly took me about the fort to show me the
interior of the different buildings and residences of the Co. found
quite a large variety and quantity of stores and furnaces on hand,
much order and system in the general arrangements, and the strictest
attention and obedience observed by the subordinates to the directions
of their superiors.

Clear at night got abt. of the (N) for Lat. Mr. Drayton ar-
mived from Wallow Valley. A rumor reached the fort that a Party under
Capt. Walker (an old mountaineer mentioned by Washington Irving in
Capt. Bonneville's work), had been cut off by the Indians and all near-
ruined somewhere near Fort Hall.
July 27, 1841,

Weather much the same, generally cloudy in the morning, clearing up by meri and remaining clear during most of the night. Very busy in collecting together the necessary articles to equip the party. Has Co being unable to furnish enough pack saddles & parallels, dispatched Mr Rodgers to the Chatakin settlement to endeavor to engage the necessary numbers, at the same time to make definite arrangements with the residents there, who had already volunteered to accompany our party -- to be ready at such a time to meet me at the disembarking place on the bank of the Macararit, bringing with them their animals, Mr. Drayton was to have accompanied Mr. R., but found the canoes too small. Dispatched Mr. Burnie canoes back to Fort R. with a letter to Capt. Hudson, and towards sunset Capt. Wilkes canoes left under charge of his servant, accompanied by a barracks furnished by Dr. McLaughlin, to convey articles purchased for the "Peacocks'" officers and crew to Astoria, owing to the recommendation of the Co. Officers. Purchased dried deer skins and had them smoked previous to being made into winter caps and moccasins for each of the party -- these being considered quite necessary to resist the scratches that one is subject to in travelling macOS in mountainous portions of this country. One of my men sick, the remainder running balls, making provision to give scientific gentlemen variously occupied. Sir Me -- their king to make me more comfortable, insisted upon my remaining in small room.
in No. 9 + taking No. 8, where he frequently called to see if his servants had attended to all my wants agreeable to his in-
structions. Thus they were sure to do, for his power is defective
here, and all have learned to obey—and possibly as I believe he has, a good heart & general knowledge of the world &
mankind, enables him to anticipate nearly all our wants—which
are now the less for having lately been tri, wrecked. His equal acts
of the sun & at night got an alt. of Polaris.

July 28, 1841.

No materials change in wind or weather, heat rather

oppressive during the day, the thermometer standing at 86 in the shade
at sun set, & Ne X— furnished me an apparatus for determining the
heights of mountains by boiling water—such as has lately been used by the O's,
officers in crossing the Rocky Mountains, principally on account
of its port alleness. A few experiments made, the boiling point
at Vancouver 210 25, but not knowing its gauge at the level of the sea
are unable at present to estimate the alt. of this fort above the latter
upon such data. —— New employed, working at buil, bag, &
tapolin & filling are useless. Capt. Vanvliet lost a man by disease, the
Co. do not countenance men who leave them under such circumstances
and will lend their aid in detecting these. Accompanied to Ne X—
To their mills about 25 miles up this river on the N. bank, both situated
directly on the bank on beautiful river, rolling streams of water which
spring from the earth near by, so near that soon after leaving the mills
draws from the sources of one. Both the flour mill and the saw mill
are carried by over-shot wheels, the former has one set of wheels, which more than answers all the present demands of the Co. The latter more I saw, - I think Dr. We B. told me - turned out 2,000 feet of lumber daily - employing from 25 to 30 men, and about 12 yokes of oxen. Most all of these men I observed wore Sandwich Islander style, their ration consists principally of smoked salmon and sea biscuit, and the pay of each $17 per an. Thus the Co. is selecting the choicest timber from our forest and supplying the Sandwich Island & California market. Their vessels coming up the river and loading at the mill, About 1/2 mile back from this shore is an open high prairie where one of their shepherds resides and looks out for a large flock of sheep & a few cattle.

29 & 30 July 1841.

Washed much the same, with 80° in the shade not well. The Z.B. Co. Sloop Victoria arrived from Fort Geo. bringing an addition to our party of Corporal Hughes, former Brack, Smith and 600 lbs. pork for use of party, only had occasion for 3 lbs., stored the remainder. Heard the Vincennes would be off the bar by the 1st of Aug. Obtained a dozen fish from Capt. Turner

Mr. Smith & wife attached to the American B.C. & Mission, who for some time had been staying here, removed on board the Chief Perkins to take passage in her to the Sandwich Islands; afterwards learned that during the last 6 years, American Missionaries had frequently stopped here for weeks or months with their wives partaking of the Company's hospitality and attended by
The Conococheague rests upon grates. During the day measured the alt. of the high prairie lands back of the fort and about 14 miles from the River upon which old Fort Vancouver formerly stood. Originally selected on account of its commanding position, at a time when the surrounding Indians were hostile, but vacated when the latter became friendly and no longer required watching for the present location which possesses superior advantages on account of its nearer approximation to the River which is the great thoroughfare of the country. Found it 65 feet above the low bottom immediately adjoining the River or the latter about 10 feet above the river water when at a low stage. Upon this flat bottom stands a small lake, video, devoid of fish. Much of it is however subject to inundation. When the Corn crops are liable to suffer. That portion of it lying in a line with the foot from the fort being quite level, I measured a base nearly the whole length of it - 1900 feet. For the purpose of obtaining some data for estimating the alt. of the bank, it being the most promin-ent one in this portion of the country. My alt. however from either end of the base only differed 10". Being obliged to depend upon the correctness of my eye for a level, concluded that I might as well depend upon the general estimated distance until I had an opportunity of measuring a longer base, which being 55 miles would make its altitude above Tumacaco 18090 feet or if 60 miles as some suppose - it would be 14390 feet bearing for Compass, N 89° 40' East.
July 31st 1841.

Cloudy until 10 AM, then clear and warm. The remainder of the day, with light variable winds. Capt. Donner took his departure for Fort George in the Brig Miss Perseus, when Mr. McLeod furnished me a house on the bank of the river for my men to press in, had various duties that kept the latter continually employed. Mr. Rodgers returned from the settlement having engaged the services of several Americans & obtained the promise that others would be ready with the materials required to complete our equipment as soon as we met at the appointed rendezvous in the Naskapiet. Having this assurance, I was determined to leave here the earliest possible hour, as the Indians were just commencing to burn the country, thereby intercepting an an obstacle that increased with my delay.

August 1st 1841

Cloudy and weather the same. Being Sunday, Episcopal and Catholic services was performed within the fort, Mr. Douglas officiating in the former at his residence & Dr. McLeod in the latter at the Chapel. I was present at the former and witnessed a very respectable and general attendance, principally the Co2. Officers and their families. The choir was led by a band of little boys & girls, generally half-breeds and mostly orphans, who have come under the patronage of the Co. in various ways and are being educated and instructed in a manner that will doubtless confer reciprocal benefits in time. Towards evening accompanied Mr. McLeod to his wheat fields and sheep farm down.
the view. The forms were quite ready for harvesting, yielding beautiful crops averaging probably 30 bushels to the acre, on
prairie ground. While upon this subject I could mention a fact
which may not be common — adjoining the fort there is a
small bed of wheat that Dr. McC. bowred for a sample, among
the 88 distinct shoots or spears of wheat springing from
one seed and upon counting the kernels in one head found that they
averaged about 60, making a total increase of 8,799 kernels.

The sheep were attended by a shepherd, all in excellent order —
of several different breeds but principally California, many had
been imported from England at considerable expense and were
among the largest that I have ever seen. Before the prairie farm
there is a lake or narrow sheet of still water that connects with
the Columbia many miles below and during high water is generally
ascended by the Indians in their canoes to avoid the rapid current.
In the fall, the footage at the head of this lake being narrow
is easily overpowered with light canoes. It was here that I first
learned that pig would voluntarily dive under water. Dr. McC.
assuring me that he had frequently witnessed this curious anomaly
and watched them until they reached the shore I dispatched
their prize vehicle to bring nothing more than a species of clam
or oyster. Just above this lake and upon the lower part of the
prairie cool wholesome water bubbles from the moist earth at
the rate of about 5 gallons per minute. At this place we were
refreshed with some lemonade, one of the Co. servants having
arrived with the necessary ingredients.

Two several families
by the R.C.A. where they have a large stock of cattle and cows 10
and makes butter for a foreign market.

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the amount in his neighbourhood, and had lately threatened to attack him and burn his fort. Their hostility arising towards the Co and Whites generally from their losses by the Powder box which was first introduced among them by the A.R. Co. Party under Michael and McKay and having lately been increased from the Co., Agents having discontinued selling them Powder and ball which they had reason to expect would soon be used against them.

This being the case Mr. G—had not ventured out of the fort for many days and had kept up a vigilant watch both night & day. of late had become so much alarmed by the increasing number and menacing attitude of the Unisqua Indians that he was about dispatching a messenger to Fort Vancouer to reform Dr. McLaughlin of his situation.

(The Expedition left Fort Unisqua on September 17 th and traveling overland reached Port Francisco Bay, October 3d and joined the Squadron.)