SOME ASPECTS OF THE LIFE OF

WILLIAM FRASER TOLMIE

by

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Abstract.

Dr. William Fraser Tolmie was a representative figure in early Pacific Coast history. With an Old World medical education in Scotland, he came to the New World, at the age of twenty, in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company. The business of fur-trading, however, promised more advancement than medicine, and Tolmie was quick to adapt himself. In eight years he had mastered the Indian trade, and developed a scientific and humanitarian interest in Indians that was to continue throughout his life. Ethnology and anthropology were his chief interests in his studies of the aborigines, and in 1884 he collaborated with Dr. G. M. Dawson in the publication of an exhaustive vocabulary of Pacific Coast Indian dialects.

Long an employer of Indian labour and closely associated with the various tribes in fur trading, Dr. Tolmie assumed the position of a local champion of the Indian cause, and advocated forward policies of Indian management that are still applicable at the present time.

When he returned to the Columbia Department in 1841, after a furlough in Europe, Tolmie was appointed to the local superintendency of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. It was a position for which, by interest and ability, he was well qualified. Between 1836 and 1841 he had learned much about the practical management of agriculture under Dr. John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver. Until 1859 he was a large figure in the
agricultural development of Puget Sound, but the rising tide of American immigration inevitably forced the Company to yield its large holdings, and headquarters were moved to Victoria.

Between 1860 and 1870 the doctor was a busy man. Apart from his heavy responsibility as managing director of the Hudson's Bay Company, he was very active in the unsuccessful fight for free education. In politics, too, he asserted a keen interest in the affairs of his community, serving in the Vancouver Island House of Assembly from 1860 until the union of the colonies in 1866. His long experience with the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company made him an invaluable sponsor of local agriculture. On his farm at Cloverdale, the doctor bred imported stock, and built up a herd which was to win top prizes for the next thirty years.

Upon retirement in 1870 he continued his interest in community affairs, holding a seat in the provincial legislature from 1874 to 1878, and actively participating in educational administration, for which a life of serious study and reflection well qualified him. A man of broad human sympathies, at one time in his younger days he had embraced the socialism of Robert Owen, but the conflict of this Old World social philosophy with the pioneer aggressiveness of the West was never reconciled in his thinking. As a result, he lacked the necessary conviction of a great political leader, but the humanitarian aspect of his philosophy found expression in his work with the Indians and his championing of public education.
His death in 1886 ended the long and useful career of a representative figure in British Columbia history, who, if not a man of outstanding ability, was yet a sincere, hard-working and public-spirited citizen.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Foreword ......................................................... 1

**CHAPTER 1**  
The Early Years ................................................. 1

**CHAPTER II**  
The Later Years .................................................. 40

**CHAPTER III**  
Tolmie and the Indians ........................................... 72

**CHAPTER IV**  
The Hudson’s Bay Connection  
from 1843 to 1870 ............................................. 111

**CHAPTER V**  
Tolmie the Advocate of Scientific  
Agriculture ....................................................... 150

**CHAPTER VI**  
The Good Citizen .................................................. 180

**APPENDIX 1** ...................................................... 217

**APPENDIX 2** ...................................................... 218

**APPENDIX 3** ...................................................... 219

**BIBLIOGRAPHY** .................................................. 220
Foreword.

"Of McLoughlin much has been written, and he richly deserves the tardy justice that later writers have done him; but there were other strong men of whom the reading public knows but little. James Douglas, Peter Skeen Ogden, William Fraser Tolmie, Archibald McDonald, John Work and many others, who built their posts and conducted the important operations of the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Agricultural Companies were no ordinary men, and they all left their impress upon the times..."¹

CHAPTER I

The Early Years

The life of William Fraser Tolmie is interesting not only as a study of an important and influential pioneer figure of early Coast history, but also as an illustration of environment working upon an individual, and an individual striving mightily to affect that environment, and not always succeeding. His life span divides geographically into three divisions: his early life in his native Scotland, his formative and determinant years in old Oregon, and his later and declining years in the even younger British Columbia. The picture supported by the Hudson's Bay Company as both frame and background, shows a young man maturing and ageing in a young country, at whose birth he had assisted.

Coincident with the growth of civilization on the North Western Pacific slope was the decline of the influence of the Hudson's Bay Company. Into the midst of this life and death struggle, for the two were irreconcilable, circumstance projected the young Tolmie. Within this environment he was to work from 1833 to 1870, one of the most decisive forty-year periods in the history of either the Pacific Coast or the Hudson's Bay Company. Within the Company, policy was to be changed from that of an aggressively expanding patriarchal organization wielding the power of a benevolent despot to that of a mere trading house shorn of its right to govern and purchasing from a severely critical and young society its farms and forts. Within the scope of this decline stood the Hudson's Bay employees, whether commissioned gentlemen
or hired servants. Some there were who adjusted to the changing scene, and themselves helped to change it; others, with perhaps less ability, struggled manfully against the change, finally being forced to accept it, and adjusting with varying success to the wreck of the old and the structure of the new. History of necessity takes first notice of the great men of a time or a period, but when these have been investigated, there remain a host of lesser men whose zeal was as great, and whose contribution, though less spectacular was as real. Within this larger group stands William Fraser Tolmie, his life reflecting faithfully the social phenomena involved in the early development of a pioneer area.

To orient the student and for the sake of historical accuracy it is necessary to devote some space to a chronicle of the main events of Tolmie's life. In the sixty-four years since he died, and even during his life, inaccuracies were permitted, sometimes wilfully, sometimes through the carelessness of journalistic reporting, which give a distorted picture of the man, what he did, and the influence he wielded. It is necessary, therefore, to review his life and attempt to give only the proper stress to significant events and facts.

William Fraser Tolmie would appear at first glance, to be a typically successful Hudson's Bay Company man. Reared in Scotland, with a better-than-average education, he joined the Company's Service before he had reached manhood, and, after a moderately arduous training as a fur-trader, rose quietly to the rank of Chief Factor. Then, retiring after a long and honest career, he divided his time between politics, private study and the successful farming of his estate. Death finally overtook him as a highly respected elderly gentleman;
his passing was marked by the usual tributes paid to a community's outstanding citizens. This is the bare outline, but a more careful investigation reveals that at several points this Hudson's Bay character was very different from the rather ordinary type of man this biographical sketch would suggest him to be.

Tolmie's early years are significant as they give a clue to much of what he did and did not do in later life. He was born into a merchant and professional family on February 3, 1812, at Inverness, Scotland. He received the normal private school education at the Inverness Academy and the Perth Grammar School, and proceeded to higher education, this in itself distinguishing him markedly from the

1 Throughout his diary we find references to his paternal uncle Dr. Tolmie (e.g. p.3, et seq.) and to his maternal uncle, Dr. Fraser (e.g. p.9, et seq.). His father was a successful wholesale merchant in Inverness.

2 Tolmie, S.F., "My Father, William Fraser Tolmie 1812-1886", British Columbia Historical Quarterly, (hereinafter cited as B.C.H.Q.), October, 1937, p.228. This would appear to be taken from family records, as the closest information the writer was able to discover was a record of baptism for 14 February, 1812, at Inverness. See Appendix I for copy of this document.


4 Commonplace Book, Original in B.C.Archives, p.1. A chemistry note heading reads "Session 1829-30 University of Glasgow". This would imply that Tolmie entered the University (actually the medical college attached to it) some time in September or October, 1829.
usual Hudson's Bay clerk, who tended to get his education extra-murally, in the service of his employers.

Tradition and courtesy have led to an error which for the sake of accuracy should be corrected here. It has been customary to refer to William Fraser as "Dr." Tolmie, and to assume that he was a graduate in medicine of Glasgow University. The effect, while very gratifying to biographers, relatives and admirers, nevertheless is to distort the man and to render obscure some of his later actions. Evidence from the University and contemporary evidence from his own writings suggest that medicine was but a secondary interest, and that he took a far greater interest in botany and physiology.

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5 S.F. Tolmie, op. cit., p.228, says his father "studied medicine at Glasgow University from which he received the degree of M.D. in 1832".

The Governor and Committee of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company to John McLoughlin / London 12 September, 1832, cited in A.G. Harvey, "Meredith Gairdner: Doctor of Medicine," B.C.H.Q., April, 1945, p.94. In view of the wide usage of this courtesy title the following extract is interesting:

"In consequence of your requisition for two Surgeons, we have ... obtained two Gentlemen from Glasgow, Dr. Gairdner and Mr. Tolmie...."

7 Letter to the writer from Prof. C.J. Fordyce, Clerk of the Senate, University of Glasgow, / 28 June, 1948. "William Fraser Tolmie ... was not a graduate in Medicine of this University ... " See Appendix 2 for the full letter which explains in part how the above error may have arisen.

8 W.F. Tolmie, op. cit., p.1. His neglect to mention his course in medicine when giving a note on his education is indicative.

9 The link between medicine and botany at this period in the history of medicine and for centuries before that, is interesting and not always realized. Dr. A.G. Harvey, writing on an associate and contemporary of Dr. Tolmie (A.G. Harvey, "Dr. Meredith Gairdner: Doctor of Medicine", B.C.H.Q., April, 1945, p.93) points out that "At that time [c. 1830] the study of botany was regarded as ancillary to materia medica, as a means of enabling the practitioner to recognize the plants used in medicine when there might be no druggist to appeal to." What often happened, as it did in the case of Scouler and Tolmie, was that the aid to the profession became the professional's main interest.
Nevertheless, he pursued his studies diligently, and achieved more than ordinary success. He appeared, indeed, to have been something of a model student, and was probably a joy to his instructors. The entry for one day in his diary records that he:

Attended the meeting of the Medical Society. Heard an Essay on Bronchitis read. Proposed a new member. Read forty pages of Cullens Practice of Physic in the evening.

At the conclusion of the Spring term in April, 1851, the young student distinguished himself by carrying off at least two prizes. He frowned on the turbulence of the Irish students when their will was opposed by a majority because "they became very clamorous and behaved in a very rude and disgraceful manner." Tolmie had agreed with them but he gracefully accepted his defeat when out-voted by the majority.

No doubt this self-control and respect for authority was instrumental in his being appointed as one of a deputation seeking favors from the instructors, and for his officer's post in the Medical Society as Custos Sigilli (Keeper of the Seal) to which he was re-elected.

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10 W.F. Tolmie, Diary, vol.1, p.2, (Tuesday, 12 Oct., 1830.)

11 Ibid., pp.54, 57. The awards were for Chemistry and French.

12 Ibid., p.12. The Medical Society moved that academic caps be worn. Tolmie and the Irish students had opposed the motion.

13 Loc. cit.

14 Ibid., p.36.

15 Ibid., p.14
for a second term. His journal gives some indication of a love of botany, but from external evidence we may deduce that this science was his first love. Again referring to his brief autobiography, he tells us that in College he showed "somewhat more proficiency than the rest of the students who were tyros in the study." Indeed, his diary does suggest that he spent a goodly part of his holidays on "botanizing" expeditions, and shows a lively interest in botany, partly inspired, possibly, by his uncle, Dr. Fraser, who appears to have been an amateur botanist, or by his paternal Uncle Dr. Tolmie who definitely was.

The significance of this medical-botanical background is only realized when his appointment to the Hudson's Bay Company is considered. Two factors were influential in determining his appointment: the first, his medical training, and the second, his botanical interest.

The situation in Oregon in the early 1850's was gravely complicated by the prevalence of intermittent fever, among the Indians. David

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16 Ibid., p.39.


18 Tolmie, Diary, p.79 - The entry includes, unfortunately, two days only, June 21 and 22, 1851.

19 Tolmie, Diary, p.24, - (Saturday, January 15, 1831.) He writes: "My Uncle (Dr. Tolmie) & I went to the Botanic Garden [This would be the Royal Botanical Gardens of Glasgow University.] He was very much gratified with the Greenhouses."

20 Malaria, according to A.G. Harvey, (op. cit., p.91)
Douglas, the noted botanist, in a letter to Sir W. J. Hooker, describes the epidemic as he saw it late in 1830:

A dreadfully fatal intermittent fever broke out in the lower parts of this river about 11 weeks ago, [i.e. about the middle of June, 1830] which has depopulated the country. Villages, which had afforded from one to two hundred effective warriors are totally gone; not a soul remains. The houses are empty and flocks of famished dogs are howling about, while the dead lie strewn in every direction on the sands of the river. I am one of the very few persons among the Hudson [sic] Bay Company's people that have stood it, and sometimes I think even I have got a shake, and can hardly consider myself out of danger as the weather is yet very hot.21

This fever was to continue, as its name suggests, intermittently, throughout the thirties,22 and was considered by some to be a serious menace to Company interests West of the Rockies.23 Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Columbia Department with headquarters at Vancouver, needed medical assistance to cope with the epidemic. The job of medical father and administrative superintendent was arduous enough in normal times, but with the fever raging, the task was superhuman.


23 J. E. Harriott to John McLeod, Hon'ble H. B. Co., d/ Fort Vancouver, 25th Feb., 1851, in "Documents", Washington Historical Quarterly, July 1907, p. 261. He writes: "...the intermitting fever which broke out here in August [1830] and was still (when I reached this on the 1st Nov'r and for some time after) raging with great violence... no less than twenty-four of the Company's [sic] servants paid the debt of nature.... I am afraid that it will prevent people from volunteering for this side of the mountains."
Dr. Kennedy, who had come out to the Columbia Department three years before Tolmie, had fallen victim to the fever.\textsuperscript{24} To offset his notice to resign from the Service he had transferred to the Northern Coast. Then, as a last straw Dr. McLoughlin was himself stricken.\textsuperscript{25} Medical reinforcements were imperative.

The second factor in the choice of Tolmie for the Hudson's Bay Company was his botanical background and acquaintance. During his college years he had studied under the renowned scientist Sir William J. Hooker at Glasgow University.\textsuperscript{26, 27} Like so many others, he had been inspired by the course. Other acquaintances, such as that of Dr. John Scouler,\textsuperscript{28} were formed. Young William Fraser, however, was above average, and attracted the favorable notice of these well-known botanists, so that, when the Hudson's Bay Company required medical aid, and this request came to the ears of Hooker,\textsuperscript{29} it was natural that he should select one who would both satisfy the professional requirements

\textsuperscript{24}A. G. Harvey, op. cit., p.91
\textsuperscript{25}Ibid., p.92.
\textsuperscript{26}The first entry in Tolmie's extant diary records that on Oct. 8, 1830, he "called on Dr. Hooker." Tolmie, \textit{Diary} vol.1., p.1.
\textsuperscript{27}Tolmie apparently took his first lecture from Hooker on 4 May, 1831. Tolmie, \textit{Diary} vol.1., p.59.
\textsuperscript{28}Dr. John Scouler was a close personal friend of Hooker's and it is natural to assume that Tolmie made his acquaintance through Sir William.
\textsuperscript{29}A.G. Harvey, op. cit., p.94. Dr. McLoughlin, desperate for professional assistance, wrote the London office of the Company on Oct. 20, 1831. They contacted Dr. Richardson, an explorer who had travelled through Hudson's Bay territory. He passed the request on to Sir William Jackson Hooker, who selected Tolmie and Gairdner.
and conduct scientific research into the flora and fauna of a new land.

The link of Tolmie the botanist with his Far West appointment is important and has not been given due prominence. Hooker is an outstanding case of the scientific and intellectual following on the heels of the trader, and he is in the proper tradition, for this was a period of territorial consolidation. One writer of British colonial history has put it succinctly when he says:

For more than a generation after Waterloo pre-occupation with affairs at home, the burden of a heavy public debt, the growth of liberal economic doctrines, and the absence of rivals in fields for overseas expansion made Britain indifferent or hostile towards policies and schemes that entailed a widening of imperial boundaries. Like the Augustan limits decided on in the Roman Empire, the era was devoted chiefly to the development of existing territory rather than the acquisition of new. Hooker and other intellectuals were active agents in this development. The botanical and zoological frontier, receiving a tremendous impetus from the establishment in


the old land of learned scientific societies, was being pushed afield as aggressively as the commercial frontier which solidified with the establishment of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Columbia Department. Regarded in this light, then, the appointment of Tolmie fits in with the establishment of British sovereignty over what was to be the British Empire. And it was the working of the same social law of the frontier which was to have so telling an effect on the fortunes of William Fraser Tolmie as he strove to advance the fortunes of the Hudson's Bay Company between 1843 and 1859. The story of his life takes on meaning only when seen in relation to the forces of which, in company with most of his colleagues, he was scarcely aware.

His active connection with the Hudson's Bay Company begins at

32 A.G. Harvey, *Douglas of the Fir: A Biography of David Douglas the Botanist*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 1947, pp. 17-18. Harvey shows the intense interest in the scientific world aroused by many, and that the parent scientific organization concerned with the collection of foreign specimens was the Horticultural Society of London, founded in 1804. It is interesting to observe the number of learned societies and institutions which Harvey shows were regular recipients of specimens of natural history. The list includes the British, Royal Scottish, Zoological Society of London, Edinburgh University, Cambridge University and Andersonian Institution Museums, as well as Kew Gardens, the Linnean Society, the Perthshire Royal Horticultural Society, the Liverpool Botanic Garden, the Geological Society of London and the Glasgow Botanic Garden. In addition to these, there were apparently very numerous private collectors.

33 It was during these years that Tolmie strove to build up a monopolistic agricultural company in the teeth of advancing and aggressive waves of American pioneers.
London, 12 September, 1832.\(^{34}\) Previous to this date Tolmie had presented recommendations which Dr. Hooker had given him,\(^{35}\) and had visited several of the spots of botanical interest in the great city.\(^{36}\) He seems to have had no trouble in securing the position, due no doubt to the patronage of his distinguished professor. His diary shows that he left Campbellton (near Inverness) by coach on 26 August,\(^{37}\) arrived in London by steamer on 4 September,\(^{38}\) was signed up on the twelfth of the month and was aboard the Columbia-bound Ganymede on the fifteenth.\(^{39}\) Within the space of two weeks his life had turned into an avenue which was to be totally different to anything he had ever known and from which he was never to turn.

The journey was probably considered to be most uneventful by the crew and passengers, yet to Tolmie it was a heaven-sent opportunity to explore the regions of natural history and improve his mind. He was typical of the young student given an opportunity of putting into practice the tools his education had sharpened for him. With a little pardonable complacency he reflects that:

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\(^{34}\) Agreement between William Fraser Tolmie and the Governor and Company of Adventurers Trading into Hudson's Bay. 12 September, 1832. Original in B. C. Archives.

\(^{35}\) A. G. Harvey, *Douglas of the Fir*, p. 87.

\(^{36}\) Ibid., p. 88

\(^{37}\) Ibid., p. 87

\(^{38}\) Ibid., p. 87

\(^{39}\) Ibid., p. 89
I never feel tedium so much complained of in a long voyage - on the contrary my time was never spent more pleasantly nor more profitably - one occupation succeeds another and every hour has its appointed task. I have now an admirable opportunity for self improvement & I trust that I shall continue to take advantage of it.40

He was fortunate in having Meredith Gairdner as an intellectual travelling companion. The two embryonic scientists revelled in an exhaustive examination of the natural world as it swirled past the bow of the Ganymede.

His diary is an excellent illustration of the serious and student mind that young Tolmie had, and gives us ample opportunity to see his interests absorbed with the natural world around him. Carefully he recorded the position of the vessel, the temperature and the barometric pressure, together with meteorological observations.41 With surprising regularity, some specimen of fish or bird would be caught, and Tolmie and Gairdner would examine it

40 Ibid., p.3.

41 Tolmie, Diary, vol.1, p.99, gives a good example and is typical of the care with which he made and recorded his observations:

"Barom. 8 A.M. 30- 26) Temp: air 8 A.M. 62 3/4
- 2 P.M. 30- 22) - - 12 64
- 6 P.M. 30- 22) - - 8 P.M. 62 3/4
- 8 P.M. 30- 22) (Sea 9 A.M. 620
cloudy, Gentle Breeze ( - - 2 P.M. 62.7
S.by E. Rate 4½ knots ( - - 6 P.M. 62.7
N. Lat. 46.38 W. Long: 10-30 by dead reckoning."
laboriously and record meticulously every significant measurement. Besides these activities, there was a rigid time-table of intellectual pursuits which included some music (the flute), language study (French and German), navigation, medicine, history and geography, to say nothing of his weekly religious exercises, to which he gave more than perfunctory attention. Then there were the ladies, but life was teeming with too many intellectual pursuits to afford an hour or two for any shipboard romances. Indeed, the twenty-year old youth solemnly commends himself when he has "succeeded in curbing its flow", i.e. "the enticing conversation of the ladies", in some measure.

42 W.F. Tolmie, Diary, vol.2, p.7, for Friday, Oct.5, 1832, recording the measurements of a turtle captured at 8 p.m. near N. Lat. 31° 56', W. Long. 17° 59'.

At 8 a turtle was seen floating near us. It was caught by two of men's sic going out in boat - on being examined it proved to be Testudo Caretta the carapace consisted of 15 central pieces of a deep reddish brown colour No 101 (Syme) of different sizes the largest in the centre - 27 marginal pieces of the same colour where they joined the central but becoming lighter and verging to yellow at the inferior part where they become continuous with the Plastron - posterior 3rd of Carapace having the outer membrane destroyed by the Anatifa vulgaris who adhered to it in great numbers Plastron composed of 18 pieces differing in size & of a straw yellow colour Length of body when neck is elongated 16 in. - of retracted part of neck 2.1 in Breadth of carapace 10 in. - of head at occiput 2.5. Length of ant. foot from carpus to end of fin 7.2 in from carpus to articulation with trunk 3- 5. Length of post. extremity metac. to end of fin 4.5 metac. to artic. with trunk - Length of plastron 8 in. Temp. of body at posterior fin 78° with folds of skin. About 12 respirations in 1' while lying on deck. While in a tub of salt water respiration for 10 minutes 14 - 1st Min: 2. 2. 38 & 4th ea 1 - 5th 2 6 to 9 ea 1 - 10th to 2. 11th 1.

43 As these are dealt with in greater detail in Chapter VI they are mentioned here only in order to give a clearer picture of the young and enthusiastic Tolmie.

44 Tolmie, Diary, vol.2, p.143.
interesting to be wasted on idle chatter.

After the lengthy voyage down the Atlantic, around the Horn, and up the Pacific, the Sandwich Islands were a welcome stopping-off point. Landing on Tuesday, 28 March, the young scientist was to spend the next eleven days in a wilderness of natural history and beautiful scenery. Specimens were to be caught, letters home to be written, and the natives to be appraised; and everything was to be carefully and copiously recorded in the journal.

On 8 April, the last leg of the journey was begun, and the Northwest drew closer. Tolmie's studies turned now to the Northwest Coast, its Indians and its geography. His meteorological observations were continued and faithfully recorded. A difference of opinion with Dr. Gairdner was patched up somehow, and the knots were logged off. By the morning of April 30 the Ganymede was off Cape Disappointment; the young naturalist eagerly recorded the phenomenal number of amphibious birds "almost darkening the air ahead". On 1 May at 5 p.m. the sea-journey of seven and one-half months ended as he stepped from an Indian canoe onto the shores of North America at Fort George on the Columbia River.

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46 Ibid., pp. 214-238.
48 Ibid. p. 246.
49 Ibid. p. 260.
50 Ibid. p. 265.
Tolmie finished the last lap of the journey to Fort Vancouver by canoe. His journal for the four days the trip occupied reflects the interest with which his scientifically trained mind analyzed the passing river banks and their flora. Nothing seems to escape his notice as he records Indian burial customs, seals in the river, the differing foliage along the banks, birds, Indian encampments, details of trading with the Indians for food, the constellations visible in the evening, the method of pitching camp, and the measurements of a snake which he caught. Besides this intellectual activity, Tolmie found time for reading and criticizing Cowper's Table Talk and his Progress of Error, paddling the canoe and "rousing the echoes with Auld Lang Syne &c." The impression the reader of this part of the Journal receives is one of a young man eagerly anticipating the future and filled with the optimism of youth. Probably the greatest value these pages have is in their comparison with the soberer record which the young doctor penned in later years, when the romantic bloom had faded from the luxuriant foliage of the primeval forest.

51 Ibid., p.266.
52 Ibid., p.265.
53 Ibid., p.266.
54 Ibid. p.267.
55 Ibid. p.269.
56 Ibid., p.266.
57 His Journal for the winter 1834/35 is gloomy and despondent in the extreme.
On his arrival at Fort Vancouver on 4 May, Tolmie and Gairdner were allowed but little time to themselves. Dr. McLoughlin seems to have been willing enough to redistribute his patients immediately, so that we find each doctor has one-third of the cases within five hours of his arrival at the Fort.

Apart from professional work, Tolmie began his clerical duties almost as soon as he arrived, in spite of the fact that his contract stipulated that he was not responsible for clerical duties until 1 June, 1855. Dr. McLoughlin was not the man to waste an eager young clerk because of a little technicality of a few weeks. Apparently, however, medical aid was in too limited supply to permit three doctors to attend to the fever-ridden patients at Fort Vancouver, so less than a week after he had arrived, Tolmie was told by McLoughlin to prepare himself to go North to Milbank Sound, where he would act as surgeon and clerk at a new establishment being formed there to supplant Fort Simpson.

No doubt the world had seemed lonely enough in Fort Vancouver, but it was to be far less social in his new location, and he seems to have had some premonition of this. Savages were a real threat, and to

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59 Ibid., p. 270
60 Ibid., p. 283.
61 Agreement, W.F. Tolmie and the Hudson's Bay Company, d/ 12 September, 1832. Original in B. C. Archives.
62 On May 9, 1835.
63 Ibid., p. 277
64 Loc. cit. The reference is to the original Fort Simpson on the Nass River.
and to meet them he felt it necessary to purchase a rifle at 150 shillings, a serious expenditure for one who was by no means affluent and who was hard put to it to escape the debit column in the Company ledger.

The original plan of travel had been to proceed by the Vancouver, Captain Ryan, down the Columbia, around to Puget Sound and down to the new fort at Nisqually. Tolmie prevailed upon Dr. McLoughlin, however, to permit him to make the overland trip with a party along the Cowlitz River to its source, then to "proceed thence on horseback to the bottom of Puget's Sound and holding afterwards a northwest course to arrive by land at Nisqualla." This party arrived at Nisqually after an arduous but not unusual journey, on

65 Loc. cit.
66 Ibid., p. 285
67 Tolmie mentions on p. 287 of his Diary the presence of cattle, horses and oxen, and that of several men, so that we may conclude, particularly in view of later information in the Diary, that this was the first herd of stock to leave Vancouver for Nisqually House.
68 Loc. cit. Probably the earliest cartography of this route was done by Lts. H.I. Warre and M. Vavasour in their "Eye Sketch of the Route from the Columbia River to Nisqually on Puget's Sound." F.O. America, Vol. 567. Copy of original in B. C. Archives. The route to-day is approximately Highway 99 from Kelso, Wash., through Castle Rock, Toledo and Chehalis to Olympia and then Northeast-(Tolmie seems to be mistaken at this point) to the mouth of present-day Nisqually River.
69 Ibid., p. 297, Tolmie, in his usual modest way, is probably recording the story of how he saved the lives of the canoemen when they were proceeding up the Cowlitz on May 23. The river at that point is a "continuous rapid" and...."it was only by the most strenuous efforts that the canoe could be urged on...." Suddenly in midstream, the men could do no more than hold it from slipping down, and a great danger arose of its being swung around by the current and smashed against partly-submerged cedar trunks. Tolmie and McDonald (Chief Trader McDonald) jumped into the water and managed to get the vessel into quieter water, but not before Tolmie narrowly missed being swept off his feet by the three or four feet of water. Has this occurred, it is problematical whether he could have survived.
May, the eager Tolmie, "at a brisk canter", arriving ahead of the others about noon. 70

Nisqually was to be but a stop-over until the Vancouver should arrive from Fort Vancouver, but before Tolmie could leave, Pierre Charles, one of the ubiquitous men-of-all-work who was assisting in building the Fort, cut himself very seriously on the foot with an axe, so that it was considered expedient to retain Tolmie at Nisqually if the man's life was to be saved. 71 This altered the course of the next few months considerably. The severity of the wound prevented Tolmie's departing and permitted him to officiate at some of the first agricultural activities on Puget Sound. As it was a new post, the young clerk also had an opportunity of getting some excellent experience in trading with the Indians. 72 For a period of nearly a week he was left in complete charge of the new post, with full responsibility for trading with the Indians. 73 The inexperienced young clerk seems to have learned quickly, for the official Fort Journal reveals that on the day of McDonald's departure Tolmie had sufficient facility with the Company's business to

70 Ibid., p. 308.
71 Ibid., p. 322. The accident occurred June 10, 1852.
72 Ibid., p. 326. Already he is preparing himself for promotion by "attending to the traffic with the Indians so as to fit myself for the office of Trader."
73 Ibid., p. 333, June 21 to June 26, inclusive, Chief Trader Archibald McDonald having gotten the new camp fairly well started, returned to Fort Vancouver without awaiting the arrival of Chief Trader Francis Heron who was to assume command on his arrival. Tolmie was placed in charge during this interval.
be able to put out a feeler for enhancing trade,\textsuperscript{74} and traded, during the period he was in command, a total of at least 39 beaver skins.\textsuperscript{75}

The summer passed quickly, for the young botanist-surgeon had little time for boredom. On every hand there were rare specimens to be searched for, new birds to be shot at and classified, and the business of getting a new fort on its feet to be attended to. Tolmie's diary is filled with interesting observations of both a scientific and a commercial nature which parallel in interest the period on the high seas spent on the Ganymede. There was little "taedium" in the summer of '33.

Probably the most widely popularized event of his younger days occurred in this summer, when he essayed the first recorded ascent of Mt. Rainier.\textsuperscript{76} No doubt challenged by the mountain's impressive massif,\textsuperscript{77} and urged on by the justifiable assumption that undiscovered plant specimens might be found at the higher altitudes, Tolmie started on his expedition with vasculum, Indian guides and diary.\textsuperscript{78} Imperfectly


Tolmie writes: "Gave Chihalucum the Squamis Chief a capot & pair of trousers as a reward for his services & general good conduct--Told him to visit the Klalams and invite the chiefs hither to trade their skins, which he promised to undertake."

\textsuperscript{75} Loc.cit.

\textsuperscript{76} Accounts of this botanizing expedition have been numerous and full, and Tolmie was latterly given full credit for the expedition, having a peak of Mt. Rainier, as well as an entrance to Rainier National Park, named in his honor.

\textsuperscript{77} He was not yet 22 years of age

\textsuperscript{78} Tolmie, \textit{Diary}, vol.3, p.12. The account of the expedition, which extended from Thurs. Aug.29 to Thurs. Sept.5, 1833, is contained on pp. 12-22 of the \textit{Diary}. It was first reprinted in Edmond S. Meany, Mount Rainier, A Record of Exploration, New York, Macmillan, 1916, pp.6-12, and subsequently appeared in the \textit{Washington Historical Quarterly}. 
outfitted, the expedition had the bad fortune to experience foul weather during most of the time. When their provisions were gone, the party subsisted on wild berries, which they heated in improvised ovens of stone. By dint of the indefatigable will of which Tolmie had shown a glimpse a year or two earlier in the Trossachs, the party reached the snow-line and ascended the summit of what is now Tolmie Peak, an eminence to the North West of the main summit. A combination of circumstances, however, prevented the main ascent from being attempted. Food was gone and the Indians were superstitious and fearful of the evil spirits of the mountain. As he was the only white man on the expedition, he had to have the support of the Indians if he were to make the final ascent, for trying it alone would have been too dangerous. This support was not forthcoming. Then, too, the expedition was completely unequipped for mountaineering. Lastly, the plant specimens seem to have been disappointing and so sparse as to scarcely warrant any exhaustive search.

As a result of these circumstances, Tolmie spent two days around the peak that was to bear his name, and returned to Nisqually. Strangely enough, he appears to have either forgotten about the expedition or else to have considered it so unimportant as not to have pressed his claim for recognition when others made the ascent. Thus, Lieutenant Kautz, reporting his ascent in 1857, remarked that as "no white man had ever been

79 Tolmie, Diary, Vol.1, pp.80-83.
On a botanizing expedition into the Trossachs in 1851, Tolmie, cool-headed in emergency, and capable of enduring hardships uncomplainingly, appears to have been the acknowledged leader in a party of three.
near it. The preparations for the journey were made without a precedent to guide them. When the details of the circumstances of Kautz's expedition are considered, it is almost incredible that Kautz should not have discovered Tolmie as a previous climber of the mountain. The young Army officer was stationed at Steilacoom, which was only a few miles from Tolmie's residence at Nisqually, and was the closest civilized hamlet to this Hudson's Bay fort. Added to this proximity of the two explorers was another link, that of the case Leschi, the Indian insurrectionist. Kautz, it appears, was sincerely interested in saving the life of the Indian chief. Tolmie, as will be shown later, was one of the major witnesses for the defence in Leschi's trial. A third factor is the constant intercourse that took place between the two forts - both social and commercial, for Fort Steilacoom depended to a considerable extent on Fort Nisqually for supplies. It seems impossible that Tolmie would not have known of Kautz's projected expedition, and that knowing of it, he would have volunteered no advice. It seems strange that Leschi did not tell Kautz of Tolmie's trip, for Leschi had surely heard of it. Whatever may have been the reason, Tolmie's expedition remained unrevealed until 1882, when Bailey Willis, a California professor,


81 Ibid., p.74.

82 Ibid., p.75 "Leschi, the chief of the Nisquallies, was at that time in the guardhouse, awaiting his execution, and as I had greatly interested myself to save him from his fate, he volunteered the information that the valley of the Nisqually River was the best approach after getting above the falls."
22.

identified and named the peak Tolmie climbed. Thus we have a period of forty-nine years during which Tolmie never bothered to assert a claim to being the first explorer to attempt Mount Rainier. With relation to Tolmie's character this is interesting.

The remainder of the autumn of 1835 passed with little incident. Tolmie's life seems to have been no more rigorous than that of the usual clerk at a small trading station, though a spice was added in the form of the Indian menace which always lurked in the dark woods that crowded on the little outpost. On one occasion the dignity of the Hudson's Bay Company was somewhat deflated and a tragedy narrowly averted. A band of Indians were clamoring to get within the pallisades of the fort, but were prudently admitted singly so that they could not cause trouble. Loud and angry shouts showed their fury at being excluded.

During the uproar the squall suddenly coming on laid the line of pickets in front of store prostrate with the ground. This unexpected catastrophe for a moment silenced the clamor but it broke out again with a redoubled fury & I trembled

83 Ibid., p.323. Altitude of the peak is given as 5939 ft. A nearby stream is called Tolmie Creek.

84 Tolmie, Diary, vol.3, p.37. On Tues. Oct.1, Tolmie records "Changed plant papers & what with trading & visiting the men, have had no time for reading." However, by November 4, (Ibid., p.69) Tolmie is chopping wood before breakfast to reduce the "corpulency"caused by his "sedentery life."

85 Ibid., p.38. An excerpt reads: "Afterwards returned to house & was soon followed by Atchilum who said I narrowly escaped being killed by Challicoom.... Gave each of the men a musket & 6 charges Ammunition & had all the guns loaded, in order to be prepared for the worst. Have desired John McKay to sleep in my apartment"
for the result, but was soon relieved from my apprehensions by hearing a loud guffaw proceeding from the brazen throats of the burly savages outside, who... soon were crowding about the door of the shop. 86

Usually, however, relationships with the Indians were quite peaceful, and Tolmie could pursue his botanical investigations and practice marksmanship with his muzzle-loader largely undisturbed, even by his duties.

Only the accident to Pierre Charles had prevented Tolmie from being shipped up to Milbank Sound shortly after his arrival on the Coast. Once Charles' foot was recovered sufficiently Tolmie began to expect the order to go North. On 15 November, 1855, Francis Heron informed him that he was to go to Fort McLoughlin, and there replace Alexander Caulfield Anderson, then a young clerk who was to return to Fort Vancouver. 87

The departure from Nisqually on Dec. 12, 1855, and the trip to Milbank Sound were as uneventful as the usual coastal voyage of the time. Seasickness attacked Tolmie again, and he was probably glad to see land. Navigation charts were very inaccurate, and on one occasion, the vessel missed disaster on the rocks by a few feet. 88 It was atypical journey of the times.

By far the greatest significance of Tolmie's trip to Fort McLoughlin is the fact that this was the second time he had stepped into a new fort. He had seen Nisqually nursed from infancy. Now he

86 Ibid., p.52
87 Ibid., p.79
88 Ibid., p.101
was to witness the rise of Fort McLoughlin when it was but seven months old, a young man in a young country. His fortunes would be decided by his reactions and adjustment to the new world in which he was moving. If he were to take hold like a James Douglas and master his environment before it mastered him, there were few limits to his fortune. If he were to become the victim of ennui or despondency, or let the gigantic isolation of the wintry, rain-sodden Coast overcome him, he would sink to the level of the common herd, and become little better than a squaw-man. Each time the young doctor ventures into the wilderness the question is decided again. As the novelty of the vast primeval fades, the problem of his future reveals itself a little more clearly to him. During this early fur-trading apprenticeship he is trying, as it were, to find his interest, and the more surely determining his future course, so that when, in the early 1840's, he turns to agriculture, the decision is not a choice - it is a logical result of his past.

The period from 2 January to 30 May, 1834, as treated by Tolmie in his Diary, is more interesting from the psychological than the historical point of view. His duties were those of a surgeon clerk, and do not appear to have been onerous. Much time was available for reading, and Tolmie seems to have used it well. Always the serious student, his

89 John T. Wabran, British Columbia Coast Names, Ottawa, Gov't Printing Bureau, 1909, p.351. Fort McLoughlin was founded on 25 May, 1855, or one week before the official founding of Fort Nisqually. The Fort was abandoned in 1843 and burned by the Indians for the metal.

90 Tolmie, Diary, vol.3, p.137. "As usual occupied in the store in the forenoon supplying the wants of the people."
alert mind constantly investigates different academic avenues, so that he is found to be studying medicine, theology, philosophy and history at different times throughout this five-month period. 91

So interested was he in reading that he, in company with Donald Manson, established what has been called the first circulating library on the Pacific Coast. 92 It is difficult to determine whose idea it originally was. Perhaps it grew out of conversation amongst the bright young men Anderson and Tolmie, and the older but somewhat academic Chief Trader Donald Manson. Tolmie, however, probably had much to do with its inception, as he was easily the most intellectual of the three.

Other activities, apart from business and reading, occupied his time. Marksmanship, which he appears to have started on his voyage across the Atlantic, is a skill which he was constantly cultivating, and in which he slowly achieved some proficiency. 93 Botanical and ornithological specimens were collected and examined. Explorations for building materials, notably fire-clay, appear to have been as common as they were necessary. 94 The Fort was still under construction, and timbers

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91 As his academic activities were such a distinguishing characteristic of the man, they are discussed in another chapter, where they receive fuller attention. They must be mentioned here, however, as study and reading were integral parts of his occupation at Fort McLoughlin.

92 W.F.Tolmie, Hist. of P.S. Typescript of the original in B. C. Provincial Archives, p.26. First mentioned by W.F.Tolmie, his account of the founding of the first circulating library on the Pacific Northwest Coast was first published by Bancroft in 1885. See Appendix 3.


94 Ibid., p.136.
clay, sand and gravel were all needed, and all scarce.

It is during this period that the first signs of the boredom which was eventually to stop the young doctor's journalizing appear. The entries diminish in scope and size, and at one point record meteorological observations only. One must not be too hard on Tolmie the diarist, however, for he would be charged with keeping the official journal in his position as clerk, and no doubt the double recording of the day's events seemed a labour of love. Nevertheless, it is indicative of his attitude, and illuminating in the light of the complete cessation of any personal journalizing within half a dozen years.

During the year in which he had now been on the Pacific slope, Tolmie had been more than once in contact with the wider circle of company policy and international affairs. He does not, however, seem to have realized that he was in the midst of forces that were determining the future of the region in which he worked. The young surgeon clerk probably discussed the question of the extension of the Hudson's Bay empire during the early thirties, but he did not consider the topic significant enough to mention in his journal. Indeed, the whole Hudson's Bay Columbia Department was so new that its novelty may well have seemed in the natural order of things. Tolmie had seen Nisqually established and then Fort McLoughlin under construction. Now he was to be brought directly into contact with one of the international aspects of the West Coast fur trade.

The struggle in which Tolmie was to be involved had begun at least a quarter of a century before he reached America. In 1821 a Russian ukase claimed as a Russian trade preserve the entire coast from

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95 Ibid., p.140. Wednesday, Mar. 12 - Saturday Mar. 15, 1834.
Bering Strait to the 51st parallel. Next year the Governor and Committee advised Governor Simpson to extend the orbit of trade both northwards and westwards in New Caledonia to cut off Russian trade at its source, and to consider the feasibility of entering the coastal trade. Shortly after this, Russia and the United States agreed on 54° 40' north latitude as the southern limit of Russian claims on the coast. The Americans, however, were poorly regarded by both Russians and British as obnoxious individual interlopers, who would sell liquor, arms and ammunition to the Indians, and thus spoil trade for the august Russian American and Hudson's Bay Corporations. Diplomatic pressure on the part of the English Company resulted in the Treaty of 1852, by which commercial report was theoretically established between the two large companies. The implementation of Article VI of this Treaty

96 W.K.Lamb, op. cit., p.xvii.
97 Ibid., p.xviii.
98 Loc. cit.
99 Loc. Cit. This was, of course, the Portland Canal.
101 Article VI stated that British vessels should "for ever" have the right of navigation of all rivers crossing the lisière or Alaskan "Panhandle."
had brought Peter Skene Ogden to the Stikine country in 1833,\textsuperscript{102} and in 1834 he had come northward to establish the post projected the year before. At this point Tolmie enters the scene, and because of his peculiar qualifications, he took more than an ordinary part in the events of the expedition.

It is unfortunate that Tolmie was either too young or too insular to grasp the historical and international significance of the drama in which he played an integral role. The ten pages of his diary which deal with the event are strangely barren of interpretation or opinion,\textsuperscript{103} and one could wish that he had spent less time at the flute and more in recording exact detail of the affair which was to grow to the diplomatic stature of an "incident". It is some satisfaction, however, that Tolmie did record the highlights, if not the all-important details. He joined the Stikine expedition on Friday, May 30, 1834,\textsuperscript{104, 105} in company with his young friend Alexander Caulfield Anderson, and by

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{103} Tolmie, \textit{Diary}, vol. 3, pp.171-180
\item \textsuperscript{104} Ibid., p.171.
\item \textsuperscript{105} Tolmie to Joseph Howe, Sup't Gen'l of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, d/ Victoria, B.C., Oct. 6, 1871. Original duplicate in B. C. Archives. Tolmie states that he accompanied the expedition as Surgeon and Trader.
\end{itemize}
Wednesday, 18 June, the Dryad was standing 7 miles from the Russian fort at Point Highfield, Redoubt St. Dionysius. The Russians, however, wanted no repetition of the previous year's English expedition up the Stikine, and were adamant against the establishment of a British Fort up that River. To this end they invoked Article II of the 1825 Convention. It was a technicality, but an effective one, for if Ogden proceeded up the Stikine he would of necessity be landing where there was a Russian establishment, which could not be done without permission. They had no hesitation in granting Ogden's right to erect a post on British territory ten miles up the river, but they gave the impression that resort would be made to force if the British did not clear out of Russian waters immediately. How far they were prepared to go in carrying out this threat is not known, but Tolmie records that Ogden was sufficiently apprehensive to ask "the opinion of each gentleman & we all agreed with him in thinking, that ... it would be highly imprudent to persist in the undertaking." Tolmie's advice probably carried some weight, for he had, on two occasions, acted as interpreter, and was hence in a fairly good position to assess the sincerity with which the Russians threatened the use of force, in spite of Article XI of the 1825 Treaty, which outlawed force of any kind.

106 Ibid., p.171.
107 Alaska Boundary Tribunal, Appendix, Treaty of 1825, p.15. Article II in part says "...it is agreed that the subjects of his Britannic Majesty shall not land at any place where there may be a Russian establishment, without the permission of the Governor or Commandant."
110 P.S.Ogden, op. cit., p.267. He and A.C.Anderson used French and Latin to translate the Russian, but they were only moderately successful.
This was Tolmie's first and last direct contact with the Russian America Fur Company, but indirectly that organization was to have a far-reaching effect on his later life, particularly in 1843. In the light of the roseate reports written up at the time of and after his demise, it is difficult to see how, if he actually were "a historian of repute," he could have missed the significance of the Russian American Fur Company in his own life story.

Having touched the international scene Tolmie returned to the Nass River to practice medicine and continue learning the fur-trade. Ogden had mentioned, at the same time that the decision was taken to abandon the Stikine venture, that Fort Simpson was to be moved to its present site in McLoughlin's Harbour on Tsimpsean Peninsula.111 This decision was carried out on 30 August, 1854, but not before Tolmie had revisited the original Fort Simpson on a professional visit, which placed him in a position to give us an exciting account of the last hours of Old Fort Simpson before the drunken Indians rushed in for the final scene of pillage as the whites left with more haste than dignity.112 In the meanwhile the new site on the coast had been carefully selected and building commenced. This was Tolmie's third experience with a new fort, and by now he had grown somewhat weary both of pioneering and journalizing.113 The period of construction he disposes of in a few

112 Ibid., p.195.
113 Ibid., pp.195-199 - see also F.W.Howay; "The Introduction of Intoxicating Liquors Amongst the Indians of the Northwest Coast" B.C.H.Q. vol.6, July.1942, wherein on p.168-9 the extract is printed in full.
114 Ibid., p.195. Under date September 2, (1854) which is the first since August 6, Tolmie writes: "Indolence & lack of matter together have prevented [ms] for some time from making an entry..."
pages of writing - and thereby deprives us of the details of Fort construction which he had proved himself so admirably suited to record in the past. There are references to such interesting persons as Capt. Dominis of the brig Bolivar,\textsuperscript{115} and "Ligeich", Dr. Kennedy's Indian father-in-law,\textsuperscript{116} but usually the reference is confined to a mere mention, and one is not granted the benefit of any interpretation Tolmie might have put on their presence, or of any conclusions he might have drawn. The whole impression that is increasingly borne in upon the reader of the diaries from this point on is one of a young man, disillusioned, in a strange and lonely country, yet apparently capable of competing on equal terms with his associates. Thus, he was Indian Trader while at Fort McLoughlin, though with only a year's service in the Company, and appears to have been taken into the councils of the gentlemen as much as anyone else. Nor did his physical stature handicap him, for on occasion he could and did deal shrewd thrashings to men of equal size. Intellectually he appears to have been more than the equal of his companions, as his remarks on his discussions with Anderson and Manson lead one to believe. He was a young man of promise in a land of opportunity, yet he allows "indolence & a lack of matter" to curb his journalizing, and, what was far deeper, to warp his outlook. It is by no means suggested that a decay had set in which was to mark his future life, for Tolmie was then, and remained, a strong man. The mere fact that a young man slacks off in his keeping of a diary, is certainly no indication that he will become a wastrel. But men are of a piece, and their omissions are sometimes

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., p.189.

\textsuperscript{116} Ibid., p.188.
more significant than their commissions. It is well to remember that the isolated forts of the Northern Coast saw Tolmie's first decline in journalizing.

Life for Tolmie at the new Fort Simpson was to be no better than at Fort McLoughlin. He must have missed the animating conversation of Alexander Caulfield Anderson, for "at night each of his fellow occupants of the store: Duncan, Heath and Singster after supper turned in & being provided with a candle betook himself to reading." During the darkening days of early autumn, Tolmie probably relieved the monotony by watching Dr. Kennedy, the Surgeon and Indian Trader at Fort Simpson. On November 3, he arrived back at Fort McLoughlin on Milbank Sound to take over the same office from Dunn, who had left to go South on the Dryad. Armed with a goodly supply of reading material, Tolmie settled down for the winter. And a dreary winter it was to be. The isolation from civilization, even of the restricted sort found at Fort Vancouver, made men avoid Fort McLoughlin and refuse to return when their period of service had expired.

Tolmie suffered as much as the rest. "Since coming here," he writes, on December 10, 1834, "what most frequently has been a matter of cogitation, is the dullness of this place & of life in the "Pays Sauvage" in general." Reflecting on his situation in the following March, this entry from his diary has significance:

117 Ibid., p.200.
118 Ibid., p.199.
119 Ibid., p.201 - McKenzie's Voyage to the Pacific, Robertson's Historical Works (in 6 vols.) the Life of Edmund Burke, Franklin's First Journey to the North besides his "stock of yet unread books."
120 Tolmie, Diary, vol.3., p.218.
Thursday March 5
38-42 37 Showery S.E. 8 P.M. clear W.N.M. Reading the life of Edmund Burke Am deplorably indolent - the fault is entirely my own, but the dull monotony of the place has a strong influence - the arrival of strangers always gives me an impulse & for some time after, I perform with much greater alertness both selfimposed & public duties. 121

Six weeks later, he mentions that he increasingly longs to revisit "the busy haunts of man," for his daily occupation is "a tedious haggling with greedy savages about the price of beaver &c talking with M [Donald Manson] about the weather." Reading and a scientific interest in the natural history around him were no doubt great comforts during the long days of "incessant rain," but Tolmie was only twenty-three years of age, and ill befitted the boundless solitude around him. Turning back the pages of his Diary to the end of May, 1835, there is some irony in his initial attraction for the North West. Then he had experienced a buoyancy & elasticity of spirit & a feeling of exultation almost, that it was not my lot to toil in a large pent up city. 122

Nor did the situation improve appreciably during the following summer. The longer days and brighter weather gave greater opportunity for scientific investigation amongst the Indians, and gardening and local exploration probably relieved the monotony somewhat, yet there are significant sterile stretches in his private journal which are eloquent. From Thursday, 16 July to Tuesday, 21 July the daily entries consist only of 3 figures indicating temperature, with one additional word denoting sunshine or rain. 123 Nor is this type of entry singular in the journal, for as

121 Ibid., p.240.
123 Ibid., p.273.
the season proceeded, it was to become more and more characteristic
until finally the journal ceased - stifled with the blanket of mono-
tonous isolation.

Bancroft, with his vivid style, has been a little hard on the
young man, but is worth quoting if only to convey more clearly the
picture of almost dangerous boredom:

It is well nigh heart-rending to see the fires of struggling
genius smothered by the very vastness of the surrounding vacuum;
to see ideas dissipated, melting into nothingness by reason of
the rarity and illimitableness of their mental atmosphere.
Tolmie's Journal... is an example. Educated only through the
medium of books, the mind cut and trimmed by the conventionali-
ties of old societies, when thrown upon its own resources and
left alone with nature it had nothing to think of, nothing to
say. Hence this shrewd young Scotch medical man, instead of
telling us something of himself, the strange new country he is
in, the people, white and copper skinned, their aims, failures,
destinies, sighs over what he did a year ago this day in
Scotland. Then he goes on with scores of pages of nothings,
covering months of non-existence....

Like many young men, Tolmie did not realize that this period of
heroic apprenticeship was "good" for him. It was literally a testing
ground, which, if he could survive it, would afford him the independence
of action and decision which was an essential of all senior Hudson's Bay
Company officers. Undoubtedly it was hard, and Tolmie cannot be blamed
too harshly for considering escape by not renewing his contract with
the Company. Dr. John McLoughlin, however, probably knew young
Tolmie's qualities better than did Tolmie himself, and appears to have
left him at Milbank Sound just as long as possible, but not so long as to
permanently alienate him from the service. McLoughlin needed Tolmie on
the Northern Coast, but more than that, he needed Tolmie.

124 H.H. Bancroft, History of the Northwest Coast, San Francisco, The
History Company, 1886, p. 328.

125 Ibid., p. 257. "The matter uppermost in my mind today was leaving
this service at the expiration of my contract."
Thus it was in February, 1836, Tolmie was returned to the civilization for which he had longed, to the frontier attractions of Fort Vancouver. His first training period was over, and he had returned to Fort Vancouver with a fair knowledge of the fur trading business, and a good grounding in practical medicine, acquired in a region where distance precluded the possibility of consultation with colleagues on difficult or unusual cases.

At this point in his life, his biographer is deprived of the great aid of the diary, which was kept more or less faithfully up to December 1835. It is regrettable that thereafter entries are very sparse and uninformative, and that the story of his life must be arrived at from other sources. No matter how shrewdly one may deduce from other evidence, there can be no substitute for the personal day to day account, and the result is at best an approximation.

Broadly speaking, Tolmie's strictly apprenticeship period may be said to have ended at this point. Although he records for Bancroft that "At Vancouver in 1836 I had the same duties to perform surgeon and trader," it is more likely that he understated his position. In another context he says that he was not only surgeon but manager of the Indian trade "and other concerns." Against this claim, however, must be placed the entry in the Minutes of Council for 1837, which lists

126 W.F. Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p.2.
127 Ibid., p.3.
128 W.F. Tolmie to Joseph Howe, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, d/Victoria, V.I. British Columbia, 6 Oct., 1871, Original duplicate in B. C. Archives.
Tolmie as Clerk and Surgeon for Fort Vancouver.129 This entry, however, must be taken as elastic. Chief Factor McLoughlin had the disposal of his staff in his own hands. Officially, and in view of his salary, Tolmie could not be termed a "manager", yet, because of the extreme shortage of professional medical personnel in the Department,130 and the experience that Tolmie had already acquired, it is doubtful that he did very much "clerking". Moreover, as mentioned above, his professional practice would of necessity carry him to scattered points in the Department, always radiating from the hub in Fort Vancouver--an ideal situation for an unpaid "manager" of smaller enterprises. For these reasons it is highly probable that Tolmie's time was divided between the practice of medicine and lesser administrative positions tending to managerial status. Indeed, this is tacitly acknowledged in Resolution 63 of the 1839 Minutes of Council, wherein W.F.Tolmie is listed as "Surgeon" only for Fort Vancouver.131

In spite of the lack of detailed personal memoirs or letters for this period of his life, there is evidence to support the theory that Tolmie had by now passed the purely "apprenticeship" stage. The long training in the North West Coast Indian country gave him a facility with Indians that enabled him to do valuable work amongst them. His


130 Geirdner, dying of tuberculosis, had left for the Sandwich Islands in 1835, and Dr. McLoughlin, the Chief Factor, had no time to devote to practice.

131 E.H.Oliver, op.cit., p.784.
brief autobiography claims that it was through his efforts that "the back country Indians or Klikitats, were led to become ploughmen, canoe-men, boatmen and active beaver trappers for the company." 132

His close association with Indians was acknowledged when, in 1840, he was given charge of an expedition of whites and Indians to capture the Indian murderer of Kenneth McKay. 133 The command of this expedition is revealing, for it shows the confidence which McLoughlin had in Tolmie, and stresses the experience and personality which the young doctor needed to be able to guide veteran trappers on a man-hunt. Again, Tolmie was chosen in 1840 to represent Dr. McLoughlin to Jason Lee, Superintendent of the Oregon Methodist Mission. Tolmie was charged with pointing out to the Reverend Jason Lee the site at Willamette Falls available for the construction of a Mission, so as not to interfere with McLoughlin's mill site reserve. 134

In the Spring of 1840, 135 Tolmie, in preparation for his rotation leave, was given a kind of roving commission, a "travelling agent for the Company," 136 as he called it, that seems to have given him wide coverage of the Southern part of the Columbia Department. Little has come to light on his duties or their nature during this year, but it is probable that his occupation was a continuation of his previous work for the past

132 W.F. Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p. 5.

133 Tolmie to Joseph Howe, d/ 6 Oct. 1871.


135 Tolmie to Joseph Howe d/ 6 Oct., 1871.

136 Ibid.
four years, with the exception that he was relieved of his medical
duties in anticipation of his leave. It is probable, too, that he
gained a great deal of first-hand knowledge of the farming operations of
the Company. His History states that he did a good deal of travelling
"to establish cattle and dairy farms and to procure wheat for the
Russians." Among other projects may be listed road-building, for he
records that he built the first dirt road over the portage round the
Willamette Falls at Oregon City.

With the arrival of the Spring of 1841, Dr. Tolmie may be said to
have finished his training period. He was twenty-nine years of age.
Nine of those years he had spent in a variety of occupations that had
included the administration and command of fur-trading posts, interpret-
ing, clerical and trading duties, Indian relationships of all kinds, and
finally, while in general service, the supervision of agricultural insti-
tutions. He was a forward-looking young man who had quickly mastered
many aspects of the Company's business on the Pacific.

137 Tolmie, Hist. of P.S. p.4.
138 W.F. Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p.7
139 John McLoughlin to George Simpson d/ Fort Vancouver, 20th Mar.1840,
in E.E. Rich, ed., The Letters of John McLoughlin from Fort Vancouver to the
Governor and Committee Second Series 1839-44 Toronto, Champlain Society,
1945, p.235.

The following paragraph is revealing and shows the esteem with which
McLoughlin regarded his young colleague.
"18th Doctor Tolmie intends going home on the furlough which the
Governor and Committee granted him in their letter of the 15th November
1857, as soon as we have a successor to replace him and I regret much that
he does so, as in justice to him, I beg to assure you I have had none here
who have discharged the laborious duties of his two stations of Surgeon
and Indian Trader of this place with such zeal and attention."
The time was ripe for a change and a rest. After that would come the realization of the training of the years between 1833 and 1841, but in the meantime the hills of home were vividly green within the young surgeon's memory, and his professional knowledge needed a refurbishing that only a return to the academic life would grant.
CHAPTER II

The Later Years.

On March 16, 1840, Tolmie wrote to Governor Simpson expressing his gratitude for being allowed to defer his leave one year in order to return home across Canada with the Spring Express of 1841 rather than by the Cape Horn route in 1840. Consequently, on March 22 the following year, he started on the historic overland route as a member of George T. Allan's party which formed the Spring Express.

Allan's Journal is enlightening, and throws valuable light on Tolmie and his trip to York Factory. However, Tolmie's part in the journey has been adequately dealt with in his son's biographical account, so that no more than an outline need detain us here. The Express left Fort Vancouver on March 22, and arrived at York Factory on July 4, travelling the usual route over the Rockies and across the prairies. The phrase "usual route", however, should not be taken to imply a well-beaten track. On 29 June Allan records that "the guide lost his way and kept us wandering backwards and forwards for upwards of three hours." Even.


2 George T. Allan, Journal of a Voyage from Fort Vancouver, Columbia to York Factory, Hudson's Bay 1841. Typescript copy in B.C. Archives. Without the aid of this interesting Journal it would have been impossible to get any detailed information on Tolmie's journey East. In his own journal, Tolmie makes entries from 25 May to 13 June (on arrival at Fort Garry), but they are only moderately helpful. A note in parenthesis indicates these entries are copied from a pocket memo book, but this book has unhappily not come to light.


4 Allan, Journal, p.31.
so, this was probably better than plunging into the icy water of a mountain river at 5 a.m. several times before breakfast, as the entire party was forced to do on the Western ascent of the Rockies. Nor was food plentiful. Allan frequently refers to shooting game when the provisions of the party were completely exhausted. Accompanied by experienced hunters, the Spring Express was expected to be self-sufficient. Carrying food would have been impracticable due to its weight. In theory, this worked very well, but the necessity for pushing ahead and shooting game only as it appeared without giving time to hunting often meant very slim rations. The party carried dispatches for Governor Simpson, and Allan had no desire to be found wanting in the opinion of the Governor. Some delays were impossible to avoid. On 31 May, the Indian guide, wholly bewildered, sat and smoked a pipe while he tried to recall the route, and then led the party in the opposite direction to the one they had been pursuing.

It was a hard journey, and one for men who were either young in years, or young in spite of them. Dr. Tolmie seems to have thought little of the hardships, however. His scientific (and probably human) curiosity led him to climb the steep hills, and view the beautiful country through which they travelled. At other times he made notes on the languages of

5 Ibid., p.31.

6 Ibid., p.32. On p.31 Allan mentions that in spite of the shortage of rations, time was too precious to waste it in going after Buffalo which were so sorely needed for meat.

7 Tolmie, Diary, vol.4., p.12.
Indian tribes the party passed, or described the country they traversed. Very little mention is made of the pemmican, alkali water, the late May heat, and the danger of attacks by Blackfeet Indians. Scotland was beckoning, and already he dreamed at night time of boyhood acquaintances, and day-dreamed of rambling with them through familiar places.

An interesting meeting occurred on Wednesday, 9 June. The party of Red River settlers who were destined for the Columbia were just starting on their journey to the West. Right glad were Allan and Tolmie to meet them, for a breakfast invitation was extended and a "fine pork ham of stately dimensions" took the place of the customary pemmican. The significance of the meeting was not to be revealed for some years. Tolmie took the occasion to observe that it was a matter of regret that the caravan had so few cattle. The breed was distinctly superior to those of the Columbia Department found around Fort Vancouver, and a greater number would have been highly desirable. On his return from Europe, the Doctor was to be instrumental in importing the finest breeds the Columbia had yet seen. And several members of the party that was

8 Ibid., p.19


11 W.F. Tolmie, Diary, vol.4, p.20.
so hospitable were to sue him for breach of contract. The advent of their journey was to become the subject of allegations against the Hudson's Bay Company in courts of international arbitration. Had Tolmie been gifted with prescience, long might he have mused on this "acquisition to the Wallamet," as he called the party.

The Express reached Fort Garry on the morning of June 10, and there Dr. Tolmie had the opportunity of meeting the redoubtable George Simpson. This, too, was an historic meeting, for the little Emperor was on his circumnavigation of the world, and he was to leave Fort Garry for the West on July 3. Tolmie was fortunate in securing an interview with Simpson, relative to his return trip via Cape Horn. It is unfortunate that Simpson makes no mention of this meeting in his Narrative, for the Governor's estimate of the young scientist-surgeon-Trader would have been revealing. He had been receiving seed and other specimens of the Columbia Department from Tolmie, and apparently took the trouble to acknowledge receipt of them in an encouraging manner.

The Spring Express from the Columbia arrived at York Factory on July 4, 1841, and Tolmie's work was awaiting him. While he had been at Fort Garry, the Council for the Northern Department had been held, starting some three days after Tolmie had had his interview with Governor Simpson.

12 Ibid., p.21
15 W.F.Tolmie to Geo. Simpson, d/16 March, 1840 in W.F.Tolmie, Diary, vol.4, p.6
16 Isaac Cowie, op.cit., p.792.
As a result of this Council, Tolmie was given the temporary employment of checking each one of the furs that were to be shipped to England. It would be pleasant to assume that Governor Simpson, having met the alert young surgeon, availed himself of his services for the protection of the Company's business, and indeed, their meeting and Simpson's previous botanical connection with Tolmie might have been influences in the appointment. It is more probable, however, that Tolmie was chosen because he was passing through, and his was the most suitable of the names before the Council. It was an important, but still a routine, appointment.

It is unfortunate that Tolmie did not keep a journal for this period from 4 July to 11 September, 1841. One may, nevertheless, gain some knowledge of his work and working conditions from contemporary accounts. The volume of his labors, if he obeyed the injunctions of the Council minutes to pass "every Skin through his own hands," must have been prodigious. Lynx returns alone for the year 1841 from the Northern Department totalled slightly over 10,000; while Muskrat furs for the same year

17 Ibid., p.804. Resolution 81 states: "To prevent a recurrence found of late in the Depot Fur Packing Accounts it is Resolved 81. That a Commissioned Gentleman or Clerk of correct habits of business be intrusted with management of that branch of the Depot duties hereafter, who will check the accounts of his subordinates by passing every Skin through his own hands and that W.F.Tolmie be appointed to that duty this Summer at York Factory.

18 Ibid., p.791. The reference is to Resolution 89 of the 1840 Minutes of Council, which appoints Donald Manson, a Chief Trader at the time, to check furs for the previous summer of 1840.

are given as 222,589. These figures omit entirely the volume of beaver, fisher, otter, sable, skunk, and fox furs which are known to have poured through the Factory from the brigades. It is little wonder that Letitia Hargrave remarks in admiration that

nothing exceed his devotion to duties wch must have required hard work of mind & body for he had the packing of all the furs to be shipped this year & had to keep the hours of the common men from $\frac{1}{2}$ past 4 a.m. to $\frac{1}{2}$ past 6 p.m.

Yet Tolmie still found time before he retired to organize classes of secular and religious instruction, to indulge in learned conversation on academic questions of social implication, and to practice the social graces so dear to the heart of Letitia. With Scotland and the braes of his youth so close, it is to be doubted whether the young doctor was ever seriously depressed by the volume of work to be accomplished.

Eventually the "sound and fury" of loading all furs for the


22 Loc. cit.

23 Ibid., p.118

24 Ibid., p.li.

25 Margaret A. MacLeod, op.cit., pp.lviii-lx, give a brief but vivid digest of the furious energy that preceded the departure for England. Men worked around the clock. "The activity was tremendous." "The stores were veritable hives, and hundreds of men, the Indians bare-footed and bare-waisted, swarmed over the fort and down to the boats on the river, all eager to get their cargoes, stow them away, and be off with their brigades.... Hargrave and William MacTavish hardly slept until the ships were away again."
London office was completed. Tolmie shipped on board either the Prince Rupert or the Prince Albert on Sept. 11, 1841. He does not appear to have had any duties on board ship, and if he had, no reference to them has come to light. Indeed, he makes no reference to this voyage whatever in any of his journals, nor do his letters reveal any reference. He arrived at London about October 15, 1841, and probably lost no time in revisiting Scotland, after such business as he may have had in London was cleared up. It is highly probable that he visited Dr. Hooker at the Royal Botanical Gardens at Kew and it is certain that he made other contacts in connection with his recent philosophical speculations. London did not detain him long, for he arrived "home" in Scotland some time in November. Letters and later references to this period of his life show that he did much visiting and established many old contacts. Domestic relations had altered considerably since 1832, and the more mature Tolmie was now in a position to aid his somewhat indigent Aunt Tulloh—terror of his boyhood. But charity was not something to be lightly entered upon, so that it is about a month after he saw her that Tolmie carefully assigns her an annual income of thirty pounds sterling.

26 Ibid., p.lviii.

27 Tolmie, Diary, vol.4., p.24. The entry is dated Edinburgh, Dec.1, 1841, and states in part: "Have now been six weeks in the civilized world ...." which would put the arrival at approximately the middle of October. He confirms this to some degree when in October, 1842, he writes that he reached London in October, 1841.

28 As his philosophical and botanical interests are dealt with in more detail later they are merely mentioned here to maintain continuity of the chronology of Tolmie's life.

29 Ibid., p.32

salary of 150 pounds per year, the apportioning of twenty per cent of it to support a maternal relative is not to be under-estimated.

Time was short, and there was much to be done. In January he was back in London, immersed in the Temperance movement and a host of conflicting sociological ideologies. It is probable that in the following four months he had numerous conversations and inter­views with the Governor and various members of the Hudson's Bay Company, for he makes such references later in applying for a larger salary.

Then, on 6 May, 1842, Dr. Tolmie left England to take a medical refresher in Paris. He had planned to take a post-graduate course on the Continent immediately after graduation in 1832, but either circum­stances or desire had altered his plans with the result that he had accepted the Hudson's Bay Company appointment instead. His account of the course is quite vague, but it seems to have consisted of supervised dissection at La Charite, a paupers' hospital, and a daily inspection tour of one or more hospitals with various noted doctors. In view of the conflicting accounts that have since appeared as to the length and type of "course" that he took in Paris, it is as well to be rather

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31 W.F. Tolmie, Diary, vol.4, p.49. The account of the Paris trip is made from pencilled "jottings" kept in a notebook during the trip. These may be taken as fairly reliable, but in addition, Tolmie states that he is adding "whatever the jottings already made, call to mind." As it is im­possible to determine what was added from memory, the account is not to be considered fully reliable. The main outlines, however, probably do not stray very far from the truth.


33 Ibid., vol.4, p.68.

34 These accounts, particularly at the time of his death, have given rise to an ever-widening circle of error. One account of his life men­tions that his post-graduate course in Paris "kept him away for two years." J.E.M. Bruce, Cloverdale Tolmie Family Home, (n.d.) typescript copy in B. C. Archives, p.4.
definite as to the details. Tolmie himself referred to the course as "my visit to Paris," and, indeed, while he was under-estimating it somewhat, it does appear to have been not much more than that. Dr. Meredith Gairdner, when he did post-graduate work, spent two years in Europe, and turned in a 420-page treatise, so it may not be said that brief periods of study were all that anyone did in those days.

In the first place, the course extended from 9 May to no more than 15 June, 1842. These dates cover a period of not more than five weeks, and it is extremely doubtful if even this limited time was fully devoted to medical research. References to non-medical pursuits in the afternoons would seem to confirm the belief that dissection in the autopsy room, and indeed surgical or medical study of any kind, was devoted to the mornings only. On the evidence in the diary, then, one is forced to grant little more than four weeks for a course in practical anatomy which covered the mornings only as Tolmie's "post-graduate course in medicine" in Paris.

This is certainly not to say that he was not busy, or indeed,

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36 W.F. Tolmie, Diary, vol.4, p.64.

37 Ibid., pp.98-101. The facts are somewhat difficult to establish, but without quoting the entire rather bulky four pages it should be sufficient to state that the last reference to a date is Sunday, 12 June, followed by an account of events at "the beginning of the week," in which he records regrets at leaving his lodgings, and his departure for Calais. Assuming that his course extended into this week (Sunday, 12 June to Saturday, 18 June, 1842) which is very doubtful as he makes no mention of it, it seems impossible that it could have continued past 15 June. The probability is that it ended on either Friday, 10 June or Saturday, 11 June.
extremely busy. The entries for this five-week period give ample proof that his mind was teeming with ideas and philosophies and interests, which he noted down or else remembered. He seems to have had many friends, and a host of acquaintances, and to have acted as a kind of missionary of progressive thinking amongst them. In another context, this period in Paris will be given its proper emphasis, for it is a significant part of his life. Here it must suffice to say that his medical training in Paris should be regarded with certain very definite reservations.

Of the period from the time Tolmie left Paris in June, 1842, until he left for North America later in the year nothing has come to light. It may be conjectured, however, that his talks with Hudson's Bay Company officials were continued, and it is to be presumed that he returned for the last time in his life to visit his native Scotland. One interesting reference to London medical practice establishes with some certainty that he visited hospitals either as a student or, more probably, as an observer. The sympathetic biographer is strongly tempted to deduce from this tenuous thread that the short Paris course was amplified by a more protracted London study, but there is no evidence to support such a theory.

So ends for the present Tolmie's excursion to Europe. It was to be a turning point in his life, and to have a significance for him far beyond that of the usual medical refresher course. On 10 September,

58 Prominent among them was Louis Joseph Papineau, then in Paris, an exile from Canada.

59 Ibid, p.101. "In London Medical practice—prescriptions are frequent and lancet more freely used [than in Paris]."
1842, Tolmie boarded the Hudson's Bay barque Columbia, to trace once again the long voyage around the Horn, on his way back to North West America. His attitude to the Service seems to have altered greatly since his days at Fort McLoughlin in 1835, when his only desire was to return to the "civilized haunts of man" and never leave them, for in his brief reflections there is no mention of any dissatisfaction with his lot. Indeed, it is the opposite, for Tolmie, the philosopher, goes out to the wilderness with something of a crusader's outlook on humanity.

The voyage was apparently uneventful, except for a stop-over at Brava in the Cape Verde Islands, where a party including Tolmie went ashore for some mountain-climbing.

The Doctor made some careful observations on the habits and customs of the natives, and the break in the voyage seems to have been very welcome. However, apart from meeting two American whalers proceeding from Massachusetts to the North East Pacific, the journey appears to have been without further incident. The usual stop-over was made at the Sandwich Islands, but it was considerably shorter than that of the Ganymede in 1833, being of only three days duration. Tolmie may have gone ashore, but there would have been little opportunity for the exploration he conducted on his first voyage.

40 Ibid., p.105. Douglas' "Voyage Records" on p.136 shows the Columbia as sailing from the Downs on 15 Sept., 1842.

41 See above, p.38.

42 Ibid., p.35.

43 Ibid., p.103.

Dr. Tolmie arrived back at Fort Vancouver on 12 May, 1843. He was, at the age of thirty-one, a mature man, almost middle-aged. He was the sort of person who seems never to have been young in the sense of being juvenile, but to have always been possessed of that ability for mature reflection and detached consideration that is the fortunate trait of some men. This characteristic brought him before the eye of the Governor and Committee of the Honourable Hudson's Bay Company. Tolmie had been training, although he could scarcely have known it, for an administrative position in the Company's agricultural operations.

While Tolmie was on the high seas en route to the Columbia from his voyage to Europe, the Hudson's Bay Company, having considered all factors carefully, appointed him as Superintendent of their newly organized Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. The choice was based, they said, on the need of medical service in the Puget's Sound area, on the need for an Indian Trader in that area to supervise the fur trade, and on the need for the local supervisor to be familiar with an agricultural interest. Dr. Tolmie satisfied all of these requirements. Indeed, he had numerous conversations with the Governor and Committee during his London visit, and appears to have put to good use his experience in the agricultural region of Fort Vancouver between 1836 and 1841. As a safeguard the head office told Dr. McLoughlin that he would retain ultimate control over the project.


47 Loc. cit.
making Tolmie actually the second in command.

This appointment, strangely enough, seems to have been unanticipated by Dr. Tolmie. During his stay in Europe he had apparently formed the impression that he would be sent to the Company's California post of Yerba Buena. To this end, he had studied Spanish while in London, and there is reason to believe, had considered the problem of the Company's precarious hold on California and its trade. Had he been posted there, he told Colvile, he would have had the business in such shape that on the discovery of gold in 1848, "the company would in all likelihood have had the best store in San Francisco." One may conjecture, therefore, that before he left the Columbia in 1841 he had, in consultation with Dr. McLoughlin, considered the California branch of the Company's business, and must have received some encouragement. In London he studied the Spanish language, and, upon his return, was on the verge of commencing the journey southward when the London appointment arrived. What appears to have happened then, is that, as a result of talks on agriculture concerning the Columbia which Tolmie believed were purely informational, Andrew Colvile, Sr. (with whom Tolmie had had the conversations referred to) decided that a man who knew that much about local agronomy was the man to handle that end of the Company's business. Thus was Tolmie's fortune decided.

Dr. Tolmie took over the management of the Puget's Sound Agricultural

48 W.F. Tolmie to A. Colvile, d/ 1 Mar. c. 1852 in W.F. Tolmie, Letterbook, p. 59.

49 Ibid., p. 59.

50 Loc. cit.

51 Ibid., p. 58.
Company in July 1845,\textsuperscript{52} with headquarters at Fort Nisqually. He seems to have enjoyed the confidence, not only of the directors in London, but also of his friend and superior, Dr. John McLoughlin, who wrote, concerning the appointment.

I have placed Dr. Tolmie in charge of Nisqually to manage the Puget Sound affairs at that place, a charge for which I am happy to say I consider him fully qualified, and in which he takes great interest.\textsuperscript{53}

His duties were those of the manager of a large estate. The object was to show a profit.\textsuperscript{54} The main obstacle in the path of this objective was the American entry into Oregon Territory. On this rock the fortunes of the Agricultural Company, and with them those of Dr. Tolmie, were to founder. Complicating the situation was the presence of the indigenous population - the Indians.\textsuperscript{55} Tolmie's problems, therefore, were threefold: the management of the Company's agricultural enterprises so that a profit could be shown, allied to which was the fur trade adjunct of which Tolmie still had control in the area; the increasingly onerous task of so managing the influx of truculent American frontiersmen that the Company's business would not be affected adversely; and lastly, the problem of continuing friendly relations with the Indians in the face of the rising tide of Americans. Tolmie's failure to solve the first two of these was assured within three years of his appointment as

\textsuperscript{52} Tolmie to Howe, 6 Oct., 1871.

\textsuperscript{53} McLoughlin to the Governor, Depty. Governor and Committee, Hudson's Bay Company, d/ Fort Vancouver, 15 November, 1843, in E.E.Rich, op.cit., p.119.

\textsuperscript{54} The subject of Tolmie's relations with the Puget Sound Agricultural Company and its relationship to conditions on the Northwest coast in the 40's and 50's is treated in a separate chapter.

\textsuperscript{55} The subject of Tolmie's relations with Indians is treated separately in Chapter III.
manager. In only the last was he successful, and this was to be a negative success.

To continue the chronology of his life, it may be said that Tolmie fought his unequal battle with the social conditions around him in the years between 1845 and 1852. During these years it was becoming ever more obvious that the eventual outcome would be a victory for the Americans, and that not in the too-distant future. A choice had to be made between surrendering to the pressure of Americanism and becoming an American citizen or remaining true to the Old Flag and retreating in dignity with the Hudson's Bay Company.

One would like to think that patriotism or some similar sentiment based on a lofty ideal motivated the Doctor in his decision to recede with the tide of British possessions from the Oregon Territory. No such solace is granted, however. When interviewed by an American newspaper reporter in November, 1851, he remarked that "his interests would not permit him to become an American citizen." These "interests" would seem to have been rather strong, for apparently he was the only Agricultural Company man not to bend the knee to the Stars and Stripes. Nor does it require much reflection to appreciate Tolmie's position. By 1851 he was thirty-nine years of age. Nineteen of those years had been

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56 The Oregon Treaty of 1846, as will be shown, was the first of the final acts which made the Puget Sound Agricultural Company's monopoly untenable below the 49th parallel of latitude.


58 W.F.Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p.22.
spent with the same Company. His record of advancement was such as to make a future with the same organization rather encouraging. Starting as a lowly clerk in 1832, he had successfully risen through the positions of Indian trader, Surgeon, travelling manager, and, in 1843, farm superintendent. In 1847, four years after his appointment he head the agricultural concern and fifteen years after his appointment with the Company, he was commissioned as a Chief Trader. The next step, the promotion to Chief Factor, was, usually, but a matter of time with a man of Tolmie’s stature, and value to the Company and background. The only stipulation, of course, was to remain in the Company’s service. In view of the inevitable rise of American influence in the Oregon Territory, by 1851 it was obvious that within a few years a final settlement would oust the English from Oregon. Tolmie’s choice was not really a choice. His only chance of a livelihood, if

59 Or with its off-shoot the Puget Sound Agricultural Company which was, in the matter of his promotion, co-terminous with the Hudson’s Bay Company.

60 Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee to William Fraser Tolmie, hereby appointed Chief Trader, d/ 31 March, 1847, Original in B. C. Archives.

61 As it turned out, it was not so automatic as Tolmie probably thought in 1851.

62 W.F. Tolmie to ---- d/ Fort Nisqually, March 2, 1850, in W.F. Tolmie Letterbook, p.35. A good example of his dilemma is given in this extract: "Tis greatly to be regretted that the Coy have made their terms so vigorous in regard to the settlement of Vancouver Island. [sic] I myself when I retire from the service would greatly prefer residing there to going elsewhere.... The clause in the prospectus providing that labourers shall be brought out by each purchaser of 100 acres of land amounts in the present state of affairs to an obligation to bring so many settlers to American Oregon. [As they would all eventually desert as had the Hudson’s Bay and P.S.A. employees under Tolmie] ...Nothing but an extremely liberal policy will induce intending settlers to select Vancouver’s Island... for in American Oregon every man occupies 640 acres of land which he confidently hopes to receive as a donation... [or at the worst pay Government prices – far cheaper than $1 per acre.].... However I look forward to ending my days as a settler on Vancouver’s Island."
he stayed at Nisqually was to become an American citizen and either go into business for himself as a farmer or enter some other field, probably medicine, in which he was getting past the age to commence competition with younger men. Remaining under the British flag meant promotion and security. The alternative meant the withdrawal of the protective hood which the Hudson's Bay Company had extended over him for nearly twenty years. It is understandable that his "interests" lay elsewhere than in American citizenship.

These factors considered, Tolmie's next problem was location. Again circumstances forced the issue. Victoria, established a few months before he was appointed to head the Puget Sound concern in 1843, was to be the headquarters of the Hudson's Bay Company west of the Rockies. An aspiring Chief Trader, looking forward to eventual central administrative duties, could do no better than to settle his family as close to that nerve-centre as practicable. Thus it was that Tolmie chose Victoria on Vancouver's Island (within British territory) as his future home.

When the decision was reached is not known, but it was implemented by March, 1852. James Douglas, writing to Archibald Barclay in London,

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63 Tolmie was married on 19 February, 1851. See below p.61.

64 W.F.Tolmie to James Douglas, Hudson's Bay Company, Fort Victoria, V.I. d/ Fort Nisqually October 30, 1850. In W.F.Tolmie, Letterbook, p.50. In this letter Tolmie makes formal application for 200 acres of the Hudson's Bay reserve known as "Grand Basford." He adds that he is anxious to commence improvements immediately. Six weeks later, on 16 December, 1850, he writes again to Douglas (Letterbook, p.51) requesting a change of his application to 200 acres to include the Mitchousin Waterfall and the seashore. Apparently Tolmie did not take up this option either, for there is no record of such a sale. Cloverdale seems, then, to have been his third and final choice.
records that he "received £268 Sterling in payment of land from William Fraser Tolmie." At the prevailing price of land bought from the Company, this meant 268 acres. Eighteen months later, Douglas records that Tolmie had applied for another hundred acres but he does not seem to have bought any more land for another five years.

There appears to have been no intention of letting this land await a speculative re-sale. Tolmie had bought his land to farm, and he intended to farm it. For November, 1853, there is conclusive evidence that the farm was being cultivated. This would mean that it had already been at least partially cleared, and possibly that a building or two had been erected. Martha Ella records that on February 13, 1854, that her uncle, Thomas Blinkhorn, assumed charge of the "farm", even then called "Cloverdale," which he was to

65 J. Douglas to A. Barclay, d/ at Fort Victoria, 18 March, 1852, in James Douglas, Letters to Hudson's Bay Company on Vancouver's Island Colony 1850-55. Typescript copy in B. C. Archives, p. 54.

66 Douglas to Barclay, 10 October, 1853. The 100 acres is listed in Douglas' letter under "land applied for and for which no payment was made prior to 6th October, 1853."

67 There appears to be no evidence that he actually bought this land. A search in the Land Register Lake, North Saanich, South Saanich & Victoria Districts Dallas Island (Original in Lands Branch, Department of Lands and Forests, B.C. Parliament Bldgs.) showed the following as Tolmie's early land purchases:

| Mar. 15, 1852 | 268 acres |
| May 15, 1857 | 99 acres |
| | 113 acres |
| | 43 acres |

68 Kenneth McKenzie, Diary 1853, Monday 21, November 1853, Original in B.C. Archives. The reference is to harrowing.

69 Martha Ella. Diary, p. 16. Typescript copy in B.C. Archives.
operate until Dr. Tolmie could leave the United States to take personal charge. 70 Farming operations were apparently continuous almost from the date of purchase.  The 1855 Census of Vancouver Island shows 65 acres of "Impraved Land" being worked at Cloverdale. 71 A year or so later Tolmie sent to England for the following substantial order for Cloverdale: 72

1 bale blankets 3 pts. Inf² B.B.
2 pieces Green Baize
100 Com Striped Shirts
3 Pieces unbleached Cotton 26 ins.
5 " Printed Cotton 28 Yds to pieces same as company's.

Then on May 18, 1857, there is a detailed memorandum, which, by reference to fruit trees, fences, fields, ditches, pastures, crops, stock and buildings suggests a farm in full operation. 73 Although the project does not appear to have been abundantly lucrative, 74 the ration list for December 1858 would suggest that it was not for want of abundant food supplies. 75

Meanwhile Dr. Tolmie had taken unto himself a wife. The marriage is typical of Hudson's Bay personnel unions in the New World and deserves

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70 Ibid., p.19. (March 28, 1854)
72 W.F. Tolmie, Letterbook, p.76. The order appears to have been written between April 19, 1856 and May 2, 1857.
73 Ibid. p.82
74 W.F.Tolmie to George Roberts d/ Nisqually, August 13, 1857, in W.F. Tolmie, Letterbook, p.92. There is a reference to the farm needing credit for everything it produces.
75 W.F.Tolmie, Account of Proceedings on Cloverdale since the 15th day of December 1858. Original in B.C. Archives. Five whites and two Indians consumed in one month 200 lbs. of pork, 300 lbs. of flour and one-half a barrel of salmon.
some comment. True to his Old World traditions, Tolmie was apt to
despise his fellow humans, the Indians. They were God's children, no
doubt, but that did not mean one had to live with them. In 1834 he had
written to the effect that his young friend Alexander Caulfield Anderson,
then contemplating a union with one of James Birnie's daughters, "a half-
breed woman", was following a course which "in his case....was the most
prudent plan which, [could] be adopted." A few days later, reflecting
on the necessity of a wife for a gentleman in the wilderness, he remarks
that

a wife is the only being to whom one could unreservedly
pour out his soul but one with whom could be enjoyed a sweet
 communion of mind is not to be met with in this country."

In December of the same year he bitterly regrets the lack of any "polished
female society." A moral man, he austenly deprecated the peccadilloes
of the "commissioned gentlemen who enjoyed single blessedness", and he
seems to have resisted until middle age the urge to marry one of the
country's daughters.

In view of these professions of superiority over native women, it
is interesting to observe the gradual destruction of this rather youthful
and somewhat impractical idealism. There is extant a letter written some
time early in 1839 which records the initial stage of the attraction that
led ultimately to his marriage. This letter was apparently addressed
to the Rev. Jason Lee who was operating a boarding school at Portland at

76 Tolmie, Diary, vol.3, p.108. (January 2, 1834).
77 Ibid., p.111
78 Ibid., p.218
79 W.F.Tolmie to The Rev. Jason Lee, in W.F.Tolmie, Diary, vol.3
p.344.
that time. In it Tolmie, writing for John Work, requests that the bearers (the Misses Work) be allowed admittance. If, however, only one could be accommodated, then "take the elder one, Jane, and in this request I, who feel a peculiar interest in that young lady's education, most sincerely join John Work." Obviously an attraction had been formed. It is a matter of some regret that the Tolmie family subsequently destroyed the love-letters of William and Jane,\textsuperscript{80} for they might have yielded some interesting sidelights on the entire affair. According to Miss Tolmie,\textsuperscript{81} the young couple used to meet beyond the confines of the boarding school. And here the historian would normally draw the curtain discreetly, were it not for a rather surprising letter the swain penned to the Governor.\textsuperscript{82} It reads, in part:

\begin{quote}
If it could be managed I should like much to go home on furlough in 1850, to endeavour to get a wife which a farmer above all men requires.
\end{quote}

Apparently the course of true love was traditionally rugged. A short time later Tolmie refers to his projected furlough in these unromantic terms:

"I am anxious to go home on furlough in 1850 to try my fortune in the matrimonial lottery."\textsuperscript{83} But lovers are a race apart. Less than two years after these callous references William Fraser Tolmie was united in marriage to Jane Work,\textsuperscript{84} then resident in Fort Victoria. The marriage was solemnized

\textsuperscript{80} Interview with Miss Josette O. Tolmie in Victoria, B.C. 24 July, 1948.
\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{82} W.F. Tolmie to Sir George Simpson 10th March, 1848 in W.F. Tolmie Letterbook, p.18.
\textsuperscript{83} Ibid., p.20.
\textsuperscript{84} The eldest daughter of John Work, Jane, was born at Fort Colville on Christmas Day, 1827, less than four years before Tolmie, a surgeon of twenty-one, arrived on the Columbia.
by the Rev. John Staines on 19 February, 1850 and the Tolmies made their home amidst the dense wilderness surrounding Fort Nisqually, W.T.

In the larger sense, the marriage is interesting because it brings into sharp focus the helpless position of early settlers on the West Coast. Surrounded by examples of mixed marriages or common-law unions, and reared in a tradition of racial superiority, many, in fact most of them, were forced to succumb to the pressure of circumstances and marry the daughters of the soil. Perhaps it was that Tolmie realized the position of the Scottish girl in the Hudson's Bay Fort. Letitia Hargrave, whom he had met in 1841, suffered all the pangs of loneliness and isolation amongst a crowd of savages whom she despised. Whatever the reasons of his marriage to Jane, once the union was concluded they were very happy. Tolmie had solved one of the big problems of the frontiersman in the manner in which it was usually solved, and there is no evidence to show that he ever regretted it. Indeed, for the rest of his life he remained devoted to the beautiful girl he had married.

The next step in the establishment of the Tolmie family within British territory was the construction of a dwelling-house on the acreage at Cloverdale near Victoria. Dr. Tolmie appears to have ordered its construction early in 1859, for in July of that year he had moved his family to

85 Register of Marriages at Fort Vancouver River Columbia North West Coast of America and at Victoria, Vancouver's Island. Photostat in B.C. Provincial Archives, p.8. No.22.

86 See below p.65. According to a picture of Jane Work at eighteen she was a girl of striking beauty. (Picture on B.C.Archives)

87 Several good accounts exist of the Cloverdale house and its present state of preservation, testifying to the quality of materials and workmanship that went into its construction. It is reputed to be the first stone house in Victoria, but this is, of course, difficult to verify. Built on Scottish farm home lines, its capacious extent and old-world atmosphere have been well-preserved, even though it serves to-day as a common rooming house. For description and some history see —"Historic Home of Pioneer Family opens its Doors," The Daily Colonist, Sunday, Nov.24, 1929, p.15.
Cloverdale. As the family by then included six children, it is extremely doubtful that Tolmie would have moved unless he had some fairly suitable accommodation for them on his farm. Nor is there any reason to suppose that he was forced to leave Nisqually before he was prepared to do so. Apart from this inferential evidence, however, the exact date of the move and the construction of the house remains undisclosed.

Upon moving to Victoria, Dr. Tolmie's fortunes increased somewhat. Four years before, he had finally achieved the rank of Chief Factor. Two years later, in 1857, he was appointed a junior member of the Board of Management of the Oregon Department. Upon his arrival in Victoria in 1859 he received a further promotion to that of junior member on the Board of Management of the Hudson's Bay Company, retaining his superintendency of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company in Oregon as well as assuming that of the Company's farms on Vancouver Island. Dr. Tolmie had become increasingly a man of some stature in local affairs. In 1865, he


89 The Tolmie Family Bible, in the possession of Miss Josette C. Tolmie, shows six children born by 21 July 1858. The next was born (at Cloverdale) on 11 Aug. 1860.

90 S.F. Tolmie, op. cit., p.255, asserts that it was completed some time in 1860.

91 W.F. Tolmie, Letterbook, passim. Here and in other private sources, Tolmie records the long and finally successful struggle to achieve the overdue promotion. As the subject of his salary and promotions is treated elsewhere, it is merely mentioned in this chronology. The original appointment dated 26 November 1855, is in the B.C. Archives.

92 W.F. Tolmie to W.L. Smith, Secretary, Hudson's Bay Company, d/ Nisqually August 18, 1857, in W.F. Tolmie, Letterbook, p.94. The effective date of promotion is not given, although the letter making the appointment is dated April 28, 1857.

93. W.F. Tolmie, Hist. of P.S. p.21

94 Ibid., p.25.
received his last promotion to the top rank of Hudson's Bay officialdom on the North West Coast — Senior Member of the Board of Management. In this position he became embroiled in the leading points of dissension that were fast sapping the monopolistic energies of both the Puget Sound Agricultural and the Hudson's Bay Companies.  

Against this background of business, Tolmie conducted a busy personal life embracing the fields of politics and education, together with his private agricultural interests at Cloverdale.

On June 1, 1870, at the age of sixty-two, after seven years at the head of the Hudson's Bay Company on the Pacific Coast, Dr. Tolmie was retired. The work had been very arduous and there is reason to believe that his health was at one point in a critical condition as a result of his labors to uphold the descending star of the Company. It was therefore painful in the extreme to be discharged, in effect, from the Service in 1870, particularly when a long drawn-out disagreement over salary and retirement allowance ended in the forfeiture of nearly $9000 on which the Doctor had been planning to retire. Times had changed since the

95 Inward Correspondence, Colonial Secretary and Lands & Works From The Hudson's Bay Company, Victoria. Originals, copies and photostats in B. C. Archives. This bulky file gives some indication of the volume of work that passed through Dr. Tolmie's hands after he assumed chairmanship of the Board of Management.

96 W.F. Tolmie to John Ross, Oakland, Cal., d/ at Victoria, V.I., British Columbia, 12 July, 1870, in W.F. Tolmie, Letterbook, p.110.

97 Extract from an unaddressed letter. W.F. Tolmie Letterbook, p.126. The reference is to a general physical breakdown and rheumatic fever in 1867, which stresses the intensity of the grind as Tolmie's constitution was not a weak one.

98 W.F. Tolmie to Alexander Tolmie [in Scotland] d/ Victoria, B.C. 10 March, 1871. The sum was £1800.
early days when retirement meant a comfortable, assured income for the
commissioned gentlemen of the Service.

After retirement Dr. Tolmie seems to have had nothing in the way
of remunerative employment. He applied for a position with the Federal
Government as Indian Agent, but political considerations seem to have
persuaded him to reject it. According to Dr. Tolmie he had made appli-
cation for the post in anticipation of Confederation. Seeing, however,
that such employment would act in restriction of his personal freedom,
he decided against it, thus retaining liberty of expression at the
expense of economic security, for an anticipated position as local secre-
tary of the Hudson's Bay Company did not materialize.

Agriculture, education and politics were his main interests and
after his retirement from the Company. He had but sixteen years of

99 W.F. Tolmie to Joseph Howe, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs,
Ottawa, d/ Victoria, V.I., B.C., 6 Oct. 1871.

100 W.F. Tolmie to W. Armit, Secretary, Hudson's Bay Company, d/ Victoria,

101 Loc. cit.

102 One must not neglect to include the rearing of a family of ten child-
ren, exclusive of two who died. Nor were the children old enough to support
themselves, as the last was born only a few months before their father retired.
The following list of children born, copied from entries in Tolmie's hand-
writing in the family Bible, gives some idea of what probably became a
harrassing domestic life:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>Born</th>
<th>Died</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alexander John Work Tolmie</td>
<td>31 Mar '51</td>
<td>7 May '08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Fraser</td>
<td>1 Nov '52</td>
<td>14 Mar '26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John Work</td>
<td>24 Mar '54</td>
<td>10 Apr. '26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>James</td>
<td>9 Sep '55</td>
<td>7 Dec. '17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Work</td>
<td>23 Jan '57</td>
<td>21 Sept. '39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roderick Finlayson</td>
<td>21 Jul '58</td>
<td>28 Mar. '34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May Fraser</td>
<td>11 Aug '60</td>
<td>3 Jan. '34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jane Work</td>
<td>10 May '62</td>
<td>27 Mar '35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anne Fraser</td>
<td>10 Nov. '63</td>
<td>25 Apr '65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Margaret Cecilia</td>
<td>15 Mar '65</td>
<td>2 May '65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Simon Fraser</td>
<td>25 Jan '67</td>
<td>13 Oct '37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josette Catherine</td>
<td>16 Apr '69</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
life remaining, and there is every reason to suspect that he was ageing rapidly. He had led a hard life, never entirely free from financial worry, and towards the end embittered by the graceless ingratitude of a soulless corporation for which he had sincerely wrought in his best years.

The first personal link with the past was snapped by the death of Jane, his wife for thirty years, on June 23, 1880. She had suffered a great deal before the end, and it was probably a merciful dispensation that the end came when it did, but the effect of grief upon the Doctor was great and it lasted until he himself died. After her death he took all his meals alone in the library, amidst his books. The only exception was Christmas dinner. With his wife, too, died Tolmie's interest in public affairs. He became, in the few years remaining, almost a recluse, hidden amidst his books, preparing his own contribution to American ethnology, and pursuing his agricultural interests. Apparently he used to journey, with his family, every summer to Nisqually, where Edward Huggins, now an American citizen after years under Tolmie in the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, was his host. Occasional trips still took him to Puget Sound, but life was ebbing and already he felt

103"Death of Mrs.Tolmie" The Daily British Colonist, Thursday, June 24, 1880, p.3.

104 Interview with Miss Josette C.Tolmie, Victoria, B.C. 24 July, 1948.

105 Interview with Miss Josette C.Tolmie, Victoria, B.C. 24 July, 1948.

106 W.F.Tolmie, Diary, vol.4, p.108. The entry is for Sept.18,1881, and is a resumption of journalizing "after a lapse of some thirty nine years of life."
66.

its approaching end. In another connection, occasion will be found to mention his later religious views; here it will suffice to record an excerpt which he wrote in August 1884, twenty-eight months before he died:

Blessed are they that have not seen and yet have believed.107

On December 8, 1886, at the age of seventy-four years and ten months, William Fraser Tolmie departed this life, as a result of pneumonia, complicated with chronic nephritis. It was a short illness, and the event was received as a shock by the community in which the Doctor had lived and moved for the past twenty-six years. Civic officials of Victoria met and passed a vote to attend the funeral.109 The service itself was one of the highlights in Victoria's pioneer history. One newspaper recorded that "It is seldom that so impressive and sad a funeral has taken place..."110 and numbered the carriages in the cortege at over sixty. The Daily Colonist mentioned the attendance of the mayor and city council at the funeral, and that the civic flag was dropped to half-mast as the procession passed the City Hall.111 Then Dr. Tolmie was laid to rest in Ross Bay cemetery, beneath the single granite pylon that already marked the grave of Jane Work.

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107 W.F. Tolmie, in Letterbook, p.141.


110 "Laid to Rest." The Daily Standard, Monday, December 13, 1886,p.3.

111 "Dr. Tolmie's Funeral," The Daily Colonist, Tuesday, December 14, 1886, p.3.
Thus was the end of one of British Columbia's early fur-traders. Covered with respect and honored in the community, he had established for himself an unusual place in the early annals of the city and the province, for Tolmie was an unusual person.

In an era characterized by its "hard" men with unbending temperaments and chilled-steel resolve to achieve a goal, the character of Tolmie deserves some attention. Indeed, without a grasp of the highlights of that character, it will be difficult to understand the aspects that are treated below, for only a man of Tolmie's nature would have acted as he did, and achieved as much, and as little, as he achieved.

On the one hand, there is contemporary American opinion which prevailed before, during and after the withdrawal of the British, North of the present international boundary:

They had represented him as a shrewd, money-living Scotchman, keen in trade, with all the williness and diplomacy of a Jesuit, -- in fact they thought, his remaining in the country was a proof that he was a sort of secret agent of the British government....

This summary was changed, of course, with the emotionalism of an economic and international struggle in which Tolmie was more or less an unwilling pawn. Actually, it points up one of the Doctor's salient traits - loyalty to duty. Of few others can it be said that they had

112 No attempt is made here to give a detailed analysis of Tolmie's Character. Anyone interested in it can do no better than read through his Diary, without which exercise it is difficult to arrive at a true picture of the man. For present purposes, only the most illuminating highlights can be given, and these only as they are significant to aspects treated in this study.


114 One needs only to recall the mass naturalization of British subjects who had left England to serve the Hudson's Bay Company in the North West. There is little reason to doubt Tolmie's word that he was the only employee of the P.S.A. to travel North to escape Americanization.
obeyed as well the stricture of their original contract to defend "with courage and fidelity" the interests of the Company. This loyalty, though sorely tested at times by an ungrateful company and a country rapidly being filled with hostile Americans, seems to have remained steadfast to the date of retirement. Even then, according to his daughter he held no rancor or bitterness towards the Company of Adventurers. None of his extant letters do anything to change this opinion. His *History of Puget Sound and the Northwest Coast* bears no hint of "scurvy treatment" he mentioned in private correspondence. H. H. Bancroft, in fact, was sufficiently disconcerted to deplore his loyalty to the Company in these words:

We [H.H. and Mrs. Bancroft] found Tolmie rather a difficult subject. He could have told more than he did, and would have done so but for his diplomatic instincts, and dislike to full, free, straightforward statements.

Nevertheless, without an appreciation of this loyalty, diplomacy, Caledonian caution, or whatever name one chooses to give the quality, it is difficult to understand the path that Tolmie followed in the years from 1843, when he assumed management of Fort Nisqually to the middle 1860's when he defended the record of a monopolistic corporation without popular support.

The second characteristic that deserves consideration is Tolmie's

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115 Original Agreement between W.F. Tolmie and The Hudson's Bay Company d/ 12 Sept, 1832. Original in B. C. Archives.

116 Between 1843 and 1859

117 Interview with Miss Josette C. Tolmie, at Victoria, B.C. 24 July, 1948


habit of examining himself. This introspective investigation was to be responsible for an aspect of Tolmie's life that, to the writer's knowledge, has not been even suggested by any of his biographers.\textsuperscript{120} Evidences of introspection are observable throughout the diaries, where they have given rise to the most serious kind of moralization and self-criticism. At the age of twenty-one he wrote in his Diary:

...would that I could shake off with the departed year, all the follies of youth in thought, word & deed... my thoughts are too puerile, . since my last birthday [his twenty-first] I have obtained a clearer view of the very limited extent of my knowledge and reflected more frequently of my state regarding religion, but alas these impressions fade without producing any permanent benefit.\textsuperscript{121}

Elsewhere he sombrely writes, "how prone have I always been to indulge in idle reveries, and waking dreams."\textsuperscript{122} These and similar references written almost in despair were the basis for a more than usual interest in religion and philosophy and the social machinery of the world. Strange indeed were the paths of philosophy that he, a Hudson's Bay Company employee, was to tread.

The third and his most popular trait was a warmth of manner and feeling toward his fellows that ranked him high in the opinion of those of the community with whom he came into contact. It is normal, in obituary notices, to mouth empty praises which the reporter, with an eye to the length of his column, is generous in applying to each departing public figure. In the case of Tolmie, there was no shortage of these

\textsuperscript{120} This aspect is his surprising political philosophy, which is examined in Chap.VI

\textsuperscript{121} Tolmie, \textit{Diary}, vol.2, p.171.

\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Ibid.} p.89.
laudatory comments when he died. One does not need them, however, to build for Dr. Tolmie, a reputation of warm-heartedness.

Hazard Stevens, who knew him during the Indian Wars of 1855-56, called him a "warm-hearted and true Scot." George H. Himes, another American, says that he was "greatly beloved by all who knew him, not only because he was a most skilful physician, but on account of his many admirable traits as a man and his many acts of kindness towards the early settlers." His daughter mentions that on her return to Nisqually in 1908 many old-timers pressed her hand, and reverentially recalled her father's widely-known kindliness and warm sympathy.

There would be no purpose in including this trait, apart from its human interest value, were it not for the fact that it was this human understanding that in part gave Tolmie his attitude towards the Indians, and to the American settlers whose encroachments he battled for twenty years. It was linked, too, with his religion and his philosophical interest in humanity. It is a part of the man's being that may not be omitted if one is to appreciate him.

Lastly, there remains to be mentioned Tolmie's ability and affinity for a lifetime of study, of diligent, ordered reading. Again, his diaries are highly indicative in this respect. One finds him constantly reading and studying, or berating himself for not doing so. The scientific background he gained while under Professor William Jackson


124 George H. Himes. "Bygone Memories", p. 65

125 Interview with Miss Josette Tolmie, Victoria, B.C. July 24, 1948.
Hooker never seems to have been completely forgotten. It was this tendency that has led his biographers to call him a scientist and a historian. While somewhat of an exaggeration, there is an element of truth in this. The error lies in the fact that he was not primarily a scientist, a religionist, a philosopher or an historian. Excess does not seem to have been part of his nature. Moderation, a prominent way of thought in the Victorian era in which he lived, seems to have been the guiding principle by which one might distinguish his life. Snowden, in commenting on Tolmie, sums him up in these few words as well as he has been epitomized anywhere:

He was a man of moderation, rare discretion and sound judgment.\textsuperscript{126}

This mixture is not usually a fountain for greatness, and Tolmie was not great. But his very lack of emotional extremes, his ability to think independently and his loyalty to duty, make him invaluable as a symbol of early Pacific Coast history. In considering aspects of William Fraser Tolmie, one may be considered to be studying a pioneer man on the British Pacific Coast.

CHAPTER III
Tolmie and the Indians

H. H. Bancroft concludes his History of the North West Coast with the following realistic and pathetic sentence:

And now the spoilation of its original occupants being practically complete, and the spoilers having partitioned the prey, the Northwest Coast, or any part of it, ceases for whatsoever time it may [,] to be debatable Ground.

Embodied in this conclusion is the story of the subjection and displacement of the North Western Indians of the Pacific Coast by the white man. In perspective, the modern student of society regards it as a manifestation of the law of the survival of the fittest — the law of the jungle. The question of ethics is not involved; present considerations deal with historical fact and obedience to or deviation from social laws. During the period, however, the emotions could not be subjected to rationality, with the result that moral and ethical stands were almost invariably taken by those men who were on the spot. The necessity for a livelihood and the capacity for human sympathy and human hate were factors which made objectivity amongst the contestants almost impossible. Subjective opinions were inevitable. Then, too, there could be no neutrals once the struggle engaged. The fundamental quarrel concerned the possession of the land, and until this question was settled to the complete satisfaction of the stronger contestant, there could be no cessation of the struggle.

Every one of the earlier immigrants to the Columbia area were ipso facto a combatant in the basic contest. Some there were who, by virtue of circumstances, found themselves defending with muzzle-loader.

their claim of land. Others, slightly removed from this immediate struggle, could observe and form opinions for a time, but eventually all were drawn in, as successive waves of immigration splashed farther into Indian territory. For this reason none of the more important earlier figures can be appreciated fully without a consideration of his relations with the Indians. Just as the history of the West is in part the history of the conquest of the Indians, so the history of the West's early characters is in part the history of their relationships to that conquest.

William Fraser Tolmie entered the Columbia before the actual struggle had begun. He was present throughout its duration and was granted sufficient time thereafter for mature reflection on the natives involved. He is, therefore, an interesting figure for study, particularly as he was able, by virtue of his position as an employee of a large concern, to view the conflict in a semi-detached fashion.

Tolmie's connection with the Indians of the North West was based on a much firmer foundation than mere proximity. It was thoroughly rooted in two traditional aspects of the Nineteenth Century. The first of these was the scientific. Tolmie, by virtue of his university training in medicine, was a Nineteenth Century scientist whose interest lay in the natural environment and all its phases. The second aspect was the humanitarian, which sponsored the carrying of the Gospel to the savage and the emancipation of the slave and downtrodden. When, under the circumstances related in Chapter II, Tolmie was appointed to the Columbia Department of the Hudson's Bay Company, it was virtually inevitable that, with these two traditions strongly at work upon his idealistic concepts, he should take an interest in the native tribes with whom he was to maintain close contact for the rest of his life. In combination, humanitarianism and
science produced an interest in the natives which went far deeper than that of a casual bystander. The recognition of these two strands makes Tolmie's relations with the Indians very much more intelligible than they would otherwise be.

One observation should be made. It was mentioned that neutrality was unrealistic in the conflict with the original inhabitants of the Columbia Department. Men had to choose, for or against. The unmolested presence of the European civilization in the area today is obvious proof that those who were against the Indians were in the majority and were considered "right". It follows that the champions of the vanquished did not enjoy any such position. Tolmie's position, then, was one with all champions of a lost cause. Recognition of his work was not to come until long after the work was finished. Others, building railroads, struggling to achieve free government, or laying the foundations for modern cities, have occupied public attention. But the sponsor of a lost cause, no matter how worthy that cause may be, seldom receives the public acclaim of a successful politician.

The first indication of Tolmie's interest in a country's native population occurs during his voyage to North America in 1832. On December 29, as the Ganymede was rounding Cape Horn, Staten Island was sighted. Tolmie read up on the inhabitants, and records in his diary a few of their characteristics. The Sandwich Islands, where the ship was docked for nearly two weeks, gave him his first opportunity for personal observation and close study of aborigines. The interest he manifests is indicative

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2 The effect of Nineteenth Century humanitarianism upon Tolmie is treated separately in Chapter VI, as it forms an integral part of his philosophy.

3 Tolmie, Diary, vol.2., p.131.
of his later studies and work. Time was all too short, but in the period at his disposal Tolmie investigated and recorded details of native government, customs, dwellings, dress, morals, education, cooking and agriculture.\(^4\) The significance of this study lies not so much in the material he recorded as in the interest he was showing in aborigines. After all, in the brief time at his disposal he could hope to add little to the world's store of knowledge, for the Sandwich Islands, as he well knew, were studied ethnologically long before he arrived. Nevertheless, his true scientific mind investigated the natives simply because they were natives and a part of his natural environment.

It was this same basic scientific interest which led him to study diligently the North American Indian before he ever saw him. After he left the Sandwich Islands he devoted part of his "study period" to learning the origins, background and customs of the Columbia River natives.\(^5\) Their language was a part of the study, although at this early stage it seems to have offered but little attraction. The requirements of commerce, however, were to make it a very attractive study indeed.

The less attractive Coast Indians, when he did finally meet them, do not seem to have held the interest for Tolmie that they might have. He records his first meeting with them in a decidedly apathetic manner.\(^6\) It is probable that their way of living and their appearance acted as deterrents to any immediate study.\(^7\) Then, too, the young man was

\(^4\) Ibid., pp. 213-253 passim.
\(^5\) Ibid., vol. 2, p. 246.
\(^6\) Ibid., p. 265.
\(^7\) Within the next few months he was frequently to remark on some disgusting aspect of their way of life, such as where he observes Indian maidens, "the filthy wretches" killing head lice by carefully placing them on the tip of their tongue and biting them apartly in two (Diary, vol. 2, p. 299). The passage is anything but scientific in atmosphere.
enchanted by the majesty of the new country around him. Its beauty was, if anything, emphasized by the apparent degradation of its native inhabitants. But such an attitude was unrealistic. The Indians were an essential link in Hudson's Bay Company trade, and sooner or later the young would-be Indian trader had to repress his finer sentiments and learn to know them so well that he could literally share a bed with them. Tolmie was granted little opportunity to study the Indian academically from afar. At Fort Vancouver he had some direct contact with them, but from the moment he left to go overland to the newly-founded Nisqually House he was seldom far removed from them. In a sense his stay at Nisqually from June until December 1833, forms a prologue to the story of his interest in and dealings with the Indians. In this brief eight-months period he formed his acquaintance with them, learned some of their language, carried on trade and finally commanded a private expedition which included only natives as companions. It was a thorough training, and a very necessary one, but to Tolmie the ethnologist it was invaluable.

His first lesson in Indian management occurred within three weeks of his arrival on the Columbia. Indians, like white men or wild animals, will respect superior strength, with the important reservation that vigilance is the price of superiority. Dr. Tolmie passed his first test successfully when he calmly continued cleaning his rifle in the presence of two designing savages with naked knives. He knew they had seen him load his pistol and he knew they feared his superior arms. Vigilance was the only prerequisite, and with his life probably in the balance, he was

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8 As he was to do on his expedition to Mount Rainier.

fully prepared to exercise it. It was an important lesson, for the
dividends were great. Courage gained the Indians' respect, respect led
to confidence, and confidence was the essential to any understanding,
whether on a commercial or scientific basis. It was a lesson which
Tolmie does not appear to have forgotten.

He seems to have inspired some of this confidence in his superiors,
for, as already mentioned, he was left in charge of Nisqually House for
several days within three weeks of his arrival amongst the Indians. With
the aid of interpreters, he appears to have performed very creditably,
testifying to his ability both to continue friendly relations with Indians
and to maintain commerce. Nor does it seem that the burden of negotia­
tions was carried entirely by the interpreter, for Tolmie appears to have
been able to accept and reject bargains as well as his more experienced
inferiors.  

It may have been as a result of this brief period of responsi­
bility that Tolmie commenced a determined study of the Indian language; or
it may have started before this period, or it may have been due to a
desire to learn more of the people through conversation. At any rate,
by June 25, 1833, Tolmie writes that he has started a vocabulary of the
Chinook patois, which he describes rather well as a "vile compound of
English, French, American & the Chinook dialect." It was a study
which was destined to continue for over fifty years, and was to form one
of his strongest links with the native Indians of British Columbia.

10 See Chapter I, p. 18.
11 Clarence B. Bagley, "Journal of Occurrences at Nisqually House,"
W.H.Q., July 1915, p. 191
12 Tolmie, Diary, vol. 2, p. 337.
In Chapter I mention was made of the somewhat remarkable expedition that Tolmie made up one of the minor peaks of Mt. Rainier. The trip, however, while noteworthy in the history of the State of Washington, has another significance that has been largely unstressed. At the time that the expedition was undertaken, its leader had less than four months seniority in North America. He had little time to learn any verbal communication with the natives, but he seems to have put it to good advantage. There appears to have been no difficulty on the journey over language, for Tolmie mentions in passing what the Indians were saying, and of his conversations with them. Relations between the single white man of twenty-one years of age and his party of five Indian "companions", as he calls them, seemed to have remained on a friendly basis. In spite of their superstitious fears, the Indians were apparently sufficiently under control to bend to the will of their master. Here again, it was the feeling of confidence he inspired in them that probably maintained for him his control. Although he admits what must have been very evident to the rest of the party, that their "smart trot" was altogether too tiring for him, he is, nevertheless, their refuge in the realm of the spirits, for Lachalet, his brave and tireless guide, requested that he be allowed

13 See Chapter I, pp.18-19.


15 Ibid., p.15.

16 Ibid., p.16.

"La chalet [Tolmie's guide on the trip] has been trying to dissuade me from going to the snow on the mountain [...]. Nevertheless, the party proceeded to the snow level, and beyond that to the peak, in other words, as far as Tolmie wanted to go."
to share Tolmie's bed when they neared the snowline. Today the young explorer rightfully receives recognition for trail-blazing, but one should not overlook his conquest of the Indian mind, which could be regarded as even more important.

During the remainder of his stay at the Fort, Tolmie was to round out his apprenticeship in Indian training. Almost daily, parties of Indians arrived and either traded their beaver skins or departed grumbling at the new higher tariff. Brief though it was this three-month period enabled him to learn a few more of the tricks of the Indian trade, and the use of psychology on the Indian mind. One case can be cited to illustrate how quickly young Tolmie was learning. Cha'llicoom, a local chief, informed Tolmie, who was in temporary command during the absence of Chief Trader Heron, that a neighbouring tribe planned to wipe out the Fort because of the higher tariff. Their intention, having murdered the English, was to admit the American coasting traders, who were charging less for their goods of barter. Cha'llicoom, protesting the friendship of long acquaintance, offered the Fort the protection of his tribe. Far from

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17 Ibid., p.19.

18 C.B. Bagley, "Journal of Occurrences at Nisqually House," W.H.Q. October 1915, passim. The tariff had been raised from one to two large beaver skins per blanket, length of stuff, trap., etc., and was not only unpopular with the Indians, but also with the Company officers and men, who had, in consequence, found trading much less agreeable and far more difficult. During the period under consideration it was quite common for Indians to depart without having traded a single skin. A complete reversal of Company policy was in store, however, for the American independent traders could and did undersell the Company, which practice eventually drove the tariff down, but only until the Americans were forced out of business on the Coast.

19 Tolmie, Diary, vol.3, p.35.
being intimidated, Tolmie coolly told him that if violence were used, the whites, after complete revenge, would abandon the Fort, and leave the entire Puget Sound district. American traders were too unreliable in their schedule to admit of being preferable alternatives, and the effect on Challicoom was telling. Tolmie, however, thanked him for his proffered aid, and next day gave Challicoom, and "other chiefs" a feast of venison, molasses and biscuit. He was learning that the way to control the native was force, but force intelligently used.

The first stage of Tolmie's apprenticeship ended with his posting to Fort McLoughlin on Milbank Sound at the end of the year 1833. He had learned a considerable amount of Indian lore that would later be valuable when he assumed charge of Fort Nisqually in 1843, but in the meantime his training was to be given the geographical broadening which it needed. The Puget Sound Indians were relatively peaceful, as they had been cowed by frequent raids of the fiercer North Coast tribes. Now Tolmie was to work in the habitat of these fierce tribes, and more than once was to walk in the gravest danger from their truculent natures. Yet it was amongst these Northern tribes that the principal foundation was laid for his most lasting work. His period of primary training at Nisqually was to pay dividends.

20 The use of an interpreter throughout the negotiation shows that Tolmie, like many others, had not yet learned enough of the local dialect for conversation. This is interesting as Tolmie was demonstrably eager to learn. In October he mentions that he is "daily adding a word or two" to his Nisqually vocabulary. On November 10, discussing his work of giving the Indians religious instruction, he deeply regrets that "the great obstacle to my success is the ignorance of the language. . . ."

21 With reference to the venison, Tolmie adds that he had "too much ... on hand for my own consumption," thereby combining a stroke of practical business with some shrewd psychology. Tolmie was a Caledonian.
In the two-year period during which Tolmie was on the North Coast, he had an opportunity to study very closely the habits and customs of the aborigines. This was feasible only if his relations with them were such as to inspire their confidence and respect, and this he seems to have been able to do. In February, 1834, he writes of eating food at the house of a chief who was by no means a trusted friend of the Company. Ransom money was always a temptation to the would-be kidnapper, or, worse, the Indian, having to resort to treachery to overcome his white superiors, was quite apt to profess friendship while intending murder. The Doctor, however, seems to have moved fearlessly among them, giving the impression of lofty calm.

The display of unaffected courage excites admiration in any breast, red or white. It may have been Tolmie's cool bravery that saved his life at the original Fort Simpson, when the Hudson's Bay Company abandoned the Fort on 29 August, 1834. The Nass Indians, emboldened by rum which had been sold to them that morning, were in a truculent mood, and were endangering the final abandonment of the Fort. Armed natives, posted on surrounding

22 This is approximate. Tolmie arrived at Fort McLoughlin at the end of December, 1833, but no evidence has come to light to show at what date between December 23, 1835 and February, 1836, Tolmie left for Fort Vancouver.

23 Tolmie records an example of this murderous characteristic wherein one tribe annihilated another during a feast of friendship.

24 Tolmie, Diary, vol.3, p.134. Tolmie admits to being "rather startled" by their fulsome savage welcome, which he mistook for exultation at getting a white chief in their power, but adds "I showed no symptoms of alarm, but entered a chief's house & sat down on a chest... placed for my use."

25 Ibid., pp.195-199. Tolmie's account of the incident already referred to in Chapter I, as a piece of restrained yet dramatic reporting, gives the details in full.
high ground could, if so moved, fire into the Fort "with deadly effect.". Surrounding the stockade was a milling crowd of more or less intoxicated Indians, all equipped with knives or guns. Inevitably one of them assaulted and drove back an employee who was rolling a cask to the beach. Tolmie describes his part in these words:

...I went out but seeing the savage advancing with his knife aloft in a menacing attitude I stepped slowly to the gate & procured a cutlass from the door keeper [*] Thus armed I walked towards the Indian...26

Bloodshed was avoided by the better judgment of the sober natives, and by an address to them by Surgeon Kennedy, who was in the Fort, but it is reasonable to suppose that the picture of a lone white man phlegmatically advancing towards an armed Indian, who was supported by well-armed allies in the woods, had a restraining effect on the belligerents. Later, it was Tolmie who held the gate of the Fort while the party evacuated to the beaches,27 an act which gives the impression that whites as well as Indians had learned to respect him.

Undoubtedly it was this same quality in his character which made him, according to one authority, "the first white man [at Fort McLoughlin] to leave the Fort without protection of H. B. Co. servants."28. In November, 1834, Tolmie was invited to attend a feast by a neighbouring chief who was not at all sure that his tribe would observe diplomatic immunity towards the Doctor. Tolmie went, however, and seems to have preserved the tradition of white supremacy in spite of ill-concealed antagonism of many of the

26 Ibid., p.196.

27 Ibid., P.198.

28 W.A.Newcombe, Assistant Biologist, B.C.Provincial Museum. Although two hostages were retained at the Fort during Tolmie's absence, this was actually little guarantee for safety, for Indian chiefs throughout the Coast area had notoriously little regard for the lives of their inferiors.
Indians. Apparently Chief Qunnachanoot was sufficiently apprehensive to hurry Tolmie from his canoe to his house, in order that the angry shouting of the horde might not develop into something more dangerous.

Other instances occur frequently throughout this two-year period which show the degree to which Tolmie had established himself in the Indian mind. On one occasion he mentions Indians bringing him a sample of a rare hawk. On another he records their opinions of the causes of an eclipse of the sun that had occurred, and continually he jots down notes on the languages of the various tribes with whom he establishes contact. In various ways he was getting to know the North Coast Indian very well, his customs, his beliefs and his language.

Reference was made to the period of despondency and almost despair which preceded the young doctor's transfer to Fort Vancouver by February, 1836. It is significant, however, that his study of the Indians and their language does not appear to have suffered. Apparently science was a refuge in which he found a last haven when the physical world, drenched with rain and tremendously silent, had extinguished the young hope he brought to it. For it was here that he commenced the scientific study of Coast Indian languages that was eventually published as an authority in its field.

This link of the scientific with the commercial is interesting. On

29 Tolmie, Diary, p. [205].

30 Ibid. p. [262].

31 Ibid., p. 215.

32 Bancroft's picture of Tolmie wasting away mentally at this time and filling his diary with useless nothings is hardly a true reflection of the case. A careful reperusal of Tolmie's journal would have shown that the study of Indian languages was never actually discontinued as was the Diary. The results of that study indicate that Tolmie could not well have dropped it for any long period and produced what he did.
November 3, 1834, Tolmie secured the appointment he had been seeking for eighteen months, that of Indian Trader.\textsuperscript{33} The position, while carrying no extra salary, did denote that its holder, having a sufficient facility with Chinook for commercial relations, was capable of independent trading with Indians. But Tolmie the scientist had a deeper interest which inspired him with a zeal not found except in the true student. Throughout the pages of the \textit{Diary}, when all else has ceased to interest him, one may see references to minor acquisitions of Indian vocabularies, scientific investigations and conclusions,\textsuperscript{34} and details of Indian life and custom which show the mind of the scientist in the field. Perhaps the most revealing passage in this part of his Diary from this point of view is the last entry for Fort McLoughlin,\textsuperscript{35} in which Tolmie lists various information on North Coast Indians. The entry gives a rather full census of Indians around Milbank Sound and on the North end of Vancouver Island, a description of fishing methods, an account of the practice of Tseetzaiak, and a further detailed census of Indian populations and dwelling houses. It is a fitting close to Tolmie's life at Forts McLoughlin and Simpson, for his interests were at the end apparently all channelled into the realm of ethnology. It is not too much to say that without this scientific background and viewpoint, the "tedious higgling with savages" might well have ended any desire for further association with

\textsuperscript{33} Tolmie, \textit{Diary}, p.199.

\textsuperscript{34} A good example is the custom of Tseetzaiak, in which an inspired chief bit large portions of skin from the forearms of Indians needing strength. Tolmie mentions it when he first arrived, and one of his last entries for the period concludes with a detailed explanation and analysis of the custom.

\textsuperscript{35} The entry, dated December 23, but probably extending over several days, occupies seven pages of script. (pp.285-292)
Tolmie brought to Fort Vancouver a fairly wide knowledge of Indian management. His course had led him from Nisqually, with its comparatively docile tribe, to the Northern forts, where Indians were dangerous and often openly hostile, and finally to the Columbia where the effects of civilization had already, as he records,\(^{36}\) begun turning the native from a nomadic to a pastoral race.

It seems that the leadership and patience of the Doctor, together with the example set by his famous superior Dr. John McLoughlin, were instrumental in making a peaceful adjustment between the two races as American settlers poured into the Wallamat Valley. Very little direct evidence exists to support this assumption but it is, nevertheless, reasonable. A religious man, he had long been interested in bringing to the native the Word of God. This effort he continued while at Fort Vancouver,\(^ {37}\) when he opened a school of religious instruction for the Indians. To this emotional appeal to the Indian mind Tolmie was able to add his extensive experience in Indian management. Altogether this made for a powerful influence on the natives, which could be used to guide them into such activities as suited the whites.

While Tolmie was at Fort Vancouver the agricultural possibilities of the Columbia Valley were being opened up, leading to a substantial supply contract with the Russians on the North Coast. Laborers were needed to work the Company's farms which were later taken over by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, and Tolmie no doubt found that the Indian, with

\(^{36}\) W.F. Tolmie, *Hist. of P.S.*, pp. 4-5.

\(^{37}\) Tolmie's religious work with the Indians is dealt with separately in Chapter VI.
88.

supervision, made an excellent agricultural laborer. The Indians were there and their labor was needed by the Company. More than that, it was becoming desirable to have the immediate Indian population fairly static, as furs were being obtained increasingly from tribes further removed from settlement. The factor that was required to bring the Indian to the land was a man or men who had the confidence of the native with a sure knowledge of the race. It seems reasonable that Tolmie, with others, of equal and greater experience, was a factor in the transition of the Indian from trapper to farmer. Particularly is this suggested when it is recalled that for a year before March, 1841, he had a roving commission under which he organized numerous cattle, wheat and dairy farms along the Columbia.

Because Tolmie had left little evidence of continued scientific investigation among the Indians after he left Fort McLoughlin in 1836, it

38 This assumption is based on the fact that Tolmie used Indians so widely at Nisqually in 1843 and after.

39 W.F. Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p.4. His part in the capture of Kenneth McKay's murderer, and in the subsequent hanging of an accomplice on August 29, 1840, has already been mentioned. For another, and fuller, account by a missionary present in the area at the time see Nellie B. Pipe, ed., "Journal of John H. Frost, 1840-45" O.H.Q., March, 1954, p.59.

40 Ibid. p.5. In addition, although there is no corroborative evidence to support the claim, there seems to be no good reason for doubting Tolmie's own statement that "...to a great extent, he being Indian trader, -- through his agency, the back country Indians or Kliketats, were led to become ploughmen, canoe-men, boatmen and active beaver trappers for the Company." Tolmie supports this in his application to the Hon. Joseph Howe for the position of Indian Superintendent in British Columbia when he says: "...the various tribes known on the Columbia River as Klikatats had by this time so much changed their notions that the Company's large fields were mostly ploughed by Indians who around Fort Vancouver were fairly friendly and useful in every way possible." The Kliketats had been notorious for their anti-white depredations.

41 See below (on p. (a)) wherein Tolmie makes reference to forwarding native vocabularies to Dr. Scouler in England. This would involve some serious work, but it is probable that the nature of Tolmie's employment at Vancouver was such as to make independent research very difficult.
is enlightening to observe that on his journey across the prairies to York Factory in 1843 he resumes his study of native tribes. His brief journal includes some discerning notes comparing the prairies and the West Coast Indians, with a summary of Indian legends concerning the origin of the Sarcie and Carrier tribes. In addition, there is a brief comparative memorandum of Chipewyan, and Carrier words, with some remarks on the Cayuse, Nez Perce, and Wailat manguages that may indicate a study of these languages while he was at Fort Vancouver. Further, brief references to the Santeux and Crees indicate that Tolmie's mind was ever open to impressions of native Indian tribes, even when he was going home on his first furlough. Nor did this interest cease in the six weeks or so that he spent at York Factory, for there he seems to have been quite prominent in instructional and religious activities amongst the Indians of the Fort, although whether this was inspired by motives of racial tolerance or missionary zeal is a little difficult to determine.

Back in his native country, wherein his education had inspired and propagated the scientific basis on which his interest in Indians had been partly based, Tolmie was able to disseminate some of his researches and conclusions amongst the learned men and societies of the day. A memorandum dated 18 November, 1842, indicates that "sculls", manifestly Indian, were to be sent to various museums and scientists.

References

42 Tolmie, *Diary*, vol. 4, pp. 10-11, The entry is for May 25, 1841.

43 Ibid., pp. 17-18.

44 On pp. 25-26 of the Diary there is also a thirty-eight word Indian-English vocabulary entry which appears, although undated, to have been compiled either on the prairie or at York Factory, probably the latter.


46 Tolmie, *Diary*, vol. 4, p. 112.
to discussions of \textit{a} scientific nature concerning North American Indians occur in the record of his stay in France. Probably, his furlough in Europe gave a necessary impetus to the anthropological aspect of his interest in natives. In the North West there were not many to appreciate the scientist; and few men continue to pursue an unrecognized line of endeavour. Scientists of Tolmie's day, such as Scouler, Douglas and Richardson, all returned to Europe when their field-work was completed. It was Tolmie's lot to remain in the field once his scientific refresher was concluded.

Shortly after his return to the Columbia, when Tolmie was appointed a local head of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company he began to reap the benefit of his long practical course in Indian management. Conditions at Nisqually were similar to what he had known at Fort Vancouver. Indians formed the bulk of the labor force, and were essential to the continuous operation of the far-flung projects operated by the Company. Hudson's Bay employees, particularly the non-commissioned servants, usually married or lived with Indian women, who often found employment in the routine tasks of the farm, such as dairy-work and sheep-shearing. But there was this important distinction. On the Columbia River Tolmie had had no final local responsibility, whereas at Nisqually he was in complete charge from the first, only answerable to John McLoughlin from time to time as letters permitted. It was essential that such a man should have intimate acquaintance with his basic labor force, and there is little reason to doubt that this qualification was partly instrumental in the choice of Dr. Tolmie for the position.

From the time of his appointment at Nisqually, Tolmie's relations with the Indians were to undergo a subtle change. Two major
trends were apparent. The first was the practical business of managing Indians in relation to the labor needs of the farms, and in relation to the non-Company whites who were gradually settling the Territory. The second was the growth of a humanitarianism as Tolmie saw the Indian gradually despoiled by virtue of his inferior strength, and constantly dealt injustice by virtue of his lesser knowledge of American custom. Knowing the Indian as well as he did, he was successful in his management of them, but only superior intrinsic strength could save the native from the settler, and this he did not have.

It is necessary to say a word concerning Company policy regarding Indians, as it concerns this study in two ways. In the first place, Tolmie had been trained in the tradition of Hudson's Bay Indian policy, and guided his actions according to that tradition. Secondly, the comparison of policies of The Hudson's Bay and of the American settlers towards the Indians revealed such glaring lack of faith on the part of the Americans that the Indians virtually threw themselves on the Company for protection and aid.

This tendency was very evident to contemporary observers, and goes far to explain the tacit British-Indian alliance that grew up to oppose the Oregon immigrant. Based on a firm control, which acted as an effective check on the more lawless elements of the tribe, the Company was able to establish a principle of impartial justice which commanded

47 John H. Frost (Nellie B. Pipes, ed. "Journal of John H. Frost, 1840-43" O.H.Q., March 1934, p. 60), says in connection with the murder of Kenneth McKay in 1840, that "it is very evident that the reason why any further depredations are not committed is not because they love the whites, but because they fear punishment."
92.

respect. The Rev. H. H. Spalding was observant enough to see this, and has left a rather fine tribute to Hudson's Bay Indian management:

Their strict honesty with the natives, always fulfilling their promises, and requiring the same of the Indians, has secured to them the entire confidence of all the Indian tribes. On the other hand continued breach of contracts, is the peculiar feature of the American policy with the Indian race... 48

General Granville O. Haller, who was prominent in the Indian Wars of 1855 and 1856, was no less favorable in his praise of the Company's Indian policy, and had good reason to see the effect on the natives when it was reversed by the Americans. He writes, in connection with the seizure of Indian lands:

This inhuman and unrighteous conduct towards human beings... who are possessed of reasoning faculties, and who can compare such treatment with the rigid justice and consideration shown by the officers and employees of the Hudson's Bay Company, on their lands, for the rights of the several tribes, and of individuals; and for wrongs committed, the exact measure of justice meted out to them, by that Company; could not fail to rouse feelings of hatred towards Americans and increase by comparison their respect for the English. 49

Hudson's Bay Indian policy must be regarded in the light of what it was intended to attain. As a fur-trading company dependent for its existence on a permanent supply-line from trap to fort, it was in their best interests to so manage the native population that this line was always free. An important factor was that the natives always outnumbered the Company men, who had no resources such as armed forces to call upon for protection. Consequently the Company employees must resort to such qualities as force of personality, the judicious use of


fear, white prestige and sheer intelligence if they were to retain control. On the other hand, the Company with its blankets, arms and tobacco, was soon to become a necessity in the Indian’s way of life, and one which he was willing to go to some lengths to preserve. Thus there existed a commonality of purpose, wherein, broadly speaking, the Company needed the Indians, and the Indians wanted the Company. The Company finding that justice and a firm but conciliatory attitude, within the tradition of white superiority, served to maintain the best Indian relations, had no reason to pursue any intrinsically different policy.

The American settler, on the other hand, had no reason to conciliate the natives. He wanted the land for the purpose of self-sufficient agriculture, and had no need for its original occupants. There was no basic conflict, however, until the Indian, foreseeing his eventual complete eviction, realized that immediate, decisive action might effectively forestall it. At that point, within each area and each community, the racial war began. It was natural that the native should compare the two whites they had met, the English trader and the American settler, and that the American should be found wanting. The Company men became the logical favorites, because they had no fundamental quarrel with the native.

As a result of these forces, William Fraser Tolmie was to occupy, within the area around Puget Sound, a position of prominence in Indian relations with the whites. His somewhat detached position permitted him to champion the Indian cause, as there was a subtle difference between the monopolistic, static agriculture of the large company, and the individualized, rapidly swelling "dirt-farming" of the small immigrant. The American settler could hardly have been expected to champion a race whose hunting grounds he was doing his best to appropriate.
Before Tolmie had arrived at Nisqually the Company policy towards Indian depredations had been firmly established. Swift and just punishment was visited upon a sheep-stealing trio of natives which seems to have put a stop to their thievery. Tolmie himself had participated in the dispensation of summary justice to the murderer of Kenneth McKay in 1840. Yet eternal vigilance was the price of security. In 1847 disaster was narrowly averted at Fort Nisqually when an epidemic of measles caused panic amongst the Indians. Apparently Tolmie worked indefatigably to halt the plague, but Indian suspicions that it was a plan of extermination were not easily allayed. The incomplete fortifications at Nisqually were quite inadequate to withstand an attack, if one developed. When the necessary bastions were under construction, the Indians shrewdly guessed at the weakness of the Fort defences, and at one point kept Tolmie and his crew manning what stockades there were with loaded muskets for half a day. Fortunately no attack developed, but the lesson was learned, and thereafter Nisqually was adequately stockaded and bastioned.

In March of the same year Tolmie displayed his ability to handle Indian sheep-stealing as effectively as had McNeill in 1842. The two Indians concerned were rounded up after a horseback pursuit by Tolmie and

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50 W.H. McNeill to James Douglas, ⃰ Fort Nisqually, 28 February, 1842. Typescript copy in B.C. Archives. Three Indians, who had stolen eight sheep are reported as caught and imprisoned for three days in solitary confinement. The swift and unrelenting pursuit apparently frightened them, for a week later on 7 March, he reports "The Indians are now quiet and we hear of no more depredations among the Cattle and Sheep" (McNeill to Douglas, ⃰ Fort Nisqually, 7 March, 1842. Typescript copy in B.C. Archives.)

51 See above, pp.37,38.
52 Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p.14ff.
53 It will be recalled that the only fortifications around the Fort were a picket fence and ditch, at the best a deterrent, but at no time an effective barrier. As mentioned above it was actually blown down in the autumn of 1833. The defences, however, speak eloquently for Company Indian policy in the area.
some trackers and were "triced up" and flogged forthwith. Some days later they were released from solitary confinement and put to hard labor on the farm, after a promise to repay the full value of the Merino ram they had slaughtered. Hudson's Bay justice was swift, sure and heavy.

In 1848 Nisqually was better able to defend itself, so that when a slaving party of Coast Indians attempted to kidnap Nisqually Indians for slavery, Tolmie was able to man the bastions and force their retreat to a safe distance. But the real test was not to come until a year later, when Patkanim, chief of the Snoqualimis, organized a plan for the massacre of the entire Fort population. Only the stout defences saved the inmates, and, incidentally, such American settlers as were in the district. The whole scheme misfired, and all the Snoqualimis achieved was the death of Leander Wallace, an American settler who was shot before he could get within the Fort. Shortly afterwards, the arrival of the American naval ship Massachusetts awed the natives sufficiently to avert immediate

54 "Journal of Occurrences at Nisqually," p 72, Saturday, 6 March, 1847. Photostat in University of Washington Library.

55 W.F.Tolmie to P.S.Ogden, d/ Nisqually, July 24, 1848, Typescript copy in B.C.Archives.


57 Tolmie himself narrowly escaped death when he left the Fort to carry inWallace's body. An Indian levelled his gun at the Doctor, but was dissuaded from firing by a more apprehensive tribesman. Tolmie, Hist of P.S. p.16. E.I.Denny, (Blazing the Way, Seattle, Wash., Rainier Publishing Co. 1909, p.372,) claims that Wallace had boasted he could settle the danger with a good club, and that he stepped outside of the Fort to prove it. Tolmie does not support this, but it is typical of the attitude of some of the American settlers towards the "Siwashes."
trouble. Tolphie was requested to withhold sales of ammunition to the Indians, and to use his influence to pacify the Indians. This he seems to have been eminently successful in doing, for Victor admits:

It is but justice here to record the fact that the suppression of hostilities in this region at this period of its history, was due largely to the influence of the Hudson’s Bay Company, and personally to Dr. Tolmie, whose knowledge and good judgment were powerful to avert hostilities.

Six years later there burst across the Territory of Washington the insurrection that has been called the Yakima War or more commonly the Indian War 1855/56. Tolmie’s part in the war was not so prominent as it had been in 1849, partly because of the widespread nature of the hostilities, and partly because the organized military forces were more concerned with crushing the uprising by force rather than by an appeal to diplomatic measures. Nevertheless, his long experience with Indians and his established reputation as a man of superior judgment made him valuable at several points, and, in fact, had his advice been utilized in May, 1855, there might not have been any widespread war at all.

59 Joseph Lane, Governor, Oregon Territory, to W.F. Tolmie, d/ Newmarket, May 17, 1849. Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.
60 F.F. Victor, op.cit., p.245. Mrs. Victor qualifies this somewhat in her footnote to this passage, although it is very doubtful in view of what is now known of Tolmie whether there is any truth in the footnote’s implication: “Notwithstanding this truth, there are several letters in the Oregon Archives M.S. numbered from nine hundred and fifty-one to nine hundred and fifty-seven which show an attempt to convict Tolmie of influencing the Indians against the American settlers.”
61 No attempt is made to give the background or history of this Indian war. This subject has been widely covered by such authorities as Bancroft, op.cit., and Fuller, op.cit. The struggle was basically for the possession of the Indians’ land, and could have but one outcome.
When the Walla Walla Council was called by Governor Isaac I. Stevens for May 25, 1855, the Indian tribes of Oregon were in a truculent mood, and prepared to go much further than diplomatic exchanges. Since the first settlement in 1842, followed by the 1843 immigration, no attempt had been made by Congress to compensate the Indians for lands taken up by the whites and confirmed under the Donation Act of 20 September 1850. Promises had been made, but nothing in the shape of concrete compensation had been shown. Stevens, not realizing the seething and justified discontent, among the natives, organized the Council with a view to placing all Indians on pre-determined reservations, and throwing all other land open to American immigrants. The Indians, rather logically supposing that this was simply a ruse to have them sign away their lands without hope of payment needed only a strong leader to organize them into a militant body opposing white immigration.

To anyone familiar with the Indian mind, a Council at that point was highly inadvisable. Dr. Tolmie warned the authorities that trouble might well develop, and pointed out that such a council as planned for Walla Walla could do no more than assemble the malcontents who would be afforded an excellent and otherwise impossible opportunity to plan a regional extermination of all whites. The Company doctor, however, was

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63 Major G.O. Haller, Indian War 1855 and 1856, part 2, Historical, p. 3. Typescript copy in B.C. Archives.

64 Ibid., p. 7.

65 Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p. 17.

66 Loc. cit.
not heeded, and Governor Stevens very nearly paid with his life at the Council for his inexperience. As a further and more important result, Kamiakin, one of the chiefs, arose to lead the disaffected tribes and unite them, as Tolmie had warned would happen. Only the hot-headedness of individual Indians in committing sporadic murders, such as those of Mattice and Major Bolan, exposed the Indians as anything but peacefully inclined and precipitated the war in time to upset Kamiaken's plan of wholesale extermination once the winter had set in and the Whites' communications were cut off.

Once the Americans had inadvertently set themselves on the path to war by calling the Walla Walla Council, there was little that Tolmie could do except place his knowledge and the facilities he controlled at the disposal of the American authorities. This he was more than anxious to do, and it is easy to trace, even in the somewhat scanty records that remain, his active co-operation with the whites throughout the winter of 1855/56, when the war was at its height.

The situation at Nisqually in the autumn was critical, James Douglas, in a letter to the head office in London, describes the general apprehension felt and appeals for immediate pressure on the American

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70 It is rather important to establish this record of co-operation, as the American neighbors of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company were very prone to regard its employees as allies of the Indians in view of the fact that hostilities were directed against the Americans and not the Company. (Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p.20). The reasons for this feeling have already been indicated above.
Government to avert a war before it should start. Already Tolmie had won the gratitude of the Olympia officials for his practical suggestions concerning preparations for the war as the following excerpt indicates:

"I beg to offer my thanks... for your valuable suggestions, in regard to a cantonment at Porter [?] & the sno. qual mie pass which I will take especial care to urge upon Gov. Mason & Gen.Wool."  

In the following spring Tolmie was to be of even greater help, due to his long experience with the country to the East of the Nisqually River. Apparently the Americans were planning a stroke at the nerve centre of the Puget Sound insurgents, but lacked the detailed knowledge of the topography essential to any offensive troop movement. In March, 1856, Tilton wrote to Tolmie, forwarding a map of the area East of Puget Sound to the Cascades, and requesting Tolmie to fill in certain essential information. This information concerned, in part, the Snoqualmie Pass, so there is reason to suppose that Tilton may have acted on Tolmie's "suggestions" of the previous autumn. Three days later a request for additional information was received from the Commanding Officer of nearby Fort Steilacoom, adding a

71 James Douglas to W.G.Smith, d/ Victoria, 6 November, 1855, in J.Douglas, Letters to Hudson's Bay Company on Vancouver Island Colony, 1850-55. Typescript copy in B. C. Archives.


73 James Tilton to W.F.Tolmie, d/ Olympia, W.T., March 26, 1856. Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington. Information was requested concerning Hudson's Bay trails, trails North and South from Snoqualmie Pass and the Klickitat Prairies, the location and extent of prairies at the headwaters of the Puyallap and Nesqually Rivers, and information concerning any other prairies in the area.

74 See note, p.98.

75 George Gibbs to W.F.Tolmie, d/ Fort Steilacoom, 29 March, 1856. Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.
request that Tolmie use his influence to make it known that peace might be granted by the whites if the Indians surrendered those guilty of actual crimes.

The result of this information was presented rather dramatically in the Pioneer and Democrat with the announcement that a decisive victory had been won over the Indians near the headwaters of the Nisqually River. From evidence within the news account it is almost certain that Tolmie's aid had been instrumental in the success. Perhaps one of the most significant conclusions that may be drawn from this aspect of Tolmie's assistance to the American forces is the fact that the military and civil authorities placed such implicit trust in Tolmie, the alien, that they were willing to disclose, by inference, their future strategy. When it is recalled that Tolmie was very closely associated with Indians, and had been on the friendliest terms with them for many years, it is high praise indeed that they should so believe in his integrity.

Further proofs of close co-operation with the military authorities are given in the several requests made upon Tolmie from Fort Steilacoom for interpreting services. The requests extend throughout the winter, and indicate that Tolmie was ever ready to offer his services in this respect. In other ways, too, was Tolmie of material assistance to the

76 The Southern Battalion Right side up," Pioneer and Democrat, Friday April 11, 1856, p.2. Microfilm in University of Washington Library. The account states that Capt. Maxon, in charge of the expedition, went to the forks of the Nisqually and Michael Rivers, (points which Tolmie had been asked to locate) and took the Indians by surprise at a small lake of which he had foreknowledge.

77 The writer found six requests extending through the winter, by the American officers at Fort Steilacoom for such services, in the Bajey Collection, University of Washington, and there is reason to suppose, by the tone of these extant letters, that there were many others which have not been preserved.
white cause. On one occasion he was requested to supply clothing for some eighty Indian allies. On another a request was sent in for the use of the Company scow. In short, the evidence that exists indicates that Tolmie was almost a vital factor in the prosecution of this Indian War. His successful efforts to avert a similar war in 1849 would suggest that the American authorities might have done well to heed his advice regarding the Walla Walla Council of 1855.

There is, however, another aspect of Tolmie’s efforts in the Indian War of 1855/56 that has not received due measure of recognition. In the heat of hostilities brutalities occurred on both sides, as is generally the case in war. But where the whites had the resources of a modern army to avenge injustice, the aborigines had none. Any efforts to succour the victims of the "atrocities" that occurred had to arise from one of the Americans’ own race. Such a champion was found in Dr. Tolmie.

An early humanitarian tendency in connection with this aspect of the racial conflict is discovered when he writes to Col. Michael T. Simmons, Indian Agent at Olympia, on behalf of an Indian whose father was

78 James Tilton to W.F. Tolmie, d/ Office of Adjutant General, Olympia, W.T., 18 February, 1856, Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.

79 Warren Gove to W.F. Tolmie, d/ Steilacoom, 20 February, 1856, Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.

The text of this letter, as it seems to indicate that such requests from the Quartermaster were quite common, is quoted in full:

Dr. Tolmie, Sir

If you can conviently [sic] spare your scow for a few days to the comissary. F Department and oblige

(Signed) Warren Gove

Q Master & c

For Port Steilacoom
kicked to death by T.W. Glasgow in 1850. There is no record available to the writer to indicate that this effort to secure the Indian Stayhoom a property compensation was successful, but the attempt on Tolmie's part is significant.

The Lake incident, while not important from the white settler point of view, is equally revealing, as it underlines the defenceless position of Indians in a local area when done wrong. On May 21, 1856, Aaron Lake, an American volunteer, shot and killed an Indian outside Fort Nisqually. As it happened, the Indian was "a harmless creature, who had long been employed at intervals by Dr. Tolmie, and the wood he was cutting when killed was for the fort". Tolmie immediately made a protest to the authorities at Fort Steilacoom, and was consequently invited by Col. B. F. Shaw to Camp Montgomery to identify the murderer from among the troops under his command. Accordingly the Doctor in company with a party of witnesses who had seen the crime, inspected the ranks of the volunteers and detected the miscreant. But detection did not mean arrest:

On seeing Lake detected many of the volunteers rushed to their arms, set all authority at defiance, and declared that the man should not be molested.

Tolmie was forded to drop the matter as the officers were powerless to

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82 Loc. cit. Snowden remarks that "It was as wanton an act as ever was committed.

83 W. F. Tolmie to---- d/ Nisqually W. T. May 24, 1856. Typescript copy in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.

84 Loc. cit.
discipline their troops, and the murderer escaped punishment. The lake murder has never received any particular publicity, probably because the victim was unimportant except to himself. But with Leschi, the case was different. Leschi was an intelligent, outstanding native, who rose to prominence as a result of the 1855/56 war. He had commanded Indians at the battle for Seattle, and was undoubtedly responsible for white deaths, though no more so than any of the Indian "hostiles". Being a leader, however, he was easily identified, and popular feeling led to his accusation for a specific murder, that of Col. A. B. Moses. There is no longer any doubt that Leschi was being made the scapegoat for a number of deaths that occurred during the war, and that popular feeling, clamoring for some tangible revenge, fastened upon the hapless Indian leader. Meeker shows that the best course would have been to have dropped the matter entirely. Bancroft agrees, without going into the evidence, that the actual conviction was something of a travesty. Leschi having been treacherously captured in November, 1856, was convicted on 18 March 1857, after a jury had failed to agree in November of the previous year.

85 Apparently officers were selected by election from amongst the volunteers. An entry in the Pioneer and Democrat, Friday, February 29, 1856, p.3. (Microfilm at University of Washington Library) records the result of an election of officers at Camp Montgomery. The practice, while an expedient in hostilities, made for lack of discipline in such an incident as Lake's detection. Tolmie reports the men as loudly shouting "they did not care a damn either for Col. Shaw or Gov. Stevens either".

86 Ezra Meeker, "The tragedy of Leschi" in Ezra Meeker, Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound, Seattle, Lowman and Hanford, 1905. Meeker gives the fullest treatment of Leschi's case that the writer has seen, and his conclusion that Leschi was innocent agrees with all modern authorities.


88 Ibid., See pp.170-175, for a good brief account of Leschi's trials.
date of execution was set for 10 June, 1857. A Supreme Court Appeal resulted in temporary postponement, but it was quashed and 22 January, 1858 was set as the final date.

At this point, Dr. Tolmie, who had been working quietly for Leschi, came out boldly in his defense. In a letter to the Governor of Washington Territory, he made a careful review of the crime of which Leschi was charged, proving that he could not have committed it owing to spatial discrepancies omitted by the witnesses in their evidence. He went on to underline the basis of Leschi's quarrel with the whites, which, as it concerned the size and location of Indian reservations, would not be cleared up by the execution of Leschi. He then recounted several instances in which Leschi and his brother Quemal had saved settlers' lives, and concluded with the point that an execution so patently unjust could serve no purpose other than the satisfaction of mob revenge.

It was a worthy effort but foredoomed to failure, for the settlers, seven hundred strong, petitioned the Governor to reject any appeal for Leschi's pardon. A ruse to stay the execution on 22 January was successful, but only temporarily so, for less than one month later Leschi

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89 His name appears as witness for the defence in—"Trial and Conviction of Leschi," Pioneer and Democrat, Friday, March 20, 1857, p.2. Microfilm in University of Washington Library.

90 W.F. Tolmie to Fayette McMullen, d/ Fort Nisqually, W.T., January 12, 1858, in Tolmie, Letterbook, pp.96-106.


92 The ruse, which involved imprisoning the civil officials at the time of execution on temporary (and undisputed) charge of selling liquor to the Indians, would be unimportant except it showed that the civil and military authorities agreed with Dr. Tolmie's contention that Leschi was innocent of the death of Col. Moses.
dropped through the trap-door at Steilacoom.\textsuperscript{93} Mob violence had overruled reasoned judgment, and arguments far removed from the legal niceties of the evidence for and against Leschi had been advanced to ensure that the Indian hang.\textsuperscript{94} Tolmie's humanitarian efforts were useless. The whites were in power and lawless elements among them, when guilty of outrages, usually went unpunished, owing to the current frontier theory that "the only good Indian is a dead Indian".\textsuperscript{95} Of main interest to this study is the fact that Tolmie's humanitarianism was such that he would aggravate the already outspoken antagonism of the settlers against the Hudson's Bay Company by championing their enemies when he believed them unjustly treated.

With his removal to Victoria, Tolmie's active connection with the Indian in no way diminished. Records show that he employed a large number on the Cloverdale farm,\textsuperscript{96} necessitating a ration room and storehouse for

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\textsuperscript{93} "Execution of Leschi," \textit{Pioneer and Democrat}, Friday, February, 26 1858, p.2. Microfilm in University of Washington Library. The execution occurred on 19 February, 1858, outside the confines of the Fort, whose officers would not tolerate the unjust hanging within the Fort area.

\textsuperscript{94} One of the best examples of this unreasoned spirit of revenge amongst the settlers occurred at a mass meeting held a week after Leschi had escaped the noose on 22 January. The angry citizens passed a series of resolutions calling upon the Governor (Fayette McMullen) to ensure the execution of Leschi. Their sixth resolution is significant:

Resolved that we now firmly believe (as it has long been supposed by some) that Dr. W.F. Tolmie and the other representatives of the Hudson's Bay Company are the Indians' friends and abettors and the enemies of the American citizens... [The governor is urged to deliver them from] this very effective blight and curse."---- "Mass meeting of the Citizens of Pierce County W.T."

\textsuperscript{95} W.B. Gosnell, "An Indian Murdered on Nisqually Reservation," \textit{Pioneer and Democrat}. Friday, February 27, 1857, p.2. Microfilm in University of Washington Library. This article, in reporting the death of Yelm John, who was murdered after surrendering to two white men, continues in these words: "The present murder is but one of several equally unjustifiable which have recently occurred in this community."

\textsuperscript{96} Interview with Miss Josette C. Tolmie, Victoria, B.C., 24 July, 1948.
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their supplies. The busy years before 1870 apparently did not stop
his active interest in Indian welfare, for there exists a letter giving
detailed information of the effect of the illicit liquor traffic on North
Coast Indians, particularly around Fort Simpson. At the same time he
brings to official attention that the country is generally in need of a
more comprehensive and better devised Indian policy than has heretofore
existed.

In 1871 it seemed that he would secure a personal opportunity
for determining that policy, when he made application for the position of
Superintendent of Indian Affairs for British Columbia. The application
is interesting as it gives a resume of his lifetime of work with the
Indians. It is to be regretted that it had no practical outcome, for
tolmie with his many-sided Indian relations experience, consisting of the
practical, the scientific and the humanitarian, would have been a difficult
man to surpass. Of special interest is the rather imposing list of testi-
monials which accompanied the application. While it is usual for such

97 W.F.Tolmie to H.M BALL, Acting Colonial Secretary, d/ Victoria,
Vancouver Island, 15 October and 16 October. Originals in B.C.Archives.

98 Loc. cit.

99 W.F.Tolmie to Hon.Joseph Howe, Superintendent General of Indian
Affairs, Ottawa, Canada, d/ Victoria, B.C. 6 October, 1871. Original copy
in B.C.Archives. This letter indicates that Tolmie made the application on
17 August, and now forwards testimonials and personal history.

100 As mentioned, above, the desire for unhampered political freedom pre-
vented Tolmie from accepting a Federal appointment which would have necessarily hampered his active political life at that time. Apparently he made the application before he fully realized its implications, then reconsidered and declined the position, which went to Dr.Israel W.F.Powell.

101 Testimonials to Dr.W.F.Tolmie, Victoria, Victoria Daily
Standard, 1871.
laudatory documents to paint the brightest picture, one feels that Tolmie is done no more than justice in these evidences of recognition in British Columbia and Washington Territory Indian relations. Such public figures as Elwood Evans, former Governor of Washington Territory and William W. Miller, former Superintendent of Indian Affairs in the same area, were in a position to assess his work and his attitude. When Miller writes of "his great influence with the Indians and his intimate knowledge of their character," and that he found Tolmie invaluable as an adviser after he moved to Victoria, there is every reason to believe that he spoke no more than the truth.  

The fact, too, that the Governor, Secretary, Assessor, Collector, Assistant Assessor, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court, and the Surveyor General of Washington Territory signed their names to a testimonial which said in part: "On more than one occasion his influence with the Indians averted serious difficulties, if not actual outbreaks," and speaks of "his well known and remarkable control over [the Indians]," speaks eloquently of the general opinion even in official circles of Tolmie's qualities as an administrator of Indian affairs. In all there are nine testimonials, outlining favorable opinion of Tolmie's ability to superintend the Province's Indian affairs.

Mention has frequently been made of the scientific aspect of Tolmie's interest in aborigines. Specifically, his interest lay mainly in Indian philology, which had been evident from the first summer he had spent with North American Indians on Puget Sound in 1833. His constant efforts

102 Ibid., p.5.

103 Ibid., pp.6,7. The testimonial is dated Olympia, August 28, 1871, and is signed by Edward S. Salmon, J.C. Clements, James R. Hayden, S. Coulter, R.G. O'Brien, R.S. Greene and E.V.P. Perry, holding in that order the offices designated.
to record vocabularies are evident throughout his diaries and letterbook. While at Fort Vancouver he had sent some of his work back to Britain. His diary indicates that Indian philology formed some part of his scientific discussions while in England in 1842/3. From at least 1850 onwards he submitted vocabularies for publication to George Gibbs, a scientist who occupied various technical positions such as land surveyor in Washington Territory after 1850. It was not until his life was nearly over, however, that he found the opportunity to record his work permanently with the publication of a serious philological study. Preceding the publication of this treatise were about nine years of diligent study, research and compilation, dating from 1875, which provide a fitting close to a life devoted to a considerable extent in affairs relating to Indians. The result is an authoritative comparison of native vocabularies, which by its painstaking detail, gives evidence of the labour involved. Interestingly enough, neither author considered the work complete in 1884, making it reasonable to assume that Dr. Tolmie, at least continued his labors after that date. The original intent was to publish a descriptive account of each tribe, but time precluded this goal, and consequently the

104 W.F. Tolmie and G.M. Dawson, Comparative Vocabularies of the Indian Tribes of British Columbia with a Map Illustrating Distribution, Montreal, Dawson Bros., 1884, p.128. In 1839, Tolmie sent seventeen Coast Indian vocabularies to Dr. Scouler at the Andersonian University, Glasgow.

105 This work (noted in n. 104 above) published by authority of the Federal Government, was under the auspices of the Geological and Natural History Survey of Canada.

106 Ibid., p. 9 B.

107 It is not within the scope of this essay to give a scientific critique of the material presented in the Comparative Vocabularies. It must suffice to say that the work is still considered an authority in its field, and that no comparable study has, to the writer's knowledge, succeeded it.
vocabularies were issued "in advance". It is highly probable, too, that with the mass of information with which Tolmie had been working, for nine years still partially inchoate, he would not have stopped with the publication of a part of it.

The scientific phase was not, however, Tolmie's only interest in Indians, during his last years. He had rebelled at the injustice dealt by the American settlers to the natives they were displacing, and in 1885 he took pen in hand again to defend the British Columbian Indian against his careless white overlords. His purpose was to advocate some system of vocational training for the natives so that they could adjust to the ways of the white man. He pointed out that the Americans had so far reversed their earlier policy of callous non-recognition of the "Indian Problem" that flourishing schools existed which were turning out capable tradesmen. Canada had not yet faced the issue with her Pacific Coast tribes and the result was the moral deterioration of the race.

Tolmie advocated two far-sighted policies. First, the vocational training of Indians, and secondly, an educational programme that would aim at eventually raising them to the status of full Canadian citizenship. Implicit within these goals is the theory that as the white man has displaced the Indian a moral duty devolves upon him to smooth the way so that

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108 Ibid., p. 7. B. Dawson goes on to say that Tolmie has given "such linguistic comparisons as he has been able to make up to the present time" which would seem to indicate that he continued work after 1884. No other evidence of such scientific activity, however, has come to the writer's attention.

109 W.F. Tolmie, 'On Utilization of the Indians of British Columbia, Victoria, B.C., Munroe Miller, 1885. The choice of title is unfortunate, as it suggests anything but the warm interest in native welfare so manifestly present in Dr. Tolmie's pamphlet.

110 Ibid., p.1.
the aborigines, too, may enjoy the better world the white man has created. This was the essence of Nineteenth Century humanitarianism and was the practical application of Tolmie's philosophy and religion to his social environment. Significantly, what he advocated has by no means died with him. Indian educational projects have since been established, following the example set by the United States, as noted by Tolmie.111 Citizenship for Canadian Indians has been partially achieved, and there is little reason to doubt that it will eventually become a reality.

It is wholly consistent with his past and a fitting end to this chapter that there is extant a letter in which Tolmie, eighteen months before he died, championed an Indian widow who was in danger of being dispossessed of her land by a white man. She wanted to retain her three-or-four acre farm so that her small son could work it when he reached maturity.112

111 Ibid., p.9.

112 W.F.Tolmie to Henry Fry, Government Agent, Kwamitskan, d/ Cloverdale, Victoria, B.C., 8 June, 1885. Original in B.C. Archives.
CHAPTER IV
The Hudson's Bay Connection From 1845 to 1870

The month of July, 1843, was both a climax and a point of departure for William Fraser Tolmie. As a climax it represented the culminating point of his interest in agricultural development as a surgeon clerk and fur-trader. As a point of departure it represented the beginning of his official connection with a concern devoted almost entirely to agriculture. It seemed a happy choice. Tolmie had been interested in agriculture from his first appearance on the West Coast. He had indulged this interest during his fur-trading years, and the result was the managership of the Company's agricultural subsidiary. But problems were to assail the new manager from both within and without the organization. Within, there was the petty jealousy that was to deal him a succession of cruel blows, taking the form of loss of seniority and salary due to unjustly slow promotion. At the end of his long period in harness the Company was to repay his service to them by virtually discharging him without pension.

From without, problems faced the new agricultural venture which were incapable of satisfactory solution. The Puget's Sound

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1 As the years between 1832 and 1843 formed an essentially preparatory period, they have been dealt with in the chronological treatment of his life in Chapter I.

2 In the following seventeen years of his service with the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, however, Tolmie did not break his connection with the Hudson's Bay Company. As was abundantly shown before the Joint Commission in 1868, the former was a subsidiary of the latter, and persons employed in the agricultural subsidiary were still employees of the Hudson's Bay Company. Thus Tolmie received his promotions to Chief Trader, Chief Factor and finally to Member of the Board of Management at Victoria while he was a superintendent of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company.
Agricultural Company was a patriarchal system of monopolistic farming, based on the model of European plantations in an uncivilized community. More and more strongly opposing this monopoly was the rising sea of American immigration, which eventually washed completely over the remains of the Company's holdings in Oregon Territory. Tolmie's task was successively to implement the Company policy of exclusion, to compete on equal terms with the new settlers, to protect what he could from their increasingly truculent and successful inroads, and finally to save what he could for his company from the wreckage that remained.

In a sense, he was highly successful, in that he maintained reasonably friendly relations with his American neighbours, and at the same time showed a profit for the Company when conditions were overwhelmingly adverse to the Company's business. But against this somewhat negative success was the rapidly descending star of the Company's fortunes. Then, as if his sincerest endeavours had been no more than the irresponsible actions of an indentured servant, the Company deserted him at the end of his career, after he had so arranged his private business that its guaranteed benefit was essential.

Nisqually was more than "just another trading post" on the Pacific Coast. A moment's reflection will show that in 1833 (and indeed for almost fifteen years to come) it was the only centre of any kind on Puget Sound. As long as it retained that primacy, its importance was assured. Dr. Kaye Lamb estimated its position in these words:

Fort Nisqually ... was intended to be both a farming centre and a shipping depot. It could be reached overland with comparative ease from Fort Vancouver, and it would enable the coasting vessels to avoid the longer ocean voyage to the mouth of the Columbia. 3

Another authority points out that shipping was not always available, and thus Nisqually could be strategically important from the transportational point of view, as its location precluded the necessity of a sea voyage. Then, too, it was important as a way point in the long and tedious (and sometimes dangerous) journey from Fort Vancouver to Fort Langley, established in 1827.

Coupled with its geographical position was its agricultural potential. As long as the Hudson's Bay Company pursued its traditional policy of maintaining agriculture up to but not in excess of port requirements, Nisqually was, in this respect, no different than other ports. But when this policy was altered to embrace an agricultural supply system distinct from the fur trade, the fort rose to a new prominence.

Soil was a limiting factor, and a deciding one, for the new fort. The Columbia and Cowlitz valleys could boast rich alluvial deposits which made crop agriculture highly productive. Nisqually was not so favored. Although the actual cleft of the Nisqually River itself was "one of the most productive regions of Western Washington," this fair opinion

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5 Strictly speaking, the policy itself was altered four years before the founding of the fort, when Governor Simpson, in a letter to the Russian Management in 1829, put out the feeler which by 1839 had grown to an understanding between the Russian and English Companies making commercial agriculture feasible through the existence of a market. Donald C. Davidson, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

could not be given of the surrounding plains, which would of necessity dictate the major products, due to the limited nature of the Valley. Francis Heron, in charge of Nisqually at the time, rather bitterly sums up the agricultural potential of the area when he writes:

Puget's Sound ... will not answer as a substitute for Fort Vancouver, as projected in respect to agricultural operations, there being no soil whatever fit for that purpose - nothing in short but pure sand & stones, on which no crop even approaches to maturity - Query who represented it as being good?

Chief Trader Heron, however, was judging the area entirely from the field crop point of view. What he failed to indicate in his letter was that the gravelly area later known as the Nisqually Plains was admirable for sheep and cattle raising due to the bunch grass that grew in abundance on the level ground, and upon which the quality of the wool depended. This potential, however, had to await the development of the affairs of the Hudson's Bay Company, and Francis Heron may be pardoned for not foreseeing that eventually Governor Simpson would be very interested in the sheep and cattle raising possibilities of the Puget Sound area.

In point of time, this development was not long in commencing, though its final conclusion was some years distant. In August, 1834, John McLoughlin was suggesting a private agricultural exporting joint stock

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8 John McLoughlin to the Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, d/ Fort Vancouver, 30 September, 1835, in E.E.Rich, op.cit., First Series, 1825-1838, p.138. McLoughlin writes, "I have been to examine Nisqually Fort and the Head of Puget's Sound, the soil at both places is poor for tillage, but there is pasturage for an immense number of cattle."
company with England and the Sandwich Islands as a market, the concern to be operated by Hudson's Bay employees, but independently of the Company. This project, so contrary to the established policy of full-time devotion to Company business, was quite naturally rejected by the Governor and Committee, but the idea was seminal, for they went on to add that within the orbit of the Company, such a venture might indeed be profitable, and gave tangible evidence of their faith in the venture by remitting the dollar equivalent of 300 for the purchase of cattle.

Five years later the Governor and Committee put their seal of approval on McLoughlin's projected Company by deciding in a Committee meeting in 1839 that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company should carry on its operations with a view to supplying wool, hides, tallow and produce for the British market. While the organization was to be under the careful control of the Company, it was to be distinct as a separate commercial organization. The prospectus, which bore the date of 20 March, 1839, stated that the new concern was to be "under the protection and auspices of the Governor and

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9 Ibid., p.137. George Simpson to the Governor and Committee, August 27, 1834.

10 Loc. cit. The Governor and Committee to John McLoughlin, December 10, 1834.

11 Loc. cit.

12 Extract from Minutes of a Committee held at the Hudson's Bay House, 27 February, 1839. Original Copy in B.C.Archives. Leonard A. Wrinch, "The Formation of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company," W.H.Q., January 1933, pp.3-9), has given a brief but satisfactory account of the founding of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company in 1839, and of the patriarchal type of modern feudalism that it was hoped would be established as a result.

13 Loc. cit. Cf. n.1 of this chapter above.
Company of Adventurers," and so arranged the appropriation of shares that the key figures in control at London were also the executive men of the Hudson's Bay Company, by virtue of their controlling interest of twenty shares apiece.

It will have been observed that Tolmie was a prime figure in the establishment of the Agricultural Company as his name heads the endorsers of the prospectus. There can be no doubt that once he was at Fort Vancouver early in 1836, he came under the influence of Dr. McLoughlin's enthusiasm for commercial agriculture of some kind. Doubtless among the "various concerns" he tells us were his business in these years, the establishment of the agricultural organization ranked high.

Before Tolmie was appointed to head the new organization another factor was to be involved which was to make Columbia produce of all kinds highly desirable as an immediate export. This was the commercial rapprochement between the Russian American and the Hudson's Bay Companies, which was formally concluded at Hamburg on 6 February, 1839. By the terms of the


15 Pelly, Colvile and Simpson, Circular Letter to prospective purchasers of stock, d/ London, 20 March, 1839, and accompanying the Prospectus mentioned above. Lithographed copy in B.C. Archives.

16 E.H. Oliver, op.cit., pp.791-796. The coincidence of the dates of this Agreement and the official ratification of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company make it reasonable to conjecture that the latter event was expedited by this Agreement. The Hudson's Bay Company had been trying for ten years to establish friendly relations with the Russians, and no doubt withheld official support until they were fairly sure of a market in the Northwest. Against this supposition, one must admit that nowhere in the Prospectus are the Russians mentioned, reference being made only to England and the Sandwich Islands as markets, but it seems unreasonable to rule out all connection in view of the fact that Governor Simpson's name is signed to both the Russian Agreement and the Minutes of the Committee launching the Agricultural Company.
agreement, the English Company was to enjoy a lucrative monopoly in the Russian supply market which was to embrace staple articles of food.\textsuperscript{17} To ensure reasonable protection for the future, the contract extended for a ten-year period, commencing in 1840. Some idea of the importance of the contract to the area may be gained from a glance at the quantities involved, which included, by 1841, the considerable item of 8,400 bushels of wheat.\textsuperscript{18} The commercial value was considerable, the wheat selling at approximately five shillings per bushel, and the butter at nearly sixpence a pound.

As delivery of produce commenced in 1840, the Puget’s Sound Agricultural Company had nearly three years of active operation before it was taken over by Dr. Tolmie in July of 1843. By that time, no doubt, it had been found that an agricultural specialist was required for local supervision, and that Alexander Caulfield Anderson, in charge in 1843, hardly held that qualification.\textsuperscript{19} The connection between Tolmie and the London office in 1842-43 has already been mentioned. It need only be added here that events were to prove there were few men in the Department who could have filled the increasingly difficult superintendency as well as Tolmie.

As a result of the factors outlined, Tolmie’s appointment was

\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., pp. 793-94. The reference is to Article 4 of the Agreement.

\textsuperscript{18} Loc. cit. Actually stipulated were the following quantities (exclusive of wheat):

- 160 cwt. wheat flour
- 130 cwt. peas
- 130 cwt. grits and barley
- 300 cwt. salted beef
- 160 cwt. salted butter
- 30 cwt. pork hams.

The hundredweight would be 196 lbs. at that time.

integral to the success of an important branch of the Hudson's Bay Company (for in spite of the ledger differentiation between the two organizations, there was little top-level distinction between the parent body and its subsidiary). Nisqually, with its poor soil, could supply only the beef and butter items in the Russian contract, the agricultural produce being drawn from the Cowlitz and Fort Vancouver farms. But another market, first proposed by McLoughlin in 1834, remained as concrete as ever, the English market for wool. Nisqually, then, could supply beef to the Russians and wool to England. As local conditions became more familiar to successive farm managers, it was discovered that dairy products too, could be produced in abundance. The conditions appeared to be ideal for an extended period of successful business operations, and Nisqually with its position of prominence on Puget Sound, promised fair to become the Fort Garry of the West Coast. It had the land, the produce, and the market, each in virtually unlimited quantity. There was only one obstacle, the aggressive American immigrant, who, by his invasion of this fertile empire, could wrest the one essential from the Company's grasp. That one essential was a monopoly of the arable and pasturable land North of the Columbia River and West of the Cascade Mountains. As will be shown below, the successful operation of the Company's farms was of itself no great task for Tolmie. He had the interest, the facilities

20 Actually, as the prospectus intimated, Company agriculture at Fort Vancouver was gradually moved to the Cowlitz Valley, so as to be North of the Columbia River when the imminent boundary award gave the Hudson's Bay Company, as they hoped, all land North of that river.

21 Snowden, op. cit., vol.2, p.405. Apparently two hundred cows were milked at one time at and around Nisqually.
and the opportunity, and he exercised each to its fullest extent. But the maintenance of the Company's land monopoly was something requiring more than the individual efforts of a farm manager. It was not even sustained by the Hudson's Bay Company. Notwithstanding the dimensions of the task, Tolmie accepted it whole-heartedly, and strove to preserve his employers' rights and privileges. In time, and not too long a time either, the business of protecting Company property from American settlers assumed an importance far greater than the administration of the farms he was trying to protect.

The original intention of the founders of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company had been to farm the area with selected and indentured servants whose actions would be well under the watchful eye of local control. Two sources were called upon. The first, embodied in a private memorandum to Dr. McLoughlin, was England. Carefully selected farmers were to be allowed to lease farms of 1000 acres, worked under direction of the Company, and at a fixed rate of return in kind for the leasing privileges. In time it was anticipated that the organization would mushroom ever wider to embrace the entire arable area. The practice of obtaining farmers from England was to continue for about fifteen years, and was to be reflected in the first farmers around Fort Victoria in the early 1850's.

22 J.H. Pelly, A. Colvile and George Simpson to John McLoughlin, d/London, 16 March, 1859, Original in B.C. Archives. The memorandum is entitled: "Directors of Puget's Sound Agricultural Company to John McLoughlin Esq.," and gives full particulars about the farm labourers to be sent out, and detailed instructions concerning their conduct of agricultural affairs.
The other source of labour or settler supply was the Red River Settlement. By 1841, a party of these emigrants had been organized under contract to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company and made the overland journey to the Cowlitz Valley. Neither of these groups, the English, nor the Red River farmers, were to prove grateful for the opportunity afforded them to till virgin soil in Oregon, but the latter were the first to rebel. Their estrangement with the Company is important, as it was indicative of the future and foretold some of the troubles, both internal and external, that Tolmie was to have.

Some of the Red River settlers did not wait to try farming under supervision at all, but precipitately struck off for themselves by establishing farms of their own on the Cowlitz River. It is not certain how many thus deserted the Company at once, but the remainder of the original party went to Nisqually and obeyed the terms of their

23 Tolmie, *Diary*, vol.4, p.20 - June 11, 1841. This is the party whom Tolmie met on his return journey to Europe. He estimated their number between 110 and 120, in twenty-three families. W.I. Marshall (Acquisition of Oregon and the Long Suppressed Evidence about Marcus Whitman, Seattle, Lowman and Hanford, 1911, vol.2, p.84) quotes H.H. Spalding, an eye-witness to the arrival of the party at Fort Colvile on Sept. 10, 1841, as numbering the immigrants at about 80 persons. It will be recalled that at the time he commented on the quality of the stock they were bringing to the Columbia.


25 *Loc.cit.* Apart from the nice legal point as to who, in fact, owned the land they thus appropriated (a point that was not settled in favor of the Hudson's Bay Company by the Joint Commission in its judgment of 1869), there seems to be no injustice in these settlers deserting the Company. They had come to Oregon, as far as has been ascertained, at very small expense to the Company, who regarded them somewhat as British bulwarks in the looming struggle for what is now the State of Washington.
contracts, by taking up land there. The stop was temporary, however, for the inferior land of the Nisqually Plains did not encourage crop cultivation, with the result that the whole party had left the area, and the Company's control, by 1843.  

Had there been no alternative farming opportunities these settlers would have had no course but to adhere to the terms of their Agricultural Company contracts. But, unfortunately for the plans of the Company, this was not the case. In the letter to the London Office of October 31, 1842, already referred to, John McLoughlin pointed out the basic objection to indentured servants in Oregon when he said "... as I have observed verbally to Sir George Simpson no man who can take a farm in the Willamette will remain at the Cowlitz or Nisqually...." As McLoughlin stated earlier in this same letter, the problem of deserting servants was not confined to agricultural employees, but to fur-trade employees as well. South of the Columbia the highly productive alluvial soils of the Willamette River Valley were a strong magnet which drew most of the early European laborers from the tilling of Dr. Tolmie's farms to the establishment of their own.

Before 1846 the unsettled nature of the sovereignty of the region that is now the State of Washington was a factor working to the advantage of the Hudson's Bay Company and its subsidiary. For while

26 Loc. cit. The source is a letter, John McLoughlin to the Agents, Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, d/ Fort Vancouver, October 31, 1842.

27 Ibid., John McLoughlin to the Governor, Hudson's Bay Company, London, d/ Fort Vancouver, 31 October, 1842.
McLoughlin could complain that servants were leaving the Company employ to take up land South of the Columbia River, he nevertheless did not have cause to worry about the tenure of the land they were deserting. As long as the forty-ninth parallel was not definitely decided upon as the International boundary, would-be settlers would take no chance that their land might eventually be declared within British territory, and therefore tended to migrate. Although there were some who remained, the majority of discharged and deserting personnel offered no problem except the diminution of the labor supply.

After the Treaty of Washington of June, 1841, the situation was radically different. No longer was there any doubt as to the sovereignty of the land. True, there was no official sanction of individual land claims, nor could there be until some definite policy had been decided regarding the vaguely-defined rights of the Puget's Sound Agricultural and the Hudson's Bay Companies, but there was no doubt that now these alien commercial enterprises held property at the sufferance of the United States Government. From this point it was an easy step for "contentions, ignorant and suspicious".

28 Exceptions to this hands-off policy, particularly of American citizens, will be noted subsequently.

29 One example is that of the few Red River settlers who took up claims of their own at the Cowlitz, as noted above.

30 The Land Donation Act of September 23, 1850, was the first law authorizing specific claims of land North of the Columbia, and this was restricted in spirit to areas not claimed or used by either Company.

31 F.W. Howay, W.J. Sage and H.F. Angus, British Columbia and the United States, The North Pacific Slope from Fur Trade to Aviation, Toronto, Ryerson Press, 1942, p.115. Chapters V and VI give the brief but informative background which is essential to an understanding of the dispute.
immigrants to justify predatory actions on any of several grounds, such as that the Companies had no right to maintain a monopoly in American territory, or that American seizure of land would later be ratified by Congress anyway, or that the land reserved for subsequent decision was too extensive, and so on *ad infinitum*. It is not within the province of this essay to do anything but suggest the background against which Tolmie was working, hence it must suffice to say that broadly speaking the post-1846 period was one in which militant Americanism determined its actions by its needs, with little popular support of such institutions as might have been erected to protect foreign vested interests. The continuation of such a condition inevitably meant the destruction of those interests.

Dr. Tolmie's part in this struggle is interesting because it stresses the quality of loyalty noted in his character heretofore. As a surgeon clerk in 1832 he had agreed to "... at all times ... defend the Rights and Privileges" of the Hudson's Bay Company. At the same time, his sympathy for his fellow man was allowed a certain expression because of earlier Company policy before the struggle engaged in the Puget Sound area. Later on, the patriarchal aspect of the Company's influence over the region was to be sharply reduced, but in the meantime it was significant as a contributing factor to American settlement.

One chronicler of pioneer history on Puget Sound has described the unique position of Tolmie's charge as follows:

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32 Original contract between W.F. Tolmie and the Hudson's Bay Company, d/ London, 12 September, 1832. Original in B.C. Archives.
Probably no Hudson's Bay post was so patriarchal as Fort Nisqually at the time the settlers first came upon these plains. 33

Edmond Meany acknowledges the magnanimity of the British contenders for the prize of Oregon, 34 in spite of the fact that the earliest settlers had broken the "North of the Columbia River" rule. 35 He shows that both McLoughlin and Douglas sent instructions to Tolmie to feed specific settlers that were emigrating to the region. 36

The early settlers themselves could testify to the assistance Tolmie had rendered them when they first "located." One William H. Rector said:

There are many of us who know for ourselves that they [the Hudson's Bay and Puget's Sound Agricultural Companies through their agents] extended every reasonable assistance to us when we first came to the country, without which we do not know how we should have subsisted. 37


35 Until the Treaty of Washington was known in Old Oregon, the Hudson's Bay Company had consistently discouraged all settlement North of the Columbia River.

36 Snowden, History of Washington, vol.2, p.489, points out that these two managers ordered Tolmie in September, 1846, to supply some settlers with thirty barrels of flour, payment to be made in shingles with no interest charges.

This assistance took the practical form of exchanging the necessities of life for such products as the settler could manufacture – notably cedar shingles. Thus Michael T. Simmons, the first American settler on Puget Sound, was weaving and selling shingles to the Nisqually fort in spite of the fact that the Company had vigorously opposed his settlement North of the Columbia River. Frequent references may be found throughout business letters of the period to the continuous purchasing of shingles, which purchases, in a region where there was no source of consumer goods apart from the Company store, undoubtedly made settlement feasible.

Nor was assistance limited to the non-credit business of buying settler’s crude manufactures. The Account book of the fort shows page after page of detailed credit advances to such Americans as Macallister, Simmons and others. This credit business was to be greatly accelerated after 1845 with the arrival of permanent settlers.

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38 Edmond S. Meany, op.cit., p.138. Simmons, after trying the Cowlitz River area in 1844, settled permanently with his family at Newmarket, a few miles from Nisqually, in October, 1845, in the face of Tolmie’s protestations.

39 Peter Skene Ogden and James Douglas to Dr. Tolmie, d/ Fort Vancouver, 3 July, 1846, Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington. This letter gives detailed instructions as to the disposal of the shingles, purchased at $1.50 per thousand. A year later there appears to have been such large stocks of shingles on hand that disposal was difficult, so that the supply from Newmarket had to be stopped. (Douglas and Ogden to Tolmie, d/ Fort Vancouver, 27 July, 1847, Photostat of Nisqually Letterbook copy in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.)

40 --Fort Nisqually Accounts with Settlers 1842-1852. Photostat of original in University of Washington. The dates of the Account Book are significant.
with little equity besides hope and faith in their future. 41 Coupled with this financial aid was the medical experience of Dr. Tolmie, and, although nothing has come to light to support it, authorities agree that it is undoubtedly true that he rendered the only medical service available to the Americans in the Nisqually region. 42

As suggested before, Tolmie would have no real problem with American immigrants around Fort Nisqually until the whole question of the Oregon boundary to the North was settled, because only then would American citizens regard the foreign company as a true alien. This settlement finally ratified on 15 June, 1846, to be known as the Washington Treaty, gave land-hungry Americans the moral justification they needed to pillage the Company holdings. Because of inadequate communications, the news of the Treaty did not reach Oregon until November. 43 Even then, there was adequate provision for the protection of Company interests in Articles III and IV, which preserved the status quo until an arbitration board should be established to settle

41 Recapitulation of Advances to American Settlers from Novr. 7th 1845 till Decr. 31st 1846. Furnished the Pioneer American emigrant by the Hudson Bay Co. at Fort Nisqually in 1845-46. Typescript in B.C. Archives. The long lists, including numerous articles of food, bear evidence of the integral part played by the Company in the pioneers' first years.

42 It must be remembered that Tolmie was a Company man, and therefore could not charge for professional service, but in view of what is known of his character it is difficult to believe that this factor (or any other, for that matter) would have prevented him from doing what he could in emergencies.

43 Snowden, op. cit., vol. 2, p. 380, quotes the Oregon Spectator as putting out an extra concerning the settlement on November 4, 1846.
the monetary value of these holdings. But the Washington Treaty was in the realm of diplomacy, whereas the American settler was on the land in question.

Tolmie had not long to wait for the battle to join. Charles Wren, an ex-employee who had recently settled near the Fort, was using his dogs to kill Company pigs and calves by mid-December. The Doctor threatened to shoot Wren's dogs, but Wren replied that he would shoot every dog at the Fort if any of his were despatched. The incident was to be typical of the settlers' attitude and actions in the years ahead, and was one prong of the two-pointed attack they were to launch. The other was the assault on the land, and the first blow followed soon after, for in January, 1847, immigrants were appropriating the "choicest pastures" belonging to the company, and complaining loudly that Company sheep were grazing "their prairies."

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44 Article III stated: "In the future appropriations of the territory south of the 49th parallel of north latitude, as provided in the first article of this treaty, the possessory rights of the Hudson's Bay Company, and of all British subjects who may be already in the occupation of land or other property, lawfully acquired within the said territory shall be respected."

Article IV confirmed the P.S.A.C. holdings and agreed to arbitration.


47 Loc.cit.
as they soon came to consider the Nisqually Plains. Throughout the years 1847, 1848 and 1849, there was usually an unstable population of around a dozen "squatters" with their families, who invaded the region, decided against it, and moved on. With the establishment at Steilacoom of a military post in 1849, this influx rose rapidly until 1853, when it levelled off at about 140 to 150 families. When it is realized that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was farming the Plains at the optimum level of production by 1846, it is obvious that an addition of, say, three or four hundred people to the area would make for serious friction.

The first organized resistance to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company and to Dr. Tolmie personally and particularly, took place on November 5, 1848, at Newmarket. Tolmie, in an effort either to strengthen and widen the claim of his company before arbitration should commence, or because the Nisqually pasturage, never very luxuriant, dictated an expansion, decided to graze a large herd of Spanish cattle on the South side of the Nisqually River, in the Newmarket Area. Whatever his reasons, Tolmie's action was bitterly opposed by the residents around the area, who drew up a series of resolutions at a public indignation meeting, and appointed a committee to place them in Tolmie's hands. The memorial required that he evacuate the Spanish

48 Ibid., p.111.
49 Loc.cit.
cattle from the area within one week, or suffer some unmentioned reprisal.\textsuperscript{51} Tolmie bowed to public opinion, and the offending herds were removed within the stipulated time.

The resolutions of the meeting are significant because they typify the settlers' attitude toward Tolmie's company. As they were carefully sent to the press, they were both a result of and an abettor of the public sentiment.\textsuperscript{52} Their basic assumption had, perforce, to be that the Company had no right within the territory whatsoever, and that any claims they made under the Treaty of Washington were fraudulent and unsupported in law.\textsuperscript{53} From this point it was logical that any action on the Company's part which interfered with a citizen's freedom of movement was unjustified, and recourse to forceful methods could and should be had. The distinction between "actual settlers" and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company aggravated the feeling that regarded the Company as a monstrous and soulless foreign giant, with no sentimental attachment to the land at all. This was to be the general attitude towards the Company, and Tolmie found it impossible to combat. He was British and he \textit{did} represent an alien company of which it could be said that "their aim is only their own

\textsuperscript{51} "Resolutions adopted at a meeting of American Citizens held at Newmarket, Lewis County, on the 5th of November, 1848", in Record Office Transcripts, H.B.C - C.O., vols. 721-725, pp. 158-162. Copy in B.C. Archives.

\textsuperscript{52} "Public Meeting", The Oregon Spectator, Thursday, January 11, 1848, [1849] p.1. Microfilm in University of Washington. The account loses nothing in the telling, and aggravated public feeling by giving wide circulation to the resolutions, which had more spleen than reason to support them.

\textsuperscript{53} The Second Resolution denies Company rights to both their original holdings, and to their subsequent improvements after 1846.
interest." All that was required to strengthen the settlers' argument was force of numbers, and these were to be had in greater abundance as each year went by. Tolmie informed his chief at Victoria of the Resolutions just before Douglas left for England, but apparently nothing was nor could have been done. The sooner an arbitration could be arranged the less would the Company suffer.

Six months after this open declaration of disregard for the rights of foreign companies, the theory embodied in it received a practical application. The Chambers family, newcomers to the Nisqually River mouth, staked out a claim for themselves as well as one for a son. Dr. Tolmie protested, particularly when Chambers erected a sawmill, as the land in question was being claimed by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. Chambers was warned off the property, not once, but several times, in the presence of witnesses, but he, significantly enough, refused to move, consulted Col. J.N. Ebey (who had helped frame the Newmarket Resolution of the previous November) and replied to Tolmie's request by "openly doing all that

54 Resolution 9 in the Newmarket Resolutions. It is somewhat ironical that the self-interested pioneers should accuse the company of this fault. It was typical, however, of public feeling towards any "grasping monopoly", and was motivated more by emotion and economic necessity than by any cold analysis of the terms of the Treaty.


he could to induce other Americans to settle near him, contending that the Agricultural Company was a foreign concern, entitled to no rights, and having none that any American was bound to respect, nor would be when the situation was fully understood at Washington [the writer's italics]."58 There was nothing effective that Tolmie could do.59

One ineffective expedient that was frequently used was the serving of official notice upon settlers "squatting" on land claimed or used by the Company. The Journal of Occurrences gives references to such processes, as do Dr. Tolmie's personal and business letters.60 61

58 Snowden, op. cit., p.447.

59 Another source of irritation which widened the breach, as mentioned in Chapter III, was the Cayuse War, which, because the Indians opposed the settlers who were taking their lands and not the Company which was not, served only to arouse American suspicions that Indian and Hudson's Bay policies towards the settlers were synonymous.


61 Apparently there was no official form of notice to vacate prior to 1851, as a letter in Tolmie's Letterbook (p.54) written between 12 March and 18 April, 1851, requests exact information from Douglas on the form to be used, and stresses the necessity for affidavits being taken from the witnesses. It was not, however, until 1854 that Tolmie took the bold step of making these warnings widely known through the medium of the press by publishing an official notice clearly stating the boundaries claimed and warning settlers off at pain of being considered trespassers. W.F.Tolmie, "Notice," Washington Pioneer, January 14, 1854, in Joint Commission, [Papers, vol.3], pp.178-179.
By 1851 the pressure was being applied a little closer than Newmarket and to the North, as the settlers' frontier closed in on Company holdings. At Steilacoom, only six miles from Fort Nisqually, another mass meeting was held, which aimed at consolidating public indignation against the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company and its agent, Dr. Tolmie. Resolutions were put forward demanding publication of the true character and origin of the Company, asserting Tolmie's claims were preposterously large, and denouncing the Company as a "system of fraud and pretext invented by the shrewd cunning of Englishmen of influence" to grab American land.

Once again, it was stressed that the lands claimed by the Company were lands which were owned and improved by American citizens. Working from this assumption, the settlers could easily arouse a fine patriotic frenzy to further their acquisition of Tolmie's estate.

So far American depredations had consisted mainly of encroachments upon lands claimed by the Agricultural Company. Inevitably, however, another phase was to develop concerning the stock which the large company ranged upon the disputed lands. As each settler "squatted" in the forbidden region, he was faced with the problem of prior occupation by the Company's herds and flocks. Regarding his claim as his own, he logically regarded any stock thereon as trespassing, and


63 Loc.cit.
sought redress by ridding his claim and the district of any animals being grazed upon it.

Evidence of the prevalence of this new threat to Company holdings was given before the Joint Commission appointed to arbitrate the two Companies' holdings in 1863. One piece of this evidence included a letter written by Tolmie in 1853 which stresses the acute difficulty of maintaining amicable relations with the settlers. It says, in part:

It has long been a custom with several of the settlers to shoot the Company's cattle and even riding horses, when feeding near their houses and enclosures.... Another mischievous custom, pretty generally adopted, has been to hunt the Company's cattle into the woods with dogs whenever herds grazing used to approach a settler's fields.64

The natural result of this practice was to make Company herds and flocks wild and untameable. This in itself became a new reason for increased persecution, as no settler wanted his herds bred to "wild stock" on the open range. A new justification was therefore being added to the squatter's case against the Company, which often inflamed even those Americans who were well-disposed towards Dr. Tolmie. Thus one John Bradley wrote to the Doctor that "a number of wild cattle came into my farm, the other day, and attacted [sic] a very fine animal of mine.... I am desirous to know what your mark is - as

I do not desire to injure any of your stocks". Tolmie admitted in his letter to Stevens that several squatters showed "highly creditable" forbearance and consideration, but this was unfortunately not the usual state of affairs. John Montgomery, a Company employee between 1851 and 1853, reported dogs and guns being used on wild (Company) cattle, and that settlers invariably drove them from the area of their claim. Richard Fiander, another employee, stated that he personally saw twenty settlers whom he recognized kill approximately 200 cattle on different occasions, that he saw boatloads of live cattle being shipped away, and was himself employed at one time by American settlers to kill Company cattle and steal calves and yearlings.

It was to be expected that if settlers were going to appropriate land and shoot cattle, they would raid buildings and other fixtures. One particularly flagrant case may be cited. At Spanoway, one of the farm out-stations, a squatter burned the dwelling house, with the exception of a few boards, which he used to erect a hidden stable for secreting stolen Company horses. During the winter, this

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65 John Bradley to W.F. Tolmie, d/ Round Plains, O.T., November 29, 1851, Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.

66 W.F. Tolmie to Isaac I. Stevens, cited on p. 133.


68 Ibid., p.97. Counsel for the United States made the point that Fiander's character might be questioned in view of the fact that, although an employee, he accepted American money to destroy his employer's stock.
squatting appropriated all buildings on the station, and in the spring sold them for 300 dollars to a settler intending to bring in horned cattle from Oregon.69 The following summer Tolmie sent an employee to Spanoway to make preparations for lambs that were to be put there, but the shepherd found the situation difficult in the extreme:

He had not been there many days when three squatters from the neighbourhood [arrived], professing to be a deputation from others, and notifying him that if the company sent sheep to Spanoway, the settlers would drive them away. They said that the District Court of the Territory, had decided that no such body as the so-called Puget's Sound Company was in existence....70

By far the worst aspect of this consistent pillage, from the Company's point of view, was the official local government attitude. There is no doubt that if the authorities had been interested in staying lawless acts towards the Hudson's Bay Company's subsidiary, many of them could have been prevented. But it must be remembered that most of the local officials were pioneers themselves, and could be forgiven for retaining views they had held while yet private individuals.71

69 W.F.Tolmie to H.H.Berens, Agent of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, d/ Nisqually, May 27, 1858, in Joint Commission [Papers, vol.3] p.170-171. Depredations on buildings were naturally quite common, for few settlers had the means to afford lumber or the equipment to saw it. Thus records show rail fences being appropriated, buildings being torn down and carried away, and, at times, barns being burned, out of malicious vandalism.

70 Loc.cit.

71 The comparison with the military is interesting. In the trial and conviction of Leschi it was noted that three of the military who were not volunteers were able to take a greatly more detached view of the case, even to the point of openly expressing repugnance at the execution of the Indian.
In addition, superior officials who had not been pioneers tended to conform to popular opinion, particularly when it was a manifestation of the current anti-British feeling prevailing at the time throughout America. The result was that the settlers flagrantly violating law were being given official sanction, if not for their acts, at least for the philosophy which motivated them. Governor Isaac I. Stevens of Washington Territory had written Tolmie in 1853 concerning the extent of Company claims considered to be just by his government. An extract presented to the Joint Commission is illustrative:

Possession is granted to the Company of [lands] actually used and occupied ... for farming purposes, such as cultivation and pasturage, regularly and continuously, prior to and at the date of the treaty, but [I] do not consider that the mere random rovings of wild cattle or the changing of flocks from one prairie to another create a right which under the treaty is to be confirmed.72

With this attitude held by the highest state official in the Territory, it is easy to believe that recourse to legal action would be useless. Tolmie pointed out before the Joint Commission that whenever he took horse and cattle thieves into the local courts the case was dropped for want of evidence, or in some other way ended unsatisfactorily.73 Even if a judgment could be secured, very few of the squatters could pay damages, and, at any rate, "without a formal


confirmation of our title by the United States, the endeavour to eject squatters would have been interminable."\(^{74}\)

Another and equally aggravating source of annoyance arising directly from the official attitude regarding the Hudson's Bay Company was the rigid observance of customs regulations enforced by the local officials. After 1846, the Puget Sound area was within the American customs area, but collection of customs duties was impossible until a port of entry had been designated and customs administrative machinery erected. As it was, no customs collector arrived on the Coast until early April, 1849.\(^{75}\) In the meantime Hudson's Bay goods entered the country duty-free, as there was no port of entry at which to declare them. This was rectified by Presidential Proclamation on January 10, 1850, with the declaration of Nisqually as one port of entry.\(^{76}\) There was, however, no customs collector at this port, so the Hudson's Bay ship Cadboro, according to the normal procedure, commenced unloading on arrival at Nisqually on 14 April.

Operations were unceremoniously halted when an American officer from Fort Steilacoom boarded the ship with a party of soldiers, ran up the American flag, and ordered the captain and crew on shore.\(^{77}\)

\(^{74}\) Loc.cit.  

\(^{75}\) C.A. Snowden, \textit{op.cit.}, vol.3, p.78, Snowden, who has used the Nisqually Journal to substantiate his facts, gives the best treatment of the seizure of the Cadboro that the writer saw.  

\(^{76}\) Loc.cit.  

\(^{77}\) Ibid., p.80.
Tolmie's protestations were useless and Lieutenant Dement sailed the ship to Steilacoom. Five days later, Dorr, the customs inspector from Astoria, arrived and impounded all goods at the Nisqually store as contraband. Adding insult to injury, he appointed a neighbouring settler, Glasgow, with whom Tolmie had had squatter trouble, as deputy collector in charge of the store. As might have been expected, Glasgow performed his duty with an exasperating zeal, insisting in an authoritative manner on the observance of all technicalities in retaining even foodstuffs for Tolmie and his employees.  

Other business took Eben May Dorr away from the district, so that not until 12 May did he return to the Nisqually. The intelligence he brought was disconcerting. No release of either ship or goods could be made until the inventories could be inspected at Astoria and instructions received therefrom. Tolmie engaged in correspondence with both the head office at Victoria and the superintending collector at Astoria, General Adair, but without results. A month later Adair arrived at Fort Nisqually and presented Tolmie with a statement of duties demanded. These were paid on 19 June by the Doctor, and the goods were finally released. Glasgow, however, was to have a last measure of revenge on the Company and Tolmie by

78 Ibid., p.82.

79 The seizure of the Albion. See H.H. Bancroft, History of Oregon, vol.2, pp.104-106 for a rather acid appraisal of this offensive incident. Bancroft adds a page or two of comment on the senseless severity of most customs officials on the Hudson's Bay Company at this time.

80 Snowden, op.cit., p.23.
insisting that he personally inspect each package in the store as it was released from his custody.

It had been a trying experience. For two months all business at the Fort had been suspended on an obvious technicality. Matters had been made difficult by the overbearing attitude of the collectors who seemed to take every opportunity to aggravate the distress of the Fort. When Tolmie requested the release of goods which were "essentially necessary" to the establishment, Collector Dorr loftily acquiesced by saying "It will afford me pleasure to grant you the privilege of taking the following articles," after stating clearly that the release was "an act of courtesy, not of right."81 The entire incident was typical of the American attitude toward the Hudson's Bay Company.82

As the area was developed, such administrative difficulties were eventually obviated,83 but yet another burden remained

81 Eben May Dorr to W.F. Tolmie, d/ Steilacoom, May 18, 1850, Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.

82 Not all American officials were so truculent as Dorr. When the case of the Beaver and the Mary Dare had been settled in favour of the Hudson's Bay Company, a customs official wrote Tolmie the following: "Publicly as an officer of the Government, I suppose I ought to regret the clemency Exercised by the Treasury Department, though privately and sincerely I congratulate you on your success." --- Amory Holbrook to W.F. Tolmie, d/ Oregon City, 22 June, 1852. Original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington.

83 It must not be imagined that the way was ever made easy. A letter to Tolmie in 1856 (M.H. Frost to W.F. Tolmie, d/ Steilacoom, 6 May, 1856, original in Bagley Collection, University of Washington) details the following procedure: Hudson's Bay Company vessels were to dock at Port Townsend, the goods were to be entered, the duties paid on the spot, a Customs Official was to board her and proceed to Nisqually, check off goods unloaded, and return a report of such goods to Steilacoom for comparison with the Port Townsend inventory. Any desire on the part of officials to be difficult could complicate this process interminably.
to be imposed - the matter of taxation. And here the situation was rather paradoxical, for American authorities, insisting on the one hand that the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company had no rights whatsoever, or at the most only a very tenuous title to an indefinite claim, were equally insistent that rigid taxation should be enforced on the very lands they would not officially define. Unfair assessments overvaluing the property were imposed by the Governor, and irked Tolmie to the point of exasperation. The taxes were paid, though under protest, in order to save the property from seizure, but the manifest injustice of the proceedings was sufficient in itself to estrange the Doctor from Americans.

Only one result, the eventual bankruptcy of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, could derive from these inroads, official and private, upon the business Tolmie was managing. As early as 1852 Fort Vancouver operations were suspended, with a sigh of relief, by

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84 W.F.Tolmie to W.L.Smith, Secretary, Hudson's Bay Company, d/ Nisqually, 18 August, 1857, in Tolmie Letterbook, p.94.

85 W.F.Tolmie to A.J.Dallas, d/ Nisqually, 3 July, 1857, in Tolmie Letterbook, p.88. The Doctor remarks: "Tis annoying to think of yielding to the unreasonable exactions of these fellows."

86 — Joint Commission [Papers, vol.3], p.113. According to Tolmie's evidence, taxes were assessed normally and paid without protest in 1850, but increasingly unfair valuation up to 1858 set the tax at a total of $7,250.02, which was paid under protest. In 1859 only $301.00 (the tax on 40 sections) were paid, because the remainder of Company holdings had been seized by squatters. Officially, however, the Company was still being taxed on this lost land.
John Ballenden. Ten years later, during the years 1861 and 1862, the Nisqually venture was to follow the same course. Before the final liquidation, however, Company losses were to be acute, in spite of all the diplomacy that Tolmie could invoke to protect his interests. Where a check had numbered 4500 cattle in 1849, increasing to an inventory count of 6,777 by 31 October, 1852, destruction by settlers after 1852 reduced this number to 500 head within five years. The survivors were wild animals which remained under cover during daylight and grazed at night on the fringes of the Company's claims. Tolmie estimated the loss to be $150,000, to which he added $7000 for the destruction of horses. Around Nisqually, the reduction in pasturage effected by squatters had amounted, in Tolmie's opinion, to "at least eighty thousand acres of the best arable and pasture land on the claim...."

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87 John Ballenden to W.F.Tolmie, d/ [Fort] Vancouver, 1 November, 1852. Typescript copy in Bagley Collection, University of Washington. With regard to livestock and other property, Ballenden says, "I cannot help feeling glad to see the last of P.S.Co's stock taken away from this place ... in consequence of the lawless population of this neighbourhood."

88 Joint Commission [Papers, vol.3], p.110.

89 Loc.cit.

90 Loc.cit.

91 Ibid., p.128.
A glance at the record of dividends paid to shareholders discloses the declining fortunes of the concern. profits withered away as settlers encroached upon the land and destroyed stock and property. 1852, when the most widespread depredations commenced, was the turning-point. After that it was only a matter of time until even operating expenses could not be paid. Then, for several years, the Company operated at an actual loss, in order to maintain its claim by the Treaty of Washington. In 1858 Henry Hulse Berens wrote a significant letter to A.C. Dallas insisting that in future remittances were to cover all supplies and advances as the heavy debt of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company to the Hudson's Bay Company precluded any further credit.

Eighteen months after this letter was written, Tolmie's personal connection with Nisqually was terminated when he moved to Victoria.

--- Joint Commission, [Papers, vol.3], p.113.  
Dividends declared by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company since its organization:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Dividend</th>
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<td>1846</td>
<td>5%</td>
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<td>1847</td>
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Dr. Tolmie added, "I don't know of any dividends since," which may be taken as sound evidence that there were none, as Tolmie held six shares in the concern.

--- Tolmie, History of Puget Sound, p.23.

94 H.R. Berens to A.C. Dallas, d/ Hudson's Bay House, London, 3 December, 1858. Original in B.C. Archives.
Edward Huggins, a former clerk who was eventually to buy out the property, was left in charge of what remained after Tolmie's departure. But the Doctor's connection with the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was by no means broken, and he was yet to do some of his most arduous work for the concern. As the member of the Board of Management at Victoria most experienced with the waning fortunes of the Agricultural Company, a great deal of work devolved upon him, in connection with the Joint Commission appointed to arbitrate the two Companies' claims. Maps had to be made of the Company's original holdings in 1846; the losses, gains, taxes paid, iniquitous assessments made etc. had to be checked in the records; and witnesses who would testify to the various aspects of the case had to be found. In addition, Tolmie had the burden of the senior managership of the Hudson's Bay Company and the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's Vancouver Island farms after 1865.

For a service so faithful and so arduous, one might have expected normal recognition from the Company he had so well served. The evidence, however, shows that Tolmie's treatment at the hands of his employers was harsh beyond all the requirements of shrewd business practice. Apparently others had found the Company equally penurious, for J.S. Helmcken recalls that he was forced out of the service, although a Chief Trader, and re-appointed as a Surgeon. Tolmie was to be served with

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95 Mention has already been made of the faithful service he rendered in "the busy years 1863, '64, '65 and '66."

96 J.S. Helmcken Reminiscences, vol.5, p.254. Original in B.C. Archives. The advantage to the Company was a reduction of Helmcken's retirement income. As it happened, he was paid £800 upon his enforced retirement, but this was far less than he would have got had he risen to Chief Factor. Tolmie was not even to have the satisfaction of a partial grant.
an even greater injustice.

His appointment up to Chief Trader had been normal and uncolored by any disfavor, and Tolmie could normally expect, in view of his virtual managership of the Nisqually and Cowlitz projects, that a Chief Factorship would follow a very few years later. Strangely enough, however, his position with the Agricultural subsidiary of the Hudson's Bay Company detracted from his chances of promotion, for there was a general antipathy towards such commissioned officers in high circles at Lachine. As Tolmie pointed out, it was not his fault that he had been appointed to Nisqually in 1843, and it was hardly fair that he should be the victim of inter-company jealousies. By dint of much correspondence and a very favorable record, Tolmie did, however, achieve his promotion by 1855.

By the time this storm had blown over, another which originated in London was developing. Andrew Colvile, Agent in London for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, had sent out in 1853 a personal friend, Kenneth McKenzie, to manage the Company's farms on Vancouver Island. Colvile's purposes in sending out a personal

97 W.F. Tolmie to —— [c.1853], extract in Tolmie, Letterbook, p.63. Tolmie regrets that "the jealousy existing on the east side towards the Puget's Sound Company, should have an injurious influence on my prospects." This antipathy is also mentioned in Tolmie to A. Colville, d/ Nisqually, August 16, 1854, in Tolmie, Letterbook, p.65.

98 McKenzie, locating near Victoria, named his farm "Craigflower" after Colvile's estate in England. Letters in the Kenneth McKenzie Collection in the B.C. Archives indicate that McKenzie knew Colvile very well in England and was obviously a favorite with the head agent.
acquaintance were not altogether noble, for there is evidence that McKenzie was to be a kind of spy on the operations of all Company projects. One letter requests McKenzie to "give ... your opinion of the Island, & all that is going on, and I hope in a full and frank manner as I shall consider your letters quite confidential." Other letters on 18 November, 1853 and 20 January, 1854, reiterate the request for detailed and confidential information about all Puget Sound Agricultural Company projects.

Then, early in 1854, less than a year after McKenzie had arrived on the Pacific Coast, he was appointed agent of all Puget Sound interests North and South of the international boundary. Six weeks later Tolmie was informed of the appointment, and his state of mind, upon hearing that his successful piloting of the Company's fortunes for some eleven years was forgotten, may be imagined. After James Douglas, whom McKenzie was replacing, had left Fort Vancouver in 1849, Tolmie had had considerable responsibility south of the

99 Andrew Colvile to Kenneth McKenzie, d/ London, 1 July, 1853. Original in B.C. Archives.

100 Andrew Colvile to Kenneth McKenzie, d/ London, 18 November, 1853, and 20 January, 1854. Originals in B.C. Archives.


border, and would have been a far better choice than the
uninitiated McKenzie. True, Tolmie was granted ten percent of the
profit of his farm, but this, due to the embarrassing settler
situation, was to be but scanty recompense.

As it turned out, McKenzie's appointment was to prove a
most unhappy one. Again and again the agents in London were to write
McKenzie requesting an account of his operations, reproving him for
lavish household expenses, and condemning him for poor farm management. And, it appears, the reaction in Oregon to McKenzie's appointment was
foreseen, because Tolmie's award of ten percent of his farm's profits
was made only two months afterwards, and a subsequent explanation
to McKenzie refers to possible "unpleasant feelings on the part of
gentlemen in charge [in Oregon] at present."

With his appointment to the superintendency of the
Agricultural Company's interests below the border in 1857, one would
have expected that Tolmie would have received the same salary that
was paid James Douglas, viz. $2500 per year, for the same responsibility.

103 Loc.cit.

104 Kenneth McKenzie Collection in B.C. Archives, particularly
letters dated between July, 1854 and December, 1856. The number of
statements throughout this period such as "We are extremely
disappointed", and "This state of things must no longer be allowed to
exist", has convinced the writer that McKenzie must indeed have been
a close friend of Colvile's to retain his appointment as long as he did.

105 A. Colvile and H.H.Berens to W.F.Tolmie, d/ London, 21 April,
1854. Original duplicate in B.C. Archives.

106 A. Colvile and H.H.Berens to Kenneth McKenzie, d/ London, 12
May, 1854. Original in B.C. Archives.
Such was not the case, however, and Tolmie had no alternative but to do the work without any added, and justified, compensation. The most bitter pill had been reserved till the last.

When Tolmie was retired on 1 June, 1870, he had expected to receive, by an agreement decided on in 1865 between the management in London and the commissioned gentlemen, some 1800 as a retirement fund. When the retirement was effective, however, he found that through a shrewd re-interpretation of this agreement, there was to be no retirement benefit whatsoever. In addition to this financial set-back, he discovered that there was to be no proportionate division of the funds paid over to the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Agricultural Companies as a result of the settlement of those

107 Unsigned, unaddressed letter d/ Nisqually, March 2, 1850, in Tolmie, Letterbook, p.34. Tolmie writes: "From the importance of my charge and its being a distinct business from the Furtrade I conceive myself in justice entitled to remuneration for my services to the Puget Sound Company...."

108 W.F. Tolmie to Alexander Tolmie, d/ Victoria, 10 March, 1871, in Tolmie, Letterbook, p. 135. The arrangement was rather involved but its re-interpretation may well have been dictated by the poor financial condition of the Company after 1863.

109 Loc.cit. Upon questioning by letter and personal interview, the Directors of the Company remained adamant in their refusal to grant a guarantee which all Chief Factors and Traders had counted on.
companies' possessory rights in Oregon.\textsuperscript{110} Aggravating his financial position was a loan of $1000 which he had made to an indigent relative in 1869, anticipating that he would receive a retirement benefit.\textsuperscript{111}

The result of these reverses could not have been otherwise: Tolmie, when he retired, was a poor man, after serving the Company for over thirty-seven years, and rising to its highest

\textsuperscript{110}The judgment awarded by the Joint Commission amounted to $650,000.00, ($450,000.00 for the Hudson's Bay Company and $200,000.00 for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company.) Tolmie, as a Chief Factor, should normally have received two eighty-fifths of forty percent of this sum, after expenses had been paid. It may be questioned whether there were any profits, but if there were not, Tolmie does not indicate that he ever received a statement showing this to be the case. He made an effort to recover his benefit by appointing his brother Alick as his attorney with instructions to keep worrying the London office for a fair settlement (Tolmie to Alexander Tolmie, cited above in n.109)

Apparently nothing came of the attempt, however. Tolmie's Probate Will (in the possession of Miss J.C.Tolmie, Victoria, B.C.) shows that his estate at death was in the class of "under $5000). It should be mentioned, too, that according to a letter in his Letterbook, (W.F. Tolmie to W. Armit, d/ Victoria, 12 December, 1870) all the salary he ever received for his services to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was £423.5.0 - and this for twenty-seven years' service.

\textsuperscript{111}W.F. Tolmie to Alexander Tolmie, d/ Victoria, 10 March, 1871, in Tolmie, Letterbook, p.135. Tolmie says that he also "bought and prepared to enclose land" on the strength of the guarantee.
position of authority on the West Coast.\textsuperscript{112} There was indeed justification for Tolmie's bitter comment that seldom had the Company acted so "scurvily" to a Chief Factor. An important interest - agriculture - was to arise out of his Hudson's Bay connection, but for that little credit may be given to the Company. The faithful servant, his days of usefulness over, was discharged without the benefit of even a kindly word.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{112} The gravity of his situation is stressed by a rather pathetic application in 1871 for a position analagous to that of auditor for Hudson's Bay Company accounts in British Columbia at a salary of £250 per year. (W.F.Tolmie to W.Armit, d/ Victoria, 12 December, 1870) He did not secure the position.

\textsuperscript{113} Tolmie, \textit{Letterbook}, p.128,- in an unsigned extract Tolmie says: "I make allowance for the urgency of the crisis, but there are different ways of gaining an end, and the most kindly is generally the best."
CHAPTER V
Tolmie the Advocate of Scientific Agriculture

It would have been surprising had Tolmie's long association with an agricultural company not resulted in a deep personal interest in the occupation of farming. He had battled American settlers to protect his herds, studied the markets to dispose of his flocks, devoted himself to the practical administration of the several farms under his control, and worked with stock of a better grade than was usually found in pioneer settlements. Over the years, almost from his first view of North America, he had been exposed to, then involved in, agriculture. To this experience Tolmie was fortunate enough to be able to bring two advantages: his superior education and his position with a large corporation interested in making agriculture succeed as a business. It was to be expected that Tolmie would develop an interest in agriculture and at the same time provide the leadership in practice and theory that was essential, for there was no precedent in the Northwest.

It must be admitted that his actions in the first few years on the Northwest Coast gave little promise of a budding agriculturist. His contacts with the soil were casual and incidental to his main interests at the time - medicine and fur-trading. These contacts, nevertheless, are important, for they indicate something of the man's later occupation, and cannot be dismissed without some
On his arrival at Fort Vancouver in 1833 Tolmie was to meet a man who had a firm belief that farming was the ultimate and logical occupation of fur-traders on the Columbia. It is interesting to observe that McLoughlin even then had the idea of the export of hides and tallow, the idea which was eventually to develop into the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, with Tolmie as its chief pilot. But Tolmie was a surgeon by profession, and his remarks at the time do not indicate anything more than a dilettante's interest. He rode out to see the Fort farm, but displayed no more interest in it than the average young man with an

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1 On Friday, 28 April, 1833, when he was a day or two off Cape Disappointment, Tolmie had mentioned a rather idyllic "vale" to which he might retire in a few years, but this is more in the tradition of early nineteenth century romanticism than practical agriculture. He does make the following significant remark, "if I am retained at Ft. V. [Vancouver] shall endeavour to acquire some knowledge of farming which will be of service if my scheme shd ever be realized of marrying & turning farmer in Canada." Tolmie, Diary, vol.2, p.257.

2 Ibid., p.282-283. On May 12, little more than a week after their arrival, Tolmie and Gairdner were to hear Dr. John McLoughlin express his firm conviction that, due to the inevitable destruction of the fur-bearing animals in the Columbia Department, Hudson's Bay Company personnel would be wise to consider farming as an alternative occupation when the trade was ended. In the Doctor's opinion the Columbia Valley offered ex-fur-traders the best opportunities.

3 Loc.cit.

4 Ibid., p.271.
active mind. True, he did plant a few dahlia seeds in a box-frame, which he visited before leaving for Nisqually, but, once having left them, he does not seem to have had any further interest in them. The same may be said of the acacia seeds he gave Dr. McLoughlin before he left Fort Vancouver.

On Puget Sound, a week or two later, Tolmie did have sufficient interest to note that the meadows were "possessed of a fertile soil ... [which] would afford subsistence to a large herd of cattle." Then, while on a hunting tramp through the woods, he noticed the planting of the kitchen garden, and a few days later he commented on its neat appearance. Shortly afterwards he was taking soil samples under the direction of Francis Heron, and was given the task of packaging and labelling these samples. On 2 August, he

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5 Ibid., p. 285. Most biographical accounts of Tolmie that the writer has seen have mentioned this as evidence of his early predisposition for farming. It seems, however, in view of the decidedly mild interest that he took in agriculture both at this time and for the next few years, that the dahlia seeds were more of an experiment in botany than an indication that Tolmie would eventually become a full-time farmer.

6 Loc. cit.

7 Ibid., p. 315. Tolmie's reference to "fertile soil" may mean the Sequallitchaw Creek defile; otherwise he is wholly incorrect, for Nisqually soil was generally poor. As he was to learn, however, the pasturage was capable of supporting very large herds of cattle.

8 Ibid., p. 331.

9 Ibid., p. 336.

10 Ibid., p. 340.
noted that "our crop is a complete failure," and added that it would be necessary to transport supplies from Fort Langley for the winter.\textsuperscript{11} Prior to this he had done some routine supervision of planting and seeding,\textsuperscript{12} but his main interest was in the possibilities that offered for reasonably rapid promotion in the fur-trade.\textsuperscript{13} There was, after all, very little inducement to consider farming on Puget Sound, at a period several years before there were any settlers there at all. Throughout this summer there is decidedly little evidence, even in his own journal, that farming had any interest for the young doctor.

Fort McLoughlin offered even less scope for agriculture than Fort Nisqually. Apparently there had been no attempt at planting a kitchen garden in the summer of 1833, when the fort was being established, for Tolmie in the spring of 1834 was engaged in soil-testing with a view to a possible garden.\textsuperscript{14} The results were quite unsatisfactory, and there appears to have been no garden at all at the fort that year.\textsuperscript{15} Tolmie, it will be recalled, spent the

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{11} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 370.
\item \textsuperscript{12} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 324.
\item \textsuperscript{13} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 326. Tolmie records that he is busy laying in a stock of medicines from Fort Vancouver and "attending to the traffic with the Indians so as to fit [himself] for the office of trader."
\item \textsuperscript{14} Tolmie \textit{Diary}, vol. 3, p.10.
\item \textsuperscript{15} A.C. Anderson, who was at the Fort with Tolmie for a few days in the winter 1833/34, remarked that the soil was generally poor, and if vegetables and potatoes were grown, they would probably exhaust the soil in "a year or two." A.C. Anderson, \textit{Memoranda respecting Milbank Sound}, 3 January, 1834. Original in B.C. Archives.
\end{itemize}
summer, from June until November, 1834, on the Northern part of the coast, but he does not indicate that there was any gardening done before he left the Fort in June.

The following year Tolmie explored the possibilities of a swamp to the rear of the Fort, and found the soil "rich" and "alluvial." Work on a clearing was commenced the following day and continued through the spring. The swamp was drained by the removal of a beaver dam, and the logs and stumps were burned. Unfortunately, there remains little record of the garden that was so laboriously planned. Tolmie mentioned the planting of potatoes, radishes, onions and carrots, but thereafter he is silent. Very probably he was in charge of the project during the summer, for he seems to have had complete charge in the spring. No mention was made of any harvest, and when he left after December of 1835, there was no parallel to the "last visit to the dahlia bed" incident at Fort Vancouver in 1833. All indications are he was only too glad to leave the country, regardless of the garden.

16 Ibid., p. 238.
17 Loc. cit.
18 Ibid., p. 252.
19 Ibid., pp. 256-265, passim.
20 This was the period when his diary was reduced to a series of remarks on the weather, and finally to a cessation of journalizing.
In the five-year period at Fort Vancouver from 1836 to 1841 Dr. Tolmie underwent the change from medical man and fur-trader to farmer. He did not realize that the change was being effected, nor did he see the result it would have in terms of his own fortunes; as was shown above, his relationships with the Indians and his continuation as a medical man far outweighed, in his own estimation of this period of his life, any experience he might have been gaining in practical agriculture. He did, nevertheless, gain a broad concept of the business of farming. McLoughlin was prosecuting a vigorous policy of agriculture, which included grain-growing, stock-raising and truck-gardening. The Columbia Department was expected to supply not only its own needs, but also those of Company ships rounding the Horn. In addition, there were

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21 John McLoughlin to the Governor and Committee, Hudson's Bay Company, d/ Fort Vancouver, 31 October, 1837 in E.E. Rich, *op. cit.*, First Series, 1825-38, pp. 205-207. Paragraphs 14, 15 and 16 give a good account of the state of farming at Fort Vancouver during Tolmie's second year there. This was his first long acquaintance with productive agriculture on anything more than a kitchen garden scale. Between 500 and 600 acres were being farmed, besides a large acreage that was under water part of the year. McLoughlin mentions a grain surplus of 5000 bushels of wheat, 5000 bushels of peas, 1000 bushels of barley, and 1500 bushels of oats. In the spring of 1837 he mentions an inventory of 229 cows, 58 bulls, 178 oxen and steers, 61 heifers and 159 calves. There is no doubt that the project was large and flourishing, and anyone with a latent interest in agriculture, as Tolmie must have had, could learn a great deal from the "Big Doctor" and his enterprises.
the Sandwich Islands as valuable markets. Then, after the
arrangement of the Hudson's Bay contract with the Russian American
Fur Company early in 1839, a greater impetus than ever was given
to agricultural production.

No doubt the Russian contract was the reason for
Tolmie's employment during 1840 and early in 1841 as an agricultural
supervisor, charged with establishing wheat and cattle farms along
the Columbia River. It is reasonable to suppose that he would not
have been given such a responsibility had he not shown a capability
in farm management between 1836 and 1840, for he had no opportunity
before that year. There is no record of his having travelled to
Nisqually during this time, but it is very probable that he visited
both Nisqually and Cowlitz Farms. Another indication of his
widening experience in farming is his reference to the extensive
employment of Indians during these years as ploughmen and farm
laborers. But the surest indication of Tolmie's growth to the
stature of an experienced and responsible agricultural administrator
is the series of conversations he had with the executives of the
Puget's Sound Agricultural Company in London in 1842. These men
apparently esteemed his opinions and advice so highly that they

22 Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p. 4.
23 Ibid., p. 5.
appointed him as local manager for the new Company; McLoughlin heartily endorsed the appointment. By July of 1843, then, Tolmie's career with the Hudson's Bay Company had led him to the position of a farm superintendent; he seems to have accepted the appointment gladly, in spite of his early intentions to rise in the fur-trade.  

Occupationally, his days as a fur-trader were over. He still had the responsibility of the Nisqually fur-trade, which was to continue for years to come, but the main interest was necessarily agriculture. It is scarcely necessary to add, however, that Tolmie was not to be a farmer in the sense of a settler. To begin with, his responsibility encompassed thousands of acres of meadow- and pasture-land, whereas the average settler had from 160 to not more than 640 acres. Then, behind and supporting him were

24 W.F. Tolmie to Andrew Colvile, d/ Nisqually, August 16, 1854 in Tolmie, Letterbook p.66. Tolmie mentions that upon his promotion from fur-trader to manager of the new company's interests at Nisqually he felt "elated and hopeful."

25 W.F. Tolmie to The Board of Management, Fort Vancouver, d/ Nisqually 15 May, 1848. Photostet of Nisqually Letterbook copy in University of Washington. This letter makes a request for information concerning prices to be paid for furs purchased from neighboring American settlers. Eighteen years later this trade was far from extinguished. In a letter to Edward Huggins (Tolmie to Edward Huggins, Nisqually, d/ Victoria, 21 September, 1864. Original in B.C. Archives) Tolmie mentions the necessity for maintaining the Nisqually supply of beaver, musquash and red fox skins to meet the demand.
the resources of a large joint-stock corporation that could and did supply first-rate stock, seed and supplies. In case of difficulty with neighbors, Tolmie's employers could always seek redress in the courts, a possibility that was denied the smaller freeholder. In other words, while Tolmie's fortunes were of course closely linked with the success of the project he managed, there was not the threat of actual want if he failed. The over-all result of the experience he gained was to give the man a larger view of agriculture and of its potential. Relieved of the necessity for weaving shingles or catching fur-bearing animals to purchase food and clothing for his family and himself, he was able to continue uninterrupted a long-term policy in agriculture that was to put him, in his last days, in the front rank of British Columbia farmers.

This is not to minimize the problems that faced Dr. Tolmie. These were many and varied; as shown above in Chapter IV, they were of such a nature that they were never visited upon the American settler with whom he was competing. Indeed, they became eventually insuperable, and caused, as has been shown, the inevitable collapse of the entire project he labored so long to protect. But the results of those years of experience can not be judged by the withdrawal from Nisqually, for after a thorough education as a superintendent of farming, Tolmie was to apply the lessons to his own project, and was to prove eminently successful to the distinct advantage of both himself and his community.
Tolmie brought to his position two essentials for successful large-scale farming: untiring energy and an appreciation of science. Both were needed in abundance. The work of the farms under his control involved the care of wild Spanish cattle from California, and of hundreds of sheep driven overland from the same area when the Russians sold out their Southern holdings. In addition, the management in London, with commendable foresight, sent out pure-bred Leicester Southdown and Cheviot sheep, as well as thoroughbred hogs. To herd these animals, skilled farmers and

26 Snowden, _op.cit._, vol. 2, p. 405. Referring to Tolmie's appointment in 1843, Snowden says, "From that time forth the betterment of the herds was looked after as carefully as the most thoroughgoing stock-breeder of the time could have desired." Another writer refers to the "untiring energy" of McLoughlin's "able assistant" Tolmie. (Alfred L. Lomax, "History of Pioneer Sheep Husbandry in Oregon," _O.H.Q._, vol. 29, June, 1928, p. 117.) The scientific background was essential to an appreciation of the ultimate value of the expense and extra care of pure-bred stock. The pioneer tendency, still evident to-day in rural British Columbia, is towards quantity rather than quality. A century ago there was little incentive in the new West for "fancy" herds; it required a fairly well-educated man to lead the way.

27 Tolmie, _Hist. of P.S._ p.8. These numbered approximately 200 in 1841.

28 _Joint Commission [Papers, vol. 3]_ p.128. Apparently 3600 sheep were bought and driven North with the loss of "several hundred" on the journey.

29 Tolmie, _Hist. of P.S._ p.8.
shepherds were sent from England. Horses, both draught and saddle, were regularly bred, and in addition there was constant experimentation with various types of fodder, pasturage and breeds, to get the best combination for the type of product - beef, hides, wool or mutton - that the needs of the market dictated. Nor was dairying to be neglected. The Russian contract as well as the local and Sandwich Island markets kept the demand always in excess of the supply.

A glance at the Journal of the Fort gives some idea of the detailed and intimate business of operating the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company's farms. The entries for September 1850 show cattle hides being processed, wheat being hauled from Cowlitz, rafts of timber being towed to the Fort for building and export, sales being made to American settlers, difficulties with settlers over

30 "Directors of Puget's Sound Agricultural Company to John McLoughlin, Esquire, d/ London, 16 March, 1839. Original in B.C. Archives. These instructions to McLoughlin inaugurated the policy of supplying expert farmers to operate the Company's farms.

31 Snowden, op. cit., p. 405, says, "Dairying was started on an extensive scale; at one time more than two hundred cows were milked at the fort. The butter and cheese made were sold to the Russians, or sent to England and the Sandwich Islands."

32 It should be remembered that there were two main areas of farming - Nisqually and Cowlitz - but Nisqually was divided into several smaller farms with managers under the direction of the central office at Nisqually (Muck and Tlithlow Farms were two of these smaller projects). As the region under pasturage and cultivation exceeded 144 square miles (the acreage claimed before the Joint Commission) it will be seen that such subdivision was essential.
mixing of stock being ironed out, potatoes being harvested, a swamp being cleared of trees, tallow being reduced from mutton, barley being harvested, beef cattle being slaughtered and salted, oats being threshed, fall ploughing being commenced, fences being built, and fall wheat being sown. Each season brought its own problems of pasturage, cultivation, animal husbandry and so forth. Land was being cleared, fences erected and buildings renewed. And always there were the basic problems of markets, labor, settlers and brushes with officious customs or tax collectors.

In spite of his experience and expert English help, Tolmie was not always successful in proper animal husbandry. The disease of sheep scab is said to have been introduced into Oregon by Tolmie's flocks. As early as 1847 he was using "tobacco water" for dipping lambs as a precaution against the disease "of which," he wrote, "as yet there is no appearance amongst any of our flocks." Five months later, in March, 1848, he was forced to

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33 Victor J. Ferrar, ed., "The Nisqually Journal" W.H.Q., January, 1921, pp. 66-70 and April, 1921, pp. 137-140. When it is remembered that this is the record for only one of several farms, some idea of the need for organization and experience may be gained.

34 A. L. Lomax, op.cit., p. 133. Lomax says Tolmie, through his sheep run to Oregon in 1854, first introduced sheep scab into the country.

35 W. F. Tolmie to Pelly, Colvile and Simpson, d/ Nisqually, October 13, 1847, in Nisqually Letterbook, p. 11, Photostat in University of Washington.
admit that "a few of the lambs" were infected with the disease. By 1850 the disease seems to have spread beyond immediate control. In 1851 there is a somewhat casual reference to dipping "a band of scabby [sic] lambs at which most of the men were employed," which gives the impression of a sizeable task. There is little doubt that Tolmie, unable to control his flocks as he might have done with less truculent neighbors than the American settlers, found the scab epidemic too great to combat.

Other problems, even less under his control than animal disease, beset the farms. Pasturage was never very prolific and with the increasingly larger flocks of sheep the problem became acute, for sheep are notoriously hard on pasture.

36 Tolmie to Pelly, Colvile and Simpson, d/ Nisqually, March 9, 1848, in Nisqually Letterbook, p. 31, Photostat in University of Washington.

37 Farrar, ed., "Nisqually Journal," W.H.Q., April, 1921, p.144. On October 30, a band of rams was slaughtered and it was found that "some few are slightly attacked with scab." This would indicate that the disease was by this time fairly widespread, for this was a random selection. Frequent mention is made of dippings in tobacco water.


39 Sheep, unlike cattle or horses, crop the grass so short that the heart of the plant is gone, and, unless the flock is moved, or the range is of great extent, the pasturage is eventually ruined until re-seeded.
effort to save what pasture there was, took the only possible course, moving the flocks onto a new range. The only feasible range, however, lay to the West of the Nisqually River, and here he found the American settlers in formidable opposition against him. 40 He was forced, then, to reduce the number of sheep through restrictive breeding and sales to such settlers as would or could buy. 41 The logical result was reduced income for the concern.

Another factor of equal importance, and equally distressing to the project's financial well-being was the market. In its early days, Puget's Sound had been in a favorable position through the existence of a reliable market in California. By 1854, however, that region was able to grow its own grain and beef, and no longer needed to depend on Oregon. The effect as Tolmie saw it meant depression, for all Oregon had depended on the California market. With its collapse, local purchasing power was sharply reduced.

40 The result was the Newmarket Meeting of November 5, 1848, referred to in Chapter IV, which forced Tolmie back to the Nisqually Plains.

41 Numerous records of such sales exist in the business papers of Nisqually. One of them records an agreement in 1852 between Tolmie and two Americans, Parker and Foster, for the sale of 1000 sheep at $4.00 for rams and $5.00 for ewes. These low prices indicate both the shrinking market and the imperative need for reducing the Agricultural Company's flocks.
decreased, shutting off local as well as distant markets to Company products. Tolmie, foreseeing that he, with large numbers of sheep on hand, could not dispose of them, conceived the shrewd plan of taking them overland to the Willamette Valley, where they would still command a reasonable price. The result was the sheep run to Eugene, Oregon, in the summer of 1854, which did yield a good immediate profit, but which meant the eventual extinction of one of the Company's fruitful sources of income.

In the face of his difficulties, however, Tolmie followed a consistent policy of herd and flock improvement. No doubt he had seen its value reflected in the prices his stock could command in immediate and distant markets. Three interesting letters deserve mention in this respect. The first was written by Tolmie

42 Tolmie to Andrew Colvile, d/ Nisqually, 16 August, 1854. Original in B.C. Archives.

43 Ibid.

44 Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., p. 11. There were 3000 sheep, which sold from six to eight dollars each for ewes, with rams a dollar or so less.

45 J. O. Oliphant, ed., "Thomas S. Kendall's letter in Oregon Agriculture, 1852," Agricultural History, October, 1935, p. 192. Kendall is loud in his praise of the Nisqually sheep he saw. Of 1500 which he saw carded, he says, "---they were pure Merinos, ... clean, neat, and not one sick or filthy — looking among them: all well woold [sic] ... we selected two [for mutton] both of which were very fat, and pronounced by our most fastidious mutton eaters to be of the very best quality."
shortly before he went to Oregon in 1854 on the expedition noted above. It says, in part:

In my opinion all farmers on V.I. where the extent of pasture is so limited, will find it to their interest to have livestock of the choicest description, and if you entertain similar views, the present is a fine opportunity of replacing the Spanish stock of cows on the Company's farms with good American animals worthy of the Bull you are soon to have from England."46

A week later Tolmie amplified this idea somewhat, stating, "I am myself in favour of getting choice American cattle for such sheep as may not be disposed of...."47 The result was highly beneficial to Vancouver Island stock-breeding, for Tolmie writes McKenzie that he has purchased for the Island two full blooded American mares, two half-bred mares and twenty head of American cows and heifers, of which the horned cattle were "of as good Durham stock as was to be found in the Willamette valley."48

It must not be supposed that Tolmie was the only champion of thoroughbred livestock in the area. At its inception, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was committed to a programme of progressive agriculture, and maintained a high standard of livestock as long as it could. Thus, there are frequent allusions to pure-blood horses, cattle, pigs and sheep being received from England by Kenneth McKenzie as late as 1855 and 1856.49 But it is only fair to say that Tolmie was one of the

46 Tolmie to Kenneth McKenzie, d/ Nisqually, August 8, 1854. Original in B.C. Archives.

47 Tolmie to Kenneth McKenzie, d/ Nisqually, August 14, 1854. Original in B.C. Archives.

48 Tolmie to Kenneth McKenzie, d/ Nisqually, November 10, 1854. Original in B.C. Archives.

49 Kenneth McKenzie Collection in B. C. Provincial Archives. passim.
stronger motivating forces in implementing this London policy. His increasingly larger position in business and political life lent a great deal of prestige to his agricultural theories, so that in time he became a powerful force for scientific stock-breeding and agriculture. It was unfortunate that social conditions in Washington Territory made monopolistic agriculture impossible, for the tendency was to blind the local farmer to the undeniably fine example of animal husbandry set by Dr. Tolmie. Then, too, the fact that the Company's holdings and profits were reduced to zero during his stewardship created an impression of failure on the part of the manager.\textsuperscript{50} But, as Tolmie was to prove on Vancouver Island, he was an experienced and able farm administrator, and capable, when he took to farming on his own account, of applying successfully the forward policies he had implemented for the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company.\textsuperscript{51}

\textsuperscript{50} It is gratifying to find that the London agents held no such views, and that they recognized fully Tolmie's difficulties. The Report for 1856 commends the Doctor for showing a profit of £1300 for 1854, "notwithstanding the immense loss of horned cattle (upwards of 2500 head) sustained through the aggressive American citizens, who have squatted on the Company's lands." The loss is estimated to be at least £2500. (H.H. Berens, \textit{Report of the Agents of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, presented at the General Meeting of the Proprietors held on the 26th December 1856}. Original Copy in B.C. Archives.

\textsuperscript{51} Because of his subsequent outstanding efforts in the cause of better livestock, the point should be made here that Dr. Tolmie did not "introduce thoroughbred stock onto the Island," as reported in several accounts of his life that the writer has seen. (e.g. --- "Tells Story of Mount Tolmie," \textit{Daily Colonist}, Saturday, April 13, 1929, p.6. wherein a speaker makes this claim for the Doctor). The first pure-bred cattle, sheep and hogs were exported from England by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company to Kenneth McKenzie, as manager of their Vancouver Island farms. On the other hand, there can be no question that Tolmie was the first private farmer to introduce livestock, and in this respect he is a pioneer in scientific animal husbandry.
Agriculture on Vancouver Island in 1859 would seem to have offered a lucrative living to almost any farmer. The Fraser River gold rush of 1858 had created a shift in population for which the carefully ordered colony was quite unprepared, particularly with respect to the food supply. "The demand for food became prodigious," and more than once it was necessary to dispatch a vessel to Nisqually to keep the local Hudson's Bay store ahead of this demand. With respect to the importation of farm produce that might have been grown locally, the Colonist pointed out that for the year 1861 Vancouver Island had imported $80,576 worth of hogs and hog products. Even more to be regretted was the importation of the staple stock food, hay. Where the Island did not grow enough hay to support the stock that it did have, the outlook for the future of its agricultural industry did not appear very bright. On the other hand, though there were obstacles,


54 Importation of hay for two comparative periods at the time are significantly heavy, both as to quantities imported and prices paid:

- Six-month period ending 31 December, 1859, 2,167 bales at $6,016
- Six-month period ending 31 December 1860, 1829 bales at $5,470.

and big ones, in the path of the prospective farmer, they were of such a nature that an aggressive farming population could overcome them. Experience South of the boundary had shown what a militant and determined population of unlettered settlers could do to even a strong corporation; the future was to show a parallel in the case of Vancouver Island. In the meantime, the chief significance of the Colony's agricultural imports was the fact that where such imports were necessary an agricultural potential did exist.

Time would solve the problem of a sufficient farming population, but there was another need - the scientific farmer, or the type of man who could give such direction to agricultural practice that the efforts expended would realize the highest potential. In the new colony other problems of necessity took precedence over this less obvious one. Then, too, the small farmer had not the money to adopt any long-range policy of progressive husbandry. His needs were immediate, and his resources seldom afforded any surplus. It required a man like Tolmie to set and maintain a standard. Eventually others would follow as they saw the wisdom of his methods.

For the dissemination of advanced agricultural ideas and for the interchange of methods found profitable by individual farmers the agricultural association is invaluable. Composed of farmers and established for the purpose of caring for their interests, it can become

The chief one being, of course, the system of land sales which denied opportunity to the man with little capital and automatically ruled out the type of pioneer who had settled Old Oregon. Labor was another difficulty, aggravated at the time by the attraction of the gold diggings.
an effective organ for the solution of problems common to an area. The annual exhibitions such an institution provides afford an opportunity for the healthy competition that often results in the adoption of better methods.

Inevitably, the rural population around Victoria realized the advisability of forming a farmer's organization. To this end a meeting was held in April, 1861, and a committee, headed by Alexander Caulfield Anderson, was appointed to draft a prospectus for the association. Dr. Tolmie's name does not appear among those present at this inaugural meeting, but his election to the presidency of the society that was formed as a result of it indicates that he was certainly there in spirit.

From the first he was a proponent of progressive agriculture. At Victoria's first exhibition held in October he gave concrete expression to his methods by carrying off an imposing number of prizes in the poultry, livestock and horticultural classes. His beets and squash were "ahead of anything of the kind." His lambs were adjudged the best, as were his entries of swine and cattle. He had shown the

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57 "Agricultural and Horticultural Society," British Colonist, Friday, April 26, 1861, p.3.
58 "Agricultural Exhibition and Horticultural Society," British Colonist, Thursday, October 3, 1861, p.3.
59 Loc.cit.
best oats and taken first prize for his display of eggs. There is no indication that Tolmie had competition in all the classes he entered, and his success probably acted as a strong incentive to other farmers to offer some competition to those of his products that were unchallenged. Farming was still young enough in the district to profit by the knowledge that familiar products could be grown locally. But the greatest encouragement Tolmie gave to his competitors that day was the sale of his first prize two-year-old bull to an Oregon farmer. The price was $300. One can imagine the impetus given to better stock-breeding when one animal could command such a figure. It was a practical demonstration of the value of selective breeding, sorely needed in a district where the prevailing custom favored "dirt-farming" with its patches of swamp-grass and its herds of brindle cattle.

In a larger way Tolmie had given the new association the local prestige it needed. As a member of the Board of Management for the Hudson's Bay Company his influence counted for a great deal. The Company was still large and powerful and the value of the support of its higher officials was almost an essential for any civic

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60 The actual prize list is interesting as it shows the diversification of Tolmie's mixed farming at Cloverdale:

1st prize for the best 5 lambs
1st " " " 5 hoggets
2nd " " " 5 hoggets
1st " " " 5 Southdown lambs
2nd " " " 5 Southdown lambs
1st " " oats
1st " " parsnips
1st " " mangolds
1st " " carrots
Prize for best 2-year-old bull
" " 2 year old heifer.
1st prize for best dozen eggs.
Moreover, it was good that settler and Company official could meet in the exhibition arena and compete on equal terms for prizes that held more of honor than emolument.

Tolmie's interest in the agricultural association was by no means a lordly gesture to be forgotten once the rustics had been shown the way. In 1862 he accepted for the second time the presidency of the infant society, in spite of the fact that his political and business connections were making his life exceedingly busy. In the exhibition of that year he was again an active competitor, and when the judges made their awards, he received seven first and two second prizes for exhibits in the livestock, grain, hay and root crop classes. In view of the pressing shortage of livestock fodder noted above in the Colony at the time, his success in the growth of hay was important, for it presented certain proof that the reason for the shortage did not lie with the land.

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61 "Agricultural Show," British Colonist, Thursday, October 3, 1861, p.2. This was emphasized in an editorial which stressed the part played by the large company: "Aside from the General Committee of the Association, the success of the show was due in a very great degree to a few gentlemen connected with the Hudson Bay and Puget Sound farms. Had it not been for them, the show would have come off very slimly indeed." Coming from Amor de Cosmos, the arch-enemy of the Company, this testimonial is particularly valuable.

62 "Agricultural and Horticultural Society," British Colonist, Thursday, July 17, 1862, p.3.

63 "The Exhibition," British Colonist, Thursday, October 2, 1862, p.3.
The year 1864 witnessed a lull in the activities of the Association. Apparently a general apathy, reflected in the failure to collect sufficient funds to finance a fair, halted a movement which had already shown its intrinsic worth to the colony. But the halt was only temporary, for in the following year, with appropriate newspaper fanfare, a third exhibition restored the exhibition to its proper place in the district's agriculture. As in the former contests, Tolmie was exceedingly active, and maintained his enviable position by carrying off eighteen prizes for field, stock and dairy exhibits.

Unfortunately, the interest which Victoria had first evinced in agricultural display was to drop sharply during the next three years. Other interests, notably political, kept the island colony from following up the promising start it had made in 1861. Then there was the inauguration of an agricultural association in Saanich which absorbed what interest remained. Also, with the departure of the gold rush boom population and the consequent decline in agricultural values, the industry lost some of the attraction it had held in the early sixties. For his own part, Tolmie was overburdened with business affairs in connection with the settlement of the Oregon claims of his Company and with the assumption of the senior position on the Hudson's Bay Board.

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64 "The Agricultural Show," Daily British Colonist, Saturday, September 16, 1865, p.3. Noteworthy was a first prize for butter, which might well have been a result of the Russian contract which Tolmie had been fulfilling at Nisqually.

65 It will be recalled that he suffered a severe illness directly resultant from the arduous period between 1864 and 1867.
of Management. Without his strong hand to guide the society, there seems to have been little initiative to carry forward its aim of mutual cooperation for general advancement. 66

With the re-establishment in 1868 of the exhibition after three years of inactivity Tolmie demonstrated that his business affairs had not dulled his ability to compete successfully with local farmers. His exhibits won for him thirty dollars, the second highest total of prize money in the show. 67 As president of the society (for the third time) it was fitting that he should set the example by a prominent display of first-class farm stock and products. And there were few in the district who were more suited to deliver a presidential word of encouragement to Victoria's resuscitated Agricultural and Horticultural Society. 68 An interesting speculation is the possibility that he was the prime force in the organization, for there were no exhibitions held in the three years in which he did not hold the presidency. It is quite possible that a man of Tolmie's qualities was essential for the promotion

66 Because of the marked lack of interest in agriculture in these years it is interesting to read in 1866 Tolmie had on display in a window in Victoria a few samples of mangolds and potatoes of "enormous size." (---"Vegetables from Cloverdale," Daily British Colonist and Victoria Chronicle, Thursday, December 6, 1866, p.3.) His farm manager, Dougherty, asserted that there were "tons and tons of the same sort at the farm."

67 ---"Agricultural and Horticultural Exhibition," Daily British Colonist & Victoria Chronicle, Saturday, October 10, 1868, p.3. A.C. Anderson was the highest winner with thirty-two dollars.

68 Loc.cit. Apparently the Doctor made a speech which warmly encouraged farmers to continue the revived custom of the exhibition.
of sufficient interest to engender a competitive spirit amongst Vancouver Island farmers.

From this point on Tolmie's constructive activity in Island agriculture was to set an example to British Columbia farmers of steady improvements in spite of financial distress and domestic tragedy. There is a dogged perseverance in the aging Doctor as he enters the products of his farm in successive exhibitions that excites admiration even to-day, and that at the time must have been a source of inspiration to his rural competitors. In 1869, no doubt in preparation for his approaching retirement, Tolmie had imported a thoroughbred bull that won first prize in its class in the exhibition. In September, 1870, far from permitting his cavalier treatment at the hands of the Hudson's Bay Company to interfere, he assumed charge of arrangements for the coming fair. As if to commend him for the appointment, a concurrent news item, in speaking of his imported thoroughbred Durham bull, remarks that his breed "is the finest on the island" and pays tribute to his "splendid cattle." In the ensuing fair, held on September 28 and 29,

69 —"Agricultural and Horticultural Society's Exhibition," Daily British Colonist and Victoria Chronicle, Thursday, September 30, 1869, p.3. The account referred to the animal as the "magnificent bull from Cloverdale." Other prizes included a first for turkeys, the first time, apparently, that turkeys had been shown in Victoria. It might be added that during 1869 he held the presidency of the Society for the fourth time.

70 —"Agri-Horticultural Meeting" Daily Standard, Tuesday, September 13, 1870, p.3.

71 —"Fifth Duke of Northumberland" Daily Standard, Friday, September 16, 1870, p.3.
Tolmie received his usual recognition in terms of prizes awarded.\(^7^2\)

In 1872 the first provincial exhibition was held at Victoria,\(^7^3\) but the Doctor from Cloverdale does not appear to have maintained his usual record of prize-winning. This may have been due to retrenchment necessitated by his reduced financial position after 1870,\(^7^4\) or it may have been the result of the wider competition afforded by the province-wide exhibition. Whatever the reason, Tolmie was awarded only two prizes and one commendation.\(^7^5\) The following year was little better, although an account of the event had this encouraging comment to make:

> Among the livestock none attracted more attention and admiration than two Berkshire sows and a Berkshire boar, imported and exhibited by Dr. Tolmie.\(^7^6\)

The third provincial exhibition saw the Doctor once again prominent among the prize-winners, making a substantial showing in the classes of cattle, hogs, horses and field crops.\(^7^7\) In 1875, at the fourth province-wide exhibition, Tolmie entered exhibits in the cattle class only, and received

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\(^7^3\) There seems to have been no exhibition in Victoria in 1871.

\(^7^4\) A notice in the Standard advertised that Tolmie was disposing of thirteen cattle and three Berkshire sows, and would barter twelve yearling steers, fifteen to twenty hogs, five tons of potatoes and five tons of oats. This sale could, of course, have been due to the necessity for disposing of surplus stock and food. ([Daily Standard, Friday, September 16, 1870, p.2.])

\(^7^5\) ---"First Provincial Agricultural Exhibition," [Daily British Colonist, Friday, October 11, 1872, p.3.]

\(^7^6\) ---"Second Provincial Exhibition," [Daily British Colonist, Friday, October 3, 1873, p.3.]

\(^7^7\) ---"The Provincial Exhibition," [Daily British Colonist, Friday, October 9, 1874, p.3.]
high praise for his imported Durham bull "Central Pacific."  

The years between 1875 and 1885 may be passed over with the comment that Tolmie maintained the enviable record in the judges' decisions that he had started in 1861 at Vancouver Island's first agricultural fair. Due to keener competition arising from the development of agriculture in Victoria's surrounding districts, notably Metchosin and Saanich, Tolmie tended to concentrate on pure-bred stock for show purposes. His name had long been associated with progressive animal husbandry, and the press was expressing the typical popular attitude when it asked, "Where could be found ... a more stately or massive bull than Dr. Tolmie's famous shorthorn?"

The Provincial Exhibition of 1885 is significant because, for one thing, it was held at New Westminster, a focal point for the rising and forward-looking agrarian population of the Fraser River valley. In addition to the heightened competition, there were the Island-mainland and New Westminster-Victoria feuds which practically assured that decisions favorable to Victoria would be well-considered. As a further obstacle to an Islander's success the boat-trip could materially reduce that fine peak of form by which thoroughbreds gain winning points. It is no small commendation, then, to find that even

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78 "Show Day in the City," British Colonist, Friday, October 8, 1875, p.2.

79 "Great Show and Fair," Daily British Colonist, Friday, October 21, p.5.
at New Westminster Dr. Tolmie won three first prizes for Shorthorn Durham stock, and a first prize for his Leicester ram.\textsuperscript{30}

The old man's life was drawing rapidly to a close in the autumn of 1886. He had made, by his consistent support of the cause of advanced agriculture, a unique place for himself in the story of the development of farming in the province. All too often such a man ends his labors with a pathetically unsuccessful attempt to capture honours that dangle just beyond his reach. But Dr. Tolmie had forty-three years of agricultural experience behind him, including twenty-five of open competition in the show ring. He knew his opponents, and he knew the rules, thoroughly. More than anything else, he knew his livestock, carefully selected and carefully bred. The result was a victory at the exhibition that outshone anything he had achieved before.

His thoroughbred Durhams outclassed everything on the fair ground. He was awarded the prize for the best bull, first and second prizes for the best calf, the prize for the best Durham any age, second prize for the best bred cow, first prize for the best bred two-year-old heifer, first prize for the best bred cow or heifer, and first prize for the best herd (any five animals) of cows or heifers.\textsuperscript{31} In the

\textsuperscript{30}---"Fifth Annual Show of the B.C. Agricultural Society," \textit{Daily British Colonist}, Sunday, October 4, 1885, p.1. With pardonable pride the Colonist had remarked two days before that "Dr. Tolmie's thoroughbred Durham bull is the finest animal ever seen on the mainland and won first prize" (Friday, October 2, 1885, p.3.)

\textsuperscript{31}---"The Fair," \textit{Daily British Colonist}, Saturday, October 9, 1886, p.3.
thoroughbred sheep class he gained first prize for the best Leicester ram, and second for the best pen of five ewes. He was successful even in the non-thoroughbred class, for he won the prize for the best graded stock herd. As a final touch to the picture, giving it a link with his first exhibitions in 1861 and 1862, he won first prize for mangold wurtzels. Two months later he died.

Dr. Tolmie's contribution to the agriculture of his province was based on a broad foundation that was to continue long after his death. It is interesting to find that in 1888 the "Tolmie estate" was still winning first and second prizes for livestock. In another sense, the elevation of his son Simon Fraser Tolmie to the Federal Cabinet post of Minister of Agriculture, may be considered as an aspect of the old gentleman's contribution to agriculture. Yet undoubtedly his major importance in this respect lies in the example he set by the operation of his farm. Commencing in 1861 with first-class stock when the only considerable competitors were the herds of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, he established the principle by which better farmers built up thoroughbred herds. During that period he had not been outgrown by

82 Loc.cit.


the reforms he initiated, but instead had grown with them, maintaining a standard that was ever a step or two above his neighbors. Nor had he lost touch with the less notable branches of scientific agriculture, as the first prize for mangold wurtzels testified.

Among the earliest advocates of scientific animal husbandry in the Province it is doubtful if there is any peer to Dr. Tolmie of Cloverdale.
CHAPTER VI

The Good Citizen

Dr. Tolmie's philosophy towards life affords an interesting and reasonable explanation of his viewpoint (and consequently of his actions) towards the environment in which he lived. For this reason, it can scarcely be omitted in any evaluation of the man which seeks to explain his success and his failure. It is quite beyond the province of this essay to deal in any detail with the various philosophies with which he was acquainted, but it is necessary to indicate what their main implications were for him, and to give some indication of the effects they produced within him, for only then can one intelligently comprehend the man and his life, his work and his contribution to the nineteenth century pioneer society in which he lived.

Tolmie's period in England in 1842 gave him the opportunity he needed to exchange his philosophical ideas with others and to clarify for himself that point of view towards humanity which a man of his character had to have. An important element in this visit is Tolmie's maturity (he was thirty years of age) because he established views at that time which governed his course of action throughout his life. In fact, it is only in terms of this philosophy that his later life is intelligible. True, his position was modified somewhat by the circumstances in which he found himself, but broadly speaking it may be said that
the philosophy he formulated and set forth in 1842 remained
the guiding force of the rest of his life. He did not adhere
to any minute observance of the logical implications of this
thinking, but he did take from it certain applications which
were to color his life, and provide guide-posts to his thinking
on concrete problems. In other words, he did not become a
philosopher, but rather, once satisfied that his point of view
was consistent with reality, he applied it on a broad basis to
his environment.

Because, therefore, this philosophical viewpoint
both echoed his past and predicted his future, it has been deemed
necessary to present it as he wrote it, in some detail: ¹

On reflecting on my mental growth and progression
I have at different times regretted not having kept
a record of the thoughts suggested by reading and
meditation. Being now occupied with the System of
Nature ... advocating Universalism[,] that is, the
doctrine that God is the author of all things good
and bad[,] that all Religions ... have their purpose
to fulfil in the great plan of Providence and that
all[,] casting away superstition exclusiveness and
Individualism[,] are to merge into the Universal
Church whose foundations will be laid in Peace and
Universal Brotherhood. My friend Fox well knew my

¹ Tolmie, Diary, vol. 4, pp. 28-33. The passage was written
on board the Hudson's Bay Barque Columbia on 10 October, 1842,
when Tolmie was on his return journey to North America. It is
particularly valuable as it reflects the product of a year of
thinking, based on ten or fifteen years of serious consciousness
of the deeper implications of this life.
mental wants when he recommended me to purchase the Shepherd. I trust that all the advocates of Cooperation may be fully imbued with its spirit - for it affords a balm and consolation to the mind not to be obtained from any form of old Religion.... It recognizes a providential plan in and extracts good from every thing. It represents cold dead Materialism or Atheism is per se as the most absurd & bigotted of all, and yet candidly allows that good and well meaning men are professors of each and all these beliefs or negations of belief - an admission not to be found in many of the effusions of Orthodox writers on Infidelity.... That there is an intellectual and moral revolution taking place in England now must be evident to every one who observes the workings and upheavings of Society.... So long as the strife between the conflicting parties is carried on by the sword of the Spirit, or the Press, instead of the sword of the flesh or physical force so long will Progress certainly be the result.

... I am now perusing the Shepherd's articles on the System of Nature, and take a deep interest in his Universal views. Some of his ideas had occurred to myself and I was pleased to recognize them worked into a system.... I hope soon to see men ... arising to preach the the [sic] gospel of Universalism and Cooperation to the tens of thousands of longing hearts throughout Britain and America who are desiring better things than the Christianity of Sects can afford.... [I] entered into an examination of the Social System of Robert Owen. After some weeks reading and reflexion the conclusion was forced upon me that nothing short of enlightened Cooperation, based on the principle that we best secure our own happiness by promoting that of others, will prove an effectual preventative of the ills now rending asunder society. The five points of the Charter are in operation in America; and yet Brother Jonathan, altho' better provided as respects the physical, is equally in a state of destitution as regards the intellectual, and moral[,] the higher wants of Man's Nature. Despite his Freeborn Americanism - Universal Suffrage - vote by ballot and all the rest - he cannot be other than the sly, moneygetting, suicide-committing dyspeptic he is[,] made by the spirit of ignorant selfishness or Competition, which in the Western Republics of the new as well as the Eastern
Monarchies of the old world, is now, whatever it may have been (and doubtless it has served a useful purpose in bygone days) the curse and bane of Society. I am delighted to think that in America as well as in England and France there are many minds longing for the Commencement of Universal Peace and Brotherhood.

Several significant inferences may be drawn from this passage. Implicit in the first sentence is Tolmie's characteristic of serious and earnest self-appraisal. This aspect of the man is markedly apparent in his diaries, and was noted above as taking the form of self-castigation and frequent re-assertions of the need for a stronger faith and will to apply himself to both his public and private duties. In practice of his daily life it led to a conscientiousness inspired by a self-evaluation of his devotion to his duty and his fellow-man.

Coupled with this characteristic of self-appraisal was the religious aspect. And here the Doctor was in the forefront of nineteenth century thought. Bertrand Russell, in accounting for the great complexity of the intellectual life of this century, says:

...a profound revolt, both philosophical and political, against traditional systems in thought, in politics, and in economics, gave rise to attacks upon many beliefs and institutions that had hitherto been regarded as unassailable. This revolt had two very different forms, one romantic, the other rationalistic....The romantic revolt passes from Byron, Schopenhauer, and Nietzsche to Mussolini and Hitler; the rationalistic revolt begins with the French philosophers of the Revolution,
passes on, somewhat softened, to the philosophical radicals in England, then acquires a deeper form in Marx and issues in Soviet Russia.\(^2\)

Tolmie was within the tradition of his century, and seems to have followed Russell's first form of revolt - the rationalistic. This would lead him, in 1842, to a favorable view of Robert Owen, and an identity of interest with the Chartists.

One implication of Tolmie's Universalism was the doctrine of cooperation - a cooperation, be it noted, based on the religious conviction that "we best secure our own happiness by promoting that of others,"\(^3\) and that only a socialistic form of cooperation will cure the ills of society. This was the motivation that led him to a consideration of Owenism, which ideology re-affirmed his belief in broadly-based humanitarian ideals.

The practical application of this philosophy to Tolmie's social environment is interesting. Implicit within it was the idea of a "duty to society," very little removed from the noblesse oblige of the aristocratic classes before the rise of industrialism. Tolmie, with his serious, self-examining nature, would of necessity see society as in need of his assistance. It was, therefore, a logical end to his philosophy that he should devote more than usual attention to politics, as


\(^3\) See above, p.182.
in that field lay the greatest possibility of social reform. Of itself, this conviction through faith might well have established Tolmie as a martyr, great reformer, or a zealot in the cause of the downtrodden. But there were other elements which greatly mitigated any such zeal. Foremost among these was a personal characteristic. Tolmie lacked the breadth which is essential to the grasping of the broader social views. Once the fundamentals had been presented, he recognized them readily enough, so that he did follow Owen into Cooperation, and he did see the necessity for humanitarianism in a world devoted to materialism. But what he did not see was that in leaving England and returning to the New World he was leaving the social conflict of an advancing industrialism to return to a pioneer society. He had studied and embraced ideas concerning the brutal end-product of an unrestrained and rampant competitive industrial society, and brought them back to a pioneer land wherein unrestrained competition was the only quick road to civilization. Without this grasp of the essential difference between England and North West America in the 1840's, Tolmie felt that his theories of mutual cooperation were right in theory but inapplicable in practice. He therefore retained the theory but was forced to withdraw his support from the practice. The result was the absence of any real contribution to pioneer politics.

An interesting comparison may be made with Dr. John
McLoughlin. If one can rely on Sir George Simpson's evaluation of him, (for in spite of their enmity, Simpson was a reliable judge of character) McLoughlin "would be a Radical in any Country under any Government and under any circumstances." Tolmie had had a considerable period of exposure to McLoughlin's personality and ideas at Fort Vancouver from 1836 to 1841. If he did become interested in radical thought at Fort Vancouver he certainly cultivated its growth in England. On his return, and for some years afterwards, he remained interested in such revolutionary movements as Chartism and Communism. It is not too much to presume that McLoughlin was interested in reading these journals. At any rate, the Tolmie-McLoughlin association probably did nothing to reduce Tolmie's revolutionary philosophy.

Apart from his radicalism, another factor militated against Tolmie as a strong political figure. He was by nature inclined to consider and weigh issues rather than arrive at a quick decision and act at once. For the student this was an indispensable characteristic, but for the man of politics it could become impractical vacillation.

One is forced to the conclusion, then, that as a result of his philosophy, his nature, and his environment, Tolmie lacked

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5 Tolmie, Letterbook, p.17. The entry, d/ September 29, 1847, requests "Sample Nos of any new advocate of Communism in any of its forms Owenism, Fourierism, &c."
the inspirational motivation to enter politics that he should have had to be successful. On the other hand, he did have a strong sense of public responsibility which was fostered by his connection with a patriarchal organization traditionally responsible for regional government. The result was Tolmie's entry into the Provisional Government in Oregon in 1846.

There is no record of the Doctor's first entering politics at the instance of the Hudson's Bay Company, but very probably this was the case. McLoughlin told Tolmie that the Management had decided that the Provisional Government should be supported by the Company, and as there was literally no one else of similar qualifications in the newly-formed Lewis County who could represent the Company at the polls, Tolmie was the only choice. In the ensuing election the Doctor was successful.

In view of the circumstances under which he contested the election, his record in the Provisional Legislature is interesting, for it was to be indicative of his later political life.

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6 Only pertinent aspects of Tolmie's political career will be treated below. The length of time he spent in active politics, particularly on Vancouver Island, together with the great complexity of the numerous issues at stake, precluded any detailed examination and appraisal of Tolmie's political life.


activity. He served on three legislative committees dealing with the judiciary, commerce and education. In accordance with Governor Abernethy's Message, he introduced and carried through a bill to establish a pilotage at the dangerous mouth of the Columbia River. He showed a level-headed approach to the Judiciary Committee when he advocated its abolition, pointing out that as the United States would soon be establishing its authority in the area, the work of the committee to set up a judicial system was a needless expense. Tolmie's chief interest and biggest fight was, however, over the liquor question. The provisional government, mainly composed of opportunistic pioneers, was strongly in favor of the unrestricted manufacture and sale of spirits. Governor Abernethy and Tolmie were as strongly on the other side, believing that the Indians, who were the obvious market, would soon be unmanageable if spirits were made plentiful. The House over-rode the Governor's veto by a vote of ten to five.

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9 "Legislative Doings," Oregon Spectator, Thursday, December 24, 1846, p.2.

10 Loc.cit. While this Act was of great public benefit, it is significant that the Hudson's Bay Company, anticipating sailing rights on the Columbia for many years to come, would also benefit greatly by having a pilot service at the mouth of the River.

11 Loc.cit. The young Legislature disregarded his motion, and set up a judiciary system which, of course, had to be remodelled in a short time.

12 Loc.cit.
and Tolmie's efforts were unrewarded, but his stand was significant.

This question of the manufacture and sale of "ardent spirits" was the only one in which Tolmie seems to have taken more than ordinary interest. If it is considered on its political merits it has no great value, except as a political football to win votes, but considered as a moral and social matter, it can be very important. Tolmie was by this time deeply interested in Indian welfare, and by virtue of his position with the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company, he was interested in maintaining a contented and diligent Indian population. Moreover, he had been trained by the Hudson's Bay Company, who forbade the sale of liquor to the Indians. In addition to this, Tolmie was deeply interested in the Temperance Movement at the time.¹³ Thus, it will be seen that his chief political action was in a matter actually removed from the political field, and more closely connected with his moral and social background. Not that this is unusual in or unworthy of a strong political figure, but it did show where his interests lay. He was interested more in the results that could be obtained through politics than in politics itself. This view of the expediency of the political life was to be characteristic of his entire political career, and goes far to explain why he never reached the Legislative Council in Vancouver Island between 1866 and

¹³ See below, p. 213.
1871, nor the Cabinet between 1874 and 1878. He was exceedingly interested in what he could derive from politics, but in the field itself he had no driving ambition.

If there was any doubt as to Tolmie's reason for entering the Provisional Government in Oregon, there is none concerning his entry into Vancouver Island Colony politics. Within a year of his arrival on the Island in 1859, he was requested by the Hudson's Bay Company to offer himself for election. He obeyed the request, and was elected on January 14, 1860, as a representative of Victoria County. Tolmie was in politics again, though, as before, not through any particularly personal motivation. Rather, his entry was in the nature of acquiescence, and his record for the next five years was to be that of a man whose duty had been pointed out to him, and who thereafter took the requisite interest.

Had Tolmie's viewpoint not been qualified by a sense of public duty his record would have been dull indeed. But, as in the case of his connection with the Provisional Government, other interests were to arise which could well be furthered by political action. In Oregon the liquor question had been foremost; in Vancouver Island education, Indian affairs and agriculture were to

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14 Tolmie, Hist. of P.S., Photostat in B. C. Provincial Archives, p.58. His own account says: "At the request of the H.B.Co. Dr. Tolmie became a member of the House of Legislative Assembly in 1860 and continued in it until 1865."

15 ---"Victoria County Election" The British Colonist, Saturday, January 14, 1860, p.2. Tolmie headed the poll with 44 votes, Henry P. Crease was second with 39.
provide the Doctor with his chief political interests. Other questions were to arise, such as the free port issue and the union of the two colonies, but in these his actions and outlook were conditioned by his connection with the Company and his sense of public duty, and cannot be taken as fundamental political interests. Thus, he rendered worthwhile service on various select committees, attended sessions regularly and gave a generally steady and serious attention to all legislative matters.16

His platform of 1859 had included a pledge to work for Indian rights and free education.17 In conformance with these intentions, he petitioned for a select committee to investigate Indian affairs in 1860,18 and gave notice of his intention to

16 Vancouver Island, House of Assembly, Minutes March 1, 1860 - February 6, 1861; September 2, 1863-August 25, 1864. Original MS. in B. C. Archives, p.26. Tolmie gives notice that he will bring in a bill to expedite the laying of roads in Vancouver Island. On pp. 285-287 is a report of Dr. Tolmie as Chairman of the Select Committee on the Salt Spring Island and Chemainus elections of 1863. Throughout the minutes several other references may be found to Tolmie's work as a committee member. His record is the same for the period 1864 to 1866 (Vancouver Island, House of Assembly, Minutes, September 12, 1864 - August 31, 1866).

17 W. F. Tolmie, "To the Electors of Victoria District Vancouver Island" British Colonist, Saturday, December 24, 1859, p.2.

18 Vancouver Island, House of Assembly, Motion Book, March 1860 - June 1865. Original in B. C. Archives p. 16. (18 June, 1860)
require returns showing the number of persons convicted for selling liquor to the Indians.\textsuperscript{19} His interest in education he showed amply by his work on the Colony’s first Board of Education, which met on June 2, 1865.\textsuperscript{20} Agriculture, always important in his life, inspired his motion for an act to "protect persons aiming at improvement in the breed of Horses Cattle and Sheep."\textsuperscript{21} Apart from these activities, however, his record in the Assembly was undistinguished. True, he sought re-election in 1863 and was successful,\textsuperscript{22} being the candidate with the largest number of votes, but the restricted electorate and his prominent position as a local business-man probably accounted in part for his victory. He had shown little far-sightedness in colony policy, maintaining that responsible government would be too costly to establish, due to low population.\textsuperscript{23} Rather, his was the role of the sincere, hard-working committee-man, intent on the advancement of the smaller issues that confronted him rather than the larger ones that faced

\textsuperscript{19} Ibid., p.82. (5 October, 1864).

\textsuperscript{20} Vancouver Island, Board of Education, Minutes, p.1. Original in B. C. Archives. Tolmie’s work on education is treated in greater detail below.

\textsuperscript{21} Vancouver Island, House of Assembly, Minutes, p.4 (April 2, 1860).

\textsuperscript{22} ---"Victoria District Elections", Victoria Daily Chronicle, Thursday, July 23, 1863, p.3.

\textsuperscript{23} ---"Victoria District", Daily British Colonist, Wednesday, July 22, 1863, p.2. This was not the argument of an advanced political thinker, nor of a man who in 1842 had spoken of Cooperation and Universalism.
his community. The best illustration of his lack of political foresight is the extreme scarcity of notices of motion or requests for returns by him amongst the records of the Vancouver Island Legislative Assembly.

With the union of Vancouver Island and British Columbia in 1866, the Legislative Assembly came to an end, and Tolmie did not stand for re-election to the partially elective British Columbia Council. Other activities, notably his managership of the Hudson's Bay Company and his interest in free education and the promotion of agricultural consciousness in the City and District of Victoria, claimed his attention and no doubt allowed him little time for parliamentary service.

Once aroused by active participation in colonial politics, however, Tolmie's political interests were not to cease with his withdrawal from the House of Assembly. In 1867 he wrote to Joseph W. McKay expressing strong pro-Confederation views that showed a close knowledge of the federation question and its alliance to the projected railway line. The general tenor of his remarks were essentially practical, in that he hoped the Colony could so enter

24 His untiring work with the Crown Lands Commission bears ample testimony of his desire to do a thorough piece of work - Vancouver Island, House of Assembly, Committee Book of Select Committee on Crown Lands 1863-1864. Original in B. C. Archives.

25 "District No 2" Daily British Colonist, Friday, December 24, 1866, p.2. J. D. Pemberton won the election by acclamation. Tolmie may have been too busy with the settlement of Hudson's Bay affairs in Oregon, or he may not have cared to oppose Pemberton, another Hudson's Bay official.
the new Dominion as to make the best bargain possible. Then he is found supporting De Cosmos' motion to have an island railway as the logical end of the transcontinental line. De Cosmos' nomination as the Victoria District representative in the British Columbia colonial legislative council was seconded by the Doctor. In 1871, also, he nominated DeCosmos for the federal house.

This keen and continuing political interest in the Terminus question may on first sight be taken to be evidence of a sense of public duty in a disinterested man who had the community's welfare at heart. There is, however, reason to doubt the disinterestedness of Tolmie in the whole matter. In a letter to the Secretary of the Hudson's Bay Company in London in 1870, Tolmie goes into intricate detail on the advisability of Esquimalt as the only logical terminus for any transcontinental line.

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26 W. F. Tolmie to Joseph W. MacKay, d/ Victoria, 4 November, 1867. Original in B. C. Archives.
28 Loc.cit.
29 Ibid., p. 142.
arguments he advances all look to the benefit of the Island of such a terminus, and seem to speak highly of Tolmie as an unbiased citizen of Victoria. But some other factors detract from this altruism. It will be recalled that Tolmie was negotiating for a position of responsibility with the Company after his discharge in June, 1870. In the same letter in which he makes formal application for this position he also puts the arguments noted above. Had this letter been made public at the time, it might well have given his political opponents the opportunity of dealing him a crushing blow, for after his long discussion on the advantages of Esquimalt and Victoria as the Western terminus, he writes:

The importance of the matters above treated of to the Puget's Sound Company will I trust be my justification for having written at such length. It is desirable that all interested in Victoria and Esquimalt tho' residing in Great Britain or Canada should be on the alert to advocate our claims for the Terminus. When it is gained it will be for the Agents to make sure by concessions of land if necessary that it shall be located on the Company's land. Sir James Douglas and ex chief justice [sic] Cameron both land owners on the opposite side of Esquimalt will of course endeavor to have the terminus on their side31

One must not be too hasty in arriving at the conclusion that the Doctor's interest in the terminus was altogether personal. It may be that Tolmie, realizing as he would the importance to the Hudson's Bay Company of a large tract of land situated in the area of a terminus, was implying by his letter that as local secretary for

31 Ibid., pp. 123-124.
the Company, he could do a great deal to turn the Terminus question to profit. In view of his vigorous fight for the island railway and Esquimalt terminus some five years later, when the Company could do him little service, it is quite possible that Tolmie saw where he could serve both himself and the island. If such were the case, he can not be blamed too harshly.

By 1874 the Doctor was prepared to enter politics once again. An opportunity was presented in Victoria District when Amor De Cosmos resigned his seat owing to the termination of dual representation in the provincial and federal Houses. Amidst cheers and good wishes he was nominated on February 23, 1874, being characterized as one not guilty of the charge of office-seeking if elected.\(^3^2\) Winning the bye-election, he was sworn in to the Legislature on March 2.\(^3^3\)

His political affiliation is interesting. The *Parliamentary Companion* listed him as "Liberal" in 1874,\(^3^4\) which championing of view he was to prove conclusively in a letter to the press excusing Mackenzie and berating Macdonald as the man responsible for the non-satisfaction of the railway clause of the terms of union in

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1874. Tolmie, the radical of 1842, had become the liberal of 1874.

His activities in the Vancouver Island Colonial Legislature might well have suggested his career in the Provincial House. Again he was to be the useful member, conscientiously doing his duty for his electors. As before, those causes in which he had a personal and prior interest claimed much of his attention, so that the broader political issues were usually left to other men. His pre-occupation with Indian welfare was reflected in March, 1875, in his request for all official correspondence respecting Indian affairs since 1874. Undoubtedly this material was to be used in his forthcoming pamphlet urging the better federal care of the Indian population of the Province. His long interest in education prompted his motion for a select committee to examine the Public School Act of 1872. In 1876 he was chairman of a committee to investigate and report upon Crown Lands at Ogden Point. Farmers

35 W. F. Tolmie, "Mr. Face both Ways", Daily British Colonist, Saturday, June 27, 1874, p.2. Macdonald had formulated the terms, not MacKenzie. "The late Government of Sir John A. Macdonald is the party upon which the odium must rest for having broken faith with British Columbia, and not Mr. MacKenzie."

36 British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, Session 1875, Victoria, Government Printer, 1875, p.15.


38 British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, Session 1875, Victoria, Government Printer, 1875, p.22.

39 British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, Session 1876, Victoria, Government Printer, 1876, p.44.
and their interests were considered in three measures in which the Doctor played a leading role, for he introduced bills for the protection of breeding stock, the prevention of the spread of thistles, and the summary punishment of trespassers. Apart from these bills, he was appointed chairman of a committee determining the relative claims of sheep and cattle owners whose stock was pastured on public lands.

Apart from these fields of personal concern Tolmie also rendered valuable service on a select committee on public accounts, and seconded a motion to establish a police force that would curb Interior Indians in their depredations on settlers. Following up his earlier interest in the Terminus Question, he contributed a series of seven very lengthy letters to the Colonist in the summer and autumn of 1877 which ably advocated the Yellowstone - Bute Inlet - Victoria route for the railway and set forth a series of

40 Ibid., p.40.

41 British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, Session 1877, Victoria, Government Printer, 1877, p.24.

42 Ibid., p.9.

43 British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, Session 1876, Victoria, Government Printer, 1876, p.47. He rendered his report on Wednesday, 10 May, 1876.

44 Ibid., p.15.

45 British Columbia, Legislative Assembly, Journals of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of British Columbia, Session 1876, Victoria, Government Printer, 1876, p.52.
Tolmie had yet to suffer defeat at the polls. He had been re-elected to the Provincial House in 1875, and had every reason to expect a further success in the general election of 1878. His platform was sound and popular. He had a local reputation as a man of integrity and energy. He had gained valuable experience in two kinds of legislatures. But against him were his Liberal sympathies, for the Mackenzie sun had set. Perhaps, though, the electorate had grown tired of his unspectacular role in the House. Of his past he could say with pride, "I have never yet been absent a day, nor have I once shirked a vote on any question," but neither could he point to any outstanding achievement or spectacular success. The result of the election was Tolmie's first and last defeat, for he never entered politics again.

Glancing back of his political record one can see

46 Daily British Colonist, July 28, August 17 and 30, October 14, November 6, December 13 and 14, 1877.

47 W. F. Tolmie, "To the Electors of Victoria Electoral District," Daily British Colonist, Sunday, May 5, 1878, p.2. Numbered among the planks in his platform were support of the public school system, retrenchment in government expenditure, increased representation and redistribution of seats, and stringent curtailment of Chinese immigration.

48 Loc.cit.

49 C. H. Mackintosh, ed., The Canadian Parliamentary Companion and Annual Register, 1879, Ottawa, Government Printing Bureau, 1879, p. 381. Two seats were at stake, and Tolmie was third in a field of four.
numerous evidences of the sincere effort of a public-minded citizen. If his earlier views had been impractical, they were sufficiently modified by the time he had reached Victoria to afford him the confidence of the electorate on four occasions. Yet that very modification may have been his basic political weakness, for he lacked the zeal of a political leader – the consuming fire that carries a leader to the fore, and will not be denied by circumstance. Tolmie was the careful thinker, perhaps propelled unresistingly into political life. With his studious, thoughtful, almost philosophical approach to public life, it is little wonder that his career in that field is colorless and just a little tedious.

Another aspect of nineteenth century humanitarianism was public education, and here Dr. Tolmie was to lead a courageous campaign against the forces of reactionary conservatism that reserved education for the minority able to pay for it. Associated in his philosophy with religion, it was logical that Tolmie's first educational activity should take the form of religious instruction. Indeed, it was Tolmie, in company with Chief Trader Francis Heron, who gave the first religious instruction to the Indians of Puget

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50 Tolmie's greatest work in the cause of humanitarianism was of course his work with the Indians and his championing of their cause. See above, Chapter III.
Sound. Although he makes no further mention of Indian religious instruction in his diary, the Journal of Occurrences mentions that on Sunday, December 22, 1833 (a week or so after Tolmie had left) "Several Indian families came in as usual to get some religious instruction." It may be safely presumed that the religious-minded young doctor had taken a prominent part in this instruction. In 1838 James Douglas informed the London office that Tolmie had opened a Sunday School for the natives, and was conducting it in the Indian language. This creditable work was to be continued at York Factory when Tolmie was awaiting his ship to England, and already he had enlarged his field of instruction to include subjects of a non-religious nature.

The concept of the brotherhood of man which Tolmie was


54 Letitia Hargrave to Dugald MacTavish, Sr., d/ York Factory, 10 September, 1841, in Margaret A. McLeod, The Letters of Letitia Hargrave, Toronto, Champlain Society, 1947, p. 102. Dr. Tolmie "had a class for teaching the people and children anything they liked, and arithmetic and sacred music in particular."
to embrace so warmly in Europe undoubtedly broadened his educational outlook from the religious to the secular, and from the Indian to all the unlettered whites. Robert Owen had attempted free education for the poor, and Tolmie was an enthusiastic Owenist. But the opportunity for militant action on the educational front does not seem to have presented itself until 1865, when he was appointed a member of the Colonial Board of Education.  

Apparently his worth as an educator was recognized by the other members of the Board, for at the first meeting on June 2, 1865, he was unanimously elected chairman.

The functions of the Board were to administer the newly instituted free schools of Victoria, together with all other schools in the island colony, which henceforth were to be free. The experiment was intended to continue for a period of one year as a trial of the principle of free education in the Colony.

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55 W. S. Tolmie to Henry Wakeford, A/Colonial Secretary, d/Victoria, May 17, 1865. Original in B.C. Archives. In this letter which accepts the appointment, Tolmie says, "I shall gladly, and to the best of my ability, attend to such business as may come before [me]."


57 Ibid., p.112.

58 Ibid., p. 57.
was conducted without incident for several months, but in the meantime there were indications of approaching difficulties, for as early as August 1, 1865, Governor Kennedy was trusting that the Board would "defer any action that would involve fresh expenditure." As free education depended upon public funds, and as the Governor virtually controlled those funds, his warning to economize was significant. Nevertheless, the experiment continued satisfactorily, and a year after it had been inaugurated the following resolution was drafted:

That in the opinion of the Board a trial of twelve months has successfully proved the advantage of the free school system as now established in this colony; and that there can be little doubt that it will confer still greater and lasting benefits in the future.

Financial difficulties had already been foreseen by the Board, however, for they continued their resolution in a tone something between a warning and a plea:

That the Board is fully aware of the urgent necessity for economy in every branch of the public expenditure at the moment; but that the Board has also acquired the conviction, that whatever difference of opinion may exist as to some of its minor details, it is the general wish of the whole population that

59 Ibid., p.19.

60 Ibid., p.60 - The resolution of which this quotation is an extract was formulated at a meeting of the Board of Education held on June 16, 1866.
the present system of a thoroughly free education be continued and maintained; and that it would therefore be unadvisable to attempt any retrenchment in a department already badly provided for, and in which many of the teachers are inadequately requited for their labors. 61

The resolution even went so far as to suggest an educational tax, whose nature was not elaborated upon, to offset an anticipated expenditure for the coming year of $13,000. 62

Notwithstanding the manifest popularity of free education, public finances could ill withstand expenditure on such idealistic experiments. Consequently, Governor Kennedy ten weeks later informed the Board through the Colonial Secretary that after August 31, 1866, the Government would take no further responsibility whatsoever for educational expenses. 63 There was no alternative but to inform the teachers of the Governor's letter, and allow them to "govern themselves accordingly." The members of the profession answered nobly that service would continue for the present, in the hope that something might yet be done. 64 There was, unfortunately, little that could be done, and to make matters more difficult, when

61 Loc.cit.

62 Ibid., p.61. The forwarding of this resolution was postponed indefinitely as several of the members felt that it might be considered ultra vires to make such suggestions as to the raising of funds.

63 Ibid., p.72. Apparently the Colonial Secretary's letter was dated August 31, 1866, which meant an immediate halt to government support, and indicated the gravity of the Colony's financial position.

64 Ibid., p.75.
Governor Seymour arrived in the newly united Colony, his views were definitely antagonistic to free education on any basis.\textsuperscript{65}

In a message to the Legislative Council on February 28, 1868, he attacked free education generally and the work of the Board in particular.\textsuperscript{66} On 5 April, 1867, Seymour went a step further, and refused to acknowledge the existence of the Board of Education, on the grounds of the Government's decision to withdraw support of free education on August 31, 1866, and on the grounds that the number of members of the Board was below the legal limit.\textsuperscript{67} The Governor was requested in strong terms to fill the existing vacancies, which he immediately did.\textsuperscript{68}

At this point feeling amongst the members of the Board was understandably high. At the next meeting on June 22 Tolmie resigned the chairmanship after two years in order to play a more

\textsuperscript{65} Governor Kennedy had permitted the experiment of free education on sufferance, for the Board mentioned in a Statement recorded August 10, 1867, the "well-known hostility of the then governor [Governor Kennedy] towards free education." (\textit{Proceedings} p.112).

\textsuperscript{66} \textit{Ibid}., p.86.

\textsuperscript{67} A. N. Birch, Colonial Secretary, to Alfred Waddington, Superintendent of Education, d/ New Westminster, 5 April, 1867, copy in \textit{Proceedings of the Board of Education}, p.90. Both arguments were specious, for Governor Kennedy had appointed the Board but had never dissolved it, and, moreover, had not made new appointments when original members resigned.

\textsuperscript{68} \textit{Ibid}., p.93.
active part in the proceedings. His activity henceforward as reflected in his numerous motions from the floor of the meetings gave evidence of his sincere interest in the temporarily lost cause of free education. For the cause was indeed lost. Of $10,000 voted for the Colony the Island was to receive $6000, whereas their expenses, including liabilities since August 31, 1866, amounted to $11,572.06. A committee, which included Tolmie, waited upon the Governor to attempt some compromise, but he rather acidly replied that he was pained to learn that Vancouver Island parents had so little pride in their children that they would not contribute to their education, and thought that further funds might be available if the "greater self reliance" of the Mainland afforded any surplus from their grant of $4000.

In the meantime, no teacher had received any salary whatsoever for the year August 1866 to June 1867, and the Board began to receive applications from some of the teachers to continue

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69 Ibid., pp.93-94.

70 Ibid., pp.93-131, passim.

71 Ibid., p.94. Liabilities to June 30 amounted to $8,192.26, or over $2000 more than the total grant, and Seymour had insisted that "the amount now offered must besides promoting the current education of the children, serve to extinguish any liabilities of the Government for past services." The task was manifestly impossible.

the system on a fee basis of one dollar per month per pupil. In spite of the aversion felt towards this policy, there was no alternative, and consequently other teachers were circularized to offer similar propositions. By August 12 Victoria's Central School was opened, but this time on a fee-paying basis. The battle for free education had been lost.

In all the negotiations and the work connected with this first Board of Education, Tolmie had played a very prominent part, so that his name became synonymous with better educational standards throughout the city and island. This was officially recognized with the re-introduction of free education through the Public School Act of 1872, when Tolmie was appointed as a member of the new Board. He continued to work as a member until 1879, when a new Act automatically dissolved this second Board of Education. This time free education was established as a community necessity, so that Tolmie's work consisted of careful supervision

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73 Ibid., p.108 (July 29, 1867.) A grant of sixty dollars per month was requested also in the case of Mr. Jessop of the Central School at Victoria.

74 Loc.cit.

75 Ibid., p.116. The Board continued to sit until March 9, 1869, when it adjourned sine die. The problem of salary arrears continued up to the final adjournment. On December 20, 1868, $434.10, the result of a benefit performance by the Victoria Amateur Theatrical Club, was distributed amongst eight Island teachers. At the last meeting of the Board Dr. Tolmie carried his motion that the remaining funds of $94.81 be handed over to Mrs. Butler who had taught in Saanich without remuneration for the past year.

76 "Appointments", Daily British Colonist, May 5, 1872, p.3.

77 The Public Schools Act 1879.
of teachers, text-books, examinations and other aspects of elementary education that required patience and sympathetic understanding.

In his domestic life, Dr. Tolmie adhered faithfully to his belief in the advantages of education. His son Simon mentions that his well-stocked library was the scene of regular morning classes, commencing at 5 a.m., in which the Doctor supervised the future Premier's daily homework. His close knowledge of Euclid, Algebra, Latin, French and Greek seem to have made him an excellent, if somewhat severe, invigilator, and probably made up in some degree for his inability to send his children to Scotland for their education, a common practice amongst the higher officials of the Hudson's Bay Company.

Tolmie's serious and constructive work in the field of public education was the logical outcome of his advanced social views, but it was also a manifestation of his student's outlook on life. All his life the man had been a serious scholar, and the studies he pursued show that it was a love of learning rather than a desire for display or advancement that prompted his serious interest in the world of science and letters.

As early as his university days his serious and attentive conduct had marked him as a man to whom personal study would afford deep satisfaction in later life. His studies over, one might have

expected that he would have turned to lighter reading, but his book list on board the *Ganymede* in 1832/33 indicates the most serious strain in his reading matter. His fondness for reading serious works was to continue throughout his life. His diary records that at Forts Nisqually, McLoughlin, Simpson and Vancouver he had a regular schedule which, though sometimes departed from, guided his study constantly. During the busy years at Nisqually with the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company he continued to read such works as Macaulay's *Essays* and Carlyle's *Cromwell*. In his later years he was to derive constant enjoyment from his well-stocked library at Cloverdale, in which he spent a certain part of each day at reading and study.

From his literary background and early training Tolmie

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79 Tolmie, *Diary*, vols. 1 and 2, *passim*. Tolmie mentions some thirty-six works on a variety of topics such as philosophy, religion, natural history, anthropology, literature etc. He apparently brought many others with him, and from his remarks one can gather that he read diligently and consistently throughout the entire voyage.


81 Interview with Miss Josette C. Tolmie, Victoria, B.C., July 24, 1948.
developed a wide variety of interests.\textsuperscript{82} Probably the most prominent was his interest in natural history, in which botany was his particular though by no means his exclusive interest. Mention has been made in Chapter I of the importance of this aspect in his original appointment to the Hudson’s Bay Company. It was a study that was to hold his attention all his life. During his first eight years in the Columbia Department he was to collect a host of plants and seeds which he forwarded to England and Scotland.\textsuperscript{83} In 1852 he was collecting botanical specimens for George Gibbs, with whom he was working in connection with Indian languages.\textsuperscript{84} Five years later, in 1857, he wrote a memorandum

\textsuperscript{82} As each of these aspects of Tolmie’s academic and scientific activity form studies in themselves, no attempt is made to do more than mention them, in the hope that even a cursory treatment will give a better picture of the kind of man Tolmie was.

\textsuperscript{83} Letter to the writer from W.M. Campbell, Curator, Royal Botanic Gardens, d/ Kew, Surrey, England, August 7, 1948. Mr. Campbell states, “Plants collected by Tolmie are preserved in the Herbarium of Royal Botanic Gardens,” and adds that three plants commemorate his name: \textit{Saxifraga Tolmiei}, \textit{Tolmiea menziesii}, and \textit{Carex Tolmiei}. Due to the peculiar system of naming new specimens which favored the classifier rather than the discoverer, it is quite possible that Tolmie discovered other plants without his discovery’s being recognized. The Carnegie Institution lists, in addition to these specimens at Kew, the \textit{Mimulus Tolmiei} and \textit{orthocarpus Tolmiei}. (Frederick E. Clements, Carnegie Institution of Washington to [Simon Fraser Tolmie] d/ Coastal Laboratory, Carmel, California, October 13, 1913. Typescript copy in B. C. Archives.)

\textsuperscript{84} George Gibbs to W. F. Tolmie, d/ Portland, December 31, 1852. Bagley Collection, University of Washington. Gibbs had recently been appointed as Collector of Customs at Astoria.
concerning the collection of pine cones and the seeds of flowering shrubs.\textsuperscript{85} Even in the last years of his life his love of botany was not to decline, for in 1885 he was awarded a prize for the best-mounted collection of native sea-weed,\textsuperscript{86} and in 1886 he achieved similar distinction for the best-named collection of local medicinal plants.\textsuperscript{87}

Apart from botany, Tolmie displayed a serious interest in ornithology, gaining the distinction of having a local bird named in his honour.\textsuperscript{88} This study had been noticeable from his first trip across the Atlantic, and was another evidence of his eager mind being directed on his physical environment in the tradition of the rationalism of his century.

The scientific approach to external reality made a strong appeal to Tolmie, but it did not dampen a Victorian interest in the spiritual, for the Doctor was a deeply religious man. It will be recalled that his trait of introspection and self-criticism often stung his conscience when indolence had interfered with his personal piety or academic interests.\textsuperscript{89} His championing of the

\textsuperscript{85} Tolmie, Letterbook, p.92.

\textsuperscript{86} "Fifth Annual Show of the B. C. Agricultural Society," \textit{Daily British Colonist}, Sunday, October 4, 1885, p.1.

\textsuperscript{87} "The Fair," \textit{Daily British Colonist}, Saturday, October 9, 1886, p.3.

\textsuperscript{88} The bird was a warbler, the \textit{Sylvia Tolmiel}. W.A. Newcombe, to John Hosie, Provincial Archivist, d/ Office of the Provincial Museum, Victoria, February 3, 1931.

\textsuperscript{89} Tolmie, \textit{Diary}, vol. 3, p.75. Here he makes an impassioned plea to the Creator to keep him in the path of virtue.
Indians had begun in July, 1833, as a manifestation of this religious consciousness. As he grew older, the desire to identify himself with religious work increased, so that in 1837 he seriously considered becoming a missionary amongst the North American Indians.90

His journey to Europe did nothing to abate this religious zeal. Indeed, the reverse was true. His espousal of the causes of Universalism and Owenism had little in them of the materialist conception of man in society.91 His was a philosophical approach in the tradition of the Higher Criticism of the Bible, but it was essentially a deeply religious one, and held no sympathy with either agnosticism or atheism. What Tolmie's religious views were towards the end of his life it is somewhat difficult to say. Simon, his youngest son, calls him "a profound student of religion,"92 and implies only a slight deafness kept him from attending church with his family, of whom he required regular attendance. But there was another aspect to Tolmie's personal religion - a deep interest in

90 Tolmie, Diary, vol.4, p.32.
91 See above, p. 182.
92 S. F. Tolmie, op.cit., p.228.
the study of spiritualism. Due to the hostile suspicion with which the whole subject was regarded by the public at large, information on the extent of Tolmie's interest in the spirit world is exceedingly scarce. The significant point, however, is that he was attracted. Perhaps from his Scottish ancestry he had inherited a Celtic mysticism; perhaps his religious nature identified itself with the hereafter, of which he had read and thought so much. Whatever the psychological cause, the result is interesting, for it shows that even in the realm of his personal devotion he could be unorthodox - something of a radical.

In order to do the Doctor justice, a word remains to be added concerning his connection with the Temperance Movement. Again referring to his son's biographical sketch one reads that Dr. Tolmie was so greatly opposed to alcoholic spirits that he travelled the entire distance from Fort Vancouver to York Factory without so much as a single drink, although George T. Allen was well supplied. The impression is easily gained that Tolmie was an advocate of the intemperance of teetotalism. This is an injustice to his character, because, as mentioned before, moderation was a keynote to his character. Apparently this was a period when he was interested in the Temperance Movement as a cure for one of the ills of society, for shortly afterwards he mentioned the beneficial

93 In an interview with Miss Josette Tolmie, the writer gathered the impression that the Doctor's interest was quite extensive and very sincere, but a natural reticence on the subject precluded any specific information.

94 S. F. Tolmie, op.cit., p.233.
result that the Movement had obtained for a Scottish congregation. As a personal discipline, however, the Doctor had no need of a pledge. George T. Allen admitted that Tolmie was possessed of a strength of character which rendered voluntary abstinence quite easy. Indeed, Tolmie was not a total abstainer. In 1833 he had celebrated Christmas off Fort McLoughlin in the Cadboro where a libation known as "Mountain Dew" was passed frequently around. During his medical course in Paris he had more than once taken a drink, and he confessed on one occasion to becoming "somewhat flushed" as the result of three pints of some excellent country wine. When Bancroft knew him in the 1870's he wrote, in answer to the Tolmie teetotalism myth, that he had seen the Doctor "prescribe for himself quite liberally on occasions." Tolmie was not a man of excesses; total abstinence was as inconsistent with his character and philosophy as drunkenness.

Within the span of half a century Dr. Tolmie had seen civilization on the Northwest Coast develop from a few isolated trading-posts in the primordial wilderness to a complex community of closely-linked towns and villages. In that growth he had been both an interested by-stander and a willing worker. Although a

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95 Tolmie, Diary, vol. 4, p.28. With unintentional humor he lists one of the benefits accruing from the congregation-wide acceptance of the pledge as being a doubling of the Sunday collection money (from £10 to £26.)

96 Tolmie, Diary, vol. 2, p.105

97 Tolmie, Diary, vol. 4, p.92.

commissioned officer in two organizations whose best interests were served by a consistent denial of the territory to independent settlers, he had grown with the new rapidly-forming society to become, at his retirement, an integral part of that society.

Tolmie's contributions to his community were not those of the political leader or the industrial empire-builder, but they were nevertheless of real and lasting worth. His work and leadership in agricultural development both North and South of the International Boundary were to prove a lasting foundation to the agronomy of both areas and an inspiration to the small farmer who vitally needed the encouragement afforded by the sight of a successful farmer. In the realm of politics the part he played was less notable, but his ten years of legislative experience provided a record of political integrity and earnest effort that could well have served as a model to many of the all too interested politicians of the day. His selfless work for the principle of free education looked into the future when free, compulsory elementary education would be an accepted part of the community's responsibility.

Perhaps his least-acclaimed and yet most worthy efforts were expended on behalf of the natives of Tolmie's adopted country. The broad sympathy and understanding with which he viewed the Indian question was to be characteristic, many years later, of the nation's attitude towards this responsibility. Dr.
Tolmie was one of the first to see the Indians as a problem rather than a menace.

Yet one gets the impression that Tolmie's life was a partial failure. His appointment to the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company proved to be both thankless and unremunerative. His slow promotion, his "notice to quit" and the unfortunate result of the retirement fund dispute all leave one with the impression of a man whose efforts were not quite equal to his task. The tragic flaw lay in his philosophy. The radical outlook on life at which he had arrived by 1842 could not be reconciled with the pioneer society to which he returned. Tolmie was forced to recognize the unreality of his idealism, but was not prepared to forego it altogether. The result was that he retained what could be retained - the sympathetic interest in mankind - but was left with no practical political philosophy to implement it. As a result Tolmie took a deep interest in mankind - its Indians, its school-children and its pioneers - but he lacked the personal conviction and practical programme to fight their battles successfully in Parliament on a broad scale.

Political success, however, is a small measure of a man. His personal traits of character are a greater indication of his value to his community. Perhaps if all men had the high moral and ethical principles of a Tolmie there would be less need of politics.

Dutiful and God-fearing, warm and sympathetic, William Fraser Tolmie was ever a man of integrity, "a scholar and a gentleman."
Appendix 1

"Copy"

EXTRACT OF AN ENTRY

IN A REGISTER KEPT AT THE GENERAL REGISTRY OFFICE, EDINBURGH.

In terms of 23° & 24° Vict. cap. 85, sect. 6, and 10 Edw. VII. & 1 Geo. V., cap. 32, sect. 1.

14 February 1812

Alexander Tolmie, Merchant and his spouse Marjory Fraser had a child baptized by Mr. Thomas Fraser named William Fraser

Witnesses James Tolmie and Thomas Fraser, Eiragdh

EXTRACTED from the REGISTER OF BIRTHS and BAPTISMS for the Parish of ................................................., Inverness

in the County of ................................................., Inverness

GIVEN at the GENERAL REGISTRY OFFICE, NEW REGISTER HOUSE, EDINBURGH, under the Seal of the said Office, the 30th day of ........... June .......... 1948.
Appendix 2

In establishing Tolmie's medical qualifications, the writer received a letter from C. J. Fordyce, Clerk of the Senate, University of Glasgow, dated 21 June, 1948, which said, in part:

William Fraser Tolmie, about whom you enquire in your letter of 21st June, was not a graduate in Medicine of this University, nor does he appear ever to have been matriculated as a regular student, though he may have attended some University classes in preparation for the examinations of the Royal Faculty of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow, a body independent of the University which under charter gave (and still gives) its own qualifications in Medicine in the form of a Licentiate.

Tolmie was often referred to as "Dr." Tolmie in the many letters addressed to him that the writer has seen, and also, when he wrote his History of Puget Sound and Northwest Coast, he invariably referred to himself as "Dr." Tolmie. Nevertheless, when he published his scientific treatise on Indians dealing with their vocabularies, he gives his proper scientific qualifications—Licentiate of the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow. It serves no purpose, other than the establishment of historical fact, to raise the question at all. To those who might suggest that Tolmie gave himself a medical standing he never acquired, it can only be said that it is customary to refer to those holding this qualification as "Doctor".
"There [at Milbank Sound] in connection with Chief Trader Manson conceived the idea of establishing a circulating library among the officers of the company. Mr. Anderson on reaching Fort Vancouver ventilated the matter. It was readily taken up by Dr. McLoughlin and Mr. Douglas. A subscription library was found which did much good for about ten years. Soon after which it was broken up. The officers subscribed, sent the order for books and periodicals to London to the Company's agent there. The books were sent out, and as everybody had subscribed they were sent to all the forts throughout the length and breadth of the land. The library was kept at Fort Vancouver, subscribers sending for such books as they wanted and returning them when read.... The H.B.Co. by its ships sent out The Times and other leading papers for circulation. This was the first circulating library on the Pacific Slope extending from 1833 to 1845."

NOTE Strictly speaking, the date of the library's inception could not well have been earlier than 1834. No evidence has come to light to support Tolmie's evidence that the library was broken up in 1843. Indeed, it is strange that it should be at this date, for Tolmie had just returned from the Old Country, and one would have thought he might have welcomed library facilities, particularly as he returned bursting with progressive thought.
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This journal was useful as it gives interesting detail concerning Tolmie's journey East with the Spring Express. His diary for the period is quite brief and deals with not more than two weeks of a four-month journey.

Bagley Collection [Tolmie Letters], University of Washington.

Indispensable for any detailed study of Tolmie's life and business connection at Fort Nisqually between 1843 and 1859. In the Collection are included letters, journal, accounts, maps and other records of Company business.

Berens, H. M., to A. G. Dallas, d/ Hudson's Bay House, London, December 3, 1858. Original in British Columbia Archives.

Clements, Frederick E., Carnegie Institution of Washington, to [Simon Fraser Tolmie], d/ Coastal Laboratory, Carmel, California, October 13, 1913. Typescript copy in British Columbia Archives.

Correspondence Between Hudson's Bay Company, Victoria and Various Colonial Departments, November 22, 1861 to 10 July, 1871. F. 1708. Originals, transcripts and photostats in British Columbia Archives.

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Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee to William Fraser Tolmie, hereby appointed Chief Trader, d/ 31 March, 1847. Original in British Columbia Archives.

Haller, G. O., Indian War 1855 and 1856. Transcript in British Columbia Archives.

Because Major Haller was a combatant in the Yakima War, his broad-minded approach to the basic causes of the struggle is interesting. Haller's complete agreement with Tolmie on the Indian question gave this account a particular value to the writer.

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This daily account of local events is replete with small points of detail that are essential to a grasp of Tolmie's life with the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. A great aid to the student is the editing that has been done with those parts of the Journal that have been published in the Washington Historical Quarterly, (Noted below under "Printed" Primary Sources as edited by Clarence B. Bagley and Victor J. Farrar.)

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As suggested in the text of this essay the material contained in this collection is valuable for understanding the beginnings of the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company.

Record of Family Birth and Death Dates in Family Bible in possession of Miss Josette Catharine Tolmie, Victoria British Columbia.


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Tolmie, W.F., Account of Proceedings on Cloverdale since the 15th day of December 1858. Original in British Columbia Archives.


Without this personal account it would have been quite impossible to trace Tolmie's early movements on the North West Coast and his background before that period. Furthermore, the Diary gives a great deal of intimate personal detail that could not have been obtained from any other source. It is to be greatly regretted that Tolmie did not continue it for a few more years.
Tolmie, W.F., to Henry Fry, Government Agent, Kwamitshan, d/Cloverdale, 8 June, 1885. Original in British Columbia Archives.


This account supplements the personal history of Tolmie's life which was discontinued when he stopped keeping a diary in 1856.

Tolmie, W.F., Letterbook April 1844-September 16 1874. Original and transcript in British Columbia Archives.

This manuscript was very helpful as another source for details of Tolmie's more mature years.

Tolmie, W.F., to Joseph Howe, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Ottawa, d/Victoria, B.C., October 6, 1871. Original duplicate copy in British Columbia Archives.

Tolmie, W.F., to P.S. Ogden, d/Nisqually, July 24, 1848. Transcript in British Columbia Archives.

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Meany's study of the early history of old Oregon and Washington Territory was a very useful point from which to approach Toltie's part in the development of the region.


This standard work in the field of British Columbia political history was used as a constant source of reference. It is an able guide to the early development of the government of the province.

One of the chief values of this work is that the author has made free use of original material. For this reason it was a valuable supplement to the research involved in the preparation of this essay.


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Maps and Charts

(Fort McLoughlin)


An excellent graphic representation of the development carried forward by the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company at Fort Nisqually. It shows as well as any other source the problem facing Tolmie as the American settler gradually appropriated Company holdings.


(Port Simpson, original site)


(Port Simpson)


(Redoubt St. Dionysius)

Port Simpson to Cross Sound, including Koloschesnak Archipelago, Chart 2431, London, Hydrographic Office, 1882, passage chart - no scale shown.

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*Victoria District Official Map, 1858, 37T2 East Coast*. Blueprint copy in British Columbia Archives.