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No. 131.



The Discovery of the Columbia River.

EDWARD G. PORTER.*

I. THE FIRST VOYAGE OF THE COLUMBIA.

Few ships, if any, in our merchant marine, since the organization of the Republic, have acquired such distinction as the "Columbia."

By two noteworthy achievements a hundred years ago she attracted the attention of the commercial world, and rendered a service to the United States unparalleled in our history. She was the first American vessel to carry the stars and stripes around the globe; and, by her discovery of "the great river of the West," to which her name was given, she furnished us with the title to our possession of that magnificent domain, which to-day is represented by the flourishing young States of Oregon, Washington, and Idaho.

The famous ship was well known and much talked about at the time; but her records have mostly disappeared, and there is very little knowledge at present concerning her.

The committee for the centennial observance, at Astoria, of the "Columbia's" exploit having applied to the writer for information upon the subject, in which they are naturally so much interested, he gladly responds by giving an outline of the facts, gathered mainly from private sources and illustrated by original drawings made at the time on board the ship and hitherto not known to the public.

* This paper was first printed in the *New England Magazine*, June, 1892, the Oregon centennial year, under the title of "The Ship 'Columbia' and the Discovery of Oregon," illustrated by original drawings made at the time on board the ship. Many of the facts were gathered by Mr. Porter from private sources, giving his account, the most careful and valuable which exists, a high original value.—*Editor*.

The publication in 1784 of Captain Cook's journal of his third voyage awakened a wide-spread interest in the possibility of an important trade on the northwest coast. In Boston there were a few gentlemen who took up the matter seriously, and determined to embark in the enterprise on their own account. The leading spirit among them was Joseph Barrell, a merchant of distinction, whose financial ability, cultivated tastes, and wide acquaintance with affairs gave him a position of acknowledged influence in business and social circles.

Associated with him in close companionship was Charles Bulfinch, a recent graduate of Harvard, who had just returned from pursuing special studies in Europe. His father, Dr. Thomas Bulfinch, lived on Bowdoin Square, and often entertained at his house the friends who were inclined to favor the new project. They read together Cook's report of an abundant supply of valuable furs offered by the natives in exchange for beads, knives, and other trifles. These sea-otter skins, he said were sold by the Russians to the Chinese at from £16 to £20 each. "Here is a rich harvest," said Mr. Barrell, "to be reaped by those who go in first."

Accordingly, in the year 1787, they made all the necessary arrangements for fitting out an expedition. The other partners were Samuel Brown, a prosperous merchant; John Derby, a shipmaster of Salem; Captain Crowell Hatch, a resident of Cambridge; and John Marden Pintard, of the well-known New York house of Lewis Pintard & Co.

These six gentlemen subscribed over \$50,000, dividing the stock into fourteen shares, and purchased the ship "Columbia," or, as it was after this often called, the "Columbia Rediviva." She was built in 1773 by James Briggs at Hobart's Landing, on the once busy little stream known as North River, the natural boundary between Scituate and Marshfield. One who sees it to-day peacefully meandering through quiet meadows and around fertile slopes would hardly believe that over a thousand sea-going vessels have been built upon its banks.

The "Columbia" was a full-rigged ship, 83 feet long, and measured 212 tons. She had two decks, a figure-head, and a square stern, and was mounted with ten guns. A consort was provided for her in the "Washington" or "Lady Washington" as she was afterwards called, a sloop of 90 tons, designed especially to collect furs by cruising among the

islands and inlets of the coast in the expected trade with the Indians. These vessels seem ridiculously small to us of the present day, but they were stanchly built and manned by skilful navigators.

As master of the "Columbia," the owners selected Captain John Kendrick, an experienced officer of about forty-five years of age, who had done considerable privateering in the Revolution, and had since been in charge of several vessels in the merchant service. His home was at Wareham, where he had built a substantial house and reared a family of six children. The venerable homestead may still be seen, shaded by trees which the captain planted. For the command of the sloop a man was chosen who had been already in the service of two of the owners, Messrs. Brown and Hatch, as master of their ship "Pacific" in the South Carolina trade. This was Captain Robert Gray, an able seaman, who had also been an officer in the Revolutionary navy, and who was a personal friend of Captain Kendrick. Gray was a native of Tiverton, R.I., and a descendant of one of the early settlers at Plymouth. After his marriage, in 1794, his home was in Boston, on Salem Street, where he had a family of five children. His great-grandson, Mr. Clifford Gray Twombly, of Newton, has inherited one of the silver cups inscribed with the initials "R. G." which the captain carried with him around the world. His sea-chest is also in good condition, and is now presented by his grand-daughter, Miss Mary E. Bancroft, of Boston, to the Oregon Pioneer and Historical Society for preservation among its relics.

Sea Letters were issued by the federal and state governments for the use of the expedition, and a medal was struck to commemorate its departure. Hundreds of these medals — in bronze and pewter — were put on board for distribution among the people whom the voyagers might meet, together with a much larger number of the new cents and half-cents which the State of Massachusetts had coined that year. Several of these medals and coins have since been found on the track of the vessels, among Indians, Spaniards, and Hawaiians. A few in silver and bronze are preserved in the families of some of the owners.

Neither pains nor expense were spared to give these vessels a complete outfit. The cargo consisted chiefly of the necessary stores and a good supply of hardware — useful tools and uten-

sils — to be exchanged for furs on the coast. There were also numerous trinkets to please the fancy of the natives, such as buttons, toys, beads, and necklaces, jew's-harps, combs, earrings, looking-glasses, snuff, and snuff-boxes.

The writer has full lists of the officers and crew. Kendrick's first mate was Simeon Woodruff, who had been one of Cook's officers in his last voyage to the Pacific. The second mate was Joseph Ingraham, who was destined, later on, to be a conspicuous figure in the trade which he helped to inaugurate. The third officer was Robert Haswell, the son of a lieutenant in the British navy, who for some years had lived at Nantasket (now Hull).

Haswell was an accomplished young officer and kept a careful record of the expedition, from which much of our most accurate information is derived. He was also a clever artist and made some of the sketches of the vessels, which are here reproduced for the first time. Next to him was John B. Cordis, of Charlestown. Richard S. Howe was the clerk; Dr. Roberts, the surgeon; and J. Nutting, the astronomer — or schoolmaster, as he was sometimes called. Mr. Treat shipped as furrier, and Davis Coolidge as first mate on the sloop.

On the 30th of September, 1787, the two vessels started on their long voyage. Many friends accompanied them down the harbor, and bade them farewell.

The owners had given each commander minute instructions as to the route and the manner of conducting their business. They were to avoid the Spaniards, if possible, and always treat the Indians with respect, giving them a fair compensation in trade. The skins, when collected, were to be taken to Canton and exchanged for teas, which were to form the bulk of the cargo back to Boston.

They had a good run to the Cape Verde Islands, where they remained nearly two months for some unexplained cause. The delay occasioned much discontent among the officers, and Woodruff and Roberts left the ship. At the Falkland Islands there was no wood to be had, but plenty of geese and ducks, snipe and plover. They lingered here too long, and Kendrick was inclined to wait for another season before attempting the passage around Cape Horn, but he was induced to proceed; and on the 28th of February, 1788, they resumed their voyage, Haswell having been transferred to the sloop as second mate. They soon ran into heavy seas; and for nearly a month they

encountered severe westerly gales, during which the "Columbia" was thrown upon her beam ends, and the little "Washington" was so completely swept by the waves that all the beds and clothing on board were completely drenched, with no opportunity to dry them.

Early on the morning of April 1 the vessels lost sight of each other in latitude $57^{\circ} 57'$ south and longitude $92^{\circ} 40'$ west. It was intensely cold, and a hurricane was raging. The crews were utterly exhausted, and hardly a man was able to go aloft.

At last, on the 14th, the skies brightened, and they had their first welcome to the Pacific; but they could no longer see anything of each other, and so each vessel proceeded independently the rest of the way. The sloop lay to off the island of Masafuero, but the surf was so heavy that they could not land. At Ambrose Island they sent a boat ashore, and found plenty of fish and seals, but no fresh water, so they were obliged to put themselves on a short allowance. Almost every day they saw dolphins, whales, sea-lions, and grampuses. In June they caught the northeast trade-wind; and on the 2d of August, to their inexpressible joy, they saw the coast of New Albion in latitude 41° , near Cape Mendocino. A canoe came off with ten natives, making signs of friendship. They were mostly clad in deerskins. Captain Gray gave them some presents.

And now for a time our mariners enjoyed a little, well-earned rest, and feasted their eyes upon the green hills and forests as they cruised leisurely along the coast. The large Indian population was revealed by the camp-fires at night and by the columns of smoke by day. Many of them came paddling after the sloop, waving skins and showing the greatest eagerness to get aboard. Others were evidently frightened, and fled to the woods.

In latitude $44^{\circ} 20'$ they found a harbor which they took to be "the entrance of a very large river, where great commercial advantages might be reaped." This was probably the Alseya River in Oregon, which is not as large as they thought. The natives here were warlike, and shook long spears at them, with hideous shouts and an air of defiance. Near Cape Look-out they "made a tolerably commodious harbor," and anchored half a mile off. Canoes brought out to them delicious berries and crabs, ready-boiled, which the poor seamen gladly bought for buttons, as they were already suffering from scurvy.

The next day seven of these men were sent ashore in the boat with Coolidge and Haswell to get some grass and shrubs for their stock. The captain's boy, Marcos, a black fellow who had shipped at St. Iago, accompanied them; and, while he was carrying grass down to the boat, a native seized his cutlass, which he had carelessly stuck in the sand, and ran off with it toward the village. Marcos gave chase, shouting at the top of his voice. The officers at once saw the peril, and hastened to his assistance. But it was too late. Marcos had the thief by the neck; but the savages crowded around, and soon drenched their knives in the blood of the unfortunate youth. He relaxed his hold, stumbled, rose again, and staggered toward his friends, but received a flight of arrows in his back, and fell in mortal agony. The officers were now assailed on all sides, and made for the boat as fast as possible, shooting the most daring of the ringleaders with their pistols, and ordering the men in the boat to fire and cover their retreat. One of the sailors who stood near by to help them was totally disabled by a barbed arrow, which caused great loss of blood. They managed, however, to get into the boat and push off, followed by a swarm of canoes. A brisk fire was kept up till they neared the sloop, which discharged several swivel shot, and soon scattered the enemy. It was a narrow escape. Captain Gray had but three men left aboard; and, if the natives had captured the boat's crew, as they came so near doing, they could easily have made a prize of the sloop. Murderers' Harbor was the appropriate name given to the place. Haswell thought it must be "the entrance of the river of the West," though it was by no means, he said, "a safe place for any but a very small vessel to enter." This was probably near Tillamook Bay. Some of the maps of that time had vague suggestions of a supposed great river, whose mouth they placed almost anywhere between the Straits of Fuca and California. When Gray was actually near the river which he afterward discovered, he had so good a breeze that he "passed a considerable length of coast" without standing in: otherwise the Centennial of Oregon might have been celebrated in 1888 instead of 1892. How slight a cause may affect the whole history of a nation!

Farther north they saw "exceeding high mountains, covered with snow" (August 21), evidently Mount Olympus. A few days later the painstaking mate writes, "I am of opinion that the Straits of Juan de Fuca exist, though Captain Cook posi-

tively asserts it does not." Passing up the west shore of the island now bearing Vancouver's name, they found a good, sheltered anchorage, which they named Hancock's Harbor for the governor under whose patronage they had sailed. This was in Clayoquot Sound, where, on their next voyage, they spent a winter.

At last, on the 16th of August, 1788, the sloop reached its destined haven in Nootka Sound. Two English snows from Macao, under Portuguese colors, were lying there,—the "Felice" and the "Iphigenia,"—commanded by Captains Meares and Douglas, who came out in a boat and offered their assistance to the little stranger. The acquaintance proved to be friendly, although there were evidences later on of a disguised jealousy between them.

Three days later the English launched a small schooner which they named "Northwest America," the first vessel ever built on the coast. It was a gala-day, fittingly celebrated by salutes and festivities, in which the Americans cordially joined. The "Washington" was now hauled up on the ways for graving, and preparations began to be made for collecting furs.

One day, just a week after their arrival, they saw a sail in the offing, which, by their glasses, they soon recognized as the long-lost "Columbia." Great was their eagerness to know what had befallen her. As she drew nearer, it became evident that her crew were suffering from scurvy, for her topsails were reefed and her topgallant masts were down on deck, although it was pleasant weather. Captain Gray immediately took the long boat and went out to meet her, and shortly before sunset she anchored within forty yards of the sloop. She had lost two men by scurvy, and many of the crew were in an advanced stage of that dreaded disease. After parting off Cape Horn, they encountered terrific gales, and suffered so much damage that they had to put in at Juan Fernandez for help. They were politely received by the governor, Don Blas Gonzales, who supplied them with everything they needed. The kind governor had to pay dearly for this; for, when his superior, the captain-general of Chile, heard of it, poor Gonzales was degraded from office; and the viceroy of Peru sanctioned the penalty. Jefferson afterward interceded for him at Madrid, but he was never reinstated. Who would have believed that a service of simple humanity to a vessel in distress would cause such a hubbub? By her cruel censure of an act of mercy

toward the first American ship that ever visited her Pacific dominions, Spain seems to have been seized with a kind of prophetic terror, as if anticipating the day when she would have to surrender to the stars and stripes a large share of her supremacy in the West.

After tarrying at Juan Fernandez seventeen days, the "Columbia" continued her voyage without further incident to Nootka. Captain Kendrick now resumed the command of the expedition. In a few days occurred the anniversary of their departure from Boston, and they all observed it heartily. The officers of all the vessels were invited to dine on board the "Columbia"; and the evening was spent in festive cheer,—a welcome change to those homesick exiles on that dreary shore.

It was decided to spend the winter in Friendly Cove, Nootka Sound; and a house was built large enough for the entire crew. They shot an abundance of game, prepared charcoal for their smiths, and worked their iron into chisels which were in good demand among the natives. To their surprise one morning they found that the Indians had landed and carried off fifteen water-casks and five small cannon which Captain Douglas had given them. This was a heavy loss; and, as the miscreants could not be found, the coopers had to go to work and make a new set of casks.

In March, 1789, the "Washington" was painted and sent on a short cruise, while the "Columbia" was removed a few miles up the Sound to a place which they named Kendrick's Cove, where a house was built with a forge and battery. In May the sloop started out again for furs, and met the Spanish corvette "Princesa," whose commander, Martinez, showed great kindness to Gray, giving him supplies of brandy, wine, hams, and sugar; but he said he should make a prize of Douglas if he found him.

At one place a large fleet of canoes came off in great parade, and offered their sea-otter skins for one chisel each. Our men readily bought the lot,—two hundred in number,—worth from six to eight thousand dollars. This was the best bargain they ever made, as they could seldom get a good skin for less than six or ten chisels. An average price was one skin for a blanket; four, for a pistol; and six, for a musket. Gray then stood southward and went into Hope Bay, and later into a place called by the natives Chickleset, where there was every appearance of a good harbor. He then visited the

islands of the north, and gave names to Cape Ingraham, Pintard Sound, Hatch's Island, Derby Sound, Barrell's Inlet, and Washington's Islands (now known as Queen Charlotte's), whose mountain tops were covered with snow, even in summer. It is a pity that most of the names given by our explorers in that region have been changed, so that it is not easy to identify all the places mentioned by them.

Returning to Nootka, they found the Spaniards claiming sovereignty over all that region, detaining the English vessels and sending the "Argonaut" with her officers and crew as prisoners to San Blas. The schooner "Northwest America," which Meares had built, was seized and sent on a cruise under command of Coolidge, and her crew and stores were put on the "Columbia" to be taken to China. Serious complications between England and Spain grew out of these high-handed proceedings, resulting in the "Nootka Convention," as it was called,—the famous treaty of October, 1790, by which war was averted and a new basis of agreement established between the two powers.

Another important change now took place. Captain Kendrick concluded to put the ship's property on board the sloop, and go on a cruise in her himself, with a crew of twenty men, while Gray should take the "Columbia," reinforced by the crew of the prize schooner, to the Sandwich Islands, and get provisions for the voyage to China, and there dispose of the skins. Ingraham and Haswell decided to go with Gray, while Cordis remained with Kendrick. And so the two vessels parted company.

The "Columbia" left Clayoquot July 30, 1789, and spent three weeks at the Hawaiian Islands, laying in a store of fruits, yams, potatoes, and hogs. They were kindly received there; and a young chief, Attoo (sometimes called the crown prince), was consigned to Captain Gray's care for the journey to Boston, under the promise that he should have an early opportunity to return. They had a good run to China, and reached Whampoa Roads on the 16th of November. Their agents at Canton were the newly established Boston firm of Shaw & Randall, who also attended to consular duties. It was an unfavorable season for trade, and their thousand sea-otter skins had to be sold at a sacrifice. The ship was repaired at great expense and made ready for a cargo of teas.

The following bill of lading should have a place here:—

Shipped by the Grace of God, in good order and condition, by Shaw and Randall, in and upon the good Ship called the "Columbia," whereof is Master under God for this present Voyage Robert Gray, and now Riding at Anchor at Wampoa, and by God's Grace bound for Boston in America — to say, 220 chests bohea Tea, 170 Half chests do, 144 quarter chests do — to be delivered — unto Samuel Parkman Esquire, or to his assigns — and so God send the good Ship to her desired Port in Safety — Amen. Dated in Canton Feb. 3, 1790.
(signed)

ROBERT GRAY.

Kendrick reached Macao January 26, with his sails and rigging nearly gone; and, being advised not to go up to Canton, he went over to "Dirty Butter Bay," — a lonely anchorage near the "outer waters," — and there waited for an opportunity to dispose of his five hundred skins, and perhaps also to sell the sloop.

The "Columbia" passed down the river, February 12, on her homeward voyage; but a gale of wind prevented her seeing her old consort.

Between Canton and Boston the "Columbia" took the usual route by the Cape of Good Hope, calling only at St. Helena and Ascension Islands. She reached her destination on the 10th of August, 1790, having sailed, by her log, about 50,000 miles. Her arrival was greeted with salvos of artillery and repeated cheers from a great concourse of citizens. Governor Hancock gave an entertainment in honor of the officers and owners. A procession was formed; and Captain Gray walked arm in arm with the Hawaiian chief, the first of his race ever seen in Boston. He was a fine-looking youth, and wore a helmet of gay feathers, which glittered in the sunlight, and an exquisite cloak of the same yellow and scarlet plumage. The governor entertained the company with fitting hospitality, and many were the congratulations extended on all sides to the men who had planned and to those who had executed this memorable voyage.

It must be said that, financially, the enterprise was not of much profit to the owners, two of whom sold out their interest to the others; but, nevertheless, it was an achievement to be proud of, and it prepared the way for a very large and remunerative trade in subsequent years. Indeed, so hopeful were the remaining owners regarding it that they immediately projected a second voyage.

II. THE SECOND VOYAGE.

No sooner had the "Columbia" discharged her cargo than she was taken to a shipyard and thoroughly overhauled, and furnished with new masts and spars and a complete outfit as expeditiously as possible.

An important sea-letter was granted by the President and another by Governor Hancock, and still others by the foreign consuls resident in Boston. The owners prepared specific instructions for Captain Gray, directing him to proceed with all despatch, to take no unjust advantage of the natives, to build a sloop on the coast during the winter, to visit "Japan and Pekin," if possible, for the sale of his furs. He was not to touch at any Spanish port nor trade with any of the subjects of his Catholic majesty "for a single farthing." He was charged to offer no insult to foreigners, nor to receive any "without showing the becoming spirit of a free, independent American." And he was to be as a father to his crew. He was not to stop till he reached the Falkland Islands, and then only for a short time.

The officers under Captain Gray were assigned in the following order: Robert Haswell, of whom we have heard much already; Joshua Caswell, of Malden; Owen Smith; Abraham Waters, who had served as seaman on the previous voyage; and John Boit. The clerk was John Hoskins who had been in the counting-house of Joseph Barrell, and who afterward became a partner of his son. George Davidson, of Charlestown, shipped as painter; and that he was an artist as well is evident from the interesting drawings which he made on the voyage, and which, through the kindness of his descendants and those of Captain Gray, are given with this narrative, though of necessity somewhat reduced in size. The Hawaiian, Jack Attoo, went back as cabin-boy. The sturdy carpenter of the ship was Samuel Yendell, of the old North End of Boston. He had served in the frigate "Tartar" when a mere boy, and he helped to build the famous "Constitution." He lived to be the last survivor of the "Columbia's" crew, dying at the ripe age of ninety-two years in 1861. He was always known as an upright, temperate, and industrious man. The present governor of Massachusetts, William Eustis Russell, is his great-grandson, and evidently inherits the faculty of building the ship — of State.

The "Columbia" left Boston on the 28th of September, 1790, calling only at the Falkland Islands, and arrived at Clayoquot June 4, 1791,—a quicker passage by nearly four months than the previous one. Obedient to his instructions, the captain soon went on a cruise up the coast, passing along the east side of Washington's Islands (Queen Charlotte's) and exploring the numerous channels and harbors of that picturesque but lonely region.

On the 12th of August he had the great misfortune to lose three of his men—Caswell, Barnes, and Folger—who were cruelly massacred by the savages at a short distance from the ship in the jolly-boat. He succeeded in recovering the boat and the body of Caswell, which he took over to Port Tempest and buried with fitting solemnity. It was a sad day for the "Columbia's" crew. They named the spot Massacre Cove, and the headland near by Murderers' Cape.

Another instance of the treacherous character of the natives occurred while Captain Kendrick was trading with the "Washington" in this same region. Knowing their pilfering habits, he took care to keep all portable articles out of sight when they were around; and he had a rule that more than two of them should never be allowed on board at once. He kept a large chest of arms on deck, near the companion-way, and wore a brace of pistols and a long knife conspicuously in his belt; and then he would fire a gun to let the Indians know that he was ready to trade. On this occasion they did not seem disposed to come any nearer; and so he went into the cabin, to talk with his clerk. While there, he suddenly heard a native laugh on deck. He sprang up, and found a whole row of them crouching all around the sides of the vessel. Turning to the arms-chest, he saw the key was gone, and at once demanded it of the nearest Indian, who said in reply, "The key is mine, and the ship is mine, too!" Kendrick, without further ceremony, seized the fellow and pitched him overboard. A moment more, and the whole set had disappeared. They all jumped into the water without waiting for the captain's assistance.

It was near this shore, also, while cruising in the "Washington," that Kendrick's son Solomon was killed by the natives. The father demanded redress of the chief, who denied all knowledge of the deed. Meanwhile Kendrick's men found the son's scalp with its curly sandy hair, and there was no

mistake about its identity. The chief relented, and gave up the murderer to Kendrick, who, in his indignation, was prompted to shoot him on the spot. But pausing a moment, the captain wisely concluded that the future safety of white men would be better promoted by a different course. He, therefore, handed over the culprit to be punished by the chief in the presence of a large assembly of his tribe. There was a well-known song, commemorating this event, quite popular with sailors. It was afterward printed, and bore the title "The Bold Nor'westman." It gave very pathetically the story of the murder and of the father's grief. The first lines were,—

"Come, all ye noble seamen,
Who plough the raging main."

After the burial of Caswell the "Columbia" sailed around to the north side of Washington's Islands, and found a fine navigable stream, which they called Hancock's River. The native name was Masset, which it still bears. Here they were glad to meet the Boston brig "Hancock," Captain Crowell, with later news from home.

Returning to Clayoquot, they found Kendrick in the harbor, and gave him three cheers. He told them that after the tedious sale of his skins at Macao he began to make the sloop into a brig. This took so much time that he lost the season on the coast, and stayed at Lark's Bay till the spring of '91, when he sailed in company with Douglas and touched at Japan, and was the first man to unfurl the American flag in that land. He sought to open a trade, but was ordered off, as might have been expected, had he known the rigidly exclusive policy of the Japan of that time. Kendrick had called at Nootka, where, he said, the Spaniards treated him kindly, and sent him daily supplies of "greens and salads." He had come down to Clayoquot to haul up the "Lady Washington," now a brigantine, to grave at a place which he had fortified and named Fort Washington.

During this sojourn, Kendrick purchased of the principal chiefs several large tracts of land, for which he paid mostly in arms and ammunition. The lands were taken possession of with much ceremony, the United States flag hoisted, and a bottle sunk in the ground. Kendrick sailed for China, September 29, taking with him the deeds, which were duly registered, it was said, at the consulate in Canton. Duplicate copies were prepared, one of which was sent to Jefferson and

filed in the State Department at Washington. The originals were signed by the chiefs (as documents are signed by people who can only make their "mark"), and witnessed by several of the officers and crew of the vessel. These deeds ran somewhat as follows:—

In consideration of six muskets, a boat's sail, a quantity of powder, and an American flag (they being articles which we at present stand in need of, and are of great value) we do bargain, grant, and sell unto John Kendrick of Boston, a certain harbor in said Ahasset, in which the brig "Washington" lay at anchor on the 5th of August, 1791, Latitude $49^{\circ} 50'$. . . with all the lands, mines, minerals, rivers, bays, harbors, sounds, creeks, and all islands . . . with all the produce of land and sea being a territorial distance of eighteen miles square . . . to have and to hold, etc.

The names of some of the signing chiefs were Maquinna, Wicananish, Narry Yonk, and Tarrasone.

It was Captain Gray's intention to go into winter quarters at Naspatee, in Bulfinch Sound, and he hastened that way; but, being thwarted by contrary winds, they put in at Clayoquot, and, finding excellent timber for the construction of the proposed sloop, he decided to remain there. The ship was made as snug as possible in a well-sheltered harbor, which they called Adventure Cove. The sails were unbent, the topgallant, topmasts, and yards were unrigged and stowed below. A space was cleared on shore, and a log-house built, the crew all working with a will. One party went out cutting plank, another to shoot deer and geese. The carpenters soon put up a very substantial building to accommodate a force of ten men, containing a chimney, forge, workshop, storeroom, and sleeping-bunks. It served, also, the purpose of a fort, having two cannon mounted outside and one inside through a porthole. All around there were loopholes for small arms.

This they called Fort Defence, and here they lived like civilized and Christian men. The log reports: "On Sunday all hands at rest from their labors. Performed divine service."

The keel of the sloop was soon laid, and the work went bravely forward. The sketch of this scene shows Captain Gray conferring with Mr. Vendell about the plan of the sloop.

The days grew short and cold, the sun being much obscured by the tall forest trees all around them. Some of the men were taken ill with colds and rheumatic pains, and had to be

removed aboard ship. The natives of the adjoining tribe became quite familiar. The chiefs and their wives visited the fort and the ship almost every day, coming across the bay in their canoes. The common Indians were not allowed to land, a sentinel being always on guard, night and day. Captain Gray was disposed to be very kind to the natives. He often visited their villages, carrying drugs, rice, bread, and molasses for their sick people. Going one day with his clerk, Hoskins, they persuaded a woman to have her face washed, when it appeared that she had quite a fair complexion of red and white, and "one of the most delightful countenances," says Hoskins, "that my eyes ever beheld. She was indeed a perfect beauty!" She got into her canoe, and soon after returned with her face as dirty as ever. She had been laughed at by her companions for having it washed. It was a common practice among some of the tribes for both sexes to slit the under lip and wear in it a plug of bone or wood, fitted with holes from which they hung beads.

On the 18th of February, several chiefs came over as usual, among them Tototeescosettle. Alas for poor human nature! he was detected stealing the boatswain's jacket. Soon after he had gone, Attoo, the Hawaiian lad, informed the captain of a deep-laid plot to capture the ship. The natives, he said, had promised to make him a great chief if he would wet the ship's fire-arms and give them a lot of musket-balls. They were planning to come through the woods and board the ship from the high bank near by, and kill every man on board except Attoo. Gray's excitement can be easily imagined. All his heavy guns were on shore; but he ordered the swivels loaded at once, and the ship to be removed away from the bank. Haswell put the fort in a good state of defence, reloaded all the cannon, and had the small arms put in order. The ship's people were ordered aboard. At dead of night the war-whoop was heard in the forest. The savages had stealthily assembled by hundreds; but, finding their plan frustrated, they reluctantly went away. On the 23d of February the sloop was launched, and taken alongside the "Columbia." She was named the "Adventure," and reckoned at 44 tons. Upon receiving her cargo and stores, she was sent northward on a cruise under Haswell. She was the second vessel ever built on the coast, and proved to be a good seaboat, and could even outsail the "Columbia."

Gray soon after took his ship on a cruise which was destined to be the most important of all,—one that will be remembered as long as the United States exist. On the 29th of April, 1792, he fell in with Vancouver, who had been sent out from England with three vessels of the Royal Navy as commissioner to execute the provisions of the Nootka Treaty, and to explore the coast. Vancouver said he had made no discoveries as yet, and inquired if Gray had made any. The Yankee captain replied that he had; that in latitude $46^{\circ} 10'$ he had recently been off the mouth of a river which for nine days he tried to enter, but the outset was so strong as to prevent. He was going to try it again, however. Vancouver said this must have been the opening passed by him two days before, which he thought might be "a small river," inaccessible on account of the breakers extending across it, the land behind not indicating it to be of any great extent. "Not considering this opening worthy of more attention," wrote Vancouver in his journal, "I continued our pursuit to the northwest." What a turn in the tide of events was that! Had the British navigator really seen the river, it would certainly have had another name and another history.

Gray continued his "pursuit" to the southeast, whither the star of his destiny was directing him. On the 7th of May he saw an entrance in latitude $46^{\circ} 58'$ "which had a very good appearance of a harbor"; and, observing from the masthead a passage between the sand bars, he bore away and ran in. This he called Bulfinch Harbor, though it was very soon after called, as a deserved compliment to him, Gray's Harbor,—the name which it still bears. Here he was attacked by the natives, and obliged in self-defence to fire upon them with serious results. Davidson's drawing gives a weird view of the scene.

On the evening of May 10 Gray resumed his course to the south; and at daybreak, on the 11th, he saw "the entrance of his desired port" a long way off. As he drew near about eight o'clock, he bore away with all sails set, and ran in between the breakers. To his great delight he found himself in a large river of fresh water, up which he steered ten miles. There were Indian villages at intervals along the banks, and many canoes came out to inspect the strange visitor.

The ship came to anchor at one o'clock in ten fathoms of water, half a mile from the northern shore and two miles and a half from the southern, the river being three or four miles

wide all the way along. Here they remained three days busily trading and taking in water.

On the 14th he stood up the river some fifteen miles farther, "and doubted not it was navigable upwards of a hundred." He found the channel on that side, however, so very narrow and crooked that the ship grounded on the sandy bottom; but they backed off without difficulty. The jolly-boat was sent out to sound the channel, but, finding it still shallow, Gray decided to return; and on the 15th he dropped down with the tide, going ashore with his clerk "to take a short view of the country."

On the 16th he anchored off the village of Chenook, whose population turned out in great numbers. The next day the ship was painted, and all hands were busily at work. On the 19th they landed near the mouth of the river, and formally named it, after the ship, the COLUMBIA, raising the American flag and planting coins under a large pine-tree, thus taking possession in the name of the United States. The conspicuous headland was named Cape Hancock, and the low sandspit opposite, Point Adams.

The writer is well aware that the word "discovery" may be taken in different senses. When it is claimed that Captain Gray *discovered* this river, the meaning is that he was the first white man to cross its bar and sail up its broad expanse, and give it a name. Undoubtedly, Carver—to whom the word "Oregon" is traced—may have heard of the river in 1767 from the Indians in the Rocky Mountains; and Heceta, in 1775, was near enough to its mouth to believe in its existence; and Meares, in 1788, named Cape Disappointment and Deception Bay. But none of these can be properly said to have *discovered* the river. Certainly, Meares, whose claim England maintained so long, showed by the very names he gave to the cape and the "bay" that he was, after all, deceived about it; and he gives no suggestion of the river on his map. D'Aguilar was credited with finding a great river as far back as 1603; but, according to his latitude, it was not this river; and, even if it was, there is no evidence that he entered it.

The honor of discovery must practically rest with Gray. His was the first ship to cleave its waters; his, the first chart ever made of its shores; his, the first landing ever effected there by a civilized man; and the name he gave it has been universally accepted. The flag which he there threw to the breeze was the first ensign of any nation that ever waved over those unexplored

banks. And the ceremony of occupation, under such circumstances, was something more than a holiday pastime. It was a serious act, performed in sober earnest, and reported to the world as soon as possible.

And when we remember that as a result of this came the Lewis and Clark Expedition of 1804-5, and the settlement at Astoria in 1811,—to say nothing of our diplomatic acquisition of the old Spanish rights,—then we may safely say that the title of the United States to the Columbia River and its tributaries becomes incontestable. Such was the outcome of the "Oregon Question" in 1846.

On leaving the river, May 20, the "Columbia" sailed up to Naspatee, where she was obliged to use her guns to check a hostile demonstration of the savages. And soon after, in going up Pintard's Sound, she was again formidably attacked by war canoes, and obliged to open fire upon them with serious results.

In a cruise soon after, the ship struck on a rock and was so badly injured that she returned to Naspatee and underwent some repairs and then sailed for Nootka, and on July 23 reported her condition to the governor, Don Quadra, who generously offered every assistance, allowed them his storehouses for their cargo, gave up the second-best house in the settlement for the use of Captain Gray and his clerk, and insisted upon having their company at his own sumptuous table at every meal. Such politeness was, of course, very agreeable to the weary voyagers, and was held in such grateful remembrance in subsequent years that Captain Gray named his first-born child, Robert Don Quadra Gray, for the governor as well as himself. It was during this visit that Gray and Ingraham wrote their joint letter to the governor, which was often quoted in the course of the Anglo-Spanish negotiations. In September Gray sold the little sloop "Adventure" to Quadra for seventy-five sea-otter skins of the best quality, and transferred her officers and crew to the "Columbia."

As he sailed away, he saluted the Spanish flag with thirteen guns, and shaped his course for China. As the season was late and the winds unfavorable, he abandoned the project of visiting Japan, which the owners had recommended. Great was the joy of the crew when they found themselves homeward bound. They had an easy run to the Sandwich Islands, where they took in a supply of provisions and fruit, sailing again No-

vember 3, and reaching Macao Roads December 7, in a somewhat leaky condition. The skins were sent up to Canton, and the ship was repaired near Whampoa, and duly freighted with tea, sugar, chinaware, and curios.

On the 3d of February the "Columbia" set sail for Boston. While at anchor, near Bocca Tigris, her cable was cut by the Chinese, and she drifted slowly ashore, almost unobserved by the officer of the watch. This proved to be the last of her tribulations, as it was also one of the least. In the Straits of Sunda they met a British fleet escorting Lord Macartney, the ambassador, to Peking, for whom Captain Gray took despatches as far as St. Helena.

At last, after all her wanderings, the good ship reached Boston, July 29, 1793, and received another hearty welcome. Although the expectations of the owners were not realized, one of them wrote "she has made a saving voyage and some profit." But in the popular mind the discovery of the great river was sufficient "profit" for any vessel; and this alone will immortalize the owners as well as the ship and her captain, far more, indeed, than furs or teas or gold could have done.

It remains only to add that in a few years the ship was worn out and taken to pieces, and soon her chief officers all passed away. Kendrick never returned to America. After opening a trade in sandal-wood, he was accidentally killed at the Hawaiian Islands, and the "Lady Washington" was soon after lost in the Straits of Malacca. His Nootka lands never brought anything to the captain or his descendants or to the owners of the ship. In fact, the title was never confirmed. Gray commanded several vessels after this, but died in 1806 at Charleston, S.C. Ingraham became an officer in our navy, but went down with the ill-fated brig "Pickering" in 1800. The same year Davidson was lost on the "Rover" in the Pacific. Haswell sailed for the last time in 1801, and was also lost on the return voyage.

Their names, however, will always be associated with the ship they served so well; and, as long as the broad "river of the West" flows on in its course, so long will the "Columbia" be gratefully remembered by the people of America. This [1892] is the year of Oregon's first Centennial, and the enthusiasm it has awakened clearly shows that the highest honor on that coast will hereafter be given to the heroic discoverers who prepared the way for the pioneers and settlers, and thus added a fine group of States to our federal Union.

*Extract from the second Volume of the Log-book of the Ship Columbia, of Boston, commanded by Robert Gray, containing the Account of her Entrance into the Columbia River, in May, 1792.**

May 7th, 1792, A.M.— Being within six miles of the land, saw an entrance in the same, which had a very good appearance of a harbor; lowered away the jolly-boat, and went in search of an anchoring-place, the ship standing to and fro, with a very strong weather current. At one P.M., the boat returned, having found no place where the ship could anchor with safety; made sail on the ship; stood in for the shore. We soon saw, from our mast-head, a passage in between the sand-bars. At half-past three, bore away, and ran in north-east by east, having from four to eight fathoms, sandy bottom; and, as we drew in nearer between the bars, had from ten to thirteen fathoms, having a very strong tide of ebb to stem. Many canoes came alongside. At five P.M., came to in five fathoms water, sandy bottom with a safe harbor, well sheltered from the sea by long sand-bars and spits. Our latitude observed this day was 46 degrees 58 minutes north.

May 10th.— Fresh breezes and pleasant weather; many natives alongside; at noon, all the canoes left us. At one P.M., began to unmoor, took up the best bower-anchor, and hove short on the small bower-anchor. At half-past four (being high water), hove up the anchor, and came to sail and a beating down the harbor.

May 11th.— At half-past seven, we were out clear of the bars, and directed our course to the southward, along shore. At eight P.M., the entrance of Bulfinch's Harbor bore north, distance four miles; the southern extremity of the land bore south-south-east half east, and the northern north-north-west; sent up the main-top-gallant-yard, and set all sail. At four A.M., saw the entrance of our desired port bearing east-south-east, distance six leagues; in steering sails, and hauled our wind in shore. At eight A.M., being a little to windward of the entrance of the Harbor, bore away, and run in east-north-east between the breakers, having from five to seven fathoms of water. When we were over the bar, we found this to be a large river of fresh water, up which we steered. Many canoes came alongside. At one P.M., came to with the small bower, in ten fathoms, black and white sand. The entrance between the bars bore west-south-west, distant ten miles; the north side of the river a half mile distant from the ship; the south side of the same two and a half miles' distance; a village on the north side of the river west by north, distant three quarters of a mile. Vast numbers of natives

* This extract was made in 1816, by Charles Bulfinch, of Boston, one of the owners of the Columbia, from the second volume of the log-book, which was then in the possession of Captain Gray's heirs, but has since disappeared. It has been frequently published, accompanied by the affidavit of Mr. Bulfinch to its exactness. It is reprinted here from Greenhow's History of Oregon.

came alongside; people employed in pumping the salt water out of our water casks, in order to fill with fresh, while the ship floated in. So ends.

May 12th.—Many natives alongside; noon, fresh wind; let go the best bower-anchor, and veered out on both cables; sent down the main-top-gallant-yard; filled up all the water-casks in the hold. The latter part, heavy gales, and rainy, dirty weather.

May 13th.—Fresh winds and rainy weather; many natives alongside; hove up the best bower-anchor; seamen and tradesmen at their various departments.

May 14th.—Fresh gales and cloudy; many natives alongside; at noon, weighed and came to sail, standing up the river north-east by east; we found the channel very narrow. At four P.M., we had sailed upwards of twelve or fifteen miles, when the channel was so very narrow that it was almost impossible to keep in it, having from three to eighteen fathoms water, sandy bottom. At half-past four, the ship took ground, but she did not stay long before she came off, without any assistance. We backed her off, stern foremost, into three fathoms, and let go the small bower, and moored ship with kedg and hawser. The jolly-boat was sent to sound the channel out, but found it not navigable any farther up; so, of course, we must have taken the wrong channel. So ends, with rainy weather; many natives alongside.

May 15th.—Light airs and pleasant weather; many natives from different tribes came alongside. At ten A.M., unmoored and dropped down with the tide to a better anchoring-place; smiths and other tradesmen constantly employed. In the afternoon, Captain Gray and Mr. Hoskins, in the jolly-boat, went on shore to take a short view of the country.

May 16th.—Light airs and cloudy. At four A.M., hove up the anchor and towed down about three miles, with the last of the ebb-tide; came into six fathoms, sandy bottom, the jolly-boat sounding the channel. At ten A.M., a fresh breeze came up river. With the first of the ebb-tide we got under way, and beat down river. At one (from its being very squally) we came to, about two miles from the village (*Chinouk*), which bore west-south-west; many natives alongside; fresh gales and squally.

May 17th.—Fresh winds and squally; many canoes alongside; calkers calking the pinnace; seamen paying the ship's sides with tar; painter painting ship; smiths and carpenters at their departments.

May 18th.—Pleasant weather. At four in the morning, began to heave ahead; at half-past, came to sail, standing down river with the ebb-tide; at seven (being slack water and the wind fluttering,) we came to in five fathoms, sandy bottom; the entrance between the bars bore south-west by west, distant three miles. The north point

of the harbor bore north-west, distant two miles; the south bore south-east, distant three and a half miles. At nine, a breeze sprung up from the eastward; took up the anchor and came to sail, but the wind soon came fluttering again; came to with the kedje and hawser; veered out fifty fathoms. Noon, pleasant. Latitude observed, 46 degrees 17 minutes north. At one came to sail with the first of the ebb-tide, and drifted down broadside, with light airs and strong tide; at three-quarters past, a fresh wind came from the northward; wore ship, and stood into the river again. At four, came to in six fathoms; good holding-ground about six or seven miles up; many canoes alongside.

May 19th.—Fresh wind and clear weather. Early a number of canoes came alongside; seamen and tradesmen employed in their various departments. Captain Gray gave this river the name of *Columbia's River*, and the north side of the entrance *Cape Hancock*; the south, *Adams's Point*.

May 20th.—Gentle breezes and pleasant weather. At one P.M. (being full sea), took up the anchor, and made sail, standing down river. At two, the wind left us, we being on the bar with a very strong tide, which set on the breakers; it was now not possible to get out without a breeze to shoot her across the tide; so we were obliged to bring up in three and a half fathoms, the tide running five knots. At three-quarters past two, a fresh wind came in from seaward; we immediately came to sail, and beat over the bar, having from five to seven fathoms water in the channel. At five P.M., we were out, clear of all the bars, and in twenty fathoms water. A breeze came from the southward; we bore away to the northward; set all sail to the best advantage. At eight, Cape Hancock bore south-east, distant three leagues; the north extremity of the land in sight bore north by west. At nine, in steering and top-gallant sails. Midnight, light airs.

May 21st.—At six A.M., the nearest land in sight bore east-south-east, distant eight leagues. At seven, set top-gallant-sails and light stay-sails. At eleven, set steering-sails fore and aft. Noon, pleasant, agreeable weather. The entrance of Bulfinch's Harbor bore south-east by east half east, distant five leagues.

CAPTAIN ROBERT GRAY'S SEA LETTER.

"To all Emperors, Kings, Sovereign princes, State and Regents and to their respective officers, civil and military and to all others whom it may concern.

"I, George Washington, President of the United States of America do make known that Robert Gray, Captain of a ship called the *Columbia*, of the burden of about 230 tons, is a citizen of the United States and that the said ship which he commands belongs

to the citizens of the United States; and as I wish that the said Robert Gray may prosper in his lawful affairs, I do request all the before mentioned, and of each of them separately, when the said Robert Gray shall arrive with his vessel and cargo, that they will be pleased to receive him with kindness and treat him in a becoming manner &c. and thereby I shall consider myself obliged.

"September 16, 1790 — New York City
[Seal U. S.]

"GEO. WASHINGTON,
President.

"THOMAS JEFFERSON,
"Secy. of State."

"When in 1826 the rights of the United States in regard to Oregon were formulated and made the subject of consideration by plenipotentiaries on the parts of Great Britain and the United States, the claims of the latter were urged on three grounds, the most important or first being from their own proper right, which was founded on Gray's discovery of the Columbia River. If Vancouver had discovered the Columbia prior to Gray, it is impossible to say what complications and results would have arisen in connection with the extension and development of the United States. It is therefore a source of endless gratification that Captain Robert Gray, by his courage, enterprise and seamanship, in discovering and entering the Columbia, ultimately secured to the United States this fertile territory, almost twice as extensive in area as Great Britain. With its six hundred and sixty thousand of inhabitants [1893], its great cities, its enormous accumulations of wealth, the young empire added to the United States through Robert Gray is fast shaping into substance the golden visions of the enthusiastic Kendrick."—*General A. W. Greely.*

Rev. Edward G. Porter, for so many years the warm friend of the Old South Work, an indefatigable worker in many fields of American history, and especially in whatever related to the history of Boston, gave us in the paper here reprinted the best connected account of the important event which so closely links Boston and New England, the extreme northeast of the country, with its extreme northwest. It was with the expeditions of Kendrick and Gray that "the 'Bostons' came into rivalry with the 'King George men' as explorers and traders" on the Oregon coast. Much information concerning these expeditions, with full references to original authorities, may be found in Bancroft's *History of the Pacific States*, vol. xxii. 185-264. Bancroft had in his hands and frequently quotes manuscript narratives of the two voyages by Haswell, "given me by Captain Haswell's daughter, Mrs. John J. Clarke, of Roxbury, Mass." The first diary (65 pages) covers 1788-89; the second, 1791-92. Of the latter Bancroft says: "It is a document of great interest and value, and includes a number of charts. The original contains also views of several places, the author having

much skill with the pencil." Several of Haswell's drawings were reproduced in connection with Mr. Porter's paper when it originally appeared.

The letter of Gray and Ingraham to the Spanish commandant, written at Nootka Sound, Aug. 3, 1792, referred to in the leaflet, is printed in the appendix to Greenhow's History of Oregon and California, which contains much besides of value in the general connection. W. H. Gray's History of Oregon begins with an account of Captain Gray's discovery. There are various histories of Oregon by Dunn, Thornton, Hines, Twiss, Wilkes, and others. The most interesting is that by William Barrows, in the American Commonwealths Series. The chapter on "The Claims of the United States to Oregon" deals specifically with the subject of the leaflet. The list of authorities given by Barrows is very full; and in this connection reference should be made to W. E. Foster's "Bibliography of Oregon," in the *Magazine of American History*, vii. 461. The first chapter of Bulfinch's "Oregon and Eldorado" is a description of Gray's voyage: the second chapter is upon Lewis and Clark's expedition. There is a capital chapter on Gray, in General A. W. Greely's "Explorers and Travellers," also followed by one on Lewis and Clark. Irving's "Astoria" is well known. T. J. Farnham's History of Oregon Territory (1844) is "a demonstration of the title of the United States to the same." Captain Gray's discovery naturally plays an important part in this, as also in W. A. Mowry's pamphlet on "Our Title to Oregon." Mr. Mowry has taken prominent part in the controversy as to the extent of Marcus Whitman's services in "saving Oregon," in which Nixon, Marshall, Bourne, and others have participated. Full references relating to the Oregon boundary disputes may be found in Channing and Hart's "Guide to American History."

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