

JOINT OCCUPATION OF OREGON TERRITORY

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After Polk's inauguration in 1845, the first thing he did was to turn his attention to Oregon. He gave this territory a regular and orderly government. He was swift, bold, decisive, and a masterful administrator. At this time emigrants were coming to Oregon in a steady stream, "stout sons of Anak, not one of them under six-feet-two in his stockings." In 1845 some ten thousand Americans had settled in the Oregon country. In his first message to Congress, Polk recommended that Great Britain be notified that the agreement of joint occupation should come to a close and that the authority of the United States be extended over our citizens in that territory. Congress approved of Polk's plan. England was notified and the Federal Government assumed authority over the Oregon Country.

Keeping to the campaign cry of "54-40 or fight," Polk quickly settled the vexed question of the Oregon boundary. England claimed the Columbia River as the southern boundary of her territory. The dispute was settled by compromise and the dividing line was established as the forty-ninth parallel from the Rocky Mountains to the middle of the channel that separates Vancouver Island from the mainland, and thence should run southward along the middle of the channel from Juan De Fuca's strait to the Pacific.

Polk acted in a quick manner in regard to the Oregon Country and England thought him arbitrary and unjust. War at one time was threatened; however, the two nations did not come to blows.

Major Long had impressed the people that this western country was a vast desert and at the beginning of this question few people thought it advisable to try to obtain the Oregon Country or to settle it. At this time one senator said, "Oregon will never be a state in the Union;" another wanted to build a railroad to Oregon, but others thought that all the wealth of the Indies would not be sufficient for such a task. The fur-trading companies were the first to bring settlers to this region. These first "Oregonians" saw the possibilities of the soil and had a vision of the forests cleared and productive fields and orchards taking their place.

In the year 1832 Nathaniel J. Wyeth led a party from New England into this region and established Fort Hall in what is now Idaho. These expeditions had to deal with the hostile Indians and all the hardships of the prairie. The American Fur Trading Company of St. Louis annually sent caravans into Oregon which were protected by large, strongly armed bands. Lewis and Clark's journal probably did more than anything else to persuade the people to settle

this country. A cheap edition of the paper, issued in 1811, made known to the people the resources of the vast country beyond the arid plains and towering mountains. Many missionaries carried their work to the Oregon region and brought back to the East good tidings of the new country. Dr. Elijah White led a company of men over the mountains into Oregon in the year 1842. This small band was soon followed by many similar bands and Oregon soon began to bloom into a country of men with clean minds and strong hearts.

The first lasting colony to be planted was Astoria, which was settled by John Jacob Astor of New York, who was a fur trader. Not only did settlers come to Oregon by land, but many came by the sea route around Cape Horn. The most settled part of Oregon at this time was the Willamette Valley.

The covered wagon was the schooner of the prairie, piloted by men and women with the spirit of adventure that lured them on.

It was these pioneer souls who pressed on with the ardor of hope and blazed the path that man enjoys today. They settled here, and desired that they be Americans and their desire caused the termination of the joint occupation.

THE WAR-BONNET

There seems to be much mental confusion, in the minds of our white people in particular, as to the status of the war-bonnet of the Indian. In pictures we often see Indian children represented as wearing a war-bonnet, or the decoration used as head-pieces on "pale faces," or even the children of the latter. Nothing could be farther afield in regard to the facts in the matter of the war-bonnet. To one who "who knows" the misconception of war-bonnet history on the part of our artists is ludicrous.

In fact, only the Indian heroes were entitled to wear the war-bonnet. Each individual feather was awarded for the performance of some deed of daring. The capture of an enemy's scalp was a popular way of winning one of these emblems of honor. Perhaps the scarcity of war-bonnets now is attributable to the fact that there is no open season on pale faces—and their scalps. A real war-bonnet, made of eagle feathers, each feather really earned, is almost without price.

Neither shells nor shock had anything to do with shellshock, a form of mental disease experienced by many in the World war, says Dr. F. W. Parsons, of the New York state hospital commission. The shellshock was dependent on fear, he says, and the phrase was simply invented to describe those stricken by terror. "A neurosis, a hysteria or a neurasthenia developed on an emotional basis is what is meant by shellshock," he declares.