

### THE METHUSELAH OF STEAMSHIPS.

THE HISTORY OF THE "BEAVER," THE FIRST STEAMSHIP THAT EVER CROSSED THE PACIFIC.

Forty-three years have passed, and a generation of men have come and gone since the Hudson's Bay Company's steamer *Beaver* floated down the river Thames, through the British Channel, and went out into the open, trackless sea, rounded Cape Horn, clove the placid waters of the Pacific Ocean, and anchored at length, after a 163 days' passage, at Astoria, then the chief town (?) on the Pacific Coast.

Built and equipped at a period when the problem of steam marine navigation was yet to be solved, it is any wonder that the little steamer which was destined to traverse two oceans—one of them scarcely known outside of books of travel—was an object of deep and engrossing interest from the day that her keel was first laid until the morning when she passed out of sight amidst the encouraging cheers of thousands gathered on either shores and the answering salvos of her own guns, on a long voyage to an unknown sea?

Titled men and women watched the progress of construction. A Duchess broke the traditional bottle of champagne over the bow and bestowed the name she has ever since proudly worn. The engines and boilers, built by Bolton & Watt (Watt was a son of the Great Watt) were placed in their proper positions on board, but it was not considered safe to work them on the passage; so she was rigged as a brig and came out under sail. A bark accompanied her as convoy to assist in case of accident; but the *Beaver* set all canvas, ran out of sight of her "protector," and reached the Columbia river 22 days ahead. Capt. Home was the name of the first commander of the *Beaver*; he brought her out, and we can well imagine the feeling of pride with which he bestrode the deck of his brave little ship, which carried six guns—nine-pounders. The *Beaver*, soon after reaching Astoria, got up steam, and after having "astonished the natives" with her performances, sailed up to Nisqually, then the Hudson's Bay Co.'s chief station on the Pacific. Here Capt. McNeil took command of the *Beaver*, and Capt. Home, retiring to one of the Company's forts on the Columbia river, perished in 1837 in Death's Rapids by the upsetting of a boat. From that period until the steamer passed into the hands of the Imperial hydrographers, the history of the *Beaver* was that of most of the Company's trading vessels. She ran north and south, east and west, collecting furs and carrying goods to and from the stations for many years. Amongst the best known of her officers during that period were Capt. Dodds, Capt. Brochie, Capt. Scarborough, Sangster, and others, all of whom passed away long since, but have left their names behind them. We believe we are correct in saying that not a single person who came out in the *Beaver* in 1835 is now alive; and nearly all the Company's officers, with a few exceptions, who received her on her arrival at Columbia river, are gone too.

Our engraving, which is most faithfully executed, represents the *Beaver* at anchor in the beautiful harbor at Victoria, B. C. Although old, she is yet staunch, and for the past two years has been successfully running as a tow-boat, in command of Capt. Rudlin, her peculiar construction (as shown in our engraving) especially fitting her for that kind of steamboating. A *Colonist* reporter went aboard the *Beaver* just after she was sold to her present owners, Sanders, Rudlin & Co., says:



MOUNT BAKER, FROM VICTORIA HARBOR.—Height, 10,781 feet.

Yesterday, through the courtesy of Capt. Rudlin (one of her new owners and future commander) we visited the old ship. On board we met the venerable Capt. Wm. Mitchell, who has had charge of the vessel for some years. He was busily engaged in packing his clothes into chests preparatory to going ashore. He remembers well the *Beaver* in her early days. Every room, every plank possesses historic interest to him. He pointed out the Captain's room, "Just the same," said he, "as when I first saw it in '36. There's the chest of drawers, there's the bunk, and there's the hook where the Captain's pipe hung, and many's the smoke I've had in these cabins nearly forty years ago. Nothing below has been changed," continued Capt. Mitchell, "except—except the faces that used to people these rooms in the days long ago, and"—pointing to his thin gray locks—"I was a deal younger then!" He led the way into the engine-room, chatting pleasantly as he went, and relating incidents connected with the *Beaver* and her dead people. There are two engines, of 75 horse-power, as bright and apparently as little worn as when they first came from the shop of Bolton & Watt. From some cuddy hole the Captain drew forth the ship's bell, on which was inscribed "*Beaver*, 1835," then he showed us into the little fore-castle, with the hammock-hooks still attached to the timbers, from which had swung two generations of sailors. Then the main-deck was regained, and we took leave of the gallant old gentleman and Capt. Rudlin.

### A BIT OF OREGON'S HISTORY.

From the Salem *Mercury* of July 16th, we clip the following:

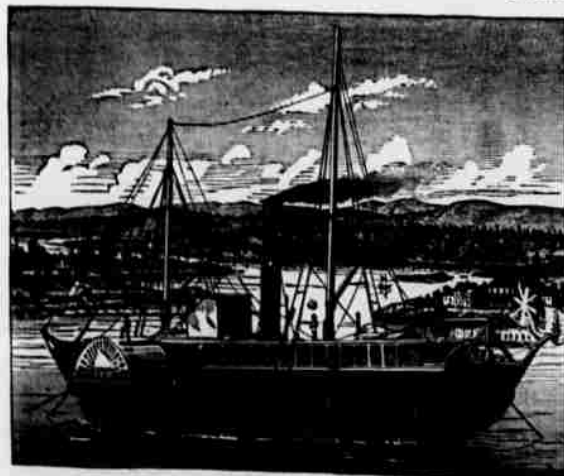
We have just heard related the circumstances of the settlement of one of the oldest farms within the present boundaries of the State of Oregon, and which we deem worthy of putting on record. Somewhere about 1812 a French mountaineer and trapper by the name of Montoure, who had drifted into this, then wild region of country, concluded to cease his wild roving and stopped among the Indians of the Willamette Valley. Having appreciations of the value and importance of the cultivation of the soil, he looked around him for a proper location. His choice fell upon the spot where Hon. Sam Brown now lives, on French Prairie, in this, Marion county. Here he settled down and commenced in a rude way, no doubt, the erection of his future home and the cultivation of the soil. Of his adventures among the wild Indians then inhabiting this beautiful country, of his trials, adversities, hopes, fears, his sorrows or happiness, we, perhaps, may never know. But here he remained in peaceable possession of his home in the wilderness until 1826. The Hudson's Bay Company had gained a foothold in the country, and they sent one of their trusted French employes, Peter Depot, to the French Prairie to establish a farm and raise grain, vegetables, etc., for the use of that company. Peter Depot, on his arrival, purchased Montoure's primitive home and farm and commenced in earnest the business of agriculture.

When the restless American race pushed their way into this rich and fertile valley and began to erect their homes on its fine agricultural and grazing lands, the Hudson's Bay Company gave up their farming enterprise, preferring to obtain their supplies derived from the soil, from the early pioneers, and turned their attention more exclusively to their legitimate business of trapping and trading with the Indians. When this change occurred, Peter Depot, preferring to continue the peaceable occupation of a farmer to that of the roving trapper and hunter, was left in peaceable possession of his home. Here he remained until 1850, when Mr. Brown bought him out and took possession of the place. During all this time, nearly 65 years, this farm has been in continuous cultivation. It has never been manured, nor has it needed it, and during all that period the fields have received no rest, except having been summer-fallowed three or four times. The crop growing upon it the present year is as fine as any in the State; the growth is luxuriant and the yield will be as great as any previous year, notwithstanding its long and constant service. This farm and its present condition is a fair and practical illustration of the richness, productiveness and durability of the lands of the Willamette Valley.

### GLADSTONE ON WEDGWOOD.

Josiah Wedgwood, the great English potter, was quite nearly contemporary with Franklin, having been born in 1730 and having died in 1795. He was uneducated, except in his trade, to which he was brought up by his brother. In 1759 he began business for himself, and produced the cream-colored "queen's ware." Subsequently he began to reproduce antique models of vases and pottery of all kinds and to introduce original designs, to which Flaxman, the artist, contributed. His factory was at Burslem in Staffordshire, but in 1771 he removed it to a new village called Etruria. He wrote some valuable papers on natural philosophy, and Mr. Gladstone lately said this of him:

Perhaps I am a little given to hero worship, but Wedgwood is one of my heroes. I consider him to be, take him altogether, the most extraordinary man whose name is recorded in the history of the commercial world. (Cheers.) Putting together the whole of his qualities and the whole of his performances, Wedgwood completely revolutionized the character of the fabrics of his country at his period. He recalled into existence the spirit of Greek art. Whatever we may say of the earthenware or porcelain manufacture as he found it, it never had arisen to the loftiness of the spirit of Greek art. The forms of Sevres porcelain or of Chelsea and Bow work were greatly inferior to Wedgwood's forms. He did not revive Greek art in a servile spirit. His works were not mere reproductions. His style was strikingly original, and though he was most powerfully aided by such men as Bentley, the same remark applies to him as applies to Queen Elizabeth. It is sometimes said that too much credit is given to Queen Elizabeth, and that the greatness ascribed to her belonged in a great measure to Burleigh and her other ministers. But how came she to have those great ministers? She had the judgment and discrimination which enabled her to bring them around her. Wedgwood not only completely revolutionized the character of the fabrics of his day, but he carried the manufacture of earthenware to by far the highest point it had ever attained in any country in the world. Before this time England was not particularly distinguished in the potter's art, for we were, upon the whole, importers and not exporters of pottery. But from the hour Wedgwood came upon the scene all this was altered, and we became great exporters of pottery, and from St. Petersburg on the one hand to the Mississippi on the other the name and productions of Wedgwood became familiar, and were everywhere met with. But his great triumph was the attempted imitation at Sevres of his ware, which, however, never reached the perfection of the genuine Wedgwood.



"THE BEAVER"—(THE METHUSELAH OF STEAMSHIPS), AND VICTORIA HARBOR. FROM A PHOTO BY NOLAN SHAKERSPEARE.