

Hunt, with the hope that by such a division their chances for reaching the mouth of the Columbia would be increased. Once the parties under Crooks and Hunt camped with only the narrow, turbulent waters of Snake river separating them. The Hunt party had killed a horse and were cooking it, while their starving companions on the opposite side of the stream, with no means of crossing it, were forced to look on as they dined. Not a man in Mr. Hunt's camp would make an effort to send them food, until the arrival of Mr. Crooks, who, discovering the condition of his men on the opposite side, called to the forlorn band to start fires for cooking, that no time might be lost, while he constructed a canoe out of skins in which to take the meat across to them. In vain he tried to shame the more fortunate into helping to succor their famishing companions, but "A vague and almost superstitious terror," says Irving, "had infected the minds of Mr. Hunt's followers, enfeebled and rendered imaginative of horrors by the dismal scenes and sufferings through which they had passed. They regarded the haggard crew, hovering like spectres of famine on the opposite bank, with indefinite feelings of awe and apprehension, as if something desperate and dangerous was to be feared from them." When the canoe was finished, Mr. Crooks attempted to navigate the impetuous stream with it, but found his strength unequal to the task, and failing to reach his companions on the opposite bank, made another appeal to Hunt's men. Finally, a Kentuckian, named Ben Jones, undertook and made the passage, conveying meat to them and then came back. These occurrences were on the 20th of December, 1811, both parties being on their way up Snake river after having found the descent of that stream impossible.

It was now their intention to strike across the country for the Columbia, as soon as it was practicable to do so. On the twenty-third of December, Mr. Hunt's followers crossed to the west side of the stream, where they were joined by Crooks's men, who were already there. The two parties, when united, numbered thirty-six souls, and on the next day they turned from the river into a trackless country; but, before starting, three more of their number had concluded to remain among the savages rather than face the hardships and trials that lay before them. December 28, 1811, the head waters of Grand Ronde river were reached, and the last day of that year found them encamped in the valley of that name. Through all their perils and wanderings since leaving St. Louis, one woman, the Indian wife of Pierre Dorion, a guide, interpreter and trapper, had accompanied them, bringing with her two children, and, as the party entered the Grand Ronde valley, she gave birth to another. The next day she continued the journey on horseback as though

nothing had happened, but the little stranger only lived six days. Mr. Hunt, after halting one or two days to enable his followers to celebrate, in their forlorn way, the advent of a new year that had presented to them the Grande Ronde valley, a kind of winter paradise in the mountains, continued his course to the west. The Blue Mountain ridge was passed, and January 8, 1812, an Indian village, on the Umatilla river close to the mountains, was reached, where they were hospitably received. From there their route was down this stream to the Columbia river, thence to the mouth of the latter, arriving at Astoria February 15, 1812.

Since leaving Fort Henry, October 19, 1811, out of Mr. Hunt's party, two men had been drowned on Snake river, and poor Michael Carriere, when exhausted, had straggled behind in Grande Ronde valley, and was never heard from afterwards. Ramsey Crooks, John Day and four Canadian voyageurs had been left half dead on Snake river, to remain in the Indian country, die, or reach the Columbia as best they could. Eleven men, among them McKenzie and McLellan had been detached on Snake river, and following that stream until its waters mingled with the Columbia, had reached Astoria a month in advance of Mr. Hunt. Mr. Stuart, when returning from his post on the Okanogan, during the first days of April, found Mr. Crooks and John Day on the banks of the Columbia river, without weapons, nearly starved, and as naked as when born, having been robbed and stripped by the Dalles Indians. They had wintered in the Blue mountains about Grande Ronde valley, and in the spring had reached the Walla Walla, who had fed, succored them, and sent them on their way rejoicing down the river. When found, they were making their way back to these early friends of the Americans, who never failed to assist our people when in trouble. At length all but three of those starting from the head waters of the Snake river for Astoria had reached that place, except the four voyageurs, and later they, too, were found by a return party.

On the ninth of May, the ship *Beaver*, with reinforcements and supplies, anchored at Astoria, and the Pacific Fur Company was in condition to enter upon a vigorous fur-gathering campaign. Mr. Hunt, who was at the head of affairs, set out in July for Alaska to fulfill the mission upon which the ill-fated *Tonquin* had sailed, and his departure left Duncan McDougal in charge. Prior to this, however, the various expeditions to trap waters and trade with natives between the Rocky and Cascade mountains had started, sixty-two strong, up the Columbia. Among the number was the unfortunate John Day, and, as the party approached the scenes of his former sufferings, his mind became delirious, and the mere sight of an Indian

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