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Pioneer Experiences of Southwest Oregon

—Continued from last week.

The captain was at the custom house at its opening, and that morning Collector Collier was succeeded by T. Butler King. Mr. Collier stated to the captain that Lieutenant Smith in command of the military department of the Pacific, had sent May Sewel, U. S. A. three times for him to take him prisoner for the abduction of Lieutenant and one soldier. The captain inquired where the Lieutenant could be found, that if he desired him he would wait for him. The Collector asked the Captain what he wanted there and he replied that he wished to anchor his vessel. The Collector with a smile asked him for his papers he knowing the vessel's papers had been detained by the Collector at Astoria. The answer was, "I presume then said: Sir you may enter your vessel; make out your manifest. Your register was left in this office; you sailed with a certificate only, and furthermore, had you killed all of them in the boat that attempted to board you in the Columbia river no law would have condemned you, and further I advised May Sewel to keep his hands clear of you if he wished to avoid serious trouble to himself and you, Capt. Tichenor, are the first ship master who has known his rights and dared

maintain them against such apparent odds."

A circumstance illustrative of the difficulties to be encountered by ship masters in 1851 and '52 was the impudent pretensions of the Doctor of the port, an individual created by the corrupt city officials of San Francisco who with his boat with yellow flag flying at the stern, boarded all and every vessel, both coast, river and foreign, ordering their signals of sickness to be displayed, indicating sickness and quarantine, and exacting a fee of ten dollars from every passenger before a permission could be obtained to go ashore. The first to oppose this system of robbery was Capt. Tichenor of the "Emily Farnham" on his arrival from the Columbia river, and Humboldt bay.

In the morning after entering the vessel, while getting ready to proceed up to the city to moor the vessel for discharging her cargo, ordering the Captain to set his ensign in the main rigging, and that he wished a line, desiring to go on board. The Captain informed him that no ensign would be placed in the rigging, and furthermore, if he came on board he would be thrown overboard. This, of course, caused quite an excitement when the news spread through the fleet and on shore as an issue was then forced upon the usurping official. A meeting was called at Delmonico's, and full attendance was given. Collector Collier and T. Butler King among the rest. The former addressed the meeting and stated that the styled Doctor of the Port had made a demand of him as collector to turn over to him

(the doctor) "hospital dues" funds held sacred by the Government for the support and care of seamen. He denounced in the strongest terms the during outrage and advised shipmasters to maintain their rights as the Emily Farnham had done. The brig being moored, Capt. Tichenor gave up command which he had really taken through friendship to the owners.

In one week the command of the steamer Sea Gull was offered him, which he accepted March 1851. She was a vessel of over four hundred tons, strongly built, with sufficient power, but wrongly applied. She was immediately put upon the route of the Columbia river and intermediate ports. Freight was then from sixty to eighty dollars per ton and passage to Portland eighty. Coal worth sixty, and during that year not less than forty dollars per ton. Seaman's wages per month from sixty to one hundred dollars. The Sea Gull made her regular trips. Captain Tichenor received his appointment as a Pilot of the Columbia bar and river in April from Governor Gains then Governor of Oregon and authorized by the territorial government to grant such privileges. Captain Tichenor's was the second ever issued up to that time. Captain White being the first. When the weather permitted, in every passage of the Sea Gull the coast line was carefully examined. Sunken rocks, reefs, shoals, and currents and every peculiarity noted for future reference. The last of May was chosen as a proper time to commence a settlement at the long determined point, Port Orford, named after the Cape seven miles to the north of the Roadstead. Nine men were engaged by Captain Tichenor, a good supply of arms ammunition and provisions, secured and upon the down passage of the Sea Gull on June 9th, a landing was made. All supplies together with the ships gun and Copper Magazine, placed upon a rock, since named Battle Rock, the gun commanding the access. The men were to have their number augmented in twelve days on the return of the steamer. Upon arriving at San Francisco it was found necessary to repair and paint the ship. Captain Knight of the P. M. Co., kindly offered to take up the recruits and additional supplies the Captain to accompany the P. M. C. ship Columbia, Captain Leroy, commanding Captain was to take her into Humboldt through the channels inside the different reefs on the coast and return in the ship at which time his own would be ready. The Columbia then entered Humboldt Bay for the first time, passed through all the reefs entered Port Orford in the morning and saw a number of canoes paddling for dear life to the southward. The ship fired her gun to let the men left in the canoe plunged overboard, giving evidence there by that something was wrong. Coming to an anchor a boat was lowered and then pulled ashore and immediately at the base of the rock at the point of ascent lay a dead Indian. The indications were anything but flattering for the safety of the men left by the Sea Gull. A search was at once instituted fragments of a diary were found scattered around embracing every circumstance all the attacks up to the previous. The carriage of the gun was broken up, the magazine gone, the two tents, also hard bread and pork scattered around, and desertion presented itself everywhere. After diligent search with no clew to solve the disappearance. The men returned to the ship and proceeded upon the voyage, returning to San Francisco on July 1, 1851. The Sea Gull ready to take in cargo, the report of the supposed death of the nine men, caused much feeling. There was but little difficulty in raising volunteers, costing them nothing as the city at that time was thronged with many idlers many destitute and willing to go anywhere so long as their wants were supplied. Many were desperate bad men which fact could only be ascertained by a trial. Passed the Fourth in San Francisco, sailed on the 8th, called at Humboldt reached Port Orford on the 14th of July 1851, with sixty-seven men under the command of Jas. S. Gamble with brass six pound guns and two with swivels of the same caliber with most approved arms obtainable at that time in the city, provisions, clothing and everything necessary for four months. At Humboldt, Mr. Nolan joined the expedition. Fort Point was picketed in immediately, two block houses erected inside of heavy logs and everything done for a permanent settlement. The ship proceeded upon her voyage to Portland at which place the Captain purchased six horses, some swine, engaged a Mr. Tevalt who had been recommending highly to him by Lieut. Phil. Kerney who had been a school mate of the Captain in Newark N. J. He then filed his notification and settlers out at Lieutenant Preeson's office at Oregon City, he having been appointed the first Surveyor General of Oregon, under the territorial government. The notification bearing date of July 21, 1851, and upon that day the ship sail-

ed upon her return passage. On arriving at Port Orford, it was found necessary to send fourteen of the most desperate and insubordinate of the men back to the city which was accordingly done. During the absence of the steamer the defences were well advanced towards completion. The horses were all landed safely, and being now relieved of the turbulent element of the camp, the prospect was flattering for a good settlement. The Indians had begun to come in and evincing a desire to trade and be friendly. 3 of the original nine men had been heard from at Portland, so the Captain had been informed, and that all had considered reliable, all wished it to be true. The steamer made her regular trips which brought her at Portland, the last of August and on the 29th of that month, leaving Portland with Doctor Anson Dart Superintendent of Indian affairs, together with Doctor Spaulding, a missionary in the massacre of Walla Walla, also Mr. Parish, many years a resident of Salem, he being a missionary of the M. E. church the two latter being interpreters having long resided in an Indian country. They had with them two Indians who had been captured when boys and were supposed to be from the vicinity of Port Orford, being taken down as interpreters. At Astoria the steamer took on board Lieutenant Whyman of the Artillery, eleven men, two mules, one Mountain Howitzer, and supplies for all ordered there by Lieutenant Hitchcock who had superseded Lieut. P. Smith, commanding the Division of the Pacific, arrived at Port Orford on the 3rd day of September.

A party under Tevalt had been sent with the horses to view out and cut a trail from Port Orford, connecting with the Oregon trail, another under Nolan for a similar purpose. The latter had been instructed by Capt. Tichenor to ascend to the summit of the Sugar Loaf Peak on the southeast of the Roadstead believing that to be the terminus of the great dividing range of mountains leading to the far interior, which has since proven to be such. The party did not follow the advice and consequently wandered through the gulches, under brush and jungles. After 7 days of hard labor, reached Port Orford, coming in from the north and to palliate their gross failure, named the Sugar Loaf Mountain, Tichenor's Humbug, the circumstances stated, is the true origin of the name of that beautiful land mark on the eastern side of the bay or Roadstead, one which cannot be mistaken by any navigator bound for that place in its approach from the northwest or south.

The party under Tevalt had a disastrous and fearful time. Little of mountaineers skill was either used or exhibited in their devious wanderings. Mountain ridges were not followed or regarded. Immense gorges were plunged into without apparent hesitation. All the animals had to be abandoned or were killed by falling off of cliffs. Their provisions were soon exhausted or abandoned, to enable them to travel or wander, for in the following year, Lieutenant Stoneman with his party of explorers, crossed their trail as shown by the cuttings evinced more of insanity than rationality. They finally reached a point on the South Fork of the Coquille river, near which Camp Depot was established the following spring by Company C, first Dragoons under Col. A. J. Smith, Lieut. Stanton, Stoneman and Williamson being with them, the latter as engineer.

To return to Tevalt and party, Tevalt sat down and cried like a child. All but one of his men declared they would abandon him. Cyrus Hedden, many years a resident of Scottsburg on the Umpqua river and a man esteemed by all who knew him, declared he would die rather than abandon a comrade and by the influence he had over the balance of the party, undoubtedly saved the life of Tevalt. They gathered roots and berries to save life being in a state of starvation, reduced greatly by fatigue and want of food they made slow progress in following the river down, but were determined to pursue that course to the ocean. Many Indians were hovering around them. Reaching the main river they finally induced an old Indian and a canoe to approach them, and by giving him buttons and such like articles as could be spared, engaged the canoe to convey them down the river to its mouth. When at a distance of two miles, some of the party declared they should land and procure some food if he had to fight for it, while others protested, fearful of an encounter with the numerous savages on shore, and while thus disputing, the canoe drifted into shoal water. The savages from the shore rushed into the water grasping the canoe and those in it, and the fight thus inaugurated. It was every one for himself. A portion of the men rushed for the shore while others were killed at once. A young Texas by the name of Brush was struck down by a blow of one of the canoe paddles, the sharp edge striking him on the head glancing down the side carrying a large piece

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of the scalp with it. He fell into the canoe. The Indian boy who had assisted in bringing them down and by signs warned them of the danger of landing. He paddled the canoe into the stream with Brush prostrated in it. Tevalt had in the meanwhile struck out to swim the river. He was picked up by the Indian boy and carried with Brush to the opposite shore. Tevalt made all haste to escape leaving Brush, and pursued his way down the coast for Cape Blanco, that in sight, a cape well known by him, being near Port Orford. He reached the mouth of the Squammy now called Sigeo river. Here his sharp rifle was taken from him, he was stripped of all his clothing save his remnants of what was once a shirt and permit-

ted by the Indians to pursue his way to the Fort where he arrived in a nude and starving condition the second day after the disaster. Brush avoided all Indians wounded as he was, all of his clothing consisting of the remnants of a shirt and pants which combined would not make the half of either garments arrived on the third day.—Port Orford Tribune.

The Ladies' Aid of the St. E. church will meet every Wednesday afternoon in the parlor of the church until otherwise notified. Work solicited. All are invited.

The Bandon Recorder
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