

# PRESIDENT PAYS HOMAGE TO OLD OREGON PIONEER

Established northern route as impassable, off to the south through unknown, untrodden lands, past the Great Salt Lake, to Santa Fe, then hurriedly on to St. Louis and finally, after a few days' sojourn on the home-stretch to his destination, taking as many months as it now takes days to go from Walla Walla to Washington.

Saved Oregon for U. S. It was more than a desperate and perilous trip that Marcus Whitman undertook. It was a race against time. Public opinion was rapidly crystallizing into a judgment that the Oregon country was not worth claiming, much less worth fighting for; that, even though it could be acquired against the insistence of Great Britain, it would prove to be a liability rather than an asset.

It is with sheep, amazement that we now read the declarations of the leading men of that period. So good an American, so sturdy a frontiersman, so willing a fighter, as General Jackson, shook his head ominously in fear lest the national domain should get too far outspread, and warned the country that its safety "lay in a compact government." Senator McDuffie, of South Carolina, declared he "would not give a pinch of snuff for the whole territory," and expressed the wish that the Rocky mountains were "an impassable barrier." Senator Dayton, of New York, said that, with very limited exceptions, "the whole country was as irremediably and barren a waste as the Sahara desert," and the malaria had carried away most of its native population. Even so far-sighted and staunch an advocate of western interests as Thomas Benton protested that the ridge of the Rockies should be made our western boundary, and avowed that "on the highest peaks the statue of the fabled God, Terminus, should be erected, never to be thrown down."

Webster Luskewarm Webster, although not definitely antagonistic, was uninterested and lukewarm. Years before he had pronounced Oregon "a barren, worthless country, fit only for wild beasts and wild men," and he was not one who changed opinions readily. But

neither was Whitman one easily dismayed. Encouraged by the manifest friendliness of President Tyler, he portrayed with vivid eloquence the salubrity of the climate, the fertility of the soil, the magnitude of the forests, the evidences of ore in the mountains, and the splendor of the wide valleys drained by the great rivers. And he did not hesitate to speak plainly, as one who knew, even like the prophet Daniel.

"Mr. Secretary," he declared, "you would better give all New England for the cod and mackerel fisheries of Newfoundland than to barter away Oregon."

Then, turning to the president in conclusion, he added quietly but beseechingly:

"All I ask is that you will not barter away Oregon or allow English interference until I can lead a band of stalwart American settlers across the plains. For this I shall try to do."

The manly appeal was irresistible. He sought only the privilege of proving his faith. The just and considerate Tyler could not refuse.

President Grants Request "Doctor Whitman," he rejoined sympathetically, "your long ride and frozen limbs testify to your courage and your patriotism. Your credentials establish your character. Your request is granted."

Whitman's strategy was true statesmanship. Substantial occupation would make good the claim of the United States, and that was what he had initiated during his few days in St. Louis. A few months later he had completed an organization of eager souls, and led the first movement by wagon train across plains and mountains along this unblazed trail.

What a sight that caravan must have appeared to the roaming savages! And what an experience for the intrepid pioneers! More than two hundred wagons, bearing well-nigh a thousand emigrants, made up the party. They traveled by substantially the same route that Whitman had taken when he first went out to Oregon; from a rendezvous near what is now Kansas City they moved due northwest across Kansas and southeast Nebraska to the Platte river; followed the Platte to the middle of what is now Wyoming, thence crossing the mountains by way of the Sweetwater valley and the south Platte; and from Fort Hall, following the well-known route, roughly paralleling the Snake river, into Oregon. The difficulties of the trip, involving beside the two hundred wagons, the care of women and children, and of considerable herds of livestock, were such that its successful accomplishment seems almost miraculous.

ed and the result was conclusive. Americans had settled the country. The country belonged to them because they had taken it; and in the end the boundary settlement was made on the line of the forty-ninth parallel, your great northwest was saved, and a veritable empire was marked in the young republic.

Never in the history of the world has there been a finer example of civilization following christianity. The missionaries led under the banner of the cross, and the settlers moved close behind under the star-spangled symbol of the nation. Among all of the records of evangelizing effort as the forerunner of human advancement, there is none so impressive as this of the early Oregon mission and its marvelous consequences. To the men and women of that early day whose first thought was to carry the gospel to the Indians—to the Lees, the Spauldings, the Grays, the Walkers, the

Leslies, to Fathers DeSmet and Blanchet and De Mers, and to all the others of that glorious company who found that in serving God they were also serving their country and their fellow men—to them we pay today our tribute; to them we owe a debt of gratitude which we can never pay, save partially through recognition such as you have accorded it today.

A Lesson For Today We may reasonably do more today than rejoice in possession of the imperial domain which they revealed, and the life they made possible to the virtue, aspiring, and confident northwest. I find new assurances in recalling the heroism, the resolution, the will to conquer of these pioneers.

I wish I might more effectively visualize them. Not very long ago I saw the covered wagon in the moving picture. I sat entranced. There was more than the picturesque, more than sorrow and discouragement,

more than appealing characters and enthralling heroism. There was more than the revelation of the ir-resolute, who failed in fitness to survive, more than tragedy and comedy in their inseparable blend. There was more than the scouts who surpassed our fancies, more than nature's relentless barriers revealed. Everywhere aflame was the soul of unalterable purpose and the commanding sturdiness of elemental greatness. Still more, there was determination to do themselves, not asking the government to do, but for government only to sanction or permit.

Spirit Of The West Much the same spirit was revealed in the making of the central west, where the determined pioneers built in the confidence which they had in themselves. They battled with nature and every obstacle which they encountered, however perilous without fame's acclaim, and they conquered and wrote big their part in the making of resolute purposes, and the human genius, confident in itself and eager to achieve on its own account.

The lesson can not fail to impress itself. In this test of self-reliant citizenship there came the rugged, militant, wholesome west. Greater things were wrought, larger accomplishment was recorded, greater victory was won in this wholesome, inspiring individualism than will ever attend paternalism or government assumption of the tasks which are the natural inheritance of the builders who may better serve for themselves. Government may well pro-

vide opportunity, but the worthwhile accomplishment is the privilege and the duty of men.

Pays Tribute to Courage I thank you from my heart for permitting me to participate in doing homage to these brave souls. I rejoice particularly in the opportunity afforded me of voicing my appreciation, both as president of the United States and as one who honestly tries to be a christian soldier of the signal service of the martyred Whitman. And finally, as just a human being, I wish I could find words to tell you how glad I am to see you all, and reflecting as you do, from untroubled eyes, the happiness of spirit breathed by your own best song.

There are no new worlds to conquer. Gone is the last frontier. And the steady grind of the wagon-train. Of the sturdy pioneer. But their memories live like a thing divine. Treasured in heaven above. For the trail that led to the storied west. Was the wonderful Trail of Love.

DINNER LASTING THREE DAYS WILL MARK ROYAL WEDDINGS

TOKIO, July 3.—A public dinner extending over three days is planned to follow the wedding of the

Prince Regent and Princess Nagako, which is to take place in the fall. Three thousand government officials, the diplomatic corps, the foreign colony and many others are to be invited. The empress, the Prince Regent, Princess Nagako, who then will be the crown princess, and other members of the royal family will attend at stated times.

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"Making the people know that the thing is to be had and making the people WANT that thing, such is the task of the advertiser."

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