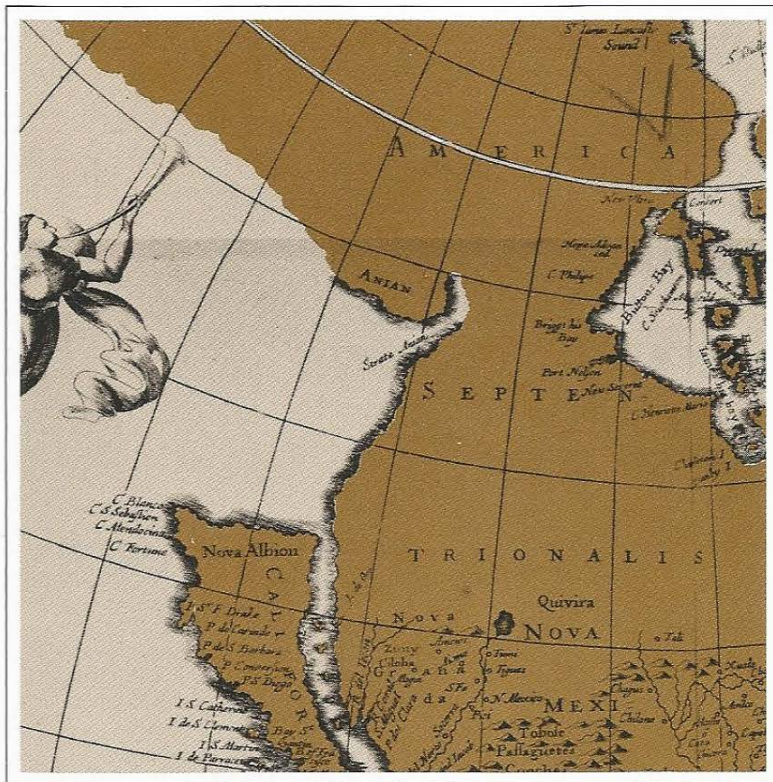


AMERICAN SCENE

THE THOMAS GILCREASE INSTITUTE OF AMERICAN HISTORY AND ART, TULSA, OKLAHOMA



AMERICAN SCENE

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Volume XVII



Chapters one through four of American Scene's Volume XVII have provided an overview of the vast and versatile, yet specialized, holdings of Gilcrease Institute. The opening segments, devoted to the Native Statement, have dealt with the archaeological aspect of the indigenous American Indians and carried through with what happened to them as a result of contact with outsiders, the reliance they developed, the movement they experienced because of outsiders, and finally a brief twentieth century look. European Contact has explored the men from various nations who first came to the New World, as well as their impact and purpose. Expansion illustrates the military and political activities of those who sought a new existence in a foreign land. These latter two segments have purposely been presented from the non-Indian view. The Microcosm has been a means whereby a special, or jewel-box type, focusing was possible.

From the outset it was known that the collections offered a wealth of material to graphically present the story line. Utilizing art, artifacts, original manuscripts, rare books, maps, and documents, each chapter became a brief refresher to the mind that when two cultures meet, conflict becomes a dominant facet in the sequence of events as varying degrees of eventual assimilation occur...

Native Statement

There is abundant and reliable information to indicate that the antiquity of the American Indian goes back 13,000 years in the northwest quadrant and possibly as long ago as 20,000 years. This evidence is also found in other areas of North America. The multifaceted climatic regions of the northwest quadrant attributed to vastly different cultures of man in the Arctic, the mountains, the plains, the plateau, and coastal areas. The historic period which began in this area in the 1500's had intensified by the mid-eighteenth century. From that point, and continuing to the present, the native and his land were changed and never again would be the same.



MASK. WOOD AND COPPER. NORTHWEST COAST (8437.1358)

The northwest quadrant of the western hemisphere is an area of extremes in ecology, geomorphology, and climate. Among its aboriginal inhabitants were the highly specialized and technically equipped Eskimo of the Arctic coast and the desert-dwelling, lightly equipped Indians of the basin-desert areas of Utah and Nevada.

The area would ultimately contain both of the "exuberant" cultures of the North American Continent — the Plains and particularly the Northwest Coast — where an abundance of rather easily acquired food would leave considerable time for non-economic pursuits.

The Northwest was also the area where, as far as is known, the vast majority of ancestral American Indians arrived on the North American Continent from Siberia. It is also the quadrant where the Old and New Worlds are still culturally connected by the Eskimo culture which extends across the Arctic shores from the east coast of Siberia east to the eastern coast of Greenland.

In the region of Alaska, no artifact material has been located which can be positively identified as attributable to early Siberian migrants. These migrants began to arrive probably some twenty thousand years ago, but their oldest remaining culture residue, so far, is found closer to the center of the continent.

The High Plains region near the mountains of Colorado contains residue from two of the earliest Big Game Hunting cultures — the Clovis of 12,000 to 13,000 years ago and the Folsom of over 10,000 years ago. The Clovis people hunted, among other now extinct game, the North American elephant. The Folsom people hunted the massive Ice Age bison. This Big Game Hunting tradition of the western plains lasted into the post-Big Game Hunting Archaic tradition beginning about 10,000 years ago, but ended about 6,500 years ago with the extinction of the large bison and a climate change. For the next 2,000 years the Plains were very sparsely populated.

To the west and north, the Clovis and Folsom cultures are not reliably evident. There is evidence that the Old Cordilleran culture of about 9000 B.C. is the oldest in the area, however, some scholars believe material from 16,000 B.C. may be present at British Mountain in the Northern Yukon and some Alaskan sites. The Old Cordilleran culture evolved into a hunting and gathering Archaic tradition which lasted in much of the area until the Europeans arrived.

Some of the plateau and coastal people, relatively late in pre-European times, appear either to have adopted *in situ* or migrated into the maritime culture which was probably introduced



BLADE, GROUND SLATE, NORTHWEST COAST (6137.6939)



ADZE, BONE WITH JADITE BLADE, ESKIMO (8437.1311)

into the area from Asia or through the Eskimo. This culture became the well-known Northwest Coast culture. Those who remained in the interior mountains and plateau region remained essentially Archaic in tradition although influenced by both the Northwest Coast and Plains areas in later times.

In the Arctic region, a series of traditions over a period of ten or eleven thousand years culminated about A.D.

1000 in the widespread Tule culture which became the modern Eskimo and which may have had its beginnings in Alaska as early as 1000 B.C.

At the time when Northwest Coast Indians first made contact with Europeans, the native men went naked during mild weather. The women wore only skirts which were made from shredded bark or animal skins. Woven hats and



ULU (WOMAN'S KNIFE). IVORY HANDLE WITH SLATE BLADE, ESKIMO (6436.2143)



PESTLE, DIORITE, SACRAMENTO VALLEY (6135.6636)



HAND MAUL, DIORITE, PUGET SOUND AREA (6135.6629)

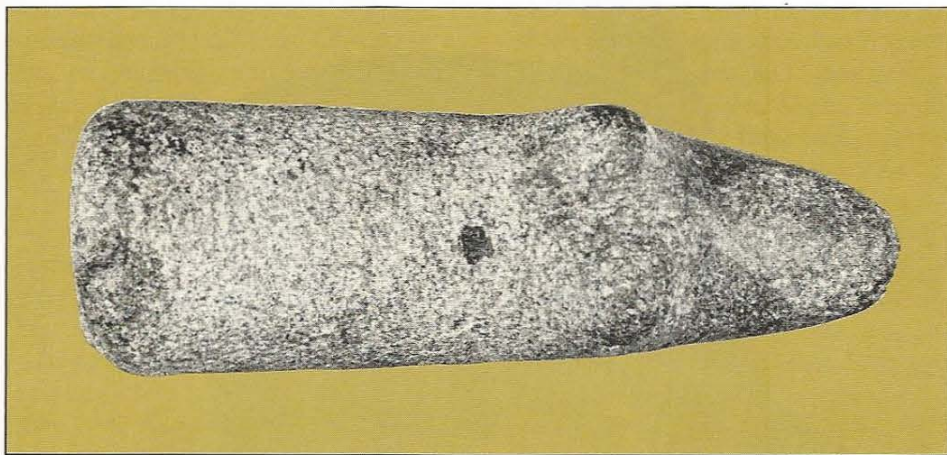
capas were worn to shed the water in the rainy season and they astounded explorers by wearing no foot gear in the snow and never complaining.

The culture groups in our geographic northwest quadrant are so large in number and so vast in diversity it is only possible to mention a few but they do include Eskimo, Haida, Chinook, Pomo, Mission, Nez Perce, Blackfoot, Sioux, Crow, and Cheyenne. The north-

ernmost group of the Northwest Coast culture area, the Tlingit, are well-known for being the first to see Europeans and for their elaborate textile art—the Chilkat blanket. The two boats of explorers sent ashore by Vitus Bering in 1741 never returned. These Indians apparently burned the boats (and used the metals from them), and killed the crews.

The social system in the Northwest

Coast was that of rank: chief, noble, commoner, and slave—slavery existed from California north to the Bering Straits. In the winter, great feasts and ceremonies took place. A potlatch, or give away, was held by people of rank for, among other reasons, the purpose of proclaiming or holding rank. It was not uncommon for a ranking person to give away, or destroy, in front of invited witnesses, everything he owned—



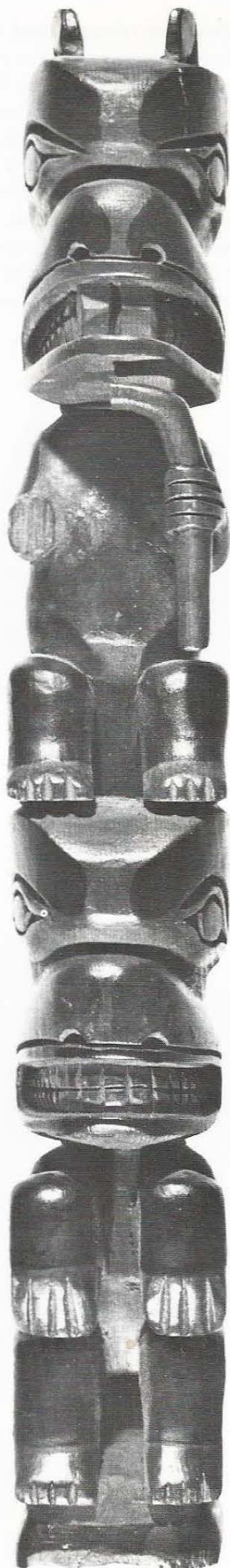
ANIMAL EFFIGY (HANDLE END OF PESTLE), STONE, NORTHWEST COAST (6135.6630)



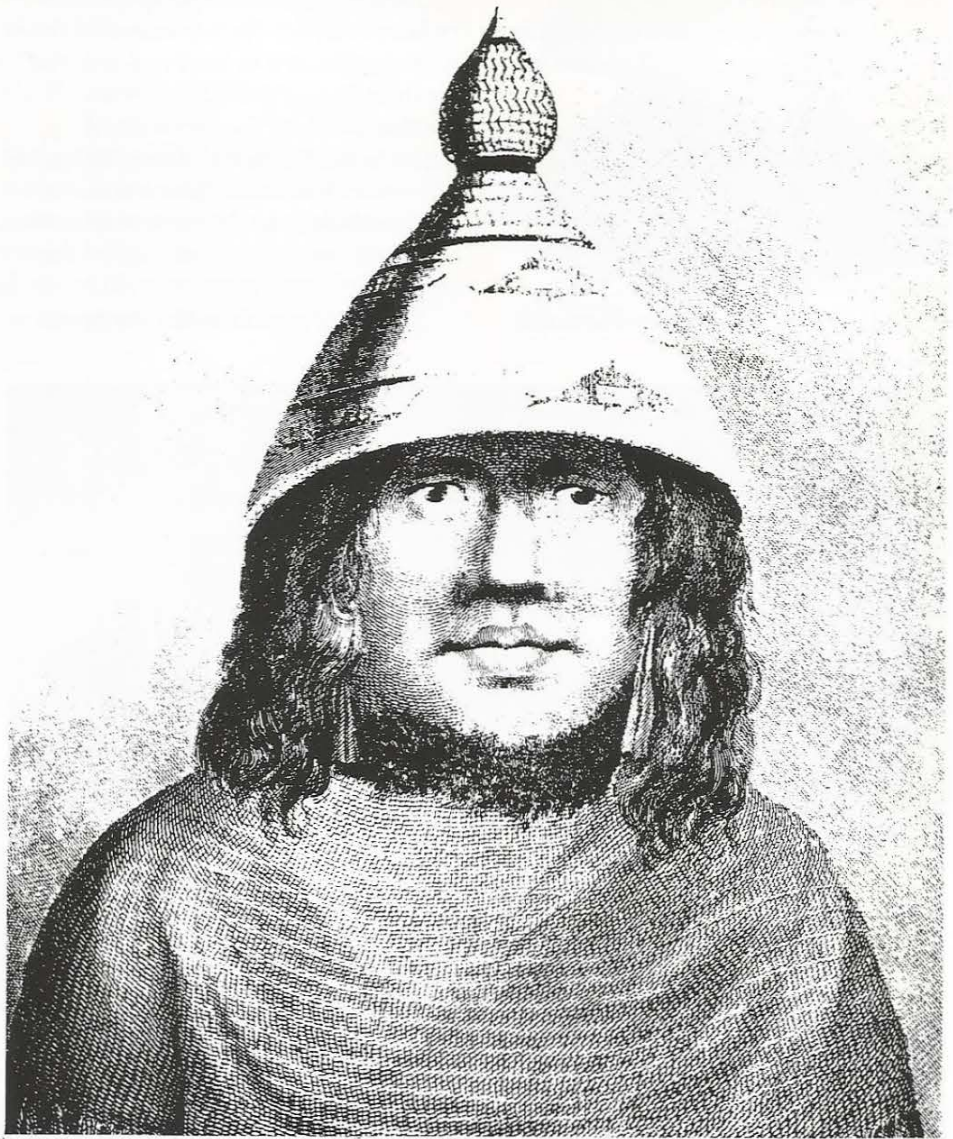
HAND MAUL, STONE, NORTHWEST COAST (6135.6623)



HARPOON HEAD, BONE WITH SLATE BLADE, ESKIMO (8436.1521)

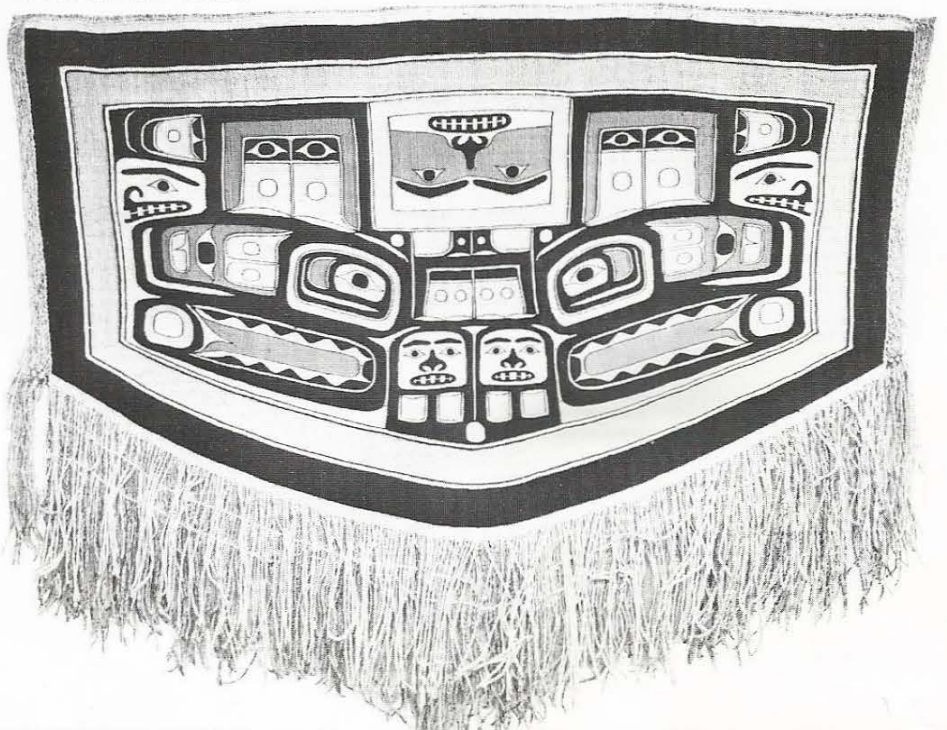


TOTEM, WOOD, NORTHWEST COAST (7337.394)



"A WOMAN OF NOOTKA SOUND" W. SHARP. ENGRAVER. FROM THE 1785 EDITION OF CAPTAIN COOK'S VOYAGES (1576.183)

CHILKAT BLANKET (9936.47)



including slaves. The great sculptural art of the region, the totem pole, was (and is) representative of supernatural beings who originated the family or clan lineage.

The Eskimo, meaning "eaters of raw meat," in the Arctic, are not Indians but a race apart who were well entrenched there even before there were Romans in Rome. Appearing very similar to Orientals, the *Inuit* ("the people"), were found from eastern Siberia to Greenland and have, compared to other aboriginal groups, changed the least. Existing in a harsh climate, their artisans utilize bone, ivory, and antler to create superb works of art which are often strictly utilitarian in origin.

The Great Plains Indians, whose cultural ties at times have extended eastward to the Woodlands and westward to the Bering Straits, are the stereotype among North American Indians. At first contact, they were generally peaceful nomads whose life style was uniquely their own. As contact with outsiders increased, their way of life, like that of most other Indian groups, changed quite rapidly and drastically.

Captain Cook's 1778 visit to Nootka country and the discovery that sea otter pelts went for high prices were the events which brought rapid changes to the Indians of the region. Native boats often forty feet long, built from one cedar tree, and easily maneuverable were used by the Chinook. The native boats transported pelts and slaves to the seagoing merchants who had anxious buyers awaiting them around the world. After 1791, the Chinook prospered on the Columbia River where their trading at ports of call brought them metal knives, colored beads and, more importantly, guns and ammunition. Acting as middlemen they often took these items upriver to markets on the Dalles River. The Haida, considered the "Vikings of the Pacific Northwest," learned from seeing sailing vessels that the addition of a sail to their own keelless boat could speed up their delivery of tons of cargo.

All along the coast, the dentalium shell which had previously served as money among the Indians—three strings bought a house, one or two strings bought a slave—became less important. Booming trade in furs, between white

and Indian, saw a flood of barter items such as "barrels of flour, bolts of cloth . . . blankets, rum, guns and cash," but metal for making tools, and muskets with ammunition were the most treasured items.

Oregon country, roughly Oregon, Washington, Idaho and western Montana, as well as the Arctic and sub-Arctic north, began to take on a different appearance. The Indian was adopting white man ways. Since the first arrival of missionaries in the 1830's, many Flatheads had observed Sundays as Christians did, tried farming, had given up polygamy and gambling and the Aleuts had been converted by Russians to the Greek Orthodox Church. On St. Lawrence Island, in 1888, four hundred people in three villages died as a result of no food. It was determined their hunters had traded furs and ivory (their source of revenue) for whiskey; their drunken condition prevented them from hunting food in preparation for the long winter and as a result everyone suffered. It was rapidly becoming apparent that the native's contact with the white man was destroying his culture.

DETAIL FROM: "INHABITANTS OF NORTON SOUND, AND THEIR HABITATIONS" B. T. POUNCY, ENGRAVER, FROM THE 1785 EDITION OF CAPTAIN COOK'S VOYAGES (1576.189)



Not all movement experienced by Indians was that of bodily movement from tribal lands to distant lands. The whites brought disease and firearms which caused bodily movement — to graves.

In 1829, an epidemic among the Chinook reduced the group to a few hundred, and eventually in 1855, that once proud people were sent to a reservation in Oregon. In the Aleutian Islands, in Alaska, and on the Pacific Coast down to northern California, the natives became accustomed to trading posts and

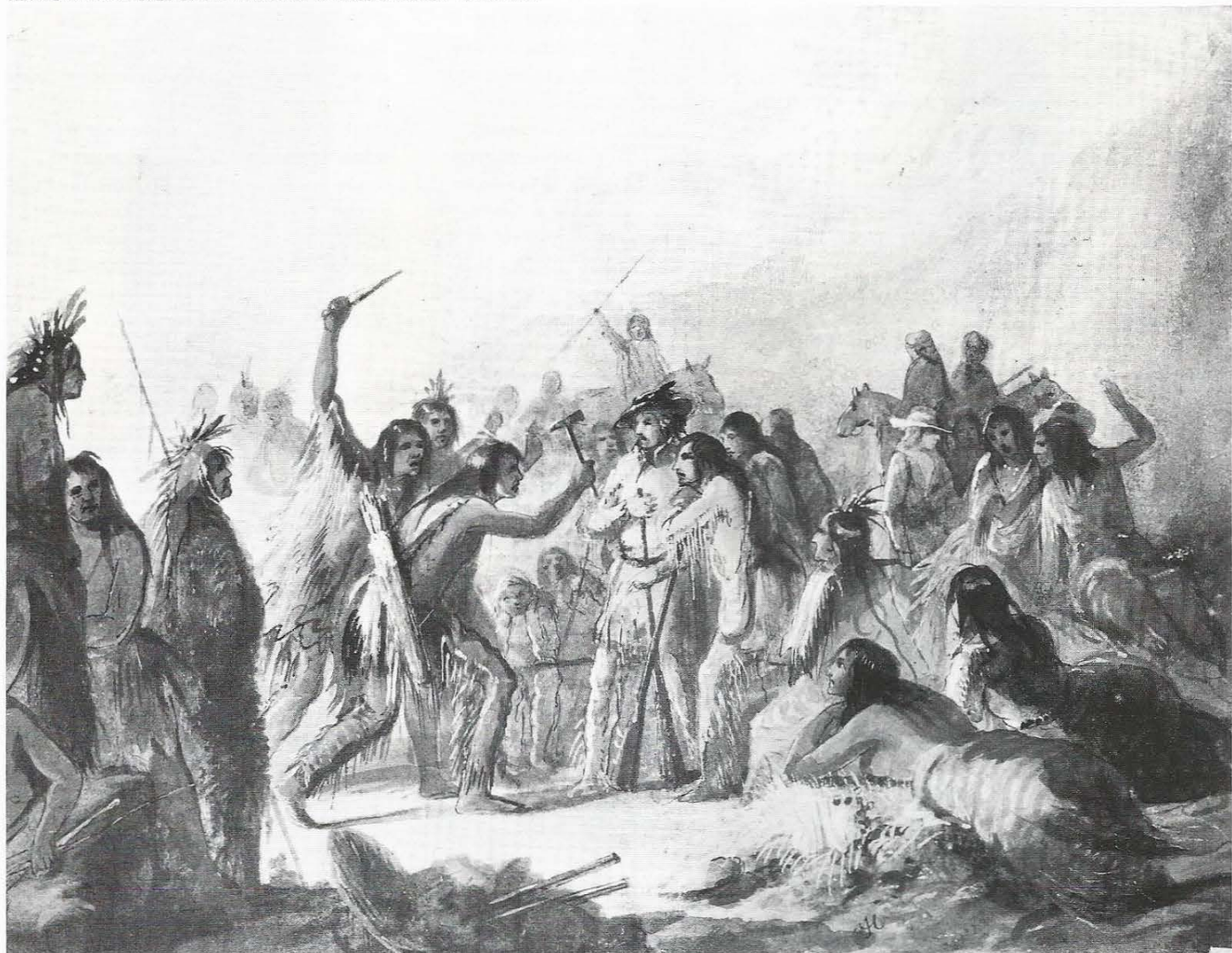
missions established by Russian missionaries, and their dependence often caused them to establish residence fairly close to those endeavors.

By the mid-eighteenth century, the Mission Indians in the fertile valleys along the coast were under the influence of the Spanish as far north as San Francisco Bay. The Indians supplied manpower and converts for the chain of missions which had been established by Franciscan priests. The converts numbered about 21,000 in the one year of 1820. However, when Mexican law



"A MAN OF OONALASHKA" W. SHARP, ENGRAVER. FROM THE 1785 EDITION OF CAPTAIN COOK'S VOYAGES (1576.182)

"TRAPPERS THREATENED BY CROW INDIANS" ALFRED J. MILLER (0236.1094)



PIPE, WOOD AND METAL, EAST CAPE SIBERIA. TRADED TO ESKIMOS (8436.1427)



ordered the Church to sell its mission lands (confiscated from Indians) to private citizens, the mission system of existence among Indians fell apart and the Indians returned to the interior.

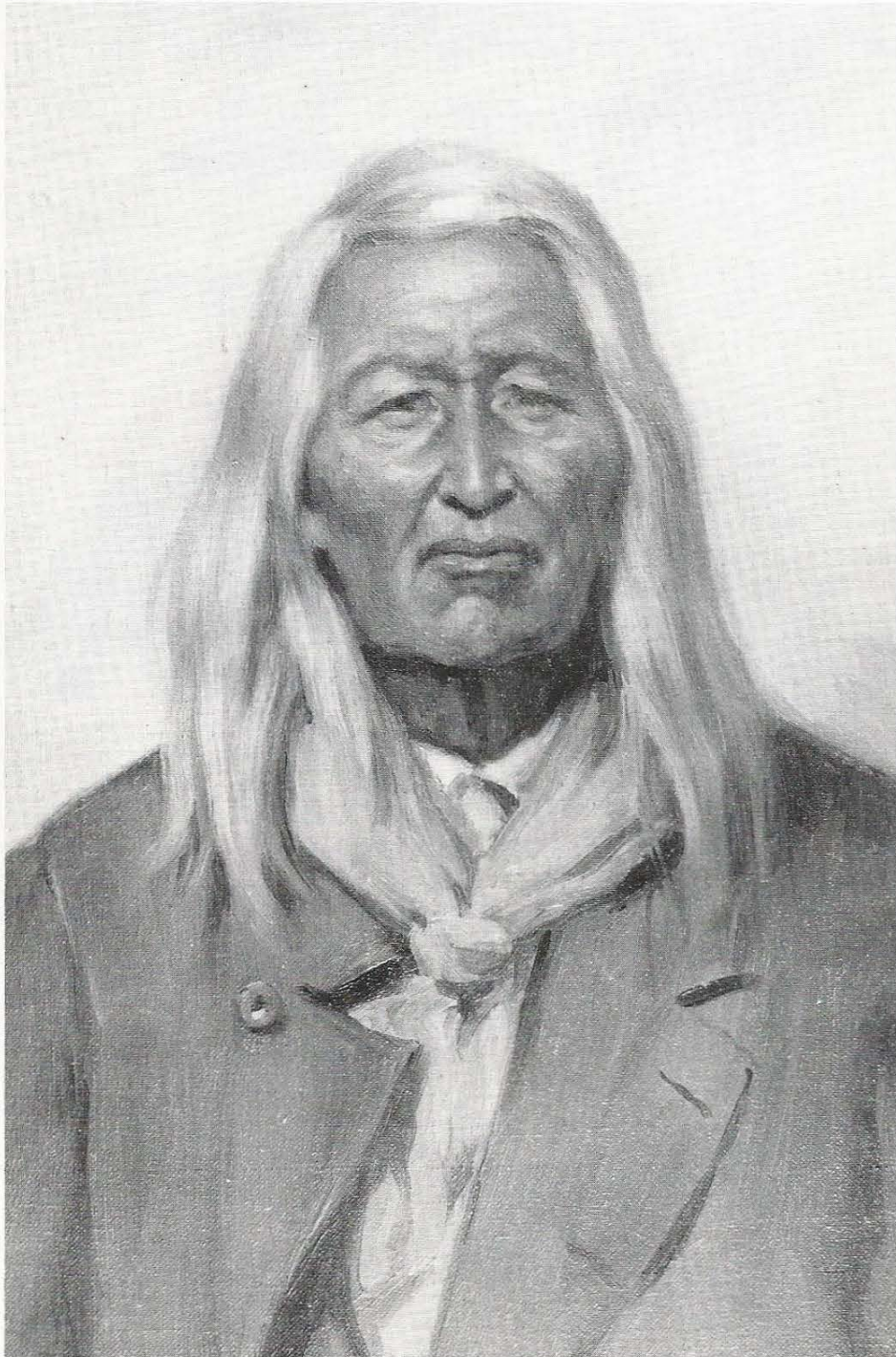
In 1855, other groups, under duress, such as the Walla Walla, Cayuse, Umatilla, Yakima, and Nez Perce, assembled in one of history's largest tribal gatherings at which they signed treaties to cede their lands to the United States Government. They received approximately three cents per acre for 60,000

square miles. Shortly afterwards, the Flathead and others in Montana and Idaho ceded 25,000 square miles. Some of the most emotional incidents in Indian history occurred during this period. For example: Chief Joseph's Nez Perce were ordered to a reservation in Idaho, and in an effort to escape the army, they made a fifteen-week journey trying to reach Canada. They were stopped forty miles from the border and returned to reservation life; the Shoshone chief, Washakie, living on the Wind River Reservation in Wyoming and yearning

for the Indian way of life said, "God damn a potato!" when asked about farming; Red Cloud, an Oglala Sioux chief said in 1870, "The Great Father has . . . left me nothing but an island . . . our nation is melting away like the snow on the sides of the hills where the sun is warm, while your people are like the blades of grass when the summer is coming."

The movement of the white man had also caused the Indian tribes to move and by 1880 nearly all United States tribes were on some kind of reservation.

"CHIEF WASHAKIE" JOSEPH H. SHARP (0137.401)



"SALLY" BAG. WOVEN VEGETAL. NEZ PERCE [7136.33]



"ESKIMO COUNTRY" WILBUR WALLUK (1337.1136)

At the time reservations were conceived, the white concept was that of "giving" land to the tribes in order that they might change their way of life and have a place to construct homes and cultivate the land.

Although the Indians did not want to live as white men, they were forced by overpowering numbers to change. In Alaska, the Eskimos' use of the rifle to hunt water and land animals nearly depleted the herds. To help the people, a missionary brought in reindeer to replace the caribou, and the Eskimos became herdsmen rather than hunters.

Today, the great art forms and potlatch of the Northwest Coast are no more, the elaborate ceremonies of the tribes have all but disappeared, although there are some small groups who are attempting to

revive them as best they can. Alaskan natives, faced with the Alaskan pipeline have, after a century-old debate, been granted "eventual title to some forty million acres and payment of a billion dollars" from the United States Congress. Too often, the scene today is one of "fish-ins" (as in Washington State in 1964) and "sit-ins" in California and at Pine Ridge. In San Francisco Bay, on the rocky island of Alcatraz in 1969, tipis were erected for nineteen months as Indians staged a "sit-in." They were reclaiming just a portion of what had once belonged to their ancestors.

Throughout the nation, Indians— young and old—are reaching out in search of their "ancestral roots" and resolving: "we must forever survive as Indians."



BASKET. FEATHER AND SHELL ORNAMENTATION. POMO (7136.561)



WINCHESTER RIFLE, MODEL 1892, CAL. 44 WCF (6216.60)

CHAPTER IV, THE NORTHWEST QUADRANT

European Contact

Through exploration, the major world powers of the eighteenth century established footholds in the Northwest and introduced economic factors never before thought possible. American politicians, potential settlers in the West, and the public at large vacillated between the adamant and lackadaisical in their attitude about other nations colonizing in North America. Early in the nineteenth century, the Congress of the United States set the tone for the future with the Louisiana Purchase; by financing the famous Lewis and Clark explorations; by sanctioning the expeditions of such military men as Pike, Wilkes, Long, and Fremont; and by encouraging entrepreneurs such as Astor.



DETAIL FROM:
"TRAPPER" OLAF SELTZER
(0237.1272)

Over a span of many years, England, Spain, Russia, Mexico, and the United States were in competition over the northwest quadrant of the North American Continent. The struggle for the area was a long and complicated one. Peter I of Russia, known as Peter the Great, wanted to determine whether Asia and North America were connected and in 1728 he inaugurated an expedition headed by Vitus Bering, a Danish sea captain. On that voyage, Bering concluded that the two continents were separated by a strait, but he failed to sight Alaska. On a second expedition in 1741, he was successful and claimed the land for Russia.

The Spanish established themselves in California, and in 1774-75, under Juan Perez and Bruno Heceta, they explored Vancouver Island and claimed portions of the Northwest Territory. In 1778, Captain James Cook visited Vancouver Island and later found the

Spanish had preceded him to that area four years earlier. Here the British would not tolerate interference and because Spain at that time was too weak to contend against England for the coast, the Spaniards were forced to withdraw. Most nations were beginning to realize one of the greatest benefits to be derived from the exploration and discoveries of the Northwest was the wealth of fur-bearing animals. England, and later the United States, established fur-trading companies in the area and they became profitable enterprises.

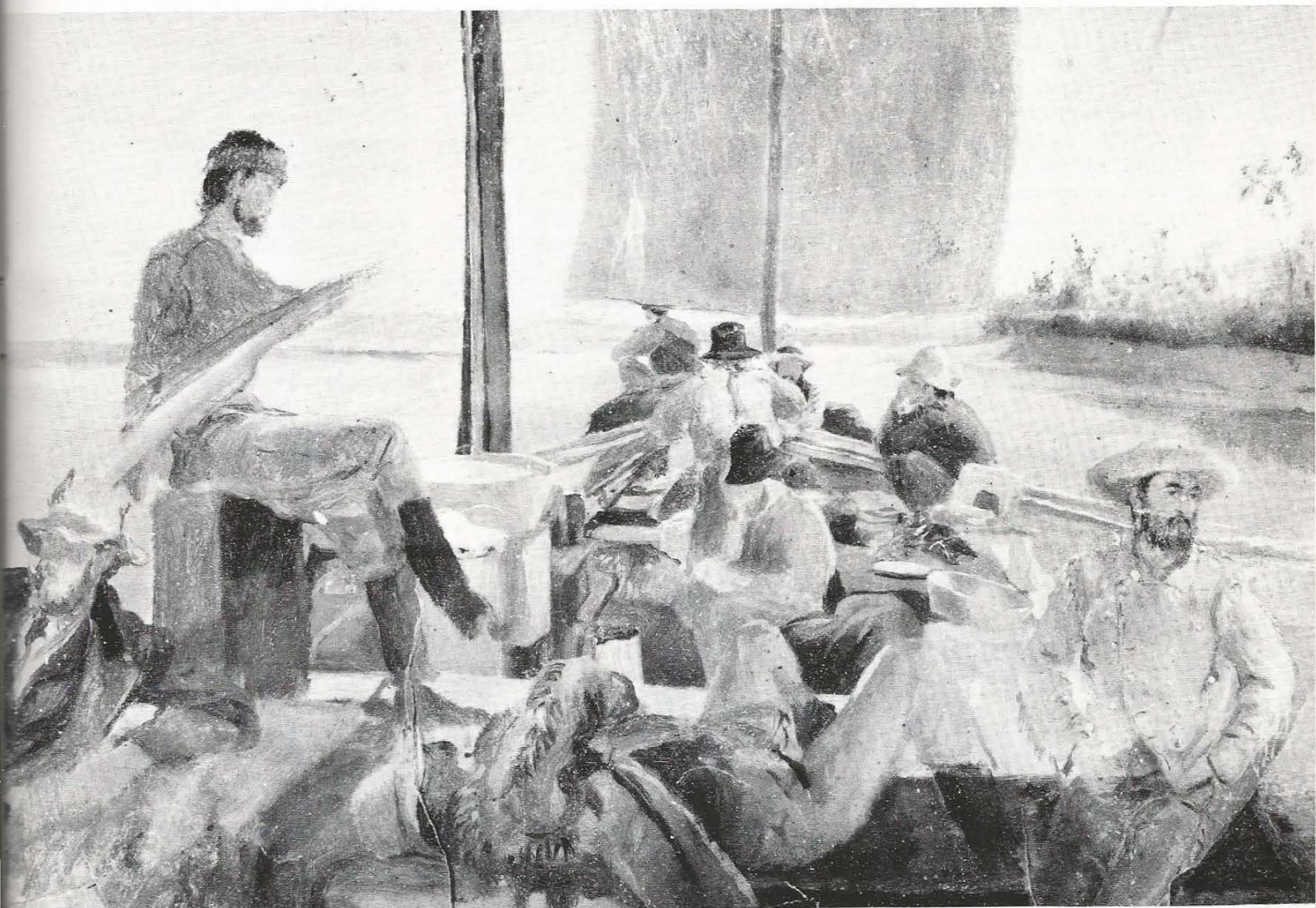
In 1793, accompanied only by six *voyageurs* and two Indians, Alexander Mackenzie, a Scottish explorer for the fur-trading North West Company, was the first white man to cross the northern part of the American Continent from the East to the Pacific Ocean. So great was his influence in the area, a district and a river both bear his name: the Mackenzie

District in the Northwest Territory of Canada, and the Mackenzie River which he discovered. Following his explorations and his failure to convince the Company of the importance of his find, he alerted Britain to the urgency of claiming the Northwest Territory for its own. Although his plea fell on deaf ears, he was rewarded by King George with a knighthood. He then concentrated on opposing the North West Company and accumulated a great fortune in the trading business.

The Russian-American Fur Company was chartered under the direction of Alexander Baranof in 1799. Baranof extended Russian activities in Alaska for some time, but as fur-bearing animals became scarce, Russia lost interest in the fur trade and turned its interest to other more pressing matters, mainly governing the vast expanse of land which was already in their possession.



DETAIL FROM: "HUNTER" OLAF SELTZER 10237.12631



UNTITLED. WILLIAM DE LA MONTAGNE CARY (0126.4)

"FORT VANCOUVER" FROM "SKETCHES IN NORTH AMERICA AND THE OREGON TERRITORY"
BY CAPTAIN HENRY J. WARRE (3636.62)



"L'VOYAGER" OLAF SELTZER (0237.1305)



The purchase of Louisiana from the French in 1803 ended forever French dreams of an empire in the New World. All, or part of what later became fifteen states, were formed from this area which was purchased for fifteen million dollars and stimulated the American move to the Pacific and greatly increased the economic resources of this country.

When Napoleon's representative was asked by an American what exactly *had* The United States purchased, he was told, "I do not know." It was true, neither France nor the United States knew the exact boundary of the purchase—as a matter of fact no one really knew if the purchase would prove to be a "folly" or a "noble bargain." It had long been hoped

that there was, across the continent, a navigable waterway that could be used to lessen the voyage time to China's great trade centers. Jefferson was convinced the nation could expand westward, become a powerful leader in world affairs due to ownership of such a waterway and more land, and could corner the trade market if a water route was found. The purchase was a political coup of enormous magnitude and the land and its products, at that time, offered unrecognized economic advantages. **Following the Louisiana Purchase, President Jefferson, wishing to learn more about the vast western lands and possible waterway, appointed Meriweather Lewis (Jefferson's private**

secretary) to head the exploration of the area as far west as the Pacific Ocean. Lewis asked his friend and associate, William Clark, to join him in the leadership of the expedition. They left with their party from St. Louis in 1804 and ascended the Missouri River to the Mandan country in North Dakota where they spent the winter. In the spring of 1805, they left that country and added several more to their party, the most noted being Sacagawea who served as a valuable member of the expedition. Sacagawea was a Shoshone and she was thus able to help lead Lewis and Clark, along with other members of their party, through the Shoshone, or Snake, country. She also aided them in their difficult



"SACAGAWEA--LEWIS AND CLARK"
HENRY LION (0837.139)

passage over the Bitterroot Range of the Rockies and on the Snake and Columbia Rivers which they took the rest of the way to the Pacific—where they arrived November 7, 1805.

They wintered at Fort Clatsop near the present site of Astoria and began their long journey home in March of 1806. After they crossed the Rockies, the party separated and took different routes, making it possible to explore more of the country. They arrived in St. Louis in September of that year.

The journals kept by Lewis and Clark have added immensely to the information about the Indians as well as geographical and scientific knowledge of the territory. In addition they provided added impetus

to American trade and settlement.

People of varied backgrounds and special interests left their mark on this nation—Astor, Pike, Wilkes, Long and Freemont—to name only a few. In 1811, John Jacob Astor, a German-American, founded the post, Astoria (later renamed Fort George by the British), at the mouth of the Columbia River in Oregon. Having incorporated both the American and Pacific Fur Companies, he at one time, held a nearly complete monopoly of the fur trade in the United States.

Although not involved in the exploration of the Far West, Zebulon Montgomery Pike was ordered to chart the southwest boundary of the Louisiana Purchase in

1806. Traveling through Kansas to the Arkansas River and up the river to Colorado, he saw the towering mountain peak that was to bear his name. Looking for the headwaters of the Red River, he crossed the Sangre de Cristo Range in midwinter where he and his men were captured on Mexican territory by Spanish soldiers. They were held for several months and then released, returning with important data about the entire area they explored. Gilcrease Institute has in its library a copy of his narrative about that trip. It was published in 1810 and contains the first description of that region—descriptions which may well have reinforced Astor's desires to establish Astoria in Oregon.

LETTER FROM JOHN JACOB ASTOR, APRIL 19, 1799, TO JOHN B. HENRY, ALBANY, NEW YORK (3826.59)

New York 19 April 1799

Dear Sir,

I have your letter in which you inform me that your object is by all the means to enter into a partnership with me from very much obliged to you for the kind manner in which you treat me in this business—

I will this day speak to Mr. A. C. Watson who shall give you notice—the Bill of Mr. Watson on Sir Pittman being paid you will please to deliver him the one you hold as a security and be so good as to accept of the note in for your attention. I am Sir Sir your humble servant John Jacob Astor

Here of course Astoria

"JOHN C. FREEMONT" PUBLISHED BY W. SCHAUS, AFTER A PHOTOGRAPH BY S. ROOT, 1856 (1526.139)



PORTRAIT OF ZEBULON M. PIKE FROM HIS BOOK "AN ACCOUNT OF EXPEDITIONS TO THE SOURCES OF THE MISSISSIPPI . . ." PUBLISHED BY C. & A. CONRAD, & CO., PHILADELPHIA, 1810 (2426.43)

The United States and Great Britain had agreed to jointly occupy the Northwest when Lieutenant Charles Wilkes was sent to explore the Antarctic coasts for America's whaling industry and became the first person to realize that the Antarctic was a continent, not an ice field. He was instructed in 1841 to map the Northwest and also investigate the importance of the geographical region between the forty-ninth parallel and the Columbia River. With Mount Rainier in sight, he ordered the ship to anchor at Puget Sound. He wrote to Congress, "There is no country in the world that possesses waters equal to these" — and he strongly suggested the United States hold fast on its claims for a boundary at the forty-ninth parallel. After exploring 800 miles of coastal area and rivers in Oregon country and visiting Astoria, he concluded in his report that the Columbia was too dangerous to be used by his country as the main waterway to the Pacific. His report was emphatic in pointing out that the economy of the United States required the entire coastal water-

way between the Russian boundary at the fifty-fourth parallel and California's boundary at the fortieth parallel.

Wilkes authored a five-volume series about his expeditions for the Government; a complete set of which is in the Gilcrease Library's rare book section.

The American Congress was not seriously concerned with acquiring California, Oregon, or Texas in 1842, but it was eager to know if western migration could continue in spite of Major Stephen H. Long's expedition report. Long described the area east of Colorado as "The Great American Desert" and "unfit for cultivation" and thus discouraged pioneers to go through it. But there were those who had to know what lay beyond.

The Topographical Corps' Lieutenant John Charles Fremont, with his friend Kit Carson, made three expeditions into the West. In *Men to Match My Mountains*, Irving Stone said "... they did more to explore, map and publicize the routes to the Far West than any combination in the expansionist years." With orders to

map the route to Oregon, Fremont was determined to also find and record new routes which would make the long journey less difficult for American emigrants.

In 1843, Fremont returned to the Rockies in Colorado and Wyoming to explore and map "scenery very wild and beautiful. Towering mountains rose round about, their sides sometimes dark with forests of pine, and sometimes with lofty precipices. The green river bottom was covered with a wilderness of flowers." In Utah at the Great Salt Lake, in 1845, Fremont later reflected: "The route I wished to take [to the coast] lay over a flat plain covered with sagebrush. The country looked dry and of my own men none knew anything of it..." Kit Carson confirmed that he had been told it was an impossible area to cross and survive. But Fremont insisted they try and, because of this, he established a route to California directly west from the Great Salt Lake and found "instead of a barren country, the mountains were covered with grasses..." and wild game.



MAPS: OREGON TERRITORY AND COLUMBIA RIVER FROM "NARRATIVE OF THE UNITED STATES EXPLORING EXPEDITION DURING THE YEARS 1838-1842" BY CHARLES WILKES. PUBLISHED BY GEORGE P. PUTNAM, NEW YORK: 1851 (VOL. IV) [2426.44]
INSET: "THOMAS JEFFERSON" PUBLISHED BY G. P. PUTNAM'S SONS (1527.128)

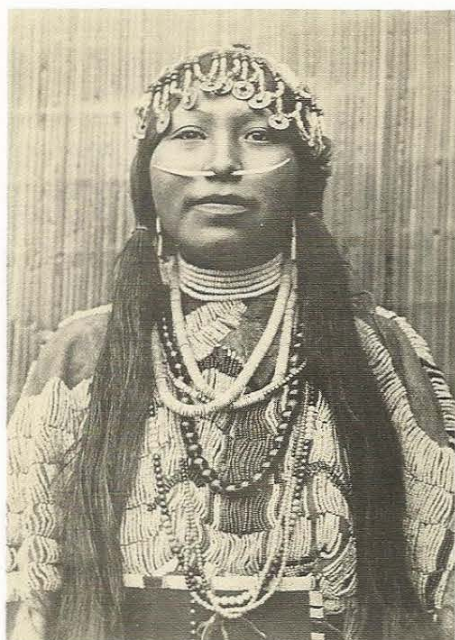
CHAPTER IV, THE NORTHWEST QUADRANT

Expansion



OX YOKE (8426.1928)

The Federal Government's expansion activities were accelerated in the Northwest with the aid of missionaries such as the Whitmans and De Smet, followed by the Mormons who were seeking the Promised Land. Without the now-famous routes west, such as the Oregon, Bozeman, and Santa Fe Trails, expansion may well have been delayed until a later date. However, with the United States-Canadian boundary dispute settled in the mid-nineteenth century, the enactment of the Homestead Act and the purchase of Alaska, westward expansion by the United States was inevitable. To assure safer and faster settlement, the Government gave financial backing to railroads and used treaties and military power to remove the Indians who were in the pathway of expansion in the West. Expansion quite naturally includes commerce in the area and points out its importance to the Nation and its citizenry. Throughout this phase, the artist was there to record the people, events, and the uncontaminated beauty of the land.



"WISHAM GIRL" EDWARD S. CURTIS, PHOTOGRAPHER
(4327.971.23)

Men felt the power of the westward surge for various reasons, not the least of which was a fervent desire to bring the vision of God to the uncivilized inhabitants of the great wilderness. With the Cross of Christianity, Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Mormons administered to, and labored among, the many Indians west of the Mississippi River.

An almost legendary priest whose name, Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, has become synonymous with devotion and dedication, has chronicled a place in the early history of America. The Belgium-born Jesuit priest once said to his Pope, Gregory XVI, "Your Holiness, it is my happiness to obey the commands that are given to me. I go wherever I am sent. But my life and hope are among the Indians . . . As a poor priest among the savages, I make bold to think I have the grace of God. I hope it is God's will that I die among them!"

In the year of 1840, Father De Smet made the arduous trip up the Missouri River as a member of the caravan of the American Fur Company and established St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads in Montana. Within six years, Father De Smet had become such a trusted figure among his beloved Indians that he became known as the most powerful "Medicine Man" in the West and also as the famed Black Robe whom the Indians revered. Father De Smet was the single-most important person in arranging the great Peace Council of 1868. He, alone among all white men, was welcomed among the five thousand Sioux warriors encamped in the Powder River area of the Yellowstone.

Because of Father De Smet's influence on the establishment of peace between the government and the Indians, and also due to the prevention of internecine wars between Indians, the transition from the era of the fur trade to the mass emigration of settlers into the wilderness became possible.

"Who will carry the Book of Life to the Indians of Oregon?" The ecclesiastical response to this ringing editorial which appeared in the "Christian Advocate" came from the Methodist Foreign Missionary Society and the American Board, which was controlled by the Congregational and Presbyterian Churches.

The waves of settlement, following the

explorations of the fur traders into uncharted lands, was stimulated by missionaries, businessmen, and surveying parties. Among the first of the missionaries was Marcus Whitman, M.D., and Henry Spalding. Their brides were the first white women to make the perilous journey across the Great Plains to the western sea. They took the promised "white man's book of heaven" to the hundreds of Indians in the beautiful Walla Walla Valley and established a mission at Waiilatpui and among the Nez Perce.

By 1847, one of the largest groups of settlers, surpassed only by the gold seekers, had crossed the plains from Illinois, Ohio, and Missouri. Driven from their homes by persecution and the fervent desire to reach their "Zion," Mormons walked and rode westward into a desert that would provide blessed asylum from hostility. The final settlement was made on the shores of the Great Salt Lake. Their expertise in desert agriculture enabled succeeding emigrants to learn many valuable lessons. The early tenets of missionary work among the Mormons are practiced today as they were in the early 1800's.

"We Sot out Early and like a Ship With out a Rudder We Steerd from South East to North East—I Sopose the gide was lost or did not as He Had toled us kno wheare He Was—In this [way] we maid twelve miles and Stopped for noon for We have not much to Eat tho we See many deer and Some Elk—...Rich leavel land."

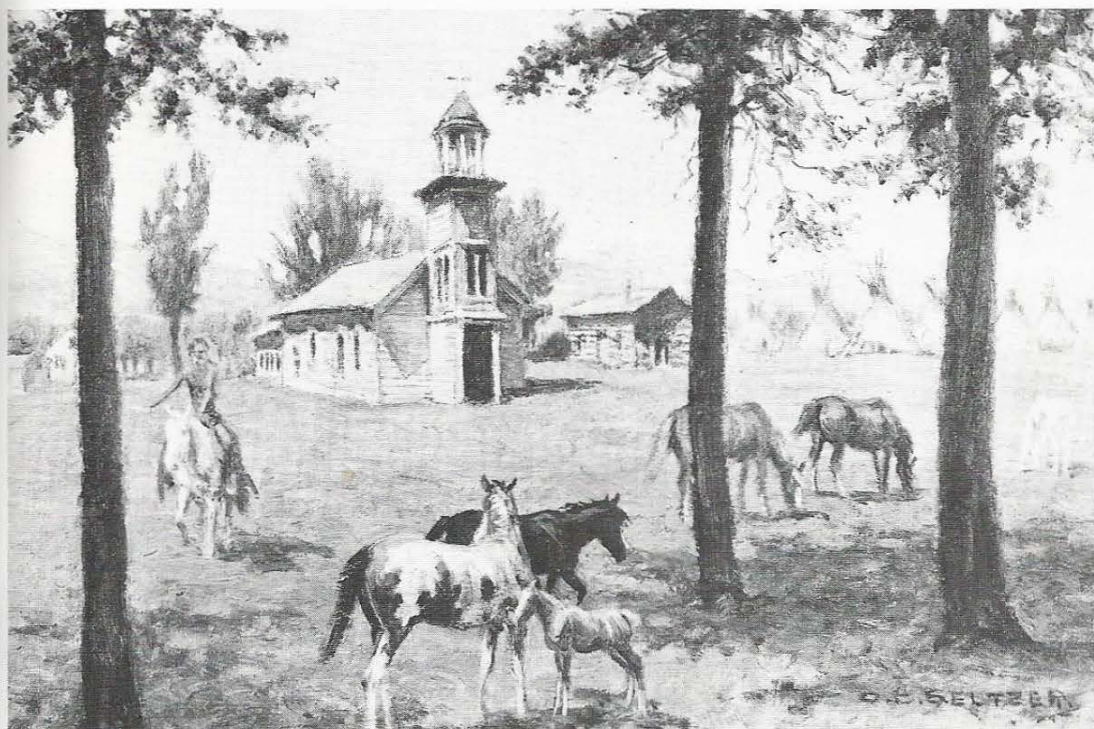
The *Journal of Jacob Fowler* in the Gilcrease Library, records—in what would seem to us today an almost illiterate way—some of the many hardships encountered by the earliest pioneers.

At first, the settlers began to trek westward for various reasons. As one youth put it: "We will go west and not live on pap's farm. Nor in the old cabin, nor any cabin unless its our own!"

Following the explorers and missionaries, expansion into the western wilderness began when groups of people gathered together to travel to areas that promised personal fulfillment and new hopes. The fourth decade of the 1800's produced, perhaps, the most exuberant of the migrations. Across the face of our continent, the trails fingered out from the major routes such as the Oregon



"FATHER DE SMET'S FIRST MEETING WITH THE FLATHEAD INDIANS" CHARLES M. RUSSELL (0137.1623)



"ST. MARY'S MISSION IN THE BITTERROOT VALLEY IN 1841" OLAF SELTZER (0137.784)



DETAIL FROM:
"DACOTA WOMAN AND ASSINIBOIN GIRL"
AFTER CARL BODMER, PUBLISHED BY
ACKERMAN & CO., 1841 (1576.301)

Trail. From the general area of what is now St. Louis, Missouri, the trails crisscrossed the country. Some went south, such as the old trading route—the Santa Fe Trail. Other names on other trails have become legends in history: the Mormon Trail which ended at the Great Salt Lake, the northwestern Bozeman Trail—or Montana Road, the Cherokee and California Trails, and the Oxbow Route.

But it was the Oregon Trail that was to be the route that vast migrations of pioneers took—along with their defiant

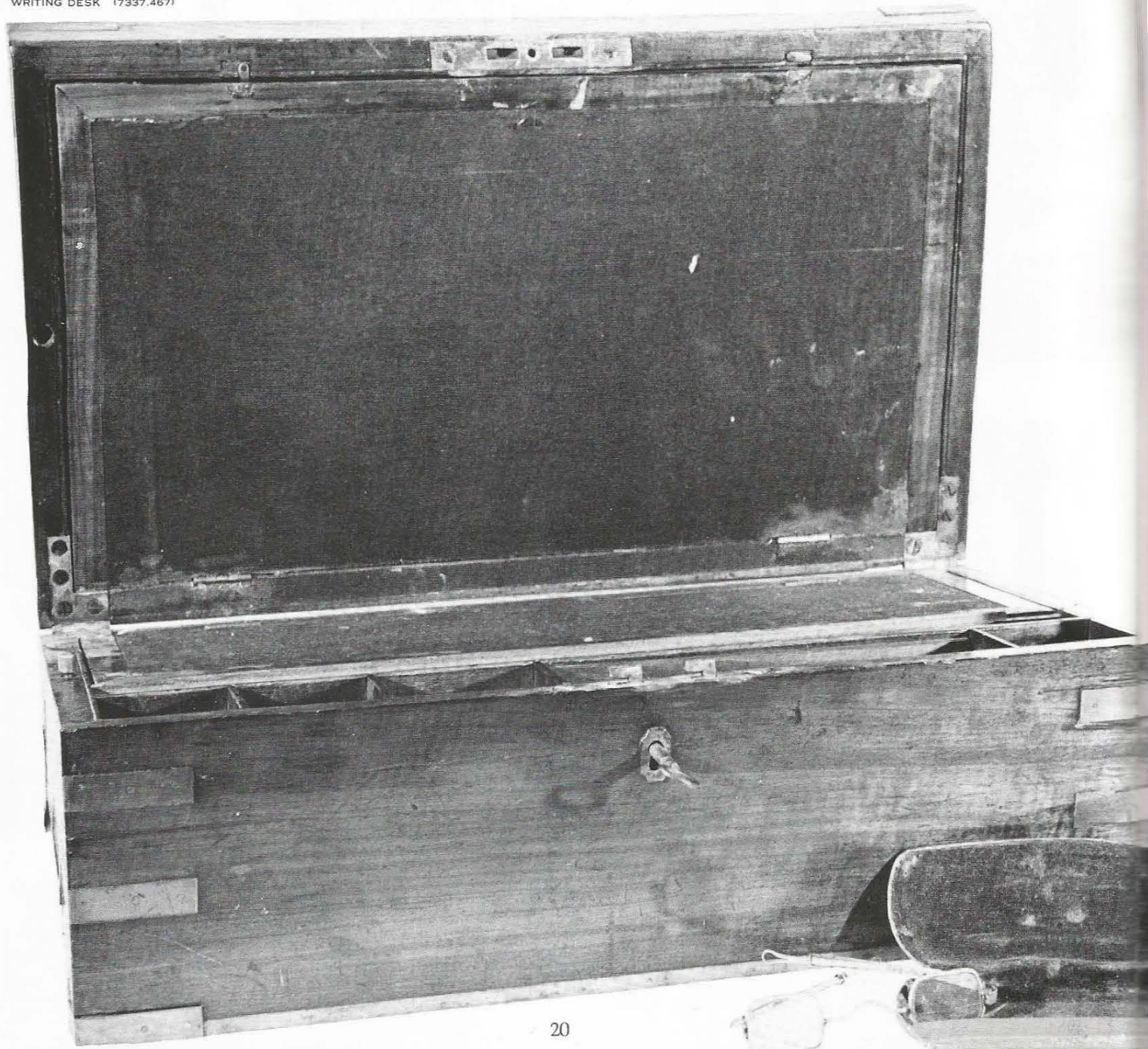
slogan, "Oregon or Bust!" With the heavily yoked oxen pulling their wagons, the unwavering settlers vowed to reach their Promised Land, wherever it might be.

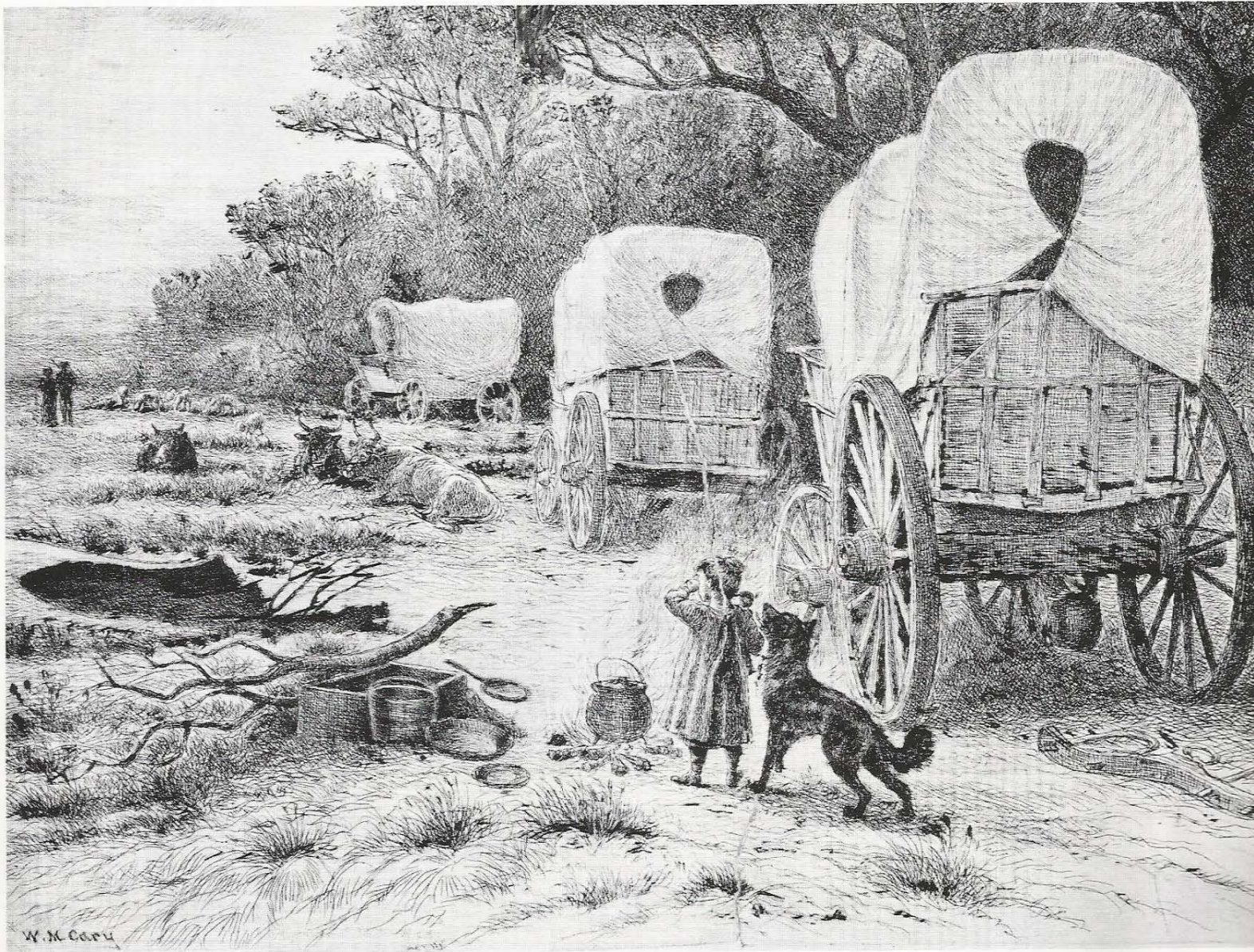
Most people who began the long journeys, carried (or tried to) all of their earthly possessions with them. A few showed a great deal of foresight: "We had butter, packed in the center of the flour in double sacks; eggs packed in corn meal or flour, to last us nearly five hundred miles; fruit in abundance, and dried pumpkins; a little jerked beef, not too salt, and last, a demijohn of brandy

for 'medicinal purposes only.'" But the women took their gentleness with them too—for there are numerous accounts of pleasant play-parties in the camps, lessons taught to youngsters, singing, and the gathering of blossoms from wild flowers along the way.

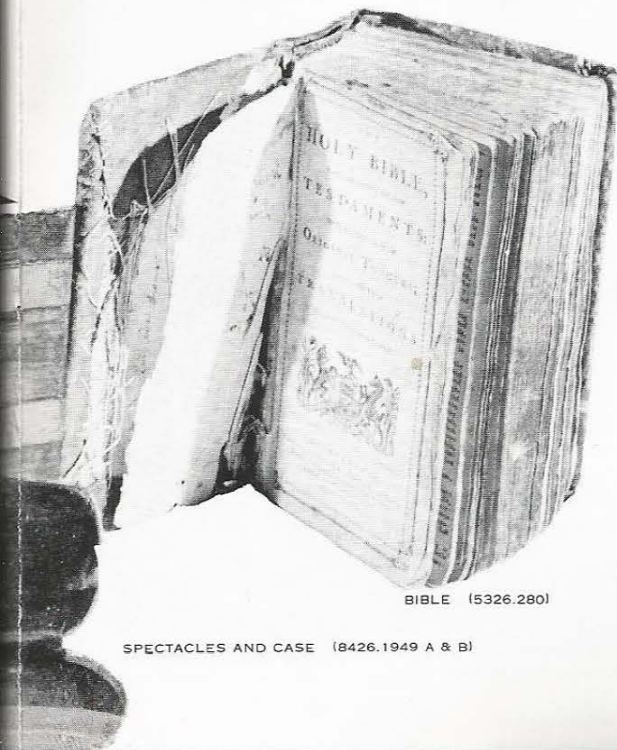
As Hiram Chittenden wrote: "Nature herself has helped to perpetuate this memorial, for the prairie winds, year by year, carve the furrow more deeply, and the wild sunflower blossoms along its course, as if in silent memory of those who sank beneath its burden."

WRITING DESK (7337.467)





UNTITLED DRAWING. WILLIAM DE LA MONTAGNE CARY (1326.1045)



BIBLE (5326.280)

SPECTACLES AND CASE (8426.1949 A & B)

MUSIC BOX (7727.52)



"Clear and unquestionable" was the remark made by President James K. Polk regarding who held title to Oregon. Americans were well positioned in the Willamette Valley and at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River. The census figures spoke for the supremacy of Americans in the area in 1845. Until this time, the United States and England had existed in the region under a joint treaty occupation. Tensions mounted between the two nations; to Polk, one war—the war with Mexico over Texas—was enough at the time, and England was taking a second look at the disadvantages of protecting a "pine swamp." Besides, the British businessmen did not want war with the Americans. Word was sent by the British to the Secretary of State that the forty-ninth parallel boundary was acceptable as long as the line curved south around Vancouver Island where a valuable Hudson's Bay post was established at Fort Victoria. The United States agreed and signed such a boundary treaty in June, 1846 and the vast territory of "Oregon" became an American possession.

In 1861, the nation was fighting for survival in a Civil War. Yet at the same

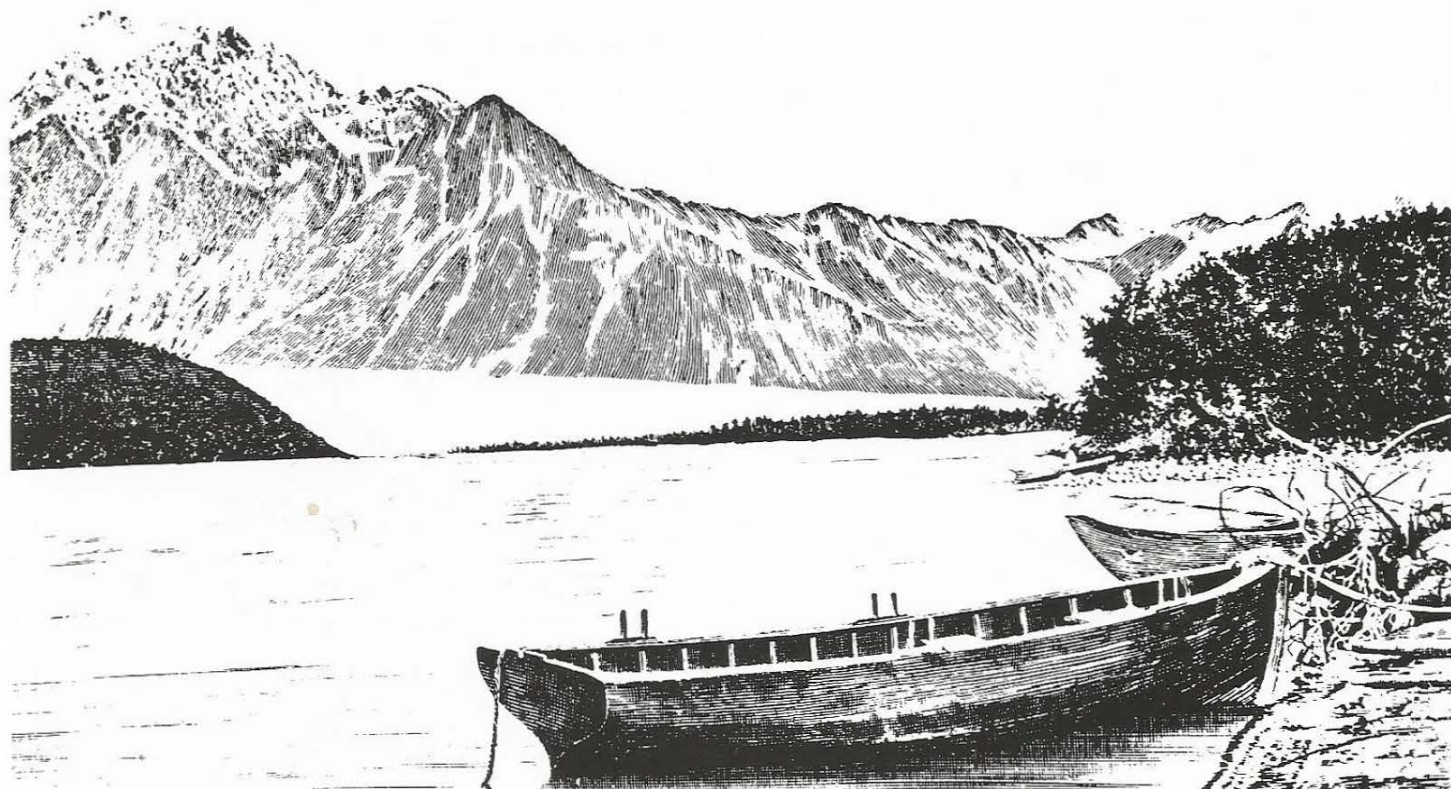
time, thousands of people from all walks of life and many foreign lands were accepting the challenge to "go west." East of the Mississippi River, farmers and industrialists alike had made money because of the ready market and high prices brought on by the war, and they were united in their fervor for land and "wide open spaces." The Homestead Act, passed by Congress in 1862, worked as a further catalyst; an individual could acquire title to 160 acres of public land for a small fee if he settled on the land and maintained a farm house and other buildings—these came to be known as



"WILLIAM H. SEWARD" FROM "THE LOUISIANA PURCHASE AND OUR TITLE WEST OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS, WITH A REVIEW OF ANNEXATION BY THE UNITED STATES" PUBLISHED BY GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE, WASHINGTON, 1898 (2526.903)

"homesteads." Americans and immigrants were on their way toward conquering "The Last Frontier!"

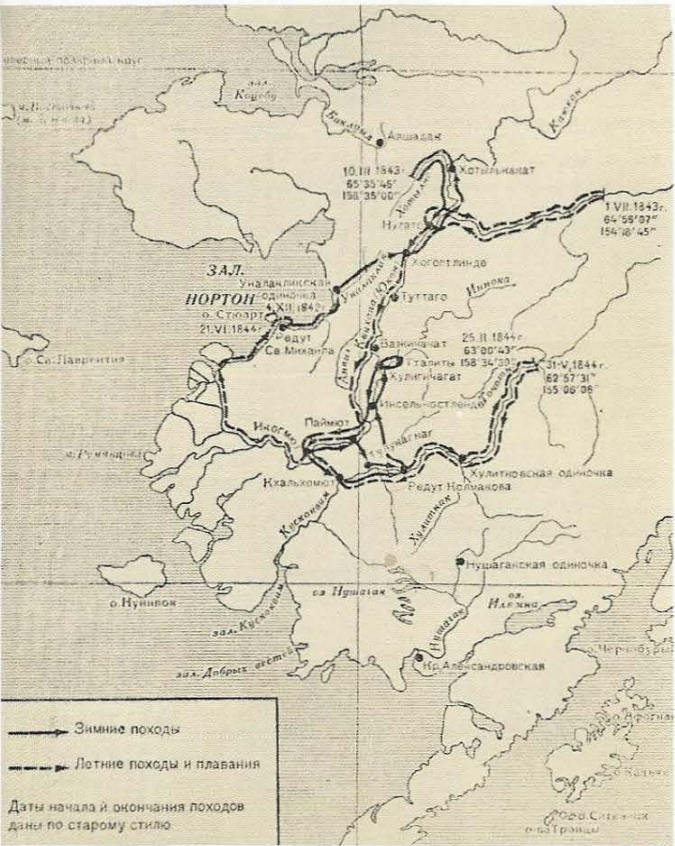
The fifth president of the United States, James Monroe, established unprecedented foreign policy when, in 1823, he asserted a strong protest to Russia regarding America's right to sail in Pacific waters. It was vital that Yankee traders have access to ports of call from Alaska southward to Oregon country. Apparently the population of the nation was in agreement: the land and waters surrounding North America should not be controlled by foreign powers. It was not, however, until 1867 during the term of the seventeenth President, Andrew Johnson, that the United States finally made the move to acquire Alaska from Russia and thereby strengthen its stand in the area. Secretary of State William Seward was ordered to pay Russia seven million dollars for Alaska; it was called by many Americans "Seward's folly." This "folly" proved to be a brilliant move of diplomacy—one more foreign power had been removed from North American soil and the United States could efficiently guard its own shores and carry on unencumbered trade and commerce.



FROM "REPORT OF AN EXPEDITION TO THE COPPER, TANANA, AND KOYUKUK RIVERS IN THE TERRITORY OF ALASKA IN THE YEAR 1885" BY LT. HENRY T. ALLEN, "NORTHERN PORT OF CHILDS GLACIER" PLATE 4 (2426.46)



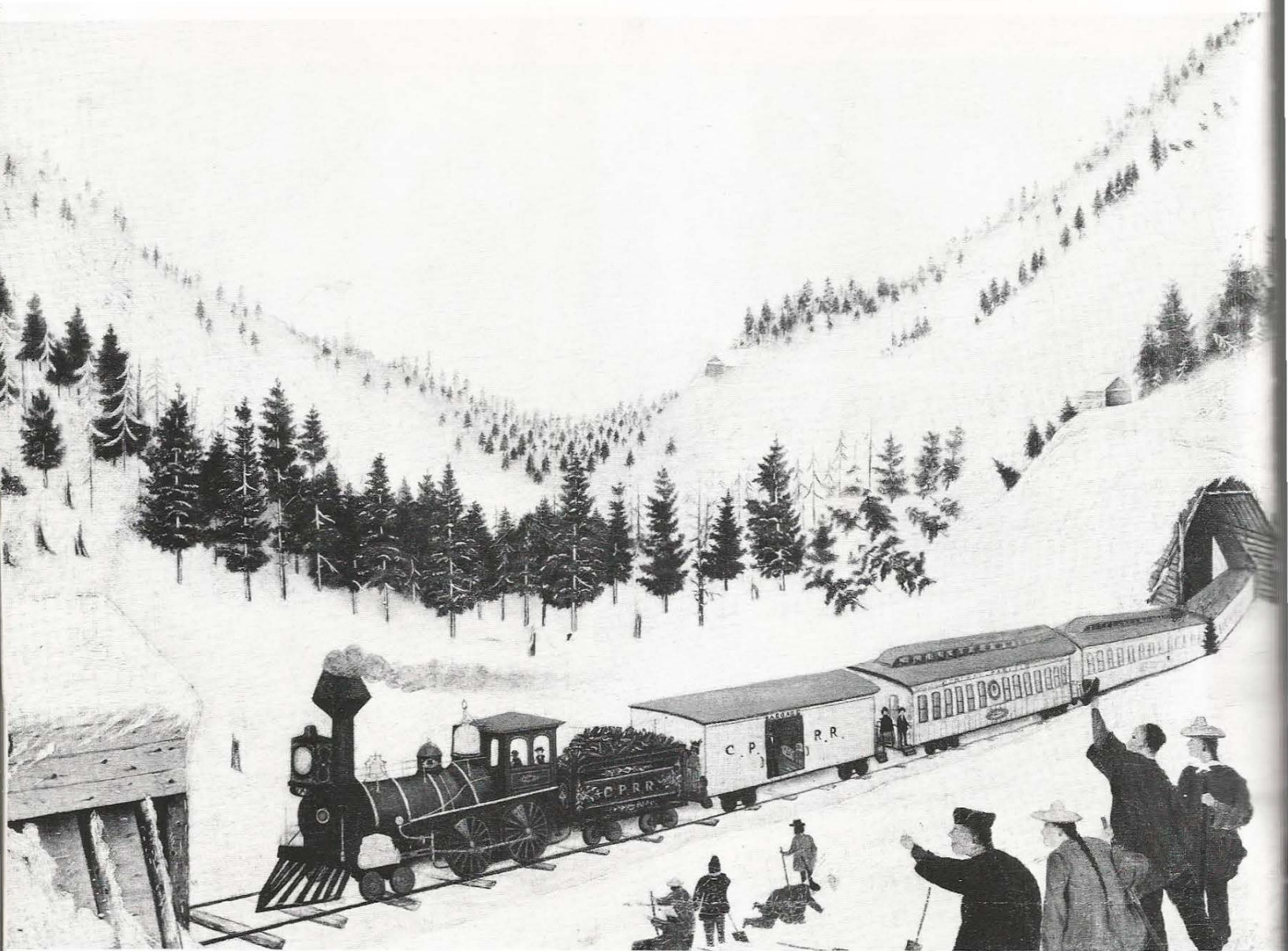
UNTITLED PAINTING. 1904. CHARLES M. RUSSELL (0237.981)



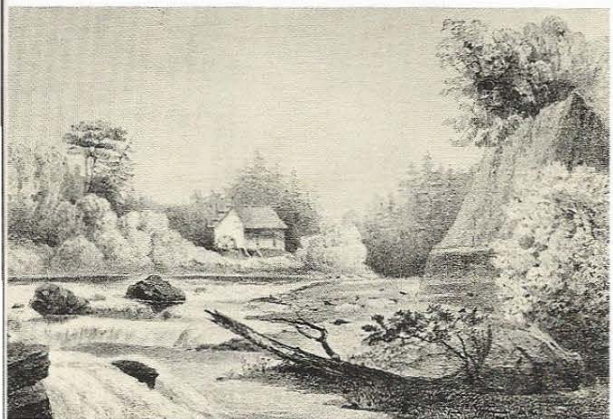
FROM "TRAVELS AND INVESTIGATIONS OF LT. L. ZAGOSKIN IN RUSSIAN AMERICA, 1842-1844" (12476.45)



"CANOES" ALBERT BIERSTADT (0126.1176)

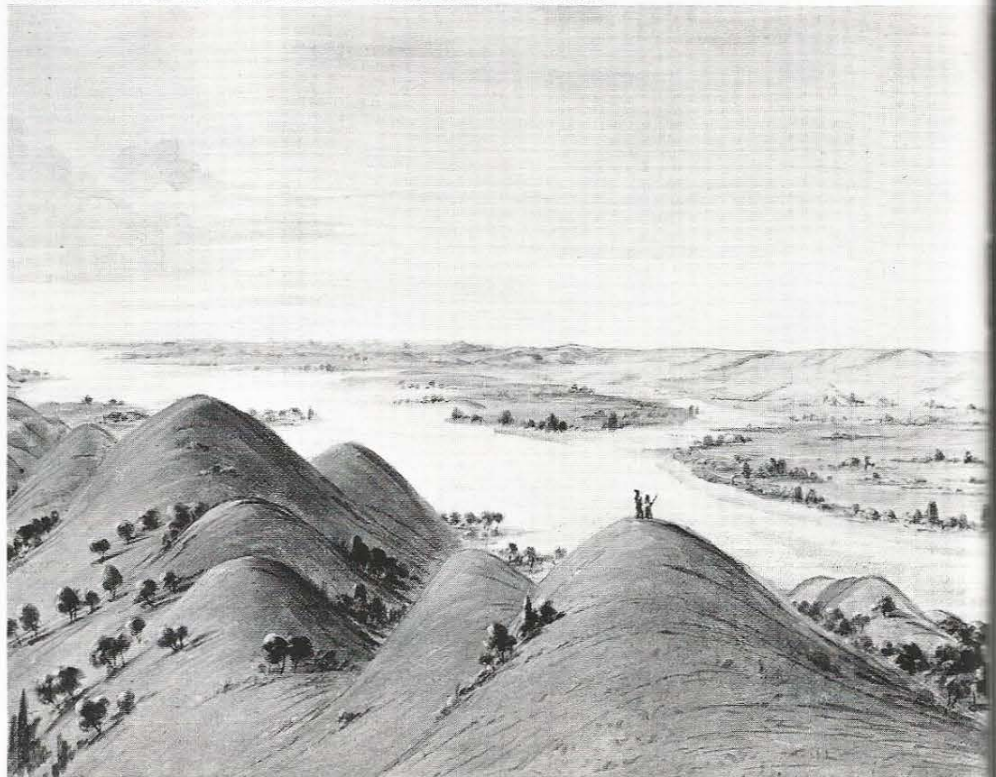


"SNOW SHEDS ON THE CENTRAL PACIFIC RAILROAD IN THE SIERRA NEVADA MOUNTAINS, MAY 1869" JOSEPH BECKER (0136.1212)



"HUDSON'S BAY MILL" PUBLISHED BY SARONY, MAJOR AND KNAPP, AFTER STANLEY (1626.368)

"GRASSY BLUFFS ON THE UPPER MISSOURI" GEORGE CATLIN (0176.2118)



After the close of the Civil War in 1865, war veterans swelled the number who flocked to the fertile lands of Oregon Territory and the vast Pacific Northwest. Even though land was easy to obtain from the Government, settlement would have taken much longer had it not been for the development of the railroads from coast to coast. Chinese labor was imported by the Central Pacific, and the Union Pacific used primarily Irish immigrants for the construction of their segments of the transcontinental railroad.

One major deterrent remained: the Indians would have to submit to relinquishing their lands if the white man's successful development of the West was to take place. During the 1870's, one tribe after another fought engagements with the United States military and were placed on reservations or moved to new grounds to make way for non-Indian advancement. One of the last rushes for Indian lands occurred in 1909 when seven hundred thousand acres of Indian lands in Montana and Washington were opened up for homesteading. For the Indians the "broken promises" of the Government continued.

The initial commerce of the Northwest from the Missouri to the Pacific and north to the Arctic had been furs. The first European settlements were the forts and trading houses of these ventures. Leading in this enterprise were the British North West and Hudson's Bay Companies and several American companies. In the area of commerce the Hudson's Bay Company ultimately became the dominant British concern, not only in trading but also in the regulation of land, agriculture, and even law. It became, virtually, the government of western Canada. When the early land-seeking people began to arrive in the Oregon country, they received help and protection from the Hudson's Bay Company which was already well established

in the area with farms, mills, settlements, and trading houses.

By the boundary settlement year of 1846, furs had become a much less important item in the economy and it began to appear that the future lay in agriculture. Within three years California would desperately need the produce of Oregon, but inadequate transportation would keep this need from being fulfilled.

Coastal transportation was not a problem. However, the mouth of the main river, the Columbia, which led to the most important settled valleys, was extremely treacherous and was not uninterruptedly navigable inland because of impassable rapids. The overland routes were also a problem. They were extremely rough and dangerous. Both within their own realm, and to connect them with the rest of the nation across the as yet untamed plains and mountains, Californians and Oregonians needed railroads; but they would have to wait a while and make do with portage, interrupted shipping, and wagon freight.

The first railway in Oregon country was a wood and strip-iron rail affair with a small steam engine. It was placed in service in 1862 to provide transportation of goods around the Cascade Rapids on the Columbia. Gold in Montana, lumber in Washington, and an increasing number of people involved in non-food processing pursuits from California to Wyoming intensified the utilization of the Columbia Valley's capacity for excellent truck gardens and wheat crops.

Railroads came to the Plains and central California as early as 1869. This was almost fifteen years before the Northern Pacific would be completed to transport the increasingly abundant crops and the now frantically needed lumber of Oregon and Washington and the lately developed silver and copper mines of Montana and Idaho.

The development of a salmon canning industry in 1865 and the movement of

cattle into the ranges of Wyoming and Montana added to the demand for efficient transportation to handle bulk cargo. These industries, along with ports and the important closer route to the Orient, brought the economic value of the Northwest to the importance it retains today. The value of the area is supplemented by water power, shipyards, aircraft, and hundreds of popular tourist areas from the Black Hills to the Alaskan volcanic areas.

Long before the railroads had made the journey to the northwest region relatively easy, artists accompanied the earliest explorers and government surveyors.

The artist's role was an important one in the early historical period of North America. Artists gave visual evidence of vast, untapped economic opportunities by depicting the awesome beauty of the majestic Northwest. This in turn inspired dreams of a new life across the great mountain barrier.

George Catlin has left to generations of scholars and artists, as well as to the average man—a pictorial interpretation of the real "wild west" before white settlement. Catlin's goal as an artist is written in his journal: "I set out on my arduous and perilous undertaking with the determination of reaching, ultimately, every tribe of Indians on the continent of North America, and of bringing home faithful portraits of their principal personages, both men and women, from each tribe; views of their villages, games, etc. and full notes on their character and history. I designed, also, to procure their costumes, and a complete collection of their manufactures and weapons and to perpetuate them in a Gallery Unique, for the use and instruction of future ages!"

George Catlin's unique position in the history of American art has been continued through the amazingly singular purpose of his life's work, along with a resurgence of popular interest.



DETAIL FROM: "GOLD MINING IN CALIFORNIA"
JOSEPH J. RAY (0137.1483)

Alfred Jacob Miller was the first artist of record to traverse the Oregon Trail into the Central Rockies. In the spring of 1837, Miller, a competent young artist who had studied in Paris, was engaged by Capt. William Drummond Stewart, a Scottish nobleman, traveler, and sportsman, to accompany an expedition with an American Fur Company caravan. During the six-month's journey to the Far West and back, Alfred Miller apparently made two hundred or more trail sketches for his patron. The sketches are a vivid on-the-spot record of the mountain fur-trade era in the Central Rockies. His journal (at Gilcrease Institute) is equally as fascinating as his paintings.

Indians as subject matter had long been of keen interest to artists. Especially to the citizenry of Europe, the Indians of North America were considered to be of "pure spirit" and "ideal existence" —

untouched by the effects of civilization. Drawn inevitably toward the "romantic Northwest," Canadian painters, many of whom were educated in Europe, left their indelible mark in art history. One such artist, *Peter Rindisbacher*, was little more than a boy when he made the hazardous trip through the wide expanse of Canada in 1821. He and his companions suffered untold hardships in their journey to the western shores of Hudson's Bay. With meticulous care, Rindisbacher painted watercolors of Indian life and fur-traders as well as western forts garrisoned by British Army troops.

Two other Canadian artists, with close ties to one another, joined the impressive ranks of painters who moved west — *Paul Kane and Frederick A. Verner*. Kane, a well-known artist, was the recipient of the adulation that the very

young Verner had for him. In later years, the two artists became friends and following Kane's death, Verner succeeded Kane as one of Canada's leading painters. Both painters felt the appeal of the adventurous contemporary scene of the mid-1800's. Both men ventured into the isolated prairies and mountain wilderness of the Northwest.

"We had for many days been surrounded by magnificent mountains, and had passed through such a beautiful country, that the effect of this grand and solitary scene (... sketch of the Rocky Mountains, No. 20) was partially destroyed, by the sublimity of that which had preceded it. The mountains are about 10,000 feet in height, unequalled in any part of Switzerland for the ruggedness of their peaks and beauty of form, capped and dazzling in their white mantle of snow." *Henry James Warre*, a British



"GREEN RIVER OREGON"
ALFRED JACOB MILLER (0126.736)

military officer and topographical artist, wrote the above descriptions of the Northwest. Warre had made numerous scenic sketches of the Oregon Territory while serving as a captain with the military in that region. These sketches, with accompanying descriptions, are found in a portfolio in the Institute's rare book section.

In a narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition during the years of 1839 through 1842, Captain Charles Wilkes described the hospitality found at one of the early Catholic Missions near the Columbia River. "Mr. Drayton, Michel, and myself, dined with Mr. Bachelét, on oatmeal, porridge, venison, strawberries and cream. This hospitality was tendered with good and kind feelings..." The Mr. Drayton, who Wilkes mentions, was one of two artists who accompanied the Expedition. Primarily

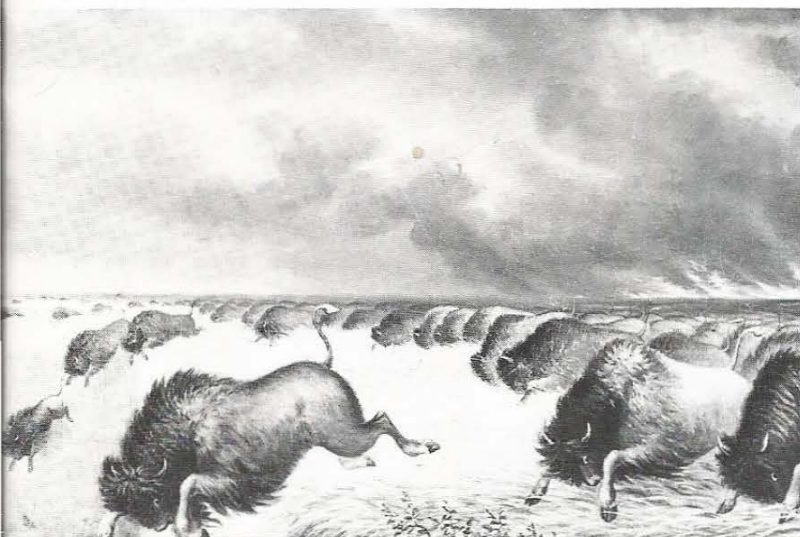


DETAIL FROM: "INDIAN SHOOTING BUFFALO"
WILLIAM DE LA MONTAGNE CARY (0126.1794)

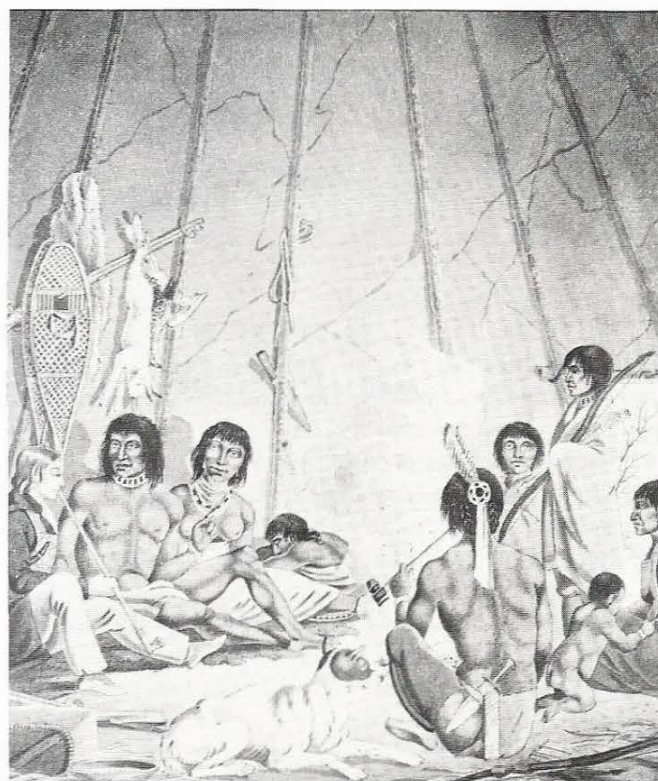
an engraver and portrait painter Joseph Drayton had worked in Philadelphia until 1823 when he was hired for the Expedition. Subsequently, Drayton and Alfred T. Agate (the other artist on the Expedition) returned to Washington, D.C. to finalize illustrations for Wilkes' report. William de la Montagne Cary, at the age of twenty-one, made the adventurous trip to the Pacific Ocean by boarding a fur company packet at St. Louis, going up the Missouri River to Forts Benton and Union and then on across the mountains to the sea. The sketches that Cary made on this first trip were the basis of a long career as a painter of western life. He wrote about his experiences as depicted in the painting "Indians Shooting Buffalo," the following: "I had an exciting buffalo [sic] Hunt while at Fort Union. We were gone five days expecting to be gone only part of the day!"



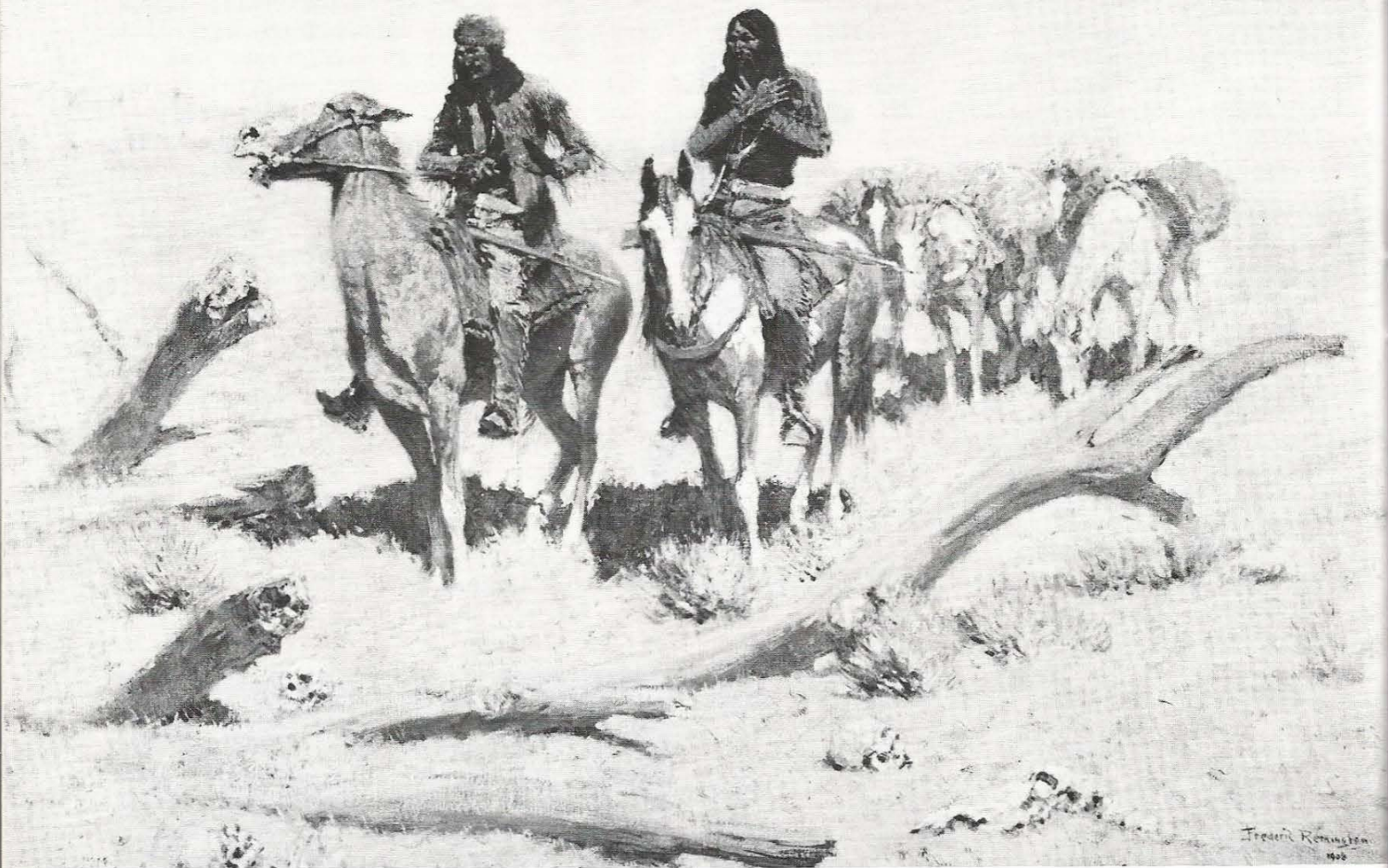
"THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS FROM THE COLUMBIA RIVER LOOKING N. W." SKETCHES IN NORTH AMERICA AND THE OREGON TERRITORY BY CAPTAIN HENRY WARRE (3636.62)



"BUFFALO STAMPEDE" FREDERICK A. VERNER (0116.1606)



"CANADIAN INDIANS AND ARTIST" PETER RINDISBACHER (0226.1341)



"THE DISCOVERY" FREDERIC REMINGTON (0136.2303)

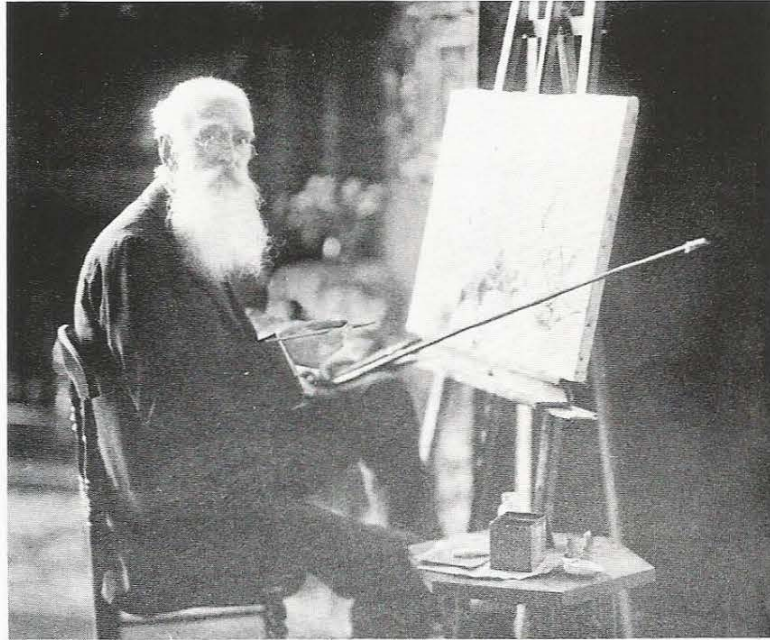
Following these early artists, there were artists of the latter half of the nineteenth century and early twentieth century who also painted scenes of the West with a brightness of palette unequalled in the period. Certainly no other artist ever devoted his talents with more dedication to a single era or was marked by more prodigious accomplishment than *Frederic Remington*. Another distinguished western artist of the period was *Charles*

M. Russell. His themes reflected specific incidents which Russell experienced in his everyday life. His oils, watercolors, bronzes, drawings, and charming vignettes which accompanied poems are works of enviable delight to the viewer. A contemporary of Russell's, *Olaf Seltzer* was one of the artists who bridged the space between the passing of the frontier and the era as seen by today's artists only in retrospect.

As historians and picture-makers, the artists of the West have preserved, in an aesthetic manner, the explorer, soldier, mountain man and trapper, and homesteader, the missionary, politician and Indian—the important and less important people—who contributed to the development of this nation and thus, eventually to our current way of life. Our appreciation of those artists grows daily as we revel in their contributions.



"BUFFALO FAMILY" CHARLES M. RUSSELL (0837.4)

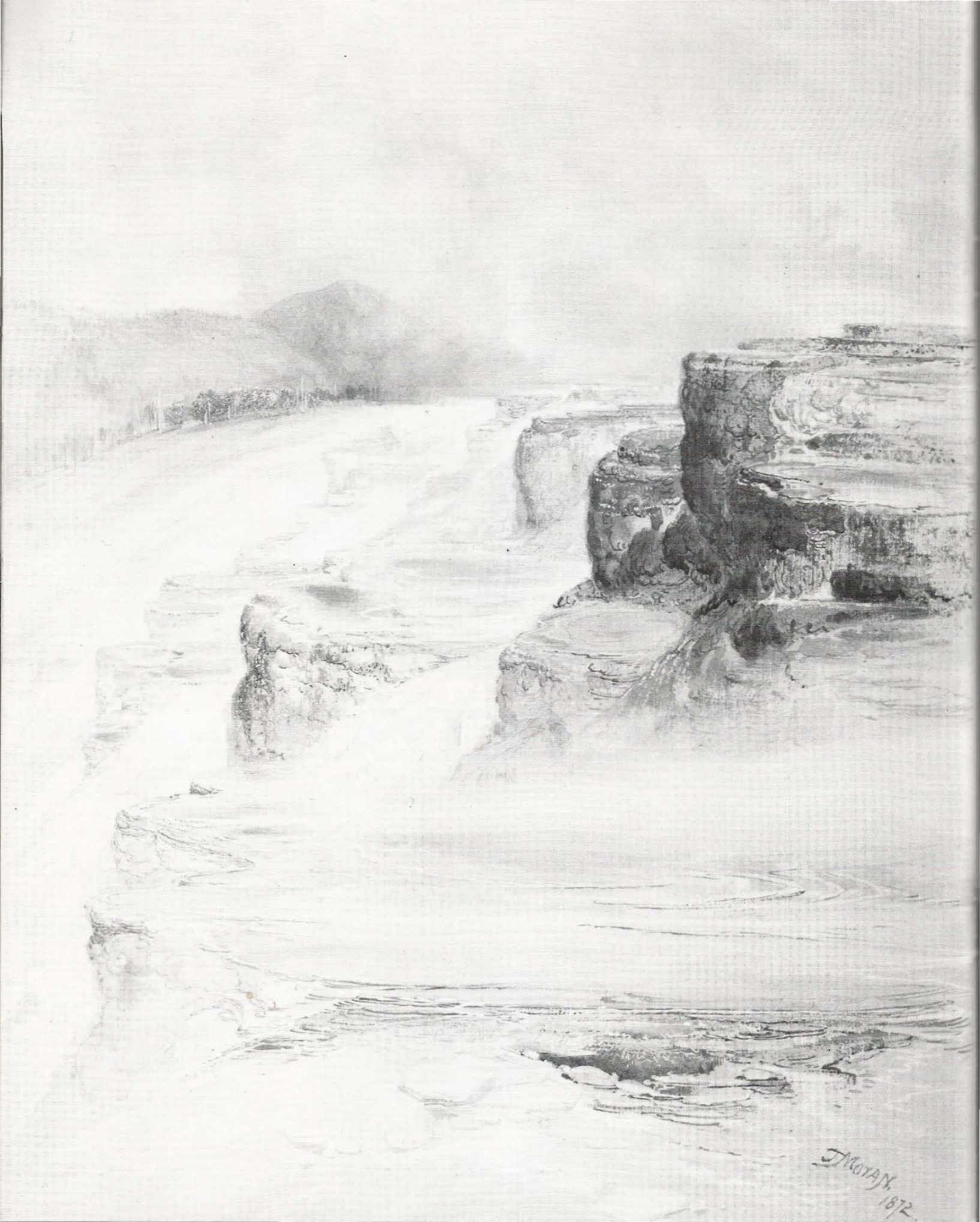


"THOMAS MORAN" HENRY HAVELOCK PIERCE. PHOTOGRAPHER (4326.12)

CHAPTER IV. THE NORTHWEST QUADRANT

Microcosm

The impressive Gilcrease Collections contain original manuscripts, first editions of rare books, and paintings which could readily be "packaged" as a unit to represent major events in history and art. The Hayden Survey material and the Thomas Moran paintings are excellent examples of such a unit and mankind marvels at the contributions these men made in their endeavors to preserve the natural beauty of this land.



Moran
1872

The many exploratory trips into the West made by Ferdinand V. Hayden laid the groundwork for the survey Hayden made as director for the United States Geological and Geographical Survey party under the Department of the Interior. Hayden was a native of Massachusetts and after graduating from Oberlin College in Ohio, he went on to medical school. He had little interest in medicine as a career, but it was the most expedient way for him to study science. His explorations were interrupted by the Civil War, and it was here that his medical studies proved to be valuable while he served as a surgeon in the Union Army.

In 1870, under the administration of Ulysses S. Grant, \$40,000 was appropriated and Hayden assembled a capable group of men including photographer William H. Jackson and artist Thomas Moran for the trip to the area that was to become Yellowstone Park.

In his report following the 1871 expedition, Hayden wrote in part:

"... Located in the northwestern corner of Wyoming Territory is a tract of country more remarkable for the wonderful phenomena of nature than any other region on the globe... the traveller passes from one unique scene to another, and his vision never wearies and is never sated..."

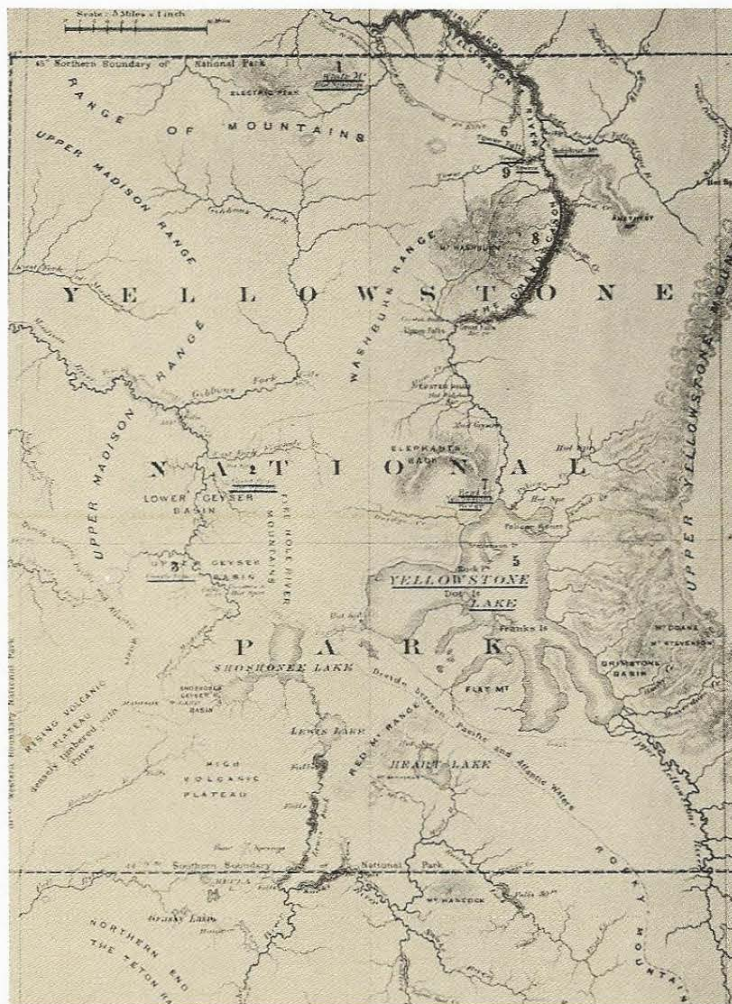
When compared to today's jet travel, Hayden's suggested routes to the Yellowstone country sound uncomfortable, time-consuming, and occasionally dangerous. He mentions in particular a wagon road from Bozeman to Mammoth Hot Springs "where there is said to be a hotel!" Speaking as a scientist he describes the Yellowstone region as being most important geographically because it forms the "divide" of the continent. As a geologist, he was fascinated by the volcanic activity and the numerous hot springs found in crevices of rocks.

In the preface of the magnificent work,

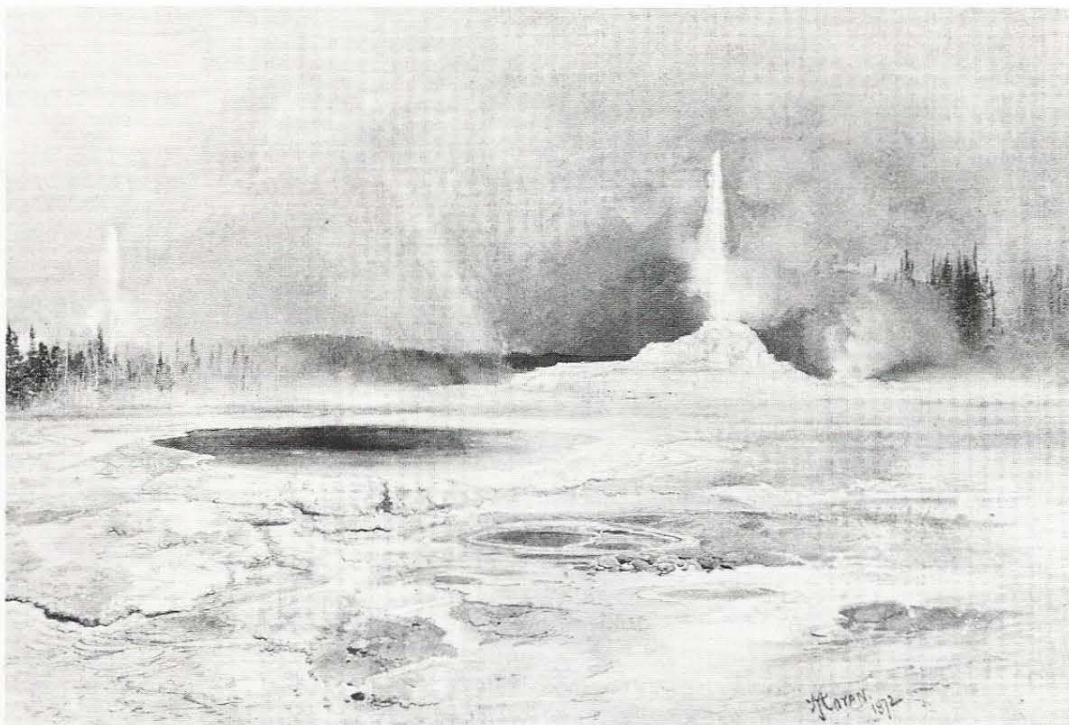
The Yellowstone National Park, Dr. Hayden says he would be glad to "... take charge of the literary part of the work, more especially as I knew of my own personal knowledge that the sketches by Mr. Thomas Moran... are not only of a high order of artistic merit, but that they can also be relied upon as exceedingly correct renderings of their subjects, interesting alike to the man of science, the lover of art, and the admirer of nature..."

It is a tribute to Dr. Hayden's keen perception that he recognized these qualities in Thomas Moran because it was after Congress had viewed Moran's mural-size paintings of the Yellowstone area that a national park system was established. Moran was credited with being partially responsible for this act, and he was subsequently known as the "Father of the National Parks" system.

"HOT SPRINGS OF GARDINER'S RIVER, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK" THOMAS MORAN (0236.1367)



MAP OF YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK, FROM F. V. HAYDEN'S "YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK AND THE MOUNTAIN REGIONS OF PORTIONS OF IDAHO, NEVADA, COLORADO AND UTAH" PUBLISHED BY L. PRANG & CO., BOSTON, 1876. (2426.47)



"THE CASTLE GEYSER, UPPER GEYSER BASIN, YELLOWSTONE NATIONAL PARK" THOMAS MORAN (0236.1363)

Thus we have reached the concluding illustration for this issue and volume of *American Scene*. We have completed a brief survey of many prominent features in a remarkable pattern of cohesiveness which is definable in the amazing amalgamation of art, artifact, and document that is the Gilcrease Museum Collection.

We began our examination of Tom Gilcrease's Collection with the idea in mind of trying to understand its "story." We offered the reader our opinion that this story was about man and his life and adventures in the hemisphere of the Americas.

Upon reaching this present writing we are still convinced that our original opinion was a correct one. We just didn't realize back at the beginning how truly immense the story is and how much looking and studying is going to be necessary on the part of viewers to "read it all." But now we know more about the scope and depth of meaning in this collection, and the tasks of presenting, protecting, and preserving this priceless gift of art, artifact, and document have become more clearly defined.

The countless additional cohesive themes and issues available for examination could bewilder us in their multiplicity. They could, but rather than bewilder they fascinate, and urge us to continue to follow those tracks which fascinated Tom Gilcrease back when the "Gilcrease Collection" was only one painting by Ridgeway Knight.

"Every Man Must Leave A Track,"

T. Gilcrease