

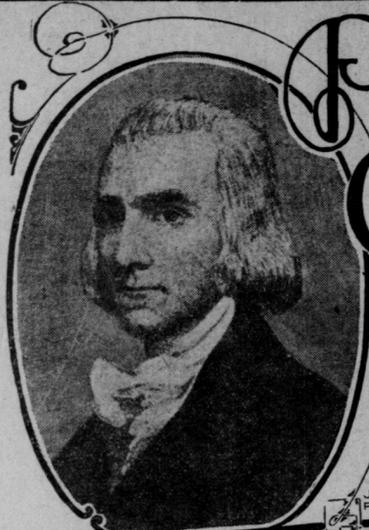
PANORAMA OF ASTORIA READY FOR THE CENTENNIAL BATTLESHIPS, MOTOR BOATS AND OTHER PLEASURE CRAFT IN HARBOR

During the past week a party of representative San Franciscans returned from Astoria, Or., where they went to join that thriving city at the mouth of the grand old Columbia in celebrating its one hundredth birthday. Few cities in America have greater cause to be proud of their history than has Astoria. Indeed, the founding of Astoria marked the founding of American civilization on the Pacific. It came, too, at the end of the most arduous journey ever made by trail breakers across a vast continent. The story of Astoria is a vital chapter in the story of the west. If you do not know this story by heart, do not fail to read the brief account which is given on this page.

By A. H. Harris

THE story of the planting of civilization on the Pacific coast goes back to 1776, when the Spaniards founded the trading post that afterward became San Francisco. But the real planting of white settlements along the coast can be traced to John Jacob Astor, whose expeditions to the Columbia river in 1811 resulted in the founding of Astoria and in the perfecting of the claim of the United States to the vast territory known as the Oregon country.

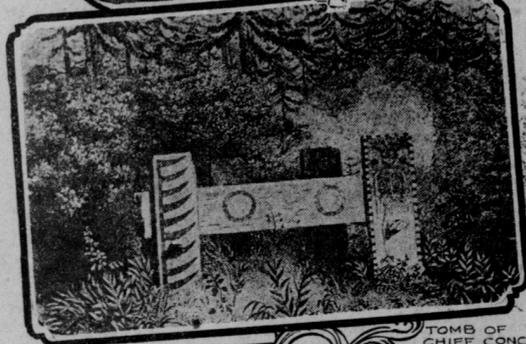
None of the great events involving territorial rights and settlement following the dark days at Plymouth Rock can be compared with the planting of civilization on the Pacific coast. Men dared the wilderness and sub-



JOHN JACOB ASTOR, FOUNDER OF ASTORIA

Planting American Civilization on the Pacific Coast

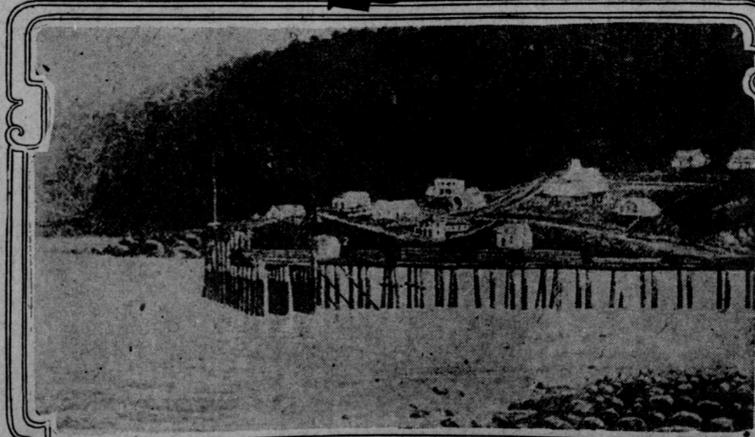
Astoria, Oregon, Celebrates the Centennial of Its Founding by John Jacob Astor's Men as the Climax of One of the Most Arduous and Heroic Expeditions in All History.



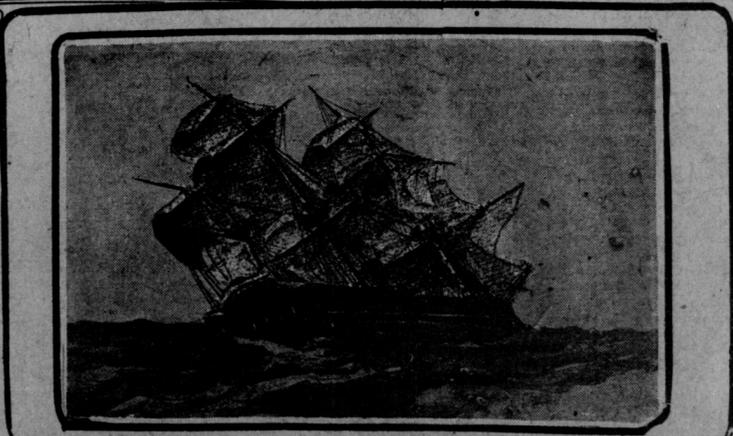
FORT GEORGE - 1811



ASTORIA 1913



ASTORIA 1856



"THE TONQUIN" CROSSING THE COLUMBIA BAR, 1811

the isolation and privation which followed settlement in old Oregon it required leadership like that of John Jacob Astor to make the venture successful. How proper, then, that the people of the United States should this year join in celebrating the centennial anniversary of the great event.

Astor's crowning desire was to establish a line of trading posts from St. Louis to the Pacific coast. In furtherance of this object he laid plans to organize the greatest company of his day. In 1783 the Northwest Fur company was organized by wealthy merchants of Montreal. For a long time this company held sway over the wintry lakes and boundless forests of Canada. The power and influence wielded was similar to that of the famous East India company in the realms of the orient. In fact, the Northwest company held feudal sway over a vast domain of forest and lake.

About this time the United States government began to view with apprehension the growing influence acquired by a combination of foreigners over the aboriginal tribes and made efforts to counteract it. In 1796 agents were sent through the northwest to establish government trading posts on the frontier. The object was to link the interests of Indians, hunters and trappers with that of the government, to promote a better feeling, and divert this growing and important branch of trade into national channels. The expedition was a failure.

Then there came to the front the man of iron will—John Jacob Astor. What the United States government could not accomplish was brought to a successful conclusion, and quickly, too. Astor jumped into the breach and laid his plans carefully and methodically. Quietly he gathered into his ranks men of financial standing and men with brains. In 1809 the New York legislature granted him a charter for the American Fur company, and the preliminary skirmish in the succeeding great battle was won. The capital of the company was \$1,000,000.

Articles of agreement by John Jacob Astor, Alexander McKay, Donald McDougal and Donald McKenzie—one German and three Scots—were filed June 23, 1810, and the Pacific Fur company was launched. Astor was to control all the movements of the company from the home office in New York. He was to furnish ships and money to carry

out the enterprise by sea and river and land. Two expeditions had been determined on.

The mouth of the Columbia river was the objective point of one expedition. The Tonquin, a ship of 290 tons with 10 mounted guns and a crew of 29, was purchased on which to embark the expedition. A large cargo of merchandise suitable for barter with the Indians was loaded, also the frame of a coasting schooner. An assortment of seeds for the soil was also taken aboard. Twelve clerks, some of whom had seen service in Indian trading, were engaged for the trip. Lieutenant Jonathan Thorn of the United States navy was granted a leave of absence to command the Tonquin. September 8, 1810, the Tonquin set sail from New York for the Pacific coast. It was a cosmopolitan crew that Commander Thorn had to manage—Canadian voyageurs, trappers, hunters and adventurers from everywhere.

The Falkland islands were sighted December 4, and December 7 the Tonquin was brought to anchor in Port Egmont, where a fresh supply of water was taken on. Cape Horn was rounded without incident and anchor was dropped at the Sandwich Islands in February. Here a fresh supply of water and provisions was obtained. February 28 the ship left the Sandwich Islands, and March 22 arrived off the mouth of the Columbia river with all on board in good health. Captain Thorn thought it prudent to stand off until the seas had calmed.

After a few days the captain became impatient and determined to send a boat's crew to find the channel. Chief Mate Fox, John Martin and three Canadians were ordered to man the boat. Chief Mate Fox, in the face of the angry seas, protested vigorously, but the captain was inexorable and the boat was sent out. No trace of boat or crew was ever found. Two other men, Aikin and Coles, were also drowned while on a similar expedition.

The waters having calmed, the Tonquin was sailed into Baker's bay April 5, 1811, and the founding of a trading post was begun. April 12 a site, called Point George, was selected. The great ambition of John Jacob Astor's life was being realized.

The story of the daring and hardships of the land expedition sent to the mouth of the Columbia river by John Jacob Astor at the same time reads like fiction. The greatest undertaking of the time, the most unique expedition in the history of America, trembled in results, the plan of Astor judged coolly in the light of later days, appear as the dream of a man whose foresight has seldom, if ever,

been equaled in this country. In 1809 Great Britain and the United States were recognized rivals for the possession of the undeveloped northwest. The territory covered half a million of square miles. The acquisition of this would enhance the power and wealth of any nation very materially. The wise men of England and of America were slowly getting their eyes open to the great possibilities of this unexplored region.

The Astor land expedition started from Montreal in July, 1810, in charge of Wilson P. Hunt, inexperienced in Indian trade. Hunt took with him Donald McKenzie, who had traded and associated with the redmen for 10 years. Thirty men comprised the expedition. The men were mostly Canadian voyageurs, hardened to toil and abounding in Indian experience. A large amount of stores, among which were plenty of arms and ammunition, were embarked in a large canoe and the party started up the Ottawa river. Mackinaw, at the confluence of lakes Huron and Michigan, was reached July 22. Needed supplies were obtained here and August 12 the expedition was en route to St. Louis, Mo. The route chosen was via Green bay, the Fox and Wisconsin rivers, to Prairie du Chien, thence down the Mississippi. At Mackinaw, Peter Dorin, a well known and experienced interpreter, was attached to the party.

St. Louis was reached without incident September 3. Here the expedition encountered the Missouri Fur company. The latter threw every obstacle possible in the way of Mr. Hunt in carrying out his project. He succeeded in recruiting 30 more men, however, and on October 21 embarked his party and started up the Missouri river. At the mouth of the Nodawa river, 450 miles from St. Louis, he decided to remain for the winter, as the river had begun to freeze.

Having heard alarming reports about the Indians along the route he was to follow, Hunt concluded to augment his force. He left for St. Louis January 1, 1811, one of his purposes being to obtain the services of a Sioux interpreter. He reached the camp on the Nodawa April 17 with several recruits. Breaking camp, the party on the 28th reached the mouth of the Nebraska and Platte rivers. May 10, the expedition arrived at Omaha, 830 miles from the mouth of the Missouri. In the face of a cold wind the men set out to cross the Rocky mountains:



TOMB OF CHIEF CONCOMLY AT ASTORIA



vided provisions with the party. Hunt camped here for nearly two weeks, during which time food was obtained from the Indians.

On resuming the journey rapids were encountered wherein a canoe was upset and Antone Clappone was drowned and the contents of the canoe lost. At the

expedition in the wilderness. The Great Falls of the Columbia (Cascade locks) were reached January 31. Here the expedition learned the first tidings of the settlement of Astoria, by parties sent out on the ship Tonquin from New York city, September 8, 1810. The blowing up of the Tonquin by the heroic Lewis and the destruction of more than one hundred Indians was told with awe.

February 5 the canoes were again placed on the river and the party proceeded leisurely toward the sea. February 15 the party came in sight of the infant settlement of Astoria, and a shout of gladness went up from the tired and hungry party that awoke an answering cry among the handful of men in the new settlement. The long journey was ended.

The Astor land expedition stands without a peer in the annals of American history. Lost in the wilderness, reduced to eating horse and dog meat, menaced by hostile tribes of Indians, deserted by half of the party, with a record of one year, seven months and five days en route, with the loss of only two men by death, the expedition managed by Hunt rivals any expedition of its character in the world.

McKenzie and McLellan, together with the men who left the main party in the wilderness, were on hand to greet Hunt and his men. There was great rejoicing when the Astoria con-

Hunt, however, made the mistake of going in a southwesterly direction. The party became lost and struck the Big Horn mountains in Wyoming. Hunt followed the Big Horn and Big Wind rivers and after many days reached the Rocky mountains. The crossing of this great range involved intense suffering. At times the men nearly famished for want of food and had to kill one of the horses to allay their hunger.

The passage of the mountains being accomplished the expedition moved on until it struck Mad river. Crossing the river the party proceeded westward. Here the greatest trials of the adventurers began. Wandering for weeks and months in the wilderness, oftentimes reduced to the necessity of eating horse or dog meat, and worn out by continuous walking, the men were on the verge of despair. Hunt, however, never gave up.

Pushing forward, a post built by Major Henry, but abandoned, was found on the upper Columbia, and here Hunt decided to establish a permanent post but the idea was abandoned. The construction of canoes at this point was begun, and fifteen were finished. October 18, the weary pilgrims embarked and floated onward toward the west. October 21, a dangerous point was encountered where the canoes had to be

cautiously passed down the rapids with mouth of the Wana Walla river a band of Indians was met who said that white men had gone down the river some time before. Hunt was rejoiced to hear this of a habitation. Here a wandering as he believed they were of the party encountered where the canoes had to be

ingent was reinforced by nearly 60 men of experience. Hope, the buoyant star, shone brighter upon the horizon for the few white men who were to establish civilization on the Pacific coast.