

the people settled on the western waters, already very considerable in their numbers, and rapidly increasing, from the mildness of the climate and the fertility of the soil.

That it is the opinion of the conference that the proposal to establish a company for opening the river Potomac merits the approbation of, and deserves to be patronised by, Virginia and Maryland; and that a similar law ought to be passed by the Legislatures of the two Governments to promote and encourage so laudable an undertaking.

That it is the opinion of this conference that it would be proper for Virginia and Maryland each to become subscribers to the amount of fifty shares; and that such subscription would evince to the public the opinion of the Legislatures of the practicability and great utility of the plan; and that the example would encourage individuals to embark in the measure, give vigor and security to so important an undertaking, and be a substantial proof to our brethren of the western territory of our disposition to connect ourselves with them by the strongest bonds of friendship and mutual interest.

That it is the opinion of this conference that an act of Assembly of Virginia "for opening and extending the navigation of the river Potomac from Fort Cumberland to tide water" ought to be repealed.

That it is the opinion of this conference, from the best information they have obtained, that a road, to begin about the mouth of Stoney river, may be carried, in about twenty or twenty-two miles, to the Dunker bottom, on Cheat river; from whence this conference are of opinion that batteau navigation may be made, though perhaps at considerable expense; that, if such a navigation cannot be effected, by continuing the road about twenty miles further it would intersect the Monongahela, where the navigation is good, and has been long practised.

That a road from Fort Cumberland to Turkey Foot would be about thirty-three miles; from whence an improvement of the Youghiogeny river would be necessary, though probably it might be done at less expense than the navigation of the Cheat river could be rendered convenient from the Dunker bottom.

That it is a general opinion that the navigation on the Potomac may be extended to the most convenient point below, or even above, the mouth of Stoney river; from whence, to set off a road to Cheat river; and this conference are satisfied that that road, from the nature of the country through which it may pass, (wholly through Virginia and Maryland,) will be much better than a road can be made at any reasonable expense from Fort Cumberland to the Youghiogeny, which must be carried partly through Pennsylvania.

That it is the opinion of this conference that, if the navigation on the Potomac should be carried to about the mouth of the Stoney river, a communication with the western waters, through a road from thence, extended even to the Monongahela, would be preferable, in most points of view, to that by a road from Cumberland to Turkey Foot, the only other way practicable, and in any great degree useful; that the communication by a road from Fort Cumberland to the present navigable parts of the Youghiogeny, and thence through that river, (though, in the opinion of this conference, a secondary object only,) would facilitate the intercourse with a very respectable number of the western settlers, contribute much to their convenience and accommodation, and that the benefits resulting therefrom to these States would compensate the expense of improving that road.

The conference therefore recommend that the Legislatures of Virginia and Maryland appoint skilful persons to view, and accurately examine and survey, the Potomac, from Fort Cumberland to the mouth of Stoney river; and the river Cheat, from about the Dunker bottom to the present navigable part thereof; and if they judge the navigation can be extended to a convenient distance above Fort Cumberland, that they may from thence survey, lay off, and mark a road to the Cheat river, or continue the same to the navigation, as they may think will most effectually establish the communication between the said eastern and western waters; and that the said road be cut and cleared, not less than eighty feet, and properly improved and maintained in repair, not less than forty, nor more than fifty feet wide, at the joint expense of both States; and your conferees beg leave to recommend that each State appropriate \$3,333 33 for the purpose. And this conference are further of opinion that the States of Virginia and Maryland request permission of the State of Pennsylvania to lay out and improve a road through such part of that State as may be necessary, in the best and most proper direction, from Fort Cumberland to the navigable part of the Youghiogeny; and, on such permission being obtained, that proper persons be appointed to survey, mark, clear, and improve such road, at the equal expense of Virginia and Maryland.

Which are submitted to the consideration of the Legislatures of Virginia and Maryland.

By order:

R. B. LATIMER, *Clerk.*

Managers are also appointed to receive subscriptions at the towns of Alexandria and Winchester; at Alexandria, John Fitzgerald and William Hartshorn, gentlemen; and at Winchester, Joseph Holmes and Edward Smith, gentlemen.

JACQUELIN AMBLER, }
JOHN BECKLEY, } *Managers.*

17th Congress.]

No. 536.

[2d Session.]

SETTLEMENT AT THE MOUTH OF COLUMBIA RIVER.

COMMUNICATED TO THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, JANUARY 27, 1823.

To the House of Representatives of the United States:

WASHINGTON, January 25, 1823.

I transmit, herewith, to the House of Representatives, a report from the Secretary of State, together with the document and information requested by the resolution of the House of the 19th of December last, relating to the establishment at the mouth of Columbia river.

JAMES MONROE.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, *January 24, 1823.*

The Secretary of State, to whom has been referred the resolution of the House of Representatives of the 19th of December last, requesting of the President of the United States "to lay before that House so much of the letter of Mr. Prevost as relates to the establishment at the mouth of Columbia river, and such information as he may have in his possession in relation to the arrangements made, about the year 1814, by the Northwest Company, with the proprietors of a settlement made by citizens of the United States at the mouth of Columbia river, by which that company became possessed of that settlement," has the honor of reporting to the President copies of the papers requested by that resolution.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS.

Mr. J. B. Prevost to the Secretary of State.

SIR: MONTE REY, NEW CALIFORNIA, *November 11, 1818.*

In conformity with mine of the 27th July, which I had the honor to address to your Department from Lima, I proceeded in His Britannic Majesty's sloop of war Blossom to the mouth of the Columbia, and entered the river on the 1st of October following. A few days thereafter, to wit, on the 6th, as you will perceive by referring to a copy of the act of surrender, (marked A,) I received, in the name and on the part of the United States, the possession of the establishment at Fort George, made under the first article of the treaty of Ghent, by Captain Hickey, of the royal navy, in compliance with the orders of the Prince Regent for that purpose, signified to him through the medium of Earl Bathurst. The British flag was, thereupon, lowered, and that of the United States hoisted in its stead; where it now waves, in token both of possession and of sovereignty.

The establishment, of which the annexed sketch (marked B) will give you a correct idea, has been considerably extended and improved by the agents of the Northwest Company of Canada, who will continue to occupy and protect it, under our flag, until it shall please the President to give orders for their removal. I will, however, suggest that, when such disposition shall take place, time ought to be granted, in a ratio with the distance, to enable them to obtain the means of transporting the private property deposited there, consisting of dry goods, furs, and implements of war, to a large amount.

Shortly after the ceremony of surrender, I received a note on this subject from Mr. Keith, the gentleman whose signature accompanies that of Captain J. Hickey, which, together with a copy of my answer, (also marked B,) is submitted for your inspection. A sense of justice would have dictated the assurances I have given him in reply; but I had a further motive, which was that of subsiding the apprehensions excited by the abrupt visit of the Ontario. It appeared to me prudent, in this view, to take no notice of the suggestion relative to a discussion of boundary, and, in answering, to avoid any intimation of immediate or of future removal; as either might have induced him to form a settlement elsewhere on the river, and thus have given rise to collisions between the two Governments, which may now be wholly avoided.

The bay is spacious; contains several anchoring places, in a sufficient depth of water; and is, by no means, so difficult of ingress as has been represented. Those enjoying the exclusive commerce have probably cherished an impression unfavorable to its continuance, growing out of the incomplete survey of Lieutenant Broughton, made under the orders of Vancouver, in 1792. It is true that there is a bar extending across the mouth of the river, at either extremity of which are, at times, appalling breakers; but it is equally true that it offers, at the lowest tides, a depth of twenty-one feet of water throughout a passage, exempt from them, of nearly a league in width. The Blossom, carrying more guns than the Ontario, encountered a change of wind while in the channel; was compelled to let go the anchor; and, when again weighed, to tack and beat, in order to reach the harbor; yet found a greater depth, and met with no difficulty either then or on leaving the bay. The survey (marked C) may be relied upon for its accuracy. The bearings, distances, and soundings were taken by Captain Hickey, who was kind enough to lend himself to the examination, and to furnish me with this result. It is the more interesting, as it shows that, with the aid of buoys, the access to vessels of almost any tonnage may be rendered secure. In addition to this, it is susceptible of entire defence; because a ship, after passing the bar, in order to avoid the breaking of the sea on one of the banks, is obliged to bear up directly for the knoll forming the cape; at all times to approach within a short distance of its base; and, most frequently, there to anchor. Thus, a small battery erected on this point, in conjunction with the surges on the opposite side, would so endanger the approach as to deter an enemy, however hardy, from the attempt.

This outlet, the only one between the thirty-eighth and fifty-third degrees of latitude, embraces the entire range of country from the ocean to the mountains; and its interior unites the advantage of a water communication throughout, by means of the many streams tributary to the Columbia, two of which disembogue opposite to each other within twenty-five leagues of the port, are navigable, and nearly of equal magnitude with this beautiful river. The ocean teems with otter, (mustela lutica,) the seal, and the whale; while the main land affords, in innumerable quantities, the common otter, (mustela lutica,) the bear, the buffalo, and the whole variety of deer.

It has been observed, by those exploring this coast, that the climate, to the southward of fifty-three degrees, assumes a mildness unknown in the same latitude on the eastern side of the continent. Without digressing to speculate upon the cause, I will merely state that such is particularly the fact in forty-six degrees sixteen minutes, the site of Fort George. The mercury, during the winter, seldom descends below the freezing point; when it does so, it is rarely stationary for any number of days; and the severity of the season is more determined by the quantity of water than by its congelation. The rains usually commence with November, and continue to fall partially until the latter end of March or beginning of April. A benign spring succeeds; and when the summer heats obtain, they are so tempered by showers as seldom to suspend vegetation. I found it luxuriant on my arrival, and, during a fortnight's stay, experienced no change of weather to retard its course. The soil is good; all the cereal gramina and tuberous plants may be cultivated with advantage; and the waters abound in salmon, sturgeon, and other varieties of fish.

The natives, in appearance as well as in character, differ essentially from those with us. They are less in stature, more delicately formed, and singular in the shape of the head, which, in infancy, is compressed between two small plates of wood or metal, so as in its growth to obtain the semblance of a wedge. They are inquisitive, cheerful, sagacious, possess fewer of the vices attributed to the savage, and are less addicted to cruelties in war. Scalping is unknown to them; and a prisoner suffers the infliction of no other punishment than that of becoming slave to the captor: but, as they neither sow nor reap, an observer cannot easily discern in what the servitude consists. The wants of the one are supplied by his own address in the use of the bow and spear; while those of the other require the same efforts, and equal skill, for their gratification.

The language on this side of the falls bears a strong analogy with that of Nootka; so much so, that, with the aid of a Spanish vocabulary of the latter, accompanying the voyage of Valdes, I could, notwithstanding the imperfection in this mode of conveying and of obtaining sounds, express my wants and be perfectly understood. I met with several of the natives who had heretofore volunteered on board of some one of our vessels in their fur excursions; two of whom had acquired a sufficient knowledge of our language to speak it with some ease, and were extremely solicitous to embark with us.

I regret that I could not collect sufficient data upon which to ground an estimate of the furs gathered on the Columbia: it was impossible, for reasons that are obvious. Humboldt has undertaken to number those of the otter taken on the coast and shipped to China, of which he assigns five-sixths to the Americans. He may be correct as to the quantity, but I doubt whether the proportion be quite so great; as it frequently happens that the English adventurer confides his stock to our countrymen, in order to participate in the benefit of a market, from a direct intercourse with which he is excluded by the laws of his country.

Perhaps I have gone too much into detail; but it appeared to me that, by exhibiting the importance of the position only, I should not have fulfilled the object of the President; that it was equally incumbent on me to present a view of the country, of its inhabitants, of its resources, of its approach, and of its means of defence. I shall now conclude with the relation of an occurrence which may and ought to influence the course to be adopted and pursued as to this station.

The speculations of Humboldt, and his glowing description of the soil and climate of this province, have probably given a new direction to the ambition of Russia, and determined its Emperor to the acquisition of empire in America. Until 1816, the settlements of this Power did not reach to the southward of 55°,* and were of no consideration, although dignified by them with the title of Russian America.

In the commencement of that year two distinct establishments were made, of a different and of a more imposing character. The first at Atooi, one of the Sandwich islands; the other in this vicinity, within a few leagues of St. Francis, the most northerly possession of Spain, in 37° 56'. The sketch I subjoin (marked D) was procured from a member of the Government at this place, from whom I also learned that its augmentation has since become so considerable as to excite serious alarm. Two Russian ships left this on their way thither a few days anterior to our arrival—one having on board mechanics of every description, together with implements of husbandry. We passed sufficiently near the spot assigned to it to distinguish the coast with some precision, and ascertained that it was an open road—a circumstance that renders the position liable to many objections, if intended to be permanent; in other respects, the choice is judicious for an infant colony. It enjoys a climate still milder than that of Columbia; is environed by a beautiful country; and its proximity to an old settlement enables the Russians to partake of the numerous herds of black cattle and horses that have been there multiplying for the last fifty years. The port of St. Francis is one of the most convenient, extensive, and safe in the world, wholly without defence, and in the neighborhood of a feeble, diffused, and disaffected population. Under all these circumstances, may we not infer views to the early possession of this harbor, and ultimately to the sovereignty of entire California? Surely the growth of a race on these shores, scarcely emerged from the savage state, guided by a chief who seeks not to emancipate, but to enthral, is an event to be deprecated—an event, the mere apprehension of which ought to excite the jealousies of the United States, so far at least as to induce the cautionary measure of preserving a station which may serve as a barrier to a northern aggrandizement.

I have not been able to gather other information respecting the settlement at Atooi than that of an assurance of its existence—a fact corroborated by the visit of the two ships to those islands in their route hither. The Russians are not yet such enterprising navigators as to augment sea risks by extending a voyage several thousand miles without an object. Such was the case in this instance, unless connected with the settlement, as they had sailed from Lima abundantly supplied, a few weeks prior to my first visit to that city, in April last.

These islands yield the sandal wood, so much esteemed in China, and have been resorted to by our vessels, for years past, not only in search of this valuable article, but of the necessary stock of fresh provisions to supply the crew during their cruise on the northwest coast. How far this intercourse may be affected, hereafter, by this encroachment, is also a subject for the consideration of the President.

I have taken the liberty to enclose a note (marked E) of the authorities, Spanish as well as English, that have fallen under my view, illustrating the discovery of the Columbia by Mr. Gray, in 1791. Its subsequent occupation in 1811, by which the sovereignty of the United States was completed, to the exclusion of any European claimant, is a fact of which the surrender of the sole establishment on the river is conclusive evidence.

I have the honor to be, with great consideration, your very humble, obedient servant,

J. B. PREVOST.

Mr. J. J. Astor to the Secretary of State.

SIR:

NEW YORK, January 4, 1823.

I had the honor to receive your letter of the 24th ultimo. Indisposition has prevented my acknowledging the receipt thereof at an earlier period.

You request information of arrangements made at about 1814, by the Northwest Company and citizens of the United States, by which that company became possessed of a settlement made at the mouth of Columbia river by citizens of the United States. The settlement to which you allude, I presume, is "Astoria," as I know of no other having been made at or near the mouth of that river. Several circumstances are alleged as having contributed to the arrangement by which the Northwest Company became in possession of that settlement, but chiefly to the misuse of the confidence which had been placed in Mr. McDougall, who, at the time the arrangement was made, and at the time my chief agent, Mr. Wilson P. Hunt, was absent, acted as sub-agent.

I beg leave briefly to state, that, contemplating to make an establishment at the mouth of Columbia river, which should serve as a place of depot, and give further facilities for conducting a trade across this continent to that river, and from thence, on the range of northwest coast, &c. to Canton, in China, and from thence to the United States, arrangements were accordingly made, in 1810, for a party of men to cross the continent for the Columbia river. At the same time, I fitted the ship *Tonquin*, carrying twenty guns and sixty men, commanded by the late Captain Thorn, lieutenant of the United States navy. This ship sailed in September, 1810, having on board the means for making an establishment at Columbia, where she arrived on 22d March, 1811. They landed, found the natives friendly, and built a fort, erected a house, store, &c. This being accomplished, Captain Thorn left thirty men in possession of the place, to await the party who were to make the voyage over land; these also happily arrived, though not till several months after. On or about the 1st of June, Captain Thorn left Columbia river with

*Chart of the discoveries of Russian navigators, published by order of the Emperor in 1802, referred to by Humboldt in his *View of New Spain*, (translation,) page 270, 2d vol. (note.)

a view to make some trade on the coast, and then to return to the river; but, unfortunately, Captain Thorn never returned. At about two hundred miles north of the Columbia, he put in a bay to trade with the natives. Not attending to the precautions necessary, as he had been instructed to do, to guard against an attack, he suffered a whole tribe of Indians to come on board and about his ship; an attack was made; he was overpowered; fire was communicated to the magazine; the ship was blown up; and every soul on board, or near her, perished.

In 1811 I fitted out another ship, the *Beaver*, carrying twenty guns, with a duplicate cargo of the ship *Tonquin*, and sixty or seventy men. The captain (Sowle) was instructed to sail for Columbia river, and in search of the men who were sent across the continent, as also of the *Tonquin*. The *Beaver* sailed from this in October, 1811, arrived at Columbia in May following, found the establishment, and landed such men, goods, provisions, &c. as the establishment was in need of. My instructions to the captain were, that, after supplying the establishment, he should proceed to Chatka, a Russian settlement, for the purpose of trade; and then return to Columbia, take what furs we had, and proceed to Canton, and from thence to New York. He accordingly left Columbia; and, most unfortunately, Mr. Hunt, of Trenton, New Jersey, my chief agent, left the river with him, sailed as directed, for the Russian settlement, and effected their object; but, instead of following instructions to return to Columbia, he sailed direct for Canton, leaving Mr. Hunt at one of the Sandwich islands, to await the arrival of another ship which I had promised to send from this in 1812. The ship *Beaver* arrived at Canton, and received there the news of war. I had sent orders to the captain to return to Astoria, but he was fearful of being captured, and remained safely at Canton till the war was over, when he came home. In consequence of the war, I found it inconvenient to send a ship in 1812; but I did send one (the *Lark*) early in 1813, with directions to the captain to sail for Columbia river, and to stop at the Sandwich islands for information. Being within a few days' sail of those islands, the ship, in a squall of wind, was upset, and finally drifted on the beach of one of those islands, a wreck—ship and cargo totally lost. Here was met Mr. Hunt, who, after all the information he received, and my great desire to protect the establishment at Columbia river, procured an American vessel, took some provisions, sailed, and arrived in Columbia river. He there learned that McDougall had transferred all my property to the Northwest Company, who were in possession of it, by a sale, as he called it, for the sum of about \$58,000, of which he retained \$14,000, for wages said to be due to some of the men. From the price obtained for the goods, &c., and he having himself become interested in the purchase, and made a partner of the Northwest Company, some idea may be formed as to this man's correctness of dealings. It will be seen, by the agreement (of which I transmit a copy) and the inventory, that he sold to the Northwest Company 18,170½ pounds of beaver, at two dollars, which was at about that time selling in Canton at five and six dollars; 907 otter skins, at fifty cents, or half a dollar, which were selling in Canton at five to six dollars per skin.

I estimated the whole property to be worth nearer \$200,000 than \$40,000, about the sum which I received by bills on Montreal. Previous to the transaction of McDougall, we had already established trading-posts in the interior, and were in contact with the Northwest Company. It is now to be seen what means have been used by them to counteract my plan. It is well known that, as soon as the Northwest Company had information of my intentions and plan for conducting my commercial operations, they despatched a party of men from the interior, with a view to arrive before my people at Columbia. These men were obliged to return without effecting their object. In the mean time, representation was made to their Government as to the probable effect of my operations on their interest, and requesting to interfere in their behalf. This being in time of peace, the Government did not deem it advisable so to do. So soon, however, as war was declared, these representations were renewed, aid was asked from the Government, and it was granted. The *Phœbe* frigate, and sloops of war *Raccoon* and *Porcupine*, were sent from England, with orders to proceed to Columbia river, and destroy my property. They sailed from England early in January, 1813. Arriving at Rio de Janeiro, Admiral Dickson ordered the *Phœbe* frigate, with one of the sloops, to pursue Captain Porter, in the frigate *Essex*, and the sloop of war *Raccoon* to the Columbia. She arrived there, took possession in the name of the King, and changed the name of the place, Astoria, to Fort George. Previous to this, the Northwest Company had despatched another or second party of men to the Columbia. They arrived there in the absence of Mr. Hunt. McDougall gave them support and protection, and they commenced, after some time, to negotiate with this gentleman.

The reasons assigned by him for his conduct will be seen by an extract of a letter said to have been sent by a Mr. Shaw, of the Northwest Company, and of which I send you a copy. The plan by me adopted was such as must have materially affected the interest of the Northwest and Hudson's Bay Companies, and it was easy to be foreseen that they would employ every means to counteract my operations, and which, as my impression, I stated to the Executive of your Department as early as February, 1813, as will be seen by a copy of the sketch of a letter which I wrote to the Secretary of State, to which no reply was given. On repeated application, some time after, aid was promised me; but I believe the situation of our country rendered it inconvenient to give it. You will observe that the name of the Pacific Fur Company is made use of at the commencement of the arrangements for this undertaking. I preferred to have it appear as the business of a company rather than that of an individual; and several of the gentlemen engaged, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Crooks, Mr. McKay, McDougall, Stuart, &c. were, in effect, to be interested as partners in the undertaking, so far as respected any profit which might arise; but the means were furnished by me, and the property was solely mine, and I sustained the loss, which, though considerable, I do not regret; because, had it not been for the unfortunate occurrence just stated, I should have been, as I believe, most richly rewarded, as it will be seen that the difference of price in the beaver and otter skins alone, say what I received, and the value of them at Canton at that time, is about \$60,000. The copy of agreement, inventory, and extract of Shaw's letter, you will please return to me.

I am, sir, &c.

Hon. JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, *Secretary of State*.

JOHN JACOB ASTOR.

Mr. Astor to Mr. Monroe, Secretary of State.

Sir:

NEW YORK, *February*, 1813.

I take the liberty to call to your recollection the subject of which I spoke when I had the honor of waiting on you at Washington, and to enclose a copy of a letter which I received in November last, *via* Canada, as also copies of some notes passed between some of the agents whom I sent to Columbia river and Mr. Thompson, a partner of the Northwest Company of Canada. By these it will be seen that the Indians on that part of the continent are friendly, and it is understood that the climate is mild and the country good, and I am informed and believe that a great and valuable trade may be carried on there with more advantage by this than any other country. By the extract of a letter from the wintering partners of the Northwest Company to Mr. McGillivray, of Montreal, it will be seen that they are more or less apprehensive that the plan pursued by me will more or less endanger the valuable and extensive trade of that company, which, though of some consideration to this country, is,

in my opinion, of less consequence than the trade which may be carried on on the coast, and from thence to China, as also a considerable trade with the Russian settlements in that part of the world.

You will perceive, sir, that the people whom I sent out in a ship in the year 1810 have established themselves on the Columbia river, and have built a fort, which I understand is on a favorable situation, about ten or twelve miles from the mouth of the river. If all the men who were sent thither have arrived safe, (as I believe they have,) then there must be about one hundred and fifty, besides a number of natives from the Sandwich islands.

I know that the Northwest Company have communicated my undertaking to the British Government, and, under present circumstances, I think it more than probable that they will apply for some aid to defeat it. Whether they have, or will succeed in obtaining it, I know not.

I have, however, every reason to believe that if the Government do not aid them, they will make themselves an effort to that effect. Under other circumstances than the present, (I mean in time of peace,) I think I could have made a stand against that company; in the present, it becomes doubtful and hazardous, and, in case of an interference on the part of the British Government, impossible for an individual to hold possession of a country which may become a source a wealth and comfort to many. In this situation, it becomes very interesting to know somewhat of the views of Government relative to this object; and whether the United States have or will assert any claim to that or any part of that country; and whether the Government will deem it expedient to take possession and give protection to the infant establishment which has been made. I presume, if forty or fifty men were placed in the fort already established, or on some more eligible situation, (if such there be,) they could, with the aid of the men already there, repel any force which I think it likely the British would at this time send; and, in the mean time, means might be found to send some more men, and to strengthen ourselves. My plan was to have reconciled the Indians on the Missouri to our having a free communication up that river, which no doubt in a future day will be effected, whence we can send any force necessary to protect ourselves. But it appears necessary that some step should now be taken which will afford a more speedy aid, which can only be done by sending a vessel, &c. round Cape Horn. There are at this time about twelve or thirteen American vessels on that coast; many of them might seek and find protection in the Columbia river if we had even a small force there. I beg leave to say, that, at the commencement of my undertaking, it appeared to be necessary that some of the people sent to that country should be acquainted with the Indian trade; and, they being very scarce in the United States, I have been under the necessity of taking some from Canada, some Canadians, and some few Scotchmen. Although they have all become citizens of the United States, I am more or less apprehensive that these, in time of war, may join any force sent by the Northwest Company or the British Government; and the more so if there should be no appearance of any protection from this country. The number of these is, however, small; and the principal agent is a Mr. Hunt, of Trenton, a real American, and a gentleman of integrity, honor, and talents. I believe, at present, there is no post or establishment on the Columbia river but the one here spoken of, though I am pretty sure the Northwest Company will endeavor to fix one, as I have just received a letter dated 19th November, in London, which says the Northwest Company are fitting the ship Isaac Todd, of about five hundred tons, to go to the northwest coast. The writer does not say under what circumstances the ship goes; but that she will go to Columbia river, there can be no doubt. I pray you, sir, to have the goodness to bring this subject under the consideration of the President, and, if permitted, I would ask the favor of being informed of the result; which is the more desirable, as I expect very shortly an opportunity of sending a messenger to that quarter of the world. I am sure the Government will readily see the importance of having possession and the command of a river so important and extensive as the Columbia, the fountain of which cannot be far distant from that of the river Missouri.

I have the honor to be, respectfully, your obedient servant,

JOHN JACOB ASTOR.

To the Hon. JAMES MONROE, *Secretary of State.*

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *City of New York, ss.*

Be it known that, on the day of the date hereof, before me, John G. Bogert, a public notary in and for the State of New York, duly admitted and sworn, dwelling in the city of New York, personally came Wilson P. Hunt, who, being by me duly sworn, did declare and say, that the annexed agreement, inventories, and account current, [are those] by which the property of the late Pacific Fur Company was transferred to the Northwest Company of Canada; which agreement said Hunt had not in his power to reject, as the property had been some months in the possession of said Northwest Company when said Hunt returned to Astoria, the 28th February, 1814.

That, in explanation of the first article of said agreement, he declares nothing more to have been intended or understood by the word "establishment," than the dwelling-houses and stores (and not right of soil) erected by the Pacific Fur Company at Astoria, as is fully shown by reference to the fourth article of said agreement, and to the tenth page of said inventory; in each of which the item of "buildings" comprehends all the property of that description paid for by the Northwest Company. And he further declares, that he never gave or conveyed to any person whatever any right or title to lands on the Columbia river and the northwest coast; nor has he any knowledge or suspicion of any member of the late Pacific Fur Company having transferred land to the Northwest Company; more particularly as no person was authorized so to do.

WILSON P. HUNT.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name, and affixed my seal of office, the twelfth day [L. S.] of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen.

J. G. BOGERT, *Notary Public.*

The association heretofore carrying on the fur trade to the Columbia river and its dependencies, under the firm and denomination of the Pacific Fur Company, being dissolved on the 1st of July last, by Duncan McDougall, Donald McKenzie, David Stuart, and John Clarke, with the intention to abandon the trade in that quarter, it is hereby agreed, concluded, and settled upon, of their own free will and consent, by Duncan McDougall, acting for himself and in behalf of his associates, namely, Donald McKenzie, David Stuart, and John Clarke, on the one part, and John George McTavish and John Stuart, acting for themselves, and in behalf of the Northwest Company, on the other part, that the following agreement and settlement take place between them, and be binding and obligatory in the manner, and subject to the terms and agreements, hereinafter specified and contained: Now, therefore, it is hereby mutually agreed and concluded, by and between the said parties to these presents, and they do hereby mutually covenant and agree, to and with each other, in manner following, that is to say:

ARTICLE I. The party of the former part hereby covenants and agrees to deliver, or cause to be delivered, the whole of their establishments, furs, and present stock on hand, on the Columbia and Thompson's rivers, as soon as

the necessary inventories can be taken, unto the said party of the latter part, or any other person or persons appointed by them to represent the Northwest Company, to receive the same at the prices and rates concluded and agreed upon as hereinafter specified in article fourth.

ART. 2. In consideration of article first being duly and faithfully performed by the party of the former part, they, the said John George McTavish and John Stuart, for themselves, and on behalf of the Northwest Company, do bind and oblige themselves and the said Northwest Company, or their agents, to pay, or cause to be paid, unto the said Duncan McDougall, acting for himself and in behalf of his associates, as before mentioned, his attorneys, assigns, or order, the amount of the sum or sums arising from the sale according to article first, and the rates hereinafter specified in article fourth, at three several instalments; the first one-third, on or before the twenty-fifth of October, one thousand eight hundred and fourteen; the second one-third, on or before the twenty-fifth of November; and the remaining one-third, on or before the twenty-fifth of December. And further: it is hereby understood, that, should the party of the former part find it convenient to leave the amount of the several drafts, after becoming payable as already specified, in the hands of the party of the latter part, or their agents, they, the said party of the latter part, or their agents, will allow interest at six per cent. until paid on demand; and as there are several moneys, the produce of their wages, due unto the people employed in the service of the late Pacific Fur Company, carrying on trade on the Columbia and Thompson's rivers, the said party of the latter part, namely, John George McTavish and John Stuart, acting for themselves and the Northwest Company, or their agents, do hereby bind and oblige themselves to pay, or cause to be paid, unto the several individuals employed by the party of the former part, the amount of the balances due them, according to the statement that shall be delivered by the said Duncan McDougall, acting for himself and his associates, as before mentioned, within one month after their arrival at Montreal, in the province of Lower Canada; the amount of which several sums so paid is to be considered as part of, and deducted from, the first instalment to be paid unto the said Duncan McDougall, acting for himself and his associates as before mentioned, his attorneys, assigns, or order, on or before the twenty-fifth of October, one thousand eight hundred and fourteen.

ART. 3. And further: The said John George McTavish and John Stuart, acting for themselves and the Northwest Company, will be at liberty to make a selection, and take into their service such of the people in the employment of the party of the former part, as they may think proper; in consideration of which, the said party of the latter part bind and oblige themselves to pay, or cause to be paid, unto the said party of the former part, the several sums due them, by such as may enter into the service of the party of the latter part; and the said party of the latter part further bind and oblige themselves to provide and insure a safe passage to the said party of the former part, and the remaining part that will not be taken into their service, to their respective homes.

ART. 4. And further: It is hereby agreed and concluded upon by the said parties, that the following are the rates at which the establishments, furs, and stock on hand, be valued at, as follows:

Dry goods, stationary, gunpowder, and leaf tobacco, fifty per cent. on the prime cost; ship chandlery, sixty per cent.; shot, ball, lead, iron, and steel, one hundred per cent.; deduction on made-up iron works at Columbia river, thirty-three and one-third per cent.; new boats, each ten pounds, Halifax currency; boats in use, each five pounds, Halifax currency; shallop, with rigging complete, one hundred and twelve pounds ten shillings; two blacksmith's forges, complete, twenty-five pounds; plug tobacco, one shilling and six pence per pound; plug tobacco manufactured at Columbia, one shilling and three pence per pound; beads, assorted, five shillings per pound; arms, cannon, &c. prime cost; provisions, at fixed prices; articles in use, half inventory prices; horses, thirty shillings each; buildings, two hundred pounds; John Reid's adventure, and Freeman's, in the vicinity of Snake country and Spanish river, to deduct one hundred per cent.; beaver furs, ten shillings per pound; beaver coating, eight shillings and four pence per pound; muskrats, seven pence half-penny each; land otters, two shillings and six pence each; sea otters, large, sixty shillings each.

And for the faithful performance of all and singular the said covenants and agreements to be by them, respectively, kept and performed, all and every of the parties to these presents bind themselves, separately and jointly, for their several associates, firmly by these presents.

In witness whereof, the parties to these presents have hereunto set their hands and seals, this sixteenth day of October, one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, at entrance of Columbia river, northwest coast of America.

DUN. McDOUGALL, [L. s.]
J. G. McTAVISH, [L. s.]
JOHN STUART. [L. s.]

Witnesses.—JOHN C. HALSEY, GABRIEL FRANCHERE, ALFRED SETON, WILLIAM WALLACE, ANGUS BETHUNE; JAMES McMELLAN, JOSEPH MCGULIVRAY.

In explanation of what is meant and intended by "inventory prices" for articles in use, and fixed prices for provisions, it was mutually understood by both parties, at the time, that the inventory prices of said articles in use should be fixed at half prime cost, and that no charges at all were to be made for provisions or stores of any description; and to prevent any difference that might, in future, arise on the subject, it is hereby mutually understood and agreed upon, by the parties present, that the inventory prices of said articles in use shall be fixed at half prime cost, and no charges at all be made for provisions: which explanation is to be considered equally valid and binding as if inserted or so explained in the body of the agreement itself.

DUN. McDOUGALL,
J. G. McTAVISH,
JOHN STUART.

Witnesses.—JOHN C. HALSEY, ANGUS BETHUNE.

It is hereby agreed, by and between the parties to these presents, that, in consideration of the arrival of W. P. Hunt, the aforementioned Duncan McDougall wishes to assign, and does hereby assign, to said W. P. Hunt, the part which the said Duncan McDougall held in acting for the party of the first part; and for the completion of the aforementioned agreement, the said W. P. Hunt holds himself equally bound with said Duncan McDougall: and further, to render the article regarding John Reid's adventure to the Snake country more explicit, it is hereby fully understood that fifty per cent. was meant, instead of one hundred per cent., expressed in the said aforementioned articles of agreement, to be deducted.

Signed this tenth day of March, one thousand eight hundred and fourteen.

DUNCAN McDOUGALL,
WILSON P. HUNT,
J. G. McTAVISH,
JOHN STUART.

Witnesses.—JOHN C. HALSEY, ANGUS BETHUNE.

The Northwest Company in account with John Jacob Astor.

		Dr.	
1814.			
March 12,	To amount of furs delivered Messrs. McTavish and Stuart, as per invoice, -	-	\$39,173 66½
	To amount of invoice of sundry merchandise, &c. delivered at Astoria, -	-	13,256 01
	To amount of invoice of sundry merchandise, &c. delivered at Okunaakan, -	-	2,333 58½
	To amount of invoice of sundry merchandise, &c. delivered at Spokane, -	-	1,715 17½
	To amount of goods delivered Mr. John G. McTavish, June 26, 1813, -	-	858 80½
	To amount of John Reid's outfit to the Snake country, and Freeman's accounts, as follows:		
	To amount of invoice, -	-	\$689 68
	To amount of J. Hobough's account, -	-	241 09
	To amount of J. Reznor's account, -	-	240 57
	To amount of P. Delaunay's account, -	-	189 76
	To amount of E. Robinson's account, -	-	330 62
	To amount of P. Dorion's account, -	-	215 85
			\$1,907 57
			953 78½
			953 78½
			\$58,291 02
			\$58,291 02
		Cr.	
1814.			
March 12,	By amount of sundry articles delivered Wilson P. Hunt, -	-	\$436 10½
	By bill of exchange of this date, drawn by John McDonald on McTavish, McGillivray & Co., Montreal, in favor of W. P. Hunt, payable 25th of October next, Hx. Cy. £927 17s. 6d.		3,711 50
	By bill of exchange of the same date, drawn by the same on the same, in favor of the same, payable 25th November next, Hx. Cy. £4,821 5s. 0d.		19,285 00
	By bill of exchange of the same date, drawn by the same on the same, in favor of the same, payable 25th December next, Hx. Cy. £4,821 5s. 0d.		19,285 00
	By draft of the same date, drawn by the same on the same, in favor of Donald McKenzie, payable 25th October next, -	-	1,483 24
	By amount of balances due sundry persons, assumed by Messrs. McTavish & Stuart, -	-	14,090 17½
			\$58,291 02

MARCH 12, 1814.

E. E.

WILSON P. HUNT, *in behalf of John Jacob Astor.*

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, *City of New York, ss.*

Be it known, that, on the day of the date hereof, before me, John G. Bogert, a public notary in and for the State of New York, duly admitted and sworn, dwelling in the city of New York, personally came John C. Halsey and Alfred Seton, who, being by me duly sworn, depose and say, that the letter hereto annexed is a true copy of a letter brought to Astoria by John G. McTavish, of the Northwest Company, and that they saw and read the same, and each became a witness to a copy thereof, which Duncan McDougall had recorded in a book of the Pacific Fur Company, for the purpose of justifying him in transferring the property of said company at Astoria to the Northwest Company of Canada, as appears by the subsequent transactions of said Duncan McDougall.

JOHN C. HALSEY,
ALFRED SETON.

In testimony whereof, I have hereunto subscribed my name, and affixed my seal of office, the twelfth day [L. s.] of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eighteen.

JOHN G. BOGERT.

Extract of a letter addressed to Mr. John G. McTavish, Columbia river, from A. Shaw, Agent for the Northwest Company, dated Montreal, May 9, 1813.

MY DEAR SIR:

ASTORIA, COLUMBIA RIVER, *October 9, 1813.*

We are in hurry and confusion, preparing papers, &c. for the express canoe, having waited impatiently for some time. It was at last determined upon to send it off, without having received the least knowledge of what has been doing in England since December last; but, fortunately, the arrival of a frigate brought us accounts of the Isaac Todd, having on board Messrs. McTavish and McDonald, being ready for sea on the 18th of March. She is accompanied by a frigate to take and destroy every thing that is American on the northwest coast.

DUN. McDOUGALL,
DONALD McKENZIE,
JOHN CLARKE,
ALFRED SETON,
JOHN C. HALSEY,
GAB. FRANCHERE,
WILLIAM WALLACE.