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JASON LEE
PROPHET OF THE NEW OREGON



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JASON LEE

JASON LEE
PROPHET OF THE NEW
OREGON

BY
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NEW YORK
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1932

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SET UP BY BROWN BROTHERS LINOTYPERS
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TO MY WIFE
ANNE STAPLETON BROSNAN
AND
MY DAUGHTER AND SON
MARY AND JOHN

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PREFACE

SPECIAL acknowledgment of thanks is due these scholars, whose assistance in the preparation of this biography was fundamental: Dr. Herbert E. Bolton, Director of the Bancroft Library and Head of the Department of History, University of California; Dr. E. A. Bryan, President Emeritus and Research Professor of Economic History, Washington State College; and Dr. T. C. Elliott, historical writer and authority on Pacific Northwest History, Walla Walla, Washington. For constructive suggestion, and criticism leading to the avoidance of errors as to fact and procedure, I am deeply indebted to these generous and disinterested friends, who, of course, are not responsible for any inaccuracies that may appear in the biography. For the courteous and efficient aid given by numerous library staffs in Canada and the United States, I wish to express appreciation. I am under heaviest obligation to the following libraries: The Bancroft Library, University of California, for the manuscript collection on the Oregon Mission; the Olin Library, Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, for the file of the *Christian Advocate* and the hitherto undiscovered Lee-Fisk Correspondence; the Library of the Oregon Historical Society, Portland, for the Jason Lee Manuscript Collection; the Congregational Library, Boston, for the file of *Zion's Herald*; and the Library of the Stanstead Historical Society, Stanstead, Quebec, for material on Lee's ancestry and early life. To many persons who have given some form of friendly assistance, I am sincerely grateful.

C. J. B.

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JASON LEE
PROPHET OF THE NEW OREGON

CHAPTER I

THE FLATHEAD DEPUTATION AND THE METHODIST RESPONSE

First tidings of Christianity to Oregon Indians. Fur trader and trapper brought the first tidings of Christianity to the Indians, natives of Oregon, but it was the visit of the Indians themselves to the Church at home that stirred it to action.

Fur traders as a class can, perhaps, hardly be regarded as religious, yet certain individual traders were notably religious-minded men. David Thompson, the first white man to live among the Flathead and Kootenai Indians, seldom passed an evening in camp which was not given over to his private devotions.¹ The American trader, Jedediah S. Smith, was equally familiar with Bible and rifle. He is described as a "bold, outspoken, professing, and consistent Christian," and is credited with the practice of invoking divine blessing before partaking of his meal.²

Moreover, the fur era of the New World was a period of observance of at least the outward forms of religion. All the brigades when leaving Montreal for the West received a final blessing from the priests at the ancient chapel of St. Ann's;³ while out in the Far West, soon after the building of Fort Vancouver in 1824-25, Dr. John McLoughlin, Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, began to hold religious services for his servants and for the Indians who came there as visitors. Even prior to 1841 or 1842, it was Dr. McLoughlin's practice to read the service of the Church

¹ T. C. Elliott, *David Thompson, Pathfinder*, Pamphlet (Kettle Falls, Washington, 1911), p. 7.

² H. M. Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of The Far West* (New York, 1902), I, p. 251.

³ Washington Irving, *Astoria; or, Anecdotes of an Enterprise beyond the Rocky Mountains* (London, 1836), I, p. 206.

of England on Sundays to the officers and Hudson's Bay Company employees who attended.⁴

Visit of the Flatheads to St. Louis, 1831. Another opportunity for friendly contact was afforded by two almost coincident occasions: the annual rendezvous of the fur traders and trappers at Green River in present western Wyoming, and the immemorial custom of the Nez Percé and Flathead Indians to make annual trips into what is now western Montana and eastern Idaho to hunt the buffalo. During the fur-trading era, different bands of Indians from these tribes used also to attend the fur traders' rendezvous, and through the contact thus made possible, these Indians came to hear of other forms of worship than their own.

In 1831 a few friendly Indians who were curious to see the "Black Robes" of whom they had heard, traveled to St. Louis with a returning trader. General William Clark, the superintendent of Indian affairs for all the tribes in the Missouri River country, immediately reported their arrival to the Jesuit fathers and also to the Methodists, who were at the time holding a conference in the city.⁵ Two of the Indians died at St. Louis during the winter, and were buried near the Catholic cathedral; the others departed for home the following spring, but only one lived to reach his tribe.⁶

This event, simple in itself, was significant in its consequences. It aroused the interest of both Protestants and Catholics and set in motion a train of events that resulted in the pioneer missionary expeditions to the vast region west of the Rocky Mountains.

Conflicting dates. Concerning the date of the Indians' arrival in St. Louis, several conflicting statements are extant. The official register of burials of the Catholic cathedral at St. Louis (discovered by W. I. Marshall of Chicago) discloses two important records: first, one of these Indians, a Nez Percé, named Narcisse,

⁴ F. V. Holman, *Dr. John McLoughlin, the Father of Oregon* (Cleveland, 1907), p. 98.

⁵ J. Q. Thornton, *History of Oregon*, MS. (Bancroft Library, University of California), contains letter of Rev. John W. York, a Methodist elder who resided at St. Louis at the time of the Flathead visitation.

⁶ William Walker letter, in *Christian Advocate and Journal* (New York, 1826), VII, p. 105.

about forty-four years of age, died and was buried near the Catholic cathedral at St. Louis on October 31, 1831. This record clearly establishes the fact that the Flatheads visited St. Louis in 1831, instead of 1832, the year usually cited as the correct one. The officiating priest was Father Edmond Saulnier.⁷ Second, the same cathedral register also records the death of the second Indian, Paul, as having occurred on November 17, 1831. Father Benedict Roux conducted the burial service.⁸ These cathedral register entries not only establish correct burial dates; they clarify certain statements in the William Walker letter, which will be presently discussed, and furnish evidence as to the correct date of Walker's call on General Clark. This is important because Walker's statement was cited for years by Protestant writers as evidence of unquestioned validity in support of the date November, 1832, instead of November, 1831, as the correct one for the Indian visitation.

Another important contemporaneous reference to the Indian deputation is found in a letter written by the Right Reverend Joseph Rosati, Bishop of St. Louis,⁹ on December 31, 1831, and addressed to the editor of a Catholic publication in Lyons, France. The Rosati letter mentions the visit of four Flathead Indians to St. Louis "some three months ago." It therefore supports the strong evidence favoring the year 1831 and points to the conclusion that the four Indians arrived in St. Louis in September, 1831.

The Walker letter. The next contemporaneous document to refer to the so-called Flathead visitation is the famous Walker

⁷ Le trent et un d'Octobre mil huit cent trent et un, Je, sousigné ai inhumé dans le Cimetière de cette Paroisse le corps de Keeppellelé ou Pipe Bard du Nez Percé de la tribu de Chopoweck Nation appelée Têtes Plattes agé d'environ quarante quatre ans, administré du St. Baptême venant de la rivière Columbia au dela des Rocky Mountains.—Edm. Saulnier, Pr. [être].

Hiram M. Chittenden and A. F. Richardson, *Life, Letters and Travels of Father Pierre Jean De Smet, S.J., 1801-1873* (New York, 1905), I, p. 22.

⁸ Le dix-sept de Novembre mil huit cent trente et un, Je, sousigné, ai inhumé dans le Cimetière de cette Paroisse le corps de Paul sauvage de la Nation des Têtes Plattes venant de la rivière Columbia au dela des Rocky Mountains, administré du St. Baptême et de l'extrême onction.—Rous, Pr. [être] Chittenden and Richardson, *op. cit.*, I, p. 22.

⁹ W. I. Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon* (Seattle, 1911), II, p. 7.

letter, written January 19, 1833. This letter is significant not only for its reference to the visiting Flatheads already discussed; it has also received wide celebrity as the letter that started what was veritably a missionary crusade in behalf of the red men of the West.

Walker was a Wyandotte Indian interpreter living on the Sandusky Indian Reservation in northern Ohio. His epoch-making letter was addressed to his friend, G. P. Disosway, a Methodist merchant of New York City. In it he speaks of his return "last November" from western Missouri, whither he had gone to examine some lands which the Federal Government had offered the Wyandottes in exchange for their Ohio holdings. He tells his Methodist friend, Disosway, that he saw three visiting Flathead Indians at the house of General Clark, where he stopped on business while on a recent Western trip. Stepping into Clark's house he found the Indians "quite sick." One Indian, he informs Disosway, had died only "a few days" prior to his call on General Clark. Walker's arrival, therefore, took place between the dates of the deaths of the two Indians.¹⁰ The burial records, as previously stated, give these dates as October 31 and November 17, 1831. Walker reports the death of the second Indian in his letter to Disosway of January 19, 1833. He doubtless obtained this information, though he does not tell us so, at St. Louis on his way back from his exploring tour into western Missouri.

Whitman's journal. A fourth important contemporary reference to the so-called Flathead visit to St. Louis is found in Marcus Whitman's journal of 1835.¹¹ Under an entry of October 26, 1835, Whitman wrote:

The following is the history of those Indians that came to St. Louis to gain a knowledge of the Christian religion, as I received it from the trader [footnote says trader is Fontanelle], under whose protection they came and returned. He says their object was to gain religious

¹⁰ William Walker letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII, p. 105.

¹¹ Journal and Report by Dr. Marcus Whitman on his tour of exploration with Rev. Samuel Parker in 1835 beyond the Rocky Mountains. *Oregon Historical Society Quarterly* (Portland, Oregon, 1900), XXVIII, p. 256.

knowledge. For this purpose the Flathead tribe delegated one of their principal chiefs and two of their principal men, and the Napiersa tribe a like delegation, it being a joint delegation of the tribes. In addition to this delegation a young Napiersa came along. When they came to Council Bluffs, two of the Flatheads and one of the Napiersa returned home; the other Flathead, the chief, and the Napiersa chief, with the remaining one of the delegation and the young Indian, came to St. Louis, where they remained through the winter. At St. Louis two of them died and the only remaining one of the delegation died on his return at the mouth of the Yellowstone; so there was none left to return but the young man.

Catlin's account. A fifth account was written by the Indian portrait painter, George Catlin, who, in 1841, published two volumes bearing the title *Letters and Notes on . . . North American Indians*, 1832-1839. This work contains letters and illustrated plates. Letter number forty-eight, in volume two, refers to the two returning Flathead Indians. The Catlin source substantiates the correctness of Bishop Rosati's statement that the visitation occurred in 1831. All the Protestant versions of this story give the year as 1832. Catlin writes:

I travelled 2,000 miles, companion of these two young fellows toward their own country, and became much pleased with their manners and dispositions. The last mentioned of the two died near the mouth of the Yellowstone River on his way home, with a disease which he had contracted in the civilized district, and the other one I have since learned arrived safely among his friends, conveying to them the melancholy intelligence of the deaths of all the rest of the party.¹²

Catlin also states that these two surviving Indians returned to their home by steamboat up the Missouri to the mouth of the Yellowstone. All accounts agree that they spent the winter in St. Louis. Now it is known that steamboats left St. Louis for the

¹² Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, II, p. 12. A scholarly treatment of the Flathead visitation evidence is C. T. Johnson (T. C. Elliott), "The Evolution of a Lament." *Washington Historical Quarterly* (Seattle, 1906), II, pp. 195-209.

upper Missouri only in the spring and early summer. It is clear from this that their departure, which antedated January, 1833,¹³ must have taken place in the spring of 1832. Catlin's letter number two begins in this way: "Mouth of the Yellowstone River, Upper Missouri, 1832. I arrived at this place yesterday in the steamer *Yellowstone* after a voyage of nearly three months from St. Louis, a distance of nearly 2,000 miles, the greater part of which has never before been navigated by steam."¹⁴ His letter number thirty-one begins: "Mouth of Teton River, Upper Missouri," and continues: "When I arrived at this place [Fort Pierre, near mouth of Teton River in the central part of the present South Dakota] up the river, which was in the month of May, 1832. . . ." ¹⁵ From other sources it is known that Catlin left St. Louis on the *Yellowstone*, March 26, 1832. He arrived at Fort Tecumseh, the site of the future Fort Pierre, on May 31, 1832, and reached Fort Union, near the northeastern corner of the modern Montana, about June 17, 1832.¹⁶ The significance of the Catlin letters is, of course, the unconscious evidence they contain in support of the correctness of the date, 1831.

The E. W. Sehon letter. During April, 1833, inquiries poured in upon General Clark for further information concerning the now famous Indian visitation. The *Christian Advocate and Journal* of May 10, 1833, for a second time featured Walker's well-known cut or representation of a flat-headed Indian. The same issue contained additional information concerning the St. Louis visitors in the form of letters from Rev. E. W. Sehon of St. Louis; Robert Campbell, a fur trader; and a St. Louis minister, Alexander McAllister. Rev. Sehon states that according to information received by him direct from General Clark, the *Advocate* version of the Flathead deputation was correct. Mr. Sehon enclosed Campbell's and McAllister's communications with his own letter. Campbell estimated the number of the Flatheads, described their habitat

¹³ The date of William Walker's letter.

¹⁴ Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, II, p. 10.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

¹⁶ Chittenden, *The History of the American Fur Trade*, I, p. 340.

and the routes by which this Rocky Mountain tribe could be reached.¹⁷

The "Patriot," Jacksonville. Convincing also is the evidence contained in an Illinois newspaper—the October 12, 1833, issue of the Jacksonville *Illinois Patriot*. This issue features the report of a committee sent to St. Louis to interview persons personally acquainted with Rocky Mountain tribes and to ascertain the truth of the "Flathead Deputation Story." The report was presented to the session of the Illinois Presbyterian Synod which met at Jacksonville, Illinois, in 1833. The committee's inquiries brought forth this definite information:

It is a fact that in the autumn of 1831 [1832], four Indians from beyond the Rocky Mountains came to General Clark, in St. Louis, for no other ostensible purpose than to make inquiries concerning our religion. The circumstances which led to this visit are already before the public. Three of these Indians were from what is called the Flathead tribe, and one of them from another tribe, which I do not recollect that General Clark mentioned—probably, however, from the adjoining tribe, called Pierced-Nose Indians. They remained several months with General Clark, and attended all the places of worship in the city. During their stay two of them died; in the spring the others returned to their countrymen, very favorably impressed, and highly gratified with the kind treatment they had received. The ideas they obtained on the subject of their embassy must have been very limited and indistinct, from the difficulty both of understanding the particular points of their inquiries, and of communicating to them the answers in such terms as they could gauge, and had they possessed every facility for instruction, the time was so short that they could have carried back to their nation but a very imperfect sketch of the Christian religion. From anything that could be learned on the subject, it does not appear whether these Indians were a delegation from their tribe, or whether, being of a more inquisitive turn of mind than their brethren, and having their curiosity excited by the white man's story, they came as mere adventurers to gratify their curiosity. Nor does it appear

¹⁷ Schon, Campbell, and McAllister letters, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII, p. 146.

whether those who returned received such an impression in regard to the Christian religion as that they would prefer it to their own superstitious rites.¹⁸

The significance of this article is apparent. This committee investigated the Flathead visitation about two years after it occurred, and their report clearly assigns the date of the event to the autumn of 1831. A second interesting feature is the doubt expressed as to whether the Indians came as a "delegation" or as mere adventurers.

Daniel Lee's account. Daniel Lee, on his outbound expedition to Oregon, was a St. Louis visitor from April 5 to April 9, 1834. In the previous August he had been appointed missionary to the Flatheads. He was therefore naturally interested in learning direct from General Clark all the facts concerning the Flathead visitation. In his *Ten Years in Oregon* he furnishes a significant piece of testimony. While he is in error as to the date of the visitation, he furnishes convincing evidence that numerous incorrect versions of the Flathead incident were afloat as early as 1834, when he personally talked with General Clark concerning the Flatheads.

An event took place in the year 1832 which directed the attention of the American churches to Oregon, as a vast field of benevolent enterprise, ripe for the introduction of the Gospel among its benighted inhabitants. Four Indians from beyond the Rocky Mountains, belonging to one of the tribes (for there are several who flatten their heads), probably the "Nez Percé" tribe, accompanied some of the white trappers from the buffalo country down to the city of St. Louis. The resident United States' Indian Agent, General Clark, was known to them as the first great chief of the white men who visited their nation. He had been seen by their fathers, who had often told them of his greatness, and it was natural they should desire to see him. They also expected to return to their own land, and make known their interview, as among the most interesting occurrences of their tiresome journey. Having great confidence in him, they made inquiries about the book of which they had been informed by the hunters, which the Great

¹⁸ *Illinois Patriot*, October 12, 1833. Reproduced in William A. Mowry, *Marcus Whitman* (New York, 1901), p. 39.

Spirit had given all the white men to teach them his will. The answers they received were in accordance with what had been told them.

The writer saw General Clark in 1834, two years after their visit, and learned from him these particulars in relation to it. Two of them became sick, and died in St. Louis, and the other two started to return to their own land. It has been reported that one of them died on the way and the other reached his tribe. As to the truth of this report, some have doubts. That both perished in the wilderness, the victims of sickness, famine, or war, appears more probable.

A high-wrought account of the visit of these Indians to St. Louis by some writer [William Walker] in the vicinity was published in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, New York City, in March, 1833. This is the most important periodical in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The sum [of Walker's letter] was this: That these "red men" were from the Flathead tribe, in the interior of Oregon, beyond the Rocky Mountains, from whom they had been sent by a council of their chiefs, as delegates to St. Louis, to inquire concerning the word of the Great Spirit; that in prosecution of their great object they had travelled two thousand miles, through rugged mountains and barren plains and dangerous enemies, enduring cold and heat, thirst and hunger, and many hardships, and reached their destination in safety; and that having made known the object of their visit to General Clark, and gained the information they sought, two of them were snatched away by death, not being permitted to carry back the "glad tidings" to their anxious countrymen. These incorrect statements receiving the fullest confidence, many believed that the day had come, and that the call was imperative, to send the gospel to Oregon.¹⁹

News spreads to Europe. The Flathead visitation, despite the exaggeration and the fiction which have been woven around this

¹⁹ Daniel Lee and J. H. Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon* (New York, 1844), pp. 109-111. Jason Lee's academy classmate and friend, Bishop Osmon C. Baker, writing in 1860 and prior to H. H. Spalding's famous legendary account, wrote: "I hardly need say that subsequent investigations have pretty conclusively shown this account to be, in a high degree, apocryphal. No evidence of such a Flathead Council has yet been found. No tribe has been discovered eagerly awaiting the arrival of a religious teacher. No returning deputies ever reported respecting the white man's religious books or religious life. A more probable conjecture is that those were wandering Indians on the plains, who accompanied some white men to the abodes of civilization."—W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, pp. 793-794.

simple incident, created a deep impression upon all who heard of it. It received wide publicity through the *Christian Advocate and Journal* and other publications. Even in Europe, such periodicals as the *Journal Officiel de L'Institution Publique* carried accounts of the visit to St. Louis by the four Flathead Indians.²⁰

William Walker's letter. The Walker letter²¹ of January 19, 1833, is an interesting document. Its publication in the *Advocate* awakened the missionary enthusiasm of American Protestant churches as probably no other contribution has ever done in the long history of this leading organ of the Methodist Church. Walker's letter is informal, and contains several references to his environment. In his readable style he describes the distractions of his "small dwelling." While busy with his writing, a little daughter was pulling a handkerchief out of his pocket. A young son was asking how to pronounce a word in his spelling book. It is clear to those who read, nearly a century later, that the half-breed Wyandotte interpreter little realized that, on that January day of 1833, he was writing an epochal letter. Great, indeed, would have been the surprise of this humble interpreter could he have known that he was soon to be the instrument that would send to far-off Oregon, Jason and Daniel Lee, pioneers representing "the first low wash of waves where soon would roll a human sea."²²

A Flathead mission. Mr. G. P. Disosway, who had financed the founding of the Methodist Missionary Society in 1819, published Walker's letter in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of March 1, 1833, from which it was copied by the *Zion's Herald* and numerous other publications. Many of the choicest spirits in the Methodist Church immediately urged the establishment of a Flathead

²⁰ *New England Christian Herald*, later *Zion's Herald* (Boston, 1823), IV, p. 178.

²¹ An accurate transcript of the William Walker letter is in Chittenden, *The History of the American Fur Trade*, III, pp. 914-918.

²² William Walker letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, March 1, 1833, VII, p. 105.

mission. Dr. Fisk,²³ President of Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, was deeply touched by the story of the Indians' plea for the "Book of Heaven." His response was an heraldic call for Flathead missionary volunteers which appeared in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of March 22, 1833.

Dr. Fisk's appeal. His appeal carried weight with both laity and officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The brief and telling letter is presented in its entirety because of the deep impression it created:

Messrs. Editors:—The communication of brother G. P. Disosway, including one from the Wyandotte agent, on the subject of the deputation of the Flathead Indians to Gen. Clark, has excited in many in this section intense interest. And to be short about it, we are for having a mission established there at once. I have proposed the following plan:—Let two suitable men, unencumbered with families, and possessing the spirit of martyrs, throw themselves into the nation. Live with them—learn their language—preach Christ to them and, as the way opens, introduce schools, agriculture, and the arts of civilized life. The means of these improvements can be introduced through the fur traders, and by the reinforcements with which from time to time we can strengthen the mission. Money shall be forthcoming. I will be bondsman for the church. All we want is the men. Who will go? Who? I know of one young man who I think will go; and of whom I can say, I know of none like him for the enterprise. If he will go and we have written him on the subject, we only want another, and the mission will be commenced the coming season.—Were I young and healthy and unencumbered, how joyfully would I go! But this honor is reserved for another. Bright will be his crown: glorious his

²³ Wilbur Fisk (1792-1839). Born in Brattleboro, Vermont, in 1792. Graduated from Brown University with honor in 1815. Received into N. E. Conference, 1818. Presiding elder of Vermont District, 1823. Principal of Wilbraham Academy, Wilbraham, Massachusetts, 1825. Delegate to General Conferences of 1824, 1828, and 1832. Elected Bishop, 1828 [and 1832]; declined office. First President of Wesleyan University, 1831 to death. Visited Europe for health, 1835-1836. Died of tuberculosis, February 22, 1839.—*Cyclopædia of Methodism*, editor, Matthew Simpson (Philadelphia, 1876), p. 363.

reward. Affectionately yours, W. Fisk,²⁴ Wesleyan University, March 9, 1833.

Missionary enthusiasm. During the spring and summer of 1833 the missionary enthusiasm created by the story of the "extraordinary inquirers after the truth" grew to unusual proportions. Contributions for the benefit of the Flathead Indians poured into the Methodist Church. The Mission Board of the Church was urged to establish a mission among these Indians. On May 18, 1833, a woman in Virginia forwarded \$10 to Mr. Disosway for the benefit of the Flatheads. In her letter she expressed the hope that "those sincere inquiries after truth should have it speedily sent them."²⁵ Women exhibited their belief in the cause of the Flatheads by donating their jewelry to swell the missionary fund. A young man of central New York State offered all his property, some \$2,000, to aid the Flathead mission, provided that he, himself, should be sent to that distant field.²⁶

Establishment of Flathead mission voted. The Mission Board was prompt to act, and on April 17, 1833, recommended the establishment of a mission among the Flathead Indians. The next step was to procure the proper missionary for the hazardous undertaking. Dr. Fisk at once urged the appointment of Jason Lee of Stanstead, Lower Canada. Lee had been one of Fisk's prized students at Wilbraham Academy, where he had impressed his teacher as possessing the varied qualifications needed for the dangerous Flathead mission. Dr. Fisk's recommendation brought about Lee's selection as "Missionary to the Flatheads" in the late spring of 1833.²⁷

Since Dr. Fisk was, perhaps, more than any other Methodist leader, the sponsor and "father" of the Oregon Mission, the dramatic circumstances surrounding his selection of Lee for the

²⁴ Wilbur Fisk Proclamation, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, March 22, 1833, VII, p. 118.

²⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, June 7, 1833, VII, p. 162.

²⁶ *New England Christian Herald*, later *Zion's Herald*, August 7, 1833, IV, p. 178.

²⁷ *Journal of Mission Board*, Minute for April 17, 1833.

Flathead missionary enterprise warrant recital. They are given in a letter written by Mrs. Fisk, and made available in the recently discovered Lee-Fisk correspondence at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, in which she recalls the intimate details of the origin of the Oregon Mission. This letter, the primary document which recounts, in phrases vibrant with religious emotion and tender remembrance, the hour when the idea of the Flathead mission was born, is as follows:

Middletown, Oct. [1839]

Dear Bro. & Sis. Luckey,

. . . It was the practice of my beloved Husband, when we received the *Advocate and Journal*, just to glance over it, to ascertain if there was any thing to which he wished to give immediate attention, and then lay it aside, untill he had completed his evening task, which usually, was writing letters, for the University. The evening the *Advocate* arrived, which contained the account of the four flat Head Indians, visiting "St. Louis, in search of the white mans God," my dear Husband was much more pressed for time than usual. Yet on receiving it, he came to me, and observed, that he "had something interesting to read"; at the same time declining a chair, saying "he had not time to sit with me." When he had finished reading, he said: "My dear wife, we will have a mission there." I replied it would be a noble enterprise; but where is your man? He said "I know of but *one* in the world, every way calculated for such an undertaking; and you know who that is"; I said yes; but you are too late for him. You know, it is about time for Mr. Lee to apply to the British Conference, for acceptance. Without replying, he called for his ink, and paper (he was standing by my worktable), and in his standing position, wrote to Mr. Lee, to know if he would accept such an undertaking, if the church saw fit to appoint him; and within *one half hour*, his letter was in the post-office. The next day, he began to take measures, to collect funds for this mission, and I believe that between \$700 & \$800 were raised in our small City, to assist in its outfit.

He soon received an answer from Mr. Lee, stating that he (Mr. Lee) had already applied to the British Conference, and if they should receive him, of course he should be subject to their directions; but if they did not receive him, or his letter not reach them, after waiting

a proper time for an answer, he would write. At the same time stating that he thought he should prefer the mission, if the church thought him qualified, and the providence of God opened the way for him to accept it. Mr. Lee did wait some time for his answer, but he told me the past summer that he had never received an answer to that letter, and you my friends, know the result. My dear Husband always considered the delay of the answer to Mr. Lee's letter a special providence of God; and the last he said to me of this mission was in answer to a question of mine: Are you in any way disappointed in this mission or in Mr. Lee?—He replied: "No, Mr. Lee more than answers my expectations, which I confess were high—O how pleasant it is, where you have placed high confidence, to have that confidence *more* than met." And I see such a beautiful train of providence's in this mission that I cannot but feel that the Lord owns it, and will bless it abundantly. This was the last my dear Husband said to me on this mission, and most probably the last he said as it was not 3 weeks before his death.

You will not therefore be surprised at my feelings—nor that I cherish *this*, as a favourite Mission. When I read the account of the little Infant receiving the name of Oregon in baptism, I could have wished that the loved name of Wilbur Fisk had been added. And that the church—the whole Church, would carry that babe to the Saviour, in their arms of faith and prayer, and plead with Him that He would spare its life for the church, and so to imbue it with His own Spirit, that it might be more useful than the *loved one* whose name it would bear. I doubt not but the church will pray for that babe—but from no heart will prayer more sincerely and ardently assend in his behalf than from the humble Widow of Oregons deceased Benefactor.

Jason Lee's acceptance. The recently discovered Lee-Fisk correspondence at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, also discloses the fact that Jason Lee's consent to accept the Flat-head mission was not unconditionally obtained until as late as May 25, 1833. His letter to Dr. Fisk, under date of April 18, 1833, now published for the first time, sets forth clearly the circumstances which delayed Lee's final decision to link his career with Old Oregon.

Lee's newsy letter to Dr. Fisk follows:

Stanstead April 18 1833.

My Dear Brother.

Your interesting favour of the 6th inst. came safe to hand, and its perusal gave me much pleasure. I perceive that you misunderstood my communication to Br. Baker. What I intended to communicate was that the M. Committee in London at the time of my offering myself were just opening a mission among the Indians in W. C.; therefore, I made application for admittance into this Conference, considering this to be the most eligible means of accomplishing the object which I had in view. It was not however solely for that mission that I was recommended but placed myself wholly under the control of the Committee. This mission is not as you supposed connected with the I.M. already established but is a new enterprise altogether.

The place chosen for the commencement of the enterprise is Lake St. Clair to which the Rev. Thomas Turner and family proceeded nearly a year since and it is probable that I may be appointed for that place this year and if so it is not likely under existing circumstances that I shall be able to serve you. It is possible that I may not receive an appointment this year for two reason, first I may be totally rejected, secondly, so much delay may be occasioned by the the death of the secretarie that our minutes may not be examined in time; in either case I am at liberty to accept your offer. When I wrote Br. B. I expected to have been able to give you a decisive answer before this time, but I now find that I shall not be able to do so until the 25th of next month; and even then there would be time for me to arrive at Boston before the session of your C. The afternoon of the day that I received yours I showed it to Br. Hick and while we were conversing on the subject Br. Sprague came up—stayed all night and we had an interesting interview. Held a long confab about the Flatheads but he was not *fully* decided, but I think will eventually conclude to go. He is I think pretty well well qualified for the enterprise and would probably make an agreeable and faithful companion. His opinion of me you will probably receive before you receive this. There is very little hope of my being able to serve you, if I should receive an appointment from the committee, for, considering the scarcity of labourers here compared with your side of 45, it is not likely that our preachers will be willing that I should leave.

I am fully persuded that you will have no difficulty in finding those

who are willing to go for it is impossible but that the spirits of some will be so stirred within them that their hearts will beat responsive to the red mans call. And I am far from thinking that among your *thousand preachers* that you can find none as well qualified as myself for the enterprise. I suppose from all the information that I can get on the subject that you will not be able to get your missionaries off in time to cross the mountains this season, which if I go I should very much regret. If however this should be the case I can see no particular inconvenience that will result from a little *delay*. If you can find others previous to 25th May that will answer your purpose and cannot wait for my decision till then please notify and I am content. Permit me to say that I think with Br. Sprague that three is the least that you should think of sending. If men will risk their lives it will not be a hard matter to persuade the Church to risk money enough for their out-fit. I think I should not be willing to go with less than two companions.

I hope I shall have an interest in prayers, that the Lord may clear; or hedge the way, as he shall see most conducive to his own glory. If Providence should release me from previous engagements, I would say "here am I, send me." Please give my love to all who enquire of my welfare. I hope that some of my friends will send me all the interesting information which they can obtain concerning the *mission*.

Yours afy.

JASON LEE.

CHAPTER II

THE YOUNG MISSIONARY

JASON LEE was descended from a sturdy Old England and New England ancestry. An old-country forbear, John Lee, was a participant in the Puritan movement of Thomas Hooker, of Braintree, Essex County, England. In 1634, this Roundhead, John Lee, having migrated to America, became one of the first fifty-four settlers of Newtown, later Cambridge, Massachusetts. The following year John Lee made his third westward move, to the Connecticut Valley. Here, a few years later, with eighty-four others, he purchased one hundred and twenty-five square miles of land from the Indians.

A brief glance at Jason Lee's ancestry reveals a long line of rugged pioneering forbears. He was descended from John Lee, already mentioned, born in Essex County, England, in 1620;¹ John Lee of Farmington, Connecticut, born in 1659;² David Lee, born in Farmington in 1674;³ Jedediah Lee, born in Coventry, Connecticut, in 1696; Elias Lee, also of Coventry, born in 1723;⁴ and Daniel Lee, the father of Jason, born in Willington in 1753.⁵

Jason's great-grandfather, Elias Lee, removed from Coventry to Willington between 1731 and 1736.⁶ Jason Lee's father, Daniel, was born at Willington on January 20, 1753.⁷ In these quiet rural environs, he passed his youth. The quaint town or township records

¹ Leonard Lee and Sarah Fiske Lee (comp.), *John Lee of Farmington, Connecticut, and His Descendants, 1634-1897*. Meriden, Connecticut, 1897, p. 53.

² *Ibid.*, p. 57.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 57.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 401. Coventry records of births.

⁵ L. Lee and S. F. Lee (comp.), *Lee Family Genealogy and Supplement*, p. 403; and *Supplement*, pp. 46, 48. Willington records of births.

⁶ Willington Births, Book B, p. 62.

⁷ Land Records of Willington.

show that Daniel Lee's father and mother, Elias Lee and Sarah Royce Lee, were in full communion in the Willington Congregational Church on November 28, 1759.⁸ Daniel Lee's mother died at the age of seventy-two and is buried at Willington. Elias Lee's second wife was Kezia Lee (1716-1807), who died at Willington at the advanced age of ninety-one years.

Daniel Lee spent his youth on his father's farm with his brothers and sisters and the children born from his father's second marriage.⁹ He was living at Willington, a youth of twenty-two, at the outbreak of the Revolutionary War. His Revolutionary War service was brief, but meritorious. The official record reads:

Private in company from Willington under command of Major Elijah Fenton during the Lexington Alarm, in service ten days. Private in 6th Company, Captain Jonathan Parker's from Willington, in 3rd Battalion, Wadsworth Brigade, Colonel Comfort Sage commanding at New York, June to December, 1776.¹⁰

A fuller report, based on the Willington Town Records, and supplementing the above-mentioned brief statement from the Adjutant General's records at Hartford, Connecticut, reads:

When news of Lexington and Concord reached Connecticut, men spontaneously shouldered arms and marched to Boston. Each town in the Willington area contributed a company and some of the larger towns raised two or more companies. The companies, each acting separately, were known as the Lexington Alarm List in the Connecticut State File. The Willington company contained 31 men, including officers. Elijah Fenton was major; Ebenezer Heath, Jr., Joseph Mer-

⁸ Willington Congregational Church Records. Elias Lee, though a resident of Willington, received from the General Assembly of Connecticut permission to unite with others in founding the Baptist Church of Stafford. These persons were exempt from the church tax in Willington. *Colonial Records of Connecticut*, XII, pp. 271-272.

⁹ Daniel Lee's full and half brothers and sisters were: Sarah, Lucy (1st), Mary, Elias, Daniel, Lucy (2d), Jerusha, Ruth, and Jedediah.

¹⁰ *Records of Connecticut Men in the War of the Revolution*, pp. 25-655 and *passim* (1889). Adjutant General's Office, Hartford, Connecticut; *Revolution Rolls and Lists*, Vol. VIII, pp. 80, 160, Hartford, Connecticut.

rick and William Johnson were Captains. Daniel Lee, father of Jason Lee, went out in this company. According to the records in the Adjutant General's office, he served ten days. Daniel Lee had no other service in the year 1775. In 1776, Daniel and his brother Jedediah, two years younger, enlisted as privates in the 6th Company of the 3rd Battalion, known as Wadsworth Brigade. The Captain of the company was Jonathan Parker of Willington. The 3rd Battalion was commanded by Colonel Comfort Sage. The 3rd Battalion was raised in June, 1776. Its objective was to reinforce General Washington in the operations in and around New York City. The battalion had service in New York City and on Long Island. In the retreat from New York City on September 15, the battalion suffered some losses and was engaged at the Battle of White Plains, October 28, 1776. The time of enlistment expired December 25, 1776. Daniel Lee of Willington had no other service in the War of the Revolution.

Soon after Daniel Lee's return home from military service, the young soldier married Sarah Whittaker, a farmer's daughter, residing in the neighboring town of Stafford. The date of the marriage is preserved in this quaint record:

January ye 8th 1778 Daniel Lee and Sarah Whitacre ware lawfully Joined in Marriage.¹¹

Sarah Whittaker, the mother of Jason Lee, like his father's family, was descended from an old and sturdy New England stock. Sarah Whittaker's grandfather, Jonathan Whittaker, Sr., soon after 1736 removed from Canterbury to Stafford, situated about thirty miles northwest of that town. Here he bought two parcels of unimproved land for "350 pounds of lawful money of New England."¹² The deed is dated January 9, 1735/6 [old and new style]. Jonathan Whittaker's son, Jonathan Whittaker, Jr., who accompanied his father from Canterbury to Stafford, was the maternal grandfather of Jason Lee. In a record book, yellowed with the years of nearly two centuries, is this interesting recital:

¹¹ Vital Statistics of Willington, Book B, p. 62.

¹² Stafford Land Records, Book I, p. 545.

20 JASON LEE: PROPHET OF THE NEW OREGON

Jonathan Whittaker, Jr. and Susanna White were joined in Marriage December 18th, 1755.¹³

On another page is this record of the birth of Jason Lee's mother:

Sarah Whitaker, daughter of Jonathan and Susanna Whitaker, was born May 18th, 1757.¹⁴

Jason Lee's mother was remembered in her father's will. This document recites that "Sarah Lee, wife of Daniel Lee, shall take and have one-third of the household furniture after the death of Susanna; also one-third of the cattle and livestock not otherwise disposed of." The inventory, filed January 7, 1813, states that "Deacon Jonathan Whitaker's" estate was \$1,726, of which \$1,226.67 comprised real estate. Distribution was made one week later, in which Mrs. Daniel Lee was given personal property valued at \$83.70.¹⁵

After their marriage, Daniel Lee and Sarah Whittaker resided on a farm of 120 acres, situated in Willington.¹⁶ Daniel Lee's property was located in the "Ashford Mile," a land strip one mile wide and nine miles long taken from the west side of Ashford in October, 1727, and annexed to the east side of Willington. During their thirteen years of married life in this township nine of their fifteen children were born.¹⁷ Like his forbears, Daniel Lee was a "mover." On November 21, 1791, he sold his farm and removed northward to Pittsford, Vermont.¹⁸ As early as 1786, he joined a number of young and middle-aged Willington men who went up into Vermont to spy out and buy land in that new region then called The New Hampshire Grants. The Land Records at Rutland, Vermont, show that Daniel Lee made his first purchase of land in "The Grants" five years before he terminated his residence at Willington. The brief statement reads:

¹³ Stafford Births, Marriages and Deaths, Book A, p. 126.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

¹⁵ Stafford Probate Records, VII, pp. 496, 497.

¹⁶ Willington Land Records.

¹⁷ Vital Statistics of Willington, Book B, p. 62.

¹⁸ Willington Land Records.

February 16, 1786, Guy Beebe sold land to Daniel Lee of Pittsford.¹⁹

A decade later he enlarged his land holdings, as revealed in this brief record:

February 6, 1796, Joseph Thomas of Pittsford sold land to Daniel Lee of Pittsford.²⁰

His departure from his Pittsford home is reflected in this brief reference to the sale of his farm:

August 17, 1798, Daniel Lee of Pittsford sold land to David Whipple.²¹

It was during his residence near Pittsford that his four children, Mary, Whittaker, Ira, and Azubah, were born. Soon after this date Daniel removed northward, this time to a four-hundred acre tract of virgin forest land, situated near the present Stanstead, Quebec.²² Here on Lot 10, Range 10, Daniel Lee lived until the year 1800.

As the years sped on, there gathered a community of Connecticut and Vermont Pioneers, and a town grew up on the old homestead, through which the boundary between the domains of Great Britain and the United States was found to pass, leaving Daniel Lee's holding on the Canadian side of the line. The Canadian part of the town is named Rock Island and the portion across the border in the United States, Derby Line. In one of the dwellings the kitchen is in the United States and the parlor in Canada.²³

About 1800 he sold his improved farm (betterments) to his brother Jedediah and established his final home still farther to the north. The Daniel Lee homestead is now the John B. Gallagher

¹⁹ Rutland Land Records, Book IV, p. 14. The record is in error in listing Daniel Lee a Pittsford resident. He doubtless went north in 1786 to make a "down payment" on his land and to establish his title.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, V, p. 141.

²¹ *Ibid.*, VI, p. 141.

²² F. H. Grubbs (comp.), *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, p. 61. Vital Statistics of Willington, Book B, p. 62.

²³ Grubbs (comp.), *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, p. 61.

farm, and is situated about three and one-half miles north of the town of Stanstead. On this clearing, in a log house built by his father, Jason Lee was born on June 28, 1803.²⁴

Back of Jason Lee's birthplace is a hill from which may be seen a sweep of country, three hundred miles in circumference, beautiful farm lands within an encircling rampart of mountains is seen to-day; but in the days of Jason Lee it was mostly forest, with a frame of blue mountains.²⁵

Here he passed his boyhood, the youngest of fifteen children,²⁶ nine boys and six girls.²⁷

Jason's father died on July 1, 1806, leaving the lad fatherless at the age of three,²⁸ and his mother with little means of support. For some years Jason resided with the family of his eldest²⁹ brother Elias, who was by twenty-five years his senior; and his sister Mary, later Mrs. Archibald Morrill.

²⁴ The inscription on Lee's gravestone, erected from funds provided for in his will, originally at Stanstead, but in 1906 removed to Salem, Oregon, gives June 27. In his diary, he gives his birth date June 28.

²⁵ Colonel B. B. Morrill, *Stanstead Historical Society*, in letter dated January 19, 1931.

²⁶ Jason Lee's brothers and sisters were: *Elias Lee*, father of the Oregon missionary, Daniel Lee. Prominent in public affairs at Stanstead. Member of Wesleyan Methodist Society. Married Rhoda Morrill, an aunt of Hon. Thaddeus Stevens, famous congressional leader. Settled on the old Lee homestead. Jason Lee, after his father's death, made his home with this eldest brother. *Henry Lee*, born September 20, 1779. Married Sarah Davis, Barrington, New Hampshire. Moved in 1804 to neighboring Stanstead farm described as in west half of No. 10, 10 Range. *Josiah Lee*, born June 24, 1782. *Sarah Lee* (Mrs. Theodore Pool), born March 1, 1783. *Jonathan Lee*, born April 12, 1785. Died at Stanstead, October 31, 1829. *Susan Lee* (Mrs. Moses Montague), born January 31, 1787. Married in 1808 at 21; died 1819 at the age of 32. *Betsy Lee* (Mrs. Theodore Pool; second wife), born October 5, 1788. *Daniel Lee*, born June 1, 1790. Married Judith Morrill. *Ede Lee*, born October 1, 1791. Married Mary Pinkham in 1816 and settled at Fitch Bay, Stanstead County. *Mary Lee* (Mrs. Archibald Morrill), born June 1, 1794. Her husband was a Stanstead magistrate and active in public affairs. *Whittaker Lee*, born 1795. *Ira Lee*, born 1796. *Azubah Lee* (Mrs. Jeremiah Morrill), born 1798. *Achsab Lee* (Mrs. Eli Bangs), married 1820; converted 1833; joined the Wesleyan Methodist Society, 1835; died 1843.

²⁷ B. F. Hubbard (comp.), *Forests and Clearings. The History of Stanstead County* (Montreal, 1874), pp. 156-159 and *passim*.

²⁸ F. H. Grubbs, *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, p. 62.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 62. Daniel Lee in letter to J. W. Bashford (1889).

Elias's oldest son, Daniel, the Oregon missionary, was only three years younger than his favorite uncle, Jason. The lifelong attachment between uncle and nephew doubtless had its beginning in these early years.

Education and early youth. Jason Lee received what little formal education he had in the village school at Stanstead.³⁰ In after years Daniel Lee referred to the little Stanstead schoolhouse as the place "where our gentle youth was cherished."³¹ He was a lad of nine when the War of 1812-1814 came as a disturbing event to the small community of Stanstead pioneers. Lee's diary and correspondence are silent as to his memories of that trying period. A contemporary record states that:

During the time of the American War of 1812-1815, the inhabitants of Stanstead and Derby maintained a strict neutrality and continued their previous friendly relations to each other. As they had together and alike shared the difficulties and privations incident to new settlements, and as nothing they could do could affect the general issue between the two governments, they succeeded in maintaining an interchange of visits between families, and to a very great extent, their previous business intercourse. Smuggling was, indeed, carried on by parties on both sides of the line; but this did not disturb the quiet and harmony of the two towns.³²

In 1816, at the age of thirteen, Jason Lee was self-supporting. In his diary he recalls that he "was thrown upon the world, without money, to provide for all my wants, by my own industry."³³ During his early years, this young Canadian giant followed the occupation of farmer boy in a new country.³⁴ In his diary he makes this brief reference to these toilsome years: "Years after years passed away; which I spent successively in business, in study and in preaching, until I reached the age of 30." Another refer-

³⁰ B. F. Hubbard (comp.), *Forests and Clearings*, p. 158.

³¹ Jason Lee Obituary Notice by Daniel Lee, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 23, 1845, XIX, p. 148.

³² B. F. Hubbard (comp.), *Forests and Clearings*, pp. 12, 30.

³³ Diary of Jason Lee, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 408.

³⁴ H. K. Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest* (Portland, 1899), p. 46.

ence to these early years at Stanstead was made during his appearance before his Mission Board at New York City in July, 1844, when he recalled for his Mission Board that his Stanstead experiences had fitted him for the manual labors that fell to his lot as an Old Oregon missionary. He said that "he was brought up to hard work" and had "managed gangs of men before he was converted," and reminded them that he "had seen the day when he could chop a cord of sugar maple wood in two hours."⁸⁵

In 1821, an intense religious revival was conducted at Stanstead by the Reverend John Hick, the first of the Wesleyan ministers to receive appointment to the Stanstead Circuit. Five years later, in 1826, came another remarkable series of religious meetings. One of the protracted revivals of this period is revealingly described as "The forty days' meeting."⁸⁶ The leader of this second great religious awakening was the Reverend Richard Pope. Although his appointment under the British Wesleyan Society's itinerant system was for only a two-year period, so great was his success that he ministered to the Stanstead folk for the "extra-ordinarily protracted stay of four years," or from 1823 to 1827.

Lee's conversion. To the Reverend Richard Pope belongs the honor of winning Jason Lee to the service of the Church. This circuit rider, whose arduous labors terminated at the youthful age of forty-three, a victim of Asiatic cholera in the city of Quebec, changed the life story of Jason Lee and caused him "to walk with the prophets."⁸⁷

H. K. Hines, who had contact with firsthand sources of information has given us a vivid picture of Lee's conversion:

While this revival was in full progress [writes Hines] Jason Lee was astonished to find that all things had become new about his old home. Old faces wore a new glory, old friends spoke a new tongue. . . . On a Sabbath, while returning home from church in company with his

⁸⁵ Jason Lee to Missionary Board, Lee Manuscript Collection in Oregon Historical Society Library, Portland, Oregon, pp. 19, 20.

⁸⁶ B. F. Hubbard (comp.), *Forests and Clearings*, p. 85.

⁸⁷ H. K. Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 46.

nephew, afterwards Rev. Daniel Lee, his companion and coadjutor in the Oregon Mission, the latter spoke to him about the salvation of his soul. Returning to the church again in the evening, while the people were engaged in a prayer meeting, he stood up in their midst and announced his firmly formed resolve to be a Christian. All hearts thrilled as his tall form, six feet and three inches in height, rose in their midst and he began to speak. His emotions were deep, and tears flowed freely as he uttered the vows that gave to Christ's grace a new and rare trophy; to evangelical Christianity one of her most apostolic servants.⁸⁸

Daniel, an eyewitness of the event, has left a realistic description of the profound religious awakening which his uncle now experienced:

In 1826, under the labors of the Rev. Richard Pope, Wesleyan missionary, during a gracious revival he was powerfully awakened, and an awful sense of his sin and danger weighed down his wounded spirit. For several days he continued in deep mourning, refusing to be comforted, till, at length, as he was one day walking along the highway alone, meditating on the future consequences of sin, so dreadful did they appear, and yet so *just*, that he felt willing to endure all he now suffered, and all the Lord chose to lay upon him while he lived, if he could but at last escape from ruin and be saved. At that moment deliverance came; the dark cloud was gone; light, peace, and joy filled his soul; and he could exclaim, "I know that my Redeemer liveth!" After many struggles under the impression, "Wo is me if I preach not the Gospel!", he ventured tremblingly forward in obedience to the divine call, and about five years after his conversion began publicly to invite sinners to repentance. In this work he continued to labor with the Wesleyan missionaries in Stanstead and its vicinity till

⁸⁸ H. K. Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 46, 47. Hines (1828-1902), brother of Gustavus Hines, who reared Jason Lee's daughter and was associated closely with Lee from 1839 to 1844. H. K. Hines came to Oregon in 1853. Wrote *Illustrated History of Washington*, 1893; *Jason Lee, Pioneer of Methodism on Pacific Coast*, a booklet, 1896. Editor of *Pacific Christian Advocate*, 1880-1884. Wrote for Portland *Oregonian* Narrative of Pioneer Ministers. (See *Oregonian*, August 12, 1900, p. 15.) Carried on correspondence with Oregon missionary, Daniel Lee (1806-1895) and with Lee's most intimate friend, Bishop Osmon C. Baker (1812-1871), obtaining some source material of high value.

1833, when he obeyed the indications of Providence, and engaged in the Oregon Mission.³⁹

In his diary, Jason Lee refers feelingly to his religious rebirth in 1826, which marked a white milestone in his brief but eventful career:

Thus far [he wrote] I had lived without hope and without God in the world, but now, the spirit, which I had so often grieved, again spoke to my conscience, and in language not to be mistaken, warned me of my danger. I saw, I believed, I repented. I resolved to break off all my sins by righteousness and my iniquities by turning unto the Lord; and if I perished, I would perish at the feet of Jesus, pleading for mercy. I saw the fulness of the plan of salvation, cast away my unbelieving fears—believed in, and gave myself to Christ—and was ushered into the liberty of the children of God. I was *now*, by my own *consent*, the property of another, and his glory and not my own gratification must be the object of my pursuit.⁴⁰

Wilbraham Academy. Lee continued his work as a manual laborer for three years following his conversion. In 1829, desiring an education in order better to equip himself for the ministry, and despite his slender preparatory training, he enrolled for the "summer" term in the young and rising institution, Wilbraham Academy, at Wilbraham, Massachusetts, a village overlooking the Connecticut Valley, where rest the ashes of a long line of Lee's ancestors. This young Methodist school was beautifully situated ten miles east of Springfield, and an unusually attractive campus added to its charm.⁴¹

³⁹ Daniel Lee Obituary Notice, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 23, 1845, XIX, p. 148.

⁴⁰ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 408.

⁴¹ Wilbraham Academy is one of the oldest institutions connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church. First established at New Market, New Hampshire, in 1818. In 1825, the Academy was removed to Wilbraham, its present site. Here it opened in September, 1825, with an enrollment of thirty-two students for the first term.—Matthew Simpson (ed.), *Cyclopædia of Methodism*, p. 956. Wilbraham Academy *Announcement* for 1929-1930 (Wilbraham, Massachusetts), p. 11. David Sherman, *History of Wilbraham Academy* (Boston, 1893), p. 1-88.

Academy friendships. Lee made several enduring friendships while at the academy. His roommate, Thomas Sewall, Jr., later of the Baltimore Conference, always spoke of him with affection. Another classmate was John C. Keener, later a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Keener wrote this reminiscent reference to Jason Lee in a letter to Reverend John Parker Lee of Los Angeles, a nephew of Jason Lee:

I am greatly obliged to you for the picture of my old and highly esteemed friend, Jason Lee. It was while at Wilbraham I first knew him. He had the care of all the boys in the large sleeping hall of that school. I have but few left of the associates of those early days of Methodism to recall many delightful memories of the great spirits that built so widely the foundations of our American Zion.⁴²

At the time of Lee's enrollment, he was twenty-six years of age. Bishop Osmon C. Baker occupied, in his student days here, Room 11 at the historic boarding house, while Lee's room was Room 13.⁴³ Lee and Baker attended classes at "Old Academy," described as the oldest building in America dedicated to educational purposes. This quaint two-story structure still adorns the topmost terrace of the Wilbraham campus.⁴⁴

Lee's personal appearance. It is to Osmon C. Baker that we are indebted for one of the most intimate pen pictures of Jason Lee's personal appearance:

Jason Lee was a large, athletic young man, six feet and three inches in height, with a fully developed frame and a constitution like iron.

His piety was deep and uniform, and his life, in a very uncommon degree, pure and exemplary. In those days of extensive and powerful revivals, I used to observe with what confidence and satisfaction seekers of religion would place themselves under his instruction. They regarded him as a righteous man whose prayers availed much; and when there were indications that the Holy Spirit was moving in the heart

⁴² F. H. Grubbs, *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, pp. 62, 63.

⁴³ G. W. Douglass, headmaster of Wilbraham Academy in letter to author, June, 1929.

⁴⁴ *Wilbraham Academy Bulletin*, October, 1925, pp. 12-15.

of the sinner within the circle of his acquaintance, his warm Christian heart would incite him to constant labor until deliverance would be proclaimed to the captive.⁴⁵

Perhaps the best rounded life-sized protrait of Lee as he appeared at the beginning of his ministry, at the age of thirty-one, has been painted by the penetrating Frances Fuller Victor, writing under the name of Bancroft:

He presented striking characteristics, carrying them on the surface; qualities pronounced, which made the presence of the possessor felt in any society in which he happened to be placed. . . . At the time of his appointment to a position destined to be more conspicuous in Oregon's history than at that time he could have surmised, Jason Lee was about thirty years of age, tall and powerfully built, slightly stooping, and rather slow and awkward in his movements; of light complexion, thin lips closely shut, prominent nose, and rather massive jaws; eyes of superlative spiritualistic blue; high, retreating forehead, carrying mind within; somewhat long hair pushed back, and giving to the not too stern but positively marked features a slightly Puritanical aspect; and withal a stomach like that of an ostrich, which could digest anything. In attainments there was the broad open pasture of possibilities rather than a well-cultivated field of orchard, grain, and vine land. He believed in the tenets of his church; indeed, whatever may become of him, howsoever he may behave under those varied and untried conditions which providence or fortune hold in store, we may be sure that at the beginning, though not devoid of worldly ambition, he was sincere and sound to the core. Strong in his possession of himself, there was nothing intrusive in his nature. Though talking was a part of his profession, his skill was exhibited as much in what he left unsaid as in his most studied utterances. Frank and affable in his intercourse with men, he inspired confidence in those with whom he had dealings, and was a general favorite. . . . Unquestionably he was a little outside the ordinary minister of the period. Some would have said he lacked refinement, others that his brusque straightforwardness was but simple honesty, unalloyed with clerical cant, and stripped of university gown and sectarian straight lace.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, p. 792. Contains biographical sketch of Jason Lee by Osmon C. Baker.

⁴⁶ H. H. Bancroft, *History of Oregon* (San Francisco, 1886), I, pp. 56, 57.

William H. Gray, mechanic of the Whitman-Spalding party, author of an early *History of Oregon* and an employee at Lee's main mission at Chemeketa after 1842, knew Jason Lee well. He has left this brief but vivid description:

Reverend Jason Lee, of Stanstead, Canada East, was a man of light hair, blue eyes, fair complexion, spare habit, above ordinary height, a little stoop-shouldered, with strong nerve and indomitable will, yet a meek, warm-hearted and humble Christian, gaining by his affable and easy manners the esteem of all who became acquainted with him.⁴⁷

Sidney W. Moss, an Old Oregon pioneer of 1842, who knew Lee personally during his last years of service in Oregon, has left this frank characterization:

Lee was rather an intellectual gentleman, a civil, quiet, straightforward Methodist minister. I think he emigrated here from there [the East]. He was a large man, near 6 feet high, weighing 200 pounds. He was not very quick but still a man of energy and quiet determination, very candid and very firm. He was a man I thought a great deal of.⁴⁸

Alvin F. Waller, a missionary associate, has furnished this informing description of the Oregon missionary as he appeared at the height of his activities as superintendent of the Oregon Mission:

He is a tall, stout-looking fellow. But let me say, the more I become acquainted with him the better I like him. A slight acquaintance would give you the impression that he is rather distant and cold, but as you become more intimate this is all removed, and he becomes the warm-hearted, cheerful, and familiar friend. I believe him to be decidedly pious. So far as he has experience he is a good disciplinarian. He presides with a good degree of dignity. His decisions show that he weighs what he decides. He is not hasty in deciding, consequently, when he gives his judgment, he is not easily moved. And in most cases I have admired his course, and could not readily conclude that he was not generally correct. He is a very good business man, a good accountant and economist. He is not willing to spend money without an effort to have it well applied. Though some think him over-careful

⁴⁷ W. H. Gray, *A History of Oregon* (Portland, 1870), p. 107.

⁴⁸ Sidney W. Moss, *Pioneer Times*, MS., in Bancroft Library.

in this, I am pleased with his course. In his preaching he is not of the brilliant, flowery order, yet he is a good sound preacher. He is generally well liked in the country, and has much influence. Upon the whole I do not know that we could have a better man for the superintendence of the mission. Some men might excell him in some things, but in others they would fail to come up to him. I like him well.⁴⁹

Academy life. When Jason Lee was a student at Wilbraham Academy, Dr. Wilbur Fisk was the principal, and was deeply revered by his pupils. The teaching staff consisted of one instructor each in natural science, in language, and in mathematics; and a preceptress. The enrollment was one hundred and sixty-three—one hundred and five men and fifty-eight women. In the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of November 28, 1828, we find this reference to the modest living costs that faced the student in those days: "The price of tuition for common studies per term is \$3; . . . the price of board, at the boarding house, including washing, and exclusive of fuel and lights, is \$1.25 per week. Board in the neighborhood may be obtained at nearly the same price."⁵⁰

Lee the teacher. Dr. Fisk early recognized Lee's superior qualities and placed under his tutorial care a class of selected, promising young men.⁵¹ Upon completing his Wilbraham course in 1830, Lee served during the succeeding two years as a teacher in the Stanstead Academy and also preached in the adjoining towns under the direction of the Wesleyan Church in Canada.⁵²

⁴⁹ A. F. Waller letter to Fuller Atchinson, Albion, Michigan, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 8, 1843, XVII, p. 50.

⁵⁰ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 28, 1828, III, p. 51.

⁵¹ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 49.

⁵² "According to our records he [Jason Lee] entered Wilbraham Academy from Stanstead in 1829. At that time Stanstead was listed as lower Canada."—Letter from Gaylord W. Douglass, headmaster, Wilbraham Academy, May 20, 1929.

"A careful inspection of our early Academy catalogues indicates that Jason Lee's name first appears in the issue for July, 1829. He is listed from Stanstead, L.S. . . . Osmon Baker, coming from Marlow, New Hampshire, is in the catalogue for 1828, and again in July, 1839. He is said to be assigned to room in B. H. (boarding house) number 11, while Lee is in B. H. number 13. . . . Baker and Lee were both at the Academy in the year 1830, and probably in 1831, although I do not have a catalogue for that year."—Letter to author from Gaylord W. Douglass, headmaster, Wilbraham Academy, June 21, 1929.

Missionary ambitions. After his conversion in 1826, it became his ambition to serve as a Western Canadian Indian missionary. On March 1, 1831, he wrote the following revealing letter to his former Wilbraham Academy friend, Osmon C. Baker, then a student at Wesleyan University:

I have not forgotten the red men of the West though I am not yet among them. Oh that I had some one like yourself to go with me, and help me in the arduous work, with whom I could hold sweet converse; or could I even be assured that I should, in a few years, embrace you in the wilds and have you for a companion for life, or as long as the Lord should have need of us in the forests, I think I could cheerfully forego all the pleasures I receive from the society of friends here, tear myself from the embrace of my nearest and dearest relatives, and go (as John before our Lord) and prepare the way before you. But I am building castles in the air. No, no, that I fear will never be. "Not my will, but thine, O Lord, be done."⁵³

The ministry. After completing the "spring term" at Wilbraham in early June, 1830, and a brief teaching experience in the recently established Stanstead Academy in his home city, Lee decided, in December, 1831, to give his time wholly to the work of the ministry. He served under the direction of the Wesleyan missionaries in Canada, preaching in Stanstead and adjoining towns until he accepted the call to engage in the Oregon mission.

In 1832 Lee applied to the London Wesleyan Missionary Society for an assignment to the western Canadian field, but owing to the sudden death of the secretary of the society, Richard Watson, on December 31, 1832, no action was taken on his application.⁵⁴

Missionary to the Flatheads. Early in March, 1833, President Fisk wrote to learn Lee's attitude concerning an appointment as a missionary to the Flatheads and, after some delay, arising from the circumstances just described, he received Lee's favorable reply. Soon thereafter Lee left his Stanstead home to receive his missionary ordination. On June 10 he attended in Boston a missionary meeting held at the Bennett Street Methodist Church. Four days

⁵³ W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, pp. 792-793.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 793.

later, in a beautiful, impressive service performed by Bishop Elijah Hedding, he was ordained "Missionary to the Flathead Indians." In an eloquent address Dr. Fisk referred to Jason Lee and his proposed work with unqualified admiration,⁵⁵ and stamped the seal of his approval on his Wilbraham pupil in these words in a letter written a few days later:

Our esteemed brother Jason Lee was appointed by Bishop Hedding at the late session of the New England conference for that mission. Brother Lee is one whom all who know him judge well qualified for the enterprise. He is the man on whom my mind rested when the subject was first agitated. I know him well, and can most cordially recommend him to all the friends of the enterprise as one worthy of their confidence.⁵⁶

Farewell to home. Following his ordination, Lee returned to Stanstead, remaining there nearly two months. On August 19, 1833, he said farewell to his boyhood home. On the flyleaf of his diary he wrote briefly: "Left Stanstead, L. C., Aug. 19, 1833." One year later, while journeying to Oregon, Lee wrote:

One year ago this morning [August 19, 1834] since I took the last view of my native town . . . I tore myself away from [relatives and friends] in spite of all arguments, in spite of their entreaties . . . I saw, yes, I beheld with my own eyes five Brothers and four Sisters, Friends and Companions of my youth, grouped together to take the parting hand with one whose face they had but the slightest expectation of seeing again till the wheels of time ceased to move. . . . One year has elapsed and I have not reached the field of my labors.⁵⁷

The day following his departure from Stanstead, Jason Lee made a brief call at the home of Mr. Harmon, of Coventry, Vermont, a former fur-trading associate of Dr. John McLoughlin, then continued his journey southward.

⁵⁵ *New England Christian Herald*, later *Zion's Herald*, June 19, 1833, IV, p. 150.

⁵⁶ Wilbur Fisk Communication, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, VII, p. 174.

⁵⁷ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 252.

Daniel Lee appointed as Oregon missionary. Jason Lee's first problem as missionary to the Flatheads was to find suitable assistants. For his missionary associate and junior assistant, he chose his nephew, Daniel Lee.⁵⁸ It was a fortunate selection. Daniel Lee felt an intense admiration for his uncle, and his devoted and effective assistance during the twelve remaining years of that missionary's life is a record of successful and consecrated service not often surpassed in the history of American Protestant missionary effort. Although Daniel Lee was not ordained as a minister until the spring of 1834,⁵⁹ he had already traveled more than two years in the New Hampshire Conference. He was appointed missionary to the Flathead Indians at the annual meeting of the New Hampshire Conference at West Windsor, Vermont, August 13, 1833.

Missionary meetings in the New York area. During the late summer and early autumn of 1833, Jason Lee and his nephew were busy with preparations for the journey to Oregon. In late August, 1833, following the commencement exercises at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut, the Juvenile Missionary Society, at its first anniversary meeting in the Middletown Methodist Church, presented Jason Lee with a "handsome collection for the Flathead Mission."⁶⁰

On October 10, in New York City, Lee held a number of conferences with the Mission Board. Of especial importance was the meeting of October 11, when \$3,000 was appropriated for the new Flathead Mission, the employment of two laymen assistants was authorized, and arrangements were made for a short tour by the missionaries in the latter part of November, 1833,⁶¹ in order to obtain contributions for the mission.

On Sunday evening, November 3, Jason and Daniel Lee attended a farewell meeting in their honor at Middletown, Con-

⁵⁸ Oregon Mission Record Book, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIII, p. 232.

⁵⁹ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 111.

⁶⁰ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 13, 1833, VIII, p. 5.

⁶¹ *Journal of Mission Board*. Minute for October 11, 1833.

necticut, the town whose college president was Dr. Fisk. Dr. Fisk delivered a stirring address on "The Signs of the Times." Jason and Daniel Lee also spoke. The Wesleyan University student who reports this meeting comments that the two missionaries "appear to have devoted themselves unreservedly to the work of preaching the Gospel to the red men of the forest."⁶² A week later, on Sunday evening, November 17, Lee spoke before the Missionary Society at New Haven, Connecticut. Dr. Fisk accompanied the missionaries to New Haven, and preached a "powerful" sermon on the claims of the Flathead Mission. The meeting was decidedly successful, the donation amounting to \$422.71, the largest collection during this tour.⁶³

Captain Wyeth. On Wednesday evening, November 20, a farewell meeting,⁶⁴ presided over by Bishop Hedding, was held in the Forsyth Street Church, in New York City. Two days later the missionaries were busy with preparations for their immediate departure to St. Louis. Unacquainted with the Far West, they had searched in vain for some one familiar with that region with whom they could travel, and had finally decided to begin the trip alone. It was their hope that, at the Missouri frontier, they might fall in with an outgoing fur-trading expedition bound for the Rocky Mountains. On November 21, the day before departure, fortune favored them. On that day they learned through Boston newspapers that Captain Nathaniel J. Wyeth, of Cambridge, Massachusetts, had on November 7 returned to Boston from his first journey to the Rocky Mountains, and was planning to make a second expedition to Oregon in the early spring of 1833. Wyeth's arrival was regarded as "providential." Going by way of Middletown, where he was joined by Dr. Fisk, Lee hurried to Boston. From his wide experience, Wyeth gave valuable information concerning the Indians in the vicinity of the proposed mission; the best routes to the Flathead country; the most favorable location for the mission,

⁶² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 6, 1833, VIII, p. 59.

⁶³ *Zion's Herald* (Boston, 1823), December 18, 1833, IV, p. 254.

⁶⁴ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Oregon* (San Francisco, 1886-1888), I, p. 59.

and the nature of the probable reception of the missionaries by this tribe of Indians.⁶⁵

Arrangements were made for the missionaries to accompany Wyeth's second expedition, which was to leave Independence, Missouri, in April, 1834. The brusque but generous Wyeth also permitted Lee to ship his freight on the Wyeth brig, the *May Dacre*, which was to sail for Oregon by way of Cape Horn. This little vessel, which left the port of Boston in early January, 1834,⁶⁶ must have had a full cargo. In addition to Wyeth's goods, it carried a miscellaneous freight for the missionaries that comprised farming implements, tools, household goods, books, garden seeds, and live chickens.

Meetings in Boston and vicinity. While Lee was in Boston a well advertised, well attended missionary meeting was held on Friday evening, November 29, at the Bromfield Street Church. Dr. Fisk's powerful, restrained, lawyer-like plea for the support of Indian missions won the sympathies of the audience for Jason Lee's Western mission, but the feature of the evening was the presence of Captain N. J. Wyeth on the platform, accompanied by two Indian boys whom he had brought East with him. One Indian of French Canadian-Flathead parentage was an intelligent lad about thirteen years old. The other was a Nez Percé, about twenty years old, whose head was decidedly flattened.⁶⁷ Besides being objects of intense curiosity, these two Indians were of absorbing interest as representatives of the nation recently made famous by William Walker's four Flathead "wise men from the West."

Just before the program began, Wyeth was handed a slip of paper on which were written seven questions relative to the Flathead Mission. These questions and Wyeth's illuminating answers

⁶⁵ Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 21, 1834, VIII, p. 101.

⁶⁶ *The Correspondence and Journal of Nathaniel J. Wyeth, 1831-1836* (Eugene, 1899), p. 96.

⁶⁷ Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 21, 1834, VIII, p. 101.

were printed in the December 4 issue of *Zion's Herald* as follows:

1. So far as the success of the mission is concerned, what would be the most eligible place for the commencement of the enterprize among the tribes west of the mountains?

In reply, Capt. W. stated that the missionaries, when there, would be able to make the location to best advantage by actual examination;—that however, for the sake of supplies, &c., it would be prudent to be in the neighborhood of some trading post;—that it should not be too high up the mountains, lest they should be disturbed by the Blackfeet Indians, who sometimes made excursions over the mountains. He thought probably Kittle Falls on the Columbia, or on the Flat Head River, a position might be assumed which would be a place of resort by the Indians for the purpose of the salmon fishery, and at the same time afford the other requisite facilities.

2. What is the moral and religious character of the Flat Head and neighboring tribes?

The religion of these tribes is Deism. At the suggestion of an Indian trader, some time since they adopted the habit of observing the Christian Sabbath. . . . Their morals are better than can be found in any other part of the world, probably taking the whole population together. . . . They are mild, docile, and honest. Their principal vice seems to be gaming. . . .

3. What is the comparative condition of females?

About the same as that of the same sex in a common Dutch population. Certain parts of the duties of life are assigned to the females, and other parts to the males. . . .

4. What is the domestic character of these Indians?

They maintain the relation of husband and wife with as much constancy, probably as the whites. . . . They appear to have no agriculture, but live almost wholly upon the productions of unassisted nature.

5. What chance in the country for agriculture?

Although the general face of the country, so far as observed by Capt. W., was not favorable to agriculture, the plains, or level parts being destitute of timber, and the timbered parts being generally precipitous and rocky, still selections might be made of tracts of land located favorably as to the other objects of the mission, and, at the same time, affording opportunity for the successful cultivation of the soil. . . .

6. What reception would the missionaries probably meet with from the fur traders and Indians?

The traders would be likely to be friendly in all cases where there would be no interference with their trade. . . . The Indians hurt no man unless violently provoked to it. . . . Any white man gaining their confidence, therefore, will be able to mould and fashion them to almost any reasonable measures and principles, of which their habits, conditions in life, and intellectual capacities are susceptible.

7. What opportunity would the missionaries have to keep up a correspondence with this country, and obtain supplies?

A ship goes from London to the mouth of the Columbia river every year. A ship will go from Boston some time between this and next September. Occasional parties cross the mountains from and to the U. States. But the most certain way of correspondence is by the expresses of the Hudson Bay Company, who will doubtless always forward in this manner all the letters of the missionaries.⁶⁸

A few days later, on Sunday evening, December 1, another missionary meeting was held at the Bromfield Church. The two Indian boys were again present. Dr. Fisk ably presented the reasons why the Church should support the Flathead missionary enterprise. After the unusually large collection of \$210, the meeting was addressed by Jason Lee. A report of this meeting states that "the house was crowded, and the audience remained through all the exercises as if spellbound."⁶⁹

The *Connecticut Observer*, a semi-religious newspaper of Hartford, Connecticut, published a full account of Lee's Boston meeting:

Rev. Jason Lee, appointed to go to the Flat Heads, was introduced to the congregation by the Rev. Dr. Fisk. He remarked that he had had a considerable struggle in his mind on being appointed to the arduous station to which he was called. To leave friends and home, to seclude himself from civilized society, and to take up his final earthly abode among untutored savages, required some sacrifice of refined feeling which was not to be decided upon hastily. His election,

⁶⁸ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 13, 1833, VIII, p. 63.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*

however, had been made, and made deliberately. And since the day of his decision to go, had not once retracted, nor had he any misgivings of heart in the view of his arduous labour. He did not, indeed, depend on his ability to command success; but feeling that he was pursuing the path of duty, he relied on the promise of God. Shall a cause fail, asked he, which has the Divine power pledged in its success. It can not, it will not. But admitting for a moment that it should, what may be the plea for this attempt in the day of Judgement? Pursuing our duty, depending upon Divine grace, shall we not be pure from the blood of those whom we labour to save? And there is a pleasure in the hope which we have of the recompense of reward. And this reward, this crown of glory, will not belong to the Missionary exclusively. O no! Our Saviour knows the measure of reward to which all his servants are entitled, and he will reward each according to his work. The liberal soul, who communicates the silver and the gold to sustain this Mission, and who with his offering presents the prayer of faith, will share the plaudit of his Redeemer. His prayers and alms will come up before the Lord as a precious memorial; and he who rewards the cup of cold water given to a disciple because he belongs to Christ, will say to each of his friends, "Well done, good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord!"⁷⁰

Cyrus Shepard. In early December, Lee was in Boston, still busy with his preparations. On December 5 he visited Cyrus Shepard, a public-school teacher, at Weston, Massachusetts, a village a few miles west of Boston. After a short conference, Shepard was engaged by Lee as the teacher of the Oregon Mission. In his diary, under date of December 5, Shepard made this feeling reference to Lee's visit:

This day Brothers [Rev. John] Lindsey [of Boston] and Lee came to see me in reference to my engaging in the Flathead Indian mission. After some conversation, I agreed to go. It may seem to some that I was precipitate in making up my mind on this important subject, but it is all known to myself and my God.⁷¹

⁷⁰ *Connecticut Observer* (Hartford, Connecticut), December 16, 1833.

⁷¹ Z. A. Mudge, *The Missionary Teacher: A Memoir of Cyrus Shepard* (New York, 1848), p. 67.

Lee has left a vivid account of the busy days of preparation for the long journey over the unsurveyed West:

We have made arrangements to cross the mountains with Capt. W. [yeth] whose company will consist of about fifty. He expects to leave Liberty (which is about one hundred miles above St. Louis) in April. From St. Louis to the Flat Head country is about one thousand five hundred miles; thence to the Pacific nine hundred miles. This journey, from the shores of the Atlantic to the shores of the Pacific, accomplished, the most laborious part of our work is yet before us. It will still remain for us to transport our outfit nine hundred miles up the river to the place of destination.

Our dependence for subsistence is almost exclusively upon the rifle, as it is impossible to carry provisions for such a journey on horseback.⁷²

Dr. Wilbur Fisk, Lee's stalwart friend during these toilsome days, wrote his wife this optimistic note from Boston:

Our visit to Captain Wyeth has been most providential. He is going out with a party in the spring, and will take the missionaries under his protection. He will go quite over the mountains. He is a fine man. They will also send out a vessel that will carry any necessary freight. Much information has also been obtained of great importance to the mission. I cannot state the details.⁷³

On Sunday evening, December 15, Lee held a missionary service at Lynn, the home of Cyrus Shepard and Susan Downing, names later to be linked forever as pioneer missionaries of Old Oregon. The Lynn Sabbath School, with which Shepard was for long identified, showed its affection for its teacher by a donation of \$25.45, of which \$20 was to "make Mr. Cyrus Shepard a life member for Flat Heads Mission."⁷⁴

Zion's Herald published this graphic account of the evening meeting "thronged to overflowing":

⁷² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 21, 1834, VIII, p. 101.

⁷³ Joseph Holdick, *The Life of Wilbur Fisk, D.D.* (New York, 1842), p. 183.

⁷⁴ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 31, 1834, VIII, p. 91.

Last Sabbath evening there was a most appropriate and interesting discourse delivered by Rev. J. Lindsey of this city, from Rom. i. 16, in behalf of the Flat Head mission; and an address by Rev. Jason Lee, Missionary to the Flat Heads. It was one of the most pleasant meetings ever held in Lynn of a missionary character. Long before the time appointed to commence, the house was thronged to overflowing and the audience hung upon the lips of the speakers with such an interest that it could not be mistaken. The Collection did honor to Lynn,—it amounted to \$100.⁷⁵

Dorchester. Lee closed his successful missionary campaign in the immediate vicinity of Boston by holding a crowded meeting at the historic city of Dorchester, now South Boston. On the platform were Wyeth's two Indian boys, fresh from their Rocky Mountain home. So great was the public interest in these flat-headed lads that Lee felt constrained to send out an extended communication concerning them in the *Christian Advocate*.⁷⁶

Andover. Lee concluded his lecture tour with visits to Andover, seat of the famous theological school, where he received a donation of \$38.83 for the Oregon Mission, and to Lowell, where the collection was \$53.41.⁷⁷ At Lowell, he conducted the Indian lads through one of the largest manufacturing plants. "On no occasion," wrote Lee, "did I see him [the older Indian boy] so much excited, and express so much wonder and astonishment, as when I took him into one of the manufacturing establishments at Lowell. He had never seen anything so wonderful and complicated before and could not conceal his surprise."⁷⁸

⁷⁵ *Zion's Herald*, December 18, 1833, IV, p. 254.

⁷⁶ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 21, 1834, VIII, p. 91.

⁷⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 31, 1834, VIII, p. 91.

⁷⁸ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 21, 1834, VIII, p. 101.

CHAPTER III

THE JOURNEY TO OREGON

ON January 29, 1834, the Lees left New York City for St. Louis. It was their plan to conduct a missionary campaign for funds on the way.¹ On Sunday, February 2, 1834, a successful meeting was held in Philadelphia, where they remained for several days. During this interval Jason Lee visited West Chester, twenty-seven miles west of Philadelphia. On February 5, Lee wrote an interesting letter from Philadelphia to the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, in which he described Wyeth's two Indian boys.²

Baltimore, Washington, D. C., Pittsburgh. On February 9, the Lees were in Baltimore; they made also a hurried trip to Wilmington, Delaware, and its immediate vicinity. From Baltimore they went to Washington, D. C., where they temporarily parted. Daniel Lee remained in the Washington area in order to attend the Baltimore Annual Conference which convened at Alexandria, Virginia, on February 20, 1834. At this conference he was elevated to the rank of elder in the Methodist Church.³

Sunday evening, March 9, Lee addressed a Pittsburgh missionary meeting. On the following Tuesday evening he spoke to a second enthusiastic gathering at the Old Liberty Street Church of this same city. The *Pittsburgh Conference Journal* reported that "in the true spirit of such an undertaking, Lee addressed the audience with great effect for more than an hour. . . . The congregation listened with the most intense interest; many poured forth their tears."⁴

¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 31, 1834, VIII, p. 91.

² *Ibid.*, February 21, 1834, VII, p. 101.

³ *Ibid.*, April 4, 1834, VIII, p. 127.

⁴ *Ibid.*

Down the Ohio. At Pittsburgh Lee boarded one of the steamboats that plied the Ohio River between the "Gate City" and St. Louis. The Ohio River, then even more than now, was one of the most beautiful of American rivers. "For hundreds of miles it coils itself among the hills, which often rise in rocky steeps from the water's edge, skirted along the base and crowned at the top with primeval forest."⁵ This pleasant journey took Lee past Blennerhassett's Island, famous even in that day for Aaron Burr's unfortunate landing there nearly thirty years before.

While on board the steamboat, on March 15, he addressed an optimistic letter to Osmon C. Baker:

A kind Providence has watched over me thus far, while I have been making preparations for the Mission, and passing from city to city to present the claims and plead the cause of the long neglected and much injured red man of the forest, before vast, attentive, and weeping multitudes. My dear brother, I go as Paul went to Jerusalem, bound in spirit, not knowing what will befall me there; but, thank God, I have had but very few anxious thoughts about anything else, except being faithful in the cause of Christ—that is enough—that is all.⁶

Cincinnati. A downstream voyage of four hundred and fifty miles brought the traveler to Cincinnati, the young and rapidly growing metropolis of the Middle West. Here he was joined on March 17 by Cyrus Shepard, the lay member of the missionary party.⁷ In Cincinnati, Lee and Shepard were hospitably entertained by James B. Finley, the famous Wyandotte missionary. Of this visit, Shepard reported, "From him we obtained much useful information concerning the Indians, their customs, habits, and manners of life, together with an account of his missionary operations."⁸

Leaving Cincinnati, the missionaries continued their descent of

⁵ H. W. Elson, *Side Lights on American History*. 2 vols. (New York, 1899-1900), I, p. 123.

⁶ W. B. Sprague, *Annals of the American Pulpit*, VII, p. 794.

⁷ Z. A. Mudge, *The Missionary Teacher; A Memoir of Cyrus Shepard*, p. 75.

⁸ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, June 20, 1834, VIII, p. 170.

the Ohio River to St. Louis, six hundred and ninety miles away. On Saturday, March 22, they stopped at Louisville near the falls of the Ohio.⁹ On the following Tuesday, at the Fourth Street Church in that city, Jason Lee "addressed [a missionary] meeting for about one hour in a strain of argument and at times with much pathos."¹⁰

A six-day voyage brought the missionaries to St. Louis, where they arrived on March 31. On April 4, Cyrus Shepard hurried forward up the Missouri River on the steamboat *Ioway* to Independence, three hundred miles distant, charged with the task of assembling the equipment for the overland journey across the plains. Jason Lee remained in St. Louis to attend to business matters relating to the mission. At St. Louis he searched in vain for a suitable assistant to accompany the missionary party.¹¹

During his brief stay in St. Louis, Jason Lee called at General Clark's office, in response to an invitation from Clark's business agent, who wanted Lee to assist him in answering a questionnaire which had been sent out by an Eastern organization calling itself the "Western Colonization Society."

Daniel Lee arrived in St. Louis soon after Shepard's departure from that city. He called upon General William Clark, and had the good fortune to find him at his office. The rising city of St. Louis, then as now the center of the fur industry of the United States, must have held a strange appeal for the visitors. Here, only two years before, the Flathead deputation was alleged to have made its pathetic plea to General Clark for missionaries. Already an old town, as American municipalities go, it was one of a half dozen American cities whose founding antedated the birth of the nation. In the colorful years of its history before 1834, the banners of three nations—Spain, France, and the United States—had floated over its battlements. Along its quaint streets mingled a population of Spaniards, Frenchmen, fur-trading magnates, voy-

⁹ Samuel Parker, *Journal of an Exploring Tour beyond the Rocky Mountains, 1833-6-7* (Ithaca, New York, 1838), pp. 18-25.

¹⁰ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 18, 1834, VIII, p. 134.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, June 20, 1834, VIII, p. 170.

ageurs, Eastern visitors, Negroes, Indians, and hustling young American business men.¹²

Though somewhat uneasy¹³ over the possibility of arriving at Independence too late to join Wyeth's "train," the Lees remained in St. Louis ten days. On Monday evening, April 7, they conducted one of the most spirited missionary meetings that marked their successful journey westward.¹⁴ The leading Protestant churches united in doing honor to these two volunteers who were risking their lives to respond to the Macedonian cry from beyond the Rocky Mountains. Threats of rain did not prevent a large congregation from assembling at the Methodist church in which the farewell service was held. After a prayer by the local Episcopal clergyman, Jason Lee in a "forcible" manner gave a brief outline of the origin of the mission and his own appointment as "Missionary to the Flat Heads."¹⁵

The Lees cross Missouri. On Wednesday afternoon, April 9, Jason and Daniel Lee set out on horseback for Liberty, Missouri, about three hundred miles from St. Louis, there to join the companies of Captain Wyeth and Sublette. On their way they called on Rev. A. Munroe, of the Missouri Conference, who lived eighty-five miles west of St. Louis. He afterwards reported the missionaries to be "in good health and spirits."¹⁶

The diary of Jason Lee and the nearly contemporaneous account of Daniel Lee are both silent as to their experiences during the greater portion of that journey, doubtless owing to the fatigue incident to the long and unaccustomed horseback riding. After reaching the town of Liberty, near Independence, Jason Lee again resumed his diary entries. Since both uncle and nephew exhibit a

¹² It was founded in 1764 by Pierre Laclede Liguist. Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade of the Far West*, I, p. 101.

¹³ *Wyeth's Journal*, II, p. 130. Wyeth wrote Lee from New York on February 14, 1834: "I leave this city to-morrow morning and will proceed directly west and remain but five or six days in St. Louis." Again, on April 17, 1834, Wyeth states in a letter to Tucker and Williams, Boston: "There are none of the Dignitaries with me as yet and if they 'preach' much longer in the States they will lose their passage and I will not wait a minute for them."

¹⁴ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, May 9, 1834, VIII, p. 146.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Zion's Herald*, May 14, 1834, p. 79.

decided capacity for plain and sincere narrative it is a cause for regret that they failed to journalize their April odyssey of a century ago.

Jason Lee informs us that he and his nephew reached Liberty on the western frontier of Missouri on Sunday evening, April 20, 1834.¹⁷ Only one week and a day remained within which to complete preparations for their two thousand and twenty-mile journey over the Oregon Trail. Mr. Wyeth, the leader of the overland train, was an efficient business man, and adhered to a pre-arranged schedule. Every member of the cavalcade knew that his signal would set in motion the seventy men and two hundred and fifty horses, mules, and cattle of his caravan on their way over the rolling prairies of present western Kansas.

Despite the feverish bustle and excitement of that last week "in civilization," Jason Lee's diary reflects the tranquil spirit of a man purposefully but serenely at work. On Sunday evening, at Liberty, Missouri, a town lying about nine miles northwest of Independence, he addressed an evening meeting in the Courthouse Square. About halfway through the service, a windstorm came up and frightened the people away. Lee pronounced the blessing, and closes his diary entry with the comment that "he did not apprehend any danger."¹⁸ Many other diary entries and the testimony of many witnesses attest that Jason Lee possessed "more than a hero's courage" and "more than a martyr's fortitude," and that he freely exhibited these qualities during the forty-one years of his eventful life.

Independence, Missouri. On April 22 they arrived at Independence, the eastern terminus of the Oregon Trail, and to-day a suburb of Kansas City, Missouri. Then it was an excited, bustling rendezvous that catered to the caravans which traveled over both the Santa Fé and Oregon trails. The brisk trafficking in horses and mules and in supplies for camping parties was an interesting feature of the noisy town. Townsend was much

¹⁷ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 116.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

impressed by the sights and sounds he witnessed there. He confesses a shocked surprise when a rough fellow approached him with the question: "Stranger, what for a gun you carry?"¹⁹ Jason Lee, however, with his accustomed tranquillity reflects that he is "thankful that we arrived safe without accident to the place where we were to prepare for our overland trip."²⁰

Lay assistants. It was the opinion of those familiar with the Oregon country that the missionaries could not transport their supplies with less than five men. Lee had been successful in securing one lay assistant in St. Louis. As it was vital that assistants be engaged before leaving civilization, Daniel Lee now sought them in the neighboring town of Richmond, Missouri, and on April 24, 1834, succeeded in engaging, as lay assistants, Philip L. Edwards and Courtney M. Walker. Edwards was a young man of twenty-two who possessed qualities of leadership and ability. Jason Lee refers to him as a "genteel, well-informed young man, and . . . a valuable acquisition to our company."²¹ Courtney M. Walker was engaged as mission business agent for one year.²² Lee reports that although a non-professor of religion "he is just such a man as we need to assist us, being acquainted with Indian life and the mode of travel we have to pursue."²³

Townsend is rather frank in his expression of the reasons why these young fellows joined the missionary group. "They have arrayed themselves under the missionary banner," explains Townsend, "chiefly for the gratification of seeing a new country, and participating in strange adventures."²⁴

On the Saturday preceding the Monday on which Lee left civilization, he purchased additional horses and a small band of cows.²⁵ These cows were the first to travel over the greater portion

¹⁹ John K. Townsend, *Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains* (Philadelphia, 1839), p. 137.

²⁰ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 116.

²¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, June 13, 1834, VII, p. 166.

²² Harvey Scott, "Jason Lee Address," in Scott's *History of the Oregon Country* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1924), I, p. 24.

²³ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, June 13, 1834, VII, p. 166.

²⁴ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 138.

²⁵ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 116.

of the Oregon Trail. Lee drove two of them from Independence to Fort Walla Walla, a distance of 1,800 miles.²⁶ The last Saturday night on the Missouri frontier was spent as the guest of a man named Rickman, who entertained him kindly. "He took nothing," says Jason Lee, "for our entertainment."

Lee expresses regret in one of his last entries before departure that he was unable to accept an invitation to preach at Independence, but he was fearful that the punctilious Captain Wyeth might set his cavalcade in motion and leave the missionaries in the lurch. He spent his last Sabbath "in the States" as the guest of an Independence preacher named Ferrell, who proved a hospitable host and donated a supply of corn for his guest's horses.²⁷

After a busy week spent "in rigging packs and pack saddles"²⁸ and in making other provision for their journey, the missionaries found themselves ready at last on Sunday, April 27, 1834.

Departure from St. Louis. At ten o'clock the next morning, the picturesque train began its march. Captain Wyeth and that other seasoned warrior of the plains, Milton Sublette, sounded the words of command from the front, while Jason Lee, leading his horned cattle, brought up the rear guard of this spectacular cavalcade. Amid songs and laughter and unrestrained enthusiasm the company filed its way over the rolling foothills toward the "lands where the sunsets go."²⁹

The Indian country. The Lees were now in that great region of the unsurveyed West known as the Indian country. According to Daniel Lee they were well equipped for the many dangers incident to their journey. He describes the company as "mounted on horses and mules, and armed with rifles. Most of them had each a powder horn or a flask, a large leathern pouch for bullets hung at his side, and buckled close to his body with a leathern belt, in which hung a scabbard of the same material, bearing a 'scalping knife,' that savage weapon whose very name is a terror."³⁰ Near

²⁶ Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, p. 480.

²⁷ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 116.

²⁸ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 114.

²⁹ Townsend, *Narrative*, pp. 141, 142.

³⁰ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 114.

the site of the modern city of Topeka,⁸¹ Kansas, the cavalcade moving northwesterly crossed the Kansas River. Their route now lay across the northwestern corner of modern Kansas.

In his diary entry of Saturday, May 3, 1834, Lee wrote:

The company soon came up and immediately set about crossing the Kansas River in a flatboat. I crossed with ours the first load. . . . Sat down to finish some letters to send back by the waggoner who had accompanied us from Independence.⁸²

One of the three letters that Lee wrote on that May day of a century ago was to Dr. Wilbur Fisk. After reposing in a lost file of Dr. Fisk's correspondence for nearly one hundred years, it reached the present writer on February 28, 1931, yellowed with age, but sound; and bearing on its last page a postmark indicating a postage charge of twenty-five cents. The historic letter reads as follows:

Missionary Tent Mi. Territory May 2, 1834
My Dear Brother

When at Cincinnati I wrote Brother Patten and Br. Wakeman and requested them to ask you to write us St. Louis and write themselves but was very much disappointed in not hearing from any of you. I have not received a line from M. since I left. I saw a letter you wrote Br. Anderson in Louisvill mentioning that a good work was breaking out there which rejoiced me much. I was hoping we should get a few days after preparing our outfit to write to our friends but we had scarcely time to get prepared so that I have been able to write but one letter since leaving St. Louis until to-day. We are about 7 miles from Kansas River and Agency which is the last we shall see. The Caw or Kansas Indians who are a party that broke off from the Osage Tribe are encamped a little distance from us and all about our encampment. They are most miserable looking animals men and women half naked and children as naked as they were born.

I visited Bro. Johnson at the Shawnee Mission and am well pleased with the Indians there they have good farms horses cows hogs com-

⁸¹ Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, p. 465.

⁸² Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 118.

fortable houses and are gaining property fast. We have five in our company now. It was however with no small difficulty that we found any one. It was the decided opinion of our friends in St. Louis and all of the Traders who had any knowledge on the subject that less than five could not get our goods up the Columbia without unparaled labour and therefore when the way opened to procure two men I took them without hesitation. Bro. Finley of Cincinnati says we ought to have a dozen at least.

May 3. I commenced this last night after writing two others by a piece of candle beged from Capt. Wyeth but it failed and I was obliged to postpone this, we started early this morning and have just crossed the Kansas. The horses and most of Capt. W. goods are on the other side. I am sitting on the green grass with six Indians lying within three feet facing me and watching me, one is painted red face head ears and beeds that are attached to them. They have blankets and look a little better than those we saw below. The wind blows hard and I find this rather an awkward place to write.

We have collected for the Mission since we left N. Y. \$1,262.33 and expended \$1,091.16.

There are now twenty Indians within 6 feet of me, and they are coming from every quarter. Who, *who*, will volunteer to come and sound the trump of salvation among them. May God in his mercy thrust out some who will not count their lives dear unto themselves but spend them in the service of the *Red Men*. We get on finely but are in the most profane company I think that I was ever in. The Agent General Clark cousin to General Clark of St. Louis is not at home.

We shall encamp near here to night and when we leave they shall progress with greater velocity.

I have had a hard time in making preparation for our journey but are pretty well fitted for the trip.

An Indian who speaks good english and who has been among the Flat Heads just asked me if we were going to try what virtue there is in them and when answered in the affirmative remarked, "I must say they are the best people in the world." They have just examined our Middltown gun and seem much pleased with it. I am inclined to think that our journey to the Pacific will not be very arduous, though it will be long and somewhat wearisome. I sleep as sound and as sweetly

as when in a feather bed. My health is good, my appetite is such that I can eat any thing we have flower and bacon enough to last some weeks. If the good Lord smile upon us we shall be able to accomplish the thing whereunto the Church and we trust the great Head of the Church has sent us. Give my love to all friends. Especially to the officers of the University and members of the Missionary Soc.

The man who carries this back to Independence,

Yours etc.

J. LEE.

The Platte River. The two hundred and thirty-five miles of rolling prairie lying between the Kansas and Platte rivers is described by Daniel Lee as "very beautiful."³³ On May 18, the travelers reached the Platte River,³⁴ with whose great course are associated so many episodes and tragedies of the fur-trading period then in the heyday of its prosperity. The missionaries' trail intersected the Platte about twenty miles east of Grand Island, located somewhat south of a point near the center of the present state of Nebraska. The Platte, impressive in its length and width, appealed to the company. The journals of the Lees and Townsend's *Narrative* devote numerous entries to its description.

Daniel Lee's account, written a decade after his Western expedition, and when interest in the Oregon question was acute, provides fuller descriptions of natural features than does the faithful but somewhat more introspective, contemporaneous diary of his uncle. Daniel Lee informs us:

The Platte,³⁵ as its name implies, is very shallow, and in some places more than a mile wide. The bottom is quicksand, and in fording, it is necessary to keep in motion to prevent sinking. The water has a whitish appearance, and a thick sediment will deposit itself in a vessel in which it stands. The banks are low, and a level bottom, covered generally with grass, extends a mile, more or less, on either side, terminated by hills. The country is destitute of timber.³⁶

³³ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 115.

³⁴ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 157.

³⁵ Platte, feminine gender of the French adjective meaning flat or shallow.

³⁶ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 116.

A hunter's wonderland. After a four days' journey westward along the south shore of the Platte the expedition found itself in the long-anticipated bison country. The youthful Townsend informs us that on the afternoon of May 20 he "came in sight of a large gang of the long-coveted buffalo."³⁷ Within the space of a few days in the region of the forks of the Platte there appeared before their eager eyes a herd of buffalo which covered with their shaggy blackness an area in excess of ten miles in length and eight miles wide.³⁸ But in addition to this "incalculable multitude," they saw on those "interminable green plains"³⁹ bands of enormous-sized elk, veritable monarchs of the prairie.

On the Oregon Trail. Had Jason Lee been able to choose the time for his Oregon journey, he could not have selected a year more colorful in the history of the Far West than the year 1834. The Oregon Trail was but a dimly blazed traders' path. Crossed and recrossed by the tracks of countless buffalo and other wild animals,⁴⁰ it stretched away indefinitely to the westward through the habitats of numerous Indian tribes. On his westward pilgrimage, he passed, in process of construction, trading posts destined later to become historic landmarks of the West.⁴¹

Across the map of the vast region he was entering lay a nomenclature suggestive of the golden age of the trapper; for the year 1834 marked a peak period in the history of the British and American fur trade of the trans-Mississippi West.⁴² On the May day on which Jason Lee reached the forks of the Platte, he began, by a long and almost imperceptible ascent, a journey toward the mountain region which formed the eastern border of the Far Western trapping fields. On every hand were picturesque memorials of trapper and trader. He was a firsthand observer of beaver streams, *voyageurs*, and horse brigades; of towering moun-

³⁷ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 159.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 161.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 173.

⁴⁰ H. K. Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 62.

⁴¹ The construction of Fort Laramie and Fort Hall were both begun in 1834.

⁴² Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, p. 364.

tains and floor-like prairies; of gently flowing, shrub-embowered streams, and rivers whose torrential waters roared through lava deserts and over foaming cataracts.⁴³ The complexity of mountain, river, and plain which lay between him and his destination was a revelation to the New England clergyman, familiar with a land where nature had wrought on a smaller and gentler plan.

Effect of the new environment. As Jason Lee's Eastern home receded into the distance that lay behind, he gradually but surely experienced a new intellectual birth, gained a broader moral outlook. By an almost unconscious progress he found himself freed from the provincial conventionalism of his boyhood environment. Frances Fuller Victor, Oregon historian, writing under the name of Bancroft, bears eloquent testimony to the play of this new environment upon the widening mental horizons of Jason Lee. This appraisal carries with it all the greater interest because Methodist writers charge Mrs. Victor with having written unsympathetically of Jason Lee and his Willamette missionary enterprise.⁴⁴

On the way the elder Lee conducted himself so as to command the respect of all religious and irreligious. The character of the man unfolded in beauty and fragrance under the stimulating prairie sun. No discipline of lecture-room, general ministration, or other experience could have been so valuable a preparation for the duties awaiting him at his destination as the rude routine of these overland days. It seemed to him as if his theological sea had suddenly become boundless, and he might sail unquestioned whithersoever the winds should carry him. It was delightful, this cutting loose from conventionalisms, for even

⁴³ Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, II, 784. Reference is to Snake River in southern Idaho.

⁴⁴ Rev. James W. Bashford, *Oregon Missions* (New York, 1918), p. 13 and *passim*. Bashford was a Methodist Bishop. He writes: "But the most serious defect, and in our judgment, the only serious fault of Bancroft's volumes, is the bias sometimes revealed in his judgment of various actors. . . . Mr. Bancroft reveals a cynical tendency which is to be deplored." On p. 16, he states: "But in his reaction against extravagant claims for the missionaries, we think Bancroft went too far—not in publishing facts, but in misinterpreting them. Our readers will be prepared for the occasional misjudgment of the efforts of missionaries from reading his false and antiquated estimate of missionary work in general, though even here he shows a desire to be fair."

Methodist preachers are men. Not that there was present any inclination toward a relaxation of principles, as is the case with so many on leaving home and all its healthful restraint; on the contrary, he felt himself more than ever the chosen of God, as he was thus brought nearer him in nature where he was sustained and guarded by day, and at night enfolded in his starry covering. Fires, both physical and mental, blazed brightly, and he was not one whit behind the most efficient of this company in willingness, ability, and courage. Nor were his associates broad-collared, long-haired, puritanical, prayer-mongers, but wide awake, hearty, and sympathetic men, bent on saving souls and having a good time.⁴⁵

Fort Laramie. In the last days of May, 1834, the Lees were entering the eastern portion of the present state of Wyoming. On June 1 they crossed the swiftly flowing Laramie River "without difficulty," according to Townsend.⁴⁶ In this vicinity Jason Lee witnessed the construction of the future Fort Laramie, famous in the annals of the Oregon Trail, and destined to become an important frontier military post.⁴⁷ Wyeth, in his matter-of-fact and badly spelled journal, states that near the point where his company forded this "clear and beautiful stream"⁴⁸ he "found thirteen of Sublette's"⁴⁹ men camped for the purpose of building a fort.⁵⁰ Jason Lee notes the additional fact that Sublette's men were planting corn in the vicinity.⁵¹

Independence Rock. On June 9, the missionaries reached Independence Rock, a notable landmark of the Oregon Trail. This

⁴⁵ Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 61.

Frances Fuller Victor is above referred to as the author of Bancroft's *History of Oregon*, in two volumes. It is now known that she wrote these two volumes in their entirety. See *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, IV, pp. 287-364.

⁴⁶ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 181.

⁴⁷ Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, II, p. 770.

⁴⁸ Hubert Howe Bancroft, *History of Nevada, Colorado, and Wyoming*, 1540-1888 (San Francisco, 1890), p. 683.

⁴⁹ William L. Sublette, one of four brothers famous in the American fur trade. In 1834, William Sublette was a member of the firm of Sublette & Campbell, a firm which later acquired wealth from their trading operations, Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, pp. 254, 255.

⁵⁰ Wyeth, *Journal*, Eugene, Oregon, 1899, p. 223.

⁵¹ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 130.

"lofty monument," as Father De Smet⁵² describes it, stood in impressive isolation on the desert. The accurate Chittenden states that it marked a point on the trail eight hundred and thirty-eight miles from the Missouri frontier.⁵³ This immense oval block of rock covered twenty-seven acres and at its highest point stood one hundred and fifty-five feet above the river level.⁵⁴ Surrounded on every side by monotonous stretches of sage-covered desert, it seemed to spring from the depths of space.⁵⁵ Practically all the members of Wyeth's train reveal the fallibility of the human eye in estimating distances in their attempts to guess the altitude of this rock. Daniel Lee's estimate is between twenty and thirty feet;⁵⁶ the careful Townsend's, fifty feet;⁵⁷ while Jason Lee's more accurate guess is seventy-five feet.⁵⁸ Cyrus Shepard hazarded the guess that Independence Rock rose "from ninety to one hundred feet above the level plain."⁵⁹ As early as 1834, Townsend states, the smooth, perpendicular sides of this rock began to bear the inscriptions of famous names in the fur trade. Townsend saw carved on it the names of such *bourgeois* of the trapping fraternity as the two Sublettes⁶⁰ and Captain B. L. E. Bonneville, whose Western wanderings were to be immortalized a few years later by the golden pen of Washington Irving. There appeared also the name of Michael Lamie Cerré, Bonneville's agent in his expedition of 1832-35, already a St. Louis fur magnate and allied by marriage to the famous house of Chouteau. Another name carved on this "Great Register of the Desert," to use another of Father De Smet's pertinent appellations, was that of Lucien Fontenelle, a "brigade" leader whose biography sparkles with episodes unusual even for the men of his day and time.

On June 10, the missionary party caught their first view of the

⁵² Hiram M. Chittenden and A. T. Richardson, *Life, Letters and Travels of Father P. De Smet* (New York, 1905), IV, p. 1349.

⁵³ Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, p. 471.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, I, p. 471.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, I, p. 471.

⁵⁶ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 117.

⁵⁷ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 183.

⁵⁸ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 132.

⁵⁹ *Zion's Herald*, September 24, 1834, V, p. 154.

⁶⁰ William L. and Milton Sublette.

Rocky Mountains, known in this section of the range as the Wind River Mountains. Townsend tells us that, although ninety miles distant to the westward, their snowy summits shimmered with dazzling whiteness.⁶¹

Big game. This naturalist-historian has also recorded a realistic account of the big game which he saw as the party ascended the Sweetwater River. The wild mountain sheep, described by him as "hairy," intrigued his interest. He saw them dancing on the distant crags, but always safely out of rifle range. A huge grizzly bear was discovered in a clump of willows. An amateur but ambitious young hunter in the cavalcade undertook to kill him. The young man's shot, fired at close range, merely wounded and irritated the bear, which darted from his covert and pursued the terrified hunter for about half a mile.

The "greenhorn" was rescued by about a dozen members of the train, whose combined volleys toppled the grizzly over. A short distance to the westward large herds of buffalo were seen grazing on the short, dry grasses of this region. Domestic cattle would have starved to death on this kind of range forage, according to Townsend.

South Pass. It is interesting to note that, although the watchful Townsend crossed the South Pass on June 14, his journal entry makes no reference to the famous gateway of the mountains. Daniel Lee's account, also based on journal entries made on the spot, likewise has no specific reference to this wide gap in the Continental Divide.

The journal of the busy and business-like Wyeth has no entry for June 14, South Pass day, but does contain a record of his doings for June 13 and June 15. Chittenden, the painstaking engineer, and later the historian of the American fur trade, has a clear explanation as to why South Pass was crossed without comment by the Wyeth train. Chittenden writes that the "pass itself, as a natural feature, is perhaps less striking and interesting than any other. It is less than 7,500 feet above the level of the sea. It is one of the few passes that are free from timber. There is not

⁶¹ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 184.

a well-defined gorge through the hills, but a broad, open valley of so gentle slope that Frémont in his explorations was in doubt what was the highest point. As a practicable pass either for a highway or a railroad, it could hardly be surpassed." ⁶² This same trained writer makes this additional observation:

It is everywhere a line of deep sentimental interest, for it is not easy to realize that, from points so close together, streams should flow to destinations so widely separated. Little as the country may vary in its aspect on one side from that on the other, the imagination sees a difference, and the early traveler always considered himself "across the Rocky Mountains" when he had passed this dividing line. ⁶³

The journal of Joel Palmer, a later Oregon Trail immigrant, well illustrates the sentimental interest which South Pass aroused in the imaginations of the weary and dust-covered pioneers. Palmer, in the itinerary or time-table at the end of his journal, itemizes points along the trail for the benefit of other prospective ox-team drivers in this fashion: "Independence Rock; on Sweet Water; Devil's Gate: up Sweet Water to South Pass (good camps); over the dividing ridge to Pacific Spring, the waters of which run into Green river. . . . HERE, HAIL OREGON!" ⁶⁴

In the body of his journal, the genial Indiana farmer, Palmer, drawing freely on his imagination, makes this colorful comment on the South Pass:

This morning we ascended the bank on the south side of the Sweet Water. Six miles brought us again to the creek, where is good grass in the bottom and willow for fuel. We crossed, went up the bottom two miles, and crossed back and left the Sweet Water. This day we passed over the dividing ridge which separates the waters flowing into the Atlantic from those which find their way into the Pacific Ocean. WE HAD REACHED THE SUMMIT OF THE ROCKY MOUNTAINS. Six miles brought us to a spring, the waters of which run into Green River, or the great Colorado of the West. Here, we hailed OREGON. ⁶⁵

⁶² Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, p. 475.

⁶⁴ *Palmer's Journal* (Cincinnati, 1847), p. 279.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, II, p. 726.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 71.

Jason Lee, although introspective and dreaming of future missionary conquests, was the only member of Wyeth's caravan to make specific reference to the unusual topographical features at this point of the trail. On Saturday, June 14, Lee informs us that he had breakfast of "roasted buffalo, poor water." He then adds: "We feel no want of bread and I am more healthy than I have been for some years." ⁶⁶

Continental Divide. On Sunday, June 15, Jason Lee writes of the Continental Divide: "Here we are now on the height of land the dividing ridge between the Atlantic and Pacific. Our rise has been gradual most of the way and we have not ascended any such Mountains as I anticipated having passed along on the Prairies at their base." ⁶⁷ The white beauty of the western-lying Wind River range drew this comment from Jason Lee: "The Rocky Mountains with their summits and parts of their sides clad in eternal snow present to the eye of the traveler a most grand, beautiful, and sublime appearance." ⁶⁸

Green River rendezvous. Leaving South Pass on June 14, the party proceeded by rapid marches down the Big Sandy, a tributary of Green River in the present western Wyoming. Four more days of vigorous travel brought the missionaries to the junction of the Green River and the Big Sandy. Continuing their southwestward journey, "a severe march" on June 20 brought them "to Horny Fork [Hams Fork], the place of rendezvous, and now ten miles above on the same [Hams] Fork." ⁶⁹

At the rendezvous, the weary travelers and their jaded animals

⁶⁶ Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 135.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*

⁶⁹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 3, 1834, IX, p. 22.

Chittenden, writing in 1901 without access to this definite information in Lee's *Advocate* letters, found difficulty in locating the exact site for the annual rendezvous of 1834. Chittenden, with remarkable accuracy, however, considering his lack of exact data, wrote, "There is no little confusion as to the precise location of this year's rendezvous, but from Wyeth's journals it seems to have been about 12 miles above the mouth of the Big Sandy in the valley of Green River. The parties, however, did not remain here but moved over to Hams Fork, a short day's march, on the 19th."

rested for nearly two weeks. Here Jason Lee witnessed, in the full flood of its tide, what was probably one of the most picturesque features of the American fur trade of the Far West, the annual rendezvous. These unique wilderness assemblages met in some green mountain valley for trade and merriment.

To the rendezvous came representatives of the fur companies, free or independent hunters from their distant mountain haunts, and Indians from various tribes. After the trafficking, the "mountain-men" went in for carousal. Men with impassive faces gambled at cards; flat liquor kegs⁷⁰ and whiskey bottles were emptied; and wildest revelry followed. The Indians joined in the gambling, horse-racing, and drunken quarrels. At the close of the week the fur-laden pack-animals and their owners returned to civilization and the trappers departed for their lonely mountain retreats.⁷¹

The rendezvous which Jason Lee witnessed in 1834, consisted of two companies of trappers and traders, which numbered about six hundred men. One of these companies represented a branch of the American Fur Company and was in charge of Andrew Drips and Lucien Fontenelle. The partners directing the operations for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company were Thomas Fitzpatrick, Milton Sublette, and James Bridger.⁷²

Perhaps the most vivid picture of this colorful trapping company was painted by Lee's youthful but discerning lay helper, Philip L. Edwards:

Here is the hardy mountain veteran who has ranged these wilds for more than thirty years. Reckless of all provision for the future, his great solicitude is . . . animal gratification. . . . A suit of clothes is seldom washed or turned from the time it is first worn until it is laid aside. Caps and hats are made of beaver and otter skins, and the skins of buffalo calves. . . . Some of these are fantastically ornamented with tails and horns. . . . Here the fringes are six and seven inches

⁷⁰ Flat kegs made to fit snugly against the side of a pack animal.

⁷¹ C. J. Brosnan, *History of the State of Idaho*, (New York, 1926), p. 50

⁷² Osborne Russell, *Journal of a Trapper* (Boise, 1915), p. 8.

long, and hung densely on every seam . . . both of hunting shirt and leggins. Indeed their weight is a great burden.⁷³

Letters home. Although busy with the routine duties of camp work, such as caring for his horses, cows, and mules, Jason Lee found the time to write informative letters to his Eastern friends. On Tuesday, July 2, 1834, he penned this diary entry: "This day sealed a long communication to Dr. Fisk [and others], and carried them down to Wm. Sublette's camp and he kindly took charge of them. May they safely reach those for whom they are designed."⁷⁴

Lee's long letter to Dr. Fisk safely reached "The States," the St. Louis postal stamp showing that it arrived in that city on September 1, 1834. According to the practice of the time, it was mailed without an envelope, but carefully folded and sealed, the address appearing on the last page, left blank for that purpose. After being carefully preserved at Wesleyan University for ninety-seven years, it was forwarded in January, 1931, to the present writer. The quaint effect of its yellowed and aged appearance is heightened by the fact that it is written in an old-fashioned vegetable "madder" red ink, and its even, smooth lines show the unmistakable evidences of a quill pen. This letter, written in a small, well-lined, and well-spaced script nearly a century ago from a green mountain valley near the Rocky Mountain rendezvous, reads as follows:

Rocky Mountains June 29, 1834

Respected and Dear Brother.

Through the goodness and mercy of the Christian's God, we are safe at Rendevous on Hams Fork, near the Colorado of the west, I think 1,500 mi. from St. Louis. I have just closed a communication for the *Advocate*, in which I have mentioned most of the interesting incidents of our journey, which in my judgement, are few, and far between.

We did not see so much as one band of hostile Indians on our

⁷³ Philip L. Edwards, Letter to Missouri *Enquirer*, in *California Historical Society Quarterly* (San Francisco, April-December, 1924), III, pp. 74, 75.

⁷⁴ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 141.

journey, and very few friendly after leaving the Kansas Agency. We got on very well for green hands, so much so, that we were no hinder to the Company, but according to the Capt., own confession, a benefit. He gives us the praise of getting along far better than he did, the first time he came to the country.

I would not have it mentioned to his injury, but the Capt. is a perfect infidel as it respects revealed religion. This I mistrusted some time since, but recently, of his own accord, he avowed his infidelity. You probably remember what was said in Boston concerning the roughness of the men, and the promise he made of saving us as much as possible from being annoyed by their profaneness; so far from fulfilling his promise, he indulges freely in the habit himself, though he says he is ashamed of it, not on moral principles, but on those of good breeding. Hence you may judge what kind of society we have been obliged to mingle with on our journey. But except that we have been treated with the greatest respect both by the Capt. and men.

The Capt. I must say has acted the part of a Gentleman towards us. He went to the place of Rendevous and returned before the company reached it. He came and informed me, that he heard, that the Indians threatened to "give them Missionaries Hell," and that he heard some thing of the kind himself, and advised us to say nothing to them on the subject of religion, for it was not possible to do them any good, and be careful not to give them the least reason, or excuse for abusing us, and if we were molested, to be *firm*, and not show the least symptoms of *fear*, adding that he did not want to get into a scrape on our account, or any other, but in case of abuse to call upon him, and rest assured that when men put themselves under his protection that he would not forsake them in the hour of danger. I replied that I *feared* no man, and as I intended to treat every man respectfully I apprehended no danger when men were sober, and when drunk, I would keep out of their way. As soon as we arrived, I went at once, to their Camp in Company with the Capt. and was never treated more kindly by any people in my life. The Gentlemen at the head of the Companies, though they frankly profess their opposition to our enterprise, yet they deny having made any threats, (though their men may have made some), and declare that men of our profession are the last they would think of abusing. I bless God I know that no weapon formed against us can prosper without his permission.

The last *Advocate* we received before we left, contained the account

of your reffermation in M[iddletown] and I rejoiced exceedingly on the reception of such glorious news. It reminds me of the refreshing seasons we enjoyed at Wilbraham in days gone by, and I trust that the Lord will make your University a nursery of piety, a fountain of virtue, where shall flow forth streams that shall water and replenish many parts of our unfruitful earth, that are now consuming by moral drowth. But their is one difficulty: many of your young men become so effiminate for want of proper exercise, and in consequence of too close application to their to their books, that they really think they have not physical force and energy enough to justify them in leaving their own *New England*, but they are mistaken on this subject. Send your pale and emaciated dispepticks a trip to the Rocky Mountains, and let them breath this pure atmosphere, and live a while on buffalo meat with out bread or sauce, and they will soon find that such a trip is far more beneficial to them than all their dieting, on all the apothacary stuff that was ever bought or sold. They will then be able to commence Missionary opperaions among the Snake, the Paw-nack, the Crow, and the Black Foot Indians, in either of which tribes I believe a Missionary would be perfectly safe, if the Indians would give him their countenance. You may think I am a little enthusiastic, but I can assure you, that many have left the states invalids, and in a few weeks entirely recovered their health. One man who looked as if he was far gone with the consumption came out with us, and now looks like another man, and a number of others who were pale and sallow now look fresh and healthy. We shall probable leave here on Tues. next.

Our horses were very much worn down, or rather starved when we arrived, so much so that some of us were obliged to walk a number of days. About 12 days from this we shall be beyond the range of buffalo, (which is here the staff of life,) and it will be necessary for us to dry, and take with us, enough to last to Vancouver, as we pass over some hundred miles where there is no game, we have therefore exchanged some of our goods for a mule, that we may be able to carry a sufficiency.

June 30th We do a proportional part of the hunting in conjunction with the Capt.'s hunters and the spoil is equally divided among all. Having the milk of two cows, and being careful not to waste our meat we have had plenty, but some of the messes have been very short sometimes not having a bite for a day or so. One day when

most of the Company had been fasting for some time, I providentially found, and killed an elk, which supplied us til we found buffaloe again.

The God of Missions is with us and still opens the way before and there can be little doubt that the Indians will receive gladness. But it is rather my opinion that it is easier converting a tribe of Indians at a *Missionary Meeting*, than in the wilderness. I think from what I learn of the situation of the Indians, and their readiness to receive instruction, that we shall soon send home the Macedonian cry, and I hope when it is known, that a trip over the Mountains is a catholican which cures all, that we shall not find it so difficult to get volunteers. I trust the Missionary flame is burning high in M. and in all the Churches. There is much for us as a church to do in this work, may we act well our part. Please pardon this hurried scrall for we have not the facilities for writing *here* that you have. Tell Br. Patten that I intended to write him but have been engaged making halters of buffaloe skins and found it so hard to prepare that I think I shall not have time. I hope you will be able to find a way of communicating with us through the Hudson Bay Companie's express, which I think will be the surest way. Letters sent this way will probably reach us, and in less time than any other way. I *talk* of letters, but when shall I have the pleasure of *seeing* them? Please give my love to all my acquaintance, and especially to Mrs. F. and Mrs. Toby. I hope I shaal have something more interesting when I write next.

Most Affely yours

W. Fisk.

JASON LEE.

"*Snake Country*." Resuming their westward march on July 2, the missionary party reached the Bear River on July 5, 1834, and with the Snake River as their objective proceeded in a westwardly direction along the valleys of the Bear and Portneuf rivers. On July 9, Lee writes that he met at the site of Soda Springs, Idaho, the famous Hudson's Bay brigade leader, Thomas McKay. With this noted leader of "Snake Country" expeditions, Lee was to have intimate and unusually friendly contact in the years immediately succeeding this first chance meeting in the heart of the Rocky Mountain country.⁷⁵

⁷⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37.

On the following day Lee encountered Captain B. L. E. Bonneville, another celebrity of the mountains. Bonneville was now in the third year of his Far Western fur-trading expedition, which, however, became more famous than significant. The meeting between Bonneville and Captain Wyeth, also an accidental one, led to a "series of hospitalities and a general buffalo hunt."⁷⁶

Continuing their descent of the rugged and picturesque valley of the Portneuf, on July 14 Wyeth's train reached the Snake River, another significant landmark in the overland journey to Oregon. Here in the fertile bottom lands formed by the junction of the Portneuf and Snake rivers, and about nine miles northwest of the present Pocatello, Idaho, the astute New England business man selected the site for a trading post. It was truly a strategic choice. On July 16, the construction of Fort Hall was begun.⁷⁷

Fort Hall. Wyeth's immediate purpose in erecting his post was to provide storage for his trading goods. This merchandise was unexpectedly left on his hands at the Green River rendezvous because of the refusal of some new members in control of the Rocky Mountain Fur Company to honor a contract made by their predecessors. The construction of a fur-trading fort was not a part of Wyeth's original plan but it brought him the distinction of being the only American to establish a trading post in the jointly occupied area. Because of overwhelming competition from the Hudson's Bay Company, Wyeth was forced to sell his post to these powerful rivals in 1836. During the twenty years of its eventful history (1836-1856) Fort Hall, together with Fort Laramie, became one of the most important stations on the Oregon Trail. During these two colorful decades a multitude of 300,000 travel-stained pioneers and adventurers passed by its hospitable sally port.

⁷⁶ Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, p. 425.

It is now known that Bonneville was in the Far West not merely on an individual fur-trading adventure, as pictured by Irving, but as an agent of the United States Government to spy out and report the operations of the Hudson's Bay Company in the jointly occupied Oregon country. See *Washington Historical Quarterly*, July, 1927, XVIII, pp. 207-230.

⁷⁷ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 210.

First Protestant religious service. During the two weeks' stay at Fort Hall, it fell to the lot of Jason Lee to be a leader in important transactions. In response to a request from Wyeth, he conducted a religious service at the fort on Sunday afternoon, July 27, the first formal Protestant religious observance to be held in the vast interior lying west of the Rocky Mountains. This meeting was held in a grove of poplar trees situated near the west wall of the fort. The congregation of about sixty persons consisted of Wyeth's party of white men and Thomas McKay's French-Canadian trappers and Indians. Mr. Lee, although tolerant of human frailties, had been much impressed by the intemperate drinking and eating habits of the "mountain men." It was doubtless this impression which inspired his selection, as the text for this occasion, of Paul's warning message to the Corinthians, "Whether, therefore, ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."⁷⁸

Cyrus Shepard's journal entry covering this first Protestant religious service in the Rocky Mountain region is unusually full. He wrote:

Mr. M'Coy [McKay], a gentleman in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, after which Jason Lee, by his request, held a meeting. . . . At the time appointed, about thirty Indians, and as many whites, came together to hear the word of the Lord. Brother Lee opened the meeting by reading the fifteenth Psalm, and singing the hymn beginning, 'The Lord of sabbath let us praise.' Prayer and an address followed by J. Lee. The congregation gave the most profound and solemn attention, and the whole scene was encouraging, being the first season of public worship I have enjoyed for nearly five long months.⁷⁹

The testimony of John K. Townsend, the Philadelphia physician and ornithologist, unaware as he was of the memorable character

⁷⁸ Z. A. Mudge, *The Missionary Teacher: A Memoir of Cyrus Shepard, Embracing a Brief Sketch of The Early History of the Oregon Mission*, p. 109; Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVIII, p. 241.

⁷⁹ Z. A. Mudge, *The Missionary Teacher: A Memoir of Cyrus Shepard*, pp. 108, 109.

of this outdoor religious ceremony, is a tribute to the spell cast that Sabbath afternoon by Jason Lee over his motley congregation:

The next day being the Sabbath, our good missionary, Mr. Jason Lee, was requested to hold a meeting, with which he obligingly complied. A convenient, shady spot was selected in the forest adjacent, and the greater part of our men, as well as the whole of McKay's company, including the Indians, attended. The usual forms of the Methodist service (to which Mr. L. is attached), were gone through, and were followed by a brief, but excellent and appropriate exhortation by that gentleman. The people were remarkably quiet and attentive, and the Indians sat upon the ground like statues. Although not one of them could understand a word that was said, they nevertheless maintained the most strict and decorous silence, kneeling when the preacher kneeled, and rising when he rose, evidently with a view of paying him and us a suitable respect, however much their own notions as to the proper and most acceptable forms of worship, might have been opposed to ours.

Townsend's reference to the easy-mannered missionary's standing with his Oregon Trail associates is a sincere tribute:

Mr. Lee is a great favorite with the men, deservedly so, and there are probably few persons to whose preaching they would have listened with so much complaisance. I have often been amused and pleased by Mr. L.'s manner of reproofing them for the coarseness and profanity of expression which is so universal amongst them. The reproof, although decided, clear, and strong, is always characterized by the mildness and affectionate manner peculiar to the man; and although the good effect of the advice may not be discernible, yet it is always treated with respect, and its utility acknowledged.⁸⁰

A funeral service. On the following day, Monday, July 28, at noon, Lee conducted a funeral service, also the first observance of this kind in the Rocky Mountain region. At the conclusion of the service on Sunday afternoon, there had been a series of horse

⁸⁰ J. K. Townsend, "Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains," reproduced in R. G. Thwaite's *Early Western Travels* (Cleveland, 1904-1906), pp. 228, 229.

rages between some of the Indians and half-breeds present, in which, through a collision between two of the riders, a half-breed by the name of Kanseau was killed. At the request of McKay, to whose brigade Kanseau belonged, Lee performed this obituary service. This is Lee's matter-of-fact reference to the occasion in his diary: "I attended at 12 o'clock, read the 90th Psalm, prayed, and then went to the grave, where I read a part of the fifteenth chapter of First Corinthians, and also read the burial service as found in our Discipline." In reporting this event to his Mission Board in a letter of February 6, 1835, Lee's account is still more vivid and intimate:

After service two of Mr. McKay's Canadians went out for a horse race, and while they were at full speed another, attempting to run with them, came in contact with the former, who was thrown from his horse and so injured that he knew nothing after and expired before morning. July 28. . . . Read the funeral service to all of both companies, who appeared very solemn. O that they would remember this, that they would think on their latter end.⁸¹

Fort Hall to Fort Walla Walla. On July 30, 1834, the missionaries left Fort Hall, escorted by Thomas McKay and his Hudson's Bay Company brigade. Wyeth remained behind in order to complete the erection of his fort. They proceeded westward down the south bank of the Snake River, over an unbroken sagebrush plain. Cyrus Shepard describes this portion of the "Snake Country" as a "dreary desert of six or seven hundred miles—sometimes scarcely affording verdure on the rivers, for the sustenance of our animals."⁸² From August 12 to August 18 they encamped on a large island in the Snake River, which afforded excellent pasturage, as it does to this day, for their jaded stock. This island, one of three at this point on the Snake River, marked the site of the future much-used Island Ford. It was at this point, a few years later, that the Snake River was usually forded by the thousands of immi-

⁸¹ Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37.

⁸² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 2, 1835, X, p. 23.

grants who journeyed to Oregon. From the ford the later road struck out across the lava plains to the northwest. Passing through the environs of Boise, the present capital of Idaho, it descended the Boise Valley, and again crossed the Snake at the ford near the future trading post, Old Fort Boise.

On Saturday evening, August 16, 1834, Thomas McKay called at Jason Lee's camp ostensibly to say good-by, since he had decided to remain in the vicinity until the following March in order to trade with the Indians and to trap beaver.⁸³ It is now known that McKay's real purpose was not to engage in a fur-trading expedition, but to set up a rival trading establishment in the Boise Valley area.

Fort Boise. McKay proceeded directly to the Boise or Reed River. On this famous beaver stream he erected the first Fort Boise, a simple log structure, situated about ten miles from the mouth of the Boise River and about three miles from the present town of Notus, Idaho. In 1838, the site of this post was changed to a location on the Snake River, near the junction of this stream and its tributary, the Boise River.

McKay was successful in his plan of drawing away from Fort Hall the Indian trade of the Boise River region. Before the close of the year 1836, Wyeth was forced, as already noted, to sell his post to his veteran competitor, the Hudson's Bay Company, whose sway was now undisputed in all the valleys of the Snake. From 1836 to 1856 the red banners of the great company floated in triumph over the battlements of both Fort Hall and Fort Boise.⁸⁴

On August 16, deprived now of McKay's friendly and helpful company, the persevering missionary band pushed on down the south bank of Snake River, and in the last week of August entered that scenic wonderland, Grande Ronde. Traveling northward through this circular valley, the Lees crossed the Blue Mountain

⁸³ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37; Mudge, *Memoir of Shepard*, p. 114.

⁸⁴ Miles Cannon, "Snake River in History," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XX, p. 15.

range, a real landmark in the far western reaches of their long trail journey. Directing their course now rather sharply to the northwest, they turned their expectant faces toward the Columbia, the "magnificent river, flowing silently and majestically on."⁸⁵ On the first day of September, 1834, at "nearly night" Jason Lee and his tired companions rode into the hospitable grounds of Fort Walla Walla. Although their arrival at Columbia waters marked the end of a land journey of more than 1,800 miles,⁸⁶ Jason Lee, with his characteristic New England reserve, made this matter-of-fact report of this event to his Mission Board:

Aug. 31. Expecting to reach Wallahwallah that night, we gave most of our little remaining stock of provisions to brother [s] Shepard and Edwards, and left them to move more slowly with the cows.— After traveling a few miles we learned from our Indian that we could [not] reach W. that night, and finding grass and water we camped.

Sept. 1. Started at day-break, and rode much faster than usual, but did not arrive at the fort till nearly night. I waited on the general, [P. C. Pambrun,] and made known our wants, and he immediately supplied us with food.⁸⁷

Fort Walla Walla. The missionary party spent September 2 and 3 at Fort Walla Walla, enjoying the hospitalities of Mr. P. C. Pambrun. On September 2, Jason Lee expresses pleasure in his journal upon Captain Wyeth's safe arrival at this fort.⁸⁸ During his two-day sojourn at this post, Mr. Lee made a fortunate arrangement with Mr. Pambrun whereby the serious problem of transporting his stock to Fort Vancouver was solved. Mr. Pambrun agreed to accept Lee's ten horses, four mules, and three cows in exchange for other stock, goods, and provisions to be delivered to the missionaries at Fort Vancouver.⁸⁹

Down the Columbia. On September 4, the Lees began their

⁸⁵ Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 278.

⁸⁶ Chittenden, *The American Fur Trade*, I, p. 481.

⁸⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*

⁸⁹ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 257.

voyage down the Columbia River in a Hudson's Bay Company barge, which a member of the Wyeth party had hired at Fort Walla Walla for the river journey to Fort Vancouver.⁹⁰ By September 9, the travelers, by employing Indians to portage their boat around the famous cataracts known as The Dalles, were able to resume their journey, although retarded, by heavy head winds and rain. On Sunday, September 14, they safely negotiated the portage at The Cascades, the last obstruction to navigation on the lower Columbia. At seven o'clock on the morning of Monday, September 15, 1834, Jason Lee entered upon the last day of his Columbia River voyage. Now long accustomed to magnificent scenery, Lee was nevertheless deeply impressed with the surpassing beauties which he saw on the broad stream on which he floated: "The Columbia is a grand and beautiful river. Below The Cascades the scenery is the most beautiful I ever beheld."⁹¹

Fort Vancouver. At three o'clock in the afternoon of this same day the travelers moored their barge on the gravelly beach in front of Fort Vancouver. On the shore stood Dr. John McLoughlin, who greeted the members of the little company and invited them to be his guests at Fort Vancouver. This meeting between McLoughlin and Jason Lee marked the beginning of a friendship never to be broken between the big-hearted chief factor of the Columbia River district of the Hudson's Bay Company and the "missionary to the Flat Heads."⁹²

⁹⁰ *Wyeth's Journal*, p. 232. The traveler of the Wyeth train who rented the boat was Sir William Drummond Stuart. See Townsend, *Narrative*, p. 197.

⁹¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37.

⁹² Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37.

CHAPTER IV

FOUNDING OF WILLAMETTE VALLEY MISSION, 1834-1837

Fort Vancouver. Fort Vancouver, with its fine spirit of hospitality, became the temporary headquarters for the missionaries, until they were able to select the site for their own mission house. Lee's supplies on Wyeth's brig, the *May Dacre*, reached the Columbia on September 16, the day following his arrival at Fort Vancouver. This fortunate coincidence enabled the missionaries to proceed with their plans at once.¹

Selection of a mission site. On September 18 the Lees began an inspection of the lower Willamette Valley, Dr. McLoughlin providing two guides, horses to ride, and provisions for the trip. They traveled by canoe down the Columbia to the mouth of the Willamette, thence up the Willamette River to Thomas McKay's farm. From this place with horses the missionaries continued their journey across the Tualitin Plains to the Chehalim Valley. At the junction of the Chehalim and Willamette rivers they swam their horses eastward across the latter stream, and entered from the north the famous French Prairie, dotted with about a dozen log houses belonging to retired Hudson's Bay Company trappers. At the southern fringe of this prairie and about ten miles northwest of the present Salem, the Lees chose a site for the Willamette Valley Mission on the east side of the river in a broad, rich bottom, well watered and well timbered. Cyrus Shepard, nearly a year later,² gives this description of it:

Our establishment is on the East side of the Willamette [the Multnomah of the maps] about sixty miles above its confluence with the

¹ Jason Lee, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37.

² October 7, 1835.

Columbia. There are seven or eight families of settlers within a few miles of us; these are Canadians and Roman Catholics, and have taken native women for their wives. . . . Our neighbors are very friendly, and several of them are desirous to have their children at school with us.³

Dr. McLoughlin's influence was doubtless the decisive factor in determining Jason Lee to build his mission in the valley of the Willamette. In his own writings he states:

In 1834 Messrs. Jason and Daniel Lee, and Messrs. Walker and P. L. Edwards came with Mr. Wyeth to establish a mission in the Flat-head country. I observed to them that it was too dangerous for them to establish a mission; that to do good to the Indians, they must establish themselves where they could collect them around them; teach them first to cultivate the ground and live more comfortably than they do by hunting, and as they do this, teach them religion; that the Willamette afforded them a fine field, and that they ought to go there, and they would get the same assistance as the settlers. They followed my advice and went to the Willamette, and it is but justice to these pioneers to say that no men, in my opinion, could exert themselves more zealously than they did till 1840, when they received a large reinforcement of forty (40) or more persons, then the new-comers began to neglect their duties, discord sprung up among them and the mission broke up.⁴

Jason Lee in his diary confirms this statement. "It is," writes Lee, "his [McLoughlin's] decided opinion that we should commence somewhere in this vicinity."⁵

The mission was attractively situated a few rods from the east bank of the river near a little grove of fir and oak trees. Behind it stretched a prairie two miles long and a half mile wide. For four weeks the missionaries lived in a tent and worked unceasingly on the construction of a shelter. The elder Lee gives a vivid picture of these weeks of labor:

³ *Zion's Herald*, July 13, 1836, VIII, p. 111.

⁴ Dr. John McLoughlin, "Copy of a Document," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880* (Salem, Oregon), p. 50.

⁵ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 262.

We landed where we now are in October 1834 and pitched our tents, unloaded our canoes, and commenced building a house. The rainy season was approaching, and I did not like the idea of living in an Indian hut. We labored under disadvantages, for we were not carpenters. We however went into the woods and cut the timber. We took the green trees and split them, and hewed out boards for our floors. If we wanted a door, a table, or a coffin, we had to do the same. We could not advance very swiftly, and we did not finish our house till after the rainy season had commenced.⁶

By November 3, they were able to move into the partly completed structure, although only ten feet of the roof was covered.

The mission house. The mission house itself was built of oak logs hewn only on the inside. This snug little structure was thirty-two feet long by eighteen feet wide, and a story and a half high. There were two rooms downstairs. The floors were split plank, hand hewn, the chimney was made of clay and sand, and there were four windows. The building was shingled with "shooks" split from a four-foot fir log. The green lumber was with great difficulty sawed by hand. The location of the mission proved unfortunate. It was erected so close to the Willamette River that it was eventually washed away by the stream.⁷ From 1835 to 1841, however, this house, with various additions, was the center of missionary life in Old Oregon.

A review of conditions at Lee's little mission house, the only center of American influence in the entire Oregon country to February, 1835, is vividly summarized in a letter Jason Lee wrote in the closing days of his first winter in the Willamette Valley to his beloved teacher and friend, Dr. Fisk. Discolored with age, but in sound condition, this three-page letter was received by the writer. The Canadian postage mark shows that it reached Montreal on October 14, 1835, seven months and eight days after Jason Lee sealed it at his far-away "mission house."

This pen picture of the Oregon of a century ago reads as follows:

⁶ Jason Lee's Boston speech, *Zion's Herald*, February 6, 1839, X, p. 22.

⁷ Gustavus Hines, *Oregon and Its Institutions* (New York, 1868), p. 140.

Mission House

Willamette River Feb. 6, 1835

My Dear Brother

After a long and somewhat fatiguing journey we landed safe Sept. 15 at Vancouver, where we met with the kindest reception from the Gentlemen of the H. B. Company. For an account of our journey I must refer you to the *Advocate*, where you will find it in detail. In a communication to Dr. Bangs, or rather to the Board, I have given some reasons for settling *here*, instead of going to the Flat Heads. We are doing little directly, as yet, to benefit the Indians, but we trust we are laying the *foundation* for extensive usefulness in future.

We have three Indian children, (orphans) under our care. One a boy of 17 or 18 years whom we got to take care of our animals, but his mother dying soon after, we were obliged to take his sister of 12 years to keep her from suffering. The third a boy of 13 years who came here and asked by signs so significantly to be permitted to remain with us that we could not refuse. We devote one hour each evening in teaching them to read and spell, and I think I never knew children make more rapid progress. I trust it will not be long before we shall have a flourishing school here, which I think is the most effectual means of benefiting these truly miserable beings. For there being no danger of hostile indians molesting them there is no necessity of their going in large bands. Hence they wander about in small parties where ever they can find roots and deer and are never long at one stay. I trust however that it will not be very difficult to bring them by degrees to cultivate the ground.

We have been labouring hard to build a house, and prepare ground for a crop. We shall probably cultivate 20 acres this season. I have requested the Board to send a man with a family to take charge of the farm, and by the time one can arrive we shall have it so arranged that it will not be so difficult as it now is. Though we think this establishment essentially necessary to the successful prosecution of our object, yet we still have our eyes on other places where the Indians are more numerous and enterprising than they are here.

I have requested the Board not to send any more *single men*, but to send men with *families*. I have also advised that Daniel's *chosen* be sent as soon as possible. A greater favour could not be bestowed upon this country, than to send to it pious, industrious, intelligent females.

I am not singular in this. The Gov. and other Gentlemen of the

H. B. Com. (though they have native wives) say that white females would be of the greatest importance to the mission, and would have far more influence among Indians than males.

If your opinion accords with ours I beg you to use your influence with the Board to cause them to send out some as soon as possible. Tell the Missionary Soc. of H.[artford] M.[iddletown] New Haven not to be discouraged in their labour of love, for they will reap in due time if they faint not. Could they see what *we* have seen, did *they* know what *we* know of the *wretchedness* and *misery* of their Red Brethren they would count it all joy, that they were able and willing to do something to alleviate such suffering, and prepare these poor Indians for the enjoyment of life *here*, but more especially, for the enjoyment of the life which is to come.

My love to all the Brethren of the University with fervant prayers for their welfare.

I send this by the H. B. Com's express which is the most regular and safe means of conveyance. You will please to direct [your letters] to Fort Vancouver to Care of James Keith Esq. Hon. H. B. Com. Lachine L.[ower] C.[anada] Letters should be there [at Lachine] the first of April. I desire very much to hear from you. My love to Sister Fisk and Daughter. And except [accept] for yourself my best wishes for your prosperity and success in your arduous and important work of moulding the minds of youth, and believe me ever

Affectionately Yours

J. LEE.

Rev. W. Fisk

On December 7, 1835, an addition to the original house was begun, but not completed until late the following spring. On March 14, 1836, Lee writes: "We have also added to our house a building fifteen by thirty-two feet. The roof is on and the chimney up, but we shall not be able to finish it until after seed time." * A log barn to house the grain was also built. This barn, forty feet long and thirty-two feet wide, was a more comfortable building than the house. Its floors and doors were made of sawed lumber. Two men who came with Hall J. Kelley from California

* Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 2, 1836, XI, p. 6.

were hired to saw this lumber by hand. The barn, like the house, was shingled with "shooks." ⁹

The missionaries' food during their first Oregon winter was limited in amount and primitive in quality. It consisted of unleavened cakes, made of flour from Vancouver, peas obtained from the settlers, pork from the brig *May Dacre*, a small amount of milk from the missionaries' cows, and venison secured from the Indians.

In the spring of 1835 thirty acres of prairie land were plowed and fenced and planted with seed furnished by Dr. McLoughlin, who had also loaned cattle consisting of seven oxen, one bull, eight cows, and their calves.¹⁰ Considerable time was spent in the cultivation of the small thirty-acre farm. The crops were sufficient to provide food for the missionaries as well as a number of Indian children. In the fall of 1835 preparations were made to expand the farming operations, and twenty-seven bushels of late wheat were sowed. Jason Lee recognized the fertility of the soil. On February 6, 1835, he wrote to the Mission Board: "The land here produces good wheat, peas, barley, oats, beans, and potatoes, but Indian corn does not flourish well."¹¹ In the fall of 1836 the missionaries sowed a larger crop of wheat and gradually they brought under cultivation a large farm, which furnished the livelihood of the mission family.

The Indian Mission School. A notable feature of the mission settlement during those early years was Cyrus Shepard's Indian School. Shepard began, on March 7, 1835,¹² a remarkable career which was terminated by his untimely death on January 1, 1840. The history of his life during that five-year period is the history of the first Oregon Indian Mission School. Shepard was exceptionally qualified for his task and was undoubtedly the most successful and consecrated of all the workers associated with Lee's

⁹ Charles H. Chapman, *The Story of Oregon and Its People* (Chicago, 1909), p. 74.

¹⁰ Dr. John McLoughlin, "Copy of a Document," *Oregon Pioneer Transactions for 1880*, p. 51.

¹¹ Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 30, 1835, X, p. 37.

¹² Cyrus Shepard, letter, *Zion's Herald*, October 28, 1835, VI, p. 170.

missionary enterprise in Oregon. That his intelligent and heroic efforts did not result in notable missionary achievements was due to the impoverished and diseased condition of the disappearing race with which he labored. The five years of service which Cyrus Shepard gave to the Indian Mission School entitle him to the distinction of being Oregon's first great teacher.¹³

Indian charges. During the winter of 1835 Jason Lee began to accept natives as members of the mission family. Three orphan Indian children were his first charges. In a letter written on January 10, 1835, Cyrus Shepard gave an intimate account of their arrival at the mission house, as follows:

The special providence of God has, already, seemed to throw upon our care three poor Flathead orphans; one, a lad of fourteen or fifteen years of age, who is quite serviceable in several ways. The other two are apparently about seven years of age; one is sister to the above mentioned lad, and they are the only survivors of the family to which they belonged; to this girl we have given the name of *Lucy Hedding*. The other is a very flat-headed boy, and has neither parent, brother, nor sister. He came one day to the mission-house, and, in the most imploring manner, asked in Indian, and by signs, to stay and live with us; and though food will naturally be rather scarce with us for the present, yet such importunities cannot be turned away. Providence, we trust will provide means of support, till we can raise something to subsist on. These children came to us almost naked, in a very filthy state, and covered with vermin. The girl had no other covering than a small piece of deerskin over her shoulders, and a deep fringe of the same material tied round her waist. I made her a gown (though not a very fashionable one) from some pieces of tow-cloth, which had been used for baling our goods; and *J. Lee* cleansed them from their vermin, so that they do not now appear like the same children they were when they first came.¹⁴

The mission school. The mission school was much more than an educational institution. Most of the children lived at the mission

¹³ Z. A. Mudge, *The Missionary Teacher: A Memoir of Cyrus Shepard*, pp. 203-221.

¹⁴ *Zion's Herald*, October 28, 1835, VI, p. 170.

house, where they were fed and clothed, in addition to receiving moral and religious training. Upon Shepard's arrival at the Willamette station he became mainly responsible for the care of the mission family. Until the coming of the first reinforcement to his primary task as teacher, he added the busy rôles of mission steward, physician, and nurse.¹⁵

Teaching facilities were limited. Slates and old textbooks donated by mission friends in the East constituted the schoolroom equipment, and gradually, through Shepard's efforts, a juvenile library for the use of the school was collected.¹⁶ Mr. Shepard did not begin giving daily instruction until the fall of 1835. In 1836, his school consisted of nineteen Indians. These children of the Oregon country received daily instruction in spelling, reading, committing the catechism, and singing hymns. In addition to regular teaching duties, Shepard also conducted a Sunday school, which by October, 1836, had fifty-three members.¹⁷ All instruction was carried on in English. This doubtless retarded the learning process, but since a number of different dialects were spoken by the Indian children, the use of English was preferable to using the Indian language.

On March 15, 1836, Lee wrote one of his confiding, intimate letters to his friend, Dr. Fisk. This letter, carried by Hudson's Bay Express eastward across Canada, did not reach Montreal until August 13, 1836—almost six months from the time it left the mission house. The plainly stamped Canadian postmark bears the legend: "Steamboat. Montreal, Lower Canada, Aug. 13, 1836." The postage charges were eighteen cents.

A significant letter. This letter is significant because it discloses realistically those lonely spring days of 1836, and describes a trying interval before the arrival of the first reinforcement of mission helpers. Lee and Shepard, both unwell themselves, were busy caring for their invalid Indian charges. Daniel Lee was con-

¹⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 30, 1840, XV, p. 28.

¹⁶ *Zion's Herald*, April 17, 1839, X, p. 62.

¹⁷ This Sunday school was established April 5, 1835, with seventeen members. *Zion's Herald*, July 19, 1837, VIII, p. 114.

valescing in the Sandwich Islands. Philip L. Edwards was teaching a small school of Indian and half-caste children twelve miles away. This letter, describing so vividly the "dark before the dawn" period of Old Oregon's first mission, was forwarded to the writer in February, 1931, from the recently discovered Lee-Fisk correspondence at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.

It is reproduced here in print for the first time:

Mission House
Willamette River
15 March 1836

My Dear Brother

I proposed to write you per Brig *May Dacre* but was prevented by ill health.

We have received but three letters from the east since we crossed the Mountains, two from N. Y. one from Canada. All by the St. Louis route were intercepted in the Mountains. This, situated as we are, was indeed a great disappointment, but there is no alternative.

Did I not think that the interest you have formerly taken in my welfare, lays me under obligation to write, and that the lively interest you feel in the success of this Mission imperatively demands a line from me, I will frankly confess, that such is my aversion to writing, that I should lay aside my pen. And more especially as I have nothing very cheering to communicate concerning our success and prospects. We have much to hinder, and some things to discourage, in our enterprise. My courage has sometimes been diminished, and my faith weakened, but they have never *failed*. But I find it much harder walking by faith than by sight. The truth is we have no evidence that we have been instrumental in the conversion of one soul, since crossing the Mountains, and this being the object, and end, of the Gospel Ministry, the faithful herald of the cross, must most devoutly wish, and diligently labour for, the salvation of souls; and he cannot *but* feel straitened, if he is placed in circumstances where he is not permitted to see the accomplishment of this most desirable object.

Such circumstances subject him to many temptations from the aversary; and besides, how is he to satisfy others, that he is in the way of duty, unless he can point them to the fruit of his labours, and say, behold these who *were* dead in trespasses and sins, now live, and the

lives which they *now* live they live by faith in the Son of God? But I would not have you infer, that because we have not done what we most ardently wished, and you, and others, doubtless expected the Lord would enable us to do, that therefore we have done nothing. You will see by my communication to Dr. Bangs that we have not spent our strength entirely for naught. Indeed if our temperance reformation succeed, as there is every prospect now that it will do; it is worth crossing the Rocky Mountains for. I was fully satisfied before we left the U. S. that our church, and others, had their expectations too much excited in respect to this Mis. and that they must necessarily meet with a great disappointment, but I am now convinced, that it will be greater than I then anticipated.

In the first place, we are not in the place they were looking at; and I have had many foolish fears, that they would ascribe our choice of location, to some other motive beside the true one; though I know there was not one of us who would not have preferred going to the Mountains, if we had been convinced that the finger of Providence pointed that way.

And again, we cannot tell of a glorious reformation, and of hundreds of Indians converted to God; this also will be a sad disappointment. But having acted conscientiously in this matter, I leave the result with him who knows the end from the beginning. Since I have been here I have been labouring almost every day building or farming, and hence, I have not had an opportunity of collecting information concerning the Indians which I greatly desired to collect, and which wo[u]ld no doubt prove interesting to your readers. If you ask why I have devoted so much time to temporals, I can only say because I judged it expedient. Send us lay-men to attend to temporals, and I will gladly attend to spirituals to the best of my ability. There is not a man in this place that *can be hired* that is *fit* to be in a *mission family*.

We labour under many disadvantages. There is no Physician within 60 mi. Brother Shepard is unwell with an influenza, and I have been obliged to leave my letters, frequently, to day to look after household affairs, to make bread &c. and even now though it is 10 o'clock P. M. I have frequently to leave my letter to wait upon the sick.

But after all, I feel greatly encouraged with regard to this mis. We shall soon be in a way of supporting a large school, and if we get help

from home, (I do not speak of money, but of *men* and *women*), we shall be able to do a great deal in this way; for I verily believe that we can support a school here with less expense than in any other place that ever I was in. And if there is a place on the Earth w[h]ere missionaries are needed, it is here. And I do think if the Lord spares our lives, and gives us health, that we shall lay a foundation for usefulness, that shall tell down to generations yet unborn.

That the Indians are a scattered, periled, and deserted race, I am more and more convinced; for it does seem, that unless the God of heaven undertake their cause, they must perish from off the face of the Earth, and their name be blotted out from under heaven. God grant that a remnant may be saved, as trophies of the Gospel of Christ, and for a seed to serve him. Please remember me in much love to the Missionary Soc'y of H.[artford] M.[iddletown] & New H.[aven] and tell them not to be weary in well doing, for they shall reap in due time, if they faint not.

I beg to be remembered to any of the students of my acquaintance who remain with you. I wished very much to write to some of them, but my time is so occupied that I cannot do it.

Do write as often, and as much as possible. There is a direct way of communication once a year per Express of the Hudson Bay Com. and they are willing to take *all* the *letters* that our friends may please to send. I informed you in my last that their Agent resides at Lachine L.[ower] C.[anada]. My kind and christian regards and *love* to Sister Fisk, And believe me to be

Most Sincerely & Affectionately

Your JASON LEE.

First reinforcements. In May, 1837, with the arrival of the first reinforcement, the mission became more comfortable and homelike. Among the members of this new group was Susan Downing of Lynn, Massachusetts, fiancée of Cyrus Shepard at the time of his departure for Oregon. On July 16, 1837, they were married by the Rev. Jason Lee. Mrs. Shepard, a young woman of attractive appearance and pleasant disposition, was well satisfied with her life in the far west. In the November, 1838, issue of a monthly magazine published at Lynn, in a letter quoted from *Zion's Herald*

she reported "intense satisfaction with the country and her condition and her desire to remain there as a teacher."¹⁸

The mission school, 1837. Mr. H. K. W. Perkins, a member of the second Oregon reinforcement, furnishes this intimate description of the Indian school as he found it in 1837:

I wish I could make you acquainted with brother Shepard's school, as it was when I first visited the country. I wish I could make you see the very log-house, the school room, the chambers where the children slept, the little clapboard bedsteads, if bedsteads they could be called, the loose straw in which they nestled, the dining-room, the table, the bits of coarse bread, and basins of soup, as they used to be placed regularly along from one end of it to the other, and last, though not least interesting, to see the good man [Shepard] quietly seated at the board sharing the fare with them. I wish I could introduce you to them, as he knelt with them and offered up evening and morning prayers, that you might hear them while they sing, and listen to the simple, artless instruction they receive. The scene would impress upon your mind a vivid idea of the beauty of goodness.¹⁹

Another important activity of the mission school was the manual instruction given the Indian children. The girls were taught to sew and cook, while the boys were taught to cultivate the soil. William A. Slacum in his report states: "Several of the larger boys work on the farm in warm weather. They can plough, reap and do all ordinary farm work well—several of them evince good mechanical genius."²⁰

Cyrus Shepard, born teacher that he was, early realized that the best approach to the problem of imparting instruction to the Indians was to assist the native children to understand English. He found that, once the language barriers were surmounted, his little Indian charges became receptive to instruction and advanced promisingly in their studies. In communicating with the Indian adults, the so-called "jargon" was employed as the language

¹⁸ *Zion's Herald*, July 19, 1837, VIII, p. 114.

¹⁹ Mudge, *Memoir of Shepard*, pp. 196, 197.

²⁰ Slacum's Philadelphia Address, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 4, 1839, XIII, p. 77.

medium. Miss Margaret Smith, an effective teacher at Old Mission near the close of Cyrus Shepard's period of service, has left this instructive reference to the "jargon":

There is, however, a kind of jargon spoken and learned for purposes of trade, which is familiar to several tribes, and easily acquired, by which some knowledge of their lost condition may be communicated to the adults. I will give you a specimen of it, and also of my short sermon I sometimes preach to one or more when they happen in my path. Mican tum-tum Cloosh? (Your heart good?) Mican tum-tum wake cloosh. (Your heart no good.] Alaka mican ma-ma lose. (Bye-and-bye you die.) Mican tum-tum cloosh mican clatamay Sakalatie. (Your heart good you go to God.) Mican clatamay sayyah; hiyas wake cloosh Schochen. (Go ye great way off; very bad devil.) Sakalatie mamoke tum-tum cloosh. (God make heart good.) Wah-wah Sakalatie. (Speak to God.) Sakalatie mamoke hiyas cloosh mican tum-tum. (God make very good your heart.) Hiyack wah-wah Sakalatie. (Quick speak to God.)²¹

Jason Lee considered that in the mission family and mission school lay his greatest hope for the conversion of the Indians. His Indian charges, after being fed, clothed, and taught, were given English names, usually names prominent in Methodism, for example, "Wilbur Fisk," "Osmon C. Baker," and "Elijah Hedding."²² So long as Cyrus Shepard, under Lee's supervision, had special care of the children, the school was successful.²³ During Lee's eastern tour, however, Shepard, never physically strong, was the victim of a scrofulous infection which necessitated the amputation of his leg. He did not long survive the operation. He died on January 1, 1840, leaving his wife, Susan Downing Shepard, and two infant daughters.²⁴ His oft-repeated wish was at last fulfilled: "to live and die in this blessed cause."²⁵

Until 1842, two years after Shepard's death, the mission school

²¹ Letter from Margaret J. Smith, dated "Fort Vancouver, April 10th, 1838" in *Oregonian and Indian's Advocate*, November, 1838, I, pp. 58-61.

²² *Zion's Herald*, July 19, 1837, VIII, p. 114.

²³ H. K. Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 250.

²⁴ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 30, 1840, XV, p. 28.

²⁵ *Zion's Herald*, October 28, 1835, VI, p. 171.

continued to be conducted at the original Willamette station. But with the transferring of the mission headquarters to Chemeketa in 1841, a building was erected called "The Indian Manual Labor Training School." The structure cost \$10,000, and was for many years the most imposing building in the Oregon country.²⁶ The school continued until 1844, and during the ten years of its existence rendered devoted service to the Indians in its vicinity. By 1844, there had been a gradually serious falling off in attendance owing to the rapid decline in the Indian population. When George Gary superseded Lee in 1844, he decided that the decreased attendance did not justify its continuance,²⁷ and on June 26 sold the school property for the small sum of \$3,000 to the trustees of the Oregon Institute, later the Willamette University. This property consisted of the Manual Training School building²⁸ and one square mile of land on which it was located.

Oregon Temperance Society. In all contacts between the white man and the Indian the introduction of intoxicating liquor plays a discreditable part. It is not strange, therefore, that on February 11, 1836, the settlers in the vicinity of the mission organized a temperance society.²⁹ Three settlers signed the pledge that day. About a year later, on January 2, 1837, the Oregon Temperance Society played an important part in postponing the entry of liquor and the liquor business into the Oregon communities.³⁰

²⁶ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 250-251.

²⁷ *Ibid.*

²⁸ *Ibid.*

²⁹ Oregon Mission Record Book, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIII, p. 242.

³⁰ For a detailed account of this incident, and a tribute to Jason Lee's pioneering service to the cause of temperance, see Appendix II.

CHAPTER V

MISSION GROWTH

Beginning of Oregon's cattle industry. Jason Lee early recognized that the possession of cattle was fundamental in the economic life of the mission settlement. The Hudson's Bay Company had been most kind in furnishing some cattle, but it was against the rules of the company to sell stock to any one. Previous to 1836, the only cattle in Oregon were the property of the Hudson's Bay Company. On January 12, 1837,¹ therefore, Mr. Lee called a meeting at the mission house and brought about the organization of a joint stock company in order to raise money and send men to California to purchase cattle. The whole amount of money raised was approximately \$2,700. Jason Lee invested \$400 for the mission;² Dr. McLoughlin invested nearly \$900 for the Hudson's Bay Company,³ and Lieutenant William A. Slacum⁴ invested \$500 in his own name. The settlers made up the remainder of the amount. Articles of agreement were drawn up. A pioneer, Ewing Young, because of his knowledge of California, commanded the party. Philip L. Edwards of the mission served as treasurer of the company.

Lieutenant Slacum offered free transportation to California, on his brig *Loriot*, to the men who were to purchase the cattle, and the offer was gladly accepted. Jason Lee accompanied the small band of eleven men to the mouth of the Willamette, where the *Loriot* was anchored, and on January 22, 1837, offered a farewell

¹ Oregon Mission Record Book, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIII, p. 251.

² Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, June 9, 1837, XI, p. 166.

³ Dr. John McLoughlin, "A Copy of a Document," *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880*, pp. 7, 51.

⁴ Federal Agent in Oregon. See Appendix II.

prayer on the quarter-deck for the success of their pioneering cattle venture. The brig then slipped its moorings and started on its way to the Spanish province of California.⁵

In California, Young and Edwards bought eight hundred head of cattle, three hundred head from the mission at San Francisco and five hundred head from the San José mission. After innumerable difficulties and hardships in driving these wild Spanish cattle overland through a primitive wilderness they succeeded in reaching Oregon with six hundred and thirty of the original eight hundred head of stock, in mid-October, 1837. These cattle were distributed to the stockholders in the company at \$7.67 a head.⁶ The introduction of this band of mission cattle marked the beginning of an independent economic life for the American settlers. It also laid the foundation of Oregon's livestock and dairying industries. Since Jason Lee's time cattle have become a leading source of Oregon's wealth.⁷

Lieutenant Slacum's own account of his part in introducing cattle into Old Oregon was told at Jason Lee's widely advertised missionary meeting at Philadelphia, at which Lee and Slacum were the principal speakers. Slacum's address, delivered only two years after the event, possesses the vividness and charm of a contemporary narrative, recited by the leading actor in the transaction:

In the course of conversation with Mr. Lee, Young, and other settlers, I found that nothing was wanting to secure comfort, wealth, and every happiness to the people of this most beautiful country but the possession of neat cattle—all those in the country being owned by the Hudson Bay Company, who refuse to sell them under any circumstances whatever. I then proposed to give to as many of the settlers as chose to embark in the *Loriot* a free passage to California, where they might purchase cattle at three dollars per head. The advantage of being landed in California free of expense and the risk of the road were very great. A meeting was accordingly held in the lower settlement. Mr. Young was appointed leader of the party.

⁵ Philip L. Edwards, *Diary*, MS. (Bancroft Library), p. 2.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-44.

⁷ R. C. Clark, R. H. Down, and G. V. Blue, *A History of Oregon* (Chicago, 1926), pp. 342-345.

All the settlers who had money due them from the Hudson Bay Company contributed to the enterprize. Ten men embarked in the *Loriot*, and were landed safely at Bodega, on the 20th of February. I advanced Mr. Lee five hundred dollars. This sum, added to the contributions of the settlers, produced sixteen hundred dollars, a sum sufficient to purchase five hundred head of cattle in California. I will here remark that when I parted with Mr. Young, at Monterey, on the 2d of March, he had every prospect of procuring all the cattle he required, on the north side of the Bay of St. Francisco. He had likewise received propositions from several Americans residing at California, to return with him to the Willamette with their stock of cattle; thus doubly reinforcing the settlement from this accession which the party will receive in California.

They will doubtless reach the Willamette in June, the distance by the coast of the Pacific being about six hundred miles. The men are all experienced woodsmen.

I certainly view this measure as one of the highest importance to the future growth and prosperity of this fine country, even if no other object is attained by my visit to the Columbia. In conclusion, I will only add that the day that witnessed Jason Lee's descent from the Rocky Mountains was a day of gladness and joy to those among whom he has cast his lot; and it will now be for you, my friends, to assist to perpetuate the glorious work in which *he* has periled every thing to give life and light to those who were in utter darkness.⁸

The serious need for cattle at the mission and the food problems solved by the arrival of the California band of cattle are strikingly revealed in a letter written by Mrs. Anna Maria Lee:

Mission House, Willamette,
October 26, 1837

Dear Brother George:

Another opportunity presents itself for sending letters home, which I hasten to improve. . . . In my last communication, which I sent by way of England, I have given you a history of my marriage. George, I hope you are as happy with your wife as I am with my husband. I have a large family to attend to, the care of which comes upon me. I find myself much engaged with domestic concerns. I have just been

⁸ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 4, 1839, XIII, p. 77.

baking an oven full of pumpkin pies and ginger bread. I wish you had a piece, they are good. We have a good vegetable garden. We cooked a beet that weighed eleven pounds. What do you think of that?

We have but a few young apple trees. We occasionally get some fruit from the fort. We are not deprived of comforts here in this respect, but by being industrious we may eat of the good of the land. Beef is scarce, and all the cattle that the settlers here have used belong to the fort. They would not sell, but lend as many as any person wishes to use. A cattle company was established by the people in the vicinity in which Mr. Lee became a stockholder for the mission. They were sent to California and returned by land with 700 head of cattle. They purchased them very low, but they have had losses and dangers to encounter. Mr. Lee is a man of business, I assure you; he is pressed down with cares. We will have eighty head of cattle—we will have plenty of milk and butter in the future. I have made twelve pounds of butter a week since I have been here, but our cows seem to fail now. We cannot make soap on account of not having fat and have been obliged to pay fifteen cents a pound at the fort; vinegar 12 shillings a gallon; the best loaf sugar for 15 cents a pound. Some things may be obtained at a moderate price. Money here is of no use—beaver skins are the money here. They are taken to Vancouver and sold for two dollars and twenty cents, and perhaps at home would bring ten dollars—that is the way the traders get rich.

I send this by a gentleman who crossed the mountains with Mr. Lee, and has resided there ever since. Well, what more shall I say, than to tell you to be good, do good and get good. . . . May the Lord bless and prosper you and give you that better part which shall never be taken from you. So prays your sister in the bonds of nature and love.

ANNA MARIA LEE.⁹

G. W. Pittman

Missionary reinforcements. Somewhat earlier than the purchase of the cattle, the first group of Oregon missionary reinforcements sailed in July, 1836, from Boston harbor in the *Hamilton*, under the leadership of Dr. Elijah P. White, the first physician to join the Willamette Mission. The party included Dr. White's wife and son; Miss Susan Downing, who was engaged to marry Cyrus

⁹ Francis H. Grubbs, *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, pp. 68-70.

Shepard; Miss Anna Maria Pittman, who later became the wife of Jason Lee; Miss Elvira Johnson, who later married Rev. H. K. W. Perkins; and Alanson Beers, blacksmith, wife and three children; and the popular W. H. Willson, a ship carpenter from New Bedford. A voyage of almost exactly five months brought the *Hamilton* to Honolulu on December 23, 1836. There they were detained nearly four months, no suitable vessel being available. Their enforced stay at "the Islands" was made pleasant through the hospitalities extended to them by the American Board missionaries stationed there.¹⁰ Passage was at last obtained on a vessel bound for the Columbia River, and the mission recruits arrived at Fort Vancouver on May 28, 1837. There Jason Lee met them, and preparations were immediately made to start for the Willamette station. By canoe and on horseback, they traveled toward their destination. At Champoege, Dr. White received a message from Daniel Lee, who was at the station, requesting him to come on in advance of the others in order to attend the sick. Dr. White accordingly hurried along and immediately upon his arrival at the Willamette station began his duties as mission doctor.¹¹

Dr. White. Dr. White remained at his post of mission doctor for three years. In 1840, "due to an honest difference of opinion"¹² with Jason Lee, according to Dr. White's version of the affair, he resigned and returned to the United States on board the ship *Lausanne*. An Oregon pioneer gives this penetrating characterization of the man: "Dr. White was sycophantic, but he had some very good points. He was ready to relieve you if he knew you needed relief. You would first have to convince him of the fact. He was kind and openhearted in his way; not very bright; slow of perception, but able to jump at a conclusion."¹³

¹⁰ Dr. White letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 24, 1837, XII, p. 59.

¹¹ A. J. Allen (comp.), *Ten Years in Oregon; Travels and Adventures of Dr. E. White and Lady* (Ithaca, 1850), p. 10.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 131.

¹³ Sidney W. Moss, *Narrative and Remarks*, MS. (in Bancroft Library), p. 2.

"It was his [Jason Lee's] opposition to the expenditure of Dr. White [on the hospital building at Old Mission] that incensed that gentleman against him [Lee]." Lee before his mission board in *Lee Manuscript Collection*, Oregon Historical Society, p. 86.

Marriage of Jason Lee and Anna Maria Pittman. Previous to the arrival of the Methodist missionaries, there were but two kinds of marriages in Oregon: tribal marriage, practiced by the natives, and contract marriage, sponsored by the Hudson's Bay Company. The native purchased his future wife from her father, paying for her in ponies, blankets, or buffalo robes. The wife thus acquired became her husband's property to do with as he pleased. Many of the Hudson's Bay Company servants married Indian women by a civil contract. Both parties signed a document witnessed by two persons and approved by Dr. John McLoughlin. A copy of one of these quaint marriage contracts in the handwriting of Peter Skene Ogden has been preserved. It recalls for a later generation the primitive conditions that prevailed in those early days when Jason Lee helped to break the solitude of that distant region.

Civil marriage contract.

In presence of the undersigned witnesses I Archibald McKinlay a clerk in the service of the Hon^{bl} Hudsons Bay Company late of Scotland and now residing at Ft Vancouver Columbia River do voluntarily and of my own free will and accord take Sarah Julia Ogden daughter of Peter Skene Ogden to be my lawful Wife and the said Sarah Julia Ogden also voluntarily and of her own free will and accord takes the said Archibald McKinlay to be my lawful Husband

Witnesses

Arch^d McDonald

Arch^d McKinlay

Alex^d C. Andrews

Sarah Julia Ogden

Ft Vancouver Columbia River

June 1840

John McLoughlin

C F H B Co ¹⁴

The marriage of Jason Lee and Anna Maria Pittman marks the beginning of Christian marriage in Oregon. On Sunday morning, at eleven o'clock on July 16, the mission family, the members of

¹⁴ A Hudson's Bay Company Marriage Certificate. Editorial Notes by T. C. Elliott, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, September, 1909, X, pp. 325-331. Opposite p. 331 Dr. Elliott furnishes a facsimile reproduction of a marriage certificate. John B. Horner, *Days and Deeds in the Oregon Country* (Portland, 1928), pp. 99-100.

the mission school, consisting of thirty or forty Indian children, French Canadians, Indians, and half-breeds assembled in a grove of small fir and oak trees near the mission house. After the singing of the old hymn, "When all thy mercies," Daniel Lee performed the ceremony uniting in marriage Jason Lee and Anna Maria Pittman.¹⁵

Death of Mrs. Lee. These two had met for the first time in Old Oregon at Fort Vancouver upon the arrival of the first Oregon mission reinforcement. Miss Pittman, fulfilling a long-deferred hope, had come to join the Willamette mission as teacher. Less than two months later she was united in marriage to the superintendent of the Oregon Mission, Jason Lee, and one year later she died in childbirth. Her husband was at the time on his way East, heroically urged on by his brave wife to a trip that was felt to be imperative in the interests of the mission. Anna Maria Pittman Lee was the first white woman to die in the Oregon country.

The David Leslie party. The second reinforcement for Lee's Oregon Mission arrived in Oregon on September 7, 1837. The leading figure of this missionary company was the Rev. David Leslie. He was accompanied by his wife and three young daughters. Other members of the party were Rev. H. K. W. Perkins, a young New England minister, and Miss Margaret J. Smith, of Saugus, Massachusetts, who was to fill a post as mission teacher. This party had sailed from Boston on January 24, 1837, on the brig *Peru*.¹⁶ Spirited farewell meetings had been held in Boston in honor of these New England missionaries. With frequent stops, which probably delayed their arrival about a month, they finally reached Honolulu on July 30, after a voyage of one hundred and eighty-seven days. At Honolulu, Leslie obtained passage on a Hudson's Bay Company ship bound directly for Fort Vancouver,

¹⁵ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 123, Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 149. The Pittmans originally spelled their name with one "t." Because of the presence of so many families in New York City, who used the one "t," Anna Maria Pittman's family began spelling their name with the double "t" early in the nineteenth century.

¹⁶ Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 161.

at what he considered the nominal sum of eight hundred dollars. Sailing from the Sandwich Islands in early August on the *Sumatra*,¹⁷ the Leslie party was greeted at Fort Vancouver by Jason Lee, Cyrus Shepard, and Dr. White, and a few days later set out for the Willamette station, the scene of their future labors.

David Leslie's Oregon career was long and notable. "Father" Leslie, as he was later called, upon his arrival at Willamette immediately assumed his duties as Superintendent Lee's assistant at the station. During Lee's frequent absences he served as acting superintendent, in full charge of the mission.

¹⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 22, 1837, XII, p. 70.

CHAPTER VI

LEE'S EASTERN TRIP, 1838

The future of the Pacific Coast. As early as 1838 Jason Lee realized that however useful his Indian mission was as an agency for the Christianization of Old Oregon's Indians, or however important it was to carry the gospel to the soul of even a single red man lying in darkness, the ultimate good of a great new white civilization on the Pacific Coast was of greater moment. Although Jason Lee did not for a moment lose sight of the need of serving and uplifting the diseased and vanishing red races committed to his charge, yet he felt the need of enlarging his mission program to include the more distant and certain goal of ministering to the incoming race of American pioneers.

It is thought by several careful writers that Slacum's visit in January, 1837,¹ was influential in strengthening Lee in this conclusion for the establishment of Christianity and a white civilization in Oregon. This conviction, however, was but one of the several reasons for Lee's desire to go East in person. The growing interest in Oregon was intensified by the extension of the Treaty of 1818 through the Convention of 1827. A full decade under this unusual joint-occupancy arrangement had already elapsed by 1837.

There was still another reason. Because of the great distance that lay between the Willamette Valley and the office of the Mission Board in New York City, it seemed almost impossible for Lee to present effectively by correspondence the needs of the mission. His plan of making the long journey in person met with the unanimous approval of his mission colleagues. They, too, recognized that he needed to hold personal conferences with the Board

¹ See Appendix II, part 2.

of Managers of his missionary society.² Mr. Lee also believed that if he were present in the East he could aid the board in raising funds for the Oregon mission, through his personal appeals to eastern missionary audiences.³

From Oregon to the Missouri frontier. So it was that, on March 26, 1838, with Philip L. Edwards and two Indian boys, Thomas Adams and William Brooks, Lee descended the Willamette River by canoe. He made a short six-day visit at Fort Vancouver, but contrary to many reports he was not greeted by his generous friend, Dr. McLoughlin. The big-hearted host of Fort Vancouver was then absent on an extended visit to England. At Vancouver, the Lee party was joined by Mr. F. Y. Ewing, a well-known citizen of Missouri, who was in Oregon for his health. By another canoe voyage, Lee ascended the Columbia River, reaching The Dalles mission⁴ on April 7. Here he made a brief two-day visit at the recently erected mission station, which was in charge of his nephew, Daniel Lee, and H. K. W. Perkins. On Sunday, April 8, Lee addressed "more than a hundred" Indians in the Chinook jargon. The next day, after an affectionate parting with his nephew, he resumed his eastward journey.⁵ At Fort Walla Walla⁶ he employed Indian guides and continued his travel from this point on horseback. On April 14 he reached the Whitman mission at Waiilatpu, where he enjoyed the hospitality of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman until April 17.⁷ During his stay he was an interested observer of all the operations connected with their new missionary enterprise.⁸ Discovering that the fur trading party which was to accompany him across the "Snake Country" would not be able to depart immediately, Lee continued on from Waiilatpu to

² Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 166.

³ Oregon Mission Record Book entry for March 26, 1838, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIII, p. 259.

⁴ A mission station had recently been established at The Dalles, a famous fishing place for the Indians, to which Mr. Lee had assigned his nephew, Daniel, and Rev. H. K. W. Perkins.

⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 30, 1838, XIII, p. 60.

⁶ Hudson's Bay post on the Columbia, situated about twenty-five miles west of the Whitman mission station.

⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 30, 1838, XIII, p. 60.

⁸ Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 417.

the Lapwai mission, near the modern Lewiston, Idaho, where he was the guest of the Rev. H. H. Spalding from April 18 to April 23. Here again he was an interested spectator, and made careful observation of the endeavors made by the Spaldings to Christianize the Nez Percé Indians.⁹ Returning again to the Whitman mission for a short visit on May 2, he started on his long Oregon Trail journey on May 12.¹⁰

Lee's opinion of the Indian. Before leaving this area, Jason Lee wrote Daniel Lee a revealing personal letter. In this note, which gives a frank and unguarded account of his observations at the Whitman and Spalding stations, it is very clear that Jason Lee, as early as 1838, entertained no illusions with reference to the probability of elevating the red men of the Far West:

Wallahwallah, April 25, 1838

My Dear Nephew:

The Yellow Serpent is to leave for the Willamette tomorrow and I hasten to drop you a line. I should have written you a line when the Indians returned but was hurried off from this unexpectedly.

I visited Mr. W.[hitman] & Mr. S.[palding] and find them getting on well with their Indians. Both are instructing the Indians in the Nez Percé language. Mrs. S. has made a small book in the language, printed it with a pen, and the children have made several copies which they sing very well. The Indians have acquired a good deal of scripture knowledge. I asked them a great number of questions through Mr. S., most of which they answered very readily. They expressed a great deal of joy at seeing me, and several made very sensible speeches, and all seemed very anxious to be taught. But still he has his troubles with them, the truth is they are *Indians*; though they are certainly superior to those upon the Willamette, and though his things are as

⁹ Mrs. Marcus Whitman letter, *Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions*, for 1891 (Portland, Oregon), p. 105.

¹⁰ On May 10, 1838, Mrs. Whitman records in a letter to her father that "Sabbath noon, after the morning worship (Mr. Lee was here and preached, and husband interpreted) . . . Mr. Lee spent much time with us, and we have been greatly refreshed with his prayers and conversation. I wish he could call, on his way to New York, and pay you a visit, but it will be very doubtful. I have made two small kegs of butter, one for Mr. Lee, and one for Mr. McKay to take to the mountains." *Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions* for 1891, p. 105.

much exposed as they can be, they steal nothing from him. Both the Kioose and the Nez Percé are doing a great deal in cultivation, the former with wooden ploughs with a little bit of iron nailed upon them, and hoes, and the latter with hoes alone. Some of the Nez Percé came to the Doctor's for potatoes to plant, a distance of 300 mi. I was astonished to see the industry of these Indians. The fact is they are starving, and they will be forced to work their land, of which, however, they have but little that will produce anything but grass. For grazing I think it surpasses the Willamette even, and the cattle look better than in any place I have before visited. Horses they have plenty, if they had cattle they could live easy enough. I feel a little [sore] from the effects of my ride yesterday, as you may well suppose when you know that I rode at least 75 mi. between sun & sun.

My health is a good deal better than when I left you. Both Mr. [hitman] & Mr. S. [palding] use highhanded measure with their people, and when they deserve it let them feel the *lash*. No[w] my Dear Brethren (for I mean this letter for you both) be strong in the Lord, be firm, and let not the Indians trifle with you, let them know that you must be respected, and whenever they intentionally transgress bounds, make them feel the weight of your displeasure. I saw the son of your late chief, Tilki, and think you had better take measures if possible to bring him under instruction, or by some means get some influence over him, for he will, if he lives, be a great blessing or a curse to his people. He will come to you before long. Watch him, for he says that Dr. McLoughlin "Hioo capsuolla."¹¹

Do all you can to encourage your people to cultivate land, by giving them seed as much as possible. And as you have a goodly number of adults I hope you will lose no time in acquiring their language, for without this you can do little good to the adult population, but when

¹¹ "Hioo capsuolla," variant of two Chinook words, "Hiju Kapsualla." "Hiju" means "plenty of" and "Kapsualla," to steal, or thief. Lee intended to convey that the son of Tilki called Dr. McLoughlin "big thief." W. S. Phillips in his *Chinook Book* defines these words as follows: "'Hiju,' one of the very common words of Chinook and used mostly as a prefix to fix the idea of 'plenty of' in connection with other words; symbol of 'much,' 'plenty of,' 'great amount of,' etc. Adds length to distance, bulk to size, and number to an amount; 'more' to anything," p. 34. "'Kapsualla' or 'kapsuallie' to steal, covers the whole idea of theft, of thief, and used in various ways with word combinations to mean thief, thieves, steal, stole, any idea connected with theft," p. 40. Leading Chinook dictionaries agree with Phillips on the meanings of above words. Walter Shelley Phillips, *Chinook Book: A Descriptive Analysis of the Chinook Jargon in Plain Words* (Seattle, 1913).

you can speak one language well you can by means of interpretation generally communicate with all who come for Salmon. Mr. S. assembles his Indians morning and evening for prayer in front of his house, and sings with them in native, and reads a chapter in English, and sometimes gives a little instruction, besides this he has family worship in his own room.

His people lose $\frac{3}{4}$ of their time for want of a little showing. They may have done more by being separate, than they could have done together, but still it was rather a rash measure to put themselves so entirely into the hands of the Indians when there was not absolute necessity for it. Mr. S. did not tell me, but Mr. Pambrun says he was obliged to fly to his double barrel gun to protect himself from some rascals who were laying hold of him. But whatever can be said in reference to the past, it is evident that their operations will move tardily and sluggishly, unless they have reinforcements in future. They give no clothing to the children, and have not advanced far in teaching to read. A few can read indifferently in English and a less number in native. I can see no chance of getting any oxen here for you, but possibly I may make arrangements with Dr. W. to purchase a span of horses for you before I leave.

Our arrangements for the *long* journey are in a state of forwardness and we shall be pretty well prepared for the trip. The more I think about the Missionary work to be done in this country, the more I feel encouraged in reference to my anticipated visit to the Union, and the more I am convinced of the necessity of the Measure.

And now my Dear Brethren I must bid you Farewell, hoping to be able to drop you a line before I leave, and praying the Almighty to bless and prosper you in your labours among that degraded people.

Be diligent, be persevering, keep up good courage, let nothing daunt you, and while you see much to be done that you are forced to leave for the present, go on doing what you can, and in the meantime pray God to send more help into his field.

Remember me kindly to Sister Perkins if she has arrived. Let me have an interest in your intercessions at the throne of grace.

And believe me

Yours truly

JASON LEE.

27. I unfold this to say that I expected a *line* from you and the friends upon the W. but am not permitted that pleasure. If Bro. P. brings let-

ters, lose no time in forwarding for I am fidgets lest they should not reach me.

J. LEE.

Rev. Messrs. D. Lee & H. K. W. Perkins
Dalls, Columbia River.¹²

Proceeding southeastward from the Whitman mission, on May 12, Jason Lee joined the Hudson's Bay fur brigade bound for Fort Hall. He now pressed forward through the Blue Mountains and past Fort Boise, reaching Fort Hall on June 16. Near this point the three sons of Thomas McKay were intrusted by their father to Lee's care. Lee was to place these wide-awake half-breed lads in school in the East.¹³ On horseback they set out from Fort Hall on June 29 for the American rendezvous, which in the year 1838 met on an island in the Po Po Agie River, a southern branch of the Bighorn River in central Wyoming. After camping here for one week,¹⁴ Lee went on toward St. Louis with an American Fur Company caravan. After a successful trip of fifty-two days from rendezvous, he reached the Shawnee mission near the Missouri frontier. Here Lee and his Indian boys tarried for a few days under the hospitable roof of Rev. Thomas Johnson, superintendent of the Shawnee Mission Station. While resting here, Lee received, at one o'clock in the morning of September 8, 1838, the news of his wife's death in Oregon on the preceding June 26. This information was brought to him by two messengers sent from Fort Hall.¹⁵

Shawnee Mission to Alton, Illinois. Resuming his eastward journey through Missouri, Lee and his five Indian boys embarked

¹² Lee to Daniel Lee, Oregon Historical Society Manuscript Collection, pp. 1-4.

¹³ The eldest was William Cameron McKay, later a prominent Pendleton, Oregon, physician. His two younger brothers, John T. and Alexander, were enrolled by Jason Lee at his own alma mater, Wilbraham Academy, in the autumn of the year 1838. *Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions*, 1889, pp. 91-93. Jason Lee's Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVII, p. 426.

¹⁴ Journal of Myra F. Eells, *Transactions Oregon Pioneer Association*, 1889, pp. 79, 80.

¹⁵ Peoria Register and North Western Gazeteer, reproduced in *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 16, 1838, XIII, p. 49; Journal of Myra F. Eells, *Transactions Oregon Pioneer Association*, 1889, p. 83.

at Westport, five miles east of the Shawnee Mission, for a canoe voyage down the Missouri River. Descending this stream at the rate of about fifty miles a day, Lee reached the "sylvan" city of Alton, Illinois, on Saturday, September 22. Here he found the Illinois Conference in session. Unannounced, he entered the Conference with his five Indian boys marching behind him. He was cordially welcomed as a guest by the presiding officer, Bishop Joshua Soule. On the evening of his arrival he was asked to hold a missionary meeting in the Baptist church. A feature of this service was the singing of a hymn by the Indian boys.¹⁶ Lee gave an interesting account of his colorful career as a missionary to Oregon. Three days before Lee's arrival the Conference had taken an unusually large missionary collection. After Lee's stirring appeal an additional sum of \$50 was contributed to the Oregon Mission.¹⁷

St. Louis to Chicago. From Alton, cherishing, no doubt, vivid memories of his visit there four years earlier, Lee went on to the neighboring city of St. Louis. On Sunday evening, September 23, accompanied by his five Indians, Lee addressed a large congregation in the St. Louis Methodist church,¹⁸ The next morning he continued his journey in a northeasterly direction toward Chicago. En route, he stopped for a second short visit at Alton on September 24. At twilight on the next day he reached Carlinville. Lee records that, while having tea here, he was importuned to address the crowd which had assembled outside the tavern where he was stopping. He held a successful meeting and entertainingly explains why the offering at this point was not larger. A few days before his arrival the townspeople had made a liberal donation to supply a horse to a preacher, who, returning from the Illinois Conference, had lost his animal at Carlinville.¹⁹

¹⁶ Lee was a practical man and used this very practical means of appealing to his audiences throughout his speaking tours.

¹⁷ *Zion's Herald*, October 17, 1838, IX, p. 167; *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 14, 1838, XIII, p. 66.

¹⁸ *St. Louis Gazette*, reproduced in *Zion's Herald*, November 28, 1838, IX, p. 190.

¹⁹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 14, 1838, IX, p. 167.

Rev. John P. Richmond. Although Lee's visit at this point was brief, his sojourn in the Jacksonville area was significant. Here the Rev. John P. Richmond was pastor of the local Methodist church. Lee succeeded in interesting Dr. Richmond and his family in Oregon, and, in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of August 16, 1839, we find the announcement of Richmond's acceptance as one of the five ministers who were to be *Lausanne* passengers in October, 1839. In June, 1840, Lee assigned Dr. Richmond to the important mission station at Nisqually, where that missionary and his family remained until he left Oregon on September 1, 1842.²⁰

On September 26, Lee held a meeting at Springfield, a thriving prairie town just then beginning to enjoy its new honors as the capital of the State of Illinois.²¹ Lee's terse report of his Springfield appointment reads:

Previous notice had been given that I would be at Springfield on Wednesday, the 26th. Here I met a respectable and attentive audience—collected \$33.12.²²

Worthy of mention, too, is the fact that Lee's missionary meeting at Springfield had a definite bearing on the colonization of Oregon. On the passenger list of the *Lausanne*, which bore Lee's fifty missionary-colonists to Oregon, were these names: "Mr.

²⁰ In 1838 he [Jason Lee] spoke at many places in Illinois, where lived the persons who composed the larger part of the first companies of emigrants to go to Oregon. These places were Springfield, Peoria, Alton, Jacksonville, and other points in that country. My father, Dr. J. P. Richmond, was at that time pastor of the Methodist church in Jacksonville, Illinois. Of Jason Lee's visit to the region I desire to say, such was the magnetic influence of the man, his great eloquence, his fervent Christian spirit, his manly bearing, his evident sincerity, that wherever he went enthusiasm was kindled. . . . At his suggestion my father, Dr. Richmond, decided to go as a missionary to Oregon.—Letter from Dr. John P. Richmond's son, Francis Richmond, quoted in Rev. Albert Atwood, *The Conquerors*, pp. 134, 135.

²¹ This young city, although of course unaware of its good fortune, had also, on the year preceding Lee's arrival, become the home of Abraham Lincoln.

²² *Zion's Herald*, December 19, 1838.

Hamilton Campbell, carpenter, wife and child, Springfield, Illinois." Hamilton Campbell, who later became a prominent figure in the economic and political life of Oregon, was, like many others, influenced by Jason Lee to cast his lot in the land of "The Sundown Seas."²³

Peoria lecture on Oregon. Leaving Springfield, Lee arrived at Peoria, Illinois, on Saturday, September 29, 1829. On the Sunday following he delivered an extended address on Oregon at the Main Street Presbyterian church.²⁴

This lecture by a citizen who had been a resident of that far-off region for four years, created a widespread interest in the Oregon country. The *Peoria Register* account was reproduced in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of November 16, 1838.

"*Indian Tom.*" Because of the illness of one of his Indian boys, Thomas Adams, Lee was detained at Peoria until the spring of 1839 when Indian Tom rejoined his patron, Jason Lee, and returned to Oregon on the *Lausanne* in the autumn of that year. Thomas Adams' accidental stay in Peoria stimulated an interest, already deep, in Oregon. The flat-headed Indian boy from the distant Willamette was the object of much curiosity and he was interviewed by many persons concerning the economic opportunities of his homeland. Young Adams, or "Indian Tom" as he was called, proud of the sensation he created, never tired of describing the superior features of the beautiful Oregon region. In Joseph Holman's wagon and cooper shop, his colorful descriptions of the royal Chinook salmon, reinforced with boyish gestures, were listened to with absorbing interest by the adventurous young

²³ Fred H. Saylor (ed.), *The Oregon Native Son* (Portland, Oregon, 1899-1901), I, p. 458, gives an extended sketch of Hamilton Campbell and wife.

²⁴ This lecture is, so far as known, the first published lecture delivered by any resident of Oregon. Lee's extended statement is significant in that it was one of the influential factors that made Peoria, in the years immediately following 1838, a leading colonizing center from which emerged many prominent future Oregonians. Harvey W. Scott, distinguished editor of the *Portland Oregonian*, was one of the numerous Oregon pioneers from the Peoria area.

Lee's lecture appeared in the *Peoria Register* and *Northwestern Gazetteer*.

men of Peoria. His friendly visits to Holman's shop were productive of important events in Oregon's history, and to a greater extent than he could ever have realized, the Indian lad was a factor in stimulating an Oregon immigration from the Peoria area.

Peoria emigrants to Oregon. Holman himself joined the Peoria party that left for Oregon, and in his own pleasant narrative he acknowledges the part that Jason Lee and his invalid Indian boy played in his decision:

In the winter [autumn] of 1838 Rev. Jason Lee, the distinguished pioneer of Methodist missions in Oregon, returned to the East, in company with [the three sons of] Thos. McKay, who had been connected with the Astor Expedition and two Calipooia Indians, one of whom, Indian Tom, still lives in the Willamette Valley. Mr. Lee delivered lectures on Oregon as he passed Eastward, making a stoppage at Peoria, Illinois, where he addressed an audience, creating considerable interest in the land of the "Sun-down Seas." At his place Indian Tom was found to be too ill to continue the journey and was left, under careful nursing, at Peoria, through that winter, joining his companions at the Eastward the following spring. Tom was only slightly acquainted with our language, but he was a curiosity to the people thereabouts, and was a frequent and welcome visitor at a wagon shop where Joseph Holman was a constant workman.

Joseph Holman was of English birth, left the mother country in his 18th year for Canada, where an uncle resided, and came to Peoria two years afterwards. He was 22 years of age, vigorous and charmed with the thought of adventure in a new and comparatively unknown country. Indian Tom explained to him and others the greatness of the Columbia, gave such graphic descriptions, as an Indian would, of the immense number of salmon in its waters, caught with such ease and possessing such excellence that the various tribes derived a great portion of their food supplies from that source, their lodges being hung overhead with many rows of the now world renowned fat Chinook salmon.

Holman was a cooper as well as a wagon maker, and it became an absorbing idea with him and others that great money was to be made

by catching, curing, and pickling these fish and shipping them to the Eastern and foreign markets. Also they fancied that the time must soon come when population would move to the Pacific and a great commerce spring up that would call for a city at the mouth of the Columbia that should be the New York of the Pacific.²⁵

Thomas Jefferson Farnham became the leader of the small party of nineteen men from Peoria who made the venturesome overland expedition to Oregon in the spring of 1839. In colorful array the little band, just before their departure, drew up before the Peoria courthouse, where a prayer was offered for a safe journey. Joseph Holman and seven other members of this little company eventually reached the Willamette Valley.²⁶

After his departure from Peoria, Jason Lee and the four Indian lads proceeded northward toward the village of Chicago. This is Lee's brief reference to his Chicago visit: "Oct. 8—Had an interesting time at Chicago. Collection, \$40.35."²⁷

From Chicago Lee traveled to New York State "by way of the lakes." At Detroit his boat stopped for a few hours on Sunday, October 21, and his reference to it is as follows:

Sunday 21.—Steamboat remained a few hours at Detroit, and in the meantime I went on shore, and was almost compelled to address a small congregation assembled for worship. They had no previous intimation that a collection would be taken up, and I should have thought \$10 a liberal collection for such an assembly under such circumstances, but the result was \$30.²⁸

One week later Lee arrived at Utica, New York. Here his company of Indian boys was reduced to three. At the near-by town

²⁵ S. A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days in Oregon History* (Portland, 1905), II, p. 442; *Transactions Oregon Pioneer Association*, 1896, p. 93; Joseph Holman, *The Peoria Party for Oregon in 1839*, MS. (Bancroft Library), pp. 1, 2.

²⁶ T. J. Farnham, *Travels in the Western Prairies*, reprinted in R. G. Thwaites, *Early Western Travels*, XXIX, pp. 10, 11.

²⁷ *Zion's Herald*, December 19, 1838, IX, p. 202.

²⁸ *Ibid.*

of Fairfield one of the Indian boys, William C McKay, was enrolled in a medical school situated there.

Arrival in New York. Lee, with William Brooks, the Chinook Indian boy, and the two remaining McKay boys, John T. and Alexander, pushed forward toward his destination. On October 31, 1838, after a journey of seven months, he arrived safely in New York City.²⁹

²⁹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 9, 1838, XIII, p. 46.

CHAPTER VII

LEE PRESENTS CLAIMS OF OREGON MISSION

Board votes appropriation. After reaching New York City, Lee successfully presented his mission needs to the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church¹ at a special meeting held November 14, 1838.² On December 5, the Mission Board approved plans calling for an appropriation of \$40,000 for the Oregon Mission. This extensive program was to include the addition of a number of ecclesiastical and lay helpers. Provision was made for five ministers, one physician, four women teachers, and a stewardess. The group of lay assistants was to include a mission steward or business agent, two carpenters, a cabinetmaker, a blacksmith, and two farmers. The Board also voted a generous amount for farm machinery, equipment for the construction of mills, garden seeds, and an appropriation of \$5,000 for merchandise.³

Fund-raising campaign. In early December the Board requested Jason Lee to assist in a campaign to raise funds for the Oregon Mission. So successful was Lee in these appeals that during the six months' period from December, 1838, to June, 1839, his stay in the East consisted of an almost continuous succession of missionary meetings. He conducted three extended missionary tours. In his first, or Southern tour, he spoke in twelve cities and towns in the vicinity of Philadelphia and Washington, D. C. His second campaign included thirty speaking engagements through New England, northward from Connecticut to Canada. His farewell

¹ Atwood, *The Conquerors*, p. 68.

² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 23, 1838, XIII, p. 54.

³ \$30,000 on May 8, 1839, and \$10,000 on August 14, 1839. From *Journal of Foreign Mission Board*.

tour included a series of day-by-day speaking engagements through nineteen cities and towns of the State of New York.

Before beginning his Southern tour, Lee filled a number of speaking engagements in New York City and vicinity. The presence of Lee and his Indian wards in New York City churches drew crowded audiences in early November. A news item in the *New York Spectator*, November, 1838, indicates that the tall and picturesque Oregon missionary had captured the attention of New York's lay public. The item follows:

The Rev. Jason Lee is, as the public know, now ⁴ in this city, having with him three Indian youths from the Oregon Territory. By invitation of the Mayor, Mr. Lee, with his charge, accompanied by Col. McKenney and other gentlemen, visited the City Hall today, the interior of which the Mayor, with his accustomed politeness, threw open for the inspection of the visitors. The Indians took great interest in the paintings, and made very judicious comparisons, always however, concluding that those in military costume were *the best*.⁵

This same lay interest is revealed in another early November incident. Lee and Dr. Nathan Bangs, the corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Church, were returning by steamboat from a brief upstate New York speaking tour. This is Dr. Bangs' account of their downstream journey:

On Wednesday ⁶ at 5 o'clock P.M., we met on the steamboat at Newburgh, on our return to New York. In the course of the evening, having obtained liberty of the captain, the passengers were informed, if they desired it, Mr. Lee would give them a narration of his journey over the Rocky Mountains, and a short description of the country. Having signified their wish to hear it, they seated themselves accordingly, and listened with great attention for more than an hour to this interesting narrative. Dr. Cummings, a Presbyterian minister from Florida, N. Y., then concluded the exercise with a prayer. A gentle-

⁴ November 12, 1838.

⁵ *New York Spectator*, reproduced in *Zion's Herald*, November 28, 1838, IX, p. 190.

⁶ November 7, 1838.

man then proposed a collection which amounted to \$10.79. It would doubtless have been much more had not several of the passengers dispersed before the collection was announced.

About 10 o'clock, P.M., we landed in the city of New York, thankful for the favor shown to the cause in which we were engaged.⁷

Another of Lee's pleasant side trips made before the beginning of his first formal missionary tour was his voyage across Long Island Sound to Bridgeport, Connecticut. The amount donated here, \$195, foretold the successes that awaited the Oregon missionary in later stages of his campaign.

On Sunday, November 18, Lee with his four Indian lads departed for Wilbraham, Massachusetts. On Tuesday, November 20, he stopped at Middletown and had an interesting day in the little college town. While here he wrote this hurried letter to David Leslie, Acting Superintendent of the Willamette Mission:

Letter to Superintendent Leslie.

New York Nov. 21, 1828 [1838]

My Dear Bro.

Dr. Bangs told me he had written you and I hope he has told you what the prospects are here for I have not time to do it. It is now nearly 12 O'clock at night and I am weary, and must refer you to bro. Shepards letter for an account of what I am trying to do.

I saw one of Bro. Pierce's sons yesterday at Middletown, he enquired after you and family. I asked for twenty-seven men and their wives to be sent to Oregon, but the Committee to whom the subject was referred did not advise but seventeen, and that report is not yet acted upon.

I think I shall succeed in getting forty men and women, (and how many children I cannot say.) For their support I shall trust to the resources of Oregon you will therefore make an estimate of what will be needed for to keep such a host, and contract with the settlers for a sufficient quantity if possible, and if there should be more than is wanted we can send it off in the Vessel. By contracting before our arrival you will probably get things cheaper than after.

From some letters written by Bro. Perkins his Con.[ference] learned

⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, November 16, 1838, XIII, p. 50.

that he was not sound in the faith and, they therefore left his name off the Minutes.

I must close though I have not time to tell you why I write so short.

My Love to All

Yours, JASON LEE.

P. S. A Missionary Steward will probably be given us with 5,000 Five Thousand Dollars worth of goods. Therefore pay as little out of the store at Vancouver for the Provisions you may purchase, as may be, as it will probably be better for us to pay our own goods. We shall not probably be there before the crops of '39 will be gathered in. Do not be afraid of purchasing too much for I would not like to have our people starve the first year.

In hast

J. LEE.⁸

Rev. David Leslie

Willamette (Oregon Ter.,
Care of James Douglas Esqr.)

At Wilbraham. On November 25, 1838, Lee visited his Alma Mater, Wilbraham Academy. The primary purpose of this journey was to enroll in the academy John T. and Alexander McKay, the two young sons of Thomas McKay, the Hudson's Bay Company leader. They were also grandsons of Mrs. McLoughlin, Lee's hostess at Fort Vancouver on many happy occasions during his isolated four years of Oregon life. The Wilbraham reporter makes this reference to Lee's two Indian charges:

Two of the Indian boys remain at the Academy, as they were sent out by their father to be educated. Neither of them are pious, though seriously disposed, and of good morals. We commend them to the prayers of Christians, that the spirit of grace may lead to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. We hope that they will not only become thoroughly educated, but devoutly pious, that on their return to their own country they may be qualified to be extremely useful, both as men and Christians.⁹

⁸ Lee to Leslie, *Oregon Historical Society*, Manuscript Collection, p. 5.

⁹ *Zion's Herald*, December 19, 1838, IX, p. 202.

The following intimate account of the meeting at Wilbraham appeared in *Zion's Herald*, Boston, on December 19:

Br. Jason Lee, accompanied by three Indian youths from west of the Rocky Mountains, visited us, and spent the Sabbath of the twenty-fifth of November in this place. At six o'clock in the evening, he held a missionary meeting. It was doubted whether much could be raised, as the people had recently contributed so freely to the African Mission.

The meeting was appointed, and the exercises commenced with singing, by the Indians. After prayer, Br. Lee addressed the meeting for more than an hour, in a manner and spirit showing that his whole soul was in his work, and well calculated to affect most deeply every heart which heard him. He gave an account of his journey over the Rocky Mountains, the commencement, progress and present state of the Mission, together with some of their labors, privations, sufferings, and encouragements.

He fully and satisfactorily answered the question, "What have they been doing all this time in Oregon?" Indeed, it seemed almost miraculous, they have done so much when we take into consideration their means.

It would be fruitless in me to attempt a description of the address. He must be *heard* and *seen*, in order to have a correct idea of Brother Lee and the interest he feels for the Oregon Mission. I think I never attended a meeting of greater interest, nor ever saw a nobler specimen and example of what a Missionary should be.¹⁰

A rapid stage journey brought Jason Lee to Boston where he arrived on Monday, November 26. He was accompanied by William Brooks, the Chinook Indian boy, who was to assist him so effectively in forthcoming months in appealing for funds and reinforcements for the Oregon Mission. *Zion's Herald* noted Lee's brief visit in the following news item:

Rev. Jason Lee visited this city last week, accompanied by one of the Flathead Indians [William Brooks.] He came on Monday, and left the following Friday. Owing to the shortness of the notice which we had of his intended visit, and the hurry of business always attendant

¹⁰ *Zion's Herald*, December 19, 1838, IX, p. 202.

upon the first part of Thanksgiving week, and likewise to the circumstance that his visit was upon business, no public meeting was held. He will visit Boston again, and probably spend a week or two, when public meetings will no doubt be held in various churches. If he is invited, he may visit also, some of the largest stations in the Conference.

The Indian whom Br. Lee has brought with him appears intelligent. He can speak and read English, and is fond of books, especially the Bible and religious books.

We hope a fire will be kindled among us in behalf of the Oregon Mission by the visit of Br. Lee, which will never burn dim until the whole race of Indians is converted to God; indeed, not until the whole world is.¹¹

Tour of the South. The opening engagement of Lee's Southern tour was in Philadelphia on the evening of December 4, 1838. This occasion was signalized by an address by Lieutenant W. A. Slacum, who will be remembered as the official visitor from the Federal Government to Oregon.¹²

An unusual feature of the Philadelphia meeting was the speech of William Brooks, the Chinook Indian boy. Brooks' fervent plea for the financial support of the distant mission station where he had so recently received instruction was listened to with deep interest. His remarks were translated to the audience by his patron, Jason Lee. The collection, \$512.26, taken at the close of this meeting, was the largest donated by any gathering during the Eastern tour.¹³

Two visits to the Federal capital and vicinity. At Washington, D. C., Lee's first engagement was at Wesley Chapel on Tuesday evening, December 18, 1838. The *National Intelligencer* of December 18 carried this brief announcement of the meeting:

MISSIONARY MEETING AT WESLEY CHAPEL

The 1st anniversary of the Wesley Chapel Missionary Society will take place in said Church this evening at half past six o'clock, when the

¹¹ *Zion's Herald*, December 5, 1838, IX, p. 195.

¹² See pp. 284-291.

¹³ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 4, 1839, XIII, p. 77.

Rev. Jason Lee, Missionary from the Oregon Territory together with a youth from the Flat Head Tribe of Indians, will address the meeting and a collection will be taken up in aid of the Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Addresses may be expected from other gentlemen.¹⁴

Dr. Thomas Sewall, Jr., son of the venerable chairman of the occasion, referred affectionately to Jason Lee as a former Wilbraham Academy roommate.¹⁵ The amount donated and subscribed at this meeting reached the generous total of \$399.95.¹⁶ Lee's second Washington meeting was held on December 31. Two members of Congress, Representatives Patrick Gaines Goode, Sidney, Ohio, and Calvary Morris, Athens, Ohio, were the speakers on this occasion.¹⁷ Adding a touch of color to this event was the speech of William Brooks. It was at this meeting that the young Chinook boy attempted his first speech in English. With deep emotion he delivered his appeal in expressive but somewhat ambiguous English. "His tears spoke with resistless eloquence," is the phrase used by an observer.¹⁸

William Brooks, Chinook Indian. Later, Jason Lee paid this tribute to William Brooks' part in contributing to the success of this missionary tour:

We went to Washington, where we remained several days. Here the propriety of his conduct, and his Christian-like deportment were the subjects of remark by many, and they could not refrain from expressing surprise, that in so short a time, and with so few advantages, a son of the forest could adopt our customs to such an extent, and learn to behave with such perfect propriety at table and elsewhere.

¹⁴ *National Intelligencer*, Washington, D. C., December 18, 1838.

¹⁵ Thomas Sewall is listed in the Wesleyan Academy, Wilbraham, Mass., catalogue as enrolled for the spring term, April, 1830. His residence is given as Washington City, his boarding place at Rev. J. Foster's. His rooming place is not listed. Lee's rooming place is listed as "at the academy."

¹⁶ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 4, 1839, XIII, p. 77.

¹⁷ *Biographical Directory of the American Congress, 1774-1927*, House document 783, 69th Congress, 2d Session (Washington, D. C., 1928), pp. 181, 1020, 1335.

¹⁸ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 15, 1839, XIII, p. 102.

Though I have seen him at table scores of times with ladies and gentlemen, in various parts of the Union, yet I never in a single instance saw him, by accident or through ignorance, do anything that would be considered *outlandish* even by the polite or well-bred.

He addressed, in his own language, all the meetings we attended in Washington, except at the Nazareth¹⁹ station, where he made his first effort in English. Knowing it had been but about three years since he learned his first English word, and that, instead of being at school that length of time, he had labored much upon the farm, and had been travelling nearly a year with scarcely any opportunity for study, I of course, expected a failure. But I was agreeably disappointed, as well as the congregation. There were present two members of Congress, who addressed the meeting, and they assured me that they were greatly and agreeably surprised . . . that they could not have anticipated such shrewd, appropriate, and intelligent remarks from a youth under such circumstances. . . .

Seldom did he arise to address a congregation without bringing forward something new and striking that he had not mentioned in any previous address; so that, contrary to what might be expected, his daily communications, instead of becoming stale and tiresome to me, by their tame monotony, were always interesting, and sometimes delightful, pathetic, and thrilling, even beyond anything I had dared to hope from him.²⁰

While in the Washington area Lee visited several near-by communities in the interest of his mission. His two successful meetings in Alexandria, six miles from Washington, drew this letter from a resident to the local Methodist minister:

Alexandria, Dec. 18, 1838.

Dear Sir, I was pleased with the missionary sermon I heard in your church last Sabbath morning; it forcibly reminded me of a duty we owe our fellowmen, that we are but too much disposed to neglect. I was also pleased last night that he brought to our view the destitute situation of the Indians and others in the far west. I hereby subscribe my pittance of fifty dollars, which I am ready to pay over to Elder Lee

¹⁹ *Christian Advocate and Journal* reports indicate that Lee meant "Ebenezer" Station here. See *ibid.*, February 15, 1839, XIII, p. 102.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, October 4, 1839, XIV, p. 25.

as soon as he is ready to start off to the west to appropriate it, having full confidence in his Christian character that he will use what is committed to his charge beneficially. I hope he will return as soon as he can make it convenient to do so.

Very respectfully,

JNO. WITHERS.²¹

Elder G. Roszell.

Lee and Brooks presented the claims of the Oregon Mission before the Foundry Missionary Society of Baltimore on December 19, 1838.²²

While in Baltimore and its vicinity, William Brooks saw a blind Methodist colored man, who because of deep religious faith was radiantly happy despite his affliction. In his addresses after leaving Baltimore, an impressive feature was this reference to the blind Baltimore Negro:

I saw something I never shall forget. I saw old blind man in Baltimore. He's colored man—he belongs to our Church. He can't read, he can't see nothing, but he sees Jesus Christ. Children, you say that old blind man, colored man, miserable—but he be very happy. O, I love that old man, because he love Jesus Christ. But great many men saucy to me, and I go on. My heart says, I not come here to see that kind men. I come here to see all good friends. I saw great many men, bright like silver. These don't care what say God in Bible. If they die, that old man go in heaven; and these rich men—where they go to? You see children, how much more better if he die and go in heaven. I shall never forgit him again.²³

Lee also held a meeting at Winchester, Virginia, one of the most southerly points visited. The little Southern village donated one hundred dollars.²⁴ Retracing his journey northward, Lee on January 3, 1839, delivered a "spirit-stirring" address at West Chester, Pennsylvania. The contribution of this generous audience was two

²¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 11, 1839, XIII, p. 82.

²² *Ibid.*, March 13, 1839, XIII, p. 118.

²³ William Brooks' Boston Speech, *Zion's Herald*, February 13, 1839, X, p. 27.

²⁴ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, March 8, 1839, XIII, p. 113.

hundred and twenty-five dollars. Lee's eloquence drew this tribute from a listener who reported the meeting to the *Christian Advocate*: "Should brother Lee as effectively leave his mark wherever he goes, the people will soon bring their tithes into the storehouse of the Lord, and will open the windows of heaven and pour out upon the heathen a blessing that there shall not be room enough to receive it." ²⁵

A crowded meeting at Morristown, New Jersey, on January 10, 1839, brought to a close his Southern tour. So deep was the interest of this gathering that "the church was much crowded at an early hour; scores who came at a distance were unable to gain admittance. The audience listened with fixed attention. . . ." The *Advocate* report of this meeting contains this expressive phrase: "The collection and pledges amounted to \$150, the most of which I will soon remit. The amount would have been greater but for the crowd." ²⁶

The New England campaign. The initial meeting of Lee's New England tour was held at New Haven, Connecticut, on January 15, 1839. The young Chinook lad, in his address, denounced the Eastern ministers who were interested merely in the economic resources of his homeland, Oregon. "Great many ministers, when he ask me, 'You got everything good in your country?' I tell him, 'No, sir.' He ask me, 'You got plenty good houses in your country?' I say, 'No, sir.' Then he say, 'I not go in your country,' Now I don't call that Christian at all; I say, 'You stay *home*, sir.'" ²⁷

Lee held an enthusiastic public meeting in the Methodist church of Middletown on January 16. William Brooks' denunciation of white men who carried rum to Oregon Indians captured the attention of the large evening audience. "One thing, my friends," said Brooks, "I must have put in paper [newspapers] that no more these Americans carry rum in my country, spoil

²⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 25, 1839, XIII, p. 90.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, April 5, 1839, XIII, p. 130.

²⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 4, 1839, XIV, p. 25. *Columbian Weekly Register*, New Haven, Connecticut, January 12, 1839.

all Indians. He make it himself, he must *drink* it himself, these Yankees."

Jason Lee, later referring to this remark by young Brooks, wrote: "The manner of delivering the above was such as simultaneously to excite the risibles of nearly every one in the house; and the lamented Dr. Fisk, who sat on the platform behind the pulpit, laughed more heartily than I remember to have seen him on any other public occasion."²⁸ President Fisk, of Wesleyan University, despite his sufferings from the last stages of a fatal illness, honored this meeting with his presence. The plea which this towering figure of Methodism made at this meeting proved to be his last public utterance in support of Lee's Oregon Mission. His presence reflected not merely Dr. Fisk's deep concern for the cause of missions, but his abiding interest in his former student.

Father of the Oregon Mission. Holdick, in his *Life of Dr. Fisk*, has preserved an illuminating incident of Lee's Middletown visit, which appears in no other contemporaneous source. This century-old biography of Lee's beloved teacher and mentor furnishes ample proof that Dr. Wilbur Fisk, beloved "saint" of early Methodism, has claims to that affectionate title sometimes conferred upon him, "Father of the Oregon Mission."

Three weeks before Dr. Fisk's decease [wrote Professor Holdick] Mr. Lee visited Middletown to confer with him on the interests of the mission, and while here held a public meeting in reference to it. On the afternoon preceding the meeting, which was held in the evening, they were several hours in consultation upon the subject, the result of which was, that Dr. Fisk sketched a plan for the employment and location of about thirty additional labourers in that field. The paper, in his own handwriting, is now before me. The re-enforcement sailed from New-York the following September.

In the evening Dr. Fisk attended the meeting, which was held in the Methodist Church, and took part in the exercises. It was his last appearance in an earthly sanctuary. Thus his final labors in public were in behalf of the Oregon Mission.²⁹

²⁸ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 4, 1839, XIV, p. 25.

²⁹ Joseph Holdick, *Life of Wilbur Fisk, D.D.*, p. 434.

The "plan" which Dr. Fisk "sketched . . . for the employment and location of about thirty additional laborers" in the Old Oregon field has been preserved through the marching years of nearly a century. Ninety-two years, almost to a day, after the memorable conference between Dr. Fisk and Jason Lee at Middletown, Dr. Fisk's rough draft of an enlarged Oregon Mission reached the present writer. The sketch is written plainly in black ink, and on a piece of stationery bearing a stamped seal of the British Crown and marked "Bath," this stationery presumably being a souvenir of Dr. Fisk's recent visit to England at which time he stopped at a "royal" hotel. This rough sketch of a "greater Oregon mission" possesses unique interest in that it is the first known draft which clearly designates as mission stations, sites that, in the years which followed, have blossomed into flourishing towns and cities of the modern Pacific Northwest.

An exact transcript of Dr. Fisk's plan reads as follows:

TRANSCRIPT OF THE PLAN FOR AN ENLARGED PROGRAM OF NINE MISSION STATIONS, SKETCHED BY JASON LEE AND DR. FISK AT MIDDLETOWN ON THE AFTERNOON OF JANUARY 16, 1839.

Willamette M.	1 Assistant Farmer 1 Missionary Steward 1 Teacher 1 Cabinetmaker 3 Carpenters & Joiners	
Umpqua	1 Missionary 1 Farmer 1 Physician	South of Willamette 150 miles
Sandiams Fork	1 Missionary	Branch of the Willamette 30 miles
Willamette Falls	1 Missionary Physician	25 miles
250 Cheenook	1 Physician	Mouth of the Columbia poor land
130 Clatsop	1 Carpenter	
Tillamooks	1 Missionary	

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Nesqually	1 Missionary 1 Farmer	Puget sound—North
Cowelits	1 Farmer 1 Missionary	Small river coming in North Columbia half- way between V. Cov & the mouth C.
Wascopan Daniels' Mission	1 Millwright 1 Physician 1 Carpenter 1 Blacksmith	By water 150 miles half distance by mountain rout
N. W. or S. W. Coast	1 Missionary 1 Physician ⁸⁰	

Connecticut. On January 18, 1838, Lee held a missionary meeting at Hartford, the capital of Connecticut. Here "the crowd was immense; hundreds went away unable to gain admittance into the church."⁸¹ By rapid winter stage journeys, Lee completed his tour of Connecticut cities. On Sunday, January 21, he addressed the two large Methodist congregations of Norwich, which assembled in the spacious East Chelsea Church. William Brooks at this gathering touched the emotions of his large audience by a feeling tribute to his former Oregon teacher, the late Mrs. Jason Lee:

William Brooks addressed the audience in English in some very impressive remarks [runs the report of this meeting], and, at the close, he spoke with much feeling, lamenting the death of our late sister, Mrs. Lee, who had been his teacher, sorrowing much that he should see her face no more, but he consoled himself with that hope that, if he lived as the Bible taught him, he should meet her in heaven.

Jason Lee's effectiveness in procuring funds for his Oregon Mission is illustrated by this suggestion which he made to his Norwich audience:

⁸⁰ Lee-Fisk Correspondence at Wesleyan University, Middletown, Connecticut.

⁸¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 1, 1839, XIII, p. 94.

Mr. Lee . . . informed the assembly that he had formed a missionary society called the "First Missionary Society in Oregon" and inquired how many present would become life members of that society by paying ten dollars; that he might have the pleasure of bearing their names beyond the Rocky Mountains, and place them upon his missionary register; and we were much gratified in receiving the names of sixteen persons who responded to the inquiry, . . . and two sisters promised five dollars each to make Sister Ransom, the wife of our preacher, a life member. . . .

At this Norwich evening meeting Lee referred to his Oregon missionary colleague, Dr. Marcus Whitman:

We were much gratified in receiving an invitation from the Rev. Mr. Bond of the 2nd Congregational Church, for Mr. Lee to hold a meeting in their church in the evening. He did so; and addressed a very large assembly who appeared very much interested in his account of the mission under his care, and particularly of the [Marcus Whitman] mission established by the American Board beyond the Rocky Mountains, which he visited on his journey to St. Louis. . . . At the close of the services a collection of \$68.18 was taken up, making . . . as the result of Mr. Lee's visit to this city, \$366.81.⁸²

On January 21, 1839, Jason Lee spoke at West Thompson, Connecticut. The *Zion's Herald* report of the West Thompson evening meeting is a vital document that makes this century-old winter missionary gathering live again for readers of a radio, air-craft civilization:

Then our beloved Lee, the first Methodist Missionary who ever came here, probably, favored us with a "sight and a hearing," which will not soon be forgotten. The good seed was sown on all sorts of ground, but some of it proved warm and fertile at once, and more will spring up by and by. The proceeds of the meeting, and pledges amount to more than two hundred dollars including a gold necklace, which cost eight dollars; and the preacher's wife informs me that "The supplies have not yet stopped." . . . Brother Lee said to me that "the missionary Society is the safety valve of the Church." I am well aware of it,

⁸² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, March 1, 1839, XIII, p. 109.

my dear brother. . . . Our folks gave of their "hard earnings"; and among them, several industrious females gave five dollars each. Verily they shall have a reward. Stock in this bank, is treasure laid up in heaven. Since the meeting I am informed, the people in a certain city said we should not much more than pay the stage fare of Brother Lee if he came here. Please publish the above, Brother Brown, and thus contradict their suspicions. Hope they will not prejudice the brethren "up in the bush" again. Though permitted to be present at many missionary meetings while living in the city, yet to behold the face of Brother Lee again, after a lapse of five years, and that too at this peculiar place, gave me unusual joy.³³

Northward through New England. Jason Lee held his first Massachusetts meeting at Foxborough, on January 24, 1839. Although scheduled for a meeting at Lynn the following evening, he was persuaded by a former Wilbraham Academy friend to lecture at Walpole. The *Zion's Herald* report of this meeting reflects the welcome which Lee received at this little town. The friendly reporter wrote that Jason Lee's presence brought to his remembrance "scenes of other years when the cares of life were only seen in prospect." He continues by recording that "notwithstanding the severity of the weather, the interest of the occasion was manifest in an assemblage larger than our chapel could contain." That Lee's young Indian campaign assistant reached the sympathies of his audience is reflected in the reference to the fact that the Chinook lad received "a present of a pair of boots . . . from the gentlemen employed in the boot factory."³⁴

Massachusetts. Continuing northward Lee held a widely attended missionary meeting at Lynn, the home of Cyrus Shepard and Susan Downing, on Friday evening, January 25. To Lynn belongs the distinction of having established as early as October, 1838, a monthly magazine, the *Oregonian and Indian's Advocate*, devoted to stimulating interest in the American settlement of Oregon. Since Lee's meeting at Lynn reflects his leadership both

³³ *Zion's Herald*, February 20, 1839, X, p. 30.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, February 13, 1839, X, p. 26.

as missionary and colonizer, the following somewhat extended reference is quoted:

Rev. Jason Lee, missionary from Oregon, with his Indian boy, arrived in Lynn last evening, and met a large concourse of citizens, in the First Methodist Episcopal Church. The meeting was opened by a short address from Rev. C. W. Turner, after which Mr. Lee held the audience more than an hour and a half by an interesting account of the progress of the Mission in Oregon. He stated that they had selected the valley of the Willamette river as the seat of their missionary operations, on account of its central relation to other eligible parts of the territory and peculiar advantages for agriculture. It is a fertile and delightful region, 200 miles in length and from 20 to 60 miles in breadth. They moreover found it occupied by small settlements of traders, who had taken Indian wives, and had families growing up around them. Their moral habits were such as to corrupt the Indians, and he concluded that their influence must be corrected before any hope could be entertained of the conversion of the natives around them. This was one of the principal motives for establishing the mission in their vicinity.

He gave a striking proof, that his views were correct and his efforts successful, in the fact that they had obtained the suppression of a distillery, which was about going into operation. They organized a temperance society, and by the blessing of God upon their persevering efforts, sustained by the efficient cooperation of the Hudson Bay Company, they prevailed upon nearly all the settlement to sign the pledge of abstinence. They prepared a written request that the distillery might be discontinued, which was signed by some even who would not sign the pledge of abstinence. The signers engaged to defray all the expense, which the owners of the distillery had thus far incurred, if they would accede to their wishes:—but these gentlemen, to their praise be it spoken—finding public opinion was against them, not only abandoned their distillery, but refused to receive any remuneration for their pecuniary loss. The Indians at first spoke much in praise of rum or “lum” as they called it. He had a dispute one day with a native:—“Rum is very bad,” said he in the native language. “No; lum very good.” “I say rum is very bad—it makes an Indian a fool, and they are foolish enough without it.” The Indian was struck with the argument, and

considered awhile, then replied, "I love to kill Indian—no get lum, no love to kill Indian." This was sound logic, no doubt. Mr. Lee said he would not attempt to draw the dark picture of the Indian, in his deplorable civil and moral condition.

Slavery was practised by several of the tribes, and gambling was a vice common to all. When they had gambled away their property, they would pledge a hand, an arm, or a leg, half the body, then the whole, till they forfeited their whole person, and devoted themselves to slavery. Sometimes when they had forfeited half their body, they would sell the rest, and make a present of the price to their relatives or friends. They have a superstitious notion that when one dies, his death is attributable to the influence of some other man, and woe unto him upon whom suspicious lights; he falls a victim to the fury of the relatives as soon as he comes within their reach. They generally hire somebody to do the deed, and he goes after his prey under the protection of an abominable public sentiment, that if one is hired to do any work he must do it, and he is not accountable for it. When caught in his dark work, he cries out, "I was hired to do it, and I did it," which is accounted a sufficient plea against all personal punishment.

Notwithstanding, these ultra montane Indians are not of a warlike disposition, but inclined to peace. In this they are very different from the Blackfeet Indians, whose country lies in and about the Rocky Mountains.

The American hunters hate these Blackfeet intensely, and think it sport to kill them as they do the buffalo of the prairie, when they can catch them within gun-shot. One day, a white man met a Blackfeet woman, and aimed at her with a view, as he said, to lame her, and then sell her for \$400, as a wife to some hunter. He fired, and she, feeling herself shot and unable to run, seized a horse by the tail, and frightening him into a gallop, escaped from her pursuer in that manner. Mr. Lee remarked that, notwithstanding all that was said about this tribe, he should not be afraid to go among them and if the Church should give him the commission, he would plant the standard of the cross in the Blackfeet Camp, or perish in the attempt.

His appeal to the Christians present, was affecting and powerful. He said the world has gone before the Church, twenty years, in every heathen land, while Christians were saying, "Four months and then cometh the harvest."

The Indian youth succeeded Mr. Lee with some remarks in the barbarous language of the red man. Then he said in English that he had come a great way, five or six thousand miles to see them—to satisfy their curiosity. (The Indian boy, it seems, has lost his reckoning a little.) That he had seen a great many things, new and strange. He wondered at the wickedness he saw. With the Bible, and the God of the Bible, he saw the children here were rude and wicked; he had been insulted while passing through the streets, and his ears pained with oaths. He stated that he felt much for his people, that had no God, Bible or Sabbath, that he could not sleep for thinking of it. He must go back and tell them Jesus died for them. He saw in this country many churches; but the Indians had none. He saw multitudes of Christians but few had gone to Indians. We had many Bibles, and those told us to preach to the Indians, but we had not minded them. I see, said he, around me many carpenter Christians but we have none; you carpenter Christians come over and help us. I see here many blacksmith Christians, but we have none; you blacksmith Christians come over and help us. I see you farmer Christians; you farmer Christians come over here and help us. Many female Christians; you female Christians come over and help us. Some had gone and died among them; one who had taught them of Jesus in Sabbath school; though he might return, he should never see Mrs. Lee any more. This was all he had to say.

The collection was then taken up, which amounted to about \$130.³⁵

Lee closed his first week in Massachusetts with a meeting at Charlestown on Saturday evening, January 26. On Sunday afternoon, January 27, his strenuous itinerary called for a meeting at Newton Upper Falls. On that same Sunday evening, Lee and William Brooks held the most notable meeting of Lee's entire career—the meeting at the Bromfield Methodist Church at Boston. The desire of the Boston public to hear of Lee's missionary enterprise is mirrored in this brief announcement in the Wednesday, January 23, 1839, issue of *Zion's Herald*:

Rev. Jason Lee, Superintendent of the Methodist E. Mission in Oregon, accompanied by two Indians, natives of Oregon, will hold a

³⁵ *Oregonian and Indian's Advocate*, January, 1839, I, pp. 125-127.

meeting for the benefit of the missionary cause, next Sabbath evening, at the Bromfield Street Church, the services commencing at half past six o'clock. . . . As the meeting will be one of intense interest, and but few of the many who would like to be present can be accommodated with seats for want of room, it is thought the most proper way to admit by ticket. Tickets can be had at the Methodist Book Room, 32 Washington Street. Price, 25 cents.⁸⁶

A careful study of Jason Lee's address, which received the compliment of being reported in full in the conservative and well-edited *Zion's Herald*, makes clear why Jason Lee touched the hearts and opened the pocketbooks of his Eastern audiences. In the first place, his theme, a message from the romantic land of the "Flat Heads," was of deep interest to missionary workers everywhere. In 1839, remembrance was still fresh of the story of those four Flatheads from the Rocky Mountains who had made their long pilgrimage to St. Louis and there poured forth their pathetic plea for the white man's religion. Second, Lee came as an actual resident of that far-away and jointly occupied region, which bore the romantic name of Oregon. Third, Boston, separated from that distant land by 3,000 miles of continent, was bound to it by long-established historical ties. As early as the eighteenth century, Boston whaling ships and Boston fur traders had borne back to their Massachusetts ports marvelous tales of the Northwest Coast.⁸⁷ Fourth, Boston was the home of Oregon's first publicity expert, Hall J. Kelley. Fifth, following closely the pioneering efforts of Kelley, came the two widely heralded Oregon expeditions of Nathaniel J. Wyeth, the Cambridge ice dealer. Wyeth's plan of erecting an American mercantile establishment on the banks of the distant Columbia failed, it is true, yet his magnificent undertaking stood forth in Jason Lee's day, and still remains one of the clearest-headed business projects launched in Old Oregon by any American business man since the days when Astoria rose and fell.

⁸⁶ *Zion's Herald*, January 23, 1839, X, p. 17.

⁸⁷ Samuel Eliot Morison, Professor of History, Harvard University, "From Fish and Furs to Municipal Bonds," *Oregon Voter* (Portland, Oregon), August 14, 1916, XLVI, pp. 4-26.

Jason Lee's Boston speech is a sincere and unadorned narrative. It probably ranks as the most graphic piece of source material that tells the story of the planting of Oregon's first mission. It leads the present-day writer unconsciously into the atmosphere of that autumn day in 1834 when Lee's little missionary party threaded their cautious way up the Willamette Valley, hemmed in by its mountains and shrouded in its wild and primitive beauty.

Lee's Boston address. Lee began by recounting the circumstances that led to his appointment as an Oregon missionary. In orderly fashion and with Homeric simplicity he told of his long journey over the dimly blazed Oregon Trail:

We slept four months and a half in tents. We then reached Fort Vancouver, a station of the Hudson's Bay Company, on the Columbia River, 90 miles from the ocean. While passing over the mountains we lived tolerably well on the fresh buffalo meat, but for about thirty days we had to live on meat dried, which was rather *dry living*.

After our arrival, we first looked about to find some suitable place to locate our mission. In ascending the Columbia we passed the mouth of the Willamette River, which is 80 miles from the ocean. Vessels have been 20 miles up this river. It is a beautiful river, of about 300 miles in length, and passes through a delightful valley, with beautiful groves of timber on either side. On both sides of this valley are mountains whose summits are of great height. From the Willamette to the Pacific Ocean is 75 miles. Between the river and the ocean there is a range of mountains, covered with a dense forest, and which terminated in high bluffs at the Pacific. On the other range, some of the mountains nearly reach the clouds, and are covered with perpetual snow.

The land of the Willamette Valley is good, and produces good English grain, but it is not suited to Indian corn. The climate there is much milder than the same latitude here. At 45 degrees north, the rivers do not freeze in winter, and the cattle do not need fodder. The prairies are green all winter, and the garden vegetables are left in the ground, to be taken when wanted. We do not have much snow and cold weather, but it rains most of the time for three or four months.

About 50 miles from the mouth of this river, we found some white

men who had commenced farming for a livelihood. Some of them were Americans and some were persons who had come out in the employment of the Hudson's Bay Company. Some had married native Indians for their wives.

When we left, we expected to labor among the Flat Head Indians. The *Christian Advocate and Journal* published a representation of a flattened head, and this tended with other things to create an interest in relation to this tribe. [Br. Lee here observed that the tribe usually denominated *Flat Heads* have not *flat*, but *round* heads, and that the tribe which have *flat heads* are the Chinooks.] Most of the Indians west of the Rocky Mountains flatten the heads of their children in infancy. This youth (pointing to Brooks) has his flattened, and the one in Illinois much more so. The process of flattening is commenced soon after birth, and is finished in about two years. It is done by binding two pieces of wood upon the head, one upon the forehead and the other upon the back part. The operation is very painful to the little sufferers. They are pitiable looking objects. Their eyes stand out in an unnatural manner, and they appear to suffer much agony. The head is not so flat in the adult as in the infant.

It was among the real Flat Heads that we located our mission, for it was left with us to locate where, in our opinion, after having surveyed the ground, we could do the most good. Besides, we left with the impression, that if we found the door open for missionary operations, the church would enter heartily into the work, and other missionaries be sent. We therefore chose a central situation, advantageous for a principal station.

We landed where we are now in Oct., 1834, and pitched our tents, unloaded our canoes, and commenced building a house. The rainy season was approaching, and I did not like the idea of living in an Indian hut. We labored under disadvantages, for we were not carpenters. We, however, went into the woods and cut the timber. We took the green trees and split them, and hewed out boards for our floors. If we wanted a door, a table, or a coffin, we had to do the same. We could not advance very swiftly, and we did not finish our house till after the rainy season had commenced.

We fenced in some prairie land when we had completed our houses, and the first year we cultivated thirty acres. We built a barn and gathered in our harvest. Thus far, we had enjoyed good health. But

my three companions were now taken with fever and ague, and I was obliged to be nurse, cook, and farmer, and every thing beside. At length I was taken down. I had warning, however, of its approach, and I prepared medicine and food for the others and myself. But the next day one of the others was able to crawl about, and wait on us a little. We had consumed our own stock of medicines, but Dr. McLoughlin of Vancouver, hearing of our situation, supplied us. . . .

We had not been in Oregon long, before we found it necessary to turn our hand to anything. It would not do when we wanted the wood for a plow, or the teeth for a harrow, or the yoke for our oxen, to say that we did not know how to make them. We went to work, and made them, and we were often surprised ourselves at what we accomplished.

Mr. Shepard kept the house and taught the school. We had in the family fifteen or twenty orphans, who had no friends, and whom God appeared to have sent to us, that we might take care of them. We thought, however, that they came faster than we could provide for them—we could not, however, turn them away. They came to us nearly naked, and we had no clothes for them. We bought some cloth for them at Vancouver, but we were neither tailors nor mantua-makers. Br. Shepard, however, concluded to try his hand at it, as we had to be "Jack-at-all-trades." He commenced cutting clothes for boys, and cut and made gowns! He then taught Indian mothers to make gowns which he had cut. I have seen Indian women dressed in gowns made by our hands, who never before had worn anything but skins.—I am better pleased with Br. Shepard's fashions than yours. They were based on *economy* and *utility*. He therefore declared at the outset that he would have no *bishop's sleeves* on the gowns. It tells little to come forward with powerful appeals in behalf of the missions, while the tyrant fashion, seconded by fancy, holds such an universal sway, and while so much is consumed in useless expenditures.

Here follows Mr. Lee's stirring, effective, but restrained appeal for funds to promote his missionary work in Oregon:

I cannot describe the wretchedness of these Indians. They are poor and miserable, blind and naked. But I have a firm belief, that if the missionary operations are continued, they will raise the poor Indian to the enjoyment of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. The same

blood which has washed away our stains, will also wash away his stains. The same gospel which has raised us to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, will also raise him to the same enjoyment; and bring both ultimately, to ascribe in the courts of heavenly bliss, glory to God and the Lamb, forever and ever!

Let no Christian think his work is done, till the world is converted. I have no fears but the world will be converted, but at the present rate of carrying on our operations, we must look far down the vista of time, before we can calculate upon this glorious consummation.

The excuses which are sometimes made by those who are urged to go as missionaries, are enough to shame a man. Men can go for paltry gain to the ends of the earth and not half the excuses are made.

When, O when shall we see the work of evangelizing the world accomplished? May God Almighty give us grace and strength to perform our duty in relation to it.³⁸

On the Monday evening, January 28, following his Boston lecture, Jason Lee filled an appointment in the factory city of Lowell, Massachusetts. Here he experienced unfavorable weather conditions. During the afternoon and evening "a large quantity of snow fell. . . . The wind blew hard, and the weather was severely cold." Despite these climatic handicaps, however, he addressed a large audience in the spacious Wesley Chapel on Suffolk Street.³⁹

Proceeding northward by winter stage, Jason Lee, with his usual promptitude, was on hand to meet his engagement at Newburyport, Massachusetts, on February 1, 1839. A pleasant incident associated with this meeting was Lee's visit with the Rev. Jefferson Hascall, a former Wilbraham Academy classmate, and the Newburyport Methodist pastor.⁴⁰

Two successful meetings at Portland, Maine, were held on February 3 and 4, the second resulting in an Oregon Mission collection of about two hundred dollars. The report of the meeting states: "It was advertised that the people would be admitted by

³⁸ *Zion's Herald*, February 6, 1839, X, p. 22.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, February 20, 1839, X, p. 30.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, March 13, 1839, X, p. 42.

tickets but this was dispensed with. . . . The house was filled to the utmost, and a hundred went away who could not gain admittance." An incident connected with the Portland meeting is illustrative of the fact that Jason Lee's stirring appeals reached a public beyond the bounds of his own denomination:

On the following evening [states the same account] Brother Lee met, by invitation of Congregational Churches, at their Monthly Concert. He addressed the meeting at length, and William Brooks gave a short address. A collection was taken, which is to be equally divided between the Methodist and Congregational Missions in Oregon.⁴¹

New Hampshire. A visit to Portsmouth, New Hampshire, brought to a close one of the really successful tours in Methodist missionary history. This lecture, although not on Lee's list of announced lecture engagements, was well attended, and received an enthusiastic report in *Zion's Herald*. The collection amounted to \$63.⁴²

At Concord, New Hampshire, Lee tarried for a day to send a report of his New England tour to his Mission Board. Although modest and matter-of-fact in tone, it is a skillful summary of his truly strenuous fund-raising campaign. Lee wrote:

Such is the rapidity with which I move through the country that it is not possible for me to give a particular account of all the meetings I attend; nor, indeed, is it necessary, as the resident preachers can do this at their leisure whenever they think them of sufficient interest to be worth giving to the public. I am not able to give the exact amount given and pledged to the missionary cause, during that four weeks' tour, at the meetings I attended, for I was sometimes obliged to leave before the amount was ascertained; but should judge that it was not less than three thousand five hundred dollars.

This, perhaps, all circumstances considered, is as much as we could reasonably expect; for I find we must take the world as it *is*, and not as it *should* be.

⁴¹ *Zion's Herald*, February 20, 1839, X, p. 30.

⁴² *Ibid.*

It is now twenty-three days since I left New-York, during which time I have held twenty missionary meetings, and have received cash as follows:—

Middletown, Ct., 1.50; Norwich, Ct., 5.00; West Thomson, Ct., 24.00;—Total \$29.00.

Walpole, Mass., 23.50; Lynn, Mass., 100.00.—Total \$123.50. From sabbath school at Lynn, to sabbath school in Oregon, \$22.00; not to be paid to F.[oreign] M.[ission] Sec.[retary].

The whole amount received and pledged at these twenty meetings, is, I think, twenty-five hundred dollars.

After entering New-England I was mentioning what had been done in the south, during my tour, and was told, in reply, that I had been over the "garden," and that "the cold calculating Yankees were not going to give much for the missionary cause." In a few instances I have found them "*cold*," indeed, if we may judge from the amount given; but, in most places, they have exhibited a good degree of warmth in this cause, and there are cheering indications that New-England is wakening up to this subject, and that she is beginning to "*calculate*" to do something in this holy and noble work, worthy of the sons of the pilgrim fathers.

I have little success in finding *men* for Oregon that answer the description, or come within the classes prescribed. John Watson, of Amber, Onondagua Co. [Onondaga County, New York], has written to me offering himself for Oregon. He has been a travelling preacher eight years, but he is not a "physician."

To-morrow I leave for the north, and in a few days expect to be in Canada, where I shall tarry say three weeks, more or less, and then return by the Hudson River route to New-York. I think of nothing more that I need say at this time.

Praying that the best of Heaven's blessing may rest upon you and the whole Israel of God, I am, dear sir, yours truly,⁴³

JASON LEE.

Tour of the North. On the day following his report to his Mission Board, Jason Lee was on his way to Stanstead, his Canadian village home and birthplace, which he had not seen for nearly six

⁴³ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, March 8, 1839, XIII, p. 113.

years. Traveling rapidly by winter stage,⁴⁴ he soon reached Haverhill, where he was invited to deliver his missionary address on Oregon before the congregations of both the Methodist and Congregational churches. About \$50 was subscribed by an appreciative audience.

The *Minutes of the New Hampshire Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1839* contain this terse bit of testimony to Lee's success at Haverhill:

Haverhill and East Haverhill, \$28.00, forwarded by Rev. J. Lee. \$40.00 to make Rev. Silas Quimby and Rev. A. Fleming life members of the Parent Society, \$57.60.

Visits Academy classmate, Baker. Although not on a formal lecture schedule, Lee's days were filled with speaking engagements. On Monday, February 11, he was at the neighboring Vermont town of Newbury, home of the famous Newbury Seminary, a young and flourishing Methodist school. Newbury, moreover, possessed a special attraction for him. It was the home of his closest personal friend and former Wilbraham Academy classmate, Osmon C. Baker, a future bishop of the Methodist Church. It is doubtful if in all of the numerous towns and cities visited by Lee during his five Eastern tours, he was more cordially received by any host than by his lifelong friend, Baker.⁴⁵

This item from the *New Hampshire Conference Minutes* reflects the effectiveness of Lee's work at Newbury:

Newbury Seminary, Dorcas Society, goods for Oregon Mission, \$13.50.⁴⁶

Lucy Thomson. In a manner undreamed of by him, Lee's Newbury visit was destined to prove a "white milestone" in that mis-

⁴⁴ "In 1814 a line of stages began to run from Haverhill to Concord, which kept up till the railroad was opened in 1848." Frederic P. Wells, *History of Newbury, Vermont* (St. Johnsbury, Vermont, 1900), p. 292.

⁴⁵ Horace W. Bailey, *Newbury Seminary Souvenir* (Newbury, Vermont, 1901), p. 45.

⁴⁶ *Minutes of the New Hampshire Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1839.*

sionary's brief but crowded career. In the long visit between Lee and his Wilbraham classmate, Mr. Baker referred to Lucy Thomson, one of his favorite students, who had delivered the valedictory address on the preceding November 22. Lucy Thomson, of "Barre Lower Village," had enrolled in the newly founded seminary in 1837. Twenty-eight years of age, and intellectually superior, she possessed a refined, spiritual nature, and was deeply interested in missionary work. Mr. Baker spoke in terms of unreserved praise of the young woman and showed Mr. Lee a copy of her valedictory address with its eulogy on missions and spiritual values. Lee's reactions are described by his future son-in-law Francis H. Grubbs, who no doubt received the information direct from Mr. Baker. Mr. Grubbs' report of the incident reads:

Having traversed the length and breadth of the Northern States of the Union, and visited their principal cities in the interest of the mission, the ship *Lausanne* being chartered and the "Great Reinforcement" ready to embark at the city of New York, Jason Lee sought a brief space for rest amid the scenes of his early life. Osmon C. Baker, his college mate and warmest friend was now principal of Newbury Seminary, Vermont. What was more natural than that he should turn aside for a few days of communion and fellowship? What more providential than that there he should then be attracted by the record, and inspired by the lofty sentiments breathed in a valedictory address delivered the previous year by a young lady graduate?

What more pleasing to his bosom friend and early companion than to declare the excellency and witness to the loveliness of the author?

Charmed by the recital, Jason Lee exclaimed, "I must know that lady!" So he hied him away to Barre, her home; met, loved, wooed and won Lucy Thomson.⁴⁷

The pleasant scenes at Newbury did not, however, detain for long the energetic Oregon missionary. Bidding farewell to this historic town with its seminary, its bustling inns and taverns, and its stage-line stations past which flowed a constant stream of travel from New York and Boston through this "north country" onward

⁴⁷ Francis H. Grubbs (comp), *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, p. 70.

to Quebec,⁴⁸ he pushed on toward his Canadian home. First, however, he made a side trip to Chelsea, a town lying a few miles to the westward of Newbury. Here he found in session a Preachers' Meeting of the Montpelier, Vermont, District. This unexpected call upon the assembled ministers and the favorable impression he made upon them is described in homely, newsy fashion by one of the attending preachers.

As you recollect [wrote the reporter], our Preachers' Meeting commenced February 12; most of the travelling preachers upon the District, and a number of the local, were present. They all possessed a large share of that spirit of which every true minister of the gospel partakes. At 10 o'clock on the above named day, our 3d quarterly Meeting commenced with a Love-feast. After we had assembled for a time, and most of the brethren had spoken of the love of God to them and as we were pausing a moment for others to participate in the joys of the occasion, the door of the vestry was slowly and softly opened by the hand of a stranger, clad in modest apparel, whose frosty locks, and somewhat furrowed visage, gave clearest proof of many cares and the severest of toil. He shook hands with our P[residing] Elder, who was somewhat surprised that a stranger should accost him, under circumstances like the present, but oh, how astonished to find in him a former, but now unheeded friend and brother in the gospel. Br. Scott then introduced him to the gazing and eager throng. Of him, indeed, they had read and heard much, and he held a prominent place in their affections. But how little did they think, until his name was called, that this was Br. Jason Lee. Never could he have made his appearance upon this District more opportunely. . . .

In the evening of that day Br. Lee and William addressed us, as I suppose, much in their usual style. The whole was interesting and profitable. We raised at this meeting, among the friends in this town, about ninety dollars, not so much as we could have wished, but as they never had such a meeting in this place before, and as the Dorcases had previously formed a Society, and raised nearly forty dollars for the Oregon mission, we think it was, to say the least, respectable.⁴⁹

⁴⁸ Frederic P. Wells, *History of Newbury, Vermont*, pp. 291, 295.

⁴⁹ *Zion's Herald*, March 20, 1839, X, p. 46.

Pursuing his journey homeward by a route that, it is quite likely, lay through the neighboring city of Barre, and on northward through the capital city of Montpelier, Lee was at last on his way to Stanstead. He stopped at Lyndon, a northern Vermont village with a population of seventeen hundred and fifty-two,⁵⁰ which lay directly on the stage route of his journey home. This village responded to Lee's appeal by donating the large sum of eighty dollars.

The *New Hampshire Conference Minutes* add this supplementary touch to the above report:

Lyndon by Rev. J. Templeton, forwarded by Rev. J. Lee, \$73.00.⁵¹

Lee reached Stanstead about mid-February, 1839.

Lee's Canadian visit. His return to his native village, his visits among his numerous kindred, his activities on behalf of the Oregon Mission, the enterprise he always "wore next to his heart," are either not recorded at all or are set down with disappointing brevity:

The following donations were mostly from personal friends in Lower Canada, for the Oregon Mission: Samuel Brooks, Esq. Sherbrooke, L[ower] C[anada], \$20.00; Mrs. Ware, Compton, L. C., \$2.00; Hazel Hazeltine, [blacksmith and early settler] Hatley, L. C., \$2.00; Jonathan L. Pool [son of Theodore C. Pool, brother-in-law of Jason Lee] Hatley, L. C., \$5.00; Lucy Curtis, Stanstead, L. C., \$5.00; Louisa D. Morrill [twenty-nine year old step-daughter of Jonathan Lee, a deceased brother of Jason Lee] \$5.00; Mary A[nn] Curtis [daughter of Daniel Curtis, Stanstead pioneer resident], do.[nation], \$2.00; sundry other persons, \$5.30.⁵²

Lee's second reference to his Canadian visit or his "tour to the north," as he called it, is:

In my last tour to the north I received the following sums for the

⁵⁰ Edward Conant, *Vermont* (Rutland, Vermont, 1905), p. 105.

⁵¹ *Minutes of the New Hampshire Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1839.*

⁵² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 12, 1839, XIII, p. 136.

Oregon mission; . . . collection at Stanstead [doubtless at the Wesleyan Brick Church on Stanstead Plain, erected in 1829-1830 ⁵³ by the resident pastor, the Rev. Thomas Turner], \$16.25; donation by E Lee, \$5.00. ⁵⁴

Early in the second week of March, 1839, Jason Lee bade farewell to his numerous kindred and friends in Stanstead and vicinity. Directing his journey toward Montpelier, he stopped at Craftsbury, a northern village of eleven hundred and fifty-one ⁵⁵ persons. The meager reference to this meeting reads: ". . . from Craftsbury, Miss. Soc. by G. F. Wells [to Lee to forward to Missionary Society] \$4.00."

The *New Hampshire Minutes* furnish this additional item: "Craftsbury, forwarded by Rev. J. Lee, \$23.00." ⁵⁶

While in this vicinity Lee made a side trip to Burlington, seat of Vermont's state university. His brief reference reads: "Missionary meeting, Burlington, Vt., \$40.92." ⁵⁷

The unusually large contribution of over \$200 "in money and pledges for the Oregon Mission" crowned Lee's visit to Danville.

The *New Hampshire Minutes* contain this bald summary of what was really an impressively large collection: ⁵⁸

Danville, by Rev. S. Kelly \$62.02 and forwarded by Jason Lee; \$18.00 to redeem pledges made at the last Conference; \$50.00 paid Domestic Society and forwarded by Rev. J. Lee. ⁵⁹

Vermont. On Sunday evening, March 17, Lee held a meeting in Montpelier. Among the persons present was Lucy Thomson. She was honored with an election to a life membership of the Parent Missionary Society. The well-written report of this meeting reads:

⁵³ B. F. Hubbard (comp.), *Forests and Clearings, The History of Stanstead County*, p. 86.

⁵⁴ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 4, 1839, XIV, p. 26.

⁵⁵ Edward Conant, *Vermont*, p. 110.

⁵⁶ *Minutes of the New Hampshire Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the year 1839.*

⁵⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 4, 1839, XIV, p. 26.

⁵⁸ *Zion's Herald*, April 24, 1839.

⁵⁹ *Minutes of New Hampshire. . . . Conference for 1839.*

We held our missionary meeting last evening in the first Congregational Church, it being the largest house in the village. Brothers Lee and William were present. Our meeting was highly interesting. The subscriptions and collections amount to \$154.00, all of which is a freewill offering. I send you \$40.00 by Brother Lee, the remainder soon. Of the sum raised, \$140.00 are to constitute the following persons life members of our Parent Missionary Society: Hon. J. P. Miller, of Montpelier, Vt., Rev. Eleazer Smith, do., Mrs. Laura W. Smith, do., Mrs. Smith, wife of Rev. B. W. Smith, pastor of first Congregational Church in Montpelier, Rev. Elisha J. Scott, P[ro]v[is]ed E[lder] of Montpelier District, William Brooks, the Indian youth, Miss Lucy Thompson of Barre.

In conclusion I would just say, the missionary flame burns in Vermont as it never has before. Glory to God in the highest.⁶⁰

While in the Montpelier area, Lee again pleaded the cause of the Oregon Mission at Barre, ancient seat of Vermont Methodism, which boasted a meetinghouse as early as the year 1800,⁶¹ and was also the home of his future wife, Lucy Thomson.

The only known report of this meeting is the laconic item in the *New Hampshire Conference Minutes*, which reads:

Barre by Rev. N. W. Aspinwall, \$10.00 to redeem a pledge of his wife Laura; \$27.00 forwarded by Rev. J. Lee \$56.53.⁶²

Lee's own precise report of the amount turned over to him at the meeting was \$27.03.⁶³

Vermont to New York. The week intervening between Sunday, March 17, and Sunday, March 24, found the dynamic missionary breasting his way over the muddy Vermont roads southbound toward Troy, New York. The large Oregon Mission contributions received along his southern route seem to furnish evidence that Lee held meetings at Rochester, whose donation was \$106.88, Woodstock, and Weston. The evidence clearly discloses that Lee was

⁶⁰ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 12, 1839, p. 136.

⁶¹ Walter Rice Davenport, *One Hundred and Twenty-five Years of Methodism* (Barre, Vermont, 1929), p. 7.

⁶² *Minutes of the New Hampshire Conference . . . 1839.*

⁶³ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 12, 1839, XIII, p. 136.

personally present at Woodstock, then the third largest city of Vermont. The brief record of this event reads:

Woodstock, \$10.00 forwarded by Rev. J. Lee \$32.50.

Lee himself also included Woodstock among his list of appointments and designates the donation placed in his hands there as \$10.⁶⁴ The unusual gift of \$36.70 made by Weston would point to the conclusion that the missionary's plea for Oregon funds was effective here in this southern Vermont village of about one thousand souls.

On Saturday, March 23, Lee left behind him the state of Vermont with its hospitable memories and crossed its boundary line into the state of New York. At Troy, on Sunday, March 24, the collections and subscriptions for his meeting reached the surprisingly large total of \$454. At this meeting Mrs. Marcus Whitman, who as a girl had attended Miss Willard's Seminary in this city, was made a life member of the Oregon Missionary Society. Mrs. Eliza Spalding, then at the Lapwai Mission near the modern Lewiston, Idaho, was likewise honored. The felicitously worded report of this meeting reads:

The Rev. Jason Lee, accompanied by a Flathead Indian from beyond the Rocky Mountains, held a missionary meeting with us in the State-street church, last Sabbath evening. Though the notice of their arrival in our city was but brief, yet the citizens came out in multitudes. Hundreds went away for want of room in the church, which was literally crammed, among whom were some of our most respectable citizens of the Presbyterian and Baptist Churches. They listened to our missionary with the profoundest attention, and responded to his call with a promptitude which did them honor. It was indeed a glorious time. We seemed to feel some of the dawns of the latter day's glory, while all hearts appeared to thrill with emotions of tenderness and sympathy for the poor, degraded, and perishing heathen, a proof of which we have in the collection and subscriptions which followed, which amounted to \$454. The sum of

⁶⁴ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 12, 1839, XIII, p. 136.

\$96.95 I now remit to you; the remainder will be forthcoming as soon as collected.

The following persons, fourteen in number, were constituted life members of the Oregon Missionary Society, namely Dr. Avery J. Skelton, Mrs. Gardner Landon, Mrs. D. Sacket, Mrs. D. Rogers, Miss Mary Ann Jackson, Mr. Noah Clapp, Mrs. Martha A. Clapp, Mrs. J. S. Hakes, Rev. Jason Lee, William Brooks, native, Mrs. Dr. Whitman, Mrs. Eliza Spa[u]lding, Mrs. Eliza Ann Remington, and Rev. S. Remington.

A missionary meeting was also held in the North Second-street church, in the afternoon of the same day, of the success of which you will doubtless be informed by the Rev. P. C. Oakley, their pastor. Though their notice was yet shorter than ours, I learn that they did well for the good cause.⁶⁵

A rapid downstream voyage in one of the steamers that plied the Hudson River brought Lee safely to his destination, New York City, in the closing days of March, 1839. In his missionary campaign, Lee had traveled through portions of nine populous Eastern states, as well as the District of Columbia and Lower Canada.

New York State. Lee's reputation as one of the most effective missionary campaigners of his time was well established. He was now requested by his Mission Board to make a final tour in New York State. This farewell speaking expedition began at Albany on April 21, and was concluded at Schenectady on May 12.⁶⁶ During this period Jason Lee spoke to crowded congregations and assemblages and successfully kept, without a single omission, each of the seventeen formal speaking engagements to which he was assigned.

Before opening his formal missionary tour, Lee paused, on his northward up-river journey, for a meeting at the village of Poughkeepsie on the banks of the Hudson. The matter-of-fact report of his meetings reads:

We have collected in this station the present year, for the cause of missions, \$155, five of which was paid in some time since. Ten was

⁶⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 19, 1839, XIII, p. 137.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, May 24, 1839, XIII, p. 160.

paid to Brother J. Lee on a late visit to us, and the balance, \$140, is enclosed.

Lee's Sunday evening address at Albany, on April 21, is described as one of "the most clear, honest, and powerful appeals that was ever made to a religious community." "We think," continues this report, "that our beloved brother Lee was eminently successful in making a deep and favorable impression in behalf of the missionary cause generally, and of Oregon in particular." The gift to the Oregon Mission in this state capital of thirty-three thousand souls reached the total of \$170.15. The journalistic description of this sabbath evening Oregon service of almost a century ago reads:

Last Sabbath evening a missionary meeting was held for the Garretson station in this city.

Though circumstances appeared to militate against us in consequence of one of the most disastrous fires which has ever visited our city, which broke out on the previous evening, and by which the best church we had here was destroyed (*the Wesley Chapel*) yet it pleased the good Lord greatly to favor us in the object of our meeting, in respect to numbers, interest, and funds. One of the largest congregations that ever crowded into our spacious church listened to one of the most clear, honest, and powerful appeals that was ever made to a religious community. We think our beloved brother Lee was eminently successful in making a deep and favorable impression in behalf of the missionary cause generally, and of Oregon in particular.

It was not all *Indian excitement* which was manifested on the occasion; for if ever a congregation of professing Christians had their duty to the heathen portrayed before them, and were urged to the performance of that duty by the most faithful and eloquent appeals, and the most interesting, palpable, and, at the same time, startling facts, it was acknowledged and felt on the present occasion.

Not only has a renewed impulse been here given to the missionary spirit, but the liberality of the friends of missions greatly augmented, as the doings of our late meeting will testify; and I think it was owing to the want of more time why our contributions were not larger, though if our friends are correct it is the most liberal sum taken up at any similar meeting in this charge; a kind of missionary

taste has been created, which I hope will increase until the Indian, and the negro, and the rude barbarian shall all enjoy the benefits of the great salvation.

The collection taken up amounted to \$73.65.

The following persons offered their names as life members and subscribers to the Oregon Missionary Society, viz:—Jonathan P. Couch, of the honorable legislature, \$10; Mrs. Maria Van Valkenburgh, \$10; Rev. Elias Van Derlip, \$10; Mr. Jacob Hochstrasser, \$10; Miss Harriet Newell Martin, \$10; Mr. William H. Ross, \$5; Mr. Oliver Scovil, \$5.

By sundry persons, in \$1 subscriptions, \$35; \$30 of which sum is to constitute Rev. E. D. Allen, of the Fourth Presbyterian Church, a life member of the parent society, and Rev. J. Pegg, preacher in charge, a life member of the Oregon missionary society.

Contents of a missionary box, presented by the pupils of Miss Child's select school, \$5. Total, \$170.15. Forwarded by this communication of the above sum, \$125.15. Balance on subscription now due, \$45.⁶⁷

Lee himself wrote a brief account of his night meeting at Utica, a rising little city which had been quickened into new life since the completion of the Erie Canal in 1825. Lee's report of his engagement here appears in this brief note which was published in the *Christian Advocate* over a month after the event.

New-York, June 4, 1839.

Dear Brother, At a Missionary meeting in the Dutch Reformed church in Utica,* there was received in collection \$17.75; donations, B. F. Beard \$5, Mr. Ellis \$1, Rev. M. Adams \$1; amounting to \$24.75, \$10 of which I have acknowledged to the *Advocate*, and I now send you the balance, \$14.75.

JASON LEE.

*In my letter published in the *Advocate* No. 666, 4th page, the printer has omitted the sign for dollars in the moneys received at Utica. It should read thus: Utica \$32; \$22 of which was pledged when I was there before.

J. L.⁶⁸

⁶⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, May 24, 1839, XIII, p. 160.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, June 14, 1839, XIII, p. 170.

The closing week of April witnessed Lee's passage through the attractive lake region of west central New York. This veritable "earthly paradise" of green countrysides and picturesquely named towns—Elmira, Penn Yan, Geneva—poured out its treasure for Oregon. Rapid stage rides, often made at night, brought the lecturer from Courtlandville south to Ithaca, later the seat of Cornell University, but then a slumbering village at the head of Lake Cayuga. For several days in late April and early May, Lee was but a few miles distant from Allegheny County, then the home of the parents of Mrs. Marcus Whitman. These "honored parents," as the distant daughter from her far-off Waiilatpu mission house in Old Oregon had frequently addressed them, were the possessors of a cordial letter of introduction to Mr. Lee.⁶⁹ Yet the Methodist missionary's exacting schedule prevented his receiving the welcome which awaited him. On May 2, Lee reached Buffalo, his farthest western New York State meeting.

On his return journey, a rapid series of engagements along the general course of the Erie Canal brought the weary lecturer to his last appointment at Schenectady on Sunday evening, May 12. Here he addressed a congregation in the Schenectady Methodist Episcopal Church which "filled the house to overflowing." A cash collection and gifts amounting to \$88.29 crowned with success the last of Jason Lee's five memorable lecture tours in which Oregon was the ever-recurring theme. Enlivening the interest was the presence of the two flat-headed Indian boys, William Brooks, Lee's regular traveling companion, and Thomas Adams, who now rejoined Lee after an illness of over six months at Peoria, Illinois. William Brooks, because of serious illness, was able to speak at this meeting for only a few minutes.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Letter of Narcissa Whitman to her parents in *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1891*, p. 105.

⁷⁰ From the *Philadelphia North American* of Wednesday (June 5, 1839). "DIED. On Wednesday morning, the 29th inst. of May, 1839, after a short illness, William Brooks. The deceased came with the Rev. Jason Lee to this city from the Oregon Territory, some months since, and has traveled with him in his visits to various places since his arrival, and spoken at missionary meetings with great effect. He was an estimable youth, beloved by all who

At Lee's farewell meeting in his New York State tour, the collection taken up and the donations made to aid the cause of missions amounted to \$88.29, which, with the exception of three dollars, was paid in and "handed over to brother Lee."

Ten dollars of the above was given by brother Chs. Lane, of Lima, N. Y., to constitute himself a life member of the Oregon Missionary Society, and should be credited to the Lima station. Ten dollars was a donation from Rev. John Nott, to constitute Miss Maria N. Potter a life member of the Oregon Missionary Society, and thirty dollars was raised to make Rev. E. Goss a life member of the Parent Society, and Mrs. Eliza B. Goss a life member of the Oregon Missionary Society.⁷¹

Lee's own summary of his New York tour is a revealing document. On May 16, three days after his return to New York City, he wrote:

Messrs. Editors,

The appointments made through your columns, a few weeks since, for me, have been duly met; and I will now acknowledge the amount of money received on that tour. It will be proper to remark here, that in some places I took none of the money collected, but left it with the preachers to arrange that business, and in others I only took a little for expenses, so that the receipts bear no proportion to the amount collected and pledged. They are as follows:—Poughkeepsie \$10; Utica \$32.22, \$22 of which were pledged when I was there before; Cazenovia 6; Courtland 18; Ithaca 88.60; Elmira 54.56; Geneva 51.88; Buffalo 28.77; Lockport 35.37; Lyons 64.61; Rochester 48.37; ear nubs 75 cts.; Seneca Falls 28; Auburn 51; Syracuse 126.71; Schenactada 85.64; ten of which were from Brother Lane of

were acquainted with him. But the best of all is, he died an experienced Christian. If brother Lee receives, in this life, no other reward for his labors and sufferings in that distant territory, the conversion of this youth is sufficient. One native Indian, at least, of Oregon, is saved, as the fruit of missionary labor.

"The corpse was taken to the Greene-st. church on Thursday, and an address delivered on the occasion by Rev. Dr. Bangs. The Rev. Brother Lee preached a funeral sermon on the subject of his death on Sunday last, in the same church. Some further particulars in the life and death of William will be given in our next."

⁷¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, May 24, 1839, XIII, p. 160.

Lima, and to be credited to that station; donation of brother King 5; George Geddes, Esq., of Camillus, by D. H. Kingsly 5. Total received \$740.20, which is probably considerably less than one third of the whole amount pledged during that tour.

It will be recollected that it was upon the country through which I travelled, that Dr. White made such a loud call, and I am happy to say the prospect is, that that call will be nobly met. And besides, most of these stations have missionary societies, which will be able to report a good round sum at the close of the conference year.

A great portion of the country through which we passed is most delightful, and produces most luxuriant crops. The farmers are becoming rich. I would to God that each would lay by in store, according as God blesses him, for the purpose of sending the gospel to enlighten others, that they may appreciate and labor for the blessings of civilization, and, above all, the durable riches and righteousness that fadeth not away. My labors on this tour were excessive; travelling long distances and addressing large audiences nearly every day; beside that which cometh upon me daily, the answering a thousand questions; the answers to most of which have been published from time to time in your excellent journal; I mean such as are either worth asking or answering. Three nights I did not go to bed at all, having to travel in order to meet my appointments; but, by the blessing and kindness of God, I am now enjoying my usual health. I will just add for the information of friends, (and I hope they will remember it two hours,) that we expect to sail the first of September—that we hire our passage, pay tonnage or freight—seven month's voyage—touch at the Sandwich Islands—don't know when I shall come back—make no calculations about it—but hope, by the blessing of God upon our unceasing efforts, to make a country fit to live in, and fit to die in; and have no choice, but would as soon lay my bones in that country as in this. Most respectfully yours,

JASON LEE.

New-York, May 16, 1839.⁷²

⁷² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, June 7, 1839, XIII, p. 168.

CHAPTER VIII

AGAIN EN ROUTE TO OREGON

AFTER Lee's return from his New York missionary tour on May 13, he faced a busy summer and autumn. Upon his Mission Board and himself fell the arduous task of chartering and outfitting a sailing vessel for the 22,000-mile voyage to Oregon. Another difficult problem was the selection and assembling of the missionaries who had volunteered to reinforce the Oregon Mission. Still another laborious feature was the assembling and labeling of the large quantity of goods and equipment to be shipped to Oregon.

"*Lausanne*" chartered. After several weeks of negotiation with shipowners, a suitable sailing ship, the *Lausanne*, was finally procured. An official announcement in the *Advocate* describes this event:

The ship *Lausanne*, chartered by the Missionary Society, is expected to sail from New-York for the Columbia River on the 1st of October. The vessel is new, of the first class, 400 tons, copper fastened and coppered, with spacious state rooms, and well furnished in every respect for the comfort and convenience of the passengers.

Josiah Spaulding, an old and respectable captain, who has made nine voyages to the East Indies, will command the ship. She goes out a temperance vessel in its fullest sense, as no spiritous liquors for freight or use will be admitted on board. For the comfort of the emigrating party, in so long a voyage, the ship will touch at St. Catherine's, in Brazil, Valparaiso, in Chili, Oahu, in Sandwich Islands, and thence depart to Oregon Territory.

By order of the Oregon Com[mittee of the Board of Foreign Missions].

G. P. DISOSWAY, Sec.
New York, Sept. 16, 1839.¹

¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 20, 1839, XIV, p. 19.

Missionary reinforcements. On December 5, 1838, about one month after Jason Lee's arrival in the East, the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society made this important announcement through Nathan Bangs, the Corresponding Secretary:

Since the return of the Rev. Jason Lee from Oregon, the board of managers have had various consultations with him respecting the present state of the mission, its future prospects, and the means necessary to prosecute it with vigor and success. The whole subject was referred to a committee, who had several interviews with Brother Lee and others, and finally agreed in the following report, which was submitted to the Board on the 5th instant, and unanimously concurred in:—

The committee to whom was referred the proposed reinforcement of the Oregon mission, after mutual consultation with Brother Lee, have agreed to recommend that, in addition to those at present connected with the mission, measures be taken to increase the establishment there by sending out additional help, as follows, viz.:—

Five missionaries, *one* physician, *six* mechanics, *four* farmers, and *one* missionary steward, with their wives, making 32 adults, who shall be connected with the Oregon mission, under the superintendence of the Rev. Jason Lee. It is recommended that educated physicians be selected for missionaries as far as possible, and that, in appointing the mechanics, as many with their wives as may be found capable as school teachers be preferred.

The committee also agreed to make the following additional suggestions, viz.:—

That a sawmill be authorized, together with all necessary building materials, tools, and implements. That goods, to be selected by Brother Lee to the amount of 5000 dollars be sent out. That the selection of the laymen to be sent, be referred to the resident corresponding secretary and Brother Lee. That a female teacher be sent, for the benefit of the children of the missionaries, her salary not to be paid by the Board.

That all persons engaging in this mission shall obligate themselves to remain in our service for ten years, unless sooner released by the Board or the Superintendent of the mission.

That Brother Lee be deputed forthwith to visit Boston, and open a negotiation with John N. Barbour, Esq. in relation to his proposal for

the joint ownership of a vessel for passengers and freight, and that he report the result to the Board, for their decision in the premises.

It was then resolved, that the corresponding secretary be requested to invite Bishop Hedding to meet with the Board at his earliest convenience, for consultation on this important subject, and that the Board be recommended to delay any final action on the subject until such interview with the bishop can be had.

It was also resolved that Brother Lee be authorized to build a grist mill at the Willamette Falls whenever it shall, in his judgment, become necessary for the interests of the mission.

It is estimated that this outfit, including a half year's salary and passage, will cost not less than \$30,000. This, in addition to the other missions we are now pledged to support, will require at least \$130,000 for this year, \$61,000 having been already drawn for since the first of May last. The friends of the cause, therefore, will have to be on the alert to meet this demand upon the liberality of the church. Past experience, however, induces the firm conviction that there shall be no lack of means to carry forward this holy work. But a *united* and *persevering* effort is essential to success.

Let therefore, the discipline be carried into effect in every circuit and station, by preaching a missionary sermon, taking up collections, and soliciting donations from every one able to give, and the work shall be done.

To aid the society in furnishing the funds necessary for the support of its missions, Brother Lee, while detained in the United States, will devote as much of his time as practicable in visiting various parts of the country, with a view to hold missionary meetings, and take up collections. For this purpose he left this city on the 13th inst. for Washington city, where he will spend about one week.

On the 22nd he will visit Baltimore, and remain there until the 31st.

From January 1st to 7th, 1839, he is expected to be in Philadelphia and vicinity.

On the evening of the 10th he has an appointment in Morristown, N. J.

On the evening of the 15th in New-Haven, Conn.

The 16th and 17th he will spend at Middletown [home of Dr. Fisk and seat of Wesleyan University], and on the evening of the 18th at Hartford, and the Sabbath following in Norwich, Conn.

On the evening of the 23rd, in Providence, R. I.

From the 24th to 31st he will spend in Boston and its Vicinity.

The evening of February 1st he will hold a missionary meeting in Newburyport [home of Caleb Cushing], and on the evening of February 3d in Portland, Me.

After this he will make a tour to the north, with a view to visit his friends in Lower Canada, and will hold meetings in as many places as he may find it convenient on his way, of the times and places for which he will give timely notice himself.

In respect to the persons wanted to make up the mission family, we do not now advertise for any persons to make application, as several names are already on our reserve list, and those who may wish to volunteer their services, either as missionaries, farmers, or mechanics, physician, or teacher, can make known their views and feelings to Brother Lee, when he may visit their neighborhoods. We wish, indeed, to become well acquainted with the persons before they are engaged, that we may, as far as possible, guard against the employment of incompetent or improper persons.

It may be well, however, to remark here, that none will be accepted but such as have an established character for *piety*, are *members of our Church*, well recommended for their *competency* in the department of labor for which they may be engaged, and are *clear of debt*. The Board having passed a resolution that they will not advance money to pay the debts of any one whom they may employ in their service.

It has already been resolved that the mission family must be sent by water, by the way of the Sandwich Islands, and as it will require considerable time to select suitable persons, procure the necessary supplies, and provide a convenient passage, the probability is that the expedition will not leave until the latter part of next summer or autumn.²

During the late spring, Bishop Elijah Hedding, Lansingville, New York, in charge of the Foreign Missions of the Methodist Church, selected most of the ministers who were to go to Oregon as missionaries. After May 15, Bishop Beverly Waugh, Bishop Hedding's successor, had the responsibility for the later appointments. During the spring and summer months the following five

² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 21, 1838, XIII, p. 70.

ministers were selected: Gustavus Hines, Herkimer County, New York; William W. Kone, Hillsboro, North Carolina; Joseph H. Frost, Newburgh District, New York; Alvin F. Waller, Elba, New York; and John P. Richmond, Jacksonville, Illinois.³

Lee overruled. It is interesting to observe that Lee recommended only two ministers, the number he felt was sufficient for the Oregon Mission. He was overruled, however, by his Board of Managers and Missionary Bishop, who, under the spell of the missionary enthusiasm of the hour, favored the larger number. Had Jason Lee's plans been approved, a chief source of his future difficulties in Oregon would have been obviated. It was his dissatisfied ministerial associates, and not the lay helpers selected mainly by himself, that introduced dissension into the Oregon Mission.

It is also worthy of note that Lee stoutly resisted the acceptance of any ministers whose wives did not wish to go to Oregon. Lee's position, if supported, would have eliminated from the lists of applicants some ministerial colleagues who later were to cause both the mission and its superintendent almost endless trouble and embarrassment.

On August 27, the appointment of Dr. Ira L. Babcock as mission physician was announced. Dr. Babcock was a resident of the State of New York and little dreamed of the aggressive rôle he was to play in the political life of the distant region to which he was assigned.⁴

After publishing several advertisements in the *Advocate* columns, four mechanics were finally announced. They were Hamilton Campbell, carpenter and joiner, Springfield, Illinois; James Olley, carpenter and joiner, East Troy, New York; Lewis H. Judson, cabinetmaker, Connecticut; and Josiah L. Parrish, blacksmith, Onondaga County, New York.⁵

In the personnel of the mission party, as finally announced, there

³ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, March to September, 1839, XIII, *passim*.

⁴ Jason Lee letter, *Zion's Herald*, September 4, 1839, X, p. 142.

⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 30, 1839, XIV, p. 7.

were four teachers, instead of one as originally planned: Maria T. Ware, Lowell, Massachusetts; Chloe Aurelia Clark, East Windsor, Connecticut; Elmira Phillips, Springfield, Massachusetts; and Almira Phelps, Springfield, Massachusetts.⁶

Only two—not four—farmers were on the official passenger list published just prior to the sailing of the *Lausanne*, namely William W. Raymond, Balston Spa, New York, and Henry B. Brewer, Wilbraham, Massachusetts. George Abernethy, New York City, was selected for the important office of missionary steward, upon whom would devolve the duties of mission bookkeeper and accountant. The appointment of a stewardess, an office not mentioned in the earlier announcement of plans, completed the missionary party. For this position, Miss Orpha Lankton, Hartford, Connecticut, was named.⁷

Missionary emphasis. Contrary to the impression conveyed by many works on Oregon and American history, the *Lausanne* reinforcement was not primarily a colonizing enterprise, but distinctly a missionary expedition in character and purpose. This fact is evidenced by these official announcements issued by Nathan Bangs, the corresponding secretary of the Missionary Society, during the spring and summer prior to the departure of the *Lausanne*:

1. We want *five* missionaries; and we should prefer men of small families, and such as have a knowledge of medicine, that they may administer to the physical as well as spiritual wants of the people.

2. They must be well recommended by *three elders*, their presiding elder being one, if practicable, for their fitness for such a mission as to health, piety, talents, and willingness to endure hardships, as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

3. *They must be clear of debt*, as the board have determined that they will not be responsible for the debts of any who may engage in their employ.

4. Those who may offer for this service may direct their letters to *Bishop Hedding* until the 15th of May, to my care 200 Mulberry street;

⁶ Jason Lee letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 30, 1839, XIV, p. 7.

⁷ Farewell Missionary Meeting, *Zion's Herald*, October 9, 1839, X, p. 163.

and, after that, to *Bishop Waugh*, to whom the care of the foreign missions will then belong. All letters must be *post paid*.

It is expected that the expedition will sail from the port of New-York some time in September next, as we are now negotiating with a gentleman in this city for the charter of a ship expressly for this purpose.*

Those who apply will recollect that they must be recommended by the preacher in charge for their piety and standing as members of the Church, and by at least three others for their competency in that particular branch of mechanical labor in which they propose to engage, signifying also their willingness to devote themselves exclusively to the service of the Missionary Society for at least ten years, unless sooner released by death or by the superintendent of the mission.

As some have expressed doubts respecting the propriety of sending so many mechanics and farmers to the mission, it may be well to give the following reasons for this measure:

Let it be recollected, then, that the missionaries who go to Oregon are entirely dependent upon their own labor for a subsistence. Hence, the first company who went were obliged to go to work or starve, build them a house, and cultivate the land. This they did themselves, with the aid they procured from some Indian boys, although they had to teach them how to work. The missionaries had not only to raise their own provision, but to cook and wash and mend their own clothes, for there were no civilized settlements from which they could obtain the needful aid.

This being the state of things there, it has been considered essential, for the successful prosecution of this mission, to have it supplied with farmers and mechanics, to build houses and to cultivate the land, that those who go as missionaries may devote themselves entirely to their spiritual work.

We have nothing to do with planting a colony in Oregon. Our business is to send the Gospel to those who may be there, either now or hereafter, whether natives or otherwise. If others see fit to remove there, well; we have no objections; we will do them all the good we can, and we wish them all manner of success in their efforts to introduce a wholesome population into that territory, who shall set an example of Christian conduct before the natives. But with colonizing

* *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 5, 1839, XIII, p. 130.

*companies we have no connection, other than this, if they arrive there, and will allow our missionaries to preach to them, we hope they may receive much spiritual benefit from the friendly intercourse.*⁹

Hence it will be perceived that we send out those only who are to be helpers to the cause of missions. It is not for the sake of cultivating the land, and building houses—only so far as these things are necessary to realize the primary object of the enterprise, which is, *the salvation of the souls of the people in that region.*

And as they are cut off from civilized society, they must depend upon their own exertions for a livelihood, as they cannot, when they want bread to eat, or raiment to put on, go to a neighboring civilized settlement and purchase these things.

In this way, too, though the necessary outfit will cost much, the mission will soon sustain itself, by raising those articles of consumption which are needful to support life, and to carry on their operations. It is hoped, therefore, that the friends of the cause will not be deterred from continuing their exertions from any misconception of the views and objects of the society in thus procuring a reinforcement and supplies for the Oregon mission.¹⁰

Burdensome detail. A burdensome feature of the work of preparing for the long voyage was the assembling and labeling of the merchandise and freight that were to be shipped. These consisted of household goods, tools, farming implements, machinery for a sawmill and grist mill, window sashes, and a large quantity of clothing donated for the Oregon Indians.

Jason Lee wrote an illuminating letter to his missionary friends in the July 26 issue of the *Advocate*. It suggests the nervous haste and rush of those warm, summer days at the New York City Mission House, and the size of the task that confronted him. He wrote:

Those friends who intend to forward clothing for the Oregon mission, to go out with the expedition appointed to sail the 16th of September, will please observe that we are now ready for their recep-

⁹ The italics are the author's.

¹⁰ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, New York, Friday, April 5, 1839, XIII, p. 130.

tion. All who have their donation prepared will do well to send them without delay; for it is important for us to know, as soon as possible, with what the liberality of our friends will furnish us, for we shall have many things to purchase, if they are not sent us; and if we begin to purchase without knowing what is intended to be given, the consequence will be, too great a supply of some things, and too little of others.

N. B. That if our good friends, in addition to all their other kind services to us, and the poor heathen, will comply with the following request, they will confer a special favor, save more trouble, and do more to subserve the cause of the mission than they could do in any other way by the same amount of labor.

Let me say that while, then, I tender my most grateful acknowledgements for your labor of love, on behalf of the more than miserable red man, let me beg of you, as a personal favour to attend to the following directions:

Let all your goods be put up in good, tight, clean barrels, well headed up, with the name of the place from which it comes, and Oregon mission on the head; send with each barrel, not in it, but by the person who conveys it, or by mail to Dr. Bangs, 200 Mulberry-street, New York, a regular bill, with the value of each article, if it is worth no more than six-pence. Upon each article pin a piece of paper with the price, unless there are several of the same kind. These may be put together in one bundle, and labelled thus, for instance: 6 boy's shirts, 50 cts. each, \$3, and so of other things. And then should we have occasion to exchange some of these things for provisions, after we arrive in Oregon, we may at once know the value of them, and not be left to guess at the price of articles, of the value of which we have no knowledge. All will acknowledge that this must occasion great perplexity.

Bro. Frost and myself have just opened all the boxes that have arrived. With respect to some of them, we have no means of telling whence they came; but there was one large and valuable box from Black River Conference, one from Platt[e]kill, N. Y., and one from Wilmington, Del., but no scrap of writing in the two former, and the bill in the latter only named the articles, and the aggregate value of the whole. How easy it would have been to put the price of each article

upon the bill, and upon the articles, as above directed; and then there would have been no farther trouble about it. But as it is, we have now to examine each article, and guess at its value, and I question, after all, whether we shall arrive at any thing like the same gross amount that is in the bill. Many may think all this particularity about the price unnecessary; but how are we to get our goods insured, if we do not know their value?

I will close by saying that whether the friends comply with the above request, or not, I shall not be able to attend to pricing and repacking goods in the future without neglecting business of such importance that the mission will suffer for years in consequence. The friends who are in the vicinity of Boston can, if they prefer, direct to D. S. King, Boston, and he will forward to N. York.

JASON LEE.

Will *Zion's Herald* please copy the above.¹¹

Early September witnessed the safe arrival of the missionaries at New York City. Since mid-September the *Lausanne*, a new three-masted sailing ship, lay in New York harbor, ready for its seven months' voyage. By October 1 the large quantity of household goods, merchandise, and equipment was securely packed in the hold of the vessel and the spacious staterooms were ready for the passengers.

Married: Lee-Thomson. But before the missionaries launch forth on their long ocean journey, a pleasant event in the life of Jason Lee remains to be told. With striking conciseness, the August 14, 1839, issue of *Zion's Herald* tells the story. The announcement reads:

Married

At Barre, Vt., July 28th, by Rev. E. J. Scott, Presiding Elder of Montpelier District, REV. JASON LEE, of the Oregon Mission, and Miss LUCY THOMPSON.

The marriage ceremony, as laid down in the discipline, was performed in the Methodist meeting house, and a sermon delivered on

¹¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, New York, Friday, July 26, 1839, XIII, p. 194.

the occasion by Rev. T. C. PIERCE, who was in that region on a tour for his health.¹²

Miss Thomson,¹³ whose career henceforth is linked with Old Oregon's history, was born at "Barre, Lower Village," Vermont, on March 10, 1809.¹⁴ She was the fourth child of Joseph Thomson and Lois Wilder.¹⁵ In 1837 she enrolled in Newbury Seminary, where she was a student for two years, and the valedictorian of her class when the flourishing little seminary numbered three hundred and twenty-six students.¹⁶

Before sailing on the *Lausanne*, Miss Thomson, now Mrs. Lee, wrote this feeling letter to her brother and his wife who were residing at Barre, Vermont. Although the name of her brother is not given, it was no doubt her brother John, at whose home she resided after the death of her mother.

My dear Brother and Sister:

Never did I feel as I do now in attempting to address you, for never before was I placed in similar circumstances.

¹² *Zion's Herald*, August 14, 1839, X, p. 131. Other references of interest bearing on this event are the following: Horace W. Bailey, *A Souvenir of the Seminary Memorial Window*, Newbury, Vermont, 1901), p. 45; *Zion's Herald*, March 6, 1839, X, p. 38; F. H. Grubbs (comp.), *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, p. 70; *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 12, 1839, XIII, p. 136.

¹³ Mrs. Victor, writing under the name of Bancroft, wrote concerning Lee's arrival in Oregon with Mrs. Lucy Thomson Lee: "Deeply stirred had been the sympathies of his old associates as they thought of his return to his desolate home [at Old Mission in June, 1840;] and now the revulsion of feeling was so great that the supremacy of Jason Lee in their hearts was thenceforth a thing of the past." Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 183. The present writer, in the examination of source material, which includes the manuscript collection of the Bancroft Library, University of California, has found no contemporary document or letter or source to support the above statement by Bancroft. Dr. White makes an unsympathetic comment; but White had been discharged as mission physician by Lee.—Miss A. J. Allen (comp.), *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 128.

¹⁴ Records in Office of City Clerk, Barre, Vermont. Copied by Walter R. Davenport, D.D., January 31, 1931.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ Catalogs of Newbury Seminary, 1837, 1839; Horace W. Bailey, *Newbury Seminary Souvenir*, pp. 44, 45; copy of Last Will and Testament of Joseph Thomson, by A. E. Johansson, Register, Montpelier, Vermont; Frederic P. Wells, *History of Newbury, Vermont*, pp. 208-211; letters from Rev. W. R. Davenport, Montpelier, Vermont; letters from Frederic P. Wells, Newbury, Vermont.

When I took leave of you, I expected before this to have left forever the land of civilization, but we have been detained by circumstances which we could not prevent. The probability is now that we shall set sail on Wednesday next.

You would like to know, perhaps, what are my peculiar feelings at this time in prospect of what lies before me. I can only say that my trust is in the living God. I am calm and resigned. I look forward upon my future life expecting it will be one of unremitting toil and anxiety. I expect to be subjected to many privations and hardships, but none of these things move me. Neither count I my life dear unto myself, if I but win Christ.

You have doubtless often thought since my departure from my native home of the motives which actuated me; but rest assured that no considerations of an earthly nature could thus have induced me to leave the land of my birth, and forego the pleasure of civilized life, bid adieu to affectionate brothers and sisters, and all the endearments of friendship; but I have acted from a firm conviction of duty. I believe that our Savior meant what he said when he told his disciples "Go teach all nations," and that that command is still binding. I have no doubt that in obedience to this command I leave my beloved friends, the home of my childhood and all I have hitherto known and loved. But think not that my heart is unfeeling because I thus voluntarily exile myself from all those scenes of endearment that twine around my memory, and bind me closer and closer as I think of leaving them forever. I rejoice, my brother, that man is not to be my judge. I feel that my record is on high; my only ambition is to glorify God, and my only aim to benefit my fellow beings who are perishing for lack of knowledge.

And now, my dear brother, let me entreat you to think candidly and prayerfully on the things which relate to your eternal welfare. This may be the last time I shall ever address you. I may be called soon to follow our departed sister [a half-sister, Betsey Thomson Smith who died August 25, 1839] to the world of spirits. You may go before me; our state of probation may soon be closed. We are separated forever as far as this life is concerned, and without timely preparation our separation will be eternal.

I leave it, as my dying testimony, with you, with a sister's sincere desire and ardent affection.

I have written to Benjamin [a half-brother, 1799-1861] the particulars respecting our accommodations on board the vessel. I refer you to him. I expect we shall have but little spare room on board, for there is a large family of us. All my accommodations are better than I expected.

Tuesday Evening, Oct. 8.

The long-looked-for day has arrived; our vessel is in the stream; we go on board at half past nine tomorrow morning. We sail in the ship *Lausanne*, Capt. Spaulding.

Let no feelings of anxiety disturb you on my account, for I have enough for my comfort on the passage.

My further acquaintance with Mr. Lee proves him to be worthy of the confidence which I reposed in him. He is one of the kindest, best of men, and every way deserving my affection. In a word, he is all to me that an earthly friend could be.

But I must close.

Farewell, farewell.

LUCY T. LEE.¹⁷

¹⁷ F. H. Grubbs, *Memorial Souvenir [of] Jason Lee*, p. 70.

CHAPTER IX

THE VOYAGE OF THE *LAUSANNE*

Farewell meeting in New York. On Thursday evening, October 3, 1839, a farewell meeting was held in the Greene Street Methodist Church in New York City. The Rev. Nathan Bangs, corresponding secretary of the Society, presided and G. P. Disowsay, a prominent New York merchant, acted as secretary. The departing missionaries were seated on the platform. As his name was read, each missionary was introduced to the audience. The address of the evening was delivered by the Rev. Robert Alder, a prominent London clergyman.¹

The Lausanne party. This missionary group consisted of fifty-one members.² A number of the missionaries were from New England, the State of New York was well represented, and two of the families were from Illinois. The only members to come from the South were the Rev. W. W. Kone and his family. Including Mr. Lee, six ministers were in the party, also one physician, a mission steward or secular agent, and four young women teachers. A number of laymen to fill the posts of mission farmers, cabinet-maker, carpenters, and blacksmiths rounded out the list. Thomas Adams, the Chinook Indian boy, was now returning with him to Oregon.³

¹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 30, 1839, XIV, p. 19.

² David Carter joined the missionary party at the Sandwich Islands. This fact doubtless accounts for the incorrect statement by many writers that the original *Lausanne* party numbered fifty-two.

³ The names of the members of the Great Reinforcement are as follows: Rev. J. H. Frost, wife, and one child, New York Conference; Rev. Gustavus Hines, wife, and one child, Genesee Conference; Rev. W. W. Kone and wife, North Carolina Conference; Rev. Alvin F. Waller, wife, and two children, Genesee Conference; Rev. J. P. Richmond, M.D., wife, and four children,

The widespread interest manifested in missionary circles in these pilgrims is reflected in the following account of the departure of Mr. H. B. Brewer, of Wilbraham, Massachusetts, who had volunteered to go to Oregon as mission farmer:

Mr. H. B. Brewer was brought up in this place [Wilbraham], of respectable parents, who, with seven of their children are worthy members of the M. E. Church. Henry is the second son. He united with the church about eight years ago. . . . Having long felt the missionary flame within his heart, on the visit of Mr. Jason Lee to this place, after his return from Oregon, his love for the cause was much increased, and when Mr. Lee called for more help, such were the exercises of Br. Brewer's mind that he could pursue his work no longer; and retiring to consult God, and then his friends, he concluded to offer himself, leaving to Divine Providence to make his way plain. Being accepted, he hastened to make all necessary preparation. He has been united by marriage to Miss L. L. Giddin[g]s, of Franklin, Conn., an *amiable*, pious and accomplished young lady; who was willing to forego the endearments of home and friends, and share with him the *toils, perils*, and *honors* of a mission to Oregon.

We deemed it proper that their departure from us should be attended by appropriate religious exercises; and accordingly the afternoon of Sabbath last [Sept. 8, 1839] was devoted to that purpose.

Miss E. Phillips, and Miss A. Phelps, who are going from Springfield, were invited to attend with us, as they had each spent considerable time at Wilbraham Academy, and had many dear and valuable friends among us. The church was crowded at an early hour. The

Illinois Conference; Mr. Ira L. Babcock, physician, wife, and one child, New York; Mr. George Abernethy, mission steward, wife, and two children, New York; Mr. W. W. Raymond, farmer, and wife, Ballston Spa, New York; Mr. Henry B. Brewer, farmer, and wife, Wilbraham, Massachusetts; Mr. Lewis H. Judson, cabinetmaker, wife, and three children; Mr. Josiah L. Parrish, blacksmith, wife, and three children, New York; Mr. James Olley, carpenter, East Troy, New York; Mr. Hamilton Campbell, carpenter, wife, and child, Springfield, Illinois; Miss Maria T. Ware, teacher, Lowell, Massachusetts; Chloe A. Clark, teacher, East Windsor, Connecticut; Elmira Phillips, teacher, Springfield, Massachusetts; Almira Phelps, teacher, Springfield, Massachusetts; Orpha Lankton, stewardess, Hartford, Connecticut; and Thomas Adams, Indian boy.

Order of Exercises, Farewell Missionary Meeting, published in *Zion's Herald*, October 9, 1839, X, p. 163.

services were opened in the usual manner, by our respected Presiding Elder, D. Dorchester, and an appropriate address from him, on the subject of missions. The youth, the Sabbath School, and parents, and relatives were respectively addressed; also, an appropriate dialogue was spoken by two Sabbath scholars and appropriate singing was interspersed. Rev. M. Raymond then addressed the missionaries in a manner highly creditable to himself, and his subject; and in behalf of the congregation, took them by the hand, and pronounced or rather implored on them their Heavenly Father's blessing, and bid them a last farewell. . . .

A meeting of a similar kind having been appointed in the evening Sunday [Sept. 8, 1839], at Springfield, we hastened thither; but before we left, there was another scene to pass through, of a most touching character. The aged and afflicted father, unable to rise from his bed, had to bid farewell to an affectionate son. A mother, too, who had watched him from infancy, and fondly hoped he would have been a stay and comfort of her old age, must say "farewell." . . .

The meeting in Springfield was interesting, especially when two of our Indian boys [John T. McKay and Alexander McKay] who are here at school, presented to the missionaries two small Bibles, to be forwarded by them to their two sisters, who are still in Oregon.

On Monday morning [Sept. 9, 1839] we attended them to the steamboat for New York, where they will meet the rest of their companions, and then they will sail for Oregon.⁴

The New York *Journal of Commerce*, under date of October 9, 1839, carried this account of the sailing of the mission party in the *Lausanne*:

The ship *Lausanne* has gone to sea, having on board the large Methodist Missionary Expedition to the Oregon Territory, and the Rev. Mr. Dibble, Missionary of the American Board, and his family for the Sandwich Islands.⁵

The significance of so large a missionary colony to Oregon received this commentary from the same newspaper:

⁴ *Zion's Herald*, September 25, 1839, X, p. 156.

⁵ *New York Journal of Commerce*, October 9, 1839, p. 4, col. 3.

The sending of this large expedition to Oregon is an important event, whether considered in its religious or political bearings. Among other things, it will expedite the settlement of the Territory; and we may hope also that it will give a tone to the moral and religious character of the people, resembling that of the early settlers of Massachusetts. An infant community is easily moulded into shape, but suffer it to grow up without religious influences, and any attempts at reformation are made under great disadvantages. With all our hearts we wish success to this mission, and the noble objects which it is designed to promote. Its primary object, we believe, is to carry the gospel to the Indians.⁶

Migration to Oregon. The *Missouri Republican* carried this penetrating news item foreshadowing a future westward movement "to the Columbia":

In addition to all this there is and for a long time has been a strong disposition on the part of numerous persons in the west to remove to the Columbia. This inclination has been steadily growing for years and frequently manifests itself in attempts to raise colonies for the purpose of migrating; and, although these attempts, thus far, have proved fruitless, still the failure of one appears not to check the spirit of others, and no sooner is one abandoned than another springs up headed by some new spirit and in some other quarter from where the former originated. A proposition has lately been put forth in this State for the formation of such a colony and efforts are making we understand to enlist a large number in the enterprise, with how much success we have not learned.

We have emphatically a restless population, and the disposition to migrate to new and comparatively unoccupied districts of country is manifest among all classes of our population, and especially with the settlers of the new States. If our Government would but furnish a little protection and will tolerate the settlement of immigrants in the Oregon Territory, a very few years would elapse before a state sufficiently strong for all the purposes of self-protection would be planted. This would do more to secure to the people of the United States the entire

⁶ Reproduced from the *Missouri Republican* in *Sangamo Journal*, Springfield, Illinois, October 25, 1839, IX, p. 1.

control of that extensive country and much of the trade of the Pacific, than any measure which could be started. Our Government has already too long neglected this subject, and the day is not far distant when the restless spirit of the people alone will compel attention to it.

Such a colony would be of immense advantage to the growth of this city. Nature has made this the inland route of communication between the Atlantic and the Pacific, and from the character of the country, the streams, mountains, &c., we must always be on the most important route. It may be thought speculative to expect any immediate advantage to this city from this source; but the time will come, and we believe shortly, when more than the most sanguine now fancies will be fully realized. At present, much the largest portion of the trade of that country takes an unnatural and inconvenient direction through the far northern lakes, and rivers, and is carried on at immense expense by the Hudson Bay Company, who monopolize it. This monopoly cannot continue, and whenever it is broken up from any cause, the products of nearly all that immense region will find their outlet through this, the most natural and easy channel.⁷

On October 9, a carriage called for the missionaries at their temporary residences to convey them to the end of Whitehall Dock, and by ten o'clock the party was all assembled. The tug *Hercules* transported them from the dock to the *Lausanne*, which was at anchor in East River. A short but impressive shipboard religious service, in charge of Dr. Bangs, was concluded with the baptism of the infant son of Dr. Richmond, who was named "Oregon" in honor of the land to which they were going. Mr. Hamilton Campbell, of Springfield, Illinois, had his child baptized also. The friends who accompanied them to the ship said their farewells, the anchor was weighed, and the *Lausanne* began her journey. The *Hercules* made a wide circle around the bow of the vessel and returned to New York harbor. That evening the *Lausanne* anchored off Sandy Hook, and early the following morning sailed away from the shores of the United States.⁸

⁷ Reproduced from the Missouri *Republican* in *Sangamo Journal*, Springfield, Illinois, October 25, 1839, IX, p. 1.

⁸ Sarah R. Frost Beggs letter, reproduced in Atwood, *The Conquerors*, p. 89; Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 207, 212.

On October 25, the *Lausanne* passengers observed the first centennial celebration of the Methodist Church and raised the sum of \$650 for the founding of the pioneer university in Oregon.⁹ Two days later Jason Lee addressed the little company. His text, "Whether, therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all for the glory of God" must have been a favorite one. When preaching the first Protestant sermon delivered west of the Rocky Mountains at Fort Hall, four years before, he had used this same New Testament passage.¹⁰ On December 9, exactly two months after leaving New York, the *Lausanne* cast anchor in the harbor of Rio de Janeiro. Lee mentions in his journal that the "scenery around Rio de Janeiro is exceedingly beautiful and sublime."¹¹ During their six-day stay the missionaries were entertained by Justin Spalding, the resident Methodist missionary.

Cape Horn was rounded in safety, although a tremendous gale accompanied by rain and sleet retarded their progress, so that the Straits of Magellan were not reached until early in February. When the *Lausanne* arrived at Valparaiso, Chile, they found this South American port prostrated by a smallpox epidemic. It was impossible to escape exposure, for it was necessary to go ashore to obtain wood, water, and provisions. Unafraid, Mr. Lee and a few others landed, mingled with the people, purchased supplies, and explored the city and surrounding country. While at Valparaiso, Lee made this shrewd comment¹² on the mission family: "I have been watching our reinforcement in order to discover their traits of character, and I trust we shall be able to turn them all to some good account in that dark land; but I am persuaded that it is one thing to be a missionary on the *Lausanne* and another to be a good one in Oregon."¹³

After a long cruise of about a month and a half through southern Pacific waters, the highlands of the island of Maui,

⁹ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, February 28, 1840, XIV, p. 111.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*, March 6, 1840, XIV, p. 115.

¹² In a letter to Nathan Bangs.

¹³ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, June 12, 1840, XIV, p. 172.

Sandwich Islands, were sighted on April 9. Two days later the *Lausanne* anchored in the harbor of Honolulu, where a cordial reception was accorded the weary group by the American Board missionaries stationed there. During the stay in Hawaii Lee closely observed the missionary work that was being carried on among the natives. Sightseeing was another entertaining and profitable pastime.

Kamehameha III. An unusual incident was Mr. Lee's visit with King Kamehameha III. Accompanied by the United States Consul, he walked to the palace where he paid his respects to the monarch. His own account of this conference is a modest and matter-of-fact recital. The somewhat informal commercial agreement here entered into proved of future value to Oregon:¹⁴

We were shown into a spacious apartment and seated where we awaited the presence of the king. He soon entered, attended by the Rev. Mr. Richards, his interpreter, the prime minister, and the chiefs. The consul presented to him brother Lee as the superintendent of the expedition. The salutation over, all quietly seated, the consul stated our object in going to Oregon, the mutual intercourse and exchange of commodities which would exist between the two countries, and recommended us to the same favorable reception which his majesty had always been wont to give the citizens of the United States, and hoped that the same friendly intercourse of this government with the United States and its citizens might continue between these islands and the settlement in Oregon. The king in reply said, that he was pleased to see us going to Oregon for such a purpose; that it was good; that no doubt the exchange of commodities would be beneficial to both countries; that we were welcome to these shores; and that he hoped the friendly relations would still continue. Brother Lee then arose, stated the object, his journey over the Rocky Mountains, his entering in among the Indians, his return for laborers, and that we were now going to join those whom he had left among the Indians, and unite our exertions to teach them the arts and sciences, and above *all*, the religion of the Bible, which maketh wise unto salvation. The king replied, "He is very persevering." Brother Lee expressed his joy that the Gospel

¹⁴ Gustavus Hines, *Missionary Expedition to Oregon*, p. 80.

had met such a favorable reception in these islands, and his ardent desire and prayer for the prosperity of the country, and especially for the happiness and welfare of his majesty here and hereafter. . . . The Flathead Indian boy [Thomas Adams] was then introduced; the king was very much interested, inquired how long he had been learning, if he could speak English, upon what his people lived, wished to hear him speak his own language, &c., &c. The prime minister is a female of immense stature, who in fact administers the affairs of the government. She said she had little to say except to express her *admiration* and her wishes for our success. When we arose to depart, the king and chiefs arose and took each kindly by the hand, and we retired, pleased and gratified by our interview.¹⁵

Late in April the *Lausanne* again put out to sea. During this last portion of the journey Lee delivered six instructive lectures on the history of the Willamette Mission. The weather was pleasant and in less than one month after leaving Honolulu the stormy mouth of the Columbia River was sighted. Before nightfall the *Lausanne* cast anchor in Baker's Bay.¹⁶ Upon the appearance of the long-looked-for vessel, Daniel Lee, who had been visiting the Chinooks in the vicinity, hurried to it by canoe, and an affectionate meeting took place between uncle and nephew.¹⁷

Arrival in Oregon. Anxious to reach the Willamette Mission, Jason Lee started on ahead and, traveling by canoe, ascended the Columbia to Vancouver. Here he halted for a few hours to make arrangements for the accommodation of the *Lausanne* passengers. Dr. McLoughlin received him with "his characteristic kindness and hospitality" and the assurance "that he had room for Mr. Lee and all his."¹⁸ Pleased and relieved, Lee resumed his journey and at sunset reached the lower part of the settlement a few miles below the parent mission station. Here he remained all night as the guest of Mrs. E. Tibbitts [Calvin Tibbets] and early the following morning set out on horseback for the mission, where,

¹⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 27, 1841, XV, p. 94.

¹⁶ George Abernethy's Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, May 5, 1841, XV, p. 149.

¹⁷ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 225.

¹⁸ Jason Lee's Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

arriving unannounced, he surprised the mission family at breakfast.

Mr. Lee remained three days at Willamette, examining the mission, and deciding upon his future progress. Then, realizing that the *Lausanne* would soon be arriving at Fort Vancouver, he announced a missionary meeting to be held at Fort Vancouver on June 3 and hurriedly retraced his steps to Vancouver.¹⁹

The *Lausanne* began its slow up-river voyage on May 20, 1840. Near the mouth of the Columbia the Hudson's Bay Company had erected a fort on the site of the old Astoria and named it Fort George. Here, about fourteen miles from the mouth of the Columbia, the missionary reinforcement was hospitably entertained by Mr. James Birnie, the Hudson's Bay agent in charge. Ignorance of the channel and unfavorable winds retarded progress. By May 28, the *Lausanne* had covered less than half the distance to Fort Vancouver. On that day, however, Dr. McLoughlin sent the missionaries a welcome gift of a bag of fresh bread and a tub of butter, fresh from the Vancouver dairy house. The ninety-mile up-river voyage to Vancouver required ten days. Not until June 1, 1840, at six o'clock in the evening, did the *Lausanne* drop anchor near the hospitable fort. Dr. McLoughlin came out to the ship to greet them and invited all ashore to take tea with him. His invitation was accepted by Captain Spaulding and four others, while the remainder of the party stayed on board until the next day.²⁰ At Fort Vancouver every courtesy and kindness was shown the members of the "Great Reinforcement." Comfortable accommodations were provided for each person. A private sitting room was set aside for the missionaries' use, and they dined at a separate table, as did the women of the Hudson's Bay Company.²¹ Here, on June 2, Jason Lee rejoined them.²²

¹⁹ Jason Lee's Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

²⁰ Extracts from Journal of Captain Josiah Spaulding, House Report 830, 27 Cong., 2 Sess.

²¹ Mrs. Anne Abernethy, *The Mission Family*, MSS. (Bancroft Library), p. 2; George Abernethy's Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, May 5, 1841, XV, p. 149.

²² Jason Lee's Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI.

CHAPTER X

LEE'S PROGRAM OF EXPANSION

Strategic points. June 3, 1840, is a significant date in early Oregon history, for it formally marks the beginning of Jason Lee's program of expansion for the Oregon Mission. On that Wednesday evening all the members of the missionary force assembled in a spacious room at Fort Vancouver, and Superintendent Lee assigned them to their various fields of labor. Note the prophetic judgment in the choice of the stations, every one of which became important points when the United States later extended its jurisdiction over Oregon: Nisqually, on Puget Sound; Clatsop, at the mouth of the Columbia; a projected station at the mouth of the Umpqua in southern Oregon; The Dalles, the modern "gateway to the Inland Empire"; the Indian station at the "Falls," now Oregon City, where was located the best water-power site in Old Oregon; Chemeketa,¹ where a sawmill and a grist mill were to be erected. A racy account of this first general meeting, which marked the beginning of the "New Era" in Oregon missionary history, is furnished by Dr. Elijah P. White, who was present:

The next day [Lee] invited Dr. White to accompany him to Fort Vancouver to meet the reinforcement. In compliance with the superintendent's request, they were all convened at seven o'clock in the evening, when they received their appointments, and listened to a few remarks from him, after which the doctor addressed them, giving an account of the deaths, revivals, reformations, etc., at The Dalles and Willamette, and all of which seemed much to interest them. In turn, he was much pleased with the neat and respectable appearance of his

¹ The modern Salem.

auditors. Having been three years so completely isolated from the fashionable world, the new modes and fashions which they brought with them struck him very pleasantly, and he thought that so large a party, and of such a cast, reflected honor on the American churches, and told favorably for their sentiments on the subject of missions. It seemed really like the arrival of the pilgrim fathers in New England. . . .

There were fifty-two members of the new recruit, and the following is the disposition which was made of them. Dr. Richmond and lady, without being gratified with a sight of the old mission at the Willamette, were sent off to Nesqually, a hundred miles north of the Columbia, and Mr. Frost and lady to the mouth of the river. Dr. Babcock and family, and Mr. Brewer, were despatched to the assistance of Lee and Perkins, at the Dalles. The residue were conveyed to the mission, to be afterwards distributed as should be deemed advisable. . . . Mr. Lee's object seemed principally to introduce a better state of things among the white settlers, which, to a great degree, succeeded.²

The Dalles branch station. The earliest branch mission established was the Indian station at The Dalles. It was situated on an elevation about one mile back from the Columbia River, and was surrounded by a grove of white oak and yellow pine trees, with a spring of clear water near by.³ Perkins' journal furnishes a glimpse of the two unusually enterprising New Englanders stationed there (Daniel Lee and H. K. W. Perkins), promptly beginning the construction of their mission house:

As we had no house, we pitched our tent and began our work . . . building, of course, to screen ourselves as soon as possible from the scorching rays of a summer sun. The work of building to persons in our situation, however, was not a trifling labor. For first, a team was wanting to draw the timber. Instead of this, we were under the necessity of employing a large gang of natives to drag it together by means of long ropes, a stick at a time. To their praise it should be said, that

² Allen (comp.), *Ten Years in Oregon, Travels and Adventures of Dr. E. White and Lady*, pp. 122-123.

³ This spring is now the source of water supply for The Dalles High School building. John B. Horner, *Oregon, Her History, Her Great Men, Her Literature* (Corvallis, 1919), p. 71.

this was done gratuitously; but the only thing ever done for us by them in this way.

To obtain shingle timber we went to the mountains for the red fir, and packed our shingles upon our horses, a distance of ten or twelve miles. Having obtained from the Hudson's Bay Company another Hawaiian, we set to work with the pit saw, and were thus able to obtain a few rough boards for flooring, partitions, doors, and so forth. Our chimney was constructed of wood, stone and clay.⁴

Until their little farm tract was under cultivation supplies had to be procured from Fort Vancouver or from the Willamette Mission station. The canoe journey between the Willamette Mission and The Dalles was a truly hazardous undertaking, as is quite evident from an account by Daniel Lee, a successful canoe mariner of those primitive days.⁵

Introduction of cattle. In September, 1838, Lee and Perkins introduced the first herd of cattle into The Dalles area. In order to procure these animals, Daniel Lee made an exceptionally hazardous journey from The Dalles to the Willamette Mission, and a few weeks later retraced his steps. These two trail journeys deserve to be ranked with the greatest mountaineering exploits in early Oregon annals.⁶

By the autumn of 1839, the first mission residence at The Dalles was completed. It was a one-and-a-half-story log house, thirty feet long and twenty feet wide. The lower floor contained two rooms. One of these rooms was used as a living apartment by Mr. and Mrs. Perkins; the other served as a dining room. The upper story of the house was divided into six small rooms, which served the double purpose of schoolrooms and living quarters for the Indians. Underneath the mission house was an excellent cellar, eight feet high. The cellar walls rose three feet above the ground level. Daniel Lee speaks with pride of this basement room as

⁴ H. K. W. Perkins' Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 13, 1843, XVIII, p. 17.

⁵ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, pp. 248, 249.

⁶ H. K. W. Perkins' Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 13, 1843, XVIII, p. 17.

providing not only "a good chamber," but making possible "a chimney and two good fireplaces." ⁷ A small structure, planned to serve both as church and schoolhouse, was also begun in the fall of 1839, and before the close of that year a small workshop had also been erected on the mission premises.

1840 Indian revivals. By the year 1840, there were numerous conversions among the tribes that lived in the region of The Dalles. The most notable of a series of revival meetings took place near The Dalles in April, 1840. This Indian gathering, perhaps the largest held in Old Oregon under the superintendency of Jason Lee, took place near the site of the present Dalles Academy. A short distance to the south of the academy, near the base of a rocky precipice, the missionaries pitched their tents. Before them in a huge semicircle were the Indian wigwams.

At this meeting [reported Daniel Lee] about 1200 were present from the villages along the river from the Cascades, from Wishram, and Caclasco, and from the neighboring Walla-Wallas, and the Clickitats, as named above. The spot was chosen in the open plain, bounded on one side by a ridge of rocks, at the foot of which the writer pitched his tent, while on either hand were ranged the forty wigwams of the natives, gradually rounding in a circle, meeting in front, and enclosing an area of half an acre. The wigwams were made of willow poles set in the ground in a circular or oblong form, inclining toward the centre at an angle of fifty degrees, and enclosed with mats of grass, having a large opening at the top, and a door at each end, with a fire in the middle, and sometimes two fires, when the tenement was long, and then it was occupied by a large number, perhaps thirty. When it was completed, the tops of the poles were the most prominent elevation of our city, which had grown up in a day. . . . At daylight they were awakened by the sound of a trumpet, and soon after engaged, first in singing, and then in prayer, in their houses. . . . Thus the time was employed till the ensuing sabbath, our meeting having continued from Monday, when the communion was administered to several hundreds.⁸

⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 13, 1838, XIV, p. 18.

⁸ Lee and Frost, *op. cit.*, pp. 190-193.

In 1840, the family of Henry B. Brewer, the mission farmer, was added to the little mission settlement.

By 1841 there were on the mission grounds two log and "board" houses, a small barn, and several outbuildings. The harvest of 1841 is described as good, the little irrigated farm tracts having yielded good crops of wheat and potatoes.⁹

Deputy-Governor George Simpson, of the Hudson's Bay Company, on his famous world tour, visited The Dalles station in late August of 1841. His description of conditions at this station is one of the most discriminating and informative furnished by any traveler of the period.

At a distance of two or three miles below the rapids we reached the American mission of Whaspicum [Wascopam] remarkable to us as the place where we saw growing timber for the first time since leaving Okanagan. On visiting the establishment, we were much pleased with the progress that had been made in three years. . . . The missionaries said that they were as happy in their new home as they could expect to be; at the same time, that they had not found the land of promise which they came to seek. . . . But the soil was not good nor could it possibly be so, where twenty-one rattle-snakes, reptiles delighting in sands and rocks, had been killed within the last three months.

Mr. [Daniel] Lee, the head of the mission, accompanied us to our encampment to supper; and while that meal was preparing we enjoyed a delicious bath by moonlight in the stream that now glittered so placidly before us.¹⁰

During the last year of Jason Lee's superintendency of the Oregon Mission, The Dalles station contained good-looking dwelling houses, commodious schoolhouses, and stables. There was also a garden patch. Between the Columbia River and the elevation on which the mission buildings stood was a prosperous-looking stretch of cleared fields, in which scattered about were the wooden huts of an Indian village. The presence of these

⁹ Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of United States Exploring Expedition* (Philadelphia, 1844), IV, p. 382.

¹⁰ Sir George Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey Round the World . . . , 1841 and 1842*. 2 vols. (London, 1847), I, pp. 169, 170.

human habitations "gave to the valley the cheerful and busy air of civilization, and had . . . an appearance of abundance and enviable comfort."¹¹

Nisqually Branch Mission. The assignment of Dr. John P. Richmond to the Nisqually Branch Mission station on June 3, 1840, marked the beginning of Protestant missionary effort in that portion of Old Oregon lying north of the Columbia River. To the Richmonds belongs the distinction of being the first American family to settle in the Puget Sound area of the present state of Washington. The founding of Nisqually, the northernmost of Jason Lee's mission stations, was part of a carefully worked out plan. As early as 1838, Mr. Lee visited the Puget Sound district, selected an excellent site, and in the spring of 1839 sent Acting Superintendent Leslie and Mr. W. H. Willson, the Willamette Mission carpenter, to put up the building that would house the missionary reinforcement of 1840.¹²

This mission house was located about three-fourths of a mile east of Fort Nisqually, the Hudson's Bay Company post. The log cabin was thirty-two feet long and eighteen feet wide, with walls nine feet high. Within the stockaded enclosure was a little plot of ground planned to be a garden patch. The Hudson's Bay Company officers and men at Fort Nisqually were generous and cordial in their attitude toward Leslie and Willson. This fact is noteworthy when it is remembered that these Americans came as the vanguard of settlers who were to challenge the supremacy of the British Hudson's Bay Company in this disputed area. A powerful agent in promoting these cordial relations was Dr. McLoughlin, the large-souled chief factor at Fort Vancouver.¹³

At this remote Nisqually station Dr. Richmond was assisted by Mr. W. H. Willson, the mission carpenter, and Miss Chloe A.

¹¹ John C. Frémont, *The Exploring Expedition to the Rocky Mountains* (Buffalo, 1853), p. 257; Sir George Simpson, *Narrative of a Journey round the World . . . , 1841 and 1842*. 2 vols. (London, 1847), I, pp. 169, 170.

¹² Pamphlet, "1841 Fourth of July (1906)," p. 29.

¹³ C. B. Bagley, "In the Beginning" in Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound* (Seattle, Washington, 1905), pp. 464-554; Atwood, *The Conquerors*, pp. 106, 126.

Clark, a recent *Lausanne* arrival, the mission teacher. The Richmonds left Fort Vancouver on July 2, 1840. They floated down the Columbia in canoes to the mouth of the Cowlitz River, which they ascended as far as that stream was navigable. Dr. Richmond's own account of this venturesome summer voyage northward through the future state of Washington is a charming contemporary source reproduced here for the first time. It was written a few months after his arrival at Nisqually. The missionary party

. . . entered the mouth of the Cowlitz River. We found the current for some miles tolerably smooth; but after that it became rapid, and required the utmost energies of our boatmen to make headway. We, however, had a pleasant time; and in two days ascended the river to the commencement of the portage; and on Sabbath morning, 5th July, we were encamped on the banks of the river, contiguous to the Courlitz [Cowlitz] farming port, belonging to the Hudson's Bay Company. Here we spent the sabbath as pleasantly as we could; but we had a very disagreeable night, occasioned by the arrival of a considerable number of Indians who encamped all around us, and who annoyed us during the whole night with whooping and singing. We slept but little; one of us being compelled to keep a look out to prevent the Indians from stealing our goods, which otherwise were rather exposed.

On Monday morning we were very kindly invited by Mr. [Charles] Forrest, who is in charge of the farm, to take up quarters at the farm house until we could make the necessary arrangements for the further prosecution of our journey. He accordingly sent a cart to carry our goods to the house, and also horses for our ladies to ride, the distance being about two or three miles from the landing.

Here we remained until Tuesday the 7th of July [1840]; and having, through the kind assistance of Mr. Forrest, secured seventeen horses, the number sufficient for the transportation of ourselves and effects through the portage, when we set out about noon under the guidance of several half breeds, and two Indian women, who took charge of the eldest of my children. We found the roads very bad, and progressed very slowly, sometimes through dense forests, and sometimes over beautiful plains, until the third day after leaving the Courlitz, and arrived at our destination in good health and spirits.

We were very kindly received by Mr. [William] Kittson, the gentleman in charge of Fort Nesqually, who furnished us with several

rooms within the stockades, and invited us to the hospitalities of his house and table. We remained at the Fort about three weeks, having every attention and accommodation within the power of Mr. Kittson, and his excellent wife, to render our situation comfortable. At the expiration of which time, Mr. Willson having laid part of the lower floor in the mission house, we removed and commenced house-keeping for ourselves. Our cooking for several months was done out of doors, and our table consisted of several boxes permanently located in the middle of the floor.¹⁴

First American marriage. In the summer of 1840 at the primitive log mission house occurred the first marriage of an American couple in northwestern Washington. Dr. Richmond on August 16, 1840, united in matrimony his popular and companionable lay helper, William H. Willson, and Miss Chloe Aurelia Clark, the mission teacher. The beginnings of domestic life established by the union of these two missionary pioneers continues unbroken to the present time in one of Old Oregon's prominent families.¹⁵

First American birth. On February 28, 1842, the first white American child was born in the Puget Sound district. This record in the Richmond family Bible tells the story:

Francis Richmond, son of John P. Richmond and his wife, America, was born at Puget Sound, near Nesqually, Oregon Territory, on the 28th of February, Anno Domini 1842, and was baptized by Rev. Jason Lee, superintendent of Oregon Missions.¹⁶

Although Dr. Richmond's mission was located north of the Columbia River, and consequently in a region which Great Britain expected would be her territory after the settlement of the boundary controversy, yet the records show numerous courtesies extended to Dr. Richmond by his British neighbors. These communications from Chief Factor McLoughlin to Mr. A. C. Anderson, the Hud-

¹⁴ Rev. J. P. Richmond's Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, September 8, 1841, XVI, p. 13.

¹⁵ Mrs. J. K. Gill, Portland, Oregon, was the granddaughter of Mr. and Mrs. Willson.

¹⁶ Clarence B. Bagley, "In the Beginning," reproduced in Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 507, 508.

son's Bay official in charge of Fort Nisqually, are eloquent testimony to this effect:

October 17, 1840

You will please supply Dr. Richmond with five bushels of pease and four barrels of flour.

February 1, 1841

You can lend six broken-in cows to the Methodist Mission for the season, and after some time when their calves are big you will let them go and give the missionaries others in their place.

February 1, 1841

Please hand the accompanying pamphlets to Rev. Dr. Richmond with my compliments, and after perusal I beg he will return them to you, and you will please send them back by first opportunity.

Vancouver, 31 March, 1841

Mr. A. C. Anderson.

Dear Sir:—This will be handed to you by the Revd. Jason Lee, whom I beg to introduce to your polite attentions, and request you will be so good as to afford him such assistance as he may require.

I am, very truly,

JOHN McLOUGHLIN.¹⁷

Dr. Richmond's service in Oregon was brief. After less than a year and a half at the Nisqually station he returned to Illinois, having become convinced that the prospects for usefulness among the Puget Sound Indians did not warrant his remaining longer among them. His family had suffered serious ill health. The harsh conditions of pioneer life, devoid entirely of educational and cultural opportunities, also contributed to his decision to terminate his career as an Oregon missionary. On September 1, 1842, with his wife and five young children, he sailed for the United States on the American brig, the *Chanamus*, bound for Newburyport, Massachusetts.¹⁸

¹⁷ Clarence B. Bagley, "In the Beginning," reproduced in Ezra Meeker, *Pioneer Reminiscences of Puget Sound*, pp. 520, 541.

¹⁸ Wilkes, *United States Exploring Expedition* (Philadelphia, 1844), IV., pp. 411-413; Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, pp. 189, 190; Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 323.

Clatsop. To Clatsop, the important branch station at the mouth of the Columbia River, Superintendent Lee assigned Rev. Joseph H. Frost, with, later, Rev. W. W. Kone as his associate. Rev. Frost received his appointment as "Missionary to Oregon" from Bishop Hedding early in 1839,¹⁹ and soon thereafter was in New York City.

The Frosts were the first to reach Clatsop, an uncivilized, unattractive Indian settlement near Astoria. In September, 1840, Rev. William W. and Mrs. Kone joined them. Rev. Kone's original assignment was as Indian missionary to the Umpqua Valley, but when Superintendent Lee decided to abandon his earlier plan for work among the Umpquas, he was detailed to serve as mission associate at Clatsop. It was a trying field, and Mr. Frost's journal shows clearly that the Rev. Mr. Kone was neither by temperament nor constitution fitted for the missionary service here assigned him. In April, 1841, a son was born to the Kones and in November of that year Mr. Kone applied for permission to return to the United States. Mr. Frost records the reasons for his colleague's retirement as follows:

In view of the unpromising prospect of the natives, and the continually declining state of Mrs. Kone's health, Mr. Kone made application to return to the States, which was granted; and as the bark *Columbia*, Captain Humphreys, of the Hudson's Bay Company was ready to sail for Oahu, one of the Sandwich Islands, Mr. Kone and the Rev. A. B. Smith and families took passage on board of her; so that on the 30th of November, 1841, I found myself and family alone. . . .²⁰

Mrs. Victor makes this frank and discriminating comment on Mr. Kone's withdrawal from the Oregon Mission field: "He took leave of Oregon after a residence of a year and half, leaving no grand achievements, and harboring in his breast no regret for his lost occupation."²¹

Prejudicial reports. The following brief quotation from the

¹⁹ May 25, 1839.

²⁰ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 310.

²¹ Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 187.

annual report for the year 1846 shows clearly that Rev. Kone, upon his return to New York City, gave the Mission Board a report of the Oregon situation which was injurious to Superintendent Lee. "Letters were subsequently received from Messrs. Kone and Richmond, and also one signed by several lay members of the mission, all of which expressed dissatisfaction with their circumstances, and more or less with the superintendent."²²

Immediately upon his arrival at Clatsop, Rev. Frost, assisted by Calvin Tibbets and Solomon Smith, two recent settlers on Clatsop Plain, began the construction of his mission house. During this period the Frosts were the guests of Mr. James Birnie, the resident Hudson's Bay Company trader at Fort George. Mrs. Frost has preserved this warning message from Mr. Birnie: "Don't go to those Clatsop Indians; they will kill you,"²³ but she found it unjustified.

Mr. Frost [she writes] told the Indians that they must not kill, or steal, or commit adultery; they must love God and love each other. They promised to do as we said, and they literally kept their word as long as we remained among them. They never showed any rudeness or indignity to us. They willingly assisted us in building the mission-house. I mention these things to show that they were not as bad as represented.²⁴

Lieutenant Charles Wilkes. In May, 1841, Lieutenant (later Captain) Charles Wilkes, of the United States Navy, visited the Frosts and makes interesting comment in his official report of 1845. At the risk of disturbing, perhaps, the continuity of our story of Mr. Lee's career, we quote from him briefly:

. . . at an early hour next morning [May 24, 1841] we set out, crossed Young's Bay . . . after walking a mile came to the mission, where we had the pleasure of seeing Mr. and Mrs. Frost. Mr. Frost gave us a kind welcome at his new dwelling, which I understood him to say had been built with his own hands. His wife appeared cheerful and happy,

²² Methodist Reports, 1846, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIII, p. 345.

²³ Sarah R. Frost Beggs' letter, in Atwood, *The Conquerors*, p. 91.

²⁴ *Ibid.*

and made herself quite agreeable. The house is a frame one of one story, and contains three rooms; it is situated in a young spruce and pine grove, which is thought to be the most healthy situation here. There are two American settlers, who are building houses here, named respectively Tibbits [Calvin Tibbets] and [Solomon] Smith; both of them are very respectable men, and good mechanics. This place is not susceptible of improvement, and I understood that it had been chosen for its salubrity. I understood that Mr. Frost was engaged with the Rev. Mr. Koen [Kone] in cultivating a tract of land about four miles distant. The latter resides upon the tract, and is occupied in raising a large crop and superintending cattle. There appeared to me to be little opportunity for exercising their ministerial calling, though I understood afterwards that at particular seasons a number of Indians collected to hear them.²⁵

During the late summer of 1841, Rev. Frost was a member of the first party of white men to travel by land from Clatsop Mission to the Willamette station. This route had hitherto been known only to the Indians. Frost, in company with Solomon Smith, John Taylor, an English sailor, and three Indians, journeyed south from Clatsop to Tillamook Bay. From this point in a southeasterly direction they crossed the Coast Range by the Grande Ronde Pass past Yamhill and onward to the Willamette Mission. At the mission, Frost obtained cattle. These cattle together with some horses owned by Smith were driven back along the same route that they had come. The entire trip consumed just thirty-six days. Possession of a herd of cattle is a fundamental necessity in the economic upbuilding of any remote area, and Frost's pioneering service in introducing the first band of cattle into the present Astoria region should be noted.²⁶

Ten years in Oregon. A final important service to Oregon was rendered by the Rev. Frost, in collaboration with another "Missionary to Oregon," the Rev. Daniel Lee. In the fall of 1843 both were returning to the United States; Mr. Frost because of his own

²⁵ Wilkes, *United States Exploring Expedition*, IV, p. 322.

²⁶ Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 187; S. A. Clarke, *Pioneer Days in Oregon*, II, p. 421; Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, pp. 307, 308.

serious ill health, Mr. Lee on account of the ill health of Mrs. Lee. During the leisurely seven months' trip together they prepared a small work on Oregon, which they called *Ten Years in Oregon*. This contemporaneous source book comprises three hundred and forty-four pages. The earlier pages, covering the period to 1840, were written by Daniel Lee. Practically all of the last half of the volume is the work of Joseph H. Frost. The value of the book is greatly enhanced by the fact that Frost's narrative is based on a journal which he kept during his entire period of residence in Oregon.

Oregon City. In the distribution of the *Lausanne* group of missionaries at Fort Vancouver on June 3, 1840, Rev. A. F. Waller was temporarily assigned to assist with the construction of mills at Chemeketa. Later in this same year Superintendent Lee appointed Mr. Waller to the important Willamette Falls Indian station, near the present Oregon City, and about twelve miles south of the site of the city of Portland. At Willamette Falls was the famous cataract of the Willamette River, the finest water-power site in Old Oregon. There was a large Indian population, attracted by the important salmon fishery at the falls.

In the summer of 1840, Mr. Waller erected a log dwelling house²⁷ which served both as residence and mission store. It was the first dwelling house erected in the settlement. Lieutenant Wilkes, a Willamette Falls visitor on June 5, 1841, furnishes a graphic picture of Rev. Waller's pioneer environment:

Early on the morning of the 5th we set out for the falls of the Willamette. As they are approached, the [Willamette] river becomes much narrower; and the banks which are of trap rock, more precipitous. This river is navigable for small vessels even at its lowest stage, as high as the mouth of the Klakamus [Clackamas,] three miles below its falls. In the low state of the river, there is a rapid at the Klakamus.

We reached the falls about noon, where we found the missionary station under the charge of the Rev. Mr. Waller. The Hudson Bay

²⁷ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 330. Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society Library, p. 44.

Company have a trading-post here, and are packing fish, which the Indians catch in great quantities. This is said to be one of the best salmon-fisheries on the river. . . .²⁸

Mr. Waller and his wife gave us a kind welcome, and insisted upon our taking dinner with them. As they have no servants, Mrs. Waller prepared the dinner, while Mr. Waller took care of the out-door business. Though the house was built of rough materials, it was very evident that neatness and order prevailed. Her management of the home-made cooking-stove, which stood in the room claimed my admiration. At the same time she made herself quite agreeable; and although she had many, very many things to contend with, appeared quite satisfied with her lot and condition.

After we had partaken of our dinner, consisting of salmon and tea, with bread and butter, Mr. Waller took us to see the Falls. On our way thither, he pointed out a log house that had been built by the agent of Mr. Slacum in 1837 in order to secure the right of site or mill-privileges. The Hudson's Bay Company have gone to considerable expense in blasting the rock for the mill-race for the same purpose; but from appearances, this work has remained untouched for several years. The falls of Willamette are about twenty feet in height, and probably offer the best mill-sites of any place in the neighboring country. Being at the head of navigation for sea-vessels, and near the great wheat-growing valley of the Willamette, it must be a place of great resort. A Mr. Moore,²⁹ from the Western states, whom I saw on the Willamette, informed me that he had taken possession of the west side of the falls, under a purchase from an old Indian chief. Whether such titles will be recognized by the government, is already a matter of speculation in this country; and there is much talk of preemption rights. . . .

In a letter to his brother in New York, written from Willamette Falls, and dated April 6, 1842, Rev. Waller gave an optimistic account of the economic opportunities offered in his new Oregon home.

²⁸ Wilkes, *United States Exploring Expedition*, IV, pp. 343, 344.

²⁹ Robert Moore of the Peoria party of 1839. Mr. Moore took up a claim near the falls, on the west bank of the Willamette River. Mr. Moore's original claim was a piece of land a mile square up and down the Willamette, exactly opposite from the site of the present Oregon City. J. Orin Oliphant, "Robert Moore in Oregon History," *Washington Historical Quarterly*, XV, p. 169.

You will see by my letter where I am stationed. This is, in some respects, a pleasant, though laborious field of labor. This is, and is destined to be, the great emporium of the interior of this country. Its water power for manufacturing purposes is probably not rivaled in the States; at least, few and far between are the privileges which equal or excel it; besides, here is an excellent salmon fishery. As to the country, taking it all in all, it is a good farming and grazing country. The winters are so mild that cattle and horses do well without feeding. . . . Produce of all kinds, except corn, does well here, I believe, so far as it has been fairly tried. Some corn is raised. Wheat, peas, and oats, I think, so far as quality is concerned, cannot excel in any country. Potatoes are tolerable, in some parts excellent. Indeed, it is my candid conviction, that an industrious and economical man can live as well (fruits excepted) and make property as fast, as in almost any country, and far easier than in any part of the state of New York, where I have lived. Let him bring with him a few hundred dollars in cash, or property, his farming utensils, and so forth, and settle on one of these most delightful plains, and the first year he can support his family from the soil, as he has nothing to do but fence, plough, and sow, and prepare a shelter or house for his family; yet he will have to encounter some difficulties incident to all new countries.*^o

. . . our mills are few and far between and not all of the first order, but rather multiplying and improving; though a good millwright is very much wanted, as well as apparatus for building mills, and a great many wholesome settlers, embracing some capitalists, who will open trade with the [Sandwich] islands and China, which can be done from this coast with great facility. But, first of all, our government ought to extend its jurisdiction and protection over this country. The state of the country in this respect (especially for Americans), as well as in respect to the currency, is unpleasant. The Hudson's Bay Company seem determined to monopolize everything as long as possible; yet in many respects they are quite accomodating, at least so far as it is for their interest. They profess to claim many of the best and most valuable parts of the country, by putting up a little hut, without inhabitant, and forbid any one settling in those places. They made a claim at the falls, on the side where I now am, about twelve years since [1829],

*^o Alvin F. Waller Letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 21. 1842, XVII, p. 74.

by digging a short mill-race, hewing a quantity of timber, and so forth,—a few years since they put up a small house, and covered it with bark. Last fall [of 1841] an American [Felix Hathaway] took possession of a small island in the Falls; but no sooner was it known at Fort Vancouver than a company of men was sent off with boards to put up a hut, and soon the governor of the Fort [Dr. John McLoughlin] came up, greatly incensed, called the man a pilferer, and any thing but good; he however went on. A cooper wished to build a shop near me, but was informed, by orders from the Fort, that if he built, his shop would be torn down. He, however, went on and built; his shop still stands.

Rev. Waller concludes his well-written communication with this information:

We have an addition to our family of another daughter [Julia Ellen, later Mrs. C. C. Stratton], born May 5, 1841. I have written in great haste, as this is to be off early tomorrow morning. Besides, I have plenty of company, a number of men being here to buy salmon, of which I have the care. Others are on their way down the river. Indeed, my house is at times, as to travelers, more like a public house than a Methodist Preacher's.⁸¹

In a letter dated August 19, 1842, Rev. Waller gives a semi-humorous description of his varied duties:

What is [my] labor, and how do [I] prosper? My labor has been a little of almost every thing. I have been carpenter and joiner, receiver and forwarder of goods, retail merchant, salmon trader and salter, boat and canoe maker, stone layer, blacksmith, farmer, cooper, nurse, and physician. . . . On Sabbath I have generally held three or four meetings. In the morning, before breakfast, go near three miles to the Clackamas village, and hold meeting with the Indians; return, and at eleven o'clock try to preach to the whites at my house, and hold a class meeting. In the afternoon cross the river to a little village; again hold meeting with the Indians. Sometimes I return and talk to a few who

⁸¹ Alvin F. Waller Letter, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, December 21, 1842, XVII, p. 74. *Pacific Christian Advocate* (Portland, Oregon, 1855 to date), December 24, 1890.

are camped at certain seasons near me, and in the evening hold prayer meeting at my house.⁸²

McLoughlin land claim. On November 18, 1842, Dr. John McLoughlin sent his historic note to Superintendent Lee respecting Mr. Waller's setting up a private claim in a section of land preëmpted by Dr. McLoughlin in 1829. This marked the beginning of a legal contest between Mr. Waller and Dr. McLoughlin which was settled through an agreement executed on April 4, 1844. This dispute also led to a historical controversy which has continued to the present day.⁸³

The first church on the Pacific Coast. Mr. Waller originated, on December 31, 1842, the movement that resulted in the construction in Willamette Falls of the first Methodist Church building not only in Oregon but on the entire western coast of the Americas from Bering Strait to Cape Horn. On that date he began, by subscription, the collection of a building fund. On the faded pages of this old subscription book appears the name of Jason Lee; his contribution was fifty dollars, and his name appears as the fifteenth on the list of the original twenty-seven subscribers.⁸⁴

In a letter begun on May 23, 1843, but not completed until the following July 31, Mr. Waller portrays to a New York friend the march of events in his vigorous young community:

My numerous calls of visitors take much of my time. Scarcely a day passes without bringing with it one or more visitors, so that we seldom take a meal alone, and sometimes a half a dozen are with us for a night, or more. . . . As there are no public houses, a stranger is generally made welcome at any house when night comes on him. If there is not a house, he can make himself welcome in the best spot of ground he can select in the plain or wood. If he has fireworks he can kindle a fire. And if from the place he left he was careful to take something to eat, he can make the best supper his pocket affords, and then roll

⁸² Alvin F. Waller to Fuller Atchinson, Albion, Michigan, *Christian Advocate*, November 8, 1843, XVIII, p. 50.

⁸³ See Appendix III for documents on Lee's relation to the Waller-McLoughlin land claim controversy.

⁸⁴ H. K. Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 255.

himself in his blanket, and sleep as quietly as the circumstances will allow. If you are so fortunate as to find a house, you are furnished by the inmates with the best the house affords, and you can receive it thankfully, because it is freely presented. Your supper consists of tea, coffee, milk, or water, bread, sometimes butter, beef, venison, pork, prepared generally by the hands of the native women. You sometimes have vegetables. Most in the country are passionately fond of tea and coffee. My own views and practice are yet unchanged in reference to tea and coffee. I do not use either, at home or abroad. I however, keep both for those who do use them which with the trimmings make no small part in my expenditures.⁸⁵

This is Mr. Waller's description of what the wayfarer's bed was likely to be in the Oregon City of 1843:

Your bed is composed of a few skins and a blanket on the floor. A bag of wheat, your saddle or valise and coat, will constitute your pillow. I speak here more particularly of these settlers who have for wives native women, of which there are not a few. But there are exceptions among them; some of them are doing quite well in housewifery considering their circumstances.⁸⁶

Rev. Waller furnishes this glimpse of his family life and of Mrs. Waller's servant problem:

My general health is as good as in the States, and as is that of my family. The labor of my wife, however, wears upon her, and at times she is much depressed in spirit and not a little discouraged. She sometimes feels that she would gladly return to the bosom of those friends with whom she formerly associated. I have been obliged to hire a Hawaiian at ten dollars per month to assist in household affairs, as no female help can be got here. This I have to pay in addition to paying his passage to and from this country. He milks my cows, washes, fetches water, cuts wood, and works some in the garden. It is, however, difficult to get him some days to do enough to pay his board. My wife cannot do all that is necessary to be done in this place, and this is the best help we can get.

⁸⁵ Alvin F. Waller to Fuller Atchinson, *Christian Advocate*, July 3, 1844, XVIII, p. 186.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*

Mr. Waller's reference to the Oregon Institute, in whose later history he was to have so prominent a part, is of special interest. Waller Hall to-day perpetuates the name of the man who wrote these lines to a New York State friend in 1843:

I want more than anything else a chance to educate and Christianize my children. And in order to do this I have ventured to pledge two hundred dollars for the erection of an institution of learning in this country, entitled the Oregon Institute [later Willamette University]. The frame is now up for the main building and is being enclosed.³⁷

The Umpqua project. The Umpqua project had been conceived by Lee in the late winter of 1837.³⁸ At that time he had visited the region, and although unable to make detailed personal observations, had gathered information which led him to believe that a mission station could be established there. Before making a final decision, however, Superintendent Lee desired to make a personal investigation of this wild region and of the Umpqua Valley Indians inhabiting it.³⁹

At the general missionary conference at Fort Vancouver in 1840, the establishment of this mission was allotted to Rev. Gustavus Hines and Rev. W. W. Kone. Accordingly, Jason Lee, Gustavus Hines, Dr. Elijah P. White, and an Indian guide, whom they called "The Captain," left the Willamette Mission on August 18, 1840, to make a tour of the Umpqua Valley.⁴⁰ They traveled on horseback, "the horses alternately galloping and walking." Their provisions were transported on pack animals. Traveling southward, the missionaries passed the noonday with friends at Chemeketa "Mill" below Willamette. Their course now lay through one of the most beautiful and fertile valleys in America. About sunset on August 21, 1840, they reached Elk Creek, a small

³⁷ Alvin F. Waller to Fuller Atchinson, *Christian Advocate*, July 3, 1844, XVIII, p. 186.

³⁸ "Oregon Mission Record Book," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XVIII, pp. 258, 259.

³⁹ "Jason Lee's Journal of Umpqua Exploration," *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

⁴⁰ Hines, *Missionary Expedition to Oregon*, p. 94.

tributary of the Umpqua River, and pitched their camp. The next day the party crossed and recrossed Elk Creek, but always pushing forward on their southward course. At two o'clock that afternoon they reached the mouth of Elk Creek in the vicinity of the second or later Fort Umpqua. This fort, the only Hudson's Bay Company post established south of the Columbia River, consisted of "three or four little log huts built on three sides of a square, and covered with cedar bark."⁴¹ It was situated on the west bank of the river about three miles below the mouth of Elk Creek, and about forty miles from the Pacific Ocean.⁴² J. B. Gagnier, the French-Canadian interpreter assigned to this post by the Hudson's Bay Company, was in charge. He sent a canoe across the river for the missionaries, and upon their arrival at the fort received them hospitably.

The party remained at Fort Umpqua⁴³ for several days. By shrewd questioning and careful observations, Superintendent Lee acquired much useful information concerning the wild Umpqua country. On August 26, Dr. White and the Indian guide returned to the Willamette. Jason Lee and Gustavus Hines proceeded to the coast by descending the Umpqua River to its mouth. Jason Lee felt it necessary to make this inspection as the greater part of the Indian population of the Umpqua Valley resided there. He also wished to examine the mouth of the Umpqua River and to observe its possibilities as a harbor.

The French trader, Gagnier, warned Jason Lee of the serious dangers attending an expedition by so small a party of white men among the cruel and treacherous Umpqua tribes, and reminded him of Jediah Smith's adventure near the mouth of the Umpqua

⁴¹ Hines, *Missionary Expedition to Oregon*, p. 99.

⁴² Bancroft, *History of the Northwest Coast* (San Francisco, 1884), II, p. 521; Elwood Evans, *History of the Pacific Northwest*, 2 vols., (Portland, Oregon, 1889), I, p. 30; Jason Lee's Journal of Umpqua Tour, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

⁴³ Leslie M. Scott, editor, John Work's Journey from Fort Vancouver to Umpqua River and Return in 1834, *Oregon Historical Society Quarterly*, XXIV, p. 257. Describes location of later Fort Umpqua.

H. O. Lang, (ed.) *History of Willamette Valley* (Portland, 1885), p. 201. Describes location of the earlier Fort Umpqua.

River.⁴⁴ In vain he tried to persuade Lee to give up his perilous plan. In his journal, Jason Lee reports the following conversation with the Hudson's Bay trader: "I said I was not afraid of the Indians molesting me. 'True,' said he; 'but there may be great danger where there is no fear.'" ⁴⁵ Accompanied by Gagnier's Indian wife (who was related to an Umpqua chief),⁴⁶ Lee and Hines set out in a canoe down the turbulent Umpqua River. Their Indian guides and canoe men expertly guided their frail vessel along the serpentine, rocky channel of the river. It was a wild, forbidding country. The river wound its way in a deep gorge between heavily wooded mountains. On the evening of August 26, the missionaries made their camp below the last rapid on the river, and, surrounded by Indians, made an excellent supper of roasted salmon which Mrs. Gagnier prepared for them.

Before noon the next day they came within sight of the Pacific Ocean. On the beach, near the largest of the three Umpqua villages at the mouth of the river, Jason Lee pitched his tent. Messengers were sent to the village to announce the arrival of the missionaries. "Nearly all, old and young, in a short time assembled," wrote Jason Lee.⁴⁷ The Indians seated themselves in a semicircle on the sand before the missionary tent. As the chief was ill, the second in rank addressed the missionaries. Jason Lee records that he "came forward with a quick step; and when within three steps, stopped short, directly in front of me, and commenced his speech. . . ." ⁴⁸

Great Chief: We are very much pleased with our country. We love this world, and desire to live a long while in it. We very much desire to become old men before we die. It is true we have killed many people, but we have never killed any but bad people. Many lies have been told about us. We have been called a bad people, and we are glad

⁴⁴ Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 194.

⁴⁵ Lee's Journal of Umpqua Tour, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*

you have come to see us for yourselves. All the white men we have seen before came to get our beavers; none ever came to instruct us. We are glad to see you. We want to throw away our bad things and become good.⁴⁹

Several other Indian chiefs addressed the missionaries in succession, according to their rank. Mrs. Gagnier acted as interpreter.

While they were visiting among these Indans an amusing incident occurred. An Indian who had seen Lee at Fort Umpqua hurried to the coast and informed the natives there that Lee was a great medicine man; and that he had a medicine bag, by releasing the contents of which he could destroy them all. This so-called medicine bag proved to be Lee's patent shot pouch. The pouch excited great fear and curiosity among the Indians, and but for the protecting presence of Mrs. Gagnier, the situation might have resulted in the Indians attacking Lee. However, by keeping a bright fire burning all night and by faithfully watching over their tent, this Indian woman probably saved the lives of the two missionaries.⁵⁰

The next day, after again preaching to the Indians, Lee inspected the country in that vicinity. That his opinion was unfavorable may be gathered from these keen commentaries on the forbidding topography of the Umpqua Valley. In his journal entry for August 28, 1840, he wrote:

There is a bar at the mouth of the river which I judge no ship can pass. The immense hills or mountains, which close in so closely upon the river as to leave it but just room to pass, are covered with dense forests to the water's edge. The whole region seems gloomy and lonesome; and everything you see seems to impress one with the idea, that, in this dismal region, *civilization itself* would run *wild*; and that, in order to tame these savage men, whose natures and habits are in exact keeping with every thing around, you must remove them to a more genial soil.⁵¹

⁴⁹ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 224.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

⁵¹ Lee's Journal of Umpqua Tour, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

Returning to Fort Umpqua on August 29, 1840, Lee and Hines remained overnight as guests of the hospitable Mr. Gagnier. The next day, with an Umpqua Indian as guide, the two missionaries set out on a tour of the Umpqua Valley proper. Ascending steep hills, crossing deep streams, and traversing difficult trails, they found themselves, on September 3, once more on Elk Creek, at the spot where they had encamped on their outgoing journey. Jason Lee here makes the penetrating observation: "Good land, but a great scarcity of timber. The only access to this is through the Willamette. Hence *this* will not settle till *that* is filled up."⁵²

While in the Umpqua Valley Lee met very few Indians. Those that he did meet, although poor, were superior to those inhabiting the Willamette Valley. Retracing their steps from Elk Creek, Lee and Hines reached the Willamette Valley Mission on September 7, 1840, after an absence of three weeks.

⁵² Lee's Journal of Umpqua Tour, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

CHAPTER XI

PROGRESS IN 1841 AND 1842

Removal of Mission to Chemeketa, 1841. Pausing for a moment to review as a whole the plan thus outlined in the assignment of missionaries to their posts, we can begin to realize the farsighted comprehensiveness of Jason Lee's vision. He was not building for a day. With keen appreciation of the future of this country in which he found himself, he realized that the most vital work of the missionary was the nurture and moral strengthening of the white people who were to be its eventual rulers. Having occupied, so far as his resources permitted, the key points in a widespread area, Jason Lee now turned to the prosecution of plans, long well thought out, for the headquarters of the mission work.

As early as the summer of 1840, Superintendent Lee had begun the removal of his mission center from its original site, known as "Old Mission," to Chemeketa, ten miles south of the parent mission station. The surroundings of Chemeketa were attractive. To the east a broad forest extended to the foothills of the Cascade Range. To the west the Chemeketa Plain stretched to the banks of the Willamette River. Across the river, still westward, could be seen the hills of the present Polk County. To the south and east rose the faint outlines of the Waldo hills. Through the mission site flowed a small stream, known as Mill Creek.¹

The first structure was erected on the bank of Mill Creek, and housed under one roof a saw and a grist mill.² The machinery for these mills had been brought from the East on the *Lausanne*, and in its transportation from Fort Vancouver to the new mission

¹ Frances Fuller Victor, *All Over Oregon and Washington* (San Francisco, 1872), p. 168.

² See also p. 254.

site the missionaries experienced serious difficulty. The frail Chinook canoes could carry only light loads and it was necessary to make many trips back and forth. The proper assembling of the mill machinery presented the next problem. J. L. Parrish, a member of the *Lausanne* party, entertainingly relates the difficulties encountered by the preacher-mechanics who undertook to assemble the mill machinery. The upper and lower millstones, according to Parrish, were at first incorrectly set, so that when they were set in motion they threw out the wheat instead of grinding it.³ The water power for the mill was supplied by means of a horizontal wheel placed across Mill Creek.⁴ During the summer it was necessary, because of low water, to suspend milling operations. When in operation, however, the grist mill's output was approximately ten bushels of flour a day.

Upon the completion of the sawmill, work was begun on the building for the Indian Manual Labor School. Plans for the erection of a new Indian school building at Chemeketa had been made during the year 1840. In May, 1841, a committee was appointed to select a site for the school building during the first annual meeting of the Methodist Missionary Society. A suitable location was agreed upon and building operations were begun. The proposed building plan called for an expenditure of about \$10,000. Jason Lee obtained the sanction of his Mission Board for the enterprise and estimated the probable cost.⁵ An imposing, three-story, wooden frame building was erected, seventy-one feet long and twenty-four feet wide. Its capacity was enlarged by an addition of two wings, each twenty-four feet square, situated at the rear of the building.⁶ A small square belfry tower ornamented the top of this pioneer structure. Building was costly and progressed slowly. In 1844, the schoolhouse had been only partly

³ J. L. Parrish, *Oregon Anecdotes*, MS., pp. 10, 26.

⁴ Wilkes, *United States Exploring Expedition*, IV, p. 353.

⁵ Gustavus Hines, *Oregon and Its Institutions*, p. 159.

⁶ Diary of Rev. George Gary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIV, pp. 86, 87.

completed. In a diary entry of June 11, 1844, Superintendent George Gary, Jason Lee's successor, gives this clear description of the Indian school at that time:

A noble edifice in appearance, it is not finished, the cornice is not on, weatherboards not on; it will doubtless cost more than two thousand dollars. It will take more than two thousand dollars to finish it. It is decaying from the want of some more labor on it. It has probably cost the Mission now from eight to ten thousand dollars.⁷

After the removal of the school to Chemeketa there was an alarming decrease in the enrollment, owing to the rapid decline of the Indian population. In 1844, the number of Indian children in attendance was only twenty-seven, and many of them were most irregular in their attendance. Rev. Gary, convinced that the school had no future, decided to close it on July 26, 1844. He offered to sell it to the trustees of the Oregon Institute for the trifling sum of four thousand dollars, an amount less than half its actual cost. Two days later the transfer of title was completed. Jason Lee's Indian Manual Labor Training School, after an existence of nearly a decade, was absorbed by the "Oregon Institute, and its career was at an end."⁸

First Protestant parsonage. By the close of the year 1841, a third building the minister's new residence, called the "parsonage," had been erected on Chemeketa Plain. This first residence built at Chemeketa, and the first Protestant parsonage in Old Oregon, was for a number of years regarded as the most attractive dwelling house in the Oregon country. It was situated about forty rods from the Indian Manual Labor School.⁹ Typically New England in architecture, the severity of its lines was relieved by the long verandas extending across the entire front of the first and

⁷ Diary of Rev. George Gary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIV, pp. 93-95.

⁸ Hines, *Oregon and Its Institutions*, pp. 160, 161.

⁹ Diary of Rev. George Gary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIV, p. 90.

second stories,¹⁰ while white paint and green blinds at the windows gave a cheery, homelike air.¹¹ This historic residence, somewhat altered in appearance and used for a home, still stands on Broadway in North Salem.

Mission summer tour. Upon his return to the Willamette Valley from his tour of the Umpqua River region, Mr. Lee found several members of the mission family seriously ill. Mrs. Lee was in a dangerous condition owing to an attack of the prevailing malaria.¹² Although she slowly recovered from this illness, Mrs. Lee never again enjoyed vigorous health. The unusually severe winter of 1840-1841 proved to be a trying one for her and for other members of the Willamette Mission family.

Missionary hardships. In her letter of March 11, 1841, to Osmon C. Baker, Mrs. Lee makes a feeling reference to the trials experienced by the little missionary company during the preceding winter at Old Mission:

Our worthy and much loved brother Whitcomb, is now swinging between life and death. Since the departure of Brother Shepard [died January 1, 1840], he has had the care of the male department of our school, excepting in school hours—a duty which he seems well qualified to perform.

[Mrs. David Leslie] continued very feeble during the summer [of 1840], but we still clung to the hope that the Lord would raise her up; but he had not so designed. In the month of December [1840] she began slowly to decline, and continued to do so until the latter part of January [1841], when she was attacked with the dysentary.

You can well imagine the effect this disease would have on one so much reduced by previous sickness; but her sufferings were nearly at an end, nature was soon exhausted, and the mortal scene was closed with her on the 15th of February [1841]. Mine was the melancholy privilege to attend her in her last moments, and to perform for her the last sad offices which friendship dictates, and humanity requires. She

¹⁰ This house with additions still stands in North Salem. Letter from W. T. Rigdon, Salem, July 9, 1929. Lee's house near "the Mill" is often incorrectly called the Parsonage.

¹¹ Atwood, *The Conquerors*, p. 169.

¹² Jason Lee's Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 25, 1841, XVI, p. 5.

viewed the last enemy as he approached with composure, took leave of her family and commended them to God. . . .¹⁸

On the day Mrs. Leslie died, Jason Lee wrote her husband a letter, hitherto unpublished, which reveals the spirit of neighborliness and kindness that pervaded the little settlement, the primitive pioneer conditions that prevailed, and the high regard Jason Lee felt for his colleague, David Leslie:

Mission House Feb. 15, 1841

My Dear Bro.

It is with mingled emotions, that I take my pen to address you, on a subject, upon which, in this hour of severest trial, sympathy, and perhaps *reason*, would dictate silence.

But strong desire, (whatever may be its origin) has prevailed and I trust you will pardon me, when I say that it would be exceedingly gratifying to my feelings, to have sister Leslie's remains, deposited in the same yard, and along side of my own Dear departed Companion's, and Bro. Shepard's. *All! all*, in this House join me, in this desire, and several others that I have conversed with.

Should the River encroach; which perhaps may never be, all can be removed at the same time. Should you continue in your present appointment, and the Mission go on here as anticipated, it will be very desirable, that you should be located on this side, and in that case you would yourself, perhaps, prefer that your Dear Wife should be buried here. Now My Dear Bro. after having *thus stated* my feelings, I am prepared to be perfectly satisfied, whether my desires are met or not.

Do not allow what I have said, to influence you, in the *least*, against your own *wishes*, for you may rest assured that no one wishes to have his desires gratified at the expense of yours. I have written, supposing that you had *little* preference in reference to the place, if I am mistaken, you will not let what I have said have the least influence.

Should you conclude to bury on this side, I would say we have plenty large canoes, and all can be accomplished without difficulty.

With best wishes, and strong prayers, for You and Yours, I am
Yours Truly

JASON LEE.

¹⁸ Mrs. Jason Lee to Osmon C. Baker, *Zion's Herald*, September 14, 1842, XIII, p. 146.

P. S. We had neither shovel or spade here, and Dick has gone to M. Caddon's [John McCaddon's] after one.

Should you conclude to bury here, write a line, by the Bearer, and we will see that the grave is prepared. J. L.

P. S. Should you bury here, it would, I think, be best to have the Funeral here,

J. L.¹⁴

Rev. David Leslie
Cold Spring

A summer tour, 1841. During the following summer of 1841 Superintendent Lee made an extended tour, which included visits to the Clatsop and The Dalles Indian Mission stations. In the hope that a long and leisurely canoe voyage would be an effective factor in restoring impaired health, Mrs. Lee accompanied him, also Mr. and Mrs. J. L. Whitcomb, with the two Whitcomb children.¹⁵ At Sauvie's Island, near the mouth of the Willamette, a distinguished visitor unexpectedly paid them a call, Lieutenant Charles Wilkes, of the United States Navy. Wilkes' report of this meeting is as follows:

Before night [of June 4, 1841] passed the encampment of the Rev. Jason Lee, principal of the Methodist Mission in Oregon, who was on his way to Clatsop, at the mouth of the Columbia. We stopped with him for an hour. He was accompanied by his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Whitwell [Whitcomb], and two or three children. Their encampment was close to the river, and consisted of two small tents. Mr. Lee gave us a warm invitation to visit the settlement on the Willamette, thus forestalling our intentions to do so.¹⁶

At Clatsop, the Lees and Whitcombs were received with cordiality by the Frosts. In that lonely Clatsop region in 1841, there were few white people, and they were very welcome. The missionaries, Frost and Kone, with Solomon H. Smith and Calvin

¹⁴ Lee to David Leslie, *Oregon Historical Society*, Manuscript Collection, pp. 6, 7.

¹⁵ Mrs. Jason Lee to Osmon C. Baker, *Zion's Herald*, March 23, 1842.

¹⁶ Wilkes, *United States Exploring Expedition*, IV, p. 341.

Tibbets, were the only white settlers. The Frosts inhabited a one-story frame house, containing three rooms. The surroundings were extremely pleasant. A young spruce and pine grove provided a healthful situation. Mr. Kone resided about four miles away, where he was cultivating a tract of land and guarding a herd of cattle.¹⁷ Before leaving headquarters, Lee had ordered sawed lumber to be sent down to Clatsop from Vancouver to be used in the construction of a frame dwelling house for Mr. Kone and his family on this tract of land. A carpenter, W. H. Willson, was sent from Willamette to build it.¹⁸ The only other inhabitants of the Clatsop region were the worthless and peculiarly degraded Clatsop Indians. Frost in his *Ten Years in Oregon* records the following discouraging incident in connection with religious services held for them by Mr. Lee and himself: "One of the head men," wrote Frost, "said, when requested to attend preaching, that he understood how to steal, and that was enough for him to know."¹⁹

After a stay of about two weeks, the Lees continued their journey, but Mr. and Mrs. Whitcomb remained at Clatsop, occupying as their temporary residence the cabin of Calvin Tibbets.²⁰ Ascending the Columbia by canoe, Superintendent and Mrs. Lee arrived home in late June, 1841.

¹⁷ Wilkes, *op. cit.*, p. 322.

¹⁸ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 305.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* The hopelessly degraded condition of these Clatsop Indians is authoritatively revealed in a letter by James Birnie, the Hudson's Bay agent at Fort George, to Daniel Lee:

Fort George, Feb. 27, 1840.

My Dear Sir,—The Indians about this quarter are the most abandoned and profligate set of people you will find on the Columbia. Their numbers have been on the decrease for the last 20 years. The causes are venerea, abortions, and infanticide. Both men and women think nothing of destroying their offspring. A case of this kind happened the other day. After the child was born, the father declared that it was not his, and ordered the mother to throw it into the river, which she did without thinking any more about it.

The number of the Chinooks about here last year were as follows: 75 men, 88 women, 69 children, and 58 slaves. The Clatsops are about the same number, but the Killimuks are more numerous. There are other small tribes in the vicinity. I am, &c.,

JAMES BIRNIE.

Quoted in H. K. W. Perkins' Journal, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, October 14, 1840, XV, p. 29.

²⁰ Lee and Frost, *op. cit.*, p. 306.

During this busy summer, Lee performed heavy manual labor on the mission farm. He, himself, later recorded that during the harvest season of 1841 he "took the cradle for 16 days."²¹ From August 25 to September 20, 1841, Jason and Mrs. Lee were the honored guests of the families of Daniel Lee, H. K. W. Perkins, and Mr. Brewer at The Dalles Mission. As a special mark of courtesy they were given the use of Daniel Lee's chamber. Every consideration was shown Mrs. Lee, who continued to experience ill health. During this interval, also, Jason Lee suffered a severe attack of malaria.²²

In the early autumn, Jason and Mrs. Lee returned to the Willamette station. It was a sad farewell. On the day of their departure The Dalles Mission family escorted them to their canoe, which was moored on the bank of the Columbia about a half mile from the mission house. Mrs. Lee was seated on horseback and Daniel Lee walked at her side. Upon reaching the Columbia River, he helped her into the frail craft. As The Dalles missionaries watched the rapidly receding vessel, they said one to the other, "She will meet us here no more."²³

Willamette University (Oregon Institute). On October 25, 1839, the *Lausanne* passengers celebrated the first centennial of Methodism. This can properly be designated as the first event in the history of Willamette University. After the close of a sermon delivered by Gustavus Hines, six hundred and fifty dollars was contributed toward the founding of an educational institution for white children in Oregon.²⁴

The next important step in the development of Willamette University was the founding of the Oregon Institute at Salem in 1842. The first meeting, to formulate plans for the proposed school, was held at Jason Lee's residence at Chemeketa on January 17, 1842. "Oregon Institute" was selected as the name for the new school,

²¹ Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society, p. 76.

²² Lee and Frost, *op. cit.*, p. 250.

²³ *Ibid.*, p. 251.

²⁴ Read Bain, "Methodist Educational Effort in Oregon to 1860," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXI, pp. 77-83.

a board of nine trustees was elected, and on February 1, 1842, Jason Lee was elected to the chairmanship of the board. Early in March, 1842, an elaborate prospectus for the institute was published, and a constitution and by-laws were drawn up by the board of trustees. The site selected was on Wallace Prairie, about three miles north of the "Mill" at Chemeketa, or Salem, the modern capital of Oregon. W. H. Gray, a Presbyterian and former lay member of the Whitman Mission, was employed as builder.²⁵

In the year 1844 the fortunes of this pioneer Methodist college were greatly advanced by the purchase of the spacious, three-story Indian Manual Labor School building, the most imposing structure in Old Oregon, together with six hundred and forty acres of fertile land. The purchase price, as has been stated, was the trifling sum of four thousand dollars.²⁶ The ambitious little institute, voted its optimistic founders, was to become a university "as soon as the resources of the institution shall justify it."²⁷

Willamette University, still called, however, the "Oregon Institute," was formally opened on its present campus, August 16, 1844. Until 1849 this school was under the jurisdiction of the Oregon and California Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Under this control, in 1853, the Oregon Institute was incorporated as Willamette University. In 1864, Waller Hall, the oldest building on the present campus, was begun. To-day the State Capitol grounds and residential section of Salem are located on the Old Indian Mission School land claim.

For about thirty years this Methodist school was the only important institution of learning in the entire Oregon country, and exercised an exceptional influence on the cultural, moral, and intellectual life of Oregon. With the establishment of the State University of Oregon in 1872, however, and the rise of other institu-

²⁵ Gustavus Hines, *Oregon and Its Institutions*, pp. 139-152; Robert M. Gatke, "Outline History of Willamette University" (Salem, Ore., n.d.), a pamphlet.

²⁶ Rev. George Gary Diary, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIV, p. 94.

²⁷ Carl Gregg Doney (President, Willamette University), "Willamette University," *The Wilbrabam Bulletin for October*, 1928, p. 21.

tions immediately thereafter, the higher educational field was divided among several flourishing institutions of collegiate and university rank.²⁸

Death of Mrs. Lee. Jason Lee's second wife, Lucy Thomson Lee, died March 20, 1842, leaving an infant daughter born on the twenty-eighth of the previous month. During her brief residence in Oregon, Mrs. Lee had endeared herself to her mission associates. Her death cast an overwhelming gloom over the mission settlement. It was the third bereavement that was to tinge with sadness the tragic career of Jason Lee. Mrs. Lee, an accomplished and charming woman, had brought a culture to Old Oregon that was preserved as a treasured memory in the early annals of the mission settlement.²⁹ Harvey K. Hines has recorded vividly the grief which the death of the young mother brought to the isolated missionary group:

Her sickness was brief and not considered dangerous. . . . On Saturday, March 20, she coughed. Mr. Lee, who was standing by her side, raised her head upon his arm. One gasp and all was over. A sadder husband, a sadder group, never surrounded a missionary's death bed. When, a few hours later, they laid away her remains by the side of his former companion, they laid away the casket that had borne one of the purest gems that ever blazed on the dark night of Oregon. As Mr. Lee, folding the infant daughter, then but three weeks old, to his heart, turned away from that grave under the oaks of "Lee Mission Cemetery," another golden strand was braided into the chain that would bind his heart forever to the vales and skies of Oregon.³⁰

This is the tribute accorded the two wives of Jason Lee by Harvey W. Scott, the distinguished editor of the Portland *Oregonian* and a sympathetic and able interpreter of Oregon history:

Each was a type of devoted womanhood. Though they gave all for the opportunity to labor in this unknown field, and sacrificed their lives

²⁸ C. H. Carey, *History of Oregon* (Portland, 1922), pp. 711-748. Chapter xxxviii, "Education in Oregon," is an excellent general treatment of present-day Oregon educational institutions.

²⁹ H. K. Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 244.

³⁰ *Ibid.*

in it, they are fortunate in name and in fame. The first wife, Anna Maria Pittman, died in May [June], 1838; the second, Lucy Thomson, in March, 1842. Sorrowful fatality, due to the conditions of remote pioneer life, in which woman had to bear more than her part, and yet in her hour of need could not have the assistance that her sisters in more favored circumstances received. Such were some of the sacrifices of the pioneer time, through which this country was prepared as a dwelling place for the succeeding generations.⁸¹

An undaunted spirit. The student of Jason Lee's career is constantly impressed with his spirit of fortitude. In his bright lexicon there was no such word as fear. A triumphant faith, the consciousness that as the servant of his Creator he had an important work to do were sources of spiritual power that sent him forward to his tasks in spite of bereavements and obstacles that would have overwhelmed a lesser man. His undaunted spirit shines through the letters which Lee wrote to those closest to him. To his Wilbraham Academy friend, Rev. Osmon C. Baker, Jason Lee gave expression to his grief, and also to a spirit of victorious faith, in a spirit worthy of the finest leaders that Methodism has produced. Writing from Fort Vancouver, on April 8, Lee informed Mr. Baker of the passing of his former Newbury Academy student:

I have a moment to convey to you the sad intelligence that your friend and my dear wife bid adieu to this vale the 20th ult., leaving a lovely daughter three weeks old. Ten days after her confinement, there was every prospect that she would recover with invigorated health, and continue long an efficient laborer in this arduous field, but Heaven had otherwise determined. She was seized with the pleurisy and though we looked upon her as in a very critical situation, yet we thought there were reasonable hopes of her recovery; and as far as we could judge, a better prospect one minute before her spirit was with God, than at any time after her attack. The breaking of an ulcer entirely stopped her breath in a moment, and all my exertions, forcing quills, dipped in sweet oils, down her throat, only produced three short gasps, and all was over. She was coughing when she choked;

⁸¹ H. W. Scott, *History of the Oregon Country*, I, p. 221.

I was holding her head, I raised her head so as to see her eyes, and she rolled up her eyes, and gave me a look, which seemed to say, "I am going"; and without a struggle, or even so much as the motion of a finger, she fell in Jesus.

She entertained hopes of recovery, probably to the moment of the breaking of the ulcer. I had, however, conversed freely with her of her danger, and of her feelings in reference to death. She felt resigned—had no fears of death—could leave all in the hands of the Lord, etc.

A most lovely smile *sat*, and *almost* seemed to *play* upon the countenance of my dear companion after her demise. And as I took my last heart-rending gaze upon that countenance, actually beautified by the hand of the destroyer, I could not forbear exclaiming,

"Ah, lovely appearance of death!
What sight upon earth is so fair?"

My dear brother, may Heaven long save you from the pangs I feel. But in the midst of all I rejoice, yes, and I will rejoice, that my companions are where they can never suffer what I suffer, and that I too shall soon join them in that glorious realm. I sometimes contemplate myself as occupying an enviable position; the glorified spirits of my two beloved companions awaiting my arrival, ready to welcome me to that bright abode, where those hearts which always beat in unison, and those hands which never touched a discordant string on earth, will reunite, and join in perfect harmony, the bright retinue above, and engage with celestial ecstasy in the glorious employments of those around the throne. Do not contemplate your old friend as disconsolate and disheartened. No, my brother, discouraged I am not. In heaviness I cannot be, while the grace of God, as hitherto, bears me entirely above that region, I feel it would be sin to waste my energies in fruitless grief, or unavailing sorrow, and yet I am aware that it is the sustaining grace of God in me that preserves me from it. Glory to God in the highest! I can exalt in the midst of the furnace, One like unto the Son of man is with me, and I expect to come forth without the smell of fire upon my garment. "In affliction deep, sustained by glorious hope."²²

In this same heroic strain writing a few days later from Fort Vancouver he wrote to his nephew, Daniel Lee, at The Dalles Mission:

²² *Zion's Herald*, September 14, 1842, XIII, p. 146.

Vancouver April 13, 1842—

My Dear Nephew.

I opened Bro.[ther] Brewers letter to Dr. Babcock, and by it, learned that you had Indian reports of the death of Mrs. Lee. It is even so. I supposed that some one would have written you the first opportunity and did not therefore write myself, especially as I expected to come up so soon. I expected to be with you by this time when I left home. But as I am now detained here waiting for letters, I write to let you know, that My Dear Companion became the joyful Mother, of a lovely Daughter, Feb. 28. and for ten days, recovered more rapidly than we had anticipated, and there was every prospect, that she would be restored to sound health. But an unerring Providence had otherwise determined. . . .

Thus suddenly, and shall I say unexpectedly, have I been again bereaved. May Heaven *long long* save *you* the pangs *I* feel.

I feel like one upon a lofty eminence who, while he looks up has no fears but as he turns his eyes downward an indescribable feeling creeps over him, as he shrinks back from the gloomy, dreary, uninviting, lonely prospect beneath. Is it possible! I am led often involuntarily, to exclaim, is it possible! that *another* sod in Oregon, covers the remains of *another* Companion, who was dearer to me than life itself?

I awake as from a dream, but alas! all I see, all I hear, and above all, what I *feel*, conspire to dispel the illusion, and I am forced to yield to the force of truth, and to give my reluctant consent to the unwelcome and overwhelming fact that it is all *reality*.

Well, thank God, the religion of Jesus Christ is a *reality*. The joys and glories of heaven will soon be *reality*.

"Let sickness blast, let death devour,
If heaven must recompense our pains;
Perrish the grass and fade the flower,
If firm the word of God remains."

Expecting soon to see [you] I remain in affliction Deep

Yours Truly

JASON LEE.³⁸

³⁸ Jason Lee Letter to Daniel Lee, Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, pp. 8, 9.

CHAPTER XII

PREGNANT EVENTS FOR THE FUTURE

Indian unrest. About the beginning of the year 1843, Superintendent Lee began to receive reports that the Indians whose habitats were in the vicinity of the Methodist branch station at The Dalles were becoming hostile toward the whites.¹ The immediate cause of this difficulty was the arrival of the Dr. White immigrant train in the autumn of 1842. The Indians accurately interpreted the significance of the arrival of these permanent settlers as the first step in a movement that would ultimately dispossess them of their ancestral streams and hunting grounds. The leading Indian in the disaffected area was the famous chief of the Walla Wallas, Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox, familiarly known to the whites as "Yellow Serpent." So great were Superintendent Lee's fears of an Indian uprising that he decided to make a winter journey to The Dalles. With his characteristic intrepidity, with four Indian guides and a Chinook canoe, he began his downstream voyage on the swollen and raging current of the Willamette on January 23, 1843, his only equipment a few blankets, a tent, and a small stock of provisions. He reached Fort Vancouver by the evening of January 27, four days after his departure from his residence at Chemeketa.

Journey to The Dalles. On the next day Lee and his four Indians began the ascent of the Columbia River. Despite wind, snow, and sheets of ice on the river, the determined travelers succeeded in safely reaching their destination.

The Dalles Mission station [{"Wascopam" as Lee called it}] was reached on the evening of February 1, 1843. Here Lee found the

¹ Gustavus Hines, *Missionary Expedition to Oregon*, p. 142; A. J. Allen (comp.), *Ten Years in Oregon*, pp. 176, 177.

little Methodist missionary group in good health. The "Family" at this time consisted of Daniel and Mrs. Lee and their two children; Rev. H. K. W. Perkins, Mrs. Perkins, and their three children; and the mission farmer, Mr. Henry B. Brewer, Mrs. Brewer, and infant daughter.

Mrs. Marcus Whitman. Jason Lee was also pleased to find at the Dalles mission house, Mrs. Marcus Whitman, who was passing the winter there,² the guest of her Methodist missionary friends. Dr. Whitman was at this time on his historic journey East. Because of ill health, loneliness, and the menacing attitude of the Indians residing near the Whitman Mission, this gracious woman had come to Wascopam to enjoy its protection and its hospitalities. In a journal entry, Lee expresses his pleasure at meeting Mrs. Whitman and recalls those spring days of five years before when he was the comfortable and happy guest at Wailatpu of this charming woman and her generous-hearted husband.

Mrs. Dr. Whitman was with them [runs his journal entry]. I was glad to meet her again, as I had not seen her since I called upon them on my journey to the States in 1838, but was sorry to find her in poor health. Met the brethren and sisters in class, and had a comfortable and profitable time. All seemed resolved to be faithful unto death, and were looking with pleasurable expectation to that home where they shall receive the crown of life.³

This visit proved to be the last one that the mission superintendent was to make at The Dalles as the guest of his nephew, Daniel Lee. This indefatigable missionary was now completing the tenth and last year of fine service in Old Oregon. This is Daniel Lee's reference to his uncle's visit, written the following year:

The first and second sabbaths of February [1843] Mr. J. Lee was with us and the preaching of the word and the holy communion was rendered a blessing to our souls. The name of the Lord be praised for the blessed privileges he permitted us to enjoy from time to time

² *Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions for 1893*, p. 177.

³ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 267.

in that desert land! During his visit there was a remarkable fall of snow; and for many days the people were mostly confined to their homes.⁴

Chief "Yellow Serpent." In early February, 1843, Jason Lee held, by appointment, a conference at The Dalles with Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox, the warrior-statesman of the Walla Wallas. In order to hold this conference the Indian chief, accompanied by a band of warriors, had journeyed from his home at Walla Walla down the valley of the Columbia for a distance of more than a hundred miles. One of the first questions addressed to Superintendent Lee by Chief "Yellow Serpent" was to ask how the arrival of so many whites into the country would affect the Indians. Jason Lee's shrewd reply follows:

That will depend largely upon yourselves. If you imitate our industry and adopt our habits your poverty will soon disappear, and your people will have things as well as we. Our hands are our wealth, and you and your people have hands as well as we, and you only need to use them properly in order to gain property. I illustrated this by showing them that Americans who passed through their country entirely destitute would by their industry upon the Willamette in a few years have horses and cattle and other property, the fruits of their own labors.⁵

Peu-Peu-Mox-Mox next wanted to know if Dr. Elijah P. White, the first official to be sent to Oregon by the Federal Government, intended to make gifts to the Walla Wallas. Jason Lee replied by telling his red conferee that "to be always looking for gifts was a sure sign of laziness, for the industrious would rather labor and earn a thing that to beg it."⁶

The conference with "Yellow Serpent" ended, a perilous downstream journey begun on February 14 brought them on the night of February 17 to the friendly beach at Fort Vancouver. Three

⁴ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 258.

⁵ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 270.

⁶ Lee in letter to Mission Board, March 27, 1843.

days later Jason Lee successfully negotiated a difficult midwinter ascent, by Chinook canoe, of the swollen Willamette River and was safe again at his residence at Chemeketa on February 25.

Chemeketa. A pleasant glimpse of early summer activities at Chemeketa, the modern Salem, and at Willamette Falls, now Oregon City, is given in a letter which Jason Lee wrote Rev. A. F. Waller on June 29, 1843. Rev. Waller was at this time stationed at the important branch mission at Oregon City.

Walamette, June 29, 1843.

My dear Bro.

Yours of the 23 inst. came to hand. Whether our Fanning Mills will be ready for use as soon as you speak of is more than I am able to say, as I have not seen Mr. [Joseph] Holman since. If Mr. [Francis W.] Pettygrove's mill is a good one you had, perhaps, better buy it, as we can no doubt sell all of ours for that price without difficulty.

Let the Church build a Chapel upon the ground, and it shall have it, without money, and without *Deed*.

You mention having written me some time since, and that you have received no reply. If you refer to your answer to my last, written before the yearly meeting,⁷ I would say, that I had forgotten that it required an answer, and I fear I shall not have time to examine it this morning.

I would say, however, that the object I had in view in writing the letter to which that was an answer, was to ascertain the position you then occupied, in reference to the land claim at the Falls. I had been told that you still determined to hold on and get the entire claim if possible, and I wished to know if this was the fact. Your answer was *satisfactory*, and I know not whether I have anything further to say on the subject.

We have no *news*—and the Brethern can tell you all the *ordinary*. I hear little said about the *Fourth*—and I have not *begun* to prepare "*an Oration forty minutes long*" yet.

I have been over collecting cattle and have sold those belonging to Mrs. Whitcomb's children to Bro. Willson. Nearly 80 head for Eight Hundred Dollars.

A Camp Meeting is in contemplation for the Plains [Tualatin].⁸

⁷ At Oregon City, April, 1843.

⁸ The meeting was held July 13-16, 1843.

I purpose to be there, and I hope to see you there. I rejoice to hear that you had a good time at your Communion. We also had an interesting time. Bro. Leslie I suppose told you that we received the converts in the school, by Baptism. May the Lord bless and prosper you and yours. In haste.

Yours truly,

JASON LEE.⁹

First Oregon camp meeting. One of the memorable activities of Jason Lee during the summer of 1843 was his inauguration of the first camp meeting for white settlers to be held on the Pacific slope.¹⁰ This religious gathering assembled in that attractive portion of Old Oregon known as the Tualatin Plains, thirty-five miles west of Willamette Falls. The missionaries pitched their tents under the shelter of three giant trees, two towering firs and a stately oak. Jason Lee, Gustavus Hines, and H. K. W. Perkins, the prominent Methodist ministers present; and Harvey Clark, the popular Congregational minister who had settled on the Tualatin Plains in 1841, were in charge of the meeting.

The first day, Thursday, July 13, only fourteen persons were in attendance. On this occasion Jason Lee selected this appropriate text from Matthew for his sermon: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." By Sunday, July 16, the growing interest resulted in an attendance of sixty persons, a majority of the Willamette Valley settlers. Nineteen of these were non-professors of religion. So effective, however, was the preaching of Jason Lee and his associates that by Sunday evening sixteen of the nineteen non-professors were publicly converted. A spectacular feature of the camp meeting was the conversion of Oregon's most picturesque mountain man, Joseph Meek. Joseph Meek, with Dr. Robert Newell and other comrades of the Rocky Mountains, arrived in the Willamette Valley in December, 1840. Practically penniless, they selected farm sites on the Tualatin Plains and began the erection of homes. In May, 1843,

⁹ Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon, pp. 10, 11.

¹⁰ Methodist Annual Report for 1844, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIII, pp. 326, 327.

Meek is said to have been the self-appointed vote-taker at the Champoeg meeting, which is credited by some writers as having organized Oregon's first provisional government.¹¹ Under the provisional government he had been elected to the office of sheriff, a post for which he was well suited.¹² On Sunday evening, July 16, after professing Christianity, Meek exclaimed, "Tell everybody you see that Joseph Meek, that old Rocky Mountain sinner, has turned to the Lord!"¹³

Daniel Lee's departure. Doubtless the saddest event in the last year of Jason Lee's residence in Oregon occurred on August 15, 1843, when he said farewell to his nephew, Daniel Lee, who, as has earlier been narrated, departed from Oregon for the United States on an ocean-sailing ship called the *Diamond*. Their last meeting took place at Fort George at the mouth of the Columbia River. James Birnie, the resident trader at Fort George, dispensed for the last time a cordial welcome to the two Lees. Birnie, a native of Aberdeen, Scotland, was one of that fine group of Hudson's Bay Company men whose name is spoken with appreciation by the numerous visitors who were the beneficiaries of his courteous and big-hearted hospitality.¹⁴ At Birnie's request, Jason and Daniel Lee preached at his establishment on Sunday, August 13, the last of many services conducted jointly by uncle and nephew in Old Oregon.

The *Diamond* lay at anchor near Fort George until Tuesday, August 15, 1843, when it dropped down to Baker's Bay while Jason Lee and other friends on the shore waved farewells to the Daniel Lees, and also to the Frosts, and the Babcocks. Mrs. Marcus Whitman accompanied the Daniel Lee family to Fort George from Fort Vancouver, and spent a day or two on board ship with Mrs. Lee.

Lee's last summer at Chemeketa. On the day of Daniel Lee's

¹¹ See p. 217.

¹² Frances Fuller Victor, *The River of the West* (Hartford, 1870), pp. 287, 323.

¹³ Methodist Annual Report for 1844, *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XXIII, p. 326.

¹⁴ Bancroft, *History of the Northwest Coast*, II, p. 276.

departure, Jason Lee and Mrs. Whitman paid a short visit to the Clatsop Mission house. Mr. Parrish, Rev. Frost's successor in charge of this station, was a cordial host. After remaining at Clatsop for about one week, Superintendent Lee set out for home accompanied by Mrs. Whitman and David Leslie. Traveling by way of Willamette Falls, they proceeded up the river, arriving at Chemeketa in late August, 1843.¹⁵ About three weeks later, Mrs. Whitman, who had remained at Chemeketa visiting her Methodist friends, received the exciting news that her husband was returning over the Oregon Trail from his long and memorable journey East. The message also stated that he was a member of a large immigrant party, consisting of one hundred and forty wagons.

Lee meets Marcus Whitman. Accordingly, in the last week of September, Jason Lee, serving as an escort for Mrs. Whitman on her homeward trip, set out again for The Dalles Mission station. Descending the Willamette by canoe, they made a short stop at Fort Vancouver, whence they proceeded by the Columbia. The Cascades were portaged in safety although continual rain made traveling unpleasant, and they reached The Dalles on Saturday evening, October 7, 1843.

While at Wascopam Jason Lee wrote the Secretary of his Mission Board this long letter, hitherto unpublished, which discloses the serious problems confronting him during these autumn days. The letter was concluded on board the brig *Pallas* at the mouth of the Willamette on Friday night, October 27.

Wascopam, Oct. 13, 1843.

Rev. and Dear Sir:

Yours bearing date of January 3, 1843, came to hand some three weeks since, by the Brig *Pallas*, and that of March 15 '43 by the foremost of the Emigration Party, last Saturday evening.

They were perhaps the more highly prized being the only ones received by these favorable opportunities. I suppose the *Pallas* will sail

¹⁵ Narcissa Whitman letter to her father, dated April 12, 1844, *Oregon Pioneer Association Transactions for 1893*, pp. 59, 60.

for Oahoo in a few days, and hope to be able to prepare some sort of a communication for you before she leaves, but whether I shall be able to write *half* what you will expect or not, and carry it down in time for that conveyance is more than I can now say.

I am sorry to learn that the Board has been so deeply afflicted and so greatly disappointed on account of my *real* or *supposed* delinquencies; and I will not conceal from you that I have a hope, (notwithstanding the severity of yours,) that some facts communicated last March will satisfy the Board that they required of me what it was not in my power to give. I think I stated to the Board that I was not sufficiently acquainted with Bookkeeping to enable me to report intelligibly the fiscal state of this Mission. And I will now say that there was not a hint when I was in New York that any such thing would be required of *me*,—so far from it, that the constant talk was that the Board would send a "Steward to take *charge* of the fiscal affairs of the Mission," as Dr. Bangs said in a meeting of the Board which I attended.

I think I did what I could to have the desired report, prepared at an earlier date, but I have no censure to pass upon any one. I know Bro. Abernethy has reasons satisfactory to himself, and I know not but they ought to satisfy others. When I call to mind what I have passed through since I returned to Oregon—the excitement made by Dr. White, the protracted sickness of my Dear companion, and her final separation from me by Death,—my own state of health,—the strange and unexpected and unparalleled, and in my opinion, most unreasonable and unaccountable course of our Missionaries who have, without scarcely making an effort at all, gone home exclaiming nothing can be done, for there is nothing to do,—the consequent derangement of our plans,—the discouraging influence *these* have upon those that remain,—the great amount of *sickness*, which I have mentioned in almost every letter (which you do not seem to take into the account, but would have the *returns* as if all had been prosperous),—the fact that our saw mill did not run so early last winter by two months, as usual, that we were very unfortunate in the Mill getting out of repair,—the misfortune of four or five hundred dollars worth of lumber being consumed by fire—the amount of extra labor that has devolved upon me by reason of the sickness of others, they not being able to attend at all times to their business, etc. etc. I say when I call these things to mind I do not

wonder that I have not met the expectations of the Board in not sending minute and extended accounts of all that has transpired in this Mission.

I acknowledge my "delinquency" if you choose to call it so. I might have written more and done less of something else, perhaps more to the satisfaction of the Board, but I have done what I thought was for the best and I think as much as I am able to endure. I hope in future if my present state of health should continue to be able to meet the expectations of the Board as far as *my own* duty is concerned and I do not do it let your censure come, I doubt not I shall hear them with meekness and profit by them. But if you can consistant with your own duty, I hope you will spare my feelings and not complain of me for what never *was*, and *never can be my duty*. Surely you must see that if you are perplexed and embarrassed, I can be no less so!

Have not I embarked my *all* in this Mission to sink or swim with it? Have not I forsaken all and labored incessantly for the long years in the service of the Board, with no other object in view but to build up the Kingdom of Christ in this dark land? And how is it possible for me to see the professed friends of this Mission, turn its most bitter enemies and not feel more intensely than language can portray? I am not now able to give my views in reference to the various causes which have operated to influence our Missionaries to leave the field and to prevent the cause prospering in our hands; but if the Lord spare my life and give me health I here pledge myself to make an *attempt* to give you my views, in detail by the March expresses. I hope you will, as far as possible, suspend your judgment till that time, for I am persuaded that where there is so much self interest as there is in the case of those who have gone and are going home, the statements they may make will be liable to be all on one side. You speak of Brother Kone,—I think there is no cause for me to add anything to what I have previously written respecting him, *at present*. There was at the time the subject of the laymen's rights was first agitated a "strong predisposition to insubordination" *on that subject*, but it has long since passed away or perhaps lies dormant awaiting your answer. I am pleased with your views on this subject. I cannot say that any of our Missionaries have become "secular men," and yet I cannot say that none of them have "bought and sold and got gain." That is, they have bought cattle and these cattle have increased and they have sold the increase and some-

times some of the original, and bought again, etc., etc. I cannot say that I have approved of everything of this kind that has been done among us and yet every one seems to think that he has kept within bounds, and none I think have gone beyond, what some of your Preachers do at home. But I must pass, hoping to give you the details in my March communication, not of this subject only, but of several others, believing that nothing short of this, can be *satisfactory* to you. It is to me, perfectly unaccountable, how you can hold me delinquent in my accounts of disbursements to the amount of *100,000 Dollars*. Surely you ought not to be ignorant, that the money expended for the outfit, passage, etc. of all the reinforcements except the last did not pass through my hands and no account of the same ever rendered me. Surely I left with the Board every item concerning the outfit, passage, freight, etc., of the last reinforcement, which I think amounted to more than *half* of the *40,000 Dollars*, besides they always know the amount paid for salaries for they make their own estimate. But enough of this! I shall be happy if the account we have rendered should in any wise serve to convince the Board that "the state of things" is not quite so "irregular and confused" as they have been led to believe.

And I should not be surprised if the great day should reveal that the minds of those who have reported such things to you, were more "confused" and their course *more* "irregular" than the state of things which obtains, *even* in this Mission.

I assure you that "*order and system*" does *prevail* here, though there are insurmountable obstacles in the way of everything going *just like clock work* in this new and wilderness country.

With respect to amount appropriated, I can only say that I fear I have already drawn for a much larger amount, some to pay Missionaries who were going home and some to pay for goods purchased at the Islands, which Bro. Abernethy's book will show have yielded profit.

I would most cheerfully carry out the views and meet every wish of the Board, but how can I? Who can anticipate their wishes in these days of change. My own views of economy in expenditures, I freely confess, have not always been able to carry out. Circumstances of the case and the views of others, have urged me on faster than I wished, and yet these perhaps were the first to desire some change which would lessen the value of the improvements made. It is well known to the Board when we left N. York that they gave us to understand

that they not only intended to sustain those sent, but to send more if the success would warrant it, and it was with this view our locations were made. But so far from this, that even, many who came are gone. Take into the account the amount of sickness that I have from time to time reported—the consequent discouragement which would necessarily follow all these unlooked for changes and discouragements and then tell me if it is fair to expect that my fond hopes will be realized in reference to the amount which wanted to be raised in this country by the labors of the Missionaries. Besides, I never held out to the Board or anyone else, that there was the least prospect of the Mission sustaining itself so soon. I think the language I held was in substance the following; that, “if the Board would deal liberally with this Mission, that they would doubtless find it to be the most economical in the end. That in this way they would hasten that period when the Walamette Valley would not only sustain its own Missionaries but would be sending forth Missionaries to other places.”

This *was* my opinion *then*, and I have seen no cause to alter it yet. And on the supposition that Miller’s predictions are not true but that the world will stand a century yet, I shall venture an opinion; though it may subject me to the sneer of the faint-hearted, who have left the field and of the Board who are pressed some beneath the weight of a Debt of \$50,000, yet I say I shall venture an opinion; that, the Missionary cause will receive an amount in Dollars and Cents, more than equal to the entire amount of *principal*, and interest, of all that has been expended for Oregon; from *Oregon itself*; as the fruits of Missionary labor, over and above what it would have received had their been no Mission established here up to this time.

This, I am aware, may be *called* comfort to those who are looking for the annual conversion of thousands, but to *me* in these days of trial it *is* comfort. Especially, as so great a proportion of the money has necessarily been expended in getting to the country.

I have been thinking much on the subject a Special Agent being sent to this country, and am decidedly in favor of the measure.

I shall set down a few reasons why I would wish to see a special Agent here. First, I have learned with pain, that without knowing the causes of my “neglect,” the Board are very much dissatisfied with me on account of it, hence it is hardly supposable that any thing that I can say, will have its due weight with them. Secondly, I am con-

fidest the Board have received false impressions and will receive more from those who have left this field which can never be entirely removed, but by a candid report from one in whom they repose the most implicit confidence, and whose circumstances are such that he can be actuated by no other motive, save the glory of God in the exhibition of truth. Thirdly, if we write home for advice or instruction on any particular subject, we *never* get an answer; at least we have never been favored with one up to this date; though it is nearly three years since I wrote Bishop Waugh, by order of the Annual Meeting, requesting information, and instruction, on important points and have often requested instruction from the Board. True, I have information that some of my letters are received but no *dates* are mentioned.

Now should answers be received subsequent to this, such are the changes in the circumstances, and aspects of the Mission, during this long interim, that they would be comparatively of little use.

Hence, I would urge the necessity of sending, *at once*, a special Agent with plenary powers over every department of this Mission, with authority to say where, and what changes should be made, if any are required. In this way the confidence of the Board may be restored or at least the facts in the case may be endorsed by them.

If a man, coming directly from the Board, feeling all their embarrassments, and knowing fully their recent views, were to come here and see our operations, he might judge it best to close some of our secular concerns and make some satisfactory arrangement with some of the Laymen to become disconnected with the Mission.

I have time to say no more on this subject, except that I hope and pray that the Board will take speedy measures to *satisfy themselves*, in reference to this Mission for if we cannot have their *confidence*, and their *cooperation*, and *cheerful support*, the sooner the whole is wound up, or rather placed on some other footing, the better for all concerned. I mean this; if after examination here, it should be thought that this Mission is a burden to the Society, it would be best to wind it up; or, rather it would be preferable; to place it on some other footing which might be mutually satisfactory to the Board, and their Missionaries now in this field.

On one point, I have not the shadow of a doubt, viz., that the growth and spread, and rise, and glory and triumph of Methodism, in the Walamette Valley is destined to be commensurate with the

growth and rise and prosperity of our now infant, but flourishing and rapidly increasing settlement for such is the adaptation of Oregon's soil to the genius of Methodism and such fruit she has already produced in this country that I am persuaded she is destined to flourish here, in spite of all the chilling blasts of adversity that can be brought to bear upon her.

I am aware that it is an easy matter to slide into a contemning and complaining spirit, but as I have the best of reasons, just now, for having no fellowship with it, I beg not to be understood as complaining, or finding fault in what I am about to say.

I wrote you an account of my bereavement in the loss of my Dear Companion dated I think in March, 1842. Has that communication been received? If so, how is it that no allusion is made to it in yours? I cannot conceive it possible that intelligence should have been received and you withhold the fact from me.

Had you mentioned the dates of the letters received, I should then have known which had been received and which had been lost. Will you please have the goodness in future to mention dates?

No mention of the disposition of the "Bill of Objections" in the New England Conference—though the session to which I was cited had closed long before you wrote. You promised to write on the subject of Laymen's rights, in your next—it is received, but nothing on that subject.

Can you tell why it is that no answers are received to the questions we have been constrained to ask the Board from time to time, concerning how we were to act in particular cases.

I see the Mission of the A. B. C. F. M. [American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions] beside a large amount of their own papers has our C. A. and Journal [*Christian Advocate and Journal*] of a much later date than any we have received.

The requisition of the Board concerning Diaries I suppose was intended to include all, both Ministers and Laymen but one of the two Brethren here seem to think otherwise. If he is correct and the Ministers only keep Diaries, it is impossible for the views of the Board to be met,—for they can never keep diaries of the operations of the secular men.

I shall therefore endeavor to enforce my own sense of the resolution until further advice and if I should be wrong and you should get a

surplus of communications, I hope they will be filed in against past deficiencies.

Brig Pallas Mouth of the Walamette Oct. 27, 1843.

The above was written at Wascopam but the coming of the Emigrants and other business did not allow me time to proceed and I hoped to have time to finish after I had reached home, but as I know no chance of sending to the Brig hereafter, I shall send what I have after adding what little I can tonight. Since I wrote the above I have seen Dr. Whitman, who informs me that he saw Bro. Ames your western secretary, and Bro. Ames* informed him that I should be called home. Be it so. You sent me here I dispute not your right to call me away. Under existing circumstances, I should be greatly pleased to visit the states and yield myself up to the Powers that be and if I have done anything worthy of death, I trust I shall not refuse to die, having long since ceased to count my life dear unto myself. But after all I must say that I am fully convinced that there is a more excellent way. That is send an Agent. Should this reach you before you have taken your measures, I do think you will see the propriety and importance of sending one at once. It will be no more expensive and it will be a far more efficient and expeditory way of settling the entire business to the satisfaction of the Board. But in order to do this your Agent must come with power not only to examine into the state of affairs but to act in the premises. If he has to come here and return and report to the Board, and we await their action, and the return of their doings, the mission may undergo such changes in that time as to render their decision far less beneficial than those of an Agent on the spot.

I wish him to come with power to appoint another Supt. if he is not pleased with the present one without having to go home and consult the Board on the subject and so on other things. I *urge* this matter, for I feel a deep interest in it. Not that I fear the result, as far as I am personally concerned, but I frankly confess that I do not wish to *linger along* in the service of a Board who have so far lost their confidence in me as to talk of recalling me, and yet leave me to learn this from *strangers*. Brethren do I do wrong to be grieved when one of the secretaries of our Board allows himself to divulge to strangers what

* Edward R. Ames. His name appears as the Agent appointed to investigate the Oregon Mission at the February 4, 1843, meeting of the Mission Board.

is calculated to disparage me in their eyes, and what in all justice should have been kept to *yourselves* till I had been heard? Should this chance to reach you in time, I beg you, I implore you, send an Agent with the Emigrating Party in the spring across the Mountains or give me to understand that you are better satisfied with me, or allow me to come home and answer for myself, or discharge me here, or at least content yourselves with saying among yourselves, "Bro. Lee *will be* called home," and leave it there. Tell it not in Gath! Publish it in the ears of the missionaries of other Societies.

I have commenced a diary but cannot send it now until some opportunity appears to send it down after I go up.

I purpose to give you some account of the pledged work of the Lord among the settlers the passed season, but I think Bro. Hines has written and I am too weary to write more tonight. I suppose you will get from Bro. Daniel Lee an answer to the questions you have proposed to me, long before this will reach you, as he will visit New York.

I cannot close without saying that there is the best state of feeling among our people that has existed since our arrival in 1840 and the emigrants are perfectly surprised to see the religious state of this country. I propose to write more fully on this subject in the course of two or three weeks. My own soul for some weeks has been on the wing for glory and I have no doubt I shall soon get there.

Yours truly,

(Signed) JASON LEE.¹⁶

The last week of October, 1843, witnessed a memorable meeting at The Dalles Mission House, when the two famous pioneer missionaries of Old Oregon held a long and pleasant conference. Profoundly interested at this time in establishing title to his mission claims and in laying the foundations for a white Christian civilization to care for the needs of the incoming pioneers, Lee must have been a deeply interested listener to Whitman's account of the march of the "Great Emigration of 1843." Here about

¹⁶ Records of the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1701 Arch Street, Philadelphia. From 1833 to 1912 the Oregon Records were filed at the office of the Board of Foreign Missions, New York City. In 1912, the Oregon Mission Records were transferred to the Office of the Home Board at Philadelphia. Transcript kindly furnished author by E. D. Kohlstedt, Corresponding Secretary.

Wednesday, October 25, Jason Lee and Marcus Whitman gave each other the parting hand in what proved to be a final farewell. Mrs. Whitman, in the unguarded language of a private letter written soon after that meeting, pays this tribute to Jason Lee:

The Whitmans' tribute to Jason Lee.

When we parted with Mr. Lee we little thought that our first news of him would be that he had set his face toward his native land. But it was indeed so. He had gone again, and I should rejoice if dear father and mother would see him. He has shown me great kindness during my lonely state, and may the Lord reward him for it. He has been deeply afflicted in his domestic relations. He has buried two excellent wives and a little son. A little daughter of his last wife still survives to comfort and cheer him in his loneliness. She has gone with him to the States; and so has Rev. Mr. Hinds [Hines] and his wife.¹⁷

Of his farewell meeting with Jason Lee, Dr. Whitman wrote:

I have been at Waskopum [Wascopam], the station near the Dalles of the Methodist Mission, after Mrs. Whitman, whom I have brought this far on our way home. Mr. Jason Lee was there and had provided her with a passage to that place from the Willamette, where she had spent some time. Mr. Lee was in a most interesting religious state of mind. He had just come from a series of religious meetings among the settlers of the Willamette, wherein they had been greatly blessed by the conversion of many of the most hardened and the reclamation of backsliden professors. He is in no way discouraged himself, but says if any of their mission have made up their minds to leave he will encourage them to go home as soon as possible.¹⁸

On his homeward journey Lee invited an enterprising member of the Immigration of 1843, John Burch McClane, to share with him his canoe, and in later years McClane left this reminiscent reference to this voyage from Wascopam:

¹⁷ Narcissa Whitman to her father, April 12, 1844, *Transactions Oregon Pioneer Association for 1893*, p. 61.

¹⁸ W. A. Mowry, *Marcus Whitman* (New York, 1901), p. 265. In a letter from Fort Walla Walla, November 1, to Rev. David Greene, Secretary of the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, Mission House, Boston.

. . . at the Dalles I had an invitation from the Rev. Jason Lee, superintendent of the Mission, to get into his canoe, and ride down to Oregon City, which I accepted. That mission [the Old Mission Station] was about ten miles below Salem. He [Lee] was up at the Dalles, at that time to meet the emigration and see the mission there. . . . [Upon reaching Chemeketa later] I found Hamilton Campbell there as Superintendent of the School; W. W. Raymond boarded the scholars. There I found at the parsonage Gustavus Hines and his lady, and the Rev. Jason Lee Superintendent of the Mission boarded with them; and I likewise boarded there during that winter [of 1843-1844].¹⁹

Lee arrived at the mouth of the Willamette River about Friday, October 27. Here on board the brig *Pallas* he wrote the above quoted letter of October 16 to his Board. On Saturday, October 28, finding opportunity to communicate still further with his Board, he wrote two informative letters concerning the "Great Emigration of 1843," and other events to which he had been an eyewitness. A contemporary newspaper report of these letters reads:

LATE AND INTERESTING FROM OREGON

At the meeting of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church—held last evening—late and interesting communications were received from the Rev. Jason Lee, the superintendent of the Oregon Mission. The dates are the 28th of October [1843], and come via Pensacola. Three detachments of emigrants from the Western section of the United States had arrived at the Columbia river, some of whom had suffered severely by sickness, and want of provisions. One man in the last detachment had died on the way, and his widow and four children had arrived at the mission station on the Willamette [the Columbia].

The emigrants on their arrival at the Willamette Valley expressed their surprise at finding the religious state of the inhabitants so much better than they expected to find it. Many of them, after their arrival, had attended the ministry of the missionaries and had given evidence of a desire to change their mode of life. Some had joined the Church

¹⁹ John Burch McClane, *The First Wagon Train to Oregon*, MS. in Bancroft Library, pp. 5, 8-9.

on probation, and it was evident that their example had its effect on many others.

The Rev. Dr. Whitman, belonging to the American Board of Missions, who recently visited the United States, had returned to his charge on the Columbia, in good health.

An excellent state of Christian fellowship pervaded the entire family of the Methodist Mission, and the prospects of its success were never before so flattering. They have suffered both by sickness and death, but when these letters were despatched, Mr. Lee says, those who had been sick were recovering—Mr. Brewer [the mission farmer at The Dalles], is spoken of as having been dangerously ill.

The Rev. Mr. Perkins [missionary at The Dalles] had been assaulted by one of the Indians from the interior. The chiefs had assembled in council, assisted by Dr. White, the United States [sub-Indian] agent, and determined that the Indian should be publicly whipped, and he received twenty-five lashes [on October 9, 1843]. Mr. Perkins interceded for the prisoner and was anxious that he should be pardoned, but it was thought that prudence required an example.²⁰

But while these events were taking place in missionary circles, another series of events was reaching its culmination. On July 5, 1843, at a mass meeting of Willamette Valley settlers, the provisional government for Oregon was ratified. This was the first civil government organized west of the Rocky Mountains.

Affairs of the government. About two years before this action was taken, on February 7, 1841, an informal conference of Oregon settlers was held at Champoeg, principal settlement in the Willamette Valley, to discuss local civil government for Oregon. Jason Lee was elected chairman of this meeting, and delivered a short speech to the citizens gathered there. J. Q. Thornton, one of Oregon's earliest historians, has written this brief report of Jason Lee's part in this historic little folkmoot:

Rev. Jason Lee presided, and in a short speech in which his remarks

²⁰ The above letter was a front-page feature in the Springfield, Massachusetts *Daily Evening Republican*, March 27, 1844. Copied from the New-York *Commercial Advertiser*, March 21, 1844. The Secretary of the Board of Home Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Philadelphia, reported that the originals of these two letters are missing from the files of the Oregon Mission Records.

were seemingly carefully considered, and in a manner which indicated that he felt oppressed by the grave responsibilities of the hour, he advised the selection of a committee for the purpose of drafting the constitution and code of laws for the government of the settlement south of the Columbia.²¹

By 1843, however, Jason Lee's political acumen made him realize that a local provisional government was not the direction where lay Oregon's true interest, and in the extended struggle for the establishment of American control over Old Oregon south of the Columbia, he was for long a central figure. It will not be amiss to delay a bit at this point in our missionary narrative to tell a little of the political service rendered by this missionary leader to his native land and to the land of his adoption.

When Jason Lee and his first company of missionaries first journeyed to the Far Northwest, the Oregon country was being administered under what was known as the Joint Occupancy agreement arranged between Great Britain and the United States, which was virtually an extension, through the Convention of 1827, of the Treaty of 1818. The so-called Boundary Controversy, as a political issue, covering as it did nearly a half century of time, came only slowly to hold the attention of the American people, and received but an indifferent, uneven interest on the part of the Federal legislators. Jason Lee played a statesman's part in concentrating the nation's concern upon this Northwestern empire. As early as 1837 an American Oregon was to him a vital, burning matter.

Slacum's memorial. Nor was he alone in this conviction. The Methodist missionaries in the Willamette Valley had for some time been actively at work to secure the protection of the United States Government for Oregon.²² Their first efforts bore fruit

²¹ J. Quinn Thornton, Oregon Pioneer Association, *Transactions*, 1875, p. 50. The fundamental documentary work on Lee's early activities for a Provisional Government is LaFayette Grover (comp.), *The Oregon Archives* (Salem, 1853), pp. 5-38.

²² Evidence of this may be found in the petitions or memorials that were sent to Congress. Two such were prepared and sent, not including the Shortess petition of 1843.

in the form of a memorial setting forth this desire, information for which was furnished by both the French and American settlers in the valley. When Lieutenant Slacum left Oregon in January, 1837, he soon began the preparation of his Memorial, and on December 18, 1837, presented a full report of his Oregon expedition to the United States Congress. This report aroused a deep interest in the country he described and encouraged the efforts of Senator Lewis Linn and others to persuade Congress to extend its protection over the jointly occupied area.²³ Lee was the central figure in furnishing Slacum with first-hand information for his Oregon memorial and was the earliest resident to coöperate with an official of the Federal Government in a program for the Americanization of Oregon.

But even more effective than this memorial as a plea for the extension of American jurisdiction over Oregon was the Settlers' Petition drawn at the little log mission house on the Willamette on March 16, 1838. This famous pioneer document was inspired by Jason Lee and drafted by Philip L. Edwards, a member of Lee's first mission party. It was signed by every member of the mission, by seventeen other American citizens, nearly the total number then in the country, and by nine French Canadians who desired to become American citizens. Lee carried this petition on horseback from Oregon to the Missouri frontier in a little trunk strapped to his horse's side. From Missouri to Washington, D. C., it was borne in safety over rivers, around the Great Lakes, over canals, and along the primitive stage routes of one hundred years ago. In late December, 1838, when Lee was meeting his missionary appointments at the Federal capital, he transmitted the memorial to Senator Linn,²⁴ who in turn presented it to the Senate on January 28, 1839, when it was ordered printed. Thus was accomplished Lee's second important political service to Oregon.

The Oregon memorial of 1838. This memorial was a

²³ Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 144; also "Slacum's Report on Oregon, 1836-1837," *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, XIII, pp. 175-224.

²⁴ E. A. Linn and N. Sargent, *Life and Public Services of Lewis F. Linn* (New York, 1857), p. 224.

clear, well-written statement of the value of the Oregon country. In it Congress was urged to assert its rights over the distant region. One of its stirring paragraphs reads:

Our interests are identified with the country of our adoption. We flatter ourselves that we are the germ of a great state, and are anxious to give an early tone to the moral and intellectual character of its citizens. We are fully aware, too, that the destinies of our posterity will be intimately affected by the character of those who emigrate to the country. The territory must populate. The Congress of the United States must say by whom. . . . By the reckless and unprincipled adventurer, by the Botany Bay refugee; the wanderer from South America; the deserting seamen; or by our own hardy and enterprising pioneers.²⁵

A clear statement of the favorable commercial position of Oregon was made, and its relation to a future commerce with the Orient and with South and Central America explained. California, with its Golden Gate, was, at this time, a sleepy Mexican province and all of our Western possessions, save those in Oregon, were landlocked. But Oregon fronted the broad Pacific and looked out southward and westward upon destinies unknown. After this statesmanlike presentation of the economic resources and commercial advantages of Oregon, a vigorous appeal was made that "the Government of the United States take formal and speedy possession."²⁶

This memorable pioneer document is deemed of sufficient interest and historical importance to justify its reproduction in full:

January 28, 1839.

To the honorable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America:

The undersigned, settlers south of the Columbia River, beg leave to represent to your honorable body:

²⁵ *Congressional Globe*, VII, p. 141; J. Henry Brown, *Brown's Political History of Oregon* (Portland, 1892), pp. 54-56. The statement frequently appears that an Oregon settlers' memorial, framed as early as 1837, was given Slacum to present to Congress. Careful search in Federal departments at Washington, D. C., fails to discover such a document. See Lee and Frost, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 144.

²⁶ *Congressional Globe*, VII, p. 141.

Fertile and Attractive Region.—That our settlement began in the year 1832, and has hitherto prospered beyond the most sanguine expectations of its first projectors. The products of our fields have amply justified the most flattering descriptions of the fertility of the soil, while the facilities which it affords for rearing cattle are, perhaps, exceeded by those of no country in North America. The people of the United States, we believe, are not generally apprized of the extent of valuable country west of the Rocky Mountains. A large portion of the territory from the Columbia River, south, to the boundary line between the United States and the Mexican republic, and extending from the coast of the Pacific about two hundred and fifty or three hundred miles to the interior, is either well supplied with timber or adapted to pasturage or agriculture. The fertile valleys of the Wallamette and Umpqua are varied with prairies and woodland, and intersected by abundant lateral streams, presenting facilities for machinery. Perhaps no country of the same latitude is favored with a climate so mild. The winter rains, it is true, are an objection; but they are generally preferred to the snows and intense cold which prevail in the northern parts of the United States. The ground is seldom covered with snow, nor does it ever remain but a few hours.

Commercial Advantages.—We need hardly allude to the commercial advantages of the territory. Its happy position for trade with China, India, and the western coasts of America will be readily recognised. The growing importance, however, of the islands of the Pacific is not so generally known and appreciated. As these islands progress in civilization, their demand for the produce of more northern climates will increase. Nor can any country supply them with beef, flour, &c., on terms so advantageous as this. A very successful effort has been recently made at the Sandwich islands, in the cultivation of coffee and the sugar cane. A colony here will, in time, thence easily derive these articles and other tropical products, in exchange for the produce of their own labor.

Should Take Speedy Possession.—We have thus briefly alluded to the natural resources of the country and to its external relations. They are, in our opinion, strong inducements for the Government of the United States to take formal and speedy possession. We urge this step, as promising to the general interests of the nation; but the advantages it may confer upon us, and the evils it may avert from our posterity, are incalculable.

Dependence upon Hudson's Bay Company.—Our social intercourse has thus far been prosecuted with reference to feelings of honor, to the feeling of dependence on the Hudson's Bay Company, and to their moral influence. Under this state of things, we have thus far prospered; but we cannot hope that it will continue. The agricultural and other resources of the country cannot fail to induce emigration and commerce. As our settlement begins to draw its supplies through other channels, the feeling of dependence upon the Hudson's Bay Company, to which we have alluded as one of the safeguards of our social intercourse, will begin to diminish. We are anxious when we imagine what will be—what must be—the condition of so mixed a community, free from all legal restraint, and superior to that moral influence which has hitherto been the pledge of our safety.

Germ of a Great State.—Our interests are identified with those of the country of our adoption. We flatter ourselves that we are the germe of a great State, and are anxious to give an early tone to the moral and intellectual character of its citizens. We are fully aware, too, that the destinies of our posterity will be intimately affected by the character of those who emigrate to the country. The territory must populate. The Congress of the United States must say by whom. The natural resources of the country, with a well-judged civil code, will invite a good community; but a good community will hardly emigrate to a country which promises no protection to life or property. Inquiries have already been submitted to some of us, for information of the country. In return, we can only speak of a country highly favored by nature. We can boast of no civil code. We can promise no protection but the ulterior resort of self-defense. By whom, then, shall the country be populated? By the reckless and unprincipled adventurer—not by the hardy and enterprising pioneer of the West; by the Botany Bay refugee; by the renegade of civilization from the Rocky mountains; by the profligate deserted seamen from Polynesia; and the unprincipled sharpers from Spanish America. Well are we assured that it will cost the Government of the United States more to reduce elements so discordant to social order, than to promote our permanent peace and prosperity by a timely action of Congress. Nor can we suppose that so vicious a population could be relied on in case of a rupture between the United States and any other Power.

Whites and Indians.—Our intercourse with the natives among us,

guided much by the same influence which has promoted harmony among ourselves, has been generally pacific but the same causes which will interrupt harmony among ourselves will also interrupt our friendly relations with the natives. It is, therefore, of primary importance, both to them and us, that the Government should take energetic measures to secure the execution of all laws affecting Indian trade and the intercourse of white men and Indians.

Confidence in Federal Government.—We have thus briefly shown that the security of our persons and our property, the hopes and destinies of our children, are involved in the objects of our petition. We do not presume to suggest the manner in which the country should be occupied by the Government, nor the extent to which our settlement should be encouraged. We confide in the wisdom of our national legislators, and leave the subject to their candid deliberations. And your petitioners will ever pray.

March 16, 1838.

J. S. [L.] Whitcomb	Xavier Ludevant [Laderout]
James A. O'Neal [O'Neil]	T. J. Hubbard
J. M. Bates	Samuel G. Campbell
Wm. Canning	John P. Edmunds [Pickernell]
John B. Deporles [Desportes]	Elijah White
his X mark	Calvin Tibbets [Tibbetts]
Joseph Gervais, his X mark	William Johnson
Felix Hathaway	Henry Wood
S. H. Smith	Elisha Ezekiel
Ewing Young	Daniel Lee
P. L. Edwards	H. K. W. Perkins
W. H. Willson	Joseph Delord [De Lor]
W. J. Hainhust [Hauxhurst]	Pierre Billique
Jason Lee	André Picord
Cyrus Shepard	Joseph Delozhe [Deloze]
Alanson Beers	John [Jean] B. Perault [Perrault]
David Leslie	Ellienne Lucia [Étienne Lucier]
Charles Rae [Roe]	John Turner ²⁷
John Rowling	

²⁷ *House Report 101*, H. R. [Supplemental Report] Appendix H., 25 Cong., 3 Sess., pp. 4, 5, 6. To simplify the reading, the author has introduced the above headings.

Lee's letter to Representative Cushing. Representative Caleb Cushing,²⁸ member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, requested Lee, as an actual resident for nearly four years of the jointly occupied area, to send him definite information concerning that remote region. He desired specific facts concerning the total population of Oregon, the classes that comprised it, and the objects of Lee's Mission. Lee's reply is an historic utterance and deserves extended mention.²⁹

The number of persons connected with the Mission, he stated, was forty-five, but the contemplated reinforcement of the coming autumn would bring the total to seventy. His estimate proved to be a conservative one, as the *Lausanne* group actually increased the Lee Methodist Mission population to seventy-seven. In 1839, wrote Lee, there were sixteen persons in Oregon representing the American Board. He estimated that there were forty-five settlers in the Willamette Valley, with Indian wives and half-breed children, and ventured the prediction that the spring immigration of 1840 would bring twenty additional settlers from the Eastern states. He declared that one object of the Methodist Mission was to improve the condition of the Indians west of the Rocky Mountains.

In the closing paragraphs of his letter, Lee explained to Cushing what had come to be another main object of his Oregon

²⁸ Caleb Cushing, Oregon's congressional friend, was a well-known public man, and a member of the maritime firm of Cushing and Company. His home was in Newburyport, and Lee, on his Washington, D. C., and Newburyport visits in 1838 and 1839 was successful in interesting this company in the possibilities of profitable trading relations with Oregon. In 1840, Captain John H. Couch, a representative of the Cushings, arrived in Oregon on the brig *Maryland*. Here he undertook to lay the foundations of future maritime trade, based mainly on the salmon industry. Attracted by the economic opportunities of the new region, Couch returned to Oregon in 1842 on the Cushing brig *Chenamus*, and later became one of Oregon's prominent residents. He established a land claim on the site of the city of Portland and gradually built up a good-sized fortune. His Portland residence was one of the earliest structures erected in what is now the attractive metropolis of Oregon. Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 221 and *passim*; Joseph Gaston, *Portland, Oregon; Its History and Builders* (Chicago, 1911), II, pp. 374-376; Lewis and Dryden, *Marine History of the Pacific Northwest* (Portland, Oregon, 1895), p. 19.

²⁹ *H. R. Report No. 101*, 25 Cong., 3 Sess., pp. 3, 4.

missionary enterprise; namely, to promote the peopling of Oregon with permanent white settlers. The letter is a masterly statement that reveals a statesman's grasp and foresight. It is reproduced in full:

Middletown, (Conn.,) *January* 17, 1839.

Sir: In compliance with your request, I send you, herewith, a brief statement of our enterprise in Oregon, and of the prospects and wants of the country.

We have now in our mission in Oregon, of all ages and both sexes	25 persons
We are about to reinforce the mission with, say	45 more
Total	70
Attached to the mission of the American Board	16
Settlers going out from the Western States in the spring, missionaries and others, say	20
In addition, there are about 45 men in the country, settled as farmers, most of them married to Indian women, and some of them with children full grown	45
	—
Making in all,	151
	—

The greater portion of those attached to the Methodist mission are farmers, mechanics, teachers, and physicians. The exclusive object of the mission is the benefit of the Indian tribes west of the Rocky mountains. But to accomplish this object, it is found necessary to cultivate the soil, erect dwelling-houses and school-houses, build mills, and in fact, introduce all the necessaries and helps of a civilized colony; and this more especially, as one of the principal means relied upon for the improvement of the natives is the establishment of extensive manual labor schools for Indian children and youth.

It is believed that, if the Government of the United States takes such measures, in respect to this territory, as will secure the rights of the settlers, most of those who are now attached to the mission will remain as permanent settlers in the country, after the mission may no longer need their services. Hence it may be safely assumed that ours, in connection with the other settlers already there, is the commencement of

a permanent settlement of the country. In view of this, it will be readily seen that we need two things at the hand of Government, for our protection and prosperity:

First. We need a guarantee from Government that the possession of the land we take up, and the improvements we make upon it, will be secured to us. These settlements will greatly increase the value of the Government domain in that country, should the Indian title ever be extinguished. And we cannot but expect, therefore, that those who have been pioneers in this arduous work will be *liberally* dealt with in this matter.

Secondly. We need the authority and protection of the Government and laws of the United States, to regulate the intercourse of the settlers with each other, to protect them against the peculations and aggressions of the Indians, and to protect the Indians against the aggressions of the white settlers.

To secure these objects, it is not supposed that much of a *military* force will be necessary. If a suitable person should be sent out as a civil magistrate and governor of the territory, the settlers would sustain his authority. In proof of this, it is only necessary to say that almost all the settlers in the Wallamette valley have signed a memorial to Congress, praying that body to extend the United States Government over the territory.

It is especially desirable that the introduction of ardent spirits into the country should be prevented. These, as all know, are ruinous to the white man and the Indian. The temperance movement in the settlement you are already apprized of. *Now*, the settlers do not desire the importation or manufacture of spirits; and if the mercenary and evil-minded are prevented from introducing them, the natives and the emigrants will be saved from this desolating scourge.

You are aware, sir, that there is no law in that country to *protect* or *control* American citizens. And to whom shall we look, to whom *can* we look, for the establishment of wholesome laws to regulate our infant but rising settlements, but to the Congress of our own beloved country? The country will be settled, and that speedily, from some quarter; and it depends very much upon the speedy action of Congress what that population shall be, and what shall be the fate of the Indian tribes in that territory. It may be thought that Oregon is of little importance; but, rely upon it, *there* is the germ of a great State.

We are resolved to do what we can to benefit the country; but we are constrained to throw ourselves upon you for protection.

I am, sir, with great respect, yours, truly,

JASON LEE.³⁰

HON. C. CUSHING.

In order to round out this story of Oregon's determination to become a part of the United States, a brief account is given of the third Oregon memorial to Congress, the David Leslie Petition of 1839.

During the autumn of 1839, while Lee was concluding his three Eastern and Southern missionary tours, a significant political event was being consummated at his remote mission house. David Leslie, acting superintendent of the Willamette Mission during Lee's absence and Lee's close and trusted friend, placed in the hands of Thomas J. Farnham Oregon's second memorial. In this document loyal Americans pleaded for the termination of British and Hudson's Bay control over Oregon and lauded the economic possibilities and general attractions of the land of their adoption. They "prayed" for the immediate extension of American jurisdiction over Oregon and for its creation as a territory. This vigorous and patriotic document Farnham carried to Washington, D. C., and on June 4, 1840, it was presented to the United States Senate by that stalwart friend of Oregon, Lewis F. Linn.

To Jason Lee, then, belongs the distinction of having been the leading figure in the framing and submitting of Oregon's first memorial. Equally to his credit is the honor of having written, to become a part of Caleb Cushing's scholarly congressional report, of which 10,000 copies were printed, one of the really effective letters which helped to win the great Pacific Northwest for the United States. Deserving of remembrance, also, is the spirited action of his distant colleagues, who, voicing the sentiment of their absent leader, presented their plea for an American Oregon to "The Honorable Senate and House of Representatives in Congress assembled."

³⁰ Jason Lee letter to Caleb Cushing. *House Report, No. 101, [Supplemental Report] Appendix H, H. R. 25, Cong., 3d Sess., pp. 3, 4.*

CHAPTER XIII

LEE DETERMINES AGAIN TO GO EAST

Misrepresentation and misunderstanding. After Lee's return from his Wascopam voyage in early November, 1843, for several reasons he decided to make another journey East. His leading purpose, no doubt, was a desire to hold a personal conference with his Mission Board. His letters to his board written during the years 1842 and 1843 show that he was aware that the Board of Managers of his Missionary Society was not sympathetic. He was also conscious that reports from disaffected returning missionaries such as Dr. Elijah White, Rev. W. W. Kone, and Dr. John P. Richmond could not be other than damaging to the Oregon Mission and its superintendent, and he hoped that a personal conference might regain for him the unwavering support he had enjoyed up to 1840.

Lee was likewise convinced that the home office of his Missionary Society, situated on the opposite side of a vast continent, could not possibly understand the new Oregon missionary problems, nor realize that, in the valley of the Willamette, a declining Indian race had been supplanted by a bustling crowd of American pioneer settlers. Furthermore, the joint occupancy convention of 1827 was soon to be terminated by Congress, and Lee felt that, as an Oregon resident and the informed head of the Oregon Methodist Mission, he was in a position to present effectively the arguments in support of valid land titles for his several mission claims before the proper congressional officials. It was important, in view of all these conditions, that his board at New York City should be made aware of the immense future value of their fertile Willamette Valley land properties.

Lee also hoped to obtain an endowment from Congress for his Indian Manual Labor Mission School and, as well, a federal

appropriation for the Oregon Institute. This little school was the only institution in the Oregon country which made provision for the higher education of white children. With the constantly increasing influx of settlers, such an institution would offer the opportunities for higher education certain to be demanded by the new settlers from the Eastern States.¹

Passage was therefore engaged for Lee and his only daughter, Lucy Anna Maria Lee, now nearly two years old, on the English bark *Columbia* which, early in 1844, was to sail from Vancouver for the Sandwich Islands. Among his fellow passengers were the Rev. Gustavus Hines, his wife, Mrs. Julia Hines, and child.²

Last days. Just at dusk on a late November evening in 1843, Jason Lee bade farewell to his Chemeketa friends and associates. At Fort Vancouver he visited Dr. McLoughlin. After the necessary business incident to his departure had been transacted and the farewells had been spoken to Fort Vancouver friends, Jason Lee on December 11 began his second journey to "The States."³

The Lee party descended the Columbia River in canoes, and arrived at Fort George at noon on December 19, 1843. Mr. Birnie received them cordially and entertained them until the following day. On December 20, J. L. Parrish conveyed Lee and his party in his large mission canoe to the Clatsop Mission house. Here they were the guests of the Parrish family. On December 21, a notice from Captain Humphries, of the *Columbia* was received, stating that the vessel had arrived at Fort George. This announcement meant the abrupt termination of Lee's pleasant visit with the Parrishes. In a cart belonging to the mission the party traveled as far as the river, where Parrish overtook them and transported them in his canoe across Young's Bay to Fort George. On Sunday,

¹ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 282-293.

² Another member of Lee's party was John Ricord, a tall, commanding, and somewhat pompous New York State attorney, who had recently arrived in Oregon as a member of the immigration of 1843. During the autumn of 1843, Ricord had served as legal adviser to Rev. A. F. Waller at Willamette Falls in connection with Waller's controversy with Dr. McLoughlin over land claims at and near the site of the Falls. Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, pp. 211, 212; F. V. Holman, *Dr. John McLoughlin*, pp. 107, 108; and the present work, Appendix III.

³ Hines, *Missionary Expedition to Oregon*, pp. 192, 193.

December 24, Lee was again the guest of his old Hudson's Bay Company friend, James Birnie. On Christmas Day he boarded the *Columbia*, and on December 26 the ship dropped down to Baker's Bay to await a favoring breeze that would carry them safely across the bar at the mouth of the Columbia. They were forced to lie at anchor in the bay for over a month because of a strong southeast wind and storms which delayed departure. At last, on February 3, 1844, after much difficulty, the bar of the Columbia was crossed and Jason Lee took what proved to be his last look at the receding shores of Oregon.⁴

Sandwich Islands. After a voyage of twenty-four days the headlands of the island of Maui were sighted. Ocean gales of unusual violence for that season and latitude had retarded their passage. On the morning of February 27 the island of Oahu was reached, and the trade winds safely wafted the ship past Diamond Head into the shelter of Honolulu Bay. Shortly after casting anchor here, Dr. Ira L. Babcock, the former Willamette Mission physician, came aboard the ship. He had been in Honolulu for his health since September, 1843, but was on the eve of returning to Oregon to resume his missionary duties. He invited Lee and the Hines family ashore, and conducted them to his temporary residence, the house of John Colcord, where Lee lodged during his unexpectedly brief Honolulu stay.⁵

Lee superseded by Rev. George Gary. At Honolulu Lee was astounded to learn that, without a hearing by his board, he had been superseded as Oregon Mission superintendent by the Rev. George Gary, of the Black River Conference, New York. Lee received this startling news from Dr. Babcock, who also informed him that the Rev. Mr. Gary was already on his way to Oregon by the usual ocean route, around Cape Horn. On Tuesday, February 27, the day of Lee's arrival, a hurried, anxious conference was held at the house of John Colcord, participated in by Jason Lee, Gustavus Hines, and Dr. Babcock. The decision finally reached was that Jason Lee should continue his journey to the United States.

⁴ Hines, *Missionary Expedition to Oregon*, pp. 196-198.

⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 202, 203.

Alone to the United States. The next problem was to obtain transportation to New York City. From the acting American consul, William Hooper, Lee learned that no vessel would be leaving the Sandwich Islands for the United States for several months. The consul informed him, however, that a small schooner, belonging to the Hawaiian Government, was leaving Honolulu for Mexico the following day [February 28, 1844]. This vessel, the *Hoa Tita*, could accommodate only one passenger. With the stoical manner that characterized the man, Jason Lee decided to take advantage of the opportunity open to him for an early return to the United States. With measureless grief, he said what proved to be a last farewell to his only daughter, Lucy Lee, and on February 28, 1844, sailed from Honolulu for the coast of Mexico.⁶

Jason Lee's will. Before embarking on the *Hoa Tita* and while still at the "Port of Honolulu," Jason Lee, on February 28, 1844, made his will. The will is carefully drawn and reflects the caution and deliberate nature of the testator. This interesting document consists of six provisions and a codicil. The will and codicil were both witnessed by Dr. Ira L. Babcock, Willamette Mission physician, and Dr. W. J. Bailey, a resident of the Willamette Valley. Lee selected as the administrators of his estate Alvin F. Waller and Gustavus Hines. Waller was to administer that portion of Lee's estate located in Old Oregon; Hines was to be the executor of Lee's property situated east of the Rocky Mountains.

Specific reference is made to the appointment of a guardian for Lee's two-year-old daughter, Lucy Anna Maria Lee. In his will, Lee appointed two guardians, George Abernethy and Gustavus Hines, but in the codicil, also drawn at Honolulu and dated February 28, 1844, and listing the names of the same witnesses, he revoked the appointment of Abernethy as guardian and confers the guardianship "solely upon said Gustavus Hines, and in no event upon the said George Abernethy."

Lee's careful plans for the education of his daughter find expression in this intensely "human" provision:

[His executors shall use the proceeds of his estate] "to instruct her

⁶ Hines, *Missionary Expedition to Oregon*, p. 204.

in all the useful and ornamental branches of education suited to her sex." ⁷

Readable, too, is the provision which makes a specific reference to the items that constituted his entire property, which Lee declared to be about \$2,500, and consisting of cattle, horses, furniture, promissory notes, and other chattels. The clause reads:

For the guidance of my executor in executing this my last Will, I make known and declare that at the day of the date hereof [February 28, 1844] I am possessed in absolute property, and in my own right of a band of tame Cattle consisting of twenty-one in number, and of a Band of Horses consisting of twenty in number, which two several bands will be found running at large at or near the Wa[i]llamette Settlement, and some of which are branded with the Letters "JL," some with the letter "M"[ission] and some entirely unbranded, but all of which are well known and easily identified. Also that I am in like manner further possessed of Household Furniture, Promissory Notes and other chattels, Amounting in value to about the sum of Two thousand five hundred dollars, all of which will be found on the premises and in the buildings appropriated to the use of the Methodist Mission where I now reside, and in money in my actual possession. ⁸

Letter to Abernethy. After a voyage of nearly a month in southern Pacific waters Lee began this long, friendly letter to his close personal friend and colleague, George Abernethy, a future Governor of the Provisional Government of Oregon:

On Board the *Hooikaika* [*Hoa Tita*]
Lat 34 dg N. Long 130 W
Mar. 21, 1844

My dear Bro.

I have been 2 or 3 days nearer you, but we are doing our best to get away to the southward at the present, but the wind having failed us, we are tossing about here to no purpose. The voyage from Oahu has

⁷ First will and codicil of Jason Lee in Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon, p. 13.

⁸ First will and codicil of Jason Lee in Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon. Lee made a second will at Stanstead, on February 20, 1845, only twenty-two days before his death. His second will contains several new provisions and is reproduced in full in Appendix V.

thus far been as pleasant as we could expect, providing always we look for head-winds and calms. Before you receive this Bro. Hines will have told you of all that led to our separation, viz., that there was only room for me, and I assure you we have little to spare.

This is the first time I have taken pen since I left Oahu, and I write principally to say that I arranged with Ladd to pay Bro. Hines Seven Hundred Eighty Two $61/100$ Dollars cash, including premium at 15 per cent amounting to Nine Hundred Dollars which you will please charge to his account on Mission books. I also paid the amount of the enclosed order, Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars, which you will charge to the account of Bro. Waller. I also paid Ladd Four Hundred Five $17/100$ dollars, adding 15 per cent Premium which he said was due him. I had no time to examine his books. He will of course explain all to you. I also drew an order on Ladd in favor of the H. B. Com. for One Hundred Eighty Two Dollars to be charged to the Mission. I wrote to Bro. Hines after I sailed requesting him to purchase a few things for James Bates [employee at Indian Manual Labor School, at Salem] and get the money from Ladd to pay for them. If my memory serves me, James included in the orders he gave me upon you Twenty Dollars to be spent at Oahu, and One Hundred to be spent in the States. But I was so unwell and confused, when I settled with you that almost all traces of that settlement have escaped my memory, and I find myself totally unable to recollect what disposition was made of his money. Neither do I remember how the Hundred Dollars order given me by Mr. Grey [W. H. Gray] was arranged. I think I have some faint recollection of the latter being included in the due bill you gave me upon the Board, but have not the slightest remembrance that James' was so included. It is a matter of some consequence to me to know if possible before I leave the States—and if you can help me in this matter by a reference to your books, you will oblige me by writing the first conveyance. Should I reach San Blas in safety, I may leave immediately with the Mail for Tepic, and have no time to write by this vessel after landing. I will therefore say that so far as I can now see I shall be compelled to pass on to the City of Mexico with guides whose language I do not understand, and shall be somewhat in danger of molestation from *Robbers*. Thank Heaven I have no perplexing fears. My health is good for *shipboard*, and I am cheerful, *somewhat*, thankful and happy.

I think I feel the same interest for the welfare of Oregon that I

have ever felt and my ardent prayer to the Almighty is that the labors of everyone of you all may be crowned with much fruit. Give my love to Sister Abernethy, and tell her that the friendship I have for her no language can describe, and my prayer is, that the Lord may give her contentment, and make her more and more useful. What would I give to know how you all are, at this moment, in Oregon. The Lord only knows whether I shall ever see half or any of you again. His will be done!

If you have anything to do with Ladd & Co. be on your guard, for I believe they intend to establish a great monopoly.

Mar. 29. N. Lat. 24°

Since writing the above I have found that James Bates' order of \$300.00 is put to my credit, or, at least, it is put in a list of credits in your hand in my little book. Whatever Bro. Hines may spend for James at Oahu, not exceeding \$25.00 you will please charge to me. If it exceed that let James pay. James wished me to request you to receive from Vancouver a watch I purchased of D. Lee and sold to him. The enclosed to Mr. Douglass [James Douglas, chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company] relates to the watch. If it is not received please make enquiries. Since the first date of this we have had fair wind and a pleasant run. This is the 31 day since we sailed and the joyful cry of Land O! is heard and we see the coast—distant 45 miles. Three days more we hope to stand on terra firma.

Pray for me. Farewell.^o

[The signature has been cut off]

George Abernethy Esqr.

Wallamette Falls

Oregon

At Sea 24 March 1844

Rev. Jason Lee

Rec'd 20 July/44

Ans'd 24 July/44

Letter to Waller. Three weeks after embarking on the *Hoa Tita* Jason Lee wrote Rev. A. F. Waller. In this letter, dated March 23, 1844, Lee says:

^o Lee to Abernethy, Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, pp. 32-34.

Hoaiikaika [*Hoa Tita*] Lat. 31 30'' N
N. Lon. 125 W. March 23, 1844.

My dear Bro.

The last note from Walamette represented you as low but convalescent, and I fondly hope that you were rapidly restored to health, and ere this have rejoiced over many souls brought to God through your instrumentality. The time spent in noble efforts to pluck sinners as brands from the burning will doubtless be looked upon, by the *dying* Missionary, with more satisfaction than any other portion of his life. How soon you, or I, may see that interesting hour, who can tell? Even this scrall may not reach your eye, till *time* with one, or both of us, shall be no more. Be that as it may, I hope to see you in a far more glorious world than this.

You will learn from Bro. Hines the reasons of his return, &c., and a great deal more news than I can give. My stay at Oahu was so short that I had not time to write a line to any one, and as I shall not have a moment to spare at San. Blass, I have summoned sufficient resolution to commence under all the disadvantages of being *at sea* in a schooner of 60 or 80 tons, and have several sheets under way. Today however I have a bad head-ache and have been most of the day in bed. But thoughts of my old *friends* has enabled me to overcome all obstacles, and if I *don't* "fetch away," I think I shall spoil several sheets of paper and leave on board for my friends. I paid Mr. Ricord Two Hundred and Fifty Dollars for you, and shall enclose your order to Br. Abernethy. You will hear of the Death of Mr. Lynn,¹⁰ and also that the prospect that the Congress will do anything for Oregon is small.

What the result of your land claim will be, of course, I can form no better opinion than when I left. But I have less hopes of effecting anything for the Mission more than to prepare the way for something to be done at the proper stage, that is whenever the Government shall be prepared to grant titles.

My successor in office may reach you before this gets to hand, and so far from wishing it otherwise I am inclined to think, that should it be so, it would be best for all concerned. In that case, you who remain will not be left in suspense, waiting for news from me, but be able at once to go forward under the sanction of the Board in accordance with their wishes; which will be much more pleasant for you. As to myself, I feel more and more pleased that I am on my way home.

¹⁰ United States Senator L. F. Linn, of Missouri, died October 3, 1843.

Beyond that, I cannot now see one inch, and yet I have but little solicitude, in reference to what will be my future destiny in this world. Oregon is the place of my choice, but if Providence orders otherwise, I trust I shall always be ready to say, not my will but thine, O God, be done.

I hope my Dear Bro. that I may depend upon hearing from you *in detail* all the important news, the first conveyance. Yes, I do trust I shall not be forgotten by those I have left behind, though I am aware you will have other business besides writing me.

My kind and christian regards to Sister Waller and all good Christians who know me. I long to hear how you are getting along with Dr.—, &c., and how the good cause is prospering. May the Lord bless all who have embraced his cause and keep them unto "that day."

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Mar. 27. We are fast approaching San. Blass, and in five or six days, with good wind, I hope to be among the Mexicans, but I fear their society will not be very edifying to me, as I scarcely understand ten words of Spanish. I shall soon learn enough for the most important purposes and, if the Robbers do not molest, I think I shall find the journey interesting, and if I had your love of journalizing, I might have something for the Public when I get home. I am nearly as ignorant of the route and the country I am to pass through as I was of the Rocky Mountains when I left home first. We have no book, or map, or any one who has penetrated a mile into the country, on board, and can learn nothing till we land. I trust the way will be opened, and that I shall reach home in safety. There I shall [find] long letters from Oregon. Shall I be disappointed?

Pray for me.

I am as ever,

Yours truly,

JASON LEE.

P. S. April 4

The latter part of our voyage has been much longer than anticipated, but the prospect now is that a few hours and I shall be on shore in a strange country, without a friend, or anyone that I have seen before, and not one in a thousand who can understand a word I say:

But I have no fears, all will be well.

Farewell, *farewell!* The Lord bless you.

J. LEE.¹¹

¹¹ Lee to A. F. Waller, Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, pp. 35-37.

On April 5, 1844, Jason Lee landed at San Blas, at that time the most important port on the west coast of Mexico. One day later, on April 6, he arrived at Tepic.

Letter to Hines. While in this quaint old Mexican city, Lee penned, in the calm environment of a quiet Sunday evening, and sealed in the office of E. Brown, the British Consul, a letter to his intimate associate, Rev. Gustavus Hines, in whose Oregon home Lee's daughter was then living. Lee's letter follows:

Tepic [Mexico] April 7, 1843 1844

My dear Bro.

I landed at San Blas 1 O'Clock A.M. the 5 Inst, and arrived here 9 A.M. the 6. Found myself greatly fatigued, but am now rested and in good health and spirits. All arrangements are made to start at 5 O'Clock in the morning. In four days I hope to be at Guadalajara [Guadalajara], thence in the Diligence to Vera Cruz by way of Mexico City, and if I get an opportunity at once from Vera Cruz I may be in N.Y. in 5 or 6 weeks.

I have seen some U.S. Papers as late as Feb. Great noise about Oregon but I fear nothing will be done this year of importance though negotiations will probably commence with Packingham [Richard Pakenham] the British Minister. The papers say large emigrations to Oregon this year. The President and his Council [Cabinet] went to see the Great Wrought iron Gun, recently invented. The Gun burst! Killed the Secretary of State¹² Sec. of War the inventor of the Gun and a great many more, so says the news by way of Havanna.

This is Sabbath evening, I am siting at the desk of [E.] Brown, Esq., British Consol, while he and all his family are gone to the Opera. This is the only note I shall send from here you will have the goodness to let my friends know my progress, and that there is in my opinion no danger from Robbers &c. The passage of the little one back entirely escaped me at Oahu but if the estimating Committee will not pay it, call on Bro. [Alanson] Beers, or for any other funds you may want for her. I do not wish her to be removed from Oregon before it is known whether I return or not. Sister Campbell¹³ has the keys to my chests, and Sister Hines can look at the few things I left and if she

¹² Secretary of State, Abel P. Upshur; Secretary of War, J. M. Porter.

¹³ Mrs. Hamilton Campbell.

finds anything she wants for herself or Lucy Anna, she can take them leaving a list of what she takes.

I could say some things that would be interesting to you about this country but time will not allow me to do it, you will therefore excuse, and Believe me as ever,

Yours Truly,

JASON LEE.¹⁴

Care Ladd & Co. Oahu.

Rev.

G. Hines

Walamette

Mexico. On Monday morning, April 8, "at 5 o'clock," Lee left San Blas, sweltering in its tropical April sunshine, and traveled by diligence to the Mexican city of Guadalajara. The Mexican diligence, the old-fashioned uncovered stagecoach, drawn by eight horses and mules, must have interested the much traveled and observant Oregon missionary. These stagecoaches ran on regular schedules over the *Camino Real* or King's Highway. Constructed by convict labor and paved with cobblestones, this highway in 1844 was already ancient. Lee¹⁵ now witnessed a tropical luxuriance that must have appealed to him as strikingly different from anything he had previously known. A four days' ride brought him to Guadalajara. This was the second city in Mexico with a population of approximately 100,000 souls. Here he was delayed by the Mexican authorities and subjected to much official annoyance. All letters and sealed packages in his possession were forcibly taken from him by the custom house officials and deposited in the post office. Lee states that the real object of the seizure was to frighten him into offering a \$100 bribe for the restoration of the letters. This dishonest attempt to extort money was "no go," according to the missionary.¹⁶

¹⁴ Lee to G. Hines, Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, pp. 38, 39.

¹⁵ For a map showing the *Camino Real*, see Herbert Eugene Bolton, *History of the Americas*, (N. Y., 1928), p. 20.

¹⁶ Lee learned after his arrival in Mexico City that the seizure of these letters and packages was wholly illegal since the letters and other written matter had not been written within Mexico nor addressed to any one residing in that country.

Lee left Guadalajara on April 12, 1844, reached the town of Lagos on the following day, and remained there until Monday morning, April 15. His stay at Lagos was unpleasant, since he had experienced several days of an annoying, although not serious, bilious disorder. A week of travel through the broad, level plains of the lake region, one of the most beautiful and productive areas in central Mexico, brought him to Mexico City, "this great city," concerning which he had "not time or courage to attempt a description."

Mexico City. When he observed the sights and sounds of this strange Aztec capital he encountered "all the inconveniences of a crowd, and yet I am alone."

Lee's frank and unguarded statements are contained in his letter to Reverend and Mrs. Gustavus Hines, written from Mexico City on Wednesday, April 24:

Mexico, April 24, 1844

My Dear Bro. & Sister.

I have addressed to each of you a letter since I left, the last to Bro. H. from Tipic [Tepic], both will reach you at the same time. When this will reach you I can form no idea. It will probably be some months on the coast, waiting for a passage to the Islands, and who knows how long there before it embarks for Oregon? By a note written to Bro. Abernethy you will have learned that I reached Guadalajara in safety, and that every sealed letter and package was forcibly taken from me by the Custom House Officers and deposited in Post Office. I find upon enquiry at headquarters here, that these letters, neither having been written in this country, nor directed to persons in it, they had no right to seize them, but the only satisfaction I could obtain was a promise that they should be forthcoming the first return mail, which will be a week after my departure. They will be forwarded to me at N.Y. by our Minister, perhaps with some expense, though I think not great. The postage for single letters across here is 50 cents, and as I had about 200, I suppose the real object of the seizure was to frighten me out of \$100, but it was *no go*. You can say to those concerned that their letters will probably reach their destination but a few weeks later than they would if they had not been seized.

Left Guadalajara on the 12 [April 12] and arrived at Lagos on the

13, greatly afflicted with the bilious colic, put up at the Diligence House, but could not find any one who spoke English or French, and hence I could get no medicine. I had left my pills accidently, and I had nothing but peppermint, of this I took freely but to little purpose for I suffered extremely till an American came in in the evening, who procured hot water for my feet and some oil. Fortunately we remained here over Sunday, and on Mon. I was able to proceed, though by being obliged to get up while in a state of extreme perspiration, I laid the foundation of a cold which has kept me almost constantly employed from that time to the present; but I am now much better for which I trust I am thankful, as it would be extremely dangerous to expose one's self to the Black Vomit of Vera Cruz, predisposed to take it. Tomorrow I leave for Vera Cruz, thence to N.Y. in the Packet, probably. The Diligence is frequently robbed between this and Vera Cruz, and this is almost certain to be the case if there is much money on hand. Sometimes they only leave the passengers their shirt and pants. I understand there is some Gentleman who will take an escort of soldiers, so there will be little danger this time.

Speeches about Oregon are *abundant* and *warm* in Congress, but I think nothing will be *done* till *diplomacy* has settled the line between E. [England] & U.S. Also much talk about the annexation of Texas, many for it, but the time is not yet. "*Easy*" times in the States. Money plenty, so report says.

Congress closes on the 27 May [First Session of twenty-eighth Congress closed June 17, 1844], so you see if I land in N.Y. I shall hardly get to Congress this year.

There are but few Americans here, all fortune hunters, not one takes a religious paper. The New Orleans Picaune [*Picayune* founded in 1837] is the only paper I have found here that I can read.

I am here in this great city, and you would like to know something about it, but really I have not time or courage to attempt a description. Should we meet again I will tell you many things, but there is much I can not learn for want of the language. The Government officers, from Sante Anna, the President, down, seem to be of the opinion of one of your N.Y. statesmen, viz.: "that the public is a goose, and he is a fool who does not pluck her."

The land is good, irrigation necessary in many places, crops abundant in the low country, two in a year. Wood very scarce. All the land in the hands of a few. The laborer gets 18 3/4 cents per day,

and corn enough to support him, which is his living. The great majority are poor, *very* poor, and there is no possibility of them ever being otherwise. The country contains some Six Millions, nearly one third Indians, who changed one set of religious forms for another, and for three centuries the servitude of their Chiefs, for the more offensive slavery of the insatiable Spaniard. Since the revolution I believe they have been treated as citizens.

My sheet is nearly full and I am not disposed to send many at 50 cents each in advance. I can't begin to tell how much I want to see Lucy Anna and Julia [daughter of Rev. and Mrs. Hines], and all of you, for when I go out I have all the inconveniences of a crowd, and yet I am *alone*. Does Lucy Anna talk about Papa? has Julia forgotten me?

Cape Horn! [prominent landmark on Columbia River] Yes my mind is nearly made up, but who can tell what a day may bring forth? If I reach home in safety, I think it will require but a short time to decide whether I return or not, and if I return, my stay in the States will not probably be long. I thank God I feel less solicitude for the future than I could have expected under the circumstances. Give my warmest love to all the friends. Tell them to live for God, and him *alone*.

Apr. 25. Bills on N.Y. are generally worth from ten to fifteen per cent [on the dollar], and yet I have great difficulty to get my Bills cashed on account of stragglng Americans having defrauded the Merchants by drawing Bills which were protested when presented. So you see the wicked do not cease to trouble in any part of this world. Have just succeeded in getting cash for my expenses, and have only time to remove to the Diligence Office to be in readiness to leave at 4 o'clock in morning.

Farewell. The Lord Bless you. Kiss the Little One often for *me*.

Yours truly, JASON LEE.¹⁷

Sister Hines tell Lucy Anna her Papa loves her very much and will come and see her as soon as he can. May the Lord spare us to meet again.

J. L.

Rev. G. Hines

Walamette, Oregon

Care of E. Brown Esqr. Tipic.

¹⁷ Lee to Hines, Oregon Historical Society. Manuscript Collection, pp. 40-43.

On to New York. After leaving Mexico City on April 26, Lee's stagecoach rumbled for about two hundred and fifty miles along the King's Highway, flanked by the maguey or century plant. He crossed the eastern mountain range, and descended into the hot, tropical coastal plain. Eight days of stage travel brought him to the hot and unhealthful city of Vera Cruz about May 4. Yellow fever, bubonic plague, and typhoid were a menace to the lives of all who passed through that port. Lee took passage on the first available mail packet ship bound for New Orleans. There he boarded an up-river Mississippi steamboat for the twelve-day voyage to Pittsburgh, where he arrived in mid-May, 1844. He crossed the Allegheny Mountains by stage, reaching his destination, New York City, on May 27, 1844. In this venturesome journey Jason Lee consumed five months in constant travel, and used almost every mode of transportation known to his day: the Chinook canoe, the ocean-sailing ship, a picturesque Hawaiian trading schooner, a Mexican diligence, a Gulf mail packet, a Mississippi steamboat, and an easily swinging old-fashioned stagecoach.¹⁸

Visits Washington, D. C. In New York, he found the General Conference of 1844 in session, but its entire attention was absorbed by the slavery question as represented by the Bishop Andrew case.¹⁹ The Missionary Board had no time for consideration of Oregon Mission business. At a meeting for another purpose, however, held in early June, the board suggested to Jason Lee that he visit Washington, D. C., and there present the mission land claims to the proper authorities.²⁰ Accordingly, Lee made a hurried visit to Washington, where he conferred with President John Tyler, who assured the missionary that an Oregon bill would undoubtedly

¹⁸ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 304, 305. For detailed information concerning Jason Lee's route across Mexico I am indebted to Dr. George Tays, of Mexico City, Mexico.

¹⁹ The Bishop James O. Andrew case resulted in the division of the Methodist Church and the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church South, in May, 1845. Edward Channing, *History of the United States*, 6 vols. (New York, 1897-1925), V, pp. 227, 228; A. B. Hyde, *The Story of Methodism* (Greenfield, Massachusetts, 1887), pp. 200-202.

²⁰ Lee to Gustavus Hines and wife, MS. Collection of the Oregon Historical Society, p. 65.

be passed in the near future and that the mission land claims would be respected.

Mission land claims. Lee ably presented the Oregon Mission's claims to heads of the various government departments and to leading members of Congress. In a conference with Oregon's stalwart senatorial champion, Thomas H. Benton of Missouri, Lee was supported in his contention that the mission land claims were valid, "reasonable and just and at a suitable time Congress must be memorialized,"²¹ a case made out, and presented to that body." While in Washington Lee also visited the office of Thomas Holdsworth Blake, the Commissioner of the General Land Office, and filed A. F. Waller's Oregon land claim. The General Land Office, created as early as 1812, was at the time of Lee's visit a bureau of the Treasury Department, but was soon (1849) to become a bureau of the Interior Department, under whose jurisdiction it now is.²²

Returning to New York the last of June, 1844, he wrote Mr. and Mrs. Gustavus Hines the following letter, setting forth in vivid detail his visit to the General Conference Sessions of 1844 and Washington, D. C.:

New York, July 1, 1844.

My Dear Bro. & Sister,

I arrived here May 27. Found the General Conference in session, and warmly debating the subject of Bishop²³ having become a slaveholder. A resolution finally passed (after more than two weeks' discussion) to this effect. It is the sense of this conference that Bishop Andrew cease to exercise the office of a Bishop till he ceases to be a slave holder. The South protested; and declared their people would force them to separate from the M. E. C. and it was finally recom-

²¹ Lee to Mission Board, Oregon Historical Society MS. Collection, p. 65.

²² Lee to Gustavus Hines and wife, Oregon Historical Society MS. Collection, p. 65. Letter from Thomas C. Howell, Acting Commissioner of the General Land Office; *Biographical Dictionary of the American Congress, 1774 to 1927*, p. 709; *Appleton's Cyclopædia of American Biography*, I, p. 285; A. C. McLoughlin, A. B. Hart, *Cyclopedia of American Government*, II, pp. 306, 307.

²³ James O. Andrew of Georgia.

mended to the Annual Conferences so to alter the 6th restriction rule of Discipline as to allow the south their pro rata of all the church property, if they find it necessary to separate. The New York conference has decided in favor of the alteration. There are differences of opinion about the final result.

I attended the Gen[eral] Con[ference] two weeks—did not attempt to get a meeting of the Board to hear me, but at a Meeting connected with Gen. Con. business, a resolution was passed for me to go to Washington, and I have but just returned. Met a very favorable reception there and there is every reason to expect that the land claimed will be fully and cheerfully accorded to us. The annexation of Texas to the Union has been the all absorbing question the better part of the Session,—the Administration hobby, but it has failed. War with Mexico was anticipated if Texas was annexed and great preparations were made, which have brought heavy anathemis upon the President [John Tyler]. An Oregon Bill will probably pass next session, but, if not next session, the settlers of Oregon may rest assured that one will pass soon it *cannot* be put off much longer. This is conceded, even by the *Opposition*.

There is a deep prejudice in this City against the Oregon Mission, and against myself, though I am treated with the utmost kindness and respect. I think your letter has done more than anything else to bring about this state of feeling. From your letter they seem to have got the following impressions,—that our sawmill [at Salem] sinks \$10 per day,—that our store [at Oregon City] makes “many” bad debts which will never be paid, that it is a great vortex swallowing up mission money,—that it would be “*infinitely*” better to send money—that goods can be got at Van.[couver] at *half* what we can sell for, that all our Kanakas [Hawaiian Island laborers] get ten dollars cash per month whether sick or well, and that they do not earn their board, a “numerous gang” at that, that the Indians are a “doomed race,” &c., &c., &c.

I no longer wonder that the Board should have acted as if they thought I had taken leave of my senses. This day I meet the Board, and only having been informed of the above state of things Saturday night, and this being Monday morning I have not made the least preparation, and as the Vessel in which I purpose to send this sails for Vera Crus at 12 A.M. I shall not be able to write any other letter to Oregon at this time which I greatly regret. I can say no more con-

cerning my future course than when I wrote you, a few hours may determine, but it will be too late for this conveyance.

I still think I shall return to Oregon though I am satisfied I could have much more personal enjoyment here, if duty did not call away, for I meet with the warmest reception everywhere. I shall write you again the *first* opportunity, which may be in a few days, and may reach you with this. The Missionary Soc. is no longer in debt. The country in a prosperous state, and a large amount of money could be raised for Mission. My health is good, and I am rejoicing in God my Savior, and feel perfectly willing that he should choose my course. I could and would fill several sheets, that would be interesting to you Oregonians if I had time. Being absent I did not know of the opportunity soon enough.

Please tell Bro. Waller that his claim is filed in the Office of the Commissioner General of the land office. This will probably secure his claim, though the supreme court will probably take no action till an Oregon Bill passes. I hope Bro. Gary is with you putting all right, so that the *management* of the O. Mission may no longer be an eyesore to the Missionary or the Board.

You cannot begin to conceive how much I want to see little Lucy Anna, Julia, Sister Hines and all of you. Tell Lucy Anna Papa loves her, and prays for her, wants to kiss her, and will come and see her as soon as possible. I cannot think of your leaving before I can let you know whether I return or not, and yet I feel myself compelled to say that should you do so, it is my desire that the beloved one should be left with Sister Abernethy.

Tell the Brethren and Sisters that I do most *deeply* sympathize with them, especially in their want of society, while I have abundance. It is my ardent prayer that God abundantly bless them all, and greatly prosper them in their work. There are thousands who deeply sympathize with [them] and I hope soon to put them in the way to convince you of it. The tone will soon be changed in reference to the O. Mission for it is about to take its proper place and will rise up upon a solid basis.

Excuse this scrawl for I write in the greatest haste. My warmest affections and kind remembrances to *all*.

Yours truly,
[Signed] JASON LEE.²⁴

²⁴ Letter from Rev. Jason Lee to Rev. Gustavus Hines and wife, Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, pp. 63-65.

Meets Mission Board. On July 1, 1844, Jason Lee met the Board of Managers of his Missionary Society. Dr. George Peck presided and Dr. Charles Pitman was corresponding secretary. Dr. Pitman announced that the purpose of the meeting was to give Mr. Lee an opportunity to make a statement in connection with his administration of the Oregon Mission.²⁵ The secret, unfounded charges made against Lee by dissatisfied members of the Oregon Mission, on the basis of which, without any investigation whatsoever, he was dismissed, were these: appropriation of mission funds for private speculation; misuse of mission funds; and failure to report concerning mission property.

Lee's statement to Mission Board. Jason Lee, in a calm, matter-of-fact manner, answered these charges in detail. His oral statement to the Board he later wrote out and it has been preserved.²⁶ This statement is an illuminating, historical document and is therefore here given (for the first time)²⁷ in full:

Special Meeting of Board, July 1, 1844.

Board met this afternoon at 4 o'clock, Dr. Peck called to the chair. The Rev. Jason Lee from Oregon opened with prayer. The minutes of the last meeting were read, approved and signed. The following members were present. Ministers, Dr. Peck, Dr. Pittman, Coles, Dempster, Jason Lee, Bigelow, Lane, Roberts, of New Jersey, Leonard of Canada, Seney, Lyon Cheney, Smith. Laymen, Hall, Edwards, Dr. Phelps, Coon, Brown, Dr. Stephenson, Dr. Throgmorton, Terry, Macfarlan, Worrel, Dando, Skidmore, Halsted, Schureman, More, Raymer, Godine, Cobb. The chairman stated that this was a special meeting

²⁵ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 307, 308.

²⁶ The names of the Mission Board members, correctly spelled, are: Dr. George Peck; Dr. Charles Pitman, corresponding secretary; George Coles; John Dempster; Jason Lee; Noah Bigelow; George Lane; William Roberts, of New Jersey; Jacob Leonard of Canada; Robert Seney; Moses Lyon; Robert Cheney; David Smith.

Laymen: Francis Hall; John B. Edwards; Dr. J. L. Phelps; P. E. Coon; A. W. Brown; Dr. James P. Stephenson; Dr. S. Throckmorton; D. Terry; T. M'Farlan; Henry Worrall; Stephen Dando; Williams B. Skidmore; S. Halsted; Nicholas Schureman; Henry More; F. Godine.

²⁷ "Lee arrived in New York in May, but what transpired between himself and the Missionary Board is unknown." Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, p. 220.

called at the request of the Corresponding Secretary. Dr. Pitman observed that the meeting had been called to offer Mr. Lee an opportunity of making a statement to the Board in reference to the Oregon Mission. He also stated that Bro. Lee had been permitted to examine the papers, which had been compiled for the government of the Rev. Mr. Gary in his visit to Oregon.

At half past 4 o'clock Mr. Lee arose and remarked, in substance, as follows. He expressed his gratitude to God for his protection in guiding him once more to a civilized world, and for permitting him to meet again with this Board. From what he had heard since his arrival in this city he was satisfied that it was necessary for him to give the Board all the information in his power, he would therefore state briefly the reasons which induced his return from Oregon:

First, The Mission had obtained by possession a large tract of land in Oregon, and as a large emigration was pouring into that country, he believed it a duty to this Board to immediately petition the Government of the United States to secure to the Missionary Soc. the right of possession. My impressions were, that if I went to Washington I could present the claims of the Soc. in a manner that would make a favorable impression. In my recent visit to the federal city I saw and conversed with President, heads of departments, Senators, and members of the House of Representatives. I gave them my view of the things, and I think made a most favorable impression upon all. And though nothing could be effected at present, I have no [doubt] that our claim will be favourable remembered. Col. Benton, and others, said that our claim was reasonable and just. At a suitable time Congress must be memorialized, and a case made out and submitted to that Body.

Second, I had heard that it was in contemplation to send a special Agent to Oregon; and my impression was that he would probably cross the Mountains. I was under the impression that availing myself of the opportunity which offered, I might reach home previous to the Agent's departure, and by giving to the Board a detail of events, and prospects of the Mission, might save the expense of sending the contemplated Agent.

Thirdly, I had become fully satisfied that the Board had had such representations made to them, that it was my duty to appear before them, and so far as in my power to correct those erroneous statements which have been [made] in reference to proceedings in the Mission.

The affairs in Oregon have greatly changed since I had the happiness of meeting with the Board, first a great change has taken place in the white population—Second, the Indians have diminished upon the Walamette River in a great degree.

When the Board sent out its last large reinforcement, its object in my view and I believe in theirs was, that Methodism should spread throughout Oregon; for what purpose else, I ask, did so large a number of laymen go out? If it was only to form one or two stations, it appears to me that both the Board, and myself as their agent, must have taken leave of our senses. If my associates had stood firm to their post, and persevered willingly in the work consigned them, I have not a doubt but far more favorable accounts would have reached you from that distant country. The plans, I assert [were] well formed and had I been sustained the object would have been accomplished. A great mistake was made in selecting some of those who were sent out. I allude not to the number but the qualifications of certain individuals. I forewarned the Oregon Committee that if the persons who applied for situations were not examined by a proper committee the plan would fail. Such proved to be the case. As proof I aver that we had not reached our first stopping place in South America, before some desired to return to the United States, and even after touching at the S. Islands before we had reached Oregon one wanted to return and secure the Chaplancy at the Islands. I have had much to contend with, and I regret that men of more steadfast minds had not been chosen. Such persons do more injury to a distant Mission than they do good, and no one knows the difficulties I have had to pass through.

I will state the case of one, although I am compelled to speak of one now no more. I allude to Bro. [James] Olley—he never was capable of doing more than the work of half a man, and I am sorry to say that he met death [through drowning in Willamette River on December 10, 1842] in a mad freak, in going after logs to build a house for himself without my knowledge. The Oregon Committee must remember that I told them that the first question to be asked the applicant should be, "Does your wife want to go"? and a negative answer should satisfy the Committee that such a person ought not to be sent. What was the fact in the case, why a number of females were unwillingly dragged thousands of miles from home into a strange and

savage country—and some of them, I know, would gladly have returned in the very steamer that took us to the Ship. It is a hard lot to go so far from home free from care and anxiety, but to endure such a voyage, with a companion all the time looking back to home, and reproaching one for having drawn her from that home, is more than almost any one can endure. So far was this the case, that I believe some would have gladly hidden in the very steamer that took us to the Ship sooner than have gone to the Oregon. As affairs have now turned out, the laymen are not all needed in Oregon, and some may return, or suffer themselves to be discharged in that country.

As it regards Dr. White, I feel today as I did the day and the hour when the Dr. first left Oregon, that I had done my duty. Bro. Kone complains of my treatment of him, and professes to know my secret reasons for wishing to keep all in the field. I never had any *secret* reasons. As it regards the yearly Meeting I acted in perfect and entire conformity to my instructions from this Board. Bro. Kone by his injudicious remarks caused great excitement among the laymen and made much difficulty.

As it regards my not sending reports regularly, I ought perhaps at once plead guilty,—but if I do there are many mitigating circumstances. The great press of business, calls to a distance, sickness of myself, death in my family, the multiplied calls on the attention of the Steward, Abernethy, all must be taken into consideration,—add to which the opportunities that offer for a conveyance to the U. States. I could not myself go behind the counter and relieve Bro. Abernethy. I called assistance to him, but it was found rather a burden than an assistance,—and finally as soon as a correct statement could be prepared, it was transmitted and is now in your possession, and I take upon me to say that Bro. Abernethy will regularly report hereafter. He is an excellent accountant, few better. I am not surprised that you have complained, I murmur not.—It is owing to the great distance we have been from each other, and the peculiar state of affairs. I assure you Brethren that I have always acted for the best interests of this Society.

In one of Bro. Abernethy's letters, he tells you that the Superintendent refused to send the report of the state of the property home. There is some error in this. I cannot, I will not, believe that A. intended to charge me with opposing the sending of that report. There must be some mistake which time will unfold. I am satisfied he does all a man

can, and I have not a doubt that he will take proper care of the property committed to his care.

I am charged by one that has returned with speculating in cattle. I will give you a history of this matter. \$250 worth fell into my hands, they feed upon the Prairies, and eat the grass which otherwise would be burnt in the fall. I have also during my residence purchased some eight or ten horses. I knew the Mission must have cattle from time to time, and I will state that my cattle were with the Mission's for a time, but I spent no more time with the cattle than I should have been obliged to spend if mine had belonged to another man, and yet, I paid my share of expenses, *including my time*. If I had chosen to speculate I might have sold to others, at a profit, some cattle I let the Mission have at cost, but I did not do so. As to time spent off my Mission work, I assure the Board that the two weeks spent in attendance on the debates at the General conference is far more than all the time spent for myself since my return to Oregon. The Mission owns about six hundred [six hundred is written in here in red ink] head of Cattle. My cattle have increased but the precise number I do not know. A little before my departure I spent two days in looking after my cattle.

Another charge against me is, that Walamette is not the most suitable place for a location. Perhaps the best answer to that is that a Committee was appointed to examine certain points, and that Committee reported in favor of continuing at the Walamette. As to the sickness at that place, as reported by Bro. [William W.] Kone, I am persuaded that had the Mission been at any other place, the sickness would have been the same it was so generally throughout the country.

The Letter of Bro. Hines [of March 15, 1843]

Before I left Oregon I was aware that Bro. Hines had written to the Board. He had read part of his communication to some persons, who had hinted to me about it. He started from Oregon with me, and I was in hopes we should have met face to face before this Board. He returned, however, from the Sandwich Islands to Oregon. He states that the Mission [store at Oregon City] cannot compete with other Traders. I have paid his bills at other stores, and I know that the articles he purchased elsewhere were fully as high as at the Mission store. And yet we think our store will give some profit.

So far as regards the matters alledged in reference to the Hudson's Bay Co., he would say, that perhaps the dearest goods they had to purchase was the Hudson's Bay Co's. Their mode of conducting their business was this. They would give \$2.20 for a Beaver [skin]; this they would probably sell in England for from \$5 to \$15. Theirs was a nominal [in name only] currency, they put on [add] in the first place (to Missionaries) 70 per cent [on their cost price]. They will take no money [from buyers] except on London. They do business [buy] there (at Fort Vancouver) at the rate of \$4.00 to the pound, but when you come to pay [them] on London, they call these pounds *sterling* [\$4.87]. They then [in addition] have a commission on their bills, and make us pay the current rate of exchange. Now Bro. Hines himself instead of going to the H. B. Co. who he says sell 50 per cent cheaper than we do, went to other stores and bought at a much dearer rate than we sell.

The committee need not think, however, that they [the missionaries] were speculating, or abusing the people, by the profit they were making on the goods. Let it be remembered that they (the Missionaries of the M. E. C.) [Methodist Episcopal Church] carred at first ploughs, &c. These the people needed, and it was by means of these that the condition of the people had been so much improved. This has given them facilities they did not before possess, and they probably raised 5000 bushels of wheat last year more than they would have raised, if the Mission had not afforded these advantages to them. They raised enough for their families, and the Emigrants, and the H. B. Co. took I think not less than 10,000 bushels to Russia. Now the Mission expected to get something eventually, for they trusted them [the settlers] when they were poor. So far as Bro. Hines remarks about bad debts went, he [Lee] would inform the Board, that Mr. Abernethy assured him that the Mission would ultimately lose scarcely a single dollar. The debts were being gradually paid. No man leaves the country in debt. There had been but one instance, and he returned and paid everything.

Again it was said that the Mission was not doing a profitable business, and that it would be better to take out money and buy goods there [in Oregon]. Mention was also made of the cost of transporting goods, &c. To all this he [Lee] would say, the worst thing they could do would be to take out money. That the cost of freight from the S. Islands to the Columbia was \$25, as asserted by Bro. Hines, is all

guess work with him. He (M. Lee) had looked over the bills more than ever Mr. Hines had. A small cargo reshipped at the Sandwich I. did in one instance cost \$20.

"But the cost of transport up the Wallamette was enormous, actual cost from \$20 to \$30 a load being taken up the river in a canoe." There may have been one or two such instances, when they had heavy rains, and fressets. Then the expense was enormous, but the average expense was nothing like that, large boat loads were got up at much less. Bro. Hines has taken an extreme case.

"Unhappy influences created. The Mission accused of going into speculation." "Difficulty in convincing the Oregon People that profit was not principally sought." I am of a contrary opinion. But where are christians not slandered? Or where does an entire community speak what they think of the men of God? The regret at my leaving, and the earnest requests I received to come back, convince me that such is not the feeling. We have put them in advan[c]e of what they would otherwise have been. Without our Mission they could not have staid in the country and they knew it. They [the settlers] told me when I reached Oregon last [in 1840], that they should have left the country, I had taken out things and saved them from succumbing to the H. B. Co.

We have been the means of the conversion of Rocky Mountain [men] who have been from 10 to 15 years in the Mountains and spent every cent in drink; and we have persuaded the people to marry. They now make a handsome living; are christians and industrious. It is impossible that such an opinion should prevail, Viz. that our object is principally money. Never, never since the world commenced has a Settlement of such men been so benefited by christian influence as the Oregon Settlement. Blood-thirsty men have been prevented from annihilating the Indians. I have a paper handed me just as I left, not numerously signed, but signed by all who saw it, except one stranger, which speaks of me in terms I should be almost ashamed to read before this Board, and which would abundantly confirm all that I have said.

Dr. McLoughlin told me that a few years before we went to that country, they could not send a boat past the Dalls without a guard of 60 armed men. Now we go up singly and no one is robbed. This is owing to our Missionary labors. Dr. was kind to the settlers so far as he liked them, but wants to do all the business. He is a Catholic. Pre-

vious to the Priests going there [in 1838], I was his intimate friend,—his confident. Such was my influence with the Canadian part of the settlement [from 1834 to 1838], that they would have been pleased to give me their church and have no Priest come. Since my return [to Oregon in 1840] I have not [had] time to instruct their children as we used to do, and the Priests have taken them.

"Farming operation, 10,000 bushels of wheat sent to Russia, which showed that there would be no lack of the staff of life," &c., &c. Some have thought differently, and have difficulty in getting what they wanted. The people borrowed seed from the H. B. Co. and the Com[pany] made them pay up first. And they take it in wheat, and must have it at any rate. (Mr. Lane) Is it true that it costs us more to raise the wheat than we could purchase it for? (Mr. Lee) We had to break up new lands and fence in farms. Mr. Hines in his document leaves out the cattle, which every farmer must take into the account of profit and loss on his farm. Then the improvements on the farm remains after the original outlay. (Some remarks being about the brethren living better there than they did at home), Mr. Lee said with all their cows they were not able to supply their families with butter the year round.

"Accused of speculating." There might [be] a shadow of truth in that, when they first went out they bought horses to ride and cows to milk. Some sold off their young cattle, others let them increase. Bro. Parrish made a little money in this way, perhaps \$100 *one* year. He and others kept hogs as your Preachers do in this country, and thus got his pork a little cheaper. He and others would go out to look for a cow that had calved, for a quarter of a day. I did not think it right to spend so much time as some did in their own business, and told them so. Bro. Frost [in the summer of 1841] went off to buy some cattle, the only effort of the kind he ever made. And I think the greatest effort he ever made in Oregon. Since Bro. Hines wrote that paper he has, perhaps, had more to do with speculating in cattle than any man in Oregon Mission. What I call speculating is not buying cattle with the intention of letting them grow and increase, but with the purpose of selling them for more than they cost. In this way, I was told, he made \$100 in a few days, then went out the impression that your Missionaries were speculating.

I made one speculation myself; I went to Dr. Richmond's [summer

of 1842]—he had some things he could not sell. I took about \$150 or \$200 worth. They were a year and a half before they reached me. He teased me to buy his rifle, offered it to me for \$30. I knew I could sell it for more. I at length consented to take it, and on reaching home had \$50 offered for it, and I let the person have it at once. That was the only thing of the kind I ever did, and I was heartily sick of it, and am sorry I ever did it, but not because I thought there was anything wrong in it, for I always believed I had a perfect right to do so. But I was sorry of the use made of it.

"Supplies can be purchased from the French farmers around at a more advantageous rate." "Setting aside the growth of stock the farm has not supported itself by many hundred dollars." The year I returned [1840] we did not gather in all the harvest, but is my administration to be found fault with on that account? I was away on an exploring expedition. The next year I took the cradle for 16 days. I was told that Broth's Hines, Abernethy, and others sat down in a room to estimate the expenses of the farm [at Old Mission] in the meantime, and there made up their conclusions; but when the farmer [Alanson Beers] and myself looked into it, we thought it had more than cleared itself. This last year [1843] the farm will make considerable money. A Barn has been built, the farm well fenced in, and we have become accustomed to work it. Bro. Beers is selling out to the people. He manages the farm, and is as good a man to work as you will find anywhere. When he first began he was not a farmer, but has now got used to it. He is one of the Executive Committee, at the head of the Oregon Government. This does not interfere with his labor much. "And the more extensive the operations, the greater the loss!" "The Blacksmith has little to do, and the shop does not pay, &c." That there is little to do I think is a great mistake, for Bro. Beers is pressed beyond measure with work, and if Bro. Parrish had not been affected with the Ague, so that he could have worked at the business, the shop would have made money.

["] The same fatality attends the Milling business, the [lumber] Mill has sunk \$10 a day for some months past. I[t] had better be given away." Now in the spring, I believe it was before the mill closed, the winter before he writes this, Bro. Hines riding with me said he had been making an estimate and found the mill was clearing, I think he said, \$15 a day. In this document he says nothing about

that. The next year it got out of repair, and while being repaired, it may have sunk \$10 a day. This might last about a month. I examined the accounts at the end of the year and it did not make much that year.¹ The water did not come as early as usual by a month or more. We have now let it out [leased it] for two years, we have [receive] half the lumber, and risk [are responsible for] the Dam and the ironwork. Lumber sells at from \$12 to \$15 a thousand. Bro. Hines must have known that this would make a false impression, and it is not fair. The Board then adjourned until Tuesday evening at 8 o'clock and were dismissed with the benediction.

Tuesday Evening

Dr. Bangs in the Chair. Prayer by Mr. Wakely. Members present: *Ministers*, Dr. Bangs, J. Lee, Withey, Wakely, N. I. B. How, Lane, Pitman, J. M. Howe. *Laymen*, Hall, Skidmore, Cobb, Worrall, Dando, Macfarlane, Coon, M. Lane, Throckmorton, Rayner, Mead, More, Dr. Stephenson.²⁸

Mr. Lee continued. There is one thing I did not mention yesterday, the excuse Bro. Kone made for not writing [the superintendent concerning his departure] while he lay in Bakers Bay was that the foremast and mainmast were destroyed by lightning, and they were six miles from shore. I saw the Capt. afterwards. He showed me the mainmast and all that was to be seen as a mere scar, a narrow slip of about two feet in length. He said nothing about the other masts being injured. The distance across the river is about six miles. Bakers Bay lies inside a sand Island, and cannot be over two miles wide. Vessels do not lie over 1 or 1½ miles from shore.

With respect to the circumstances attending the death of Bro. Olley [James Olley, Mission carpenter, drowned in Willamette River, December 10, 1842], (Mr. Pitman observed that the account had been furnished by Bro. Frost since he came to this country). I was told that Bro. Hines had written an account of his death, and his account must be correct. Some remark of Mr. Hall, respecting a statement of Mr. Lee's on the previous evening, on which Dr. Bangs observed that he never selected any of them, (the Missionaries,)—not one of them,

²⁸ The names of the Mission Board members not already identified at the meeting held on July 3 are: Dr. Nathan Bangs, chairman, Ezra Withey, Lemuel Wakeley. *Laymen*: G. T. Cobb, J. Raynor, Ralph Mead.

and did not know how they were selected. *Mr. Lee.* You and I were the committee to accept them, and after that Dr. Luckey²⁰ was added. I gave my consent to only two of the men. Mr. Pitman remarked on the word "mad," as applied to Mr. Olley, and Mr. Lee explained that he meant it was a wild freak, an inconsistent and unheard of thing.

Mr. Lee then read a paragraph from Mr. Hines' document, respecting the great number of drafts that were "flocking over the Rocky Mountains, and which it was contended, proved, that the true interests of the Mission a change in the *modus operandi*," &c. On which Mr. Lee remarked, I do not know any considerable expenditure that was not first approved of by the members of the Mission, Bro. Hines among the rest. And the Mission would, I believe, bear me out in saying that it was the general impression that Bro. Hines was more free to have the money spent than any other man on the Mission. A house was wanted [at Salem] for himself and Bro. Campbell. The plan was drawn out [in late 1841], I thought it [the house] was too small for two families, and it was agreed to build a larger one, the size was defined, and Mr. H. professed himself much pleased. I went home. On my return I found he had altered the plan on his own responsibility. He said it would cost but little more, I thought it would cost \$100 more. I expressed my surprise. He was displeased and told me I ought rather to have congratulated him upon the noble looking house he had raised. Bro. H. was said to be the highest man in his estimates for domestic expenditures. I say this only that you may know something about the man who has preferred these charges.

"A numerous gang of Sandwich Islanders are employed whose labor does not pay their board. They are paid \$10 per month sick or well." This is calculated to make a very false impression. You would think that a gang would consist of, at least, 5 or 6. I think the farmer [at Old Mission] has never had more than three belonging to the farm except in time of harvest. They receive nominally \$10 a month. This is the H. B. Co. price, paying them in goods at Sandwich Island retail prices, and enormously high. Dr. M. Loughlin told me they preferred taking \$74 a year, Beaver prices. Bro. Hines knew this as well as I knew it, both as to the manner in which they were paid, and the prices. They were satisfied. We were guided by the H. B. Co. "Whose labor does not pay their board." The H. B. Co. have repeatedly told me that

²⁰ Samuel Luckey.

this is the cheapest labor that can be procured. We have found it so, so also thinks the farmer. Bro. Beers understands business well and would not keep men year after year who did not earn their board, and give them \$10 per month. I was offered \$1 a day for one as long as he could work. The falsity of this statement is apparent to anyone. I cannot take any other view of it than it was written to make a false impression.

"There is not an Indian but what is affected with the venereal disease, or scrofula," &c. I accompanied Bro. Hines to the Umpqua [in 1840]. We saw several hundred Indians in our route. I saw no signs of venereal diseases, and there was no such remark made about the Indians in the upper part of the Walamette. These prevail to a great extent, especially the scrofula amongst the Indians on the Columbia river and lower part of Walamette, but even there it is very far from the truth that scarcely an exception is found, or my eyes deceive me very much. "These with the petty wars are fast destroying this wretched race of men." There has been very few petty wars since we went into that country. If the Mission has done nothing else, it has put a stop to these in a great measure from the mouth of the Columbia River to the Dalls, and in the lower part of the Wallamette Valley. There have been a few murders, but very few to what there used to be. "These 1500 Indians are divided into seven different clans each speaking a distinct language, not understood by others except through an interpreter." Bro. Hines has probably less personal knowledge on this subject than any other man except Bro. Beers, who with Dr. Babcock, is the only one that has not attempted to preach to the Indians in Jargon. Bro. Hines I think has never attempted it. Mr. [Cornelius] Rogers [a missionary first at the Whitman Mission and later at Lee's Mission] one of the *best linguists* says that the Kalapooyas all speak the same language. This Jargon was used at the Dalls, many of the Indians understood it, many were convicted and converted. The Indians have never been injured by white men since I went there. They would have been had we not been there to guard their interests. But I wish the world to know that the Missionaries have exerted their influence to prevent the white men killing the Indians, and therefore they have not killed a white man since. The H. B. Co. were sending out a large party to avenge the death of one of their Trappers. The leader came to my house. I made enquiries and found that there were no substantial grounds to believe that the tribe they were going to murder

were guilty parties, and in consequence of my remarks they gave up their design. True the H. B. Co. made a noise about Missionaries interfering with their business, &c., but a few weeks after it was found out to be another tribe than that on which they were going to wreak their vengeance.

Dr. M. Loughlin afterwards acknowledged he was satisfied. *I saved them* from murdering, and us from being murdered. "And indeed they (the Indians) have no life or energy and are a melancholly *doomed* race of men." I think this is in part true, the Indians on the Walamette, will become, as a distinct race, *extinct*. But I think there will be more Indian blood, through amalgamation, running in the veins of white men a hundred years hence than would have been running in the veins of the Indians, if they had been left to themselves. The Missionaries have performed many such marriages among them.

"So far as the prospect of doing good is concerned, there is nothing to warrant the Board in supporting the Mission at its present expense." That probably was perfectly true when Bro. Hines wrote, though even then the expense was not so great as his language would lead one to believe. But alterations have been made. Several of the laymen I have persuaded to go for themselves. They were willing to do so. Had I dismissed them without their consent, they might have required me to send them home. This arrangement will save money, and the Mission will do very well. I have dismissed three laymen. At the Dalls, Bro. Brewer the farmer could not be spared. He is doing well for the Mission. Bro. Perkins is not enough for that Mission. At Clatsop Bro. Parrish is laboring for the good of the Indians. He was doing well, and working hard. He is a local Preacher. Seven of the Indians were becoming praying men.

Of Bro. Frost, I cannot say much. He has made no thorough effort to bring sinners to God. I mean such an effort as would render it probable that these Indians could not be benefited by the Gospel. Whether he could have done more is with himself. At the Walamette Falls Bro. Abernethy *cannot* be spared until he has wound up the business, which will take him a year or two. At the old farm [at Old Mission near modern Wheatland] is Bro. Beers, that could not be given up. It would be bad policy to give it up. It could be sold but we have the prospect of getting the land, which will be yet more valuable than it is now. It is only by retaining the farms that we can secure the lands

which are any day worth \$40,000. I have no doubt about getting the land. Dr. Babcock went to the S. Islands for the benefit of his wife's health, but has now returned. He was never fond of the station. There was some little disaffection but he has taken pretty good care of the Mission family. They could not, at Walamette, well get along without a Physician.

At the Mill [at Chemeketa, the modern Salem] we have none of our own people. Bro. Judson has gone to work for himself. At the [Indian Manual Labor] school we have only Bro. Campbell, his wife, and sister Philips, who will probably not remain long at the school. This is nothing like an adequate number. To carry on the school at the Shawnee Mission, I am informed, they have 14 individuals, directly employed in school, male and female, they have 100 scholars, we have about 40. Bro. Gary *may* be able to dismiss more of the laymen.

"This state of things produces a very disheartening effect upon the minds of the friends of the Mission,—the object is not secured." To this I reply that the laymen have nearly all told me that they went to Oregon with the expectation of becoming Missionaries, and Preachers. They find they cannot do this and they feel dissatisfied. There are 16 adults employed at and above the Falls. A majority think there ought only to be **six**.

Now let us look at this majority. There is Bro. Hines and his wife, who never wished to go into the country. And Miss Philips who I think is about to be married. Dr. Babcock and his wife who never wished to go for ten years and would be glad to return. Bro. Abernethy, and his wife who did not wish to go.⁸⁰ Bro. Waller's wife, who never wished to go into the country, and Bro. Parrish and his wife, who wanted to get upon a circuit. These will about make the number. I was told that Bro. Hines' mind was made up to come home *before* he wrote, and *that* is the key to this communication from Bro. Hines.

Mr. Lee then proceeded to notice the impression made upon the Board by the communication, which he felt was very unfavorable, and to illustrate the character of the writer adverted to a fact in connection with the Oregon Institute. The Trustees had unanimously, with the

⁸⁰ Lieutenant Wilkes made this comment concerning Mrs. Abernethy: "Mrs. Abernethy we found pretty & pleasing & and gave such hospitality as we would receive at home. I thought her out of place in this country and community." Wilkes' Diary, *Washington Historical Quarterly*, XIII, p. 48.

exception of Mr. Hines, agreed upon a certain resolution. And Mr. Hines after the meeting charged them all with being satisfied that they were acting *inconsistently*. And of course they had voted as they did from improper motives. In this he persisted to such an extent that it was generally understood that he did not intend to pay his subscription. And the sensation was so great that the collector declared that he should not come away without paying it for he would have him arrested. He paid it just before he left. Some of it had been due a long time. He did leave, but has returned to the Continent. I have no doubt (continued Mr. Lee) that this document was written to prepare the way for his leaving, and in his zeal he has gone beyond the mark. I do not mean to say that he has intentionally stated any thing wrong, and yet, knowing the man, and the document, I confess I am dreadfully puzzled to account for some of the statements. I ought to say, however, that I am under ten thousand obligations to Bro. Hines; he has been as kind to me as a man could be. His wife has been a mother to my daughter, and his house has been my home!

Mr. Lee observed that [he] felt inclined to say something respecting himself. He said when he first went to Oregon, he went to work with his hands; he was brought up to hard work. He knew the impression prevailed here that he was not competent to manage such a concern, but he had managed gangs of men before he was converted. The first year he was in Oregon [1834] he worked incessantly, and seldom did the sun in the morning find him from his work. In the winter he had work that he could do in the house in the evening, such as making sashes, and in a house measuring 32 feet by 18 he hewed every plank for the floor, above and below, and all the doors and tables, &c. He had seen the day when he could chop a cord of sugar maple wood in two hours and he did more in his first year in Oregon, in the way of building that house, fencing and cultivating land, than he had ever seen done there by any one man in the same time. He then alluded to some difficulty he had had in the erection of the Mill, over which, however, by his management he triumphed. He could manage any one branch of business very well, and never had fault found with him at home, those under him were always willing to stay longer. He could do one thing but could not be in ten places at once.

He did not engage in the Missionary work for the sake of speculating. The Chair would bear him witness that before he went out the

first time, when it was proposed to give him a larger salary, he said God forbid that the time should ever come when Preachers in the M. E. C. could take into account the prospect of *pecuniary* advantage, above what Preachers have at home, as an inducement to go into the Missionary field.

And the estimating Committee ³¹ would bear him record that when they were making out the estimates, at time of his last visit [1838-1839], they told him they had been accustomed [to] give Superintendants, and he replied that on no *consideration* could he be induced to receive more than Preachers did at home, or his associates who labored in the same field.

The Chair (Dr. Bangs) and the committee ascended to the above statements.

These things being known, (said Mr. Lee) my *character ought to have been above suspicion*. I know that men may change, but still it ought not to have been credited, without the most indisputable *proofs*, that *Jason Lee was speculating, and that too, with Mission funds for his own benefit*. He had served the Missionary Society eleven years. He had had a wife ³² a short part of that time, and she had well earned her living. In addition to all her domestic labors for the Mission, which were very heavy, she made clothes for the Indian children in the school. When she did work for others, the proceeds were always put into the Mission funds. This was the case with both of his wives.

He had himself lived most of the time without any Table Expenses, and had received during the eleven years but \$1300 with the exception of his living. Yet he and his brethren had contributed as liberally as any men towards any benevolent project. As Superintendent he was expected to give more than others, and to enable him to meet these demands, he had sold the clothes of his deceased wives and his furniture, &c. He would not have mentioned these things, but he thought it due to himself, after the feeling he had witnessed in every quarter. As to his traveling expenses he did not think that throughout his whole tour through the United States [in 1838-1839] they would find \$3 charged for dinners; for he had been so conscientious that he often dined upon a few crackers in order to save expense to the cause. It

³¹ The Estimating Committee was composed of seven members, one of the nine committees of the Missionary Society.

³² Anna Maria Pittman married Jason Lee, July 16, 1837; died June 26, 1838.

was his opposition to the expenditure of Dr. White that incensed that gentleman against him.

Then he *Mr. Lee* again went out, his principles with regard to economy were unchanged; but he was then placed in circumstances he could not control. Any man who would not have given money for houses, &c., would have been driven out of the field. He never spent any considerable amount of money that had not been approved by those connected with the Mission. Some of them wanted him to spend money faster than he could get it. He had traveled thousands of miles by canoe, and his expenses were not one third of any of the gentlemen connected with the H. B. Co. The reason of this was that he traveled in a smaller canoe. So small that they would not risk their lives in it,—and because he never would hire white men at \$1 per day, preferring when he could not procure a full crew of Indians to paddle himself.

The Secretary states that, "the Superintendent of the Oregon Mission has spent \$100,000 and no account of disbursements had been rendered." *Mr. Lee*. This I confess surprises me. When I left this country, I left the account of all the goods we had bought. When I came home [in November, 1839] I told the Missionary Society that we had done so and so, and had so much property left. This was the disbursement, and was so understood at the time, and no complaint was made about it. I went back [in 1840] and no farther explanation was asked, and no complaint made either to the Board or to myself. We might perhaps have sent the report home one year sooner, though that would have been very difficult. We took to Oregon I think between \$13,000 and \$14,000 worth of goods. The Board knew what salaries the Missionaries were to receive, for they themselves fixed them, and the statement of Table expenses was sent regularly every year. How much then remained not accounted for? Out of the proceeds of the goods taken out and drafts since we have had annually to pay a large number of men their Salaries and Table expenses.⁸³

The Chairman explained the kind of account that was wanted. (Mr.

⁸³ A missionary's allowance is illustrated in the diary of Henry B. Brewer, the mission farmer at The Dalles. Brewer wrote: "My allowance for my table, servant, fuel, lights for 1841 is 2 adults, \$205.41; Servant, \$50.00; Fuel, \$30.00; Food, \$30.00; Lights, \$13.50; Salary for 2, \$250.00; Salary and other expenses, \$548.91."

Brewer: Log of the *Lausanne*. *Oregon Historical Society Quarterly*, XXX, p. 117.

Lee) There was not a Clerk in Oregon who could have been had, at the time, to assist Bro. Abernethy that such was required. He had since sent an inventory of all there was, which should have been sent the first year.

Dr. Bangs further explained that the Board wanted an account of what was raised, and how disposed of. Mr. Lee, that I suppose will come in regularly now that the inventory has been made out. The Board know the amount of the salaries; I do not understand bookkeeping myself. (Dr. Pitman. But Bro. Abernethy is an efficient bookkeeper.) Mr. Lee. Yes but he could not get help. He was unable to get his accounts written into his books for a long time. It was explained that what the Board wanted to know was what was raised on the farm, &c., what it cost, what each Missionary received from the farm, and what from other sources, &c. Mr. Lee. Well but the proceeds of the farm all go to pay Table expenses, and the estimated prices are sent home every year by the Estimating Committee [in Oregon].

Mr. Lee then entered upon the question of the large expenditure of the Oregon Mission. From a rough but he thought not an overrated sketch, he would show that the expenditure in Oregon was not so enormous after all. This apparent enormity of expenditure was in a great measure owing to the immense *distance*, The transportation there, the extra expense of outfit, the freight of goods, the return of Missionaries, &c., &c. The *distance* between this country and Oregon was the great vortex that had swallowed up \$40,000 of this money. This must be deducted in making a comparison with other Missions. Now suppose they had \$60,000 expended there; a year ago they supposed their property, not including lands, worth about \$50,000. The school house could not be sold for what it cost. The property at all the stations will probably have increased in value during the year. By the goods sent out the last time Bro. Abernethy expects to clear \$10,000. The Dall's property perhaps could not be sold, the Indians will have no one there but Missionaries. This would leave about \$10,000 expended in Oregon above what remained. He did not think this subject had been properly investigated, and that for want of looking into it, wrong impressions had been made.

This statement showed that their business in Oregon had not been such a sinking operation as had been represented, but had yielded something towards their support. Mr. Lane said the amount expended

had been about \$120,000 to which Mr. Lee replied that he did not seek to make a false impression, and he would say then that it would leave \$30,000, but they expected to get the land in Oregon, which would be worth \$40,000; for from the President downwards all acknowledged that they were entitled to it, and he thought that their expenditures in Oregon was the sole cause of their favorable view of this subject.

He considered Dr. Richmond his enemy because he had so declared himself, and sent word to him (Mr. Lee) that he was his antagonist. And he hoped as they had heard his enemy, they would hear him. He must be heard by somebody. The Board then adjourned to Wednesday.

Wednesday Evening, July 10.

Present Rev. Dr. Bangs, Jason Lee, Osbon, J. M. Howe, Lane, Suttan, Pitman, Wakely, G. Smith, Withey, Seney. *Laymen*, Messrs. Hall, Dando, Raynor, Maclane, Coon, M. Lean, Loveland, Cobb, Brown, Skidmore, Oakley, Dr. Stephenson, Dr. Phelps. Dr. Bangs in the Chair. Prayer by Mr. Osbon.³⁴

Mr. Lee resumed. He was happy to hear from the Board last evening that they excepted him from the charge of speculating, but he feared this exception was only in the minds of the Board, and not with the public at large. He judged this from what he had heard from every quarter. The expenses of the Oregon Mission might, from what he had heard, been thought unprecedented; but this was not the case. A Mission from Mexico to Lower California cost the Government in three years \$225,000 and failed. In reference to the Oregon Mission, the reaction had already taken place. The day of unwarrantable expectations, in reference to that Mission, had, he thought, gone by. It should be sustained, and might be. With the exception of the great distance, it was as cheap as any that promised as well. In the Walamette Valley the people were not just now able to pay for themselves, nor could it be expected of them, until they had a Preacher appointed with the understanding that they were to do something for his support.

³⁴ The correct names of the Mission Board members, already not referred to and present at the meeting on July 10, were: Dr. Nathan Bangs; A. M. Osbon, Chairman Committee on Domestic Missions; J. G. Smith; J. M'Lean; O. Loveland; A. W. Brown, member of Auditing Committee of Mission Board; James B. Oakley, a manager of the Mission Board.

Three Preachers could not more than do the work. Even then they would still require to be dependent upon the Society to some extent. The friends of Missions need have no fears about it in future, but might come up to its support, with the assurance that it would henceforth be as beneficial as others which cost the same money.

What he was going to say might militate against him more than anything that yet transpired. It had been said that [he] was a non-committal man, yet arbitrary, and precipitate. He shuned no responsibility where he saw plainly his duty required it. He alluded to his superintendancy of the Oregon Mission, or his official character, and the manner in which it had been treated. It appeared to him that in his official character he had been tried, condemned, and executed on an exparty statement, and without having been heard himself. He had been told by a gentleman of high standing in society that an unfavorable impression had gone out, far and wide, and the gentleman advised him not to collect a single dollar for the Society until something had been done in that Board in reference to his case.

Mr. Lee then referred to the Missionary Report,⁸⁵ and complained of the course adopted by the Board in sending out Bro. Gary, and the remarks in the Report explanatory of that appointment, and his, Mr. Lee's, deposition. He contended that that Report had not assigned the main reason for that change. Dr. White, though known to have been expelled from the church, had made by his statements an unfavorable impression upon the minds of the Board, which had never been removed.

Mr. Lee then made some strictures upon the [Board] respecting an agent and a superintendant, and sought to show an inconsistency between the recorded resolutions and the reasons given in the report.

⁸⁵ The Annual Missionary Report of May 13, 1844. The opening paragraph of this report reads: "The superintendency of this mission has been transferred to the Rev. Geo. Gary, of the Black River Conference. The conflicting and unsatisfactory reports concerning it which, from time to time, have reached us, seemed in the judgment of your Board and of the Bishop having charge of Foreign Missions [Elijah Hedding] to call for a thorough and impartial investigation of the conditions and prospects. We wish it distinctly understood that it is on these accounts Brother Lee has been superseded in the charge of this mission, and not because there is any lack of confidence in his religious and moral character, or of his entire devotion to the interest of the Oregon Mission."

Methodist Reports—Willamette Mission, *Oregon Historical Society Quarterly*, XXIII, pp. 324, 325.

Dr. Pitman defended the proceedings of the Board. Mr. Lee thought that the truth of the matter was, that an impression unfavorable to himself and his administration had been made, and that some were withholding their subscriptions on that account. So the Committee thought it necessary to do something to appease the people, and made him the sacrifice. He believed it to be the action of the Board, and not of the Bishop, who never moved in such matters without taking council of the Board. He claimed a right to have been informed of any contemplated movement that was calculated to affect him in the estimation of his friends. They might think he was holding with a death grasp to the superintendency. It was not so. They had made him a superintendant without his solicitation, or knowledge. Since his conversion he had never taken one step towards an appointment. He went nowhere, except God first opened the door. In this case God opened the door and the church pushed him in.

I did believe (said Mr. Lee) when so many offered themselves, and then backed out, that I should do very well for a pioneer across the Rocky Mountains. Before I had got across the Mountains on my return [in 1838] my mind was made up that men might be found who would manage that Mission in its future prospects better than myself. And I asked, on my return, if there could not be some way devised for some one to supersede me in that charge. I pleaded my ignorance of the usages of the church, and that I had been so little accustomed to govern in the church, &c. But all would [not] do. You would not hear a word of it, and heavy as the cross was I took it up. I have never yet seen the time when I would not have been glad to relinquish the Superintendency. But I do not think my present removal has been done just in the way it ought to have been done. Nevertheless I [do] not intend to make a great fuss about it. I believe the Board mistook the point, when they took the course they did. They have made a favorite of the man they placed over my head. He may go to Oregon, stay just as long as he likes, and then return. He is not required to stay ten years. The Board thought the public would be satisfied and that I should go down. I think they are mistaken with respect to the public being satisfied, and will find that they have only increased the impression that the business has been badly managed.

Mr. Lee then entered into his personal history prior to his being employed by the Board, and said, if he alone had been affected, he

could have bourn it,—and assured the Board that he felt more for the cause than for himself. He then continued his remarks upon the Mission. The Walamette Valley would require more Missionaries than almost any other country, in proportion to numbers; and at the present time there must be a large amount of missionary labor expended there if they would retain possession of what [they] had got. The number of inhabitants had doubled last year. Of these 'twas true several were pious, but a large proportion of them were not so. It was a difficult thing to carry religion over the Rocky Mountains. The school at Oregon required another efficient man, if the Board carried it on. It would be folly to attempt to carry it on with the present amount of employed upon it. Mr. Lee again entered upon his personal history and future prospects, and put in sundry documents, one of which was a letter from Bro. Raymond requesting to be taken back into the Mission. This Mr. Lee had refused to do, but had promised to lay the subject before the Board. With Bro. R. he had had much trouble, and he knew not where to put him, or what to do with him. If he was going to work a farm for himself he would scarcely take him if he would work for nothing. He should fear he would break as much as he would earn—would work one day beyond human strength, and then be unfit for work for a week. Was a generous man when he enjoyed religion, but discontented otherwise. In relation to Dr. White's charges made against him in the New England Conference, Mr. Lee mentioned that one of the signatures, Mr. Joseph M. Loughlin's, attached to one of his testimonials was not written by Mr. M. L. nor with his knowledge, but Dr. White had persuaded another to *forge* his name. Mr. Lee then [showed] documents proving that the report he made of the doings of Dr. White at the meeting at the Catholic Church was correct.

Bro. Hines had intended to come home with him, not because he wished for his own part to leave the country, but because his wife could not be contented. He should not wonder if he came yet. He (Mr. H.) wished to know if they would pay his expenses to and from the Sandwich Islands. Mr. Lee thought they ought in view of the precedents established. Said that he Hines was willing to go back and labor as long as the Board required his services, but if *they* have no work for him he would rather come home. He stands high in the community there.

It became necessary that we should have some one there as Judge

with probate powers. We were obliged to do something to prevent bloodshed about the property of deceased persons. Dr. B. [Ira L. Babcock] was appointed [Supreme Judge, with probate powers, 1841-1843], and has gained the confidence of all parties.

The cry of speculation he (Mr. Lee) doubted not had also reference to the building a Mill there. The history of the matter is this; The Settlers became convinced that the H. B. Co. wished to monopolize the commerce. This injured the settlers and the Mission. They believed they could build a Mill [a flour mill in 1841; a sawmill in 1842] at the Falls that would bring in other vessels besides the H. B. Co's. They spoke to him about it, and he told them that he could go into no such speculation. They did build one and Dr. M. Loughlin put up another in opposition.

Our people would go and spend two or three days in a quarter, in the business charging themselves with the time. They thus get together and discuss matters, and see each other's faces. But he [Mr. Lee] always parried off and spoke against it, not that he was much opposed to that one thing, but he thought it safest to hold them back and let them feel that he held them responsible for every day's employment.

Mr. Pitman on behalf of the Board explained that the Episcopacy had suggested that they should send a Superintendent to Oregon, instead of an Agent. And Dr. Pitman further said that Bro. Lee was still a missionary in Oregon, and the Board could do or say nothing as to the future. It was with the Episcopacy.³⁶

Exoneration and public vindication. So well impressed were the members of his Mission Board with Lee's explanation of his administration of the Oregon Mission that they at once exonerated him from all the accusations and complaints that had been made by his dissatisfied associates. Had Lee's statement been presented to them previous to Rev. George Gary's appointment, it is improbable that Lee would have been dismissed; and had it not been too late to recall Gary, who by that time had already reached Oregon, Lee might have continued as Oregon Mission superintendent. The Board did what it could and Jason Lee retained his title, "Missionary to Oregon."

³⁶ Lee before Mission Board, Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, pp. 66-95.

Lee's conferences with his Mission Board began on Monday, July 1, and lasted until after Wednesday, July 10, 1844. After his public vindication, fatigued in mind and body by months of constant travel and numerous worries, Jason Lee determined to visit his Canadian home and there seek the rest he so much needed.

New Hampshire Conference. First, however, he attended the New Hampshire annual conference session, which convened at Portsmouth from July 13 to July 16, 1844. There, with his old-time eloquence, he delivered an address on the Oregon Mission. *Zion's Herald*, in its issue of July 17, 1844, made this reference to it:

Monday afternoon [July 15] at the Conference Rev. Jason Lee, Missionary from Oregon, then addressed the meeting on the origin and progress of the Oregon Mission. He said that hundreds of the heathen had been converted, and that scores had died in the triumphs of faith—that the torrent of intemperance had been rolled backward, and profanity and Sabbath breaking had been successfully rebuked—that a moral and religious influence had been thrown around hundreds of emigrants, and that a sure foundation has been laid for a future religious community in Oregon. At five o'clock in the afternoon the meeting was adjourned to half past seven o'clock in the evening. Mr. Lee's speech had great effect, and exhibited a truly missionary spirit.⁸⁷

In New York City again, on Tuesday, July 23, he wrote his Mission Board, requesting one of its members, toward whom he felt he was "an old friend," to file with the Board's report of his hearing this letter of July 23. In it he states that in the draft of the report submitted to him for correction he had found many serious errors. This letter is the last he is known to have written in the Atlantic States. It reads:

Will Bro. please read this sheet to the Board at their next meeting, and greatly oblige his old friend, J. Lee?
Rev'd. and Dear Brethren

In correcting the report of the statements I made before the Board,

⁸⁷ *Zion's Herald*, July 17, 1844, XV, p. 114.

I have found several gross mistakes, and very many of minor importance. So much so that those who only heard the uncorrected report read in the Board must have received many erroneous impressions. For instance, I said \$250 worth of cattle fell into my hands. The report says "150 head." The report says, "Bro. Abernethy told him that he (Mr. A.) cleared on his small goods \$10,000 in one year." I said no such thing.

These are only specimens, taken from among many. And I will add that I found it difficult to make a correct copy without rewriting it, and this I did not feel authorized to do. When there was but a shade of difference, I have let it pass; and also some things of a different meaning, if they were true. And have not in every instance inserted the qualifying word I used.

Something was said about printing that report. I hope it will not be done. I think more evil than good will come of it. You would not, of course, think of publishing it without the resolutions and documents which gave rise to it. For even the extracts I read are not all correctly quoted in the report. And to give all these things to the public I think would be injurious. Some extracts might be profitable. It will be a gratification to me if the Board will allow this sheet to be filed with the report.

Yours truly,

JASON LEE.³⁸

New York July 23, 1844.

Jason Lee remained in New York City until Thursday, July 25, when he deposited \$499 at five per cent per annum interest in the Bowery Savings Bank, at 110 Bowery. Interest at this rate was at that time paid on all sums under \$500.³⁹

Immediately after July 25, Lee traveled northward to attend the New England Conference, which was held at Westfield, Massa-

³⁸ Lee's letter to the Mission Board, Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, p. 96. Lee's "old friend" was Francis Hall, according to Daniel Lee in letter to J. W. Bashford (1889).

³⁹ Letter from Victor A. Lersner, Chairman of the Board of Directors, the Bowery Savings Bank. Jason Lee's account number was 13,939. Lee's account was withdrawn by George Lane, Executor, on November 6, 1845, the balance amounting to \$515.33. At the time of Lee's transaction, the bank was a small institution, only ten years old. Its present deposits (1931) total \$463,877,977.

chusetts. Here he again "powerfully and successfully advocated the claims of the Oregon Mission," and at his own request received the appointment of "Agent for the Oregon Institute."⁴⁰ It was his intention to travel in the Eastern states for a year or two before returning to Oregon, collecting funds for the benefit of this school which he had founded.⁴¹ His Conference associates urgently requested that he accept an appointment within the bounds of the New England Conference and remain in the East, but Lee refused because of his desire to return to Oregon.

Daniel Lee. On his northward way toward Stanstead, he stopped at Wilbraham and held a meeting in the interest of the Oregon Institute. At East Haverhill, New Hampshire, where Daniel Lee was now stationed, he stopped for a short visit. Daniel Lee, since the beginning of his Oregon ministry, had been a member of the Haverhill District of the New Hampshire conference and at the 1844 session was assigned to East Haverhill, New Hampshire.⁴² In August, Jason Lee reached his boyhood home at Stanstead, where his sister, Mary Lee Morrill, wife of a prominent Stanstead farmer, Archibald Morrill, welcomed him into her home,⁴³ where he hoped to find rest and recuperation. In the late summer, however, he contracted a severe cold. Hardship, fatigue, and worry had undermined his naturally rugged constitution. In a letter to his nephew, Daniel Lee, on October 19, he reports his continued ill health:

I have been some time under the doctor's care, and suffered much from the application of several large blisters, and have been so low that I could scarcely walk across my room. But now, I trust, the main disease is reached, and if that can be removed, I hope to be able to proceed to my work. To be resigned to do nothing, when I have

⁴⁰ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 7, 1844, XVIII, p. 207. Methodist Reports—Willamette Mission, *Oregon Historical Society Quarterly*, XXIII, p. 339.

⁴¹ New England Conference, 1845, *Minutes of Conferences, 1839-1845*, III.

⁴² *Christian Advocate and Journal*, August 7, 1844, XVIII, p. 207.

⁴³ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, p. 314. Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society, p. 97.

apparently so much to do, I find requires much grace; but blessed be God, his grace is always sufficient for us.⁴⁴

Last sermon. One Sunday in November Jason Lee preached his last sermon. At the request of the local minister, Rev. James Brock, he delivered a stirring address to his friends and relatives in the little Stanstead chapel. His illness had left its mark upon his countenance. His pale face bore traces of suffering and his clothes hung loosely upon his wasted frame. Always a tall man, emaciation made him appear taller than he really was.⁴⁵

His health continued to fail. During the winter of 1844 and 1845 he was confined more and more to his bed. Daniel Lee visited him on January 30, 1845. He noted with alarm that his idolized uncle was "mostly confined to his bed, being able to sit up but a small part of the day. He was much emaciated, had a cough, slept but little, and was exercised with severe pain a great part of the time."⁴⁶

About one week later, on February 7, Jason Lee wrote George Lane, Treasurer of the Mission Board, for the purpose of informing friends of his whereabouts. An extract of the message was printed in the *Christian Advocate and Journal* of March 5, 1845:

The effects of a severe cold have been gradually destroying my constitution for the last six months. I have had a cough, but it did not affect the lungs. I have been greatly afflicted with indigestion, until the pain in my bowels became so severe as to deprive me of rest day and night. I have been confined to my bed for several weeks. I do not think I receive any benefit from medical aid; and unless some favorable change should take place very soon, I see no other prospect than a few weeks will number me with them that are gone before. I have written the above that my friends may see where I am and how I am. I trust some will pray for me, and others write to me. I am admonished that I must close; but rest assured, beloved brethren, for me to live is

⁴⁴ Jason Lee Obituary Notice by Daniel Lee, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 23, 1845, XIX, p. 148.

⁴⁵ Hines, *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 315, 316.

⁴⁶ Jason Lee Obituary Notice by Daniel Lee, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 23, 1845, XIX, p. 148.

Christ, to die is gain. Farewell,—be faithful, then we'll meet in heaven.⁴⁷

Last letter to Oregon. The following day, February 8, Lee wrote a letter to Mr. and Mrs. Gustavus Hines in far-off Oregon. To them he had entrusted the care of his only child, and to this daughter his last thoughts constantly turned. Realizing that he would probably never see her again, he wrote:

Stanstead Canada Feb. 8/45.

My dear Brother & Sister Hines.

I have written you twice since I reached this Country, once by Mexico and once by Panama. I have heard nothing from you since I left you in Oahu. I have seen a notice in the *Advocate* that Br. Gary had arrived and that the missionaries were all well. I inferred that you had all reached Oregon in safety and were in good health. I suppose that you wrote by the same conveyance that Brother Gary wrote, for I have just received news that there are letters in New York for me. I think I mentioned in my last letter that I was afflicted with a severe cold, no medical aid that I was able to procure has been able to remove it. I have suffered severely from pain in the bowels, and am so reduced that I have been confined to my bed for several weeks, and unless some favorable change takes place soon it is my deliberate opinion that it will prove fatal.

If I should continue to fail I think I shall appoint an Executor here, and another in New-York, these I suppose will do all the business so that you can draw whatever money there may be in New-York without any trouble. There will be an opportunity by the "Express" to write you. Some favorable change may take place, and I may advise you to be looking out for me coming around Cape-Horn or threading my way up the Walhamet in a canoe as I used to do. But if I should never make my appearance, what shall I say concerning the "*dear little one.*" Let her have if possible a first rate education. But above all do not neglect her religious education, my Dear Brother & Sister. I must hold you responsible under God to train that child for Heaven.

I have nothing special to write. I get no news here. I suppose you will get the news in the papers. Tell Brother Beers his property is all

⁴⁷ *Christian Advocate and Journal* (March 5, 1845), XIX, p. 119.

safe. Most of it is in the hands of his own relatives who pay six per cent for the use of it, they can obtain it at any time for the same interest. The Missionary Society would pay no interest for it, I therefore left it where it was. Tell Meek I have been unable to learn anything concerning his business—Tell Doctor Babcock that his Draft which he gave me was protested, I hope he will pay the note according to promise the same as if the Draft had never been endorsed upon it. I remain your affectionate friend and Brother.

JASON LEE.⁴⁸

Kind regards to Dr. Babcock and family should you see them.

With the passing of the winter days of February, Jason Lee's health suffered a marked decline. Realizing the approach of death, Lee made his second will.⁴⁹ In late February, after a consultation of physicians, his case was pronounced almost hopeless. On March 9, 1845, Jason Lee requested his niece to write Daniel Lee to come to him. "Turn your horse this way," he said, "as soon as possible if you wish to see me alive," and he added, "I know he does, nothing would hinder him from coming if he thought he should see me alive once more before I go hence." "His sufferings," the letter continued, "are indescribably severe most of the time. He often wishes to go home, to fly away and be at rest."⁵⁰

On Wednesday, March 12, 1845, Jason Lee closed his eyes in a final sleep. Shortly before his death he lost the ability to speak, although he recognized all who visited him. His mind, unimpaired, seemed to wander to Oregon and he was once more in the land of his adoption.

A postmortem examination, according to Daniel Lee, exhibited two strictures in the intestines which had been the cause of much of the missionary's pain, and a diseased state of the lungs. The right lobe had become extensively attached to the walls of the chest, and the left lobe was found to be ulcerated in two places.⁵¹

⁴⁸ Lee to Rev. G. Hines, Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, pp. 107, 108.

⁴⁹ See Appendix V for a transcript of this will.

⁵⁰ Lee to Mr. Bond, editor *Christian Advocate*, in Jason Lee Oregon Historical Society, Manuscript Collection, Portland, Oregon, p. 103.

⁵¹ Daniel Lee to Mr. Bond, editor *Christian Advocate*, Jason Lee Manuscript Collection, Oregon Historical Society, Portland, Oregon, p. 104.

Burial of Jason Lee. On Friday, March 14, 1845, Jason Lee was buried in the little Stanstead graveyard. The text of the sermon preached at his funeral was taken from Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth."

Daniel Lee, in a sincere tribute, reflects upon the unusual fact that "he who had been exposed to death in so many forms, in the wilderness and on the deep, should escape them all and return to die in the embrace of his kindred! . . . His sun has gone down at noon."⁵²

⁵² Jason Lee Obituary Notice by Daniel Lee, *Christian Advocate and Journal*, April 23, 1845, XIX, p. 148.

CHAPTER XIV

IN RETROSPECT

JASON LEE came to Oregon in the gray morning of her history. He journeyed over the Oregon Trail while it was still a dimly blazed fur traders' trail; and nine years before it became the famous immigrant wagon road stretching from the Missouri frontier to Oregon City, Oregon. He arrived in Old Oregon in September, 1834.

His place in Oregon history, and in that of the entire Pacific Northwest, is important. He was the first missionary, either Catholic or Protestant, to enter the Oregon country. His arrival antedated the coming of any Protestant party by two years and the planting of the first Catholic mission by four years. He founded Oregon's first permanent American settlement. While it is true that about a half dozen scattered Americans were to be found in Oregon prior to 1834, they made no attempt at settlement. Since the days of the ill-starred Astoria venture, there had been attempts at colonization, but these had all ended in failure or disaster.

Jason Lee and his party planted in the Willamette Valley, in 1834, a mission colony that grew into permanent settlements at Salem and Oregon City. They possessed the land and built a mission station that became a center of American influence. In this sense, Lee laid the foundations of an American state.

Lee's vision of Oregon's future was prophetic and reveals a statesman's grasp and foresight. Looking down the coming years, he comprehended the important political and economic development that was to come; he saw before him the "germ of a new state." Although not essentially politically minded, Lee played a significant rôle, in part unconsciously yet strongly, in

starting the first ripples of immigration to this far Western frontier, first, through his eloquent and interesting lectures which stimulated an already widespread interest in the remote Oregon country; second, through his letter to Representative Caleb Cushing, of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, the best brief publicity document written for the extension of American jurisdiction over Oregon. Pointed, informative, reaching a wide public as part of a government report, and coming from an actual resident of the disputed region, it deserves an important rank among the documents which helped to gain Oregon for the United States, and to place the American flag officially over the states in the Pacific Northwest.

But Lee was first of all a missionary. As early as 1837, with characteristic New England clear-headedness he realized the futility of attempting to rescue the vanishing Indian race, and foresaw the future occupation of the country by white settlers of his own race. With a wisdom superior to that exhibited by any co-worker or mission-board official, he recognized as particularly the work of the Mission Board and church he represented, the firm establishment of the Methodist Church in Oregon, and the provision of facilities for the education of the population that was sure to come. Emphatically Jason Lee deserves the title, "Prophet of the New Oregon." Before his *Lausanne* company of missionaries reached their distant destination, he had formulated a plan for an Oregon university which should educate the children of future pioneers, and had laid out a large, well-thought-out program for the spiritual and social betterment of a white Oregon citizenry.

Appreciative notice should be accorded Lee for his part in laying the foundations of Oregon's economic life. He was an influential factor in introducing the cattle industry into Oregon. He successfully urged the Cushings of Massachusetts to begin a maritime trade with that far-off coast. Of prophetic significance also was Lee's informal commercial treaty with King Kamehameha III of Hawaii.

Jason Lee did not begin his missionary labors until he was

thirty years of age; he died when only forty-one. Only eleven short years, crowded with all the handicaps of far distances and pioneer conditions, yet how notably impressive are his achievements! His masterly conception of the future commonwealth of Oregon has been abundantly justified in the strategic importance and development, under American jurisdiction, of the sites he authorized as branch mission stations: Nisqually, near the modern Tacoma, on Puget Sound; Clatsop, near the mouth of the Columbia; The Dalles, the gateway to the present "Inland Empire"; Oregon City, the finest water-power site then known in Old Oregon. The educational foundations that he laid have served—and still are serving—well the people for whom they were planned.

Jason Lee was not destined to witness the fruitage of his well-laid, far-seeing plans. But "the years are seldom unjust." Time has vindicated the vision of Jason Lee and the projects for whose advocacy he suffered unjust recall and loss of office. "Virtue, not length of days, the mind matures"; and "that life is long which answers life's great end."

APPENDICES

APPENDIX I

LEE'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE SETTLEMENT OF THE OREGON BOUNDARY DISPUTE

THE claim that any one man "saved Oregon" has led to endless and useless controversy. It is clearly an historical verity to state that no one man at any time was a decisive factor in bringing to a conclusion this diplomatic dispute. The assertion is likewise historically sound that there never was a time when there was serious danger of losing the whole of Oregon, notwithstanding the indifference and delays of Congress and of the State Department.

The forced "sale" of Astoria; the apathy or delay of the State Department in heeding the Petition of Astor for redress of grievances; the aggressive policy of the Hudson's Bay Company within the territory of "joint occupancy"; the special interest of New England in problems relating to the northeastern boundary—none nor all of these factors were sufficient to cause the loss of Oregon to the United States. A careful reading of the activities of Congress from the close of the War of 1812 to 1846 will reveal the fact that, while Congress slumbered, the issue was not dead. Such men as Senator Thomas H. Benton, Senator Lewis F. Linn, and Dr. John Floyd never lost interest in the Pacific Northwest. More recent investigation shows that Andrew Jackson was awake to the interest of the United States on the Pacific Coast. From 1830 to 1840, publications, such as Rev. Samuel Parker's *Exploring Tour*; Townsend's *Narrative*; Irving's *Astoria* and *Captain Bonneville*; and Dana's *Two Years Before the Mast* reveal a deep and widespread interest in the Pacific Ocean and its problems.

The story of the Protestant missions must be interpreted primarily from this point of view: *i.e.*, as missions, not political undertakings. Their contribution to the settlement of the international boundary dispute was of necessity incidental to their own purposes; especially is this true of the Willamette Valley Mission. There is clear and closely connected evidence that from 1838 to 1846 the activity of the Willamette Mission in the promotion of its own affairs stimulated a deep and widespread interest, on the part of Congress and of the public, in the fertile soil, the mild climate, the rich and varied resources, the attractive scenery, and the strategic location of the Oregon country which resulted in an increasing determination to retain it, and made the question a major issue in the presidential campaign of 1844, with its picturesque slogan.

Consider Lee's visit in 1838 to the East with his lectures in eighty-eight cities and towns, including the capital of the nation; his meetings and lectures promoted by a great and influential denomination, or denominations, for others than the Methodist participated; consider Slacum's widely quoted report; consider the Second Petition or Memorial of the Oregonians framed at Lee's Mission House; the introduction of the Linn Bill; of Cushing's elaborate and learned report embodying two Lee documents, with a publication and distribution of 10,000 copies; consider the fact that Lee's widely attended and published lectures dwelt upon the desirability of the Pacific Coast as a place of settlement and thus assisted in awakening an interest that sent the Peoria Party to Oregon in the spring of 1839 and was a factor in bringing between eight hundred and a thousand settlers, from many states, without previous inter-correspondence of any moment, to a fixed point in the early spring of 1843, with many others in succeeding years pressing after them, all bound for the Willamette Valley; consider the Provisional Government and the important part Lee's Mission had in its inception and promotion; consider that experienced politicians saw in the movement for an American Oregon vitality

enough to make it an issue in a presidential campaign on the basis of our claims to the territory,—when all these contributions are appreciated one cannot doubt that, though incidental and not primary, the Lee Mission was a significant factor in the settlement of the Oregon boundary controversy.

APPENDIX II

FEDERAL INTEREST IN OLD OREGON

1. *A Tribute to Lee's Service to Temperance*

ON December 22, 1836, there landed at the mouth of the Columbia River, William A. Slacum, a purser in the United States Navy, sent out by John Forsyth, Secretary of State during Jackson's administration, as Federal Agent, to visit the Oregon settlements, discover the relative number of white men and Indians, the total population, and the condition of the inhabitants. He was also to investigate a certain episode¹ which had reached the ears of the Jackson administration. This incident will be briefly told.

While the missionaries were building their first house, there arrived overland from California a party of Americans led by two men named Ewing Young and Hall J. Kelley. Dr. McLoughlin had received word from Governor José Figueroa, of California, that these men were horse thieves. (This statement was found to be untrue so far as Young and Kelley were concerned.) As a result of this intelligence, Dr. McLoughlin refused to have any dealings with any of the party. The accusation of being a horse thief embittered Young. Later this accusation was contradicted by Governor Figueroa himself, and Dr. McLoughlin did what he could to make amends, but Young remained unforgiving.

When Fort William was abandoned in 1836, Young obtained from Wyeth a large caldron that had been used in pickling salmon, and with Lawrence Carmichael, another member of the California party, decided to establish a distillery and sell whiskey

¹ Edmond S. Meany, *History of the State of Washington* (New York, 1909), p. 98.

to the Indians and settlers.² This unusual enterprise was a subject of anxiety to both the Hudson's Bay Company and the settlers. When Young's plan was made public, a meeting of the Oregon Temperance Society was called at Lee's mission house on January 2, 1837. At this conference it was decided to send a request to Young and Carmichael, asking them to discontinue their enterprise. The letter containing the request was dated January 2, 1837, and was signed by a committee of four, of which Jason Lee was the chairman, and by twenty-six settlers. This request of the committee was strengthened by the coöperation of William A. Slacum, Federal representative and agent of the Jackson administration. Mr. Slacum was authorized by the authorities at Fort Vancouver to tell Young that "if he would abandon his enterprise of distilling whiskey he would be permitted to get his necessary supplies from Vancouver on the same terms as other men." Slacum advised Young to accept this proposal, but Young was still inclined to go forward with the distillery project. Slacum even offered to lend Young \$150. To this amount he might purchase supplies in Slacum's name at Fort Vancouver. Slacum also assured Young that he would grant him a free passage to California on his ship the *Loriot*. Young was extremely anxious to go to California in order to clear himself of the charges made against him by the Governor of California. For all these reasons, when he received the letter from the Oregon Temperance Society requesting him to abandon "the manufacture of ardent spirits," Young acceded to their request, and on January 13, 1837, sent them a signed statement that he and Carmichael would discontinue the distillery enterprise. The "favorable circumstances," to which Young refers in his letter of January 13, are Slacum's offers of aid.³

Lieutenant Slacum's tribute to Jason Lee's pioneering service for the cause of temperance is impressive. Slacum was not merely an actor in the event described and an eyewitness, but the first official commissioned by the Federal Government to visit Old Oregon:

² Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, pp. 91-98.

³ Slacum's report on Oregon, Sen. Doc. No. 24, 25 Cong., 2 Sess., pp. 1-31.

It would be doing the Messrs. Lees and their associates injustice were I to omit speaking of their happy and successful efforts in establishing a temperance society among men who are generally considered almost without the pale of moral restraint—I mean trappers. And it affords me great pleasure to add that every white man in the settlement entertains the highest respect for the conduct of the Lees and their associates. This circumstance is sufficient evidence of their worth. After duly considering the great benefit that would result to this thriving country if the distillery of Ewing Young could be prevented from being put into operation; and inasmuch as he candidly admitted that it was nothing but sheer necessity that compelled him to adopt the measure, I told him (Young) that I thought he had gained his point, as I was authorized by Mr. Finlayson to say, "if he would abandon his enterprise of distilling whiskey, he could be permitted to get his necessary supplies from Vancouver, on the same terms as other men"; and farther, I proposed to loan him one hundred and fifty dollars, get him a supply of decent clothing from the fort, in my name, and give him and his partner, Carmichael, a passage to California; as he informed me he was exceedingly anxious to go thither to clear himself of the calumny that Gen. Figacon [Figueroa] had, through Dr. M'Laughlin, circulated against him, producing in effect the most unjustifiable persecution. Mr. Young seemed deeply sensible of my offer; and said a cloud had hung over him so long, through Dr. M'Laughlin's influence, that he was almost maddened by the harsh treatment he had received from that gentleman. I left him under a promise of receiving an answer next day.⁴

2. Federal Inspection of Oregon Conditions

Upon receiving his appointment, Slacum had proceeded to Mexico, whence he sailed to the Sandwich Islands. There he chartered a small brig, the *Loriot*. He arrived at the mouth of the Columbia River, as had been stated, on December 22, 1836.⁵ On January 2, 1837, he landed at Fort Vancouver, where he remained a few days as the guest of Dr. McLoughlin. On January 10 he set out for the Willamette Valley settlements in a canoe furnished by

⁴ *Christian Advocate and Journal* (January 4, 1839), XIII, p. 77.

⁵ Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, p. 101.

his host, Dr. McLoughlin. At Champoege, eighteen miles below the mission, he was greeted by Jason Lee, whom McLoughlin had informed of Slacum's arrival. Lee conducted Slacum to the mission house where they arrived at about eleven o'clock on the night of January 14. During Slacum's brief visit at Willamette, Lee greatly assisted him in his census taking, and accompanied him on his calls upon all the settlers in this area.

Slacum's own account of his visit to Jason Lee's mission house is a charming narrative:

Having received a commission from the late Executive of the United States to proceed to the Columbia River, to inquire into the political, statistical, and geographical condition of the country, I crossed the Continent: through Mexico, and reached the Gulf of California. It was my intention to have proceeded through the country bordering on the shores of the Pacific Ocean, but meeting with difficulties which I could not surmount, I was compelled to go to the Sandwich Islands, to procure a vessel to take me into the Columbia. It was here I first heard, from the Rev. J. W. Parker, that the Methodist Episcopal Church in N. York had established a mission in the valley of the "Willamette" (the *Multnoma* of Lewis & Clark) and on my arrival at Fort Van Couver, the principal depot of the Hudson's Bay Co., on the Columbia, I had this information fully confirmed by Dr. McLoughlin, the "chief doctor," who told me the problem was now fairly established that the Western Indians were now willing to receive instruction.

I determined to visit the mission: imbarcking in a light canoe, with my servant and six Indians, I soon entered the Willamette, or Multnoma, which falls into the Columbia about 80 miles from its mouth. Nothing can exceed the beauty of this noble river: although it was now mid-winter, the hills were clothed with evergreens, and their sides were fringed with ferns and wild flowers to the water's edge. It was about midnight of the second day after my departure from Vancouver, when I reached camp "Maud au Sable [Campment du Sable]," the first settlement of the whites on the river; and it is now nearly two years since I was greeted by the friendly voice of Jason Lee, who called to me from the shore to direct me where to land—for the current was rapid, and the night was dark and chill. We met on the

shores of the Multnoma; and I trust I shall neither be suspected of partiality or prejudice, in speaking of my friend Mr. Lee as I think he merits; for I do not belong to the religious sect that sent him thither.

I am one, however, of the few white men who have seen Jason Lee at his post, imparting mental and physical instruction to those who slumbered in the profoundest ignorance of God's commandments. I have seen him rearing the temple of God in the vast wilderness; I have seen him casting aside the sectarian prejudices that might have influenced other men—administering the last consolation of our most holy religion to those who are without a pastor, and of a different faith—and when the Canadian mother pressed her dying infant to her bosom, I have seen the tear of gladness gushing from her eyelid, under the hope that by *his* act of consecrating the last sign of our faith, her offspring was rendered worthy of being received into the kingdom of God. I have seen him, too, arresting one of the greatest evils to which the white and red man are subject, by establishing a temperance society among those who are proverbially beyond the pale of moral restraint. I mean the trappers, west of the Rocky Mountains. Let it not be imagined that their exit was without danger or difficulty; for it was not so. Jason Lee was openly reviled and taunted by some of those by whom he was surrounded, but he bore this with the true courage of a Christian minister: at length, these very men became convinced of the purity and integrity of his character.

The next night [Saturday, January 14, 1837] about 11 o'clock, we reached the mission house, being much worn and fatigued, and soon retired to rest; the next day I awoke to a scene of the deepest interest: the morning bells aroused the children to prepare for the duties of the day; they soon assembled around their pious pastor, and joined in hymns of praise to their great Creator. I will now read you an extract from the official reports I made to the department of state, and which was printed by Order of Congress:

The Rev. Jason Lee, missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church of New York, having heard, through Dr. M'Laughlin, of my intention to visit the Willamette settlement, politely came down from the mission house, distant eighteen miles [to Champoege] to meet me at this place. In company with this gentleman, I called on all the settlers in the lower settlement, and next day visited the mission house and upper

settlement. No language of mine can convey an adequate idea of the great benefit these worthy and most excellent men, the Messrs. Jason and Daniel Lee, and Messrs. Shepherd and Edwards, their assistants, have conferred upon this part of the country; not by precept, but *example*, as I think the following result of their labors will show.—To use Mr. Jason Lee's own words, "It was, after having heard that an Indian, of the Flat-Head tribe, had crossed the Rocky Mountains to inquire of Gov. Clark, at St. Louis, about the *God* that the 'pale faces' worshipped, that first led me to think of establishing a mission west of the mountains."

Two years since, last October, Mr. Lee's party encamped on the ground where their dwelling now stands, immediately on the banks of the Willamette. They commenced felling timber with their own hands, and by Christmas they erected the frame of their house and had it half closed in, and fenced twenty-four acres of land. In the spring they put in a crop, which produced the first year, 1835, one hundred and fifty bushels of wheat, thirty-five of oats, fifty-six of barley, eighty-seven of peas, and two hundred and fifty of potatoes. In the second year, 1836, five hundred bushels of wheat, two hundred of peas, forty of oats, thirty of barley, four and a half of corn, three and a half of beans, and three hundred and nineteen of potatoes, with a full supply of garden vegetables.

They have built a good barn, added to their dwelling house, which now consists of four large rooms, eighteen by twenty feet, garret and cellar, have a good garden, and one hundred and fifty acres of land inclosed under good fencing. With the exception of three months' hired labor of a carpenter, to finish the inside of the dwelling and make tables, forms, etc., for the school room, the above is the work of these pious and industrious men, assisted by the Indian children of the school.

Their family at present consists of three adults, nineteen full-blooded and four half-breed Indian children, ten of whom are orphans. Seven girls and fifteen boys attend the school: likewise eight half-breed children of the neighboring settlers. The children are taught to speak English. Several of them read perfectly well. They are all well clothed and fed, and are already very cleanly in their habits. The larger boys work on the farm in warm weather. They can plough, reap, and do all ordinary farm work well. Several of them evince

good mechanical genius. Mr. Lee assures me that most of the boys have earned their board, clothing, and tuition, estimating their labor at the lowest rate of wages allowed by the Hudson Bay Company.

Their school and family could be much increased, but they do not wish to add to their number until they receive farther assistance; thinking it the wisest plan at present, for the sake of example, to attend strictly to the mental and physical instruction of these "Neophytes."

The land on which the mission house is established is rich alluvial deposit, interspersed with good timber. Brother Lee acknowledges the kindest assistance from Doctor M'Laughlin, of Fort Vancouver, who gave him the use of horses, oxen, and milch cows, and furnished him with all his supplies. Indeed, Dr. M'Laughlin has acted toward many of the settlers in a similar manner, giving them the use of cattle and horses on the following terms: The *produce* of the neat cattle and horses belong to the Hudson Bay Company, and are liable to be called for at any time. If the cattle die, the persons holding them are charged with their value. Horses to be returned in kind, or the sum of eight dollars, the current value of a horse, is charged.⁵

Mr. Slacum's cordial attitude toward Lee and the missionary enterprise was further attested in connection with the purchase of cattle to be brought from California. This incident has been told on pages 84-88.

⁵ *Christian Advocate and Journal*, January 4, 1839, XIII, p. 77.

APPENDIX III

JASON LEE AND THE WALLER-McLOUGHLIN LAND CLAIM CONTROVERSY DOCUMENTS

IN Oregon much contention has arisen over Jason Lee's relation to the Waller-McLoughlin Land Claim Controversy. This historic dispute arose over the ownership of a tract of land included in the town site of the modern Oregon City, Oregon. The documents here presented will afford an opportunity for readers to consult evidence hitherto unavailable. The exhibits listed on pages 292 to 316 were compiled by Dr. McLoughlin and constituted what he regarded as a defense of his position as the lawful claimant to the property in dispute as against the claim of the Reverend A. F. Waller. Lee left the Willamette Valley in December 1843, learned of his removal as Mission superintendent in the following February, and died in March, 1845. The available letters written by Lee between 1840 and 1845, which appear in this biography, his statements before his Mission Board in July, 1844, together with the documents appearing in this Appendix, comprise all the known existing evidence regarding his connection with this century-old dispute.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

There are no satisfactory published works on Lee's relation to the Waller-McLoughlin Land Claim Controversy. The best single collection of source material on this subject is the series of documents used in this work, and on file in the *Office of Indian Affairs, Oregon File, W 2477*, Washington, D. C. Copies of this file are in the Manuscript Collection of the Oregon Historical Society, Portland Oregon.

In the Manuscript Collection of the Bancroft Library, University of California, are the McLoughlin Private Papers, in McLoughlin's handwriting. They were obtained by H. H. Bancroft from Mrs. Daniel Harvey, a daughter of McLoughlin. This collection does not include several of the important documents and letters in the *Office of Indian Affairs File* above cited.

An important statement by McLoughlin concerning his land claim and several other matters is his *Copy of a Document Found among the Private*

Papers of the late Dr. John McLoughlin. (The original paper, of which this is a copy, is written in Dr. McLoughlin's handwriting—Harvey.) This document is printed in the *Transactions of the Oregon Pioneer Association for 1880*, pp. 46-55.

Mrs. Victor's monumental work in two volumes, published as Bancroft's *History of Oregon*, maintains a critical attitude in its appraisal of missionary activities.

There is a short treatment of the Oregon City Land Claim Controversy in Bashford's *Oregon Missions*, pp. 216-225. This brief account, by a bishop of the Methodist Church, although approached in a spirit of fairness, is written from the pro-missionary viewpoint. The value of the work is limited by the fact that it is based on Bancroft's *History of Oregon* and H. K. Hines' *Missionary History of the Pacific Northwest*, two older secondary works.

Frederick V. Holman, *Dr. John McLoughlin*, is an able lawyer's brief for Dr. McLoughlin. This biography is the best published work on McLoughlin and is especially valuable for its orderly collection of documents, which are, however, by no means complete. This work was published in 1907, prior to the appearance in print of many Hudson's Bay Company documents and letters, now accessible. Large collections of Hudson's Bay Company documents still repose in the main London office, and in the branch offices of the "Great Company" even at this date (1932). When these sources become available, the inviting task of writing a definitive life of McLoughlin awaits some scholar equipped with the proper training and background of research.

McLoughlin's Statement

Office of Indian Affairs, Oregon File W2477,
Vancouver, 1st March, 1844.

In 1829 I set about building a Saw Mill at the Falls of the Willamette and had a party residing there the whole winter. They built three log houses and prepared the wood for a Saw Mill but it not suiting my purpose to erect it then I dropped it for the time and in the spring of 1830 had potatoes planted there. In 1832 I had the mill race blasted and in the spring of 1838 I got all the squared timber hauled to the spot and a small building erected to serve as a house and store, to replace the houses which had been built in 1829 and afterwards destroyed by Indians. In 1840 the Reverend Jason Lee applied to me for some of the squared wood I had at the Falls to build for the Mission and which he would return when required. To this request I agreed, and at the same time sent Dr. Tolmie to point out to him how much I wanted to reserve for my Mill yard and to show him where he might build, and wrote Mr. Lee the following letter.

McLoughlin to Lee

Vancouver, 21st July, 1840.

To the Rev'd Jason Lee.

Dear Sir:

Yesterday I was informed that you intend to establish a mission at the Falls of the Wallamette. I beg to inform you that in 1830, as is well known to most of the old settlers in the Wallamette, I took possession of the side of the Falls on which I got a mill race blasted, from the upper end of the Falls, across to the Clackamas River, and down to where the Clackamas falls into the Wallamette, including the whole point of land and the smaller Island in the Falls on which the portage is made, and which I intend to claim when the Boundary line is drawn.

Though I intend to send our ship Vancouver to Calefornia [sic] still I cannot speak decidedly till she arrives, however I am of opinion we will send a vessel to Calefornia certainly this Fall, and when one goes it will afford me great pleasure to accomodate [sic] Mr. Crate [in charge of sawmills five or six miles above Fort Vancouver] with a passage on the same terms as those paid p. (?) *Lausanne* from this to Calefornia. I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

Sign'd J. McLOUGHLIN.

Private

P. S. Of course this is not to prevent your building the store, as my object is merely to establish my claim.

Sign'd JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

McLoughlin's Comment

Mr. Lee proceeded to erect a building with the wood I lent him, and divided the building into two apartments, one end for a dwelling house and the other for a store, in the former of which Mr. Waller resides at present.

In 1841 Mr. F. Hathaway had some timber in the Island to

build as I thought at the time for a Milling Company, that had been formed in the Wallamette, but I since learned it was for himself, however I gave him formal notice of my claim, and erected a small house on the Island. He desisted for a time, but afterwards proceeded with the building. When at the Falls on this business, conversing with the Rev'd Mr. Waller on the subject of Mr. Hathaways jumping my claim, he asked me if I had any other claim. I told him that I had no other, that the Falls was the only place I claimed in the Country. "Have you no claim," says Mr. Waller "at the Clackamas?" I answered that I had not. "Well," said Mr. Waller, "my claim is at the Clackamas."

In the fall of 1842 I heard a rumour that Mr. Waller was starting pretensions in opposition to my claim at the Falls, & the Rev. Mr. Lee happening to call here, I spoke to him on the subject to which Mr. Lee replied that he had heard such a report and that he had spoken to the Rev'd Mr. Waller and that the latter told him [Mr. Lee] that he set up no such claim. Some days after this, I think in Nov., 1842, Mr. Stephen [H. L.] Meek applied to me for a building lot. I told him to select a lot and I would go there in a few days to give him possession of it. He accordingly went to the Falls, but returned in a few days to tell me that Mr. Waller had opposed his making a selection, and had told him that he was much obliged to me for giving away lots on his claim, that he could do so himself, on which I wrote the following letter to Mr. Lee:

McLoughlin to Lee

Fort Vancouver, 18th Nov., 1842.

To the Rev'd Jason Lee,
Superintendent of the M. Mission,
Oregon.

Dear Sir:

When I had the pleasure of seeing you last, I mentioned to you that I had been informed that the Rev'd Mr. Waller of your Mission, now stationed at the Falls of the Wallamette, claimed the

land I claim at that place, to which I understood you to reply that you had heard such a report and that you had spoken to the Rev'd Mr. Waller, and that he had told you he put no claim. Will you do me the favour to let me know if I understood you correctly or not, as Mr. [Stephen H. L.] Meek to whom I had given a building lot came to me today and informed me that Mr. Waller had ordered him not to build there as he claimed one mile square at the place. I am

Reverend Sir,
Your Ob't humble Ser't,
Sign'd JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

And received the following answer:

Lee to McLoughlin

Wallamette, 28th Nov., 1842.

My dear Sir:

Yours of the 18th instant came safe to hand and I now embrace the earliest opportunity to send you a reply.

I said to you that I had conversed with Mr. Waller on the subject of claims at the Falls, and that I understood him to say that he set up no claims in opposition to yours, but if your claim failed and the Mission did not put in a claim, he considered that he had a better right than any *other man* and should secure a title to the land if he could.

From what I have since heard I am inclined to think I did not understand Mr. Waller correctly, but I am not certain it is so.

You will here allow me to say that a Citizen of the United States by becoming a Missionary does not renounce any civil or political right. I cannot controul any man in these matters, though I had not the most distant idea when I stationed Mr. Waller there that he would set up a private claim to the land.

As I am inclined to think I misunderstood Mr. Waller before, I can say nothing further on that point, but as Mr. Waller acts entirely on his own private responsibility in this matter, I would

beg leave respectfully to suggest the propriety of an understanding being had between yourself and Mr. Waller on this subject.

I presume he can have no objection to state to you distinctly his claim (if he has any) if you desire him to do so, and I can but hope that a *mutual understanding* will produce *mutual satisfaction*.

Please allow me to trouble you to say to Mr. [Dougal] Mac-tavish [an accountant at Fort Vancouver] that Mr. Bishop's draft in my favour came safe to hand.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Yours truly,

sig' JASON LEE,

S. O. M.

To John McLoughlin, Esqr.,
C. F. H. H. B. Co.

McLoughlin's Comment

When I received the above letter [from Jason Lee of Nov. 28, 1842] I was at the Falls and had seen the Rev'd Mr. Waller with whom I had a conversation on the subject of his pretension to my claim, in which he told me that he set up no counter claim to mine, but that he would assert his right in the event of my claim being withdrawn.

He stated a wish that I would let him keep the land he had cleared and allow those to whom he had given lots to retain them, to which I assented, as I considered that his and their residence was beneficial to the place, provided he ceded to me an equal extent out of his claim adjoining mine, to which he agreed. Two days after [in early December, 1842] I employed Mr. Hudspeth [J. M. Hudspeath, an immigrant of 1842] to survey and mark the boundaries of my claim, after which he proceeded to measure what Mr. Waller had cleared and fenced upon it, and as we were going to measure the same extent out of his which he was to make over to me in exchange of the Lots I had consented to his holding

on my claim, Mr. Waller suddenly stopped and said "I will keep mine, keep you yours. I hope you will give me a lot as to the others," meaning as I had done to those to whom he had promised lots. I told him I would, but Mr. Hastings gave him two in the same way as the others, and though Mr. Waller was informed in time to apply for his deed, he did not and retains forcible possession to this day, but to return to the subject, surprised at this unexpected change of purpose I stopped and looked at him when he repeated "do you keep yours. I will keep mine." I gave a call to Mr. Hastings and Mr. Hudspeth and I believe Mr. [Walter] Pomeroy [an immigrant of 1842] was there also, when Mr. Waller repeated the same words before these gentlemen.

The next day [in early December, 1842] as I was embarking in my canoe to leave the Falls Mr. Waller came to me to renew the bargain and exchange but I refused him. He came a second and third time when I referred him to my agent Mr. Hastings who was instructed to accept or decline the proposals as he thought best in the case. Mr. Hastings did not accept the exchange, but agreed to pay Mr. Waller for the land he had cleared on the west side of middle or main street. He accordingly paid him twenty-five dollars by an order on me, and I was surprised last summer [summer of 1843] to learn that Mr. Waller had put in a further claim for a clearance on the east side of the road, for which he demanded a hundred dollars, and I agreed to pay the sum, but the Rev'd Mr. Lee acting in behalf of Mr. Waller would only accept of fifty dollars for which I now hold his receipt.

In the summer [autumn] of 1843 when Mr. Ricord passed here [on his way to Oregon City], he mentioned that as I was a british subject I could not hold the Falls of the Wallamette. As this was the first time I heard this objection stated and hearing he was a lawyer, I offered him a fee and asked him if he could point out a way by which I could hold the claim at the Falls.

He declined to give an opinion, but a few days after he and Mr. Lee came here, and Mr. Ricord handed me the following letter:

Attorney Ricord to McLoughlin

[November 2, 1843.]

John McLoughlin, Esq're,
C. F. H. H. B. Co.

Sir:

In reply to your proposal for retaining me professionally to establish your claim on the Wallamette known as Oregon City, I have the honour to inform you that my original design was to have merely passed through the territory to the Sandwich Islands with as little delay as possible, but since the opportunity is thus presented for benefitting myself and others in a matter of considerable importance, I shall be most happy to serve you on the following conditions:

That your preemption line be so run as to exclude the Island upon which a private company of Citizens have erected a grist mill, conceding to them as much water as may be necessary for the use of said Mill.

That the Rev'd A. F. Waller be secured in the ultimate title to the two City lots now in his possession, and other lots not exceeding five acres to be chosen by him from among unsold lots of your present survey.

The Rev'd Jason Lee on behalf of the M. E. Mission be also in like manner secured in regard to certain lots in Oregon City.

For my services in attempting to establish your preemption to the land in question the sum of 300 pounds sterling money.

The first three mentioned conditions are induced by a wish to escape the censure of several personal friends in this country, to diminish at the same time as much as possible the opposition which I am convinced will be made to your claim and to secure in your behalf the valuable testimony of some important witnesses, as to the last my own services will I trust imply such an amount of labour as to render it satisfactory to you.

I would desire not to make public the fact of my retainer, lest any person unfriendly to your claim should in the meantime endeavor to counteract my efforts. Conciliation ought to be observed

towards those who heretofore pretended to hold adverse possession of the same tract and such a course as to enlist the good wishes and feelings of the Wallamette Citizens generally. To this end I would recommend the appointment as your agent of some one not directly connected with the Hon'ble Bay Company.

In case of retainer my labour will be confined to the reduction of all such testimony as can be had on the support of your claims; to drafting a caveat with a written argument in its support, founded upon the treaties of amity, commercial & joint occupation, and upon the general laws for the naturalization of foreigners; and a letter of advice to you upon the views to be taken of your claim, and the course most advisable to be followed by you in regard to all.

By such measures I have entire confidence in the final result of your cause.

I have the honour to be
Your Obed't Servant,
sign'd JOHN RICORD.

These terms of Mr. Ricord's appear to propose an ami[c]able arrangement where all the sacrifices were to be made by me, however I requested time to consider, and asked ten days, which was allowed, and at the expiration of that time I wrote him the following letter:

McLoughlin to Attorney Ricord

Vancouver 10th Nov. 1843.

John Ricord, Esquire.

Dear Sir:

I have delayed answering yours of the 2nd Instant [of November, 1843] to the present time in the expectation that our express would arrive and afford me an opportunity of visiting you at Oregon City and of discussing the points to which I object, as though most anxious to do everything I can to promote a good feeling among the members of our little community, still the desire

ought to be mutual. But in the document you gave me the concessions are all to be on my side, and some of these are perfectly inadmissible as they are out of my power. For instance how can I dispossess Mr. Meek of his lots. But before proceeding further it is necessary for me to know if I am to consider you as my legal adviser or not, as in the event of my not coming to terms with those Gentlemen, I wish to know how you and I will be placed, and to be candid with you I do not see how I can do myself the pleasure to accept of your services on the conditions proposed.

I am,

Dear Sir,

Your Obed't humble Serv't,

Sign'd JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

To this I received the following reply:

Attorney Ricord to McLoughlin

Oregon City, 17th Nov., 1843.

J. McLoughlin, Esq're,

C. F. H. H. B. Co.

Sir:

I am sincerely sorry to learn through your favour of the 10th Inst [November 10] that I am precluded from serving you honourably in the matter of your claim, that is that you decline to comply with the only proposals under which I could with respect to my friends at the Falls hope to make good your title. The condition in my communications of the 2nd Instant were intended to remove all semblance of impropriety on my part, and at the same time to benefit your claim by removing all opposition on the part of any person in this country, while on the contrary you would find in your friendly opponent a friend and cooperator. I do yet hope that an interview with Mr. Waller will enable you so to accomodate matters that I may render you the services proposed.

But if this cannot be I shall then have nothing to detain me

longer in Oregon and with your consent should like to pursue my intended voyage to the Sandwich Islands by the first opportunity. Will you therefore be pleased to inform me whether I can obtain passage on board your next vessel about to sail, and if so how soon.

You enquire whether or not you are to consider me your legal adviser I steadily declined to become such while at Vancouver except upon the conditions presented in my letter, and I hope now that my inability to become your adviser under these circumstances will not occasion in your mind a distrust of my motives.

That I design so soon to leave the country is in part the result of my not being retained in your case, a circumstance which must necessarily have delayed me till spring. I assure you Sir that my feelings towards you are in no way changed and I still as at first continue to be

Your humble friend &
Obedient Servant
Sign'd JOHN RICORD.

Waller to Senator Linn

Wallamette Falls, Oregon, 6th Dec., 1843.

Hon. Lewis F. Linn,¹

Senator in Congress.

Sir,

Cut off as I am from all organization, by which my fellow citizens in other parts of the Union are enabled to procure, defend and secure their rights, I take the liberty as of necessity, to appeal to you, the patron and friend of those who have first encountered the trials and privations of a Settlement in this faroff wilderness; And although from different States of the Union, I feel assured that if any relief can be afforded me which depends upon your exertions, you will cheerfully render them in my behalf.

I came to reside in Oregon in 1840 with my family consisting of

¹ Senator Linn died October 3, 1843. This fact was, of course, unknown to Waller.

a wife and two children—located upon a piece of land then unoccupied by any one else—cleared a portion of it—built a house upon it, removed my family into it, and fenced, and for two years and a half cultivated, a portion of the land. At the end of that time, Dec. 1842, when emigration had fairly commenced to this country, Dr. McLaughlin, thinking to make a favorable speculation for the Hudsons Bay Company, seized upon my farm, which was favorably situated for such a purpose, and had it subdivided into Lots to sell to the settlers newly arrived. This he has already done to the extent of some fifty or sixty lots of his survey, at one hundred dollars each, and among the rest, actually including the lot upon which, according to his survey, my house is situated.

Under these circumstances I have been advised to file my Caveat & Proofs in the office of the Commissioner General of the Land Office at Washington, as the foundation for my future claim to the land, whenever through the patriotic exertions you are making, Congress shall see fit to prescribe the conditions and considerations upon which the title to land may be acquired in this Territory. I have transmitted by the same conveyance a duplicate of my Caveat, & proofs, including a protest, to the President of the United States for his information; and praying for his interference in my behalf. Also by the advice of counsel, I have made direct exparte application by Petition in Equity, to the Supreme Court of the United States, for an Injunction, founded upon a violation of the Treaty of Joint Occupancy, avowing the Title to be in the United States—and for a Commission to perpetuate my testimony *de bene esse*.

Will you be pleased Sir, to examine the Documents alluded to in the hands of the Rev. Jason Lee, who can more fully explain to you the merrits of my case; and to further their disposition as above indicated. If it becomes necessary to employ counsel to submit my petition to the Chief Justice at Chambers, please select and employ one for me. The Rev. Mr. Lee will be able to name the most suitable persons in this country to take testimony as Commissioners, and the most proper person to serve the Writ of

injunction, as well as, to supply in person, any circumstances which may have been casually omitted in the proofs; as he has been for many years a resident in this Collony, and is intimately acquainted with all the facts of my case.

I know it to be a novel procedure, but although unprecedented, it is nevertheless constitutional, just and right; and I have confidence that with your friendly assistance I shall prevail.²

I am very Respectfully

Your Obt Servt.

A. F. WALLER.

Addressed:

Hon. Lewis F. Linn
 Senator in Congress
 Washington, D. C.

McLoughlin on Ricord's Last Interview

Mess'rs Lee and Ricord passed here [Monday, December 11, 1843] on their way to embark on board the *Columbia* and according to the invitation held out by Mr. Ricord I made the following offer:

To allow the Methodist Mission

2 lots for a Church

2 do " " House for Clergymen (men)

2 do " " School

2 do " " schoolmaster.

These lots to be taken out of the unconceded lots in blocks between streets no. 8 & 13 and they will restore me the lots

1 2 3 4

5 6 7 8 in blocks no. 29 and 4 & 5 in blocks no. 28.

As to the house occupied by Mr. Abernethy I will appoint two arbitrators, the Mission will appoint two, these will nominate a fifth and I will pay what these arbitrators state the building is worth. I will allow the Mission 1 lot on which their store is built, 1 Lot on which is the house Mr. Waller lives in, and if the

² *William Allen Papers*, vol. 3:40453, Library of Congress.

Mission is withdrawn or gives up keeping a Store, in either case the lots to revert to me, and I will pay for the improvements; or if they will give them up now, I will pay now for the improvements, and give them two lots in their place alongside of the school and church. It must be understood in making the estimation that Mr. Waller's house was built with my timber.

The Milling Company to go on as they have done, and when the Boundary is settled if government admits my claim I will appoint two arbitrators, the milling Company will appoint two, these four will nominate a fifth, these five will estimate the value of the work done by the milling Company on the Island and the value of the place they occupy and it will be optional for me to take their buildings and pay the value of the buildings or to give over to them my claim, and they shall be bound to pay the estimated value put on it by the arbitrators.

My reason for wishing to get the lots 1 2 3 4
5 6 7 8 in blocks no.
29 and 4 and 5 in blocks no. 28 is that I want them for my establishment.

I handed these terms to Mr. Ricord and subsequently to Mr. Lee, and verbally stated to Mr. Lee that I did not see that Mr. Waller had any claims upon me. But if they could show me that he had any I would willingly admit them, as I did not wish to have his or any other man's services for nothing, that I was anxious that mutual good will should exist in our little community, and they both appeared to express to me that they considered the terms fair and liberal, and seemed to regret that they had no power to treat for Mr. Waller for whom Mr. Lee seemed to interest himself much, and requested me to call on Mr. Waller which I promised to do and have since done.

Mr. Lee inquired if I intended to take any measures to repossess the Mission Lots before his return from the United States. I assured him that I entertained no such design, and would take no steps towards that object that give any trouble. This expression of my intention appeared to afford him much satisfaction.

Notwithstanding what passed of our last interview [on Dec. 11, 1843] herein given, I am surprised now to discover that three days before that time [Dec. 8, 1843] Mr. Ricord had penned a caveat against me, which Mr. Lee must have known, and which was to be left to be delivered to me by their friends after their departure from the River and is as follows, and which was delivered to me only on the 22nd February, 1844:

Waller's Caveat

[December 8, 1843]

John McLoughlin Esquire
Chief Factor of the H. B. Co.

Sir

You will please to take notice that my client Mr. A. F. Waller has taken formal measures at Washington to substantiate his claim as a preemptor and actual settler upon the tract of land sometimes called the Wallamette Falls Settlement and sometimes Oregon City comprising six hundred and forty acres and being aware that although a foreigner you claim to exercise acts of ownership over said lands, this notice is given to apprise you that all sales you may make of Lots or other subdivisions of said Farm, after the receipt hereof, will be regarded by my client and by the government as absolutely fraudulent and will be made at your peril.

The grounds upon which my client claims exclusive rights under the laws of the United States of acquiring a patent for said Land are

1st. As a Citizen of the U. S. 1840 when he first took possession of the same and

2nd. Prior occupancy, building, fencing and clearing of said land from which he has never removed his actual domicile.

The grounds on which he denies your pretended claim to the right under the laws of the United States of acquiring a patent to the said tract of land are

1st. That you are an alien owing allegiance to a foreign government and therefore you are not eligible to such a claim.

2nd. That you are the Chief Officer of a foreign corporate monopoly, & that would be sufficient of itself to debar you of any such rights.

3rd. That you have never resided upon the Land alluded to since the month of December A.D. 1840 when you first openly laid claim to the same but that on the contrary you have always resided and still reside at Vancouver on the north bank of the Columbia within the territory actually in dispute between the two governments, at least twenty miles from his land, and that upon no other principle than that of omnipresence could you be supposed to be settler therein.

4th. That while you pretend to hold said Lands for yourself you in fact hold the same for a foreign corporate body evinced by the employment of their Agents and partners as your pretended Agent and as no corporation in the United States can acquire land by preemption, so most assuredly a foreign one cannot and

5th. That your claim arose, if at all, more than two years subsequently to his actual possession, building, fencing, clearing, and cultivation, and that therefore, all other reason aside, it cannot be so good.

I regret extremely the failure of my endeavour to make an amicable compromise of this matter between you, and that my client had been driven to the vexatious proceedings of the Law in order to establish his rights as an American Citizen.

I am

Very respectfully

Your Obedient Serv't

sign'd JOHN RICORD

of Council S. D. U. S. and
attorney for A. F. Waller.

McLoughlin on Waller's Caveat

Notes on Mr. Ricord's letter of 8th December, 1843.

Mr. Waller first founds his claim on being actually a Citizen of the U. States.

That ground would hold good when no preemption claim

existed but gives him no right, so far as I am informed, to commit an injustice by invading the rights of others, even though those parties should not be natural born American Citizens. Even Mr. Linn's bill [introduced December 16, 1841] has no clause excluding foreigners of any nation from becoming Citizens of Oregon, but states that every white male inhabitant shall be allowed to possess 640 acres of Land. In regard to his taking possession of it in 1840, I am astonished that the Gentleman should say so. He was and is a servant of the M. E. Mission, earning their money, and placed there for their service by the superintendent the Rev'd Jason Lee who writes me in his letter of 28th Nov., 1842, "I had not the most distant idea when I placed Mr. Waller there that he would set up a private claim to the land."

2nd. As to the prior occupancy building, I have already stated I got houses built on it in 1829/30, and wood prepared for a mill but the Indians burnt the houses and timber and in 1838 Mr. Douglas got a small house built for me, which house and wood were there in 1840 when Mr. Waller went there, and part of this wood was lent to Mr. Lee to build the house in which Mr. Waller resides and has resided since he is at the Falls. Mr. Waller only came to the Country in 1840, but Mr. Lee must recollect that prior to 1838 I told him I was inclined to give up my claim to the Falls to Thomas McKay and let him erect his Mill there.

3rd. I am not claiming the land for the Hudson's Bay Company, but for myself. As to my employing Hon'ble H. B. Co's Servants, the H H B Cos Books as well as my account will show who pays them.

The Methodist Mission have servants of the H H B Co's whom I transferred to them, though these men were under engagement to the H H B Co.

Surely I have the same right to do for myself what I did for them.

4th. "Your claim arose, of at all, more than two years subsequently to his actual possession."

The preceding narrative will show that in 1841 the Rev'd Mr.

Waller himself acknowledged to me that he had his claim at the Clackamas. "Yes," said he, "but Mr. Lee has taken it for the Mission."

If so, it must be because he is a servant of this Mission. If he is a servant of the Mission, and if the buildings and clearance belong to the Mission and have been made at the expense of that body, how can he claim in his own right or call it a private undertaking? There are many people here who can swear that since 1829/30 I have repeatedly spoken to them of the Falls of the Willamette as being my claim.

But the best answer I can make to Mr. Ricord is the preceding narrative and Copy of letters.

sign'd

JOHN McLOUGHLIN.

McLoughlin's Comment

I might here add that in summer 1843 speakin[g] to Mr. Lee, I told him I was surprised that most of the members of his Mission to whom I had spoken denied ever having heard that I claimed the Island on which the Milling Company erected a Mill before they began to build. "They cannot do that," replied Mr. Lee. "I told them of it before they began operations at their first or second meeting" and the only meeting he said he attended.

On the 2nd October, 1843, at our table Mr. Parish said he never heard it, till they began operations, when Mr. Lee observed to him in my presence, "I attended your first or second meeting and it is the only meeting I attended, and told you that Dr. McLoughlin claimed the Island."

Letters of Sir George Simpson, 1841-1843

. . . *To the Governor, Deputy Governor, and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, dated Fort Vancouver, November 25, 1841*

The Willamette River falls from the South into the Columbia in two branches, the upper branch about 8 miles below Fort Van-

couver. It is navigable at the season of high water by vessels of 300 to 400 tons burden, a distance of about 15 miles from where its waters unite with those of the Columbia, and to within a mile of the Falls of the Willamette which are formed by a ledge of rocks that bars the river across from side to side, obstructing the navigation and rendering it necessary to make a portage of a few hundred y[e]ards. On this waterfall there are many fine situations for grist and saw mills and other machinery requiring water power. I visited this spot in 1828 accompanied by C. F. [Chief Factor] McLoughlin, when it was determined to take possession of a part of this water-fall for the Company; and soon afterwards possession was accordingly taken by blasting a canal through the locks and erecting a house upon the portage. Of late, however, the United States Methodist Mission, who seem to direct their attention more to temporal than spiritual affairs, and exercise good judgment in reference to commerce in the selection of their establishments and settlements, have taken possession of part of this waterfall, and disregarding our claims founded on prior possession and occupation have seated themselves down on the portage, erecting buildings within our boundaries. There is no question that this country will soon grow into importance, and that the water privileges of the Falls will become exceedingly valuable, and as it appears very desirable that the Company should retain command of the import and export business of this settlement as long as possible, to the exclusion of strangers, it has on further consideration been deemed expedient to erect the machinery now supposed to be on its way from England at this place instead of Puget Sound as was contemplated when the 44th paragraph of this letter was written.³

³ The dispute over the Willamette Falls, or Oregon City, land claims which began as above described, is not yet laid aside. Many local writers, assuming that the claim was Dr. McLoughlin's private property, with which the company had nothing to do, have severely condemned the action of the missionaries in contesting it. In so doing they have chosen to accept McLoughlin's interested statement that the claim was taken for himself rather than the missionaries' interested statement that the claim was intended to give the British company a monopoly of the water privileges at the Falls. Simpson's

John McLoughlin's Last Letter

Fort Vancouver, Columbia,
20th November, 1845.

To The Governor, Deputy Governor and Committee,
Hon'ble Hudson's Bay Company.

Hon'ble Sirs,

34. As the "Falls of the Willamette" are destined by nature to be the most important place in the country, and though there were improvements on it, yet the Methodist Mission wanted to possess themselves of the place, of which I was informed in 1840. But I could not believe that persons calling themselves Ministers of the Gospel would do what their countrymen in the most humble station in life having the least regard for right would condemn. I did not therefore give credit to my informant, and you have seen by the documents I forwarded to you on the subject the very insidious manner they took to attain their object, and as they wanted by securing the place to increase their influence, so as to oppose me more effectually, to defeat them and secure the place it became necessary to build there, and though I might have built there in 1842 for the Hudson's Bay Company in compliance with Sir George Simpson's instruction in the 7th par. of his letter dated Woahoo,⁴ 1st March, 1842, to whom in 1829 and in 1841 I had pointed out the importance of the place, yet as the Methodist Mission had excited a strong national policy against the Hudson's Bay Company without any cause whatever (as it is well known we never did them anything but good) and they acted thus as they

testimony above clearly bears out the contention of the missionaries so far as the origin of the claim is concerned. It may be added that as late as March 29, 1845, Simpson wrote about "Our [the company's] water privileges on the Willamette."

(The above note is by the editor, Professor Joseph Schafer, formerly head of the Department of History, University of Oregon, and now (1932) Superintendent of the Wisconsin Historical Society.)

American Historical Review, October, 1908, XIV, p. 82.

⁴Oahu (Honolulu), Hawaiian Islands. The reader may compare Simpson's statement concerning the matter, in his letter of November 25, 1841, addressed to the company from Fort Vancouver, *American Historical Review*. (Note 4 by Schafer, ed.)

said from national views, merely because we were a British Association maintaining and extending British influence, I was afraid if I built the mill in the name of the Hudson's Bay Company, it would be destroyed, from the feeling they had excited against us among their countrymen; and even if this did not occur, as you had written in your despatch of 21st July, 1824, "We cannot expect a more southern boundary of [than] the Columbia in any treaty with the Americans," when that occurs the Company would lose all its improvements at the place, which would become the property of the Methodist Mission and of Mr. Waller, without their paying one farthing for them, in the same way as one Beaubien dispossessed the United States of their barracks in Chicago, under the pre-emption laws of the United States,⁵ and as their [there] was no other way to avoid the loss, I conceived it necessary to follow out the plan and build there, but to build in my name. I did so, and wrote in my private letter to Sir George Simpson, dated 20th March, 1843, giving him a short detail of the proceedings of Mr. Waller and the Methodist Mission, and stating, "In acting as I have done, I have only been actuated by a desire to secure it more effectually to the concern, and to have less dispute about it, as I think it can be more effectually secured in the name of an individual than in that of the Company, and I wish to know:

"Can the Company secure the place in their own name?

"If they cannot, can I secure it for them in my name? If either of these can be done, I will do it at once. If the Company cannot keep it in their name, nor I keep it for them in mine, I will then keep it in my own name on my own account. In the meantime, till I hear from you, I will go on as if it was mine."

In his reply dated 21st June, 1843, he writes, "With respect to

⁵ Jean Baptiste Beaubien, who since 1817 had lived on the Fort Dearborn reservation at Chicago, attempted in the thirties to acquire title to a part of it. In 1835 he entered a claim at the Chicago land office, which was allowed. An action of ejectment against the United States agent was sustained by the state courts. The United States Supreme Court reversed the decision and ordered the land to be sold in lots to the highest bidder; but there was a general refusal to bid against Beaubien, and he bought in much of the property.—Quaife, *Chicago and the Old Northwest*, p. 278; Andreas, *History of Chicago*, I, pp. 84-86. (Note 5 by Katherine B. Judson, ed.)

your private letter of 20th March on the subject of our claim to the Wallamette Falls, I submitted the same to Mr. Recorder Thom^o for his opinion, which I beg to annex, and have handed both the letter and copy of opinion to the Governor and Committee." You see in this answer there is nothing explicit, nor is Mr. Recorder Thom more so; but if Sir George Simpson had authorized me to take possession of it in my name, I would not have given five acres land and five hundred dollars to the Rev. Mr. Waller, and if I had received your Honors decision in time (which I could at the same time I received copy of Mr. Thom's reply to my queries in regard to deserters, as I sent them by the same despatch in which I sent my queries to Sir George Simpson), I would have been able to give a test of proprietorship, and would not have had to give five thousand five hundred dollars to the Methodist Mission for the lots I had to purchase from them, as they had no just or legal claim, and I could have rejected them, and which I did because if it came to a legal decision, I could not produce a legal test of proprietorship and all the money laid out there would be lost and the building go to the Methodist Mission; and as all that had been done there was contrary to the instructions in yours of 21st July, 1824, I might be blamed, though in building there I did so to promote the interest of the Company in order to avert the loss. As I was situated I had no alternative but to act as I did, as the Methodist Mission was broken up and selling all their effects, and as these lots were required to complete the Establishment, if I allowed them to pass to the possession of others, I would not get them without paying much dearer for them.

35. If I had intended to speculate I would not have taken Abernethy's mill (for if any part breaks, the whole mill will become useless, as in this country there are no means of repairing it) when I had orders not to erect it, but which I did because it was a dead weight in the stores of the Company, and if not erected then (as Mr. Fenton, the millwright, at the time said and still says he

^o Adam Thom, recorder of Rupert's Land, resident at Fort Garry (Winnipeg). (Note 6 by K. B. Judson, ed.)

would go home at the end of his engagement) the mill would have become a complete loss to the Company. To sum up the subject, I erected the mill to manage the business under my charge with more advantage to the Company, by enabling me to oppose our rivals in trade more effectually. Having acted with these motives and with these views in compliance with the spirit and tenor of your instructions and those of Sir George Simpson, I need not say how I must feel at the perusal of Mr. Secretary Barclay's despatch of 30th Nov., 1844, yours to Sir George Simpson of 11th March, 1845, and Sir George Simpson to me of the 16th of June last. And so far am I from wishing to speculate, that as I consider (for reasons which I will state in a subsequent part of the despatch) that the Hudson's Bay Company will find it to their interest to carry on business there as long as the law allows them and as for this purpose the use of these premises will be highly advantageous to them, and as I intended them for that purpose, I will offer them to my successors at a rent sufficient to cover the wear and tear on the buildings, etc. with a right to sell them as soon as I find a purchaser. But it may be said, why not hold the claim in trust for the Company as others hold here? That cannot be done, as I have given building lots on which the people have made improvements, and as the Company would lose the claim the moment it becomes U. S. Territory, these men would lose their property; to avert this, I can only make a sale of it to an individual.

51. Oregon City is destined by nature to be the best place for Commerce in this country, and is about twenty-five miles from this place; and people will prefer to pay dearer there than to come here. The Company this year will sell goods there to the amount of £4,000 sterling, in which they will gain something handsome, though at present (as the season for making out the accounts is not yet come) we cannot say what the amount may be; besides this, by so doing, they keep their competitors occupied, and prevent them extending their trade to other posts, and maintain and extend their own influence. It was because I thought Great

Britain would have the north bank of the Columbia, that to facilitate the farmers in bringing their produce to this place, I took the precaution to obtain a right to erect a canal there, which can be constructed at a very small expense.

73. In closing this my official correspondence with Your Honors, I beg to observe that I always thought that exerting myself zealously to promote the interests of the Hudson's Bay Company, to the best of my abilities, would at least assure me their approbation, if not their protection. Whether I have done the best the circumstances of the case would admit is not for me to determine; but I will assert that I went so far in my zeal as to risk my private means to carry on works at the Wallamette Falls so as to secure it from persons who wanted to get it in order to use the influence the place would give to the prejudice of the Hudson's Bay Company, to which I was also induced on account of the hostile feeling the immigrants had to the Company, as I was afraid if I did [not] give them employment, that animated with this feeling and urged by their wants, they might make an attack on the property at this place which might be destroyed, and for which the Hudson's Bay Company never could get any indemnification, and the whole of the Company's business in this Department would be ruined. In doing which, by Sir George Simpson's not writing me in 1843, to take the place in my own name, I had to give five acres of the best ground for building lots, and five hundred dollars to Rev. Mr. Waller,⁷ and by the Hudson's Bay Company not giving me sanction to take it in my own name⁸ in time (which they could readily have done) I had to pay three thousand four hundred and twenty dollars for improvements not worth one-half the money and one thousand nine hundred and eighty dollars for lots to which they had no claim,—and to close

⁷ Rev. Alvan F. Waller, Methodist missionary. For his controversy with the writer, see Holman, Dr. John McLoughlin, pp. 105-109 *et seq.*

⁸ Under his contract with the company, McLoughlin could not engage in any business, or give attention to any personal interest. The entire time and thought of the officers and servants, by contrast, were to be given to the company. (Notes 7 and 8 by K. B. Judson, ed.)

the business, it is proposed this year to charge me an advance of 100 per cent on the goods I have had to carry on the business,⁹ when I carried it on with the spirit of opposition and made it subservient to the Hudson's Bay Company business and interests, and so little is what I have done understood, or more properly speaking, it is so completely misunderstood, that instead of being appreciated as it ought, I am disgraced, and my salary of £500 per annum, which is a part of the consideration on which I renewed my agreement, is stopped without any previous notice as I only heard it on the 15th June last. But my conduct must have been misrepresented, or I must have been completely misunderstood, and I trust that when the truth is known, it will be found that I have acted with as much zeal as if my life had been at stake, and justice will be done me.¹⁰

⁹ One of the first actions of James Douglas, in taking charge of Fort Vancouver, was to settle this on a more just basis, as reported by him in a very matter-of-fact way.

¹⁰ *American Historical Review*, October, 1915, XXI, pp. 120-135, *passim*. (Notes 9 and 10 by K. B. Judson, ed.)

APPENDIX IV

LEE AND THE *LAUSANNE* SECRET SERVICE FUND

IN 1878, nearly forty years after the event, Rev. Josiah L. Parrish, a member of the *Lausanne* Reinforcement, furnished H. H. Bancroft a manuscript book of his personal reminiscences called *Oregon Anecdotes*. In this manuscript, on pp. 7, 8, and 9, Mr. Parrish recorded the rumor (first heard about the year 1847), that Jason Lee in 1839 had been given a subsidy from the Secret Service Fund of the Government of the United States to assist in financing the transportation of the *Lausanne* passengers to Oregon. Parrish's statement follows:

There is a fact connected with that [the *Lausanne* Reinforcement] the Government had a little hand in. I was told, but I knew nothing of it [then] and I do not know positively about it [now]; but the Fry and Farnham company [of New York] brought us out, the adults I think for \$200 each, and the children were graded down. The company I suppose could not bring us for that. I understood after I had been to Oregon seven years [in 1847] that the government paid Fry Farnham & Co. 50 dollars a head from the secret Treasury. Mr. Lee on his return [to Oregon in 1839-1840] got missionaries proper and mechanics of all kinds to establish his work permanently in the country and make it if possible self-sustaining instead of drawing on the missionary fund constantly. The government discovered that the missionary family, as it was called in New York, was almost sufficient to establish a permanent colony, that is a small one. The government had an eye to the settlement of the boundary question; and I understand afterwards by a member of the missionary board that the Government paid Fry Farnham & Co. \$50 dollars on each one of our heads. I have no doubt that that reinforcement was the settlement of the [Boundary] question really.¹

¹ Parrish, J. L., *Anecdotes of Intercourse with the Indians*, MS., pp. 7-9, in the Bancroft Collection, University of California.

With this reminiscent sketch by Parrish before her, Mrs. Victor wrote for H. H. Bancroft:

A proof of the favor with which his [Jason Lee's] designs were regarded by the cabinet [President Van Buren's Cabinet] is furnished by the appropriation of considerable money from the secret service fund, for the charter of the *Lausanne*, as related by one of her passengers [Rev. Josiah L. Parrish]. Lee kept the secret, and so did those who gave the money, until the boundary question was settled between the United States and Great Britain.²

This rumor of a subsidy apparently was receiving some cursory interest in Oregon about 1858. The Rev. George H. Atkinson, a Congregational minister residing in Oregon, mentions it in a letter to his Missionary Board:

Oregon City, November 20, 1858

. . . I am told also that he [a Methodist agent] remarked "The Government will not refuse us a title to the Dalles. They will give it to us for they gave our missionaries \$100,000 to come out to Oregon as colonists when there was danger the English would get the country." The man who informed me said that he had it from the Methodist Episcopal agent, and also from another source, and that he could get a copy of the order at Washington for \$100,000 of the "Secret Service Money" to be paid them. He says also that Jason Lee went to Washington in 1835 or 1836 [1838] and got this, and that Mr. Linn of Missouri introduced and advocated the measure, probably in secret session of the Senate.³

Reference to the latest research on this question is made in an article, "Secret Aid for Oregon Missions," in the July, 1924, issue of the *Washington Historical Quarterly*. This investigation disclosed the information, received from the Treasury Department, that "their [the Treasury Department's] accounts of expenditures from the Secret Service fund begin only in 1865, and their impression is that the fund, as such, did not exist before that time."⁴

² Bancroft, *History of Oregon*, I, pp. 176, 177.

³ Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, II, p. 46.

⁴ "Secret Aid for Oregon Missions," by Edmond S. Meany, *Washington Historical Quarterly*, July, 1924, XV, pp. 211-215.

It appears that (1) to the present time there is no evidence that there existed at that time, 1839, such a secret government fund, and (2) that even if such fund did exist, proof is lacking that any portion of it was expended for the *Lausanne* expedition.

The Records of Board of Managers of Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church at New York City has this minute relating to price of passage on the *Lausanne*: "The price of passage for this family in the ship was for those over 15 years of age, \$250.00 each. Servants, \$125.00 each. Children at the rate of \$16 $\frac{2}{3}$ for each year, freight \$25.00 per ton." ⁵

⁵ From Journal of Foreign Mission Board. Minute for January 16, 1839. For a transcript of a STATEMENT OF FACTS *in relation to the Oregon Mission as extracted from the Journal of the Board for the Agent of the Board to that Mission*, the author is indebted to Dr. R. M. Gatke, Willamette University.

APPENDIX V

LEE'S SECOND WILL ¹

THIS interesting document, drawn up on Thursday, February 20, contains many provisions not found in his first will drawn up at the port of Honolulu. These numerous provisions, which reflect the fact that they had been thought out carefully, furnish bright historical high lights on the inner Jason Lee. This will is here (for the first time) given in its entirety:

Drawn February 20, 1845. On this day the Twentieth of the month of February in the year of our Lord one thousand and eight hundred and forty five at the special request of the Reverend Jason Lee formerly of the Township of Stanstead in the District of St. Francis, the Province of Canada, now of the Wallamette Oregon Territory, Missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I, the undersigned Notary Public, duly commissioned and sworn in and for that part of the Province of Lower Canada, residing in the said Township of Stanstead, went, proceeded and repaired to the residence of Archibald Morrill Esquire in the said Township of Stanstead, where I found the said Rev. Jason Lee sick in bed, but of sound and disposing mind, memory and understanding as testified by the witnesses hereinafter named called to the effects hereof.

Dictates to notary. Which said Reverend Jason Lee, declared that considering the certainty of death, and the uncertainty of the time thereof, and in order the better to be prepared to leave this world whenever it shall please Almighty God to call him hence, he was desirous of making and publishing this his last will and testament, and therefore requested of me the said undersigned

¹ In Oregon Historical Society Manuscript Collection, pp. 97-100.

notary public, to take the same accordingly, Whereupon the said Reverend Jason Lee did and hereby doth make, declare and dictate this his last Will and Testament to me the undersigned Notary Public in the Presence of the said Witnesses hereinafter named as aforesaid word by word as follows,

Religious invocation. That is to say, I the said Reverend Jason Lee Testator do first and principally commend my soul into the hands of Almighty God my creator hoping for the remission of all my sins and to enjoy everlasting happiness in his heavenly Kingdom through the sole merits of Jesus Christ my Redeemer, and my body I commit to the earth, to be entered in such decent manner as the Executors of this my last Will and Testament hereinafter named may deem proper.

Debts. Secondly, I order and dictate that all such debts as I shall justly owe at the time of my decease shall and will be fully paid and discharged by my Executors hereinafter named, out of my personal estate.

A small gift. Thirdly, I the said Testator did and do hereby give devise and bequeathe unto MRS. ELIZABETH LEE of said Stanstead, widow relict of the late Theodore Pool deceased, in his life time of said Stanstead, Farmer, the sum of Twelve pounds ten Shillings current money of this Province.

Twenty-five dollars. Fourthly, I, the said Testator, did and do hereby give, devise and bequeath unto MRS. JUDITH MERILL [Morrill] wife of Daniel Lee of said Stanstead, Farmer, the sum of Twenty-five dollars, and unto the said DANIEL LEE, my Pilot cloth short Overcoat.

Remembers Mr. and Mrs. Ede Lee. Fifthly, I give, devise and bequeath unto MRS. MARY PINKHAM wife of Edd [Ede] Lee Senior of Stanstead Farmer, the sum of Twenty-five dollars, and unto the said EDD [Ede] LEE, SENIOR, my longest overcoat.

Oregon Institute. Sixthly, I, the said Testator, did and do hereby give, devise and bequeath unto the OREGON INSTITUTE the sum of One hundred dollars.

Money in Bowery Savings Bank. It is my will and intention

that the above mentioned legacies and bequests shall and will be paid by the said Archibald Morrell Esquire, one of my Executors hereinafter named, out of my personal property and effects that may be found to me belonging at the time of my decease, in the said Province of Canada, but if the same should be found insufficient for that purpose in that case the ballance of said legacies and bequests as well as all other lawful debts and expenses as I shall owe at my decease shall be paid by the said Archibald Morrell Esquire out of such monies as I own and have deposited in the Bowery Savings Bank in the city of New York in the State of New York, one of the United States of America.

Lucy Anna Maria Lee. Seventhly, And as to the remainder of all the personal and moveable property and estate that may be found to me belonging or to which I may in any way be entitled at the time of my decease, as well in any part of the United States of America as in any part of the said Territory of Oregon or elsewhere, I the said Testator did and do hereby give, grant, devise, and bequeath the whole of the same unto my beloved daughter LUCY ANNA MARIA LEE a minor aged three years, issue of the marriage between me and the late Lucy Thomson. To have and to hold of the same unto my said beloved daughter, her heirs and assigns to the use, benefit and behalf of my said beloved daughter, her heirs and assigns from the day of my decease forever by virtue hereof.

Guardian. Eighthly, I, the said Testator, do hereby make, name, constitute and appoint the Reverend Gustavus Hines of Wallamette Oregon Territory aforesaid, Missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church to be the lawful tutor and Guardian of my said beloved minor child, the said Lucy Anna Maria Lee, from the day of my decease, with full powers and authority to take care of the person and protect the rights, property and interests of my said minor child until she shall attain the age of Twenty-one years.

Tombstone. Ninthly, I order and direct that a marble stone shall be placed at my grave with such inscription thereon as my friends may see fit.

Executors. And for the due execution hereof I, the said Testator, do hereby make, name, constitute and appoint the said Archibald [Morrill] Esquire the said Reverend Gustavus Hines, also Mr. George Abernethy of Wallamette aforesaid, Missionary Steward, also Mr. Alanson Beers also of Wallamette aforesaid Farmer, and the Rev. George Lane of the said city of New York, Treasurer of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to be Executors jointly and severally of this my last Will and Testament into whose hands I hereby direct and dispose myself of all my said property according to law.

Witnesses. Thus done, published and dictated word by word as aforesaid on the day and year first above written. In faith and testimony whereof the said testator in the presence of the said Notary Public and Mr. Eli Bangs and Joseph Morrell both of Stanstead aforesaid Farmers, Witnesses to the Execution hereof, hereunto also subscribing our names and signatures, in faith and testimony of these presents.

This same having been first twice duly read, the said testator still persisted in this being his last Will and Testament.

Signed, JASON LEE. ELI BANGS,
JOSEPH MORRILL, and C. A. RICHARDSON N. P.²

² To simplify the reading, the author has made some changes in paragraphing, capitalization, and punctuation; and has introduced headings.

APPENDIX VI

REMOVAL OF LEE'S ASHES FROM STANSTEAD TO SALEM

"IN the year 1904, Mrs. Smith French of The Dalles, Oregon, held some correspondence with Col. Frederick D. Butterfield, of Derby Line, Vermont, suggesting the desirability of removing the remains of Jason Lee from Stanstead, Canada, to the Lee Mission Cemetery, Salem, Oregon. This resulted in a proposal on the part of Col. Butterfield to superintend and bear the entire expense of disinterring the remains and shipping them, with the tombstone, to Portland, Oregon, provided suitable arrangements were made to receive and reinter them.

"At the session of the Columbia River Annual Conference of the M. E. Church, held at The Dalles in 1904, Mrs. French had a resolution presented to accept the generous offer. Immediately the Conference took up the matter and appointed a committee of arrangements to unite with one on the part of the Oregon Conference, which joint committees were to have charge of the services and provide a program for the reinterment of Jason Lee's remains. These committees were, on the part of the Columbia River Conference, Rev. Robt. A. Booth, Rev. Walton Skipworth, and Mrs. Smith French. For the Oregon Conference, Dr. J. H. Coleman, Amadee M. Smith, and F. H. Grubbs.

"The remains were expressed from Derby Line to Portland, Oregon, in care of F. H. Grubbs, and deposited in the safety vault of the Title Guarantee and Trust Company, Chamber of Commerce Building, Portland, awaiting a suitable occasion for reinterment in Lee Mission Cemetery, Salem, Oregon. The time chosen was June 15th in connection with the sixty-second annual commencement of Willamette University, June 15, 1906." ¹

¹ Grubbs, Francis H., *Memorial Souvenir of Jason Lee*, p. 2.

APPENDIX VII

LEE'S GRAVESTONE INSCRIPTION

SACRED

To the Memory of the

REV. JASON LEE.

an itinerant minister of the
Methodist Episcopal Church,
member of the New England Conference,
and the first Missionary to the Indians
beyond the Rocky Mountains.

He was born

in Stansted, L. C., June 27, 1803.

Converted

in 1826 under the labors of the Wesleyan
Missionaries, Mr. Pope and Turner, and commenced
his ministry in 1832 among the Wesleyan Methodists,
preaching in Stansted and the adjoining towns
till 1833, when he was called to engage in the

Oregon Mission.

To this

Godlike Enterprise

he devoted all his talents, in labors abundant
he laid all on the missionary altar, counting not
his life dear that the Red-men might be saved.

In this work

he crossed the Rocky Mountains first in 1834,
and again in 1838.

July 16th, 1837, he married Anna Maria Pitman
of New York, who died in Oregon June 26th, 1838.

His second wife Lucy (Thompson) of Barre, Vt.,
died in Oregon, March, 1842.

He sustained these painful bereavements with
great Christian fortitude and submission.

In May, 1844,

he returned a second time to the United States,
and in August impaired health compelled
him to desist from his labors and find an
asylum among kind relatives in his native town
where he died in peace

March 12, 1845

aged

41 years, 3 months, and 18 days.

Job XIV, 14

"If a man die shall he live again? All the days of
my appointed time will I wait till my change come."

Job XIX, 25

"I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that He
shall stand in the latter day upon the earth."

Job XIV, 15

"Thou shalt call and I will answer; Thou wilt
have a desire to the work of Thy hands."

APPENDIX VIII

AN ECHO FROM THE PAST

"THE period given each year to pioneers, their era and their memory, was brought to a fitting close by the reinterment of the remains of Jason Lee in Lee Mission Cemetery, Salem. The eulogies pronounced upon this occasion tell how strong a hold the early missionary had upon the regard of his contemporaries, while the recital of the chief incidents of his brief career in Oregon told of the important place that he held in the history of those early times.

"The return of the dust of Jason Lee to Oregon for final sepulture sixty-one years after his death, the final interment in the cemetery that bears his name, near the site of the old mission that he established away back in the years of a past century, was a grandly significant tribute to the memory of a man who was a moving force in the early settlement of Oregon. The sod in Lee Mission Cemetery has been broken many times since, according to the record, 'it was broken to receive the body of Maria Pittman and her child, wife and son of Jason Lee'; but during all the intervening years no form has been more tenderly consigned to the bosom of our common mother than Jason Lee's after all these years.

"The eulogies upon this occasion followed history closely, but the glamor of romance is over the simple facts of the life of this early missionary. Far and far away are the echoes from the endeavor of those times. They tell of the human experiences of a devoted band of men and women in a beautiful wilderness; of the vicissitudes of life and death as they come everywhere and to

all; of the disappointments that belong to the common lot wherever that lot is cast and of the triumph of faith and hope and love over all obstacles.”¹

¹ Editorial by Harvey W. Scott in Portland, Oregon, *Oregonian* (June 16, 1906), XLVI, p. 8.

APPENDIX IX

LEE'S PLACE IN HISTORY

By Harvey W. Scott, Editor of the Portland *Oregonian*.
From address delivered at Memorial Service at reinterment of remains of Jason Lee at Salem, June 15, 1906.

"It is difficult for any generation to estimate rightly its contemporary men and women of real worth. There are many mistaken estimates. After the Restoration in England, John Milton was overlooked and forgotten. Though the literary defender of the Commonwealth and regicides, he was regarded as too unimportant for notice. His obscurity secured him immunity from prosecution, and he died unnoticed. But so great is he now that kings and princes and nobles of his time walk about under his shadow; the very age that neglected him is now known as "The Age of Milton," and receives its luster from his name. Mind and spirit are the controlling forces of the world. Men of preeminence can be estimated only by their peers. Equality of judgment is too scantily bestowed in any living generation to insure a correct decision, to settle the scale of pretension, to arrange the gradations of favor, or the definite place or title which each is to occupy in the ranks of fame. Contemporary men often pronounce that to be greatest which approaches nearest to themselves, since they are able to look upon it with the distinctness of close proximity. But the judgment is with the future time. We get no proper sense of the majesty of our mountain peaks when near them. We must draw back a little if we would take in their full grandeur.

"On this view the work of our missionaries in Oregon rises to proportions more and more majestic, as we study it from the view-

point of history and of consequences; and though others bore lofty spirits and did great work, no name stands or will stand above that of Jason Lee.”¹

¹ From *History of the Oregon Country*, by Harvey W. Scott, compiled by Leslie M. Scott, I, pp. 221-222.

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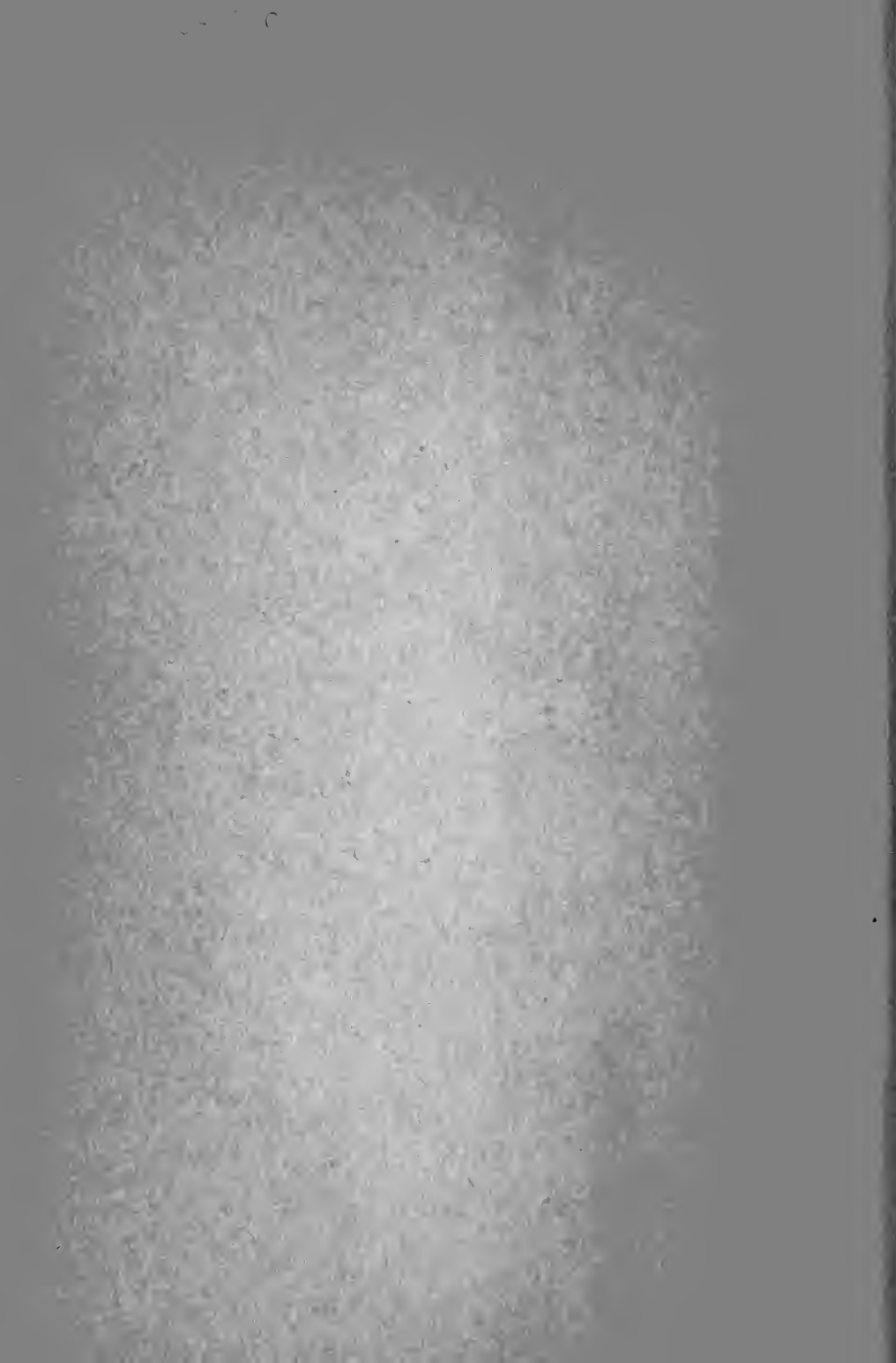
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