

## Timeline related to Wallace House

- 1810 John Jacob Astor organize the Pacific Fur Company.
- April 1811 Pacific Fur Company establish Astoria on the south bank of the Columbia River.
- May 1811 Alexander McKay party pass the mouth of the Willamette River and learn of the falls and prairies from the Indians.
- December 1811 Robert Stuart and Regis Brugier ( freeman trapper) explore the lower Willamette (to the falls?)
- April 1812 Donald McKenzie, William W. Matthews and five or six others depart from Astoria to explore up the Willamette.
- May 1812 McKenzie's party returns to Astoria (presumably having explored as far as the present McKenzie River).
- November 23 or 24, 1812 William Wallace and J. C. Halsey and 14 men leave Astoria with instructions to set up a winter trading post on the upper Willamette. (Franchere)
- According to McDougall's journal, the party consisted of Wallace, Halsey, John Day, "the two Indian hunters with their families," and 12 men leaving in two canoes. (McDougall)
- December 1812 News reaches Astoria via Indians that Wallace's party had passed the falls, reached their destination, and were putting up buildings. A report that one man had been killed by a "white bear" [grizzly] proved false.
- January 15, 1813 A party of from a post in the interior arrive in Astoria with news that the US and Great Britain are at war. The additional men further strain the already depleted food rations and raise the fear that the British will cut off the supply vessel coming from New York.
- February 2, 1813 A party consisting of John Reed, Alfred Seton, Thomas McKay, two trappers and 13 men depart from Astoria to spend the winter with Wallace and Halsey, reducing the burden of feeding them at Astoria. Additionally, they carry letters instructing Wallace to suspend trade on account of the war. One of the men, Flanagan, turned back to Astoria shortly after they departed, arriving back there on February 6.

- About February 22, 1813      Reed, Seton and party arrive at Wallace House, having spent 20 days "suffering from hunger, from fatigue & from weather."
- " They were situated in a part of the country, where game was tolerably plenty, had built themselves a small house to shelter them from the weather, & they had sent their party in different directions to trap beaver & get their living. We remained with them until the middle of March, at which time our orders were to return to the Fort, which we accordingly obeyed & arrived a few days after." (Seton in Jones, *Astorian Adventure*, 112)
- "The present party who were sent up merely to live made out very well, as the country abounds in Elk & Deer, that is to say some parts of it, only as a good hunter could some time supply the party by hunting only a few hours. The river has some Beaver. Messrs. Wallace & Halsey with a S. Islander were the only persons remaining at the house when the party reached their place. They live upon very amicable terms with the natives, who visit them daily & trade roots (their only articles of trade) for meat. Indeed, they seem so far from having a wish to pillage their goods that they seemed to look with more desire upon the contents of the provision store than that of the goods, where the Bales still remain in the same state as when they took them in. The hunters say those they heard from had as yet caught but few Beavers, owing chiefly to the frequent rising & falling of the River, which overflows its banks almost with every shower." (McDougall in Jones, *Annals*, 165)
- March 18 or 20, 1813      Reed, Seton, and party return to Astoria.
- "These gentlemen described the country of the Willamette as charming and abounding in beaver and deer, and they told us that Messrs. Wallace and Halsey had built a trading house on a great prairie about 150 miles from the mouth of that river [that is at the confluence of the Willamette and the Columbia]." (Franchère 75)
- May 25 or June 2, 1813      Wallace, Halsey, and party return to Astoria, bringing everything with them.
- Toward evening were surprised by the arrival of Messrs. Wallace & Halsey & party, from McKay's River, forming a number of 26 persons including hunters & families, in three Canoes, bringing with them all the Goods, etc. on hand, beside the proceeds of their trade & hunt, amounting to 17 Packs Beaver & 19 Bales dried meat. Mr. Wallace explored the river for a good distance almost to its source, but could learn nothing of importance more than that it abounds in Beaver, more or less in its whole course.They

"number 26 persons including hunters & families" and arrive in three canoes, bringing 17 packs of beaver pelts and 19 bales of dried meat. (McDougall)

Summer 1813

The Astorians' supplies had been cut off by the War of 1812 and North Westers, their rival Canadian (British) trading company, were gathering at the mouth of the Columbia waiting for their own supply ship. The Astorians decided their situation was hopeless and prepared to close their affairs and leave the following spring. (Hussey 27)

In the meantime, men were sent to the upper Willamette in early July, where they were to kill and dry meat for the coming winter at Fort Astoria and return in October. They returned in early August, ahead of their orders, with 33 bales of meat: "as they had no fixed residence, were changing camp often, with many of their men sick, & so many Bales to carry from one place to another, could make no progress in hunting." (McDougall in Jones, Annals, 206)

December 1813

By early December a permanent site for what Seton refers to as "Fort Calipuya" (Willamette Post) is decided upon, downriver from Wallace House and, according to Seton, 30 miles above the Falls. Buildings are erected by the end of December.

"The post had been established for the purpose of keeping a number of hunters constantly engaged to provide the Fort with venison. ... The mildness of the climate never permitted us to take fresh meat from the Willamette to Astoria [without it spoiling], and the attempts that we made to dry or smoke the venison always failed." (Franchère 100)

January 25, 1814

Alexander Henry, having arrived at Willamette Post two days earlier, notes in his diary that three American freemen arrived by land from "Mr. W[allace's] house of last winter." (Hussy 26)

March 1814

Seton and the other Americans leave the country on the brig Pedler of Boston. Most of the other employees of Astor's Pacific Fur Company were Canadians anyway, so they simply switched sides and went to work for the North West Company.

The Astorians also referred to the Willamette River as McKay's River and the Wolamut (various spellings). Lewis and Clark called it the Multnomah.

Seton's journal and McDougall's headquarters log were discovered and published in the 1990's.

## Original References

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