

JOHN McLOUGHLIN

The big, two-story, timbered house in the center of the court was the residence of the chief factor. On both sides were stores and warehouses and fur presses and the bachelors' quarters and the little log cabins, where lived the married trappers. Trim lawns decorated with little rockeries of cannon balls divided the different buildings, and in front of the chief factor's residence, on the top of a large flagpole, there blew to the breeze the flag with the letters H. B. C.—a sign that a brigade was coming in, or a brigade setting out, or that a ship had been sighted, or that it was Sunday and the flying flag was signal to the Indians there would be no trade, a custom that has lasted to this day." (Laut, Vol. II, p. 241.)

With characteristic energy and foresight Dr. McLoughlin soon established at or near Fort Vancouver a large farm, on which were grown quantities of grain and vegetables. It was afterward stocked with cattle, horses, sheep, goats and hogs. In 1836 this farm consisted of three thousand acres, fenced into fields, with here and there dairy houses and herdsmen's and shepherds' cottages. In 1836 the products of this farm were, in bushels: 8,000 of wheat; 5,500 of barley; 6,000 of oats; 9,000 of peas; 14,000 of potatoes; besides large quantities of turnips (rutabaga), pumpkins, etc. There were about ten acres in apple, pear and quince trees, which bore in profusion. He established two saw mills and two flour mills near the Fort. For many years there were shipped from Fort Vancouver lumber to the Hawaiian Islands (then called the Sandwich Islands) and flour to Sitka. It was not many years after Dr. McLoughlin came to the Oregon country until it was one of the most profitable parts of North America to the Hudson Bay Company. For many years the London value of the yearly gathering of furs in the Oregon country varied from \$500,000 to \$1,000,000, sums of money representing then a value much larger than such sums represent to-day. (*Holman, p. 28*).

In this empire McLoughlin, who was then only thirty-nine years old, reigned supreme. There was a governor above him, it is true, but that dignitary rarely visited the territory; communication with him was difficult and what the factor wished was done.