

of a site for Fort Hall (Idaho), which he built in 1834.

In a letter he says: "I have built a fort on Lewis or Snake River, in latitude 43° 14' N. and longitude 113° 30', which I named Fort Hall. We manufactured a magnificent flag from some unbleached sheeting, a little red flannel, and a few blue patches, saluted it with damaged powder, and wet it in villanous alcohol, and after all it makes a very respectable appearance."

Nine years later, in 1843, when, in the race for the occupation of Oregon, Dr. Marcus Whitman led his great caravan of about two hundred wagons and eight hundred souls, he selected the route by Fort Hall, which even at that date was in the hands of the Hudson Bay Company. Barrows writes: "As this expedition turned the balance for Oregon, so Fort Hall was the pivotal point. This Fort Hall, on Lewis or Snake River, about one hundred miles north of Salt Lake City, was originally an American trading-post, built by N. J. Wyeth, but the Hudson Bay Company crowded him out by the many monopolizing and outraging means which a wilderness life made possible. Many of his traders and trappers were scattered wide; some of them were killed, and his business generally was ruined. At this point many immigrant companies had been intimidated and broken up, and so Fort Hall served as a cover for Oregon, just as a battery at the mouth of a river protects the inland city on its banks.

In later days, when the spirit was aroused for "the whole of Oregon or war," the question was raised whether it was to be taken under the walls of Quebec or on the Columbia. Neither was the place. Oregon was taken at Fort Hall.

The first indication of the proposed expedition I find is in a letter dated Cambridge, Massachusetts, October 5, 1831, written to his brother, Mr. Charles Wyeth, of Baltimore: "My plan is to go out there and carry with me what property I can spare after leaving a support for my wife," etc. On November 11th he wrote to a brother in the South for explicit instructions in regard to the cultivation of tobacco, which he hoped might be introduced and cultivated successfully in the new colony.

On December 19, 1831, he wrote from Cambridge to the Secretary of State: "Hon. Edward S. Everett: Sir,—Enclosed you have a letter from Mr. Nuttall, con-

taining in part my views in regard to this application to the Executive. I have to repeat that no view of emolument induces it, but only a desire to serve the views of the government in regard to that country. It occurred to me that the government might avail itself of my services to obtain information concerning that country, which in time would be useful. I would willingly devote a portion of my time to their service without other compensation than the respectability allotted to all those who serve their country."

To the same gentleman, on January 6, 1832: "I believe it is not lawful for armed bodies of men to pass through the country. I would beg leave to inquire of you whether any permission is required, and to obtain the same, and also permission for trading with the Indians beyond the Rocky Mountains." He also in this letter expresses the hope that the attention of Congress may be called to the subject in such manner as to induce them to act in "aiding good men to form a settlement in that region, and assume the government of the colony."

On March 11, 1832, with a company of twenty-one men, fully armed and equipped, Mr. Wyeth sailed out of Boston Harbor, and landed fifteen days later in Baltimore. From Baltimore they journeyed by rail for sixty miles to the terminus of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad at the foot of the Alleghanies, and thence on foot to the nearest point on the Monongahela River, where they took a steamboat for Pittsburg. At a tavern on the mountains the proprietor refused to entertain the members of the expedition because they were *Yankees*. "The disagreement ran so high that the tavern-keeper and the Yankee captain each seized his rifle. The latter demanded lodging and refreshment, and the dispute ended in our captain sleeping in the house with three of his party, well armed, determined to defend their persons, and to insist on their rights as peaceable and inoffending travellers."* From Pittsburg the voyage was continued to St. Louis by steamboat, reaching this latter city April 18, 1832; thence by steamer to Independence, the last white settlement on the Missouri River, near the present Kansas City. Here two of the company deserted and returned to the States. From Independence, in the latter part of May, the expe-

* J. B. Wyeth, *Short Account of a Long Journey*.