

of the Columbia river, which discolours the water of the ocean for miles and miles. This was reserved for the American, Captain Gray, in 1792, in his ship "Columbia," whence the name of the river. This discovery was one of the important points upon which later the United States based their claim to the country which the river drains. Captain Gray did not ascend the river; but this was subsequently done by Lieut. Broughton, under Vancouver's instructions. Mackenzie, the discoverer of the great river bearing his name, in 1793, made his way through the interior of the continent, in behalf of the Northwest Company, the great rival of the Hudson's Bay Company, to the Pacific in about latitude 52 degrees. President Jefferson followed up the "Louisiana" purchase by sending an expedition under Lewis and Clark (1804-1806) to explore the territory north of the then Spanish territory of California and west of the Rocky Mountains, the "Oregon Country" as it was afterwards called. Lewis and Clark penetrated through the Rocky Mountains and descended the Columbia, whereby the United States added another claim, and a strong claim, to the territory subsequently in dispute. In 1808 Astor founded the American Fur Company, and three years later the Pacific Fur Company, a branch of the former, which was followed by the founding of Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia.

The Northwest Company was busy with exploration too in the interest of their fur trade. In 1808 Simon Fraser descends the river that now bears his name, to the sea; and similarly David Thompson, who also has a river to his name, descends in 1811 the Columbia to the Pacific. We see how year by year British and American claims are made by exploration and occupation. A blast of the war of 1812 even reached the Pacific coast. In 1813 Astoria was discreetly sold to the Northwest Company and a month later was taken possession of by a British vessel and its name changed to Fort George, but it was restored in 1818. In the following year Spain waived her claim to the north of 42 degrees in favour of the United States. The bitter rivalry that had