

[CHAPTER SIXTEEN]

THE MISSION IN CRISIS
1841–1842

As early as May 1840, Narcissa in a letter to her mother had written: “A tide of immigration appears to be moving this way rapidly. What a few years will bring forth, we know not. A great change has taken place even since we first entered the country, and we have no reason to believe it will stop here. Instead of two lonely American females, we now number fourteen and soon may [be] twenty or forty more, if reports are true. We are emphatically situated on the highway between the States and the Columbia river, and are a resting place for the weary travelers, consequently a greater burden rests upon us than upon any of our associates—to be always ready.” The fourteen American women to whom Narcissa referred included the six wives in the Oregon Mission of the American Board, the two wives of the independent missionaries, and six women connected with the Methodist Mission in the Willamette Valley. A few weeks after Narcissa wrote, the *Lausanne* arrived in the Columbia River bringing the large Methodist reenforcement which included eighteen females. Three more independent missionary couples arrived in Old Oregon in the fall of 1840 and one immigrant family. Thus the number of American women in the Old Oregon country rose to thirty-six by that fall.

During the first part of September 1841, a party of twenty-four immigrants from the States passed Waiilatpu bound for the Willamette Valley. Narcissa wrote that included in the number were “two families with small children, from Missouri” [Letter 96]. A larger number had started, but some had branched off at Soda Springs and headed for California. Those who continued on to Oregon left their wagons at Fort Hall and completed their journey on horseback. In this party was a family with six children. “It was very pleasing to me,” wrote Narcissa, “to see such a mother with so many children around her, having come so far such a dreadful journey.” Included in the 1841 party was a Methodist minister, the Rev. Joseph Williams, who later published an account of his travels. Commenting on his visit with the Whitmans and the Grays, he wrote: “These were kind, friendly people. We heard the doctor hold a meeting on Sunday in a well-behaved congregation of Indians. I tried to preach to them myself that day. Here we had all kinds of garden vegetables, which they gave to us very freely.”¹

ACTIVITIES OF W. H. GRAY

During the summer and early fall of 1841, Gray was busy finishing the house he was building for himself and his family. According to a map which Gray drew of the mission premises at Waiilatpu [see illustration in this volume], the new house had two main partitions which crisscrossed the interior, dividing it into four main rooms. Two of the rooms were then subdivided, thus giving six rooms on the ground floor. Whitman was able to hire two men from the 1841 immigration to help Gray place the roof, which was made out of “split timbers of cottonwood... covered with grass and slabs of dirt.” By November 11, Whitman reported: “The house was roofed & the walls are being hewed and plastered, & in a short time it will be fit to dwell in” [Letter 100]. The Gray family moved in during the latter part of November.

After finishing his house, Gray built a blacksmith shop, which measured 16 x 30 feet, out of the adobe bricks taken from the original mission house. The shop was located about midway between the main mission house and the emigrant house. On January 24, 1842, Narcissa in a letter to Mary Walker wrote: “The old house is entirely taken down... You will see quite a change in Waiilatpu when you visit us next spring as I hope you will be able to do.” In addition to these

three main buildings, the premises at Waiilatpu contained a number of smaller structures such as granaries, corn cribs, a smoke house, a hen house, and a corral. These improvements, with irrigation ditches, fenced fields and gardens, the flour mill, the young orchard and the grove of locust trees gave every appearance of a growing and thriving establishment.

Gray was not content to be just a manual laborer. He never forgot that he had studied medicine for a few weeks during the winter of 1837–38 at the Medical College at Fairfield, New York. In a letter to one of his former professors at Fairfield dated February 1841, Gray wrote: “The Doct. [i.e., Whitman] and I differ in some of his professional points, and so far as our practice goes, I do not know as I have lost any more patients than he has. I may not have had as severe cases, I cannot say.”² No comment by Whitman regarding Gray’s practice of medicine has been found, but we may assume that he would have strongly opposed such actions.

THE RED RIVER EMIGRATION OF 1841

The fall of 1841 was noteworthy not only for the arrival in Oregon of the first overland party of immigrants from the States, but also for the arrival of a colony of immigrants from Red River which was sent to Oregon by the Hudson’s Bay Company. As has been told in a previous chapter,³ George Simpson was in New York City a few days before the Methodist Missionary Society sent out its large reenforcement of 1839 on the *Lausanne* under the leadership of Jason Lee. Simpson immediately recognized the political implications in the enlargement of the American colony in the Willamette Valley. As soon as he could, he alerted the officials of the Hudson’s Bay Company in London to this threat to the territorial claims of England to Oregon. As a result, the Company decided to send a colony of French Canadians with their families from Red River to settle at the Cowlitz Portage. It is evident that the Company wanted to increase the number of British citizens living north of the Columbia River in order to strengthen British claims to that part of the Oregon territory. The emigrants left Red River on June 1, 1841, under the command of James Sinclair. This was the only emigration of that size sponsored by the Company for Oregon before the settlement of the boundary question in 1846. There is no

indication in the writings of any of the missionaries of the American Board that they saw a connection between the arrival of the Methodist reinforcement of 1840 and the Red River immigration of 1841.

Mary Walker in her diary tells of a visit that Sinclair made at Tshimakain on August 21. "He is conducting a company of emigrants from Canada," she wrote. "They expect to settle at the Cowlitz. There are a hundred and twentyfive, 80 of whom are children. The women are mostly halfbloods. Several births have occurred on the way, & since leaving the buffalo country, they have been obliged to kill 8 oxen. An ox only lasts them a day or two. Thus we see Oregon fast filling up."⁴ Being French Canadians, it may be assumed that all were Catholics.

The Red River party was at Fort Walla Walla at the time part of the Fort burned on October 35 Whitman mentioned the fire in his letter to Greene of October 22, saying that, although the Company's loss was not great, "Messrs. Griffin, Clark, Littlejohn, & Smith were very heavy sufferers;" many of their personal belongings had been left there in storage. Narcissa in a letter to her parents said some property belonging to their mission, such as salt and a few precious plows, were also lost [Letter 97]. Under McKinlay's energetic supervision, the destroyed buildings were soon rebuilt.

According to Spalding, who made the claim in a published article in May 1865,⁶ Whitman was called to Fort Walla Walla at the time of the Annual Mission Meeting of September 1842. While there, according to this account, word came of the arrival at Fort Colville of the Red River party, while a number were dining at the Fort. Upon hearing the news, a young priest sprang to his feet and shouted: "Hurrah for Columbia! [Oregon]. America is too late; we have got the country." Spalding claimed that: "In an instant, as by instinct, Dr. Whitman saw through the whole plan, clear to Washington... He immediately rose from the table and asked to be excused, sprang upon his horse, and in a very short time stood with his noble 'Cayuse' [pony] white with foam, before his door; and without stopping to dismount, he replied to our anxious inquiries with great decision and earnestness: 'I am going to cross the Rocky Mountains and reach Washington this winter, God carrying me through, and bring out an emigration over the mountains next season, or this country is lost.'"⁷

Here is one of the main points of the discredited Whitman-Saved-

Oregon story so zealously disseminated by Spalding, Gray,⁸ and others. The main fallacy of Spalding's account is that the *Red River colony arrived in Old Oregon in the fall of 1841 and not 1842*. However, there may be a core of truth in Spalding's claim. Whitman may have visited Fort Walla Walla in the fall of 1841 when he heard of the arrival of the Red River colony at Fort Colville. He did comment on this news in his letter to Greene dated November 11, 1841, but said nothing about seeing any political significance in the colony's arrival.

When the colonists arrived at the Cowlitz Portage, they found that the lands made available to them by the Puget Sound Agricultural Company were not well suited for farming. Attracted by the fertile acres and better climate of the Willamette Valley, they soon moved thither. No doubt the presence of a number of former employees of the Hudson's Bay Company in the Valley was an inducement. This was a disappointing development for Dr. McLoughlin and the officials of the Hudson's Bay Company who were eager to increase the British population at the Cowlitz Portage. Bancroft commented: "The failure of the Red River settlers to remain on the lands of the Puget Sound Company defeated whatever political design the formation of that organization favored."⁹ But, as will be indicated, the increase of the number of French Canadians in the Willamette Valley gave the Hudson's Bay Company a temporary advantage in its opposition to any move on the part of the Americans to establish a provisional government.

George Simpson estimated the population of the Valley in 1840 to be about five hundred, of whom sixty-five men were Americans and sixty-one French Canadians.¹⁰ Although the number of adult men was about evenly divided between the two groups, the French Canadians had a larger number of children than the Americans. When all or most of the Red River colonists moved to the Valley early in 1842, the French Canadians were in the majority until the arrival of the American immigration in the fall of that year. The annual subsidy of £100 given by the Hudson's Bay Company to Father F. N. Blanchet for his services to the French Canadians in the Willamette Valley has been mentioned previously.¹¹ This generous assistance to the Roman Catholics in the Valley was not at that time public knowledge. Why was the Company making such a large annual payment? The most apparent reason was that the Company felt a responsibility to provide for the spiritual welfare of its

former employees. A second reason was that the presence of a priest in the colony of illiterate but devout Roman Catholics was helpful in maintaining discipline. Lieut. Charles Wilkes, who visited the Valley in 1841, confirms this latter explanation when he wrote: "...the Catholic portion of the settlement, who form a large majority of these inhabitants, are kept under control by their priests."¹²

The Hudson's Bay Company enjoyed an unexpected benefit on the removal of most of the Red River colonists to the Willamette Valley: it gained a temporary political advantage over the Methodist-dominated American settlement. As has been stated, prior to the arrival of these colonists, the French Canadians had joined the Americans in signing the first two memorials sent to the United States Congress asking for an extension of its jurisdiction over Oregon. When, however, the Americans in the fall of 1842 sought the cooperation of the Canadians in another similar petition to Congress, the Canadians not only declined to sign but actively opposed the idea. Bancroft states that this was "presumably by the advice of McLoughlin and their spiritual adviser, Blanchet."¹³ The loyalty of the French Canadians to the Company was such that they could usually be counted on to vote or act en bloc as directed.

The formation of a provisional government was finally approved by a narrow majority of settlers meeting at Champoeg on May 2, 1843. Most of the Canadians on that occasion, still heeding the advice of Father Blanchet, voted against the proposal. However, a few voted with the Americans; thus permitting the provisional government to be established.¹⁴

WAR, DIPLOMACY, OR EMIGRATION

The area of Old Oregon claimed by the United States and coveted by Great Britain was that part of the present State of Washington lying to the north and west of the Columbia River. The final settlement of the troublesome boundary question could have been by one of three methods—war, diplomacy, or emigration. The slogan: "Fifty-four forty or fight," referring to the boundary line that far north, was often heard in the United States following the Presidential campaign of 1844,¹⁵ and yet going to war over a wilderness area in faraway "Oregon" was too preposterous to have been taken seriously by either nation. Diplomacy needed

a bargaining base before it could be effective, and this is exactly what emigration from the States provided for its diplomats.

As has been stated, Slacum was the first to recognize the strategic value to the United States of the Puget Sound region. He was insistent that the boundary line should be at the 49° parallel. Inspired by the dream that Slacum had imparted to him, Jason Lee had induced Whitman and Spalding to petition the American Board to send out a colony of 220 missionaries. Lee's plan was for the Methodist Church to concentrate on enlarging its colony in the Willamette Valley while the American Board would plant its colony in the interior of Oregon. If this strategy were successful, Oregon would be won by immigration.

When the Joint Occupation Treaty came up for possible consideration in 1837, Senator John C. Calhoun advised Congress to delay. He argued that the whole question of the location of the boundary line would be decided by an influx of American settlers. "Let us encourage emigration," he advocated, "and let the West send off its swarms; fill Oregon with its citizens, and it will become ours as certainly as a ripe peach drops to the ground in autumn."¹⁶

George Simpson was aware of this strategy when he met Jason Lee in New York shortly before the *Lausanne* sailed in October 1839. As has been mentioned, it was this knowledge that moved the Hudson's Bay Company in London to take steps to counteract the American moves by sending its colony from Red River to Oregon in 1841. Evidently realizing that the number of emigrants who could be sent to Oregon from the Red River settlement would be strictly limited, the officials of the Hudson's Bay Company made plans to send some by sea. We find this plan mentioned in a letter from London to Dr. McLoughlin dated December 31, 1839: "In furtherance of the same object of protection to the fur trade, we have it in view to send by the ship to sail for the Columbia River in the month of September next, about twenty respectable, industrious agriculturists either with small families or single to be taken into the Company's service or placed on the Cowlitz settlement, as may hereafter be found expedient, and we have it in view moreover to increase our numerical strength in your quarter by a regular system of migration from year to year as the means of conveyance may admit."¹⁷ Actually such a plan was never put into effect. If, however, the only practical way to colonize Oregon had been by sea, the Hudson's Bay Company would have had a

distinct advantage over any private agency in the United States. If, on the other hand, Oregon was to be colonized by overland emigrations, the advantage lay with the United States.

While in the United States during that fall of 1839, Simpson learned of the proposal of the Oregon Provisional Emigration Society to send a colony of two hundred men “with whatever families they may have” overland to Oregon in 1840. When this was reported to the Company’s headquarters in London, the officials called it a “wild enterprise”¹⁸ which was unlikely ever to be realized. The consensus of British opinion seems to have been that, because of the long distance between the Missouri frontier and the Willamette Valley, the high mountains, and the barren deserts, no serious threat to England’s claim on Oregon would ever come from any American overland emigration. This view was summarized in the following statement in the July 1843 issue of the *Edinburgh Review*: “However the political question between England and America, as to the ownership of Oregon, may be decided, *Oregon will never be colonized overland from the Eastern States.*”¹⁹ Ironically, at the time that issue of the *Review* appeared, the first large Oregon emigration, consisting of about a thousand people, was already moving across the western prairies. In that party were Dr. Whitman and his nephew, Perrin Whitman.

In 1841–42, Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson’s Bay Company in Canada, made what he called an overland journey around the world.²⁰ This included crossing Siberia going west from the Pacific Coast. Simpson began his travels from Red River in June 1841 shortly after the colony left from that place for Cowlitz Portage. Simpson followed after them, passed them, and arrived at Fort Vancouver the latter part of August 1841. There he saw two of the ships of the Wilkes Expedition which were visible reminders of the interest the United States was taking in the Old Oregon country. Simpson sailed from Fort Nisqually on September 6 for Sitka. He wrote in his journal while at the 49° parallel near Point Roberts: “If this parallel, as proposed by the Americans, should become the international boundary... Britain would not only be surrendering all the territory of any agricultural value, but would also virtually cut off the interior and the coast of her own share from each other.”²¹ As late as 1843, Sir George was still advocating that the boundary dividing the Old Oregon territory be the Columbia River.

By an interesting coincidence, the first emigration to Old Oregon from the States, with twenty-four in the party, arrived at Fort Vancouver shortly before the bateaux came down the Columbia with the Red River colonists. Although Simpson and the officials of the Hudson's Bay Company in London were skeptical that Americans ever could cross the continent in sufficient numbers to threaten England's claim to the heartland of Old Oregon, surely Dr. McLoughlin and James Douglas at Fort Vancouver were not so uninformed. Yet, we may wonder whether McLoughlin and Douglas saw the real significance of the success of the 1841 immigration. All members of the Methodist colony in the Willamette Valley had been sent to Oregon by a mission board, with some possible help from the U.S. Government in the form of a subsidy for the *Lausanne* party. Not one of the Methodist missionaries paid for his or her passage to Oregon. Likewise, all members of the Red River colony had their traveling expenses covered by the Hudson's Bay Company. On the other hand, no private or governmental subsidy helped the members of the 1841 emigration go to Oregon. These were entirely self-supporting. Here was a new factor introduced into the strategy of winning Old Oregon through emigration, which worked exclusively to the advantage of the Americans.

After witnessing the arrival of the second immigration from the States in 1842, consisting of about a hundred men, women, and children, James Douglas recalled the words of Senator Calhoun (previously quoted), who in 1837 had advised Congress not to be in any hurry to renegotiate the joint Occupation Treaty of 1818. In a letter to Simpson dated October 23, 1843, Douglas wrote: "The wily old lawyer is correct, and it would appear from the rush of emigration to this quarter, that his words have produced their effect, and there can be no doubt of the final success of the plan, if the country remains open a few years longer."²²

During the year that elapsed after the arrival of the Red River immigration in the fall of 1841, Whitman had time to think about the political future of Old Oregon. Nowhere in Whitman's letters do we find him stressing the strategic importance to the United States of securing title to the territory lying south of the 49° parallel. Instead, he was dreaming of a large American population, preferably Protestant, coming into the upper Columbia River Valley to establish homes, schools, communities, and industries. Although consistent in his continuing

efforts to civilize and Christianize the natives, he knew that the Indians could never compete with the superior numbers, skills, and industry of the white man. Whitman was only being realistic when he came to the conclusion that the country would eventually belong to the white man.

WHITMAN'S LIFE THREATENED

The first serious trouble that Whitman had with the Cayuses came in September and October 1841, about a year after Spalding and Smith had their difficulties with some Nez Perces at Lapwai and Kamiah. Whitman gave a detailed account of his harrowing experiences, when his very life was threatened, first in a letter to Archibald McKinlay²³ dated September 30 and then in a longer account to Greene on November 11. In the latter he wrote: "The Indians at this station had been very quiet for the last year and a half, but for various reasons causes which have been operating upon them, they were prepared for agitation, thinking that that was the best way to obtain property." Smith had repeatedly referred to the insatiable desire of the Nez Perces for the material things which the white man had, and Spalding had spoken in the same way about the Indians in his vicinity. Now Whitman was referring to it.

One of these "various causes" to which Whitman made reference arose out of a visit a certain Cayuse, called Iatin, had made to the Willamette Valley presumably in the spring or summer of 1841. While there he heard that it was customary for white men to pay for the land they cultivated and to buy the right to cut wood on land owned by another. "He was told," wrote Whitman, "that when a man came on to the white man's land & they wanted him to go off, if he would not, he was kicked off." When Iatin told his fellow Cayuses what he had heard, their cupidity was aroused. Whitman had never paid them for the land he was occupying nor for the timber he was cutting in the Blue Mountains. The fact that they had initially urged Whitman to settle at Waiilatpu in 1836 with every promise of cooperation was overlooked or forgotten.

AGITATION BY HALF-BREEDS

A second source of difficulty arose out of some inflammatory remarks made by Joe Gray, a half-breed Iroquois.²⁴ According to Whitman, Joe was "for a long time a servant of the H.B. Co.," and lived "in the camp of the Waiilatpu & Walla Walla Indians from April until

Sept.” Joe, like Iatin, stressed the idea that the white man should pay for the lands taken from the Indians and became specific when he argued that Whitman should pay for the mission premises at Waiilatpu. Being a Roman Catholic, Joe further complicated the situation for Whitman by encouraging the Cayuses to forsake the teachings of the Protestants and accept the doctrines and practices of the priests.

Three half-breeds figure in the Whitman story. The first was Joe Gray in 1841; then Tom Hill, 1844–46; and finally the archvillain, Joe Lewis, who precipitated the Whitman massacre of November 1847. A half-breed was often an unhappy, frustrated person, frequently rejected by the white people and yet not willing to live as an Indian. Some of the half-breeds who drifted into the Oregon country came from the Eastern States and had first-hand knowledge of how the white men had dispossessed the Indians of their ancestral lands. According to Whitman’s report to McKinlay, this was one of the main points which Joe Gray stressed. Whitman claimed that Gray told Tiloukaikt “how the Indians did in his country and [how they] raised disturbances and by that means got property.”

The Cayuses listened to Joe and noted that much that was taking place about them confirmed all he was saying. White men were coming into the Oregon country in increasing numbers. Perhaps the day was near when they would take the lands and the horses of the Cayuses. The more Joe talked, the more fearful the Indians became. Iatin aroused the cupidity of the Cayuses; Joe stirred feelings of animosity against the missionaries. The guilt of the wrongs the white men had done to the Indians of the East was focused on Whitman. Disregarding all the good that he had done and was doing for them, Tiloukaikt and his subchiefs finally came to the point of being ready to force the issue; either Whitman was to pay for the land he was occupying or he would have to go. There is no evidence that the Indians ever asked for or received payment from the Hudson’s Bay Company for land that it had occupied. However, the Company was powerful and well able to impose its will without fear of reprisals. The missionaries were entirely dependent upon the goodwill of the natives.

FIRST CONFRONTATION WITH TILOUKAIKT

The first confrontation that Whitman had with Tiloukaikt and members of his band came on or before Saturday, September 25, 1841.

In the letters that Whitman wrote to McKinlay and Greene, he gave the names of four of the ringleaders, each of whom was to play a leading role in the massacre which came some six years later. The first was Tiloukaikt,²⁵ the successor to Chief Umtippe. He and his band had their home camping grounds within a mile or so west of Waiilatpu. Whitman named a second Indian who took part in the disturbance “Sakiaph,” believed to be Tamsucky, also called Feathercap.²⁶ Since the natives were often called by several names and nicknames, a positive identification is not always possible. A third Indian was Tomahas, who has sometimes been confused with Tamsucky as each has been referred to by survivors of the Whitman massacre as “The Murderer.”²⁷ The nickname seems to have been given to one of these individuals because he had killed another Cayuse. The fourth was Ish-ish-kais-kais,²⁸ also known as Frank Escaloom, a brother of Tomahas.

Tiloukaikt and his band, stirred by the inflammatory statements of Joe Gray, deliberately precipitated a confrontation with Whitman by turning some of their horses into Whitman’s fenced corn field. It so happened that Whitman had some Walla Walla Indians working for him who were being paid with Indian goods such as awls, shirts, etc. Even this had become a sore point with Tiloukaikt, as Whitman explained to McKinlay: “There is a great jealousy of the labouring Indians because they get food, shirts, and blankets, in distinction to themselves.” When Whitman saw the horses in his field, he ordered one of the Walla Walla Indians to drive them out. Tiloukaikt countermanded the order and told the man that he would be whipped if he obeyed Whitman.²⁹ With admirable self-control, Whitman told Tiloukaikt that the fence had been erected to protect his crops, not to make a horse pen, “but if he thought [it] good [for the horses] to eat up our crops, I had no more to say about it.”

Tiloukaikt replied: “That this was his land, that he grew up here & that the horses were only eating up the growth of the soil; and demanded of me what I had ever paid for the land.” Whitman answered that he had paid nothing and that he would never give anything. “He then made use of the word, ‘Shame,’” wrote Whitman. “I spoke to him of the original arrangement made for us to locate here & that we did not come of ourselves but by invitation from the Indians, & that the land was fully granted us. Here I left him” [Letter 100]. The question

of property rights had been raised. Whitman refused to press the issue and the horses remained in the field, for the time being, eating his corn crop.

Whitman related to Greene what followed: "In a short time one of the chiefs came to me & asked why I allowed those troublesome horses to eat up the corn? I related to him what had just passed & said I had no intention to remove them. While I was talking Tilkanaiks [Tiloukaikt] came along, having overheard, & came up to me & exclaimed that it was troublesome for me to talk so much & struck me severely twice on my breast & commanded me to stop talking. I simply replied that I had been in the habit of talking from my childhood & that I intended still to talk." Evidently Tiloukaikt tried to provoke Whitman to strike back, but this he, very wisely, refused to do.

SECOND CONFRONTATION WITH TILOUKAIKT

A second incident involving Tiloukaikt occurred a few days later. An Indian entered W. H. Gray's kitchen in defiance of a wellknown rule and refused to leave when asked to do so. Maria Maid,³⁰ who was still at Waiilatpu, called Gray, who also requested the Indian to leave. When he refused to do so, Gray forcibly ejected him. The Indian then went to the corral and roped one of Gray's horses. Gray cut the rope and returned the horse to the corral. Tamusky then threatened to kill all of the cattle belonging to the mission. Whitman told him: "You have now shown your heart & if you think so, you can kill them."

By this time Gray, realizing that the Indians were spoiling for a fight, withdrew and began to work on the roof of his house. Some Indians followed but remained on the ground. Whitman climbed up to where Gray was working and warned him to say nothing, no matter how insulting the provocation. Tiloukaikt also climbed upon the roof and continued to harass Gray. Tiloukaikt ordered Gray to stop building and to make plans to leave the mission premises the very next day, which was a Sunday. When Whitman interceded on Gray's behalf, Tiloukaikt turned on him and ordered him and his wife to leave also. In Whitman's letter to McKinlay we can read: "I told him we could not consent to move on the Sabbath." So thoroughly had the missionaries stressed the sinfulness of traveling on Sunday that Tiloukaikt under those strained circumstances actually accepted the logic of Whitman's request for a delay.

After both Whitman and Tiloukaikt had climbed down to the ground, Tiloukaikt continued the quarrel. Whitman tells the story: "He complained of my taking the part of Mr. G. He said if he were to go to our country, he should be very careful how he conducted [himself] lest he should be sent off. I told him that if Indians came into Mr. G's or my house & refused to do as we desired, it was right for us to put them out. He then took hold of my ear & pulled it & struck me on the breast, ordering me to hear, as much as to say we must let them do as they pleased about our houses. When he let go, I turned the other [ear] to him & he pulled that & in that way I let him pull first one & then the other, until he gave over & took my hat & threw it into the mud." Whitman asked one of the Walla Walla Indians to retrieve the hat, which he put on his head again. Tiloukaikt then "took it off again & threw it to the same place. Again the Indian gave it to me & I put it on & again with more violence, he took it off & threw it into the mud & water of which it dipped largely. Once more the Indian gave it back to me & I put it on, all mud as it was & said to him, perhaps he was playing." After reading Whitman's detailed account of his terrifying experience, we are amazed at his forbearance and his bravery. He literally obeyed the New Testament injunction to turn the other cheek. Under the circumstances, this was the wisest course he could have followed.

Finally, after realizing his failure to provoke Whitman to some act of resistance, Tiloukaikt withdrew. In Whitman's account to Greene, he added this amazing statement: "On the Sabbath all came to worship as usual." This would have included Tiloukaikt.

When McKinlay received Whitman's letter of September 30 which told of the disturbance at Waiilatpu, he sent a messenger with a stern word of warning to Tiloukaikt. Perhaps the Indians felt that since Pambrun was dead, the new Hudson's Bay official in charge at Fort Walla Walla would be lenient. If so, McKinlay's rebuke would have come as a shock. McKinlay warned Tiloukaikt that any insult to the Whitmans would be considered as a personal affront to himself; that the Company could cut off all trade with the Cayuses; and that if any harm befell the Whitman family, the Company would take immediate steps to avenge the deed. He referred to the fact that the personnel of the Company had but recently been increased by the arrival of the Red River colony which was at that time at Fort Walla Walla. In his letter

to Greene, Whitman referred to the presence of this colony, not as an indication that the British Government was strengthening its claim to Oregon, but rather as an added factor guaranteeing the safety of the American missionary stations.

A THIRD CONFRONTATION WITH THE INDIANS

The sharpest part of McKinlay's rebuke was his reference to those who took part in the outrage against the Whitmans as "dogs," a term of reproach particularly objectionable to the Cayuses. Smarting under the lash of McKinlay's hot words, a group of Indians led by Tiloukaikt invaded the Whitman home. When the Whitmans had lived in their first house near the river, the Indians were given free access to the living room and kitchen, but when they moved into the second house, their private quarters were kept locked. This the Indians resented, and no doubt the natural desire on Mrs. Whitman's part for privacy gave rise to the feeling among the natives that she was proud and haughty and "far above them."³¹

When the Indians forced their way into the kitchen, Narcissa called her husband. He persuaded the Indians to move into the living room. Narcissa was then able to lock one of the kitchen doors leading to the outside. For a few moments, all was confusion, as Whitman described in his letter to Greene: "...while we were talking... an old Indian was threatening Mrs. W. with a hammer through the window in order to force open the kitchen door & at the same time Sakiaph [Tamsucky] was trying to open another door in order to throw the house open." The locks were broken with a hammer and an ax "& a horde of lawless savages entered & took possession of the house."

One of the Indians threatened Whitman with an ax. Whitman's account of what then happened follows: "After I took away the ax, he held to my collar & struck me with his fist on the mouth & tore my clothes. Mrs. W. took the ax from me & Mr. G. put both the ax & hammer up stairs & we then sat down again. Sakiaph soon returned with a club and advanced upon me. As I arose to take hold of the club, I avoided the blow he was leveling at my head. For this I was much ridiculed by the Indians as fearing death." Sakiaph then went out and got his gun and threatened Whitman with it. "They persisted in saying," wrote Whitman, "because I said I was not afraid to die that I challenged them to kill me, but I told

them no—I did not challenge them nor did I want to suffer pain but still I did not fear to die.”

Whitman’s amazing coolness cowed his antagonists. They began to weaken by suggesting some compromise terms. Instead of demanding that the missionaries leave, they said that if the Whitmans would not lock their doors, they could live at Waiilatpu in peace. Whitman replied: “...that as long as we lived and occupied our houses, we should order our doors & if they wished to live in peace, they must not oppose the regulations we made.” Finally Tiloukaikt exclaimed that “it was impossible to bully us into fright.” Tomahas then spoke up and suggested that Whitman give them presents. “I told them,” wrote Whitman to Greene, “they would not get the value of a single awl or pin for their bad conduct & if they wanted property in that way, they must steal it.” Sensing that he had the upper hand, Whitman then accused them of being made dupes by Joe Gray. Tomahas admitted that Joe had told them of the experiences of the Iroquois who were given “a great deal of money” by the white men and “after that all lived together as brothers.”

Whitman added: “They now broke up & went away saying they would go & see if Mr. McKinlay dared call them dogs.” Alarmed at the possibility of the Indians attacking Fort Walla Walla, Whitman sent a messenger that night to warn McKinlay. “The next day was the Sabbath,” Whitman noted, “& it was a sad day for us. Many stayed away from worship & some went to the fort carrying their arms & others were insolent & reckless of evil. They did many violent acts such as troubling our animals & breaking our windows. We now felt that we had showed the example of non resistance as long as it was called for & as we went to bed, we put ourselves in a state of defence should any thing occur at the Fort & the Indians return upon us. We also resolved to go to the Fort with our families & stay for a time until we could arrange to go away or return as might seem best.” Here is the only discovered reference in any of the writings of Whitman of his willingness to use force if he felt that their lives were in danger.

McKINLAY WARNS THE CAYUSES

McKinlay was prepared to receive the band of armed Cayuses when they appeared at the Fort on Monday, October 4. Writing to Whitman that day, McKinlay said: “I told them I wished to know their hearts & at

the same time tell the state of my own." He informed the Indians that he was about to trade for some of their horses but said he would not do so until he found out whether "we were to have war or not." He stressed the fact that he was well able to defend the Fort and that if any harm befell the Whitmans, Chief Factor McLoughlin "would send up a sufficient number [of men] to revenge the whole and that the plunder of their horses would be considered sufficient payment for the trouble." The threat of losing their horses was something the Cayuses understood, and they at once calmed down. "Let it suffice," McKinlay wrote, "that what one and all of them said expressed deep contrition for what had passed and made many promises that they would conduct themselves well in future... I think you will find it to the advantage of all concerned to forget & forgive the past. But pray put your face against paying them for their bad conduct." McKinlay reassured Whitman that there was "every prospect of your being allowed to keep peaceful possession of your place & that you will not be further molested by the Indians."³²

When George Simpson had passed through Fort Walla Walla, shortly before this disturbance took place, he met Asahel Munger, who, as Simpson reported, was "grievously disappointed with the country." Simpson, who was always cynical regarding any good that missionaries might be able to do for the Indians, then added: "But the ministers of the Gospel, moreover, had a grievance peculiar to themselves, for, instead of finding the savages eager to embrace Christianity, as they had been led to expect, they saw a superstitious, jealous and bigoted people. They soon ascertained that they could gain converts only by buying them; and they were even reproached by the savages on the ground, that, if they were really good men, they would procure guns and blankets for them from the Great Spirit, merely by their prayers. In short, the Indians, discovering that the new religion did not render them independent of the traders, any more than their old one, regarded the missionaries as mere failures, as nothing better than imposters."³³

"AMONG A PEOPLE OF NO LAW"

Following the receipt of McKinlay's letter, Whitman had a meeting with Tiloukaikt and his followers on October 5. "We told them plainly," Whitman reported to Greene, "that unless they were ready to protect us— & enforce good order we would leave them, that we did not come

to fight but to teach them.” The Indians appeared to be contrite and promised that they would not make further trouble. However, Whitman did tell Greene: “From the commencement of this station to the present time, it had constantly been a point with some one or more to be urging for property to be given them to keep them in subjection to order... I do not think we shall again be molested on these points very soon.”

Whitman had no more trouble with the Indians until his confrontation with Young Chief in November 1845. The unhappy episodes of October 1841 put a damper upon the educational and religious activities of the Whitmans. A bond of sympathy had been severed which made it much more difficult for the Whitmans to receive the cooperation of the natives.

Whitman’s bravery in standing up against the threats of the Indians even when his life was threatened was no doubt the reason why H. K. W. Perkins was able to give the following appraisal: “Though they feared the *Doctor*, they did not *love* him... And *knowing him* as I *knew him*, you would not need to be told that an Oregon Indian & he could never get along well together... I need hardly tell you he cared for no man under heaven—perfectly fearless and independent.”³⁴

Several years later, on April 10, 1846, Narcissa, in a letter to her father, made the following comment about the difficulties white settlers in the Willamette Valley faced: “*To be in a country among a people of no law, even if they are from a civilized land, is the nearest like a hell on earth of anything I can imagine.*”³⁵ If such were her feelings regarding the more stable society in the Willamette Valley, how much more did her words apply to the situation that she and her husband faced when living among the lawless and uncivilized Cayuses.

MORE DISAGREEMENTS WITHIN THE MISSION

On October 13, about a week after Whitman had settled his difficulties with the Cayuse chiefs, Spalding arrived at Waiilatpu for supplies. A few days later Eells came on a similar errand. As would be expected with four of the five men of the Mission present, certain items of business came up for informal discussion. Again some things that Spalding had either said or done aroused the ire of Whitman. In the August preceding, Spalding had received two letters from Greene which made him feel that the Board fully supported the views he had advocated

regarding the policies to be followed in evangelizing the natives. These letters may have given Spalding too much confidence, and he may therefore have spoken too boldly in his criticism of others.

Another factor to be remembered is that the Grays had been living with the Whitmans for about a year, and no doubt Gray's prejudices against Spalding had to some degree influenced Whitman. The Coe Collection in the Yale library contains several letters from Gray to Walker, written during the fall of 1841 and the following winter, which reveal Gray's animosity towards Spalding. Over and over again, Gray accused Spalding of "duplicity." The following quotation taken from his letter of March 28, 1842 is typical: "Duplicity you are well aware is one that holds a prominent station in all his correspondence & actions."

Whatever the cause, this we know: Whitman had become deeply discouraged. No doubt his recent unpleasant experience with Tiloukaikt contributed to his depression. On October 22, a few days after Spalding and Eells had left for their respective stations, Whitman wrote to Greene saying that a Mission meeting would be called as soon as possible to settle their differences or else they would "mutually divide & leave the Board to fill our places with others more suitable." He also wrote: "When I last wrote you, I thought we were prepared to cooperate together—but more recent facts have shown that hope to be vain, for Mr. and Mrs. Spalding have proved it otherwise

He has again expressed a full desire to be reconciled to all in the Mission but as Mrs. Spalding was not present & wishing not to make reconciliation to be so soon broken, or of partial understanding, we did not go any farther than to agree to act as being under covenant [i.e., Christian] fellowship."

From Spalding's diary we learn that Whitman with a Mr. Cook, who was evidently in Whitman's temporary employ, arrived at Lapwai on the evening of November 26, 1841, to help Spalding build a flour mill. The day happened to be Spalding's thirty-eighth birthday. Spalding had been conducting another series of what he called "protracted meetings" for the natives and was giving special instruction to a number he felt were ready for church membership. On Sunday, the 28th, Whitman addressed the people.

On the following Wednesday, December 1, Spalding wrote in his diary: "Examine Five Crows who has been here since the commencement

of the protracted meeting & is surprisingly attentive to religious instruction & his book. Attends school regularly every day. I think he indulges a hope. Oh Lord, grant he may be really a child of thine.”

Five Crows was a Cayuse chief, a half-brother of Old Joseph and a brother of Young Chief. Spalding also called him Hezekiah. Five Crows and his band lived along the Umatilla River. His interest in Christianity had induced him to travel to Lapwai sometime in the fall of 1841 and become a member of a class that Spalding was preparing for church membership.³⁶

When Spalding presented Five Crows and a number of Nez Perces to Whitman as candidates for membership in the Mission church, Whitman, to Spalding’s great surprise, objected. Whitman allowed his personal pique to block Spalding’s laudable objective of receiving several Indian converts into the church. An entry in Spalding’s diary for December 8 tells the story: “Doct. W. is not willing that these persons who have been examined & who give satisfactory evidence that they are new creatures in Christ should be received into the church till our difficulties are settled. He read over a long list of charges against me, many of which were true & for which I told him I was willing and anxious to make any concessions, or do any thing he wished, if he would let me know his wish... but though he did not directly say what he wanted, still he gave us plainly to understand that nothing short of excision from the Mission would satisfy him & Mr. Gray. Many of the charges were facts perverted. And many of them were direct falsehoods got up by somebody.”³⁷ Spalding’s mention of Gray is evidence that Gray was the one who was keeping old disagreements alive. As long as Whitman objected to the reception of Five Crows and the others whom Spalding had prepared for church membership, there was nothing that Spalding could do at that time.

When Whitman started back on December 7 for Waiilatpu, accompanied by Cook, he took with him the blacksmith equipment which had been at Lapwai. This was to be placed in the new shop which Gray had erected. Spalding kept the printing press and, at the time of Whitman’s visit, was working on a translation of the Gospel of Matthew into the Nez Perce tongue. Whitman took the first ten chapters of Spalding’s work

with him to review. Since Rogers spent some time at Fort Walla Walla and Waiilatpu during the winter of 1841–42 and the following spring, while working on a dictionary of the Nez Perce language, it is possible that he too went over Spalding's translation.

THE AMERICAN BOARD TAKES DRASTIC ACTION

Secretary Greene was stunned when he received four long letters from A. B. Smith on October 5, 1841. When these were added to previous letters that Smith had written, each of which contained criticisms of Spalding, and also to the letters of criticism written by Gray, Rogers, and Hall, Greene felt that the situation in the Oregon Mission was far too serious for him to settle alone. He decided to wait until the Prudential Committee would meet on the following February 15.

A major difficulty faced both by the American Board in Boston and by its missionaries in faraway Old Oregon were the long delays in the transmission of the mails. Since Greene had the custom of noting on the letters received the date of their arrival in Boston, it is easy to ascertain the time which elapsed between the time of writing and the time each arrived in Greene's office. Letters carried by the Hudson's Bay Company's express across Canada were delivered in about seven months. Letters that went by sea often took twice as long. For instance, the letter which Smith wrote on February 24, 1840, did not arrive in Boston until October 5, 1841, about nineteen months later. This was longer than usual. On the average, it took about two years for an exchange of letters. This long interval made it impossible for the Board to write to Spalding and get his side of the controversy before taking decisive action.

The members of the Prudential Committee met in Boston as scheduled on February 15, 1842, and Greene laid before them the series of complaining letters. The Committee was faced with a distressing situation. The Oregon Mission had received extensive publicity through the *Missionary Herald* as being one of the most promising of all the missions of the Board. Any action to dismiss any of the members of that mission or to close any of the three stations would have been most painful. No account has been discovered of the agonizing discussions of the Committee which must have occurred as they debated what should be done.

On February 25, a day or so after the Prudential Committee had adjourned, Secretary Greene addressed a letter to "The Members of the

Oregon Mission” which summarized the actions taken. His introductory sentences reflect his heaviness of heart. He noted that the Committee had hoped that “the Stations at Waiilatpu and Clear Water” might have been continued “with the expectation of their being prosperous and highly useful, both to the Indian race, and as planting and nourishing the seeds of Christianity and Christian institutions in a country into which a white population will be pressing at no distant day.” Now those hopes seemed doomed to failure.

Greene then listed the five following resolutions passed by the Prudential Committee:

1. To discontinue the southern branch of the Oregon Mission.
2. To recall the Rev. Henry H. Spalding and wife, with the expectation that they would return to the United States by the earliest suitable opportunity.
3. Expressing the decided opinion that it is expedient for Rev. Asa B. Smith and wife and Mr. William H. Gray and wife also to return to the United States by the earliest suitable opportunity.
4. Transferring Doct. Marcus Whitman, and Mr. Cornelius Rogers, if he should be disposed to continue in the missionary work, to the north branch of the mission, to cooperate with Messrs. Eells and Walker.
5. Appointing Doct. Whitman and Mr. Rogers to dispose of the mission property connected with the south branch of the mission, to the Methodist mission, or in such other manner as they might deem advisable, in order to bring the affairs of those stations to a close more speedily and with the least loss to the Board.

The Prudential Committee did not know that the Smiths were in Hawaii at the time the above actions were taken or that Rogers had severed his connections with the Mission. The actions to close Waiilatpu and Lapwai and recall the Spaldings and the Grays were tantamount to closing all stations of the Oregon Mission, for it is extremely doubtful that the Whitmans would ever have consented to move to Tshimakain where they would have had to learn a different Indian language. Had the resolutions of the Prudential Committee been implemented, in all probability the Whitmans would have left the Mission by moving to the

Willamette Valley. The Walkers and Eellses, under those circumstances, would have been stranded at Tshimakain and no doubt would also have left the Mission. Thus the fate of the whole Oregon Mission was involved in the drastic action taken by the Board's Prudential Committee.

In the closing paragraph of the letter addressed to all members of the Mission, Greene wrote: "It is a cause of much grief and disappointment, as you may well suppose, that a mission which seemed to promise so great and speedy results, as did yours for years, should be brought to such a close, and that too owing to disaffection among its members. The Christian community, when the catastrophe becomes known, will also be grieved and disappointed. And we fear that in the eyes of many... the missionary work will be dishonored and prejudiced."³⁸

On that same day, February 25, 1842, on which Greene wrote a general letter to all members of the Oregon Mission, he addressed a personal note to Whitman. "In everything that relates to Mr. Spalding," he wrote, "you will need to act with much discretion and kindness." Greene recommended that the Spaldings, with their two small children, return to the States by the overland route since this would be much less expensive than going by sea around Cape Horn. Evidently Greene did not know that the fur trade was over and that there were no more caravans going to a Rendezvous. Nor did the Committee know of the Annual Meeting of the Oregon Mission held in May 1841 when most of the personality differences involving Spalding had been brought out in to the open and amicably settled.³⁹

Greene's two letters of February 25, 1842, were entrusted to Dr. Elijah White for delivery. White, who, as has been stated, had been dismissed from the Methodist Mission in 1840, had returned to the States and had received an appointment as a sub-Indian Agent for Old Oregon. White was planning to make the overland journey in the spring and summer of 1842 with a party of emigrants. Learning of this, Greene asked White to deliver the letters to Whitman.

A few days after the letters of February 25 were on their way to Oregon, Whitman's letter to Greene of July 13, 1841, and also one from Spalding of the same date, reached Greene. Whitman gave an optimistic report of conditions then existing within the Mission which reflected the conciliations worked out at the Annual Meeting held in the previous May. Whitman wrote: "We are prepared so far as we can,

to labour together in harmony with the exception of some that may be waiting to see the result of the communications to the Board.” By that date, conditions within the Mission had greatly changed because of the departure of the Smiths and Rogers. Greene hastened to send another letter to Whitman to countermand the directives given in his February 25 letter to the Mission. Writing on April 28, Greene said that if the Committee had known what Whitman had reported in his July 13 letter, “they would almost necessarily [have] decided differently.” Since it was then impossible to call the Prudential Committee together on short notice, Greene suggested to Whitman that he ignore the actions taken and continue to carry on as before. Unfortunately for all concerned, Greene’s letter of April 28 failed to reach Whitman before he left for Boston on October 3 of that year.

FALL 1841—SPRING 1842

After depending upon horseflesh for their meat for about five years, the Whitmans were able in the fall of 1841 to butcher their first beef and hogs. Of this Narcissa wrote in a letter to her parents dated October 6, 1841, “We killed a very fat beef a short time ago, fed upon grass only, which yielded 148 pounds of tallow after it was tried.” She also reported that her husband had on that day butchered seven hogs. Since by that date, Whitman had a smokehouse, he could have thus preserved both pork and beef.

The winter of 1841–42 passed quietly at Waiilatpu with the Whitmans experiencing no serious difficulty with the Indians. The Walkers were expecting their third child in March, and Whitman was requested to be present. Whitman left Waiilatpu on Tuesday, March 1, and arrived at Tshimakain the following Saturday. Mary Walker gave birth to a son on the 17th and they named him Marcus Whitman.⁴⁰ This was the fourth boy to be named after Dr. Whitman during his lifetime. Whitman did not start back to Waiilatpu until the 23rd. He arrived at his home on the 26th, having been absent for about four weeks.

A great feeling of loneliness swept over Narcissa after her husband left for Tshimakain. She began a letter that day addressed to her sister Jane and her brother, Edward, in which she gave intimate glimpses into her home life and also into her own mind and heart. She added post-scripts on each of the eleven following days so that the letter became a

diary and grew until it contained about 6,000 words. After referring to the departure of her husband, she wrote: "I am once more left alone in this house with no other company than my two little half-breed girls, Mary Ann Bridger and Helen Mar Meek." The Grays were in their new house nearby. Living in an Indian lodge on the grounds was a friendly half-breed, who may have been the "Mr. Cook" who accompanied Whitman to Lapwai a few weeks earlier. "He is the man," she wrote, "who attends to my wants, such as milking, getting water, wood, etc." The drinking water used by the Whitmans was dipped up out of the Walla Walla River. There was no well on the mission grounds.

Narcissa yearned for the company of her sister and brother "to enjoy my solitude with me," and then she added: "Jane, I wish you were here to sleep with me, I am such a timid creature about sleeping alone that sometimes I suffer considerably, especially since my health has been not very good." She again referred to her weak eyes and mentioned using the spectacles that her brother, Jonas Galusha, had given her. "I do not know what I could do without them," she commented.

DAVID MALIN RECEIVED INTO THE WHITMAN HOME

On March 2, 1842, two Indian women called on Narcissa bringing with them "a miserable looking child, between three and four years old, and wished me to take him. He is nearly naked, and they said his mother had thrown him away and gone off with another Indian." The little boy was the son of a Spaniard by the name of Cortez, who was once in the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, and a Walla Walla Indian woman. According to Narcissa's account in her letter to Jane and Edward, his parents had deserted him and his Indian grandmother had cared for him for a time. "My feelings were greatly excited for the poor child and [I] felt a great disposition to take him." She hesitated, however, to accept the responsibility of having a third half-breed child to rear. Of this she wrote: "I, however, told them they might take him away and bring him again in the morning, and in the meantime I would think about it. The care of such a child is very great at first dirty, covered with body and head lice, and starved—his clothing is part of a skin dress which does not half cover his nakedness, and a small bit of skin over his shoulders."

The forlorn and forsaken boy was returned to Narcissa the next day. Of this she wrote: "I could not shut my heart against him. I washed him,

oiled and bound up his wounds, and dressed him and cleaned his head of lice. Before he came his hair was cut close to his head and a strip as wide as your finger was shaved from ear to ear, and also from his forehead to his neck, crossed the other at right angles. This the [Indian] boys had done to make him look ridiculous. He had a burn on his foot where they said he had been pushed into the fire for the purpose of gratifying their malicious feelings, and because he was friendless." In a letter to Maria Pambrun, Narcissa told how some of the boys had gratified their evil hearts "by burning his naked body with sticks of fire" [Letter III].

When cleaned up, Narcissa saw that the boy was not more than two years old. The hardships through which he had passed had made him appear to be older. Having accepted the child, Narcissa wondered what name should be given to him. In memory she went back to her school days at Prattsburg and thought of a schoolmate, David Malin,⁴¹ who had married her friend, Mary Porter. So she called the boy David Malin.

The boy's grandmother, delighted to know that Mrs. Whitman would take the lad, called on her a few days later and asked for food and clothing, "because I had got the child to live with me." "So it is with them," Narcissa wrote, "the moment you do them a favour, you place yourself under lasting obligation to them and must continue to give to keep their love strong towards you." David proved to be a lovable child, much easier to handle than Helen Mar "who was so stubborn and fretful and wanted to cry all the time if she could not get her way."

MORE FROM NARCISSA'S LETTER

On March 4, 1842, Narcissa added another note to her growing letter when she wrote about high winds and stormy weather. She thought of Marcus on horseback working his way some 140 miles to the north towards Tshimakain where the weather would in all probability be even more severe. "He has never been obliged to encounter so much snow before," she wrote, "and I do not know how it will affect him." Whitman had the foresight to take with him a pair of snowshoes so that if the snow became too deep, he could dismount and walk. "He is a courageous man," wrote Narcissa proudly, "and it is well that he is so, to be a physician in this country. Common obstacles never affect him; he goes ahead when duty calls. Jane and Edward, you know but little about your brother Marcus, and all I can tell you about him at this time is that he is a *bundle of thoughts*."⁴² Actually,

as Narcissa later learned, Whitman did meet with deep snow, but the top crust was so hard that it supported both horse and rider.

In the same entry for this day, Narcissa wrote: "I am blessed with a lovely sister and an excellent associate in Sister Gray, and I trust that I am in some measure thankful, for I have found by experience that it is not good to be alone in our cares and labors." Mary Gray, already the mother of a boy and a girl, was expecting another child at any time. Since her husband had attended her on the two previous confinements, the Grays were not concerned about the absence of Dr. Whitman.

According to Narcissa's entry in her letter of March 11, she became ill that day. She wrote: "Dear Jane, I am sick tonight and in much pain—have been scarcely able to crawl about all day." She missed her husband and felt that if only he were present, "all the gloom that creeps over the mind in spite of efforts to the contrary," would disappear.

On March 12th, she wrote: "Before I could get to bed last night, I was seized with such severe pains in my stomach and bowels that it was with difficulty that I could straighten myself. I succeeded in crawling about until I got something to produce perspiration, thinking it might proceed from a cold, and went to bed. About two o'clock in the morning, Sister Gray sent for me, for she was sick and needed my assistance. When I waked, I was in a profuse perspiration. What to do, I did not know. Neither of them knew that I was sick the day before."

Narcissa felt it her duty to respond to Mary Gray's call, so arose and got dressed. She called for Cook who made a roaring fire in the fireplace in her room. This warmed her, for the night was cold. "I bundled myself pretty well," she wrote, "and went with Mr. C's assistance, for I felt but very little better able to walk than I did the evening before, yet not in so much pain. When I arrived the babe [a girl] was born, and Br. Gray was washing it... I took the babe and dressed it, and have been there all day with my children, although I have not been able to sit up all day."

On March 14, Narcissa noted the arrival of her thirty-fifth birthday and what would have been the fifth birthday of her own little girl had she lived. As far as she was able, Narcissa helped in the Gray household. For a time she took the two older Gray children, one three years old and the other eighteen months, to her home to be with her three half-breed children. After telling of her experiences, she gave the following advice to her brother Edward, who was thinking of becoming a minister or a missionary:

“You would do well to write a sermon on the word PATIENCE every day.” This was a virtue much needed in the mission field of Old Oregon.

On Saturday, March 26, to Narcissa’s great joy and relief, Marcus returned home. Eells was with him in order to get some supplies which had been shipped from Vancouver to Fort Walla Walla. “We are cheered,” Narcissa commented, “with an occasional visit from one and another, which is a source of comfort to us in our pilgrimage here.”

DEATH OF CAYUSE PITT

From time to time references to one or more of the seven Oregon Indian boys who had been sent to the Red River Mission school occur in the correspondence of the Hudson’s Bay officials or of the missionaries of the American Board. On February 5, 1842, Whitman wrote to Walker and told of some difficulties he had experienced while trying to mediate a dispute between some Nez Percés and some Cayuses resulting from the death of Cayuse Pitt, possibly at The Dalles or in the lower Columbia River area. According to a statement in a letter Narcissa wrote to Jane on February 2, 1842, Cayuse Pitt could just as well have been called Nez Perce Pitt, for it appears that he was part Nez Perce. According to Whitman’s letter to Walker, the Cayuses blamed the Indians of the lower Columbia for the death of Cayuse Pitt and, therefore, demanded payment. Whitman wrote: “They have caused the Indians below to give them a great deal of property on account of Pitt’s death... [including] 10 horses, 2 blankets, 15 or 20 shirts, many kettles, besides guns & muskets, food, etc.” According to Narcissa, the trouble arose out of the Indians’ superstitious faith in the medicine man, the “te-wat” [Letter 104]. Evidently, the Cayuses felt that because the te-wat had failed to cure Cayuse Pitt when he was summoned to do so, the River Indians would have to pay a penalty. The Cayuses, a much stronger and more warlike tribe than the River Indians, threatened severe reprisals if payment were not made. Whitman reproved the Cayuses for what they had done, and this aroused their anger against him.

The Nez Perce chief, Meiwai, who had made trouble for Smith at Kamiah and who claimed that he was a brother, or half-brother, of Cayuse Pitt, visited Waiilatpu and demanded a share of the loot received from the River Indians. When Whitman tried to arbitrate the dispute, “twelve or fifteen” Indians crowded into his home in a menacing manner,

one with a war club, and threatened his life [Letter 102a]. Finally Whitman was able to soothe the ruffled feelings. Narcissa's comment on the blind faith of the Indians in the power of the *tewat* "to kill or make alive at pleasure," reveals the dangerous situation in which Whitman was constantly being placed whenever he, a white *te-wat*, ministered to the sick and dying among the Cayuses.

After the death of Cayuse Pitt, only two of the seven Indians who had been sent to the Red River Mission were still alive: Spokane Garry and Nez Perce Ellis. Perhaps the one who had been the most sincere in his efforts to introduce Christianity among his people was Cayuse Halket, who returned from the school in the fall of 1834 when he was fifteen years old. He returned to Red River in the spring of 1835 or 1836 and died there in January 1837. On the whole the experiment of sending the Oregon Indian boys to the Red River school to be educated was not a success, although there were some benefits. Both Spokane Garry and Nez Perce Ellis had learned English, and become useful in their respective tribes as leaders of their people in their contacts with the whites.

ROMAN CATHOLIC ACTIVITIES

When Joseph Drayton of the Wilkes Expedition visited Waiilatpu in the summer of 1841, he described a picture that he had seen in Dr. McLoughlin's home at Fort Vancouver. According to Whitman's account in a letter to Greene, the picture represented "all Protestants as the withered ends of the several branches of Papacy falling off down into infernal society & flames." Whitman was told that the priests gave copies of the picture to the Indians with an explanation of its meaning. "The possession of one of these manuscripts by an Indian," wrote Whitman, "binds him not to hear any more instruction of Protestants so far as my observation can prove" [Letter 100].

Both the Protestants and the Roman Catholics discovered that the use of pictures was an effective way to teach religious doctrines. Gray tells how Spalding, wishing to emphasize the divine importance of labor, had his wife paint a picture of Adam with a hoe and of Eve with a spinning wheel.⁴³ Sometime during the summer of 1839, Fathers Blanchet and Demers devised a plan of teaching Christian history by marking off the centuries on a board and then painting symbolic pictures in the separate sections. Father Demers is reported to have had a board ten feet tall

which was called a “ladder” because of the horizontal lines drawn across it to indicate the centuries.⁴⁴ At the bottom were forty such lines to indicate the forty centuries before Christ; then came thirty-three dots to symbolize the years of His life on earth; and then eighteen more bars and thirty-nine dots to bring the chronology down to 1839. In the representation of the key events of the sixteenth century, the departure of such “heretics” as Luther, Calvin, and Henry VIII from the Catholic Church was shown by their being cast into hell.⁴⁵

To counteract such teachings, Spalding devised a Protestant ladder which showed Luther leaving the broad road leading to destruction which the Catholic Church was following and taking the narrow way leading to salvation. Spalding showed “the Man of Sin,” i.e., the Pope, as the one being cast into hell.

Since the Indians looked upon pictures with an almost superstitious awe, the use of them in teaching by both the Protestants and the Catholics was most effective. Narcissa explained this in one of her letters: “The influence of Catholicism adds much to distract their minds. They are constantly told by the followers of the priest that all who attend upon our instructions are in the sure way to Hell—& all who go to the priests’ worship will go to heaven. They are certain of it for they have seen the road with their own eyes & see us & all who follow us falling off into Hell. They have a representative of this kind given them by the priests & they need nothing more to make them positive that it must be so” [Letter 114].

A letter from Whitman to Walker, dated April 14, 1842, contains two references to the efforts of the Catholics to win over to their faith some of the followers of the Protestants. “Richard has just come in from the Papist station above,” he wrote. “He appears well & disposed to stay with us.” Richard, one of the two lads Whitman took East with him in 1835, proved to be uncooperative and no doubt was a great disappointment to Whitman. Yet, Richard refused to turn Catholic. On the other hand Whitman passed on the surprising news to Walker: “Tackensuatis & Kansut [two Nez Perce chiefs] & their wives have been baptized.” Evidently this was done by Father Demers. As has been stated, Tackensuatis was one of the Nez Percés who gave the mission party such an enthusiastic welcome in 1836 and who was so eager that the Spaldings settle among his people. Spalding’s early letters carried

many laudatory references to this chief, yet by 1840 Tackensuatis had lost his zeal for the white man's religion. Smith, writing to Greene on February 6, 1840, called the chief "a very wicked man."⁴⁶ The baptism of Tackensuatis and his wife by the Catholics must have caused dismay to both Spalding and Whitman.

Another convert won by the Catholics in 1842 was Dr. John McLoughlin. Reared as a Church of England communicant, Dr. McLoughlin from his earliest days at Fort Vancouver was accustomed to read the Anglican service on Sunday mornings at the Fort. He was a deeply religious man and personally gave every encouragement to the Protestant as well as to the Roman Catholic missionaries. Following the arrival of the Catholic priests, Dr. McLoughlin reexamined his own religious convictions and on November 10, 1842, after his "abjuration of heresy," became a communicant member of the Roman Catholic Church.⁴⁷ Nine days later, Father Blanchet solemnized the sacrament of marriage for "John McLoughlin and Margaret Wadin." Mrs. McLoughlin, as has been stated, was the widow of Alexander McKay and the mother of Thomas McKay. In 1846, Pope Gregory XVI honored Dr. McLoughlin by making him a Knight of St. Gregory.

THE ANNUAL MISSION MEETING OF 1842

After his return from Tshimakain on March 26, Whitman turned to this spring planting which had to be completed before the annual meeting of the Mission was held in May. To his great satisfaction, more of the Cayuses were cultivating the soil that spring than ever before. In her letter to Mrs. Parker of July 25, 1842, Narcissa wrote: "The success of the Kayuses in farming is pleasing beyond description. There is scarcely an individual of them but what has his little farm some where & every year extending it farther & farther. A large number of the Walla Walla tribe are doing the same... The Nez Perces are a labouring people, far more so than the Kayuses. Mrs. S. has succeeded very well in teaching several girls to spin & weave, knit & sew some but the Kayuse ladies are too proud to be seen usefully employed. Those who labour for us are Walla Wallas principally. One has learned to spin & knit some & others to sew." After giving further news of their situation, Narcissa wrote in the concluding paragraph of her letter: "Do not think me unhappy or discontented—neither would I murmur. No, in no wise—I would not

change places with any one so long as we may be permitted to remain & do good to these benighted Indians.”

In his letter to Greene written on the eve of the 1842 Annual Meeting, Whitman gave the following optimistic report: “The natives at this station never appeared better & more quiet than at present. They have gone on with the cultivation with their usual energy & are gradually enlarging their little farms, with the assistance of the plows, hoes &c. &c, furnished by the Mission & the H. Bay Company.” Here is evidence that the Company was cooperating with Whitman in making agricultural tools available.

Whitman, in this letter of May 12, 1842, to Greene gave a hint of more trouble with Spalding by writing: “Mr. Spalding has notified us that he shall not be present at the coming meeting... In relation to the internal affairs of the mission, there is no change, at least all things remain as they were last fall & no better understanding with Mr. Spalding.” Looking into the future, Whitman added: “There will probably be a large party of immigrants coming to this country in the spring of 1843. Some young men are now returning with the expectation of bringing out a party next spring.” Little did he dream that he himself would be with the 1843 migration.

Narcissa also was conscious of coming immigrations. In her letter to Mrs. Parker written on the following July 25, she said: “A party of military and scientific men are expected across the mountains this fall. What the effect will be upon the Indians, we know not. The rumor of it may have a worse effect upon them than the reality.” Such quotations from the Whitman letters show their awareness of the inevitability of Oregon emigration. One could no more hold back the surge of Oregon-bound Americans at that time than he could sweep back the incoming tide on some ocean beach. Also, the Whitmans were beginning to wonder what effect these immigrations would have upon the Indians and particularly upon the volatile Cayuses.

VISIT OF THE REV. JOSEPH WILLIAMS

Among the visitors at Waiilatpu during the week beginning May 8, 1842, was the Methodist minister, Joseph Williams, who had arrived in Oregon in the fall of 1841 and who was with the company of young men, of whom Whitman wrote, returning to the United States. In

his *Narrative of a Tour*, Williams told of his second visit to Waiilatpu. "I lodged with Mr. Gray, my old friend," he wrote, "who was very kind to me, as was also his wife." On the 13th, when Walker and Eells were expected to arrive at Waiilatpu to attend the mission meeting, Williams with others "galloped out, about four or five miles into the plains," to welcome them.⁴⁸ The Walkers had with them their three children, the youngest but two months old, and the Eellses had their yearold son. The two couples were obliged to drive a fresh milk cow with them on the long 140-mile journey from Tshimakain. One night they had to camp in the snow. Because of some unexpected delays, the trip took longer than usual, as they were eight days on the road.⁴⁹

Since the missionaries had the rare experience of having a visiting minister with them, he was invited to preach on Sunday, May 15. Of this Williams wrote: "I tried to preach to the people there." The expression "trying to preach" was often used by ministers of that day who wished to avoid giving the impression of excelling as pulpit orators. Williams throws further light on the day's religious exercises: "They had with them a coarse violin, which was poor music on Sunday." He was referring to the bass viol which Eells owned and which he cherished enough to take the trouble of packing it all the way from Tshimakain. Williams' use of the word "coarse" in this connection is archaic and refers to an instrument larger than the ordinary violin and one that had six strings instead of the usual four. Williams also commented: "They [then] read two sermons, which was all the preaching that was done. They appeared very dull in religion." Perhaps as a Methodist, Williams expected more emotion than the four missionary couples were accustomed to display.

ANOTHER UNHAPPY MISSION MEETING

The four men of the Oregon Mission—Whitman, Gray, Walker, and Eells—opened the meeting as scheduled on Monday, May 16. Walker and Eells were reelected to their respective offices as moderator and clerk. Spalding was not present. His absence may have been due to some resentment he felt against Whitman for not agreeing to the reception of Five Crows and some Nez Percés into the Mission church the preceding December. Possibly there were other issues also which accounted for his absence. Spalding did send word to Whitman that he was too busy to attend. The four men found his reasons for his absence unacceptable and

sent a messenger to Lapwai requesting his immediate attendance. They then adjourned to await his coming. Spalding appeared on Thursday, May 26, and the Mission resumed its meetings the next day.

Since Spalding made no entries in his diary after April 28, 1842, except for a short section in March 1843, we do not have his side of the story. Both Elkanah and Mary Walker kept diaries for those days and from them we get many glimpses into what took place.⁵⁰ After clearing such routine business as reading the most recent correspondence from Greene, the men turned their attention to the differences which had arisen between Whitman and Spalding. The women were invited to be present for the discussions. All members of the Mission were present except Mrs. Spalding who had remained in Lapwai.

Walker, in his diary, noted that it was decided to have each man present write out what he considered to be the chief difficulties within the Mission and then each was to give specific suggestions as to how the difficulties could be settled. This took all of Friday. No business sessions were held on Saturday and Sunday. When these were resumed on Monday, the individual specifications were read. That night Mary Walker wrote in her diary: "Hear much to make our ears tingle." On Tuesday the discussions continued; many bitter words were said. Walker that night wrote: "Had a hard session today and there was so much bad feeling manifested that I said that I thought it was an abomination for us to meet and pray."

Walker, according to his diary, placed most of the blame for the unhappy condition existing within the Mission on Whitman. Cornelius Rogers, who had been at Fort Walla Walla working on his Nez Perce dictionary, was invited to sit in on the discussions; evidence shows that he shared Walker's views about Whitman's unforgiving spirit. On Wednesday, June 1, Walker and Eells took a long ride in the rain. Walker wrote that they "felt that all hope was gone." The Mission was on the verge of complete disintegration. The next day the men frankly faced the stark reality of what the consequences would be if a reconciliation were not reached. Walker wrote in his diary: "I felt much and said considerable, and hope that it was not in vain. I think there was a better state of feeling than there had been since the session began."

However, Friday, June 3, was another unhappy day. Walker confessed: "My feelings have been anything but calm. I have been much

moved by some threats the Doctor made, that if he was not allowed to pursue his own course, he would leave the Mission. The Doctor asked to be allowed to go on in his own way without being checked." Walker could scarcely sleep that night because of worry. His wife's diary for the same day stated: "Soon after the opening of the session, Dr. W. began to call Mr. Spalding to account. Mr. Rogers thought Dr. W. wrong. Much talk followed and the Dr. was allowed to proceed... If any restraint is laid on the Dr. or if he suspects he is not to have his own way entirely, he immediately threatens to leave the mission."

On Saturday Whitman and Spalding had a private conference, after which they asked all to assemble. Spalding began with a confession which Mary Walker described as being "as humble as could be wished." When Whitman was questioned as to his threats about leaving the Mission, he replied that he did not mean for them to take his remarks seriously. According to Mary's diary: "He said he saw nothing why he & Mr. Spalding could not come to a settlement. The minds of all were relieved." Thus another crisis in the Oregon Mission passed. An enduring understanding had finally been reached by Whitman and Spalding.

MISSION MOVES TO FORESTALL ACTION BY THE BOARD

After Whitman and Spalding had settled their differences, the Mission turned to other items of business which kept them busy for the next two days. The possibility of the Board taking some drastic action on the basis of the complaining letters about Spalding which had been sent to the Board in 1840 was discussed. To forestall any order disastrous to the welfare of the Mission, the men decided that if such an order arrived, the Prudential Committee should be informed of the new developments before implementing any such order. On June 8, Walker, Eells, and Spalding signed a letter addressed to Greene which stated that all difficulties had been settled and that they then had reason "to hope for permanent peace & harmony."

This letter of June 8 also contained the following statement which, as later events proved, was of utmost importance to Spalding: "It was the unanimous opinion at the close of the investigation that, should the Prudential Committee have taken any action on any communication yet unanswered, that the Mission ought to wait until this communication can be answered."⁵¹ This, in effect, nullified the yet unknown order of

the Board of the previous February. By an interesting coincidence, Elijah White, who was carrying the Board's letter, left the Missouri frontier on May 16, the very day the 1842 Annual Meeting of the Oregon Mission began its sessions.

Before the meeting was adjourned on June 1, the men passed a strange motion which called for Whitman and Spalding to exchange stations. This action was taken on the insistence of Gray. Eells, in his letter to Greene of October 3, 1842, said that "a rather hesitating assent was given to the resolution." In July when both Walker and Spalding happened to be at Waiilatpu for supplies, they agreed with Whitman that no exchange should be made. For some reason Gray was adamant in his insistence and when he learned that the exchange had not been made, he expressed his regret "that he was connected with a mission which had not the courage to carry out such a vote."⁵²

Gray, still unhappy with his place within the Oregon Mission, seized upon this incident as an excuse to resign. Before doing so, he felt it necessary to find a job in the Willamette Valley. He left Waiilatpu on September 1 to see what could be found. While in the Valley, Gray was successful in securing an appointment as Secular Agent and General Superintendent of the Oregon Institute, a Methodist school which later became Willamette University.⁵³ Gray was back in Waiilatpu by September 21 and began making preparations to move his family to Salem.⁵⁴

DR. ELIJAH WHITE AND THE 1842 EMIGRATION

When Dr. Elijah White returned to the States in April 1841, he found a growing public interest in the possibilities of emigrating to Oregon, an interest which he assiduously promoted. By this time it was well known that white women had crossed the Rockies, and White was aware of the fact that Meek and Newell had taken their wagons over the Blue Mountains in 1840.

President John Tyler, in his message to the Twenty-Seventh Congress, which sat from December 6, 1841, to August 31, 1842, voiced his approval of the recommendation made by John C. Spencer, then Secretary of War, for the establishment of "a chain of military posts from Council Bluffs to some point on the Pacific Ocean within our limits." This, he said, would benefit those engaged in the fur trade and be the means of establishing safe intercourse "between the American

settlements at the mouth of the Columbia River and those on this side of the Rocky Mountains.”⁵⁵ President Tyler was assuming that all of the country south of the Columbia would become U.S. territory.

No member of Congress was more interested in extending United States jurisdiction over Oregon than Senator Lewis F. Linn of Missouri. Beginning as early as February 1838, he introduced a series of bills calling for that action. Congress for several years failed to act, but Linn’s bills did focus attention on what was coming to be known as the “Oregon question.” In January 1842, Senator Linn tried once again to induce Congress to act by introducing another bill which called for the extension of United States jurisdiction to all of Old Oregon south of the 49th parallel and for the granting of a section of land to every settler. Speaking in favor of his bill, Senator Linn in April 1842 said: “There should be no dispute about the right of the United States to all the region south of the Columbia River, a right which Great Britain had fully conceded. The only question was to the right of the United States to the territory north of the Columbia River.”⁵⁶

The arrival in the United States of Lord Ashburton from England on April 4, 1842, to negotiate a treaty caused Congress to postpone action on the Linn bill until after the treaty had been signed. The Webster–Ashburton Treaty was concluded on August 9, 1842. Even though Lord Ashburton had been instructed by his government to deal with the Oregon boundary, the Treaty had nothing to say about it. It dealt only with the boundary between Maine and Canada. Daniel Webster, then Secretary of State, felt that the time was not opportune to settle the Oregon question and deliberately kept this subject out of their discussions.

In January 1842, Elijah White, with letters of testimony from persons of note, visited Washington, D.C., and called on President Tyler, Secretary Webster, Secretary Spencer, and Senator Linn. The White file in the Old Indian Bureau records in National Archives, Washington, D.C., contains a number of letters written by him which reveal his intense interest in the Oregon question. White was politically minded and asked for an appointment as sub-Indian Agent for Oregon which he succeeded in getting on January 27, 1842. His salary was fixed at \$750.00 a year with the understanding that if the Linn bill passed, it would be raised to \$1,500.00. White thus had the distinction of being

the first person to be appointed to some official position in Oregon by the United States Government.

SOME DETAILS OF THE 1842 EMIGRATION

After receiving his appointment, White issued through the public press a call for families to go out with him to Oregon that year. His call was successful for he left Independence, Missouri, on May 16, 1842, with a party of 105 emigrants. White had with him the two sons of Tom McKay, John and Alexander, who had been taken East by Jason Lee in 1838 to be educated. Writing to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs from Fort Hall on August 15, White stated that the number in his party had increased to 112.

The members of this migration left the Missouri frontier with nineteen wagons, none of which was taken west of Fort Hall. From that point all, including women and children, rode horseback. White's letter of August 15 refers to certain funds that he had received from the Government to cover some expenses incurred by the emigration of that year.⁵⁷ Such a subsidy lends support to the theory that Jason Lee also had received financial aid from some Government fund to help pay the costs of sending the *Lausanne* company to Oregon.

White left the main party of emigrants on August 23 and pushed on ahead. He arrived at Waiilatpu on September 9 and delivered Greene's two letters of February 25 to Whitman. White spent the weekend of September 11 at Waiilatpu and left the next Tuesday for the Willamette Valley. Mary Gray noted in her diary that during those days she copied two letters from Greene which White had brought.⁵⁸ These letters she gave to White with the request that, if on his way down the Columbia River he met her husband returning from the Willamette Valley, he should give them to him.

The 1842 emigration broke up into small groups. One of these parties arrived on Wednesday afternoon, September 14. In this group was Medorem Crawford who wrote in his journal that he was never more pleased to see a house or white people in his life. He reported that the Whitmans treated him and his fellow travelers with the utmost kindness and sold provisions on "very reasonable terms."⁵⁹ Here is the first reference to Whitman selling supplies to the emigrants. He was later accused of charging exorbitant prices for supplies and Elijah White was one of

his critics. Yet for the most part, this service was greatly appreciated.

Another member of the 1842 immigration who visited Waiilatpu and recorded his impressions was the lawyer, Lansford Warren Hastings. He wrote in his journal: "...the next place of note, at which we arrived, was a presbyterian mission, in charge of which, is a Dr. Whitman, who is a very kind and hospitable gentleman. He received us with the utmost kindness and attention, and insisted upon our remaining a few days with him, in order to obtain some relaxation of both body and mind." Hastings spent a Sunday at Waiilatpu and attended religious meeting where Whitman "delivered a discourse to the Indians in their own language." He also commented: "The doctor is not only a very kind and hospitable gentleman, but he is no doubt, a very good man, and a devoted Christian. He appears to be rendering a great service in christianizing and civilizing the natives."⁶⁰

WHITE'S ARRIVAL IN OLD OREGON BRINGS DISMAY

The unexpected arrival of Dr. White in the Willamette Valley in the fall of 1842 as an officially appointed Indian Agent brought dismay both to the colony of Methodist missionaries and to Dr. McLoughlin and his associates at Fort Vancouver. White's return was an embarrassment, especially to Jason Lee, as he had been dismissed from the Methodist Mission in 1840. Now he was back again.

Dr. McLoughlin was disturbed but for different reasons. He at once informed Gov. Simpson, who on June 21, 1843, writing from Red River, stated: "I shall be glad to learn that the 100 emigrants you speak of as having accompanied Dr. White from St. Louis have proceeded to California as the rapidly increasing vagrant population in the Willamette is becoming too numerous for the safety of the Company's interest in its immediate neighborhood." Dr. McLoughlin had evidently reported that Hastings and some others were planning to move on to California, but Simpson's hope that all of the 1842 party would do likewise was nothing more than wishful thinking.

When Dr. White arrived in the Willamette Valley, he notified Dr. McLoughlin of his appointment by the United States Government by letter, which the latter forwarded to Simpson. Simpson called the letter "a curious specimen of impertinence," and wrote: "We cannot recognize Dr. White's commission as sub-Indian Agent nor any other commission

of the U. States Government assuming authority in the country pending the adjustment of the Boundary question.”⁶¹ Simpson advised McLoughlin to notify all “gentlemen” in charge of the various Company’s posts in Oregon “that they are not to receive nor extend their hospitalities, nor afford any facility or assistance to strangers of any description assuming authority, unless you be perfectly satisfied that such authority is founded on an amicable adjustment of the Boundary question.” Simpson was still confident that the Columbia River “from its outlet to the source in the mountains by the northern branch [i.e., the Snake River], or Lewis & Clark’s route will become the boundary.”⁶²

When the London headquarters of the Company heard about White’s arrival in Oregon, the Governor and Committee wrote on September 27, 1843, to Dr. McLoughlin saying: “...no authority emanating from the Government of the United States is to be recognized west of the Rocky Mountains until the boundary questions shall have been settled.”⁶³ Legally the Hudson’s Bay Company and the British Government stood on solid ground. The appointment of Dr. White as an Indian Agent for Oregon was a unilateral act which contradicted the spirit of the joint Occupation Treaty of 1818. The fact that Dr. White confined his activities to the country lying to the south and east of the Columbia River did not, in the eyes of the British, lessen the seriousness of what they considered to be his illegal appointment.

THE SPECIAL MISSION MEETING OF SEPTEMBER 1842

We have no contemporary document which would reveal Whitman’s reactions when he read Greene’s two letters of February 25, 1842. We may assume that he was not surprised to read of the dismissal of the Spaldings but the recall of Smith and Gray may have been unexpected. Surely the order to close both Waiilatpu and Lapwai and for him to move to Tshimakain would have brought dismay to his heart. The southern stations were far superior in regard to agricultural possibilities than Tshimakain, as each had irrigation ditches, mills, fenced fields, and other improvements. With members of the 1842 immigration still streaming by his door, Whitman realized anew the strategic importance of Waiilatpu. To him it was unthinkable that his station and Spalding’s should be abandoned. The Board simply did not understand the situation. Moreover, conditions within the Mission had changed. A reconciliation had been

effected between him and Spalding which gave promise of enduring. Smith and Rogers had already resigned and Gray was preparing to leave. The Board's order was out-of-date. Then, too, how impossible was the order for the Spaldings with two small children to return to the States by the overland route. There was no longer any Fur Company's caravan going to the Rockies. How could a family cross the plains unescorted?

We learn from Mary Gray's diary that Whitman received Greene's letters on September 9, yet Elkanah Walker in his diary stated that he and Eells did not receive notification, of the call for a special meeting of the Mission until September 20.⁶⁴ If we allow five days for a messenger to carry Whitman's letter to Tshimakain, it is apparent that Whitman waited until September 15 before issuing his call for the special meeting. Why this delay of about six days when the issues to be decided were so urgent? A probable explanation for the delay is that Whitman wished to consult with Spalding before calling a special meeting. If he had sent a messenger to Lapwai, the round trip would have taken about six days. If this had been done, then Whitman would have learned that Spalding and his family were not at Lapwai. No one seemed to know where they were. Thinking that perhaps the Spaldings had gone to Tshimakain, Whitman sent Greene's letter addressed to Spalding to Tshimakain, along with other correspondence received from Greene, with the request that he, Walker, and Eells leave as soon as possible for Waiilatpu.⁶⁵

The next piece of this jigsaw puzzle, which is now being put together, is found in Medorem Crawford's journal. As has been mentioned, Crawford was a member of the 1842 immigration. After spending the night of September 14 at Waiilatpu, Crawford and his party continued their journey, going overland to The Dalles. On September 20, when Crawford was forty-five miles below Fort Walla Walla, he wrote: "Mr. Spalding & Lady overtook us at noon... Mr. Gray called at camp on his return from Vancouver." Just why the Spaldings with their two little children were at that place at that time remains a mystery. On September 21, Crawford noted: "Parted with Mr. & Mrs. Spalding who in consequence of some intelligence from Mr. Gray resolved to return."⁶⁶ Evidently Gray had met Dr. White en route to the Willamette Valley and had received from him the copies of the letters sent by his wife, including Greene's letter of February 25. Thus Gray learned of the action of the Board dismissing both him and Spalding, which information he

had passed on to Spalding. Since Gray had already taken steps to leave the Mission, the order did not strike him with the same force as it did Spalding. Both, however, hastened to Waiilatpu, where they arrived on Thursday, September 22.

On Tuesday, September 20, Walker wrote in his diary: "Just as we were about to sit down to breakfast, the long looked for express came in with some letters from the Dr. & from Mr. Greene... The Dr. requested us to come down immediately." Walker and Eells left the next day and arrived at Waiilatpu on Monday, the 26th, where they found the other three men of the Mission waiting for them.

GRAY RESIGNS

The Special Meeting of the Oregon Mission opened that Monday evening. Greene's letter of February 25, together with copies of communications sent to him giving the actions of the May-June meeting, was read. The men were thus reminded of the action taken which suspended the implementation of any order that the Board might send until it could be informed of the changed situation. Thus, neither Spalding nor Gray was in any immediate danger of being dismissed. Nevertheless, Gray presented his resignation.⁶⁷ He informed his associates that he had found work in the Willamette Valley and was planning to leave with his family as soon as possible. Walker and Eells, with a high sense of loyalty to the commission each had received from the American Board, opposed the departure of Gray. They felt that it was a disgrace to resign. An appointment from the Board was for life. This had been their attitude when Smith left in the spring of 1841. Whitman voted in the affirmative with Gray. Strange to say, Spalding voted in the negative with Walker and Eells. Gray threatened to leave with or without formal acceptance of his resignation, and so, two days later, the action of Monday evening was reconsidered and a unanimous approval was given to his request. Thus ended Gray's sixyear connection with the Oregon Mission of the American Board.⁶⁸

WHITMAN PROPOSES GOING TO BOSTON

According to Walker's diary, nothing special happened at the Mission meeting on Tuesday, September 27. On Wednesday morning, when Walker, Eells, and Spalding were making preparations to return to their

respective stations, Whitman suddenly proposed that he go to Boston to intercede with the Board for the revocation of its drastic order of February 25. Walker and Eells with their customary reluctance to make any move without deliberate thought, were hesitant. They wanted time to think about it. Whitman urged the need for immediate action. If he could leave that fall, then he could return with the 1843 emigration. If he should wait to go East in the spring, he would not be able to return until the fall of 1844. Whitman stressed the fact that if he were to leave for the East that fall, the sooner he got started the better in order to cross the mountains before winter.

Walker and Eells brought up the question of care of the Waiilatpu property during his proposed absence. Finally, they gave their consent for Whitman to leave on condition that some satisfactory arrangements be made for the care of the station. Whitman assured them that he would get somebody to live at Waiilatpu during his absence. He then hastily wrote out the following:

Resolved: That, if arrangements can be made to continue the operations of this station, That Dr. Marcus Whitman be at liberty & advised to visit the United States as soon as practicable to confer with the Committee of the A.B.C.F.M. in regard to the interests of this mission.

Waiilatpu, September 28th, 1842

This was signed by E. Walker, Moderator; Cushing Eells, Scribe; and H. H. Spalding.⁶⁹ Here in Whitman's handwriting is the first statement given to explain why he wanted to go East. He was to go on mission business.

MOTIVES FOR WHITMAN'S RIDE

Whitman's reasons for suddenly deciding to cross the Rocky Mountains in the late fall of 1842 and to travel on to Washington and Boston have been debated for over one hundred years. The subject is complex and the evidence in some particulars conflicting. We can list three apparent motives, but it would be unhistorical to say that any particular one took priority over the other two.⁷⁰

ON MISSION BUSINESS

Before Walker and Eells left Waiilatpu, it was agreed that each would write a letter to Greene which Whitman would carry should he go East. It was understood that Whitman would wait until the two had returned to Tshimakain, had time to write the letters, and then send them to Waiilatpu. By forced marches, Walker and Eells were able to return to their homes by October 1. They delayed in writing their letters, however, for Mary's diary states that the letters were not sent until October 12. Since Whitman had become restless and had left for the East on October 3, the letters were mailed to Greene and arrived in Boston months after Whitman had been there.

The letters that Eells and Walker wrote are illuminating, as they throw light on what was discussed at the Special Meeting of the Mission. Eells in his fourteenpage letter dealt especially with the Gray case. Walker in a longer letter of sixteen pages reviewed the reasons why Whitman wanted to make the journey. He wrote: "If necessity demanded that one branch of the Mission be abandoned, the north part could have been given up with far less disastrous consequences both as respects white settlers and the natives..." He also stated: "We do not approve the hasty manner in which this question was decided. Nothing it seemed to us but stern necessity induced us to decide in the manner we did. It seemed death to put the proposition in force, and worse than death to remain as we were."⁷¹ There is nothing in either of the letters that Walker or Eells wrote which indicates that the main reason, or even a secondary reason, for Whitman's sudden decision to go East was anything other than mission business.

News of the Whitman massacre, which began on November 29, 1847, reached the offices of the American Board in time for the editor of the *Missionary Herald* to make a brief mention of it in the July, 1848, issue. Regarding the reasons for Whitman's journey east in 1842-43, the editor wrote: "He made a visit to the Atlantic States in the spring of 1843, being called hither by the business of the mission."⁷²

TO PROMOTE OREGON EMIGRATION

The text of the Resolution adopted by the Mission, which was carried to Boston by Whitman, and the letters of Walker and Eells do not give a complete answer as to why Whitman was moved to leave for the East on

such short notice in the fall of 1842. The unhistorical and often perverted explanations of Whitman's motives, as found in Spalding's later Whitman-Saved-Oregon story, must be rejected; yet there were some motives which moved Whitman to make the journey which had political overtones [see Appendices 3 & 4]. When Mary Walker noted the return of her husband on Saturday, October 1, she wrote that day in her diary: "Messrs. W. & E. had much trouble with Gray & Co. The Mission have concluded to send Dr. W. to the States to represent the Mission & *obtain a reinforcement or settlers or do something.*"⁷³ Here is contemporary evidence that Whitman was concerned about other issues beyond mission business.

Ever since Jason Lee's visit to Waiilatpu and Lapwai in the early spring of 1838, at which time Whitman and Spalding sent in their amazing request for 220 additional missionaries, we find evidences of Whitman's growing interest in the political future of Old Oregon. The limits of that interest need to be defined. As previously stated, he never seemed concerned about the exact location of the boundary line which would divide Old Oregon. Rather, his political interests centered on (1) the promotion of the emigration of American citizens to Oregon, especially those of the Protestant faith, and (2) the extension of the jurisdiction of the United States over whatever part of the Oregon territory would be granted it by treaty.

The arrival of the first wagons at Waiilatpu, which had been taken over the Blue Mountains by Meek and Newell in the summer of 1840, prompted Whitman to remark to them that the day was coming when other wagons would follow, and "in a few years the valley will be full of people." Even though the emigrants of 1841 and 1842 had abandoned their wagons at Fort Hall, and had completed their journey on horseback, Whitman believed that the emigration of 1843 would take its wagons over the mountains into the Columbia River Valley. By the late spring of 1840, both Marcus and Narcissa realized the importance of Waiilatpu as an outpost on the Oregon Trail. Little, however, did they dream of the demands which would be made upon their hospitality and resources by the hungry, the weary, the sick, and the destitute in the years just ahead.

On May 2, 1840, Narcissa wrote in a letter to her mother: "A tide of immigration appears to be moving this way rapidly. What a few years will bring forth, we know not. A great change has taken place ever since

we first entered the country, and we have no reason to believe it will stop here.” Writing to Greene on July 13, 1841, Whitman said: “It has been distinctly my feeling that we are not to measure the sphere of our action & hope of usefulness by the few natives of the country, but, by all that we can see in prospect, both as it relates to a white population & [to counteract a] Catholic influence.”

According to Dr. White’s biographer, White and Whitman had much to tell each other when they were together at Waiilatpu, September 9–13. “The visit was very agreeable to both,” wrote Miss Allen, “as he had much to tell Dr. White of Oregon affairs, and Dr. him of his two years’ residence in the States.”⁷⁴ Undoubtedly White would have told Whitman of Lord Ashburton’s visit to the United States, of the expected settlement of the boundary in Old Oregon, and especially of Senator Linn’s bill which offered to give a section of land in Old Oregon to every emigrant including children. White would certainly have reported that all signs pointed to a large emigration in 1843. At the time the two men were together, they did not know that the Webster–Ashburton Treaty had been signed without containing any mention of the Oregon boundary and that Congress had adjourned without taking action on the Linn bill. Like a dry sponge soaking up water, Whitman’s mind avidly absorbed all that White had to tell him about the political prospects for the future of Old Oregon.

Another member of the 1842 immigration who visited Waiilatpu was a lawyer, Asa Lawrence Lovejoy, 1808–1882, with whom Whitman also discussed certain political matters relating to the Pacific Northwest. Lovejoy with a small party of immigrants arrived at the mission on Monday, September 19, when both of the Whitmans for some unknown reason were absent.⁷⁵ Since Lovejoy was Whitman’s companion on his ride over the Rockies in the late fall of 1842 and the following winter, special attention must be given to his recollections of this journey. Lovejoy wrote three accounts describing his travels with Whitman, two of which have been published.⁷⁶ Some minor differences are to be found when the three accounts are compared. When we note that Lovejoy wrote the earliest letter twenty-seven years after some of the events described had taken place, allowances should be made for the fallibility of human memory. On the whole, Lovejoy was a reliable witness and became a highly respected citizen of Willamette Valley after returning to Oregon with the 1843 emigration.

In Lovejoy's letter of 1876, we may read: "I crossed the Plains in company with Dr. White and others, arrived at Waiilatpu the last of September, 1842. My party camped some two miles below Dr. Whitman's place. The day after our arrival [i.e., on September 20], Dr. Whitman called at our camp and asked me to accompany him to his house, as he wished me to draw up a memorial to Congress to prohibit the sale of ardent spirits in this country. The Doctor was alive to the interests of this Coast, and manifested a very warm desire to have it properly represented in Washington; and after numerous conversations with the Doctor touching the future prosperity of Oregon, he asked me one day in a very anxious manner, if I thought it would be possible for him to cross the mountains at that time of the year. I told him I thought he could. He next asked, 'Will you accompany me?' After a little reflection, I told him I would. His arrangements were rapidly made."

After spending a day or so in the vicinity of Waiilatpu, Lovejoy moved on to Fort Walla Walla. Whitman visited him at the fort shortly before the Mission opened its meeting on Monday, the 26th, and it may be that it was then that Whitman secured Lovejoy's consent to accompany him across the mountains that fall. Lovejoy's testimony indicates that Whitman was already planning the journey before he gained a reluctant consent from his associates to go. We have no indication that Whitman ever mentioned the possibility of Lovejoy going with him to his associates. Without that assurance, it is doubtful that Whitman would have attempted making the journey. The combined testimony of White's biographer and Lovejoy's accounts is evidence that Whitman was concerned with certain political issues involved in the future of Old Oregon. As later events indicated, he was deeply interested in promoting emigration to Oregon. Hence, his visit to Washington, D.C., before going to Boston.

TO COUNTERACT THE ROMAN CATHOLICS

A third reason which moved Whitman to make his sudden decision to go East was his concern over the growing influence of the Roman Catholic missionaries in the Northwest. This, to Whitman, was a threatening situation especially in view of the possible abandonment of the Oregon Mission of the American Board and the uncertain future of the Methodist Mission in the Willamette Valley. As has been stated,

Jason Lee wrote to Whitman in the early fall of 1840 telling of Dr. White's dismissal from the Methodist Mission and of his intention to return to the States. Lee expressed his fears lest White might do "all that he can to injure them [i.e., the Methodist missionaries in the Valley]" after he got back to New York City. Lee's fears were well founded; White did appear before the Methodist Missionary Society and declared that Lee was not qualified "for the important trusts which had been committed to him."⁷⁷ White's charges were reenforced by two other disgruntled returned Methodist missionaries, Rev. W. W. Kone and Dr. John P. Richmond. As a result of these criticisms, Lee was superseded by the Rev. George Gary in September 1843. Gary was sent out to Oregon in 1844 with instructions to close the Methodist work and dispose of the property. Just as the Oregon Mission of the American Board had its critics—Smith and Gray—so the Methodists had theirs—White, Kone, and Richmond. Thus the Methodist Mission in Oregon functioned for only ten years, 1834–44.

We have reason to believe that White gave Whitman a detailed account of the dismal prospects of the Methodist Mission. Such information would have been alarming to Whitman; if both the American Board's Mission and the Methodist Mission in Old Oregon were abandoned, organized religious activities in the country would be monopolized by the Roman Catholics. We have already noted that the Belgian Jesuit, Father Pierre Jean De Smet, was at the 1840 Rendezvous on his way back to St. Louis after a visit to the Flathead country. In 1841 he returned to the Flatheads with a reenforcement of two priests and three lay brothers. With these assistants, De Smet established St. Mary's Mission among the Flatheads in Bitterroot Valley, in what is now western Montana, in the fall of 1841.

After Narcissa had learned of the founding of St. Mary's Mission, she wrote to her sister Jane on October 1, 1841: "Now we have Catholics on both sides of us and, we may say, right in our midst, for Mr. Pambrun, while he was alive, failed not to secure one of the principal men of this tribe [Young Chief] to that religion and had his family baptized." Nearly a year later, Narcissa wrote again: "Romanism stalks abroad on our right hand and on our left, and with daring effrontery boasts that she is to possess the land. I ask, must it be so?... The zeal and energy of her [priests] are without a parallel... Two are in the country below us, and two far above

in the mountains. One of the latter is to return this fall to Canada, the States and the eastern world for a large reenforcement" [Letter 115].

Father De Smet visited Fort Vancouver in the spring of 1842, where he consulted with Fathers Blanchet and Demers about the future of Roman Catholic work in Oregon. En route to Vancouver, he visited Tshimakain in April 1842, at which time he had some discussion with Elkanah Walker over the proper Flathead term to be used to express the idea of the Trinity.⁷⁸ De Smet left Fort Vancouver on his return trip up the Columbia on June 30. He was back at St. Mary's Mission about July 25.

There is a strong possibility that while going down or returning up the Columbia River, Father De Smet saw Dr. Whitman at Fort Walla Walla. For several years, the Oregon Historical Society displayed a copy of the Roman Catholic English translation of the Bible, known as the Rheims-Douai version, which had been presented by Father De Smet to Dr. Whitman.⁷⁹ If the two pioneer missionaries met, Whitman would have learned of De Smet's intention to go to Europe that year to enlist more missionaries for new stations to be established in the upper Columbia River country.

The increasing activities of the Roman Catholic missionaries in the upper Columbia River country gave the Whitmans much concern. What could be done to counteract their influence? Marcus remembered the extravagant request that he and Spalding had made in the spring of 1838 when they asked the Board to send out a reenforcement of 220 missionaries. He later apologized to Greene for signing such a request, but yet the hope of such a reenforcement was revived as he debated what measures could be taken to meet the Catholic threat. Finally, he came to the conviction that the answer lay in getting as large a reenforcement as possible from the Board and then also to recruit colonies of emigrants who would settle in the vicinity of each of the three stations. This seems to be the proposal which Whitman presented to his colleagues and which was reflected in the entry in Mary Walker's diary, previously quoted, which stated that Dr. Whitman was to go to the States "to represent the Mission & obtain a reinforcement or settlers or do something."

WHITMAN'S STATEMENT OF HIS MOTIVES

On April 1, 1847, about four and one half years after the special meeting of the Oregon Mission, held in September 1842, Whitman, in a letter to Greene, looked back on that event and wrote: "From the year 1835 to this time, it has ever been apparent that there was to be a choice only of two things; one of the increase & continuation of British interests here to the easy exclusion of all other acquired rights in the Country; or the establishment of American interests by Citizens [i.e., by emigration]." Whitman then pointed out his conviction that the Roman Catholic interests were deeply rooted in the British establishment, even though he did not know that the Catholic priest in the Willamette Valley was then receiving an annual subsidy of £100 from the Hudson's Bay Company. Regarding the American interests in Oregon, Whitman wrote: "In thirty six [1836] Capt. Wyeth left the Country⁸⁰ & with him closed for a long time nearly all of the American interests in the country but the Methodists and our Missions. *In the fall of 1842, I pointed out to our Mission the arrangement of the Papists to settle in our vicinity and that it only required these measures to be completed for us to be obliged to close our Mission operations. This was urged [by me] as a reason for me to return home & try to bring those to carry on the affairs of the Mission stations and to settle in the Country who would stand on the footing of Citizens & not as missionaries.*⁸¹ It may not be inappropriate to observe that at that moment [i.e., September 1842], the Methodist Mission as well as our own was on the point of dissolution."

Two questions arise: (1) If the Oregon boundary had been settled before Dr. White left for Oregon and if he had carried such news to Whitman, would Whitman have made his journey merely on the need to correct the Board's order of February 25, 1842? In my opinion, the answer must be No! (2) If the Board had never issued its drastic order and if Dr. White had informed Whitman of pending treaty negotiations which involved the Oregon boundary, would Whitman then have made his ride? Again, in my opinion, the answer would be NO!

In other words, there was a combination of motives which, taken together, prompted Whitman to leave for the East, and it is impossible to say which had priority. Whitman did ride on mission business; he did want to get the Board to rescind its order dismissing Spalding and closing the work at Waiilatpu and Lapwai. He was eager for the extension of United States jurisdiction over the disputed Oregon territory,

although, seemingly, he did not advocate any specific boundary line. He was concerned about the future of the Methodist Mission after hearing from Dr. White the story of dissension within its ranks, and he feared for the future of his own Oregon Mission. The failure of either or both of these Missions would, in his opinion, have made it easier for the Roman Catholics to achieve an amazing success in Oregon.

WHITMAN LEAVES FOR WASHINGTON AND BOSTON

Within twenty-four hours after Walker, Eells, and Spalding had left for their respective stations, Dr. Whitman announced his intention to leave for Washington and Boston on the following Monday, October 3. We can be sure that had he proposed such an early departure before Walker and Eells had left for Tshimakain, they would have objected. They wanted time to write their letters and to send them to Waiilatpu. This would have delayed Whitman's departure by about two weeks. To Whitman, it was far more important for him to be on his way before winter came to the Rockies than to wait for letters which could be sent by other means. Therefore, it is possible that Whitman deliberately kept his intentions secret while Walker and Eells were still at Waiilatpu.

On Thursday, September 29, the day after the Mission meeting was adjourned, Narcissa wrote to Jane and Edward: "I sit down to write you but in great haste. My beloved husband has about concluded to start next Monday to go to the United States, the dear land of our birth; but I remain behind. I could not undertake the journey, if it was considered best for me to accompany him, that is to travel as he expects to. He hopes to reach the borders [of Missouri] in less than three months, if the Lord prospers his way. It is a dreadful journey, especially at this season of the year." Narcissa made no direct comment regarding the purpose of her husband's journey except to say: "He wishes to reach Boston as early as possible so as to make arrangements to return next summer, if prospered. The interests of the missionary cause in this country calls him home." The wording of the last sentence is sufficiently ambiguous to include all three of the motives for Whitman's ride discussed above. Jane and Edward Prentiss were then associated with one of Narcissa's former Prattsburg teachers, the Rev. William Beardsley, in the Mission Institute at Quincy, Illinois. Jane may have been a teacher, while Edward seems to have been studying for the ministry. Narcissa begged her sister to return with Marcus the next spring.

Since Narcissa fully expected Marcus to call on her parents and other members of her family, she wrote to them on September 30: “You will be surprised if this letter reaches you to learn that the bearer is my dear husband, and that you will, after a few days, have the pleasure of seeing him. May you have a joyful meeting. He goes upon important business connected with the missionary cause, the cause of Christ in this land, which I will leave for him to explain when you see him, because I have not time to enlarge. He has but yesterday fully made up his mind to go, and he wishes to start Monday, and this is Friday.”

Narcissa returned to the object of her husband’s journey by adding: “As much as I do desire to see my beloved friends once more, yet I cheerfully consent to remain behind, that the object of his almost immediate presence in the land of our birth might, if possible, be accomplished. He wishes to cross the mountains during this month, I mean October, and reach St. Louis about the first of Dec., if he is not detained by the cold or hostile Indians... He has for a companion, Mr. Lovejoy, a respectable, intelligent man and a lawyer, but not a Christian, who expects to accompany him all the way to Boston, as his friends are in that region, and perhaps to Washington. This is a comfort to me...” It is significant that Narcissa here indicated her husband’s intention to visit Washington.

Narcissa mentioned that she expected to be “quite alone at this station for a season,” as the Gray family expected to leave for the Willamette Valley within a few days. She did not indicate that she was concerned over this as she had been left alone on a number of previous occasions when her husband was called away on professional business. The other men of the Mission also at times had left their wives alone at their stations for ten days or even longer.⁸² Narcissa did say in her letter to her parents that Marcus had asked Gray to see if he could secure the services of Mr. and Mrs. Rogers or the Littlejohns to take charge of activities at Waiilatpu until he could return. “Next spring,” she wrote, “I intend going below and spending some time in visiting for the benefit of my health.”

For the third time, Narcissa returned to the reasons why Marcus was going: “He goes with the advice and entire confidence of his brethren in the mission, and who value him not only as an associate, but as their physician, and feel, as much as I do, that they know not how to spare

him; but the interest of the cause demands the sacrifice on our part; and could you know all the circumstances in the cause, you would see more clearly how much our hearts are identified in the salvation of the Indians and the interest of the cause generally.”

Narcissa’s love and wifely concern for her husband is revealed in the following: “Forgive me, dear mother, if he is the sole theme of this letter; I can write about nothing else at this time. He is inexpressibly dear to me.” After explaining that she did not have time to write individual letters to each member of her family, she added this postscript: “...all others must receive my dear husband as my living epistle to them and write me by him.” Nowhere in any of the letters Narcissa wrote for her husband to carry east with him is there any hint of any question being in her mind as to the necessity of her husband’s journey. She was in full accord with his views.

Evidently Whitman rode to Fort Walla Walla on Thursday or Friday, September 29 or 30, to complete arrangements with Lovejoy and to inform McKinlay of his plans.⁸³ No doubt McKinlay assured Whitman of his readiness to stand by and render Narcissa any assistance that might be needed, even though he was twentyfive miles away. Whitman has been censured for his willingness to leave his wife alone with the Indians for an indefinite period. His willingness to do so can only be explained by what he considered to be the great urgency of his mission. Whitman made such provisions as were possible under the circumstances. In addition to talking with McKinlay, Whitman had asked Gray to find someone to go to Waiilatpu and take care of the premises. However, it would have taken weeks for any party to arrive at Waiilatpu from the Willamette Valley. Whitman also confided in the Indians who lived nearby. Both Tiloukaikt and Tamsucky solemnly promised that they would protect both Mrs. Whitman and the mission property.

Like other ordinary human beings, the Whitmans were sometimes guilty of procrastination. The archives of the American Board contain copies of two questionnaires filled out by Marcus and Narcissa which gave information about their early lives, education, and spiritual experiences. The fact that they are dated October 3, 1843, the day Marcus left for Boston, shows one of them suddenly remembered their failure to answer the Board’s request for such information.⁸⁴ The Spaldings received like questionnaires which were filled out and dated May, 1840.

The two questionnaires were carried east by Whitman along with the other letters that Narcissa had written.

Believing that McKinlay and Gray would find someone to go and live with Narcissa at Waiilatpu, and lulled by the promises of Tiloukaikt and Tamsucky to protect his wife and the mission property, Marcus kissed his wife goodbye on Monday morning, October 3, 1842, and started his long journey to Boston [Letter 119]. With him were Lovejoy and at least one Indian by the name of Aps. The men had with them several pack animals and a dog, called Trapper, which had once been a pet of Alice Clarissa's.⁸⁵ With a brave but heavy heart, Narcissa stood watching her husband and his companions ride up the trail that led to the Blue Mountains until they were lost to view. She then reentered the house knowing that about a year would pass before she would see her husband again. She was alone except for the three halfbreed children—Mary Ann Bridger, Helen Mar Meek, and David Malin—and the Hawaiian, Jack. The Grays were still living in the emigrant house but they were planning to leave for the Willamette Valley the next day. Tiloukaikt and his band of about fifty men, women, and children had their lodges about a mile away.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME

CHAPTER 16 FOOTNOTES

- 1 Joseph Williams, *Narrative of a Tour from the State of Indiana to the Oregon Territory*, Cadmus Book Shop, reprint, New York, 1921, p. 48.
- 2 O. Larsell, *The Doctor in Oregon*, Portland, 1947, p. 114.
- 3 See Chapter Twelve, section, "Reaction of the Hudson's Bay Company."
- 4 Drury, *F.W.W.*, II:220.
- 5 Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, II:61, quoting from *Seattle Daily Intelligencer*, April 28, 1881.
- 6 See Appendices 3 & 4 for a discussion of the *Whitman-Saved-Oregon* story. Spalding, writing some twenty-four years after the arrival of the Red River colony, made several errors in his series of articles which began appearing in the *San Francisco Pacific* with its May 23, 1865, issue.
- 7 Spalding, *Senate Document*, p. 20. Also, Marshall *Acquisition of Oregon*, I:62, quoting from the *San Francisco Pacific*, Oct. 19, 1865.
- 8 Gray, in his *Oregon*, p. 288, embellishes Spalding's fanciful account of what was supposed to have happened at Fort Walla Walla in the fall of 1842, by saying that after Whitman heard the taunt of the priest at the dinner table about the Americans being too late, he hastily withdrew, mounted his horse, and rode the twenty-five miles to Waiilatpu in two hours! Gray, who was at Waiilatpu in the fall of 1842, also stated: "I saw in a moment that he was fixed on some important object or errand." Gray's personal testimony gave weight to Spalding's version as to why Whitman left for Washington so suddenly in the fall of 1842.
- 9 Bancroft, *Oregon*, I:252.
- 10 *McLoughlin's Letters*, III:XXXIV.
- 11 See Chapter Thirteen, section "Roman Catholic Missionaries Arrive in Oregon."
- 12 *O.H.Q.*, XII (1911):292.
- 13 Bancroft, *Oregon*, I:97.
- 14 Accurate figures as to how all present at this historic Champoeg meeting voted are not available. Some writers claim that the Americans had a majority of two; others say six out of a total vote of over 100. A good account of the meeting is to be found in John A. Hussey, *Champoeg*, Portland, 1967, p. 154.
- 15 See Edwin A. Miles, "Fifty-Four Forty or Fight—An American Political Legend," in *Mississippi Valley Historical Review*, Vol. 44: (Sept. 1957), pp. 291 ff.
- 16 *McLoughlin's Letters*, III:XXXIV.
- 17 HBC Arch., B/223/c.
- 18 See Chapter Twelve, section "Reaction of the Hudson's Bay Company."
- 19 *Op. cit.*, p. 191. Italics are the author's.
- 20 George Simpson, *An Overland Journey Round the World During the Years 1841 and 1842*, Philadelphia, 1847. A later edition of this work under the title *Narrative of a Voyage to California Ports*, San Francisco, 1930, also appeared.
- 21 Simpson, *Overland Journey*, p. 110.
- 22 *McLoughlin's Letters*, III:XXXIV.
- 23 Narcissa copied her husband's letter to McKinlay in her letter to her father of Nov. 18, 1841.

- 24 Possibly the same John Gray, a half-breed Iroquois, who deserted Ogden's Snake River brigade in Utah in 1825. See Josephy, *Nez Percés*, pp. 68 & 216.
- 25 See Chapter Ten, "Three Cayuse Chiefs." In Whitman letters Nos. 100 & 101, the name is given as "Tilankaik."
- 26 Cannon, *Wailatpu*, p. 103, identifies Sakiaph as Tamsucky and also as Feathercap. Cannon gives five different ways by which this Indian's name was spelled.
- 27 Clarke, *Pioneer Days*, II:526, and Gray, *Oregon*, p. 467.
- 28 Also spelled Isai-shal-akis, Tsai-ach-alkis, or Isai-ashel-uckas.
- 29 Here is evidence that some of the chiefs would use this form of punishment on members of their bands. Hudson's Bay Company's officials also used the whip as is noted in letters from James Douglas to Angus McDonald, Jan. 25, 1842, and Feb. 23, 1842, *Fort Vancouver Correspondence, Outward to 1845*, Provincial Archives, Victoria, B.C. In the latter letter Douglas advised: "Never apply the whip unjustly or without the clearest proof of the person's guilt." There is no evidence that Whitman ever used the lash in punishment. See Chapter Eleven, "Let Them Feel the Lash."
- 30 Maria Maki, the wife of Joseph Malin, who died at Wailatpu on August 8, 1840, remained at the mission until the fall of 1841 when she was sent to Fort Vancouver. There she joined the A. B. Smiths and returned with them to Hawaii in December of that year.
- 31 See Appendix 6 for text of the H. K. W. Perkins letter from which this quotation was taken.
- 32 McKinlay's letter to Whitman was copied and sent to Greene [Letter 100].
- 33 Simpson, *Overland Journey*, p. 99. Simpson's views on the avarice of the natives harmonized with that which A. B. Smith had written on that subject.
- 34 See Appendix 6. Words in italics are underlined in the original.
- 35 Italics are the author's.
- 36 Drury, *Spalding*, p. 273.
- 37 Drury, *Spalding and Smith*, p. 326.
- 38 Hulbert, *O.P.*, VII:253 ff.
- 39 *Ibid.*, pp. 258 ff.
- 40 See Chapter Twenty-Four, section "Other Memorials" for reference to name-sakes of Dr. Whitman.
- 41 This David Malin, 1805-85, was pastor of a church in Philadelphia when Spalding visited him in 1870. Drury, *Spalding*, p. 391.
- 42 Italics are the author's.
- 43 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:218 if; Gray, *Oregon*, p. 110.
- 44 Clarence Bagley, *Early Catholic Missions in old Oregon*, Seattle, 1932, p. 70; Carl Landerholm (translator), *Notices & Voyages of the Famed Quebec Mission to the Pacific Northwest*, Oregon Historical Society, 1956, pp. 44 ff. An original Catholic ladder in Coll. B. is reproduced in this latter work.
- 45 An original painting of a Protestant ladder by Mrs. Spalding is in Coll. O; copy reproduced in Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:218. Landerholm, *op. cit.*, p. 45, quoting Bishop Blanchet as saying: "Protestant ministers stop at nothing in sowing tares in

the field of the family father. They have fabricated an imitation of our historic ladder, and have not hesitated to place a mark on it at the sixteenth century to indicate the rise of their religion.”

- 46 Drury, *Spalding and Smith*, p. 127.
- 47 Record book labelled “Baptisms, Marriages, Interments,” St. James Cathedral, Vancouver, Wash., 1842–56.
- 48 Williams, *Narrative of a Tour*, pp. 70–1. See ante, fn. 1.
- 49 Drury, *F.W.W.*, II:229 ff., from Mary Walker’s diary.
- 50 Elkanah Walker’s diary covering these days in 1842 is in Coll. O.
- 51 Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, II:118.
- 52 *Ibid.*, II: 180.
- 53 *Ibid.*, II: 126.
- 54 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:262–5. Information from Mary Gray’s diary.
- 55 Dorothy O. Johansen and Charles M. Gates, *Empire of the Columbia*, Harper, 1957, have a chapter on “The Boundary Question” which gives a fine review of the activities of Senator Linn and others in behalf of the U.S. claims to Old Oregon.
- 56 Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, I:212.
- 57 White file, Old Indian Records, National Archives, Washington, n.c.
- 58 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:264.
- 59 *Sources of the History of Oregon.*, Vol. I, No. 1 (F. G. Young, ed.), Univ. of Oregon, Eugene, 1897, “*Journal of Medorem Crawford*,” p. 20.
- 60 L. W. Hastings, *A New Description of Oregon and California*, Cincinnati, 1857, p. 21.
- 61 HBC Arch., B/223/c/7.
- 62 *Ibid.*
- 63 HBC Arch., B/223/c/210a.
- 64 Drury, *F.W.W.*, II:236.
- 65 Walker could not understand why Whitman had sent letters addressed to Spalding to Tshimakain. Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, II:128, gives a transcription of this section of Walker’s diary.
- 66 See ante, fn. 59. *Crawford’s Journal*, p. 21.
- 67 Marshall, *Acquisition of Oregon*, II:126–7 gives a copy of Gray’s letter.
- 68 After serving two years as General Superintendent of the Methodist Oregon Institute, Salem, Oregon, Gray moved first to Oregon City and then to Clatsop Plains, south of Astoria. He took an active and often stormy part in the political, community, and church affairs of the different localities in which he lived. Following the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, the Grays visited their old homes in the East. In 1870 Gray published his biased, but still important, *History of Oregon*.
- 69 Original in Coll. A. Reproduction in Drury, *Whitman*, p. 269.
- 70 This modifies the position taken in my Spalding biography, published in 1936, where I stated that Whitman rode primarily to save Spalding and the Mission. I now feel that there were other motives as well as that of concern for the Mission.

- 71 The original Eells and Walker letters are in Coll. A.
- 72 *Op. cit.*, p. 237. Italics are the author's.
- 73 Italics are the author's.
- 74 Allen, *Ten Years in Oregon*, p. 166. Miss Allen was mistaken about the time Dr. White spent in the States. He arrived in April 1841 and left the Missouri frontier in May 1842.
- 75 Drury, *F.W.W.*, I:265, quoting from Mary Gray's diary for Monday, September 19: "Mr. Smith & family, Mr. Lovejoy & several other Americans arrived today. Mr. S. [identity unknown] said they were starving—wanted to buy food. As the Dr. was gone, I sold them some flour—took one dollar for it. Gave him some butter & cheese." Feeling that he had not paid enough for the food received, Smith returned the next day and gave another dollar.
- 76 Lovejoy's earliest account, a letter addressed to W. H. Gray dated Nov. 6, 1869, appeared in Gray's *Oregon*, pp. 324–6; Spalding included a paraphrase of this letter in his *Senate Document*, p. 23. Lovejoy's second account, also a letter, was sent to Dr. G. H. Atkinson, a pioneer Congregational minister of Portland, February 14, 1876, and was published in *Pioneer and Historical Society of Oregon*, pp. 13 ff., and in Nixon, *How Marcus Whitman Saved Oregon*, pp. 304 ff. His third account, still unpublished, was written for the historian H. H. Bancroft, June 18, 1878, as in Coll. B, with photostats in Coll. O. Reference to any of these three accounts will be indicated by the abbreviations (L1), (L2), and (L3) used in the text, thus referring to the documents in their chronological order.
- 77 Barclay, *Early American Methodism*, II: pp. 234, 254.
- 78 Drury, *F.W.W.*, II:226. Walker, in a letter to Chamberlain in Honolulu, Sept. 6, 1842, wrote: "I had some conversation with De Smet on the language. He remarked that as our belief was the same in regard to the Trinity, he thought we had better adopt one common phraseology. He gave me some of his phrases & my knowledge of this language would not allow me to adopt them."
- 79 Hiram M. Chittenden and Alfred T. Richardson, *Life, Letters, and Travels of... De Smet*, New York, 1905, I:129, fn. 1: "There is now in the possession of George H. Hines of Portland, Oregon, a 'Douay Bible' dated Belfast, 1839, with the following inscription in Father De Smet's hand: 'Presented to Dr. M. Whitman by P. J. DeSmet.'" I recall seeing this volume on display in the museum of the Oregon Historical Society in the spring of 1954. Present location of the Bible is unknown.
- 80 Fort Hall, founded by Capt. N. J. Wyeth in 1834, was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company in 1836.
- 81 Italics are the author's.
- 82 See Drury, *Spalding*, pp. 317 ff., for an account of Spalding leaving his wife and year-old baby girl alone at Lapwai for several weeks in the summer of 1845 while he made a trip to The Dalles for supplies.
- 83 Archibald McKinlay to Dr. W. F. Tolmie from Lac La Hache, Dec. 9, 1884: "He came to Walla Walla a few days before his departure, not on a professional call but to bid me farewell. He was in my opinion a very superior man, his whole soul was devoted to christianizing and civilizing the Indians." Also McKinlay to Myron Eells, Jan. 4, 1884: "Whitman did say to me before his departure that his objects in going east were to frustrate unfavorable reports sent the Board by discontented

members of the mission." Original letters owned by descendants of McKinlay; copies in Kamloops Museum, Kamloops, B.C.

84 My attention was directed to these questionnaires by Ross Woodbridge of Pittsford, N.Y., who evidently was the first student of the Whitman story to discover them in the archives of the American Board.

85 I received this story about Trapper, the dog, about thirty-five years ago from the late Mrs. Edmund Bowden of Seattle who in turn heard it from the Rev. Cushing Eells.