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Influence of Governor Isaac Ingalls Stevens on the opening of the Northwest Territory

Dorothy Dall
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THE INFLUENCE

of

GOVERNOR ISAAC INGALLIS STEVENS

on

THE OPENING OF THE NORTHEAST TERRITORY

by

Dorothy Bell

B.A., State University of Montana, 1926

Presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

State University of Montana

1936

Approved:

[Signature]

Chairman of Board of Examiners.

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Chairman of Committee on Graduate Study.
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Congress to support the Indian policy, even if they did not
fratendly associate with the Indians, and thereby preventing
and of recoininonizing parties, submittirig reports, ete.
chirnng
peace control of the entire exploration—are the same parity
who, authorized by the United States goveveir, assumed con-
"authority." These were embodied in the policy of Isaac Stevne
"pass as synonyms for "influence."—"contract," "messen"y, and
power to open the new northwestern territory to emigration; to
northern route to survey; Governor Stevens used the influence
road route to the Pacific Coast, and now, when given the
I mean to show the steps by which interest in the rail-
not Stevens, &c., that the track is determined to continue
letting Superintendent! the Indian war of 1855-6, &c., and ever-
blackfeet, who were not included within the limits of any ex-
blacketl, who were not included within the limits of any ex-
when extracted! the relations with the Puget Sound Indians, and
application for the Governorship and superintendence of It-
formation of the Washington Territory in 1857, and Stevens's
tary reader and a member of the Coast Survey Office, the
preparation and qualification for the work, both as a mi-
or engineers. Supplementary to the main theme are Stevens's
as conducted by Governor Isaac I. Stevens and his partire
sed and the Pacific Ocean
the northwestern territory to settle the dispute about the source of
I shall first my subject recapitulate to the opening of

Reference
agree to finance further surveys.

Hazard Stevens, in his book entitled The Life of Isaac Ingalls Stevens, outlines briefly the extent of his father's task:

"It was to traverse and explore a domain two thousand miles in length by two hundred and fifty in breadth, stretching from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, across a thousand miles of arid plains and two great mountain ranges, a region almost unexplored, and infested by powerful tribes of predatory and warlike savages; to determine the navigability of the two great rivers, the Missouri and the Columbia, which intersect the region; to locate by reconnaissance and to survey a practicable railroad route; to examine the mountain passes and determine the depth of winter snows in them; to collect all possible information on the geology, climate, flora and fauna, as well as the topography, of the region traversed; and finally to treat with the Indians on the route, cultivate their friendship, and collect information as to their languages, numbers, customs, traditions, and history; and all this, including the work of preparation and organization, to be accomplished in a single season." (V. i, 294)

The discussion in Chapter IV of Governor Stevens's expedition is in the nature of an itinerary, both of the main party and of the reconnoitring and surveying parties, with summaries of the observations of those whose surveys affected the main expedition. All the parties are not included, but rather those whose reports seemed to me to have the most bearing upon Stevens's opening of the territory to emigration, through survey and treaty. Although special attention is paid to the reports of Lieutenant Mullan and Captain McClellan, the complete findings of neither are fully reported, but only those which affected particularly the main railroad survey report.
I wish to acknowledge my appreciation of the assistance of the following, who contributed to the study of this subject:

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Mrs. Edith M. Duncan

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University of Montana

Miss Winnifred M. Feighner, Assistant Librarian
University of Montana

May 13, 1936
Chapter I. The Creation of Washington Territory

I. The territory is settled, north of the Columbia River.
   1. 1844-9, settlement at Puget Sound, Vancouver, Whidbey Island, Olympia, Nisqually, and Sumner.
   2. The gold rush serves to settle the Pacific coast.
   3. Indian attacks lead to the settlement of Steilacoom.
   4. 1850 marks the beginning of American commerce at Olympia; the cargo of the Orbit is sold.
   5. Seattle is founded in 1852.

II. Washington Territory is created.
   1. Political meetings are held, 1847-8.
   2. The northern counties demand representation.
   3. Chapman proposes a division of territory, 1851.
   4. The Monticello memorial is presented to Congress in 1852.
   5. After Congressional discussion, the Territory of Washington—at first "Columbia"—is formed, on March 2, 1853.

Chapter II. Provision is made for the survey of a Pacific Railroad.

I. The territorial problem:
   1. Additional territory as a result of the Mexican War makes protection necessary.
   2. The discovery of gold in California leads to a demand for roads.
      a. Two roads exist, from Fort Leavenworth to Oregon and California—the Santa Fe and Oregon trails.
   3. There is need of a railroad.
      a. Proposals of A. Whitney, Thomas H. Benton, and E. P. Stanton
      b. North and South dispute termini.

II. The railroad problem:
   1. The physical obstacles: unoccupied plains and mountains— the Indian frontier
   2. The Indian titles and frontier line to be extinguished by the Commissioner of Indian Affairs.

III. A railroad survey is provided for, as part of the new Army Appropriation bill, March 3, 1853.
   1. The Corps of Topographical Engineers to make the survey
   2. The last objects to conflict with state jurisdiction; objection overruled.
   3. Report of survey to be presented to Congress in 1854.
   4. Engineers employed under the act are not to act in concert with private associations or individuals.
Chapter III. Governor Isaac I. Stevens Proposes an Expedition to the Pacific

I. Major Stevens applied for governorship
   1. He asked the appointment because he was best qualified.
      a. At West Point, he undertook added duties; was suited for surveys because of mathematics and drawing ability
      b. Activity in Coast Survey Office
      c. Leader of engineers in Mexican War.
   2. Resigned from army

II. Stevens's proposal to lead the expedition from the Mississippi to the Pacific is accepted.
   1. Democratic victory insured policy of exploration.
   2. Stevens's letters to the secretaries of War, Interior, and State are accepted, with all his proposals.

III. Steps preliminary to the start of the expedition:
   1. Assigning of men
      a. Expedition to be military
      b. List of important men assigned.
   2. Plans of sending out three parties:
      a. Two parties to operate simultaneously from both ends of the route.
      b. Third party to establish depot of provisions at St. Mary's village.
   3. Donelson sent to Montreal for information.
   4. A brief outline of factors involved in the exploration.
   5. Statement of Indian policy; no aid from Hudson Bay Co.
   6. Preparation of instructions.

Chapter IV. The Explorations of Governor Isaac Stevens and his Parties to the Pacific Ocean

I. From St. Louis to the Bitterroot Valley:
   A. General course to be pursued:
      1. Reconnaissances.
      2. General survey.
      3. Particular survey of passes.
   B. Object: survey from Mississippi to Pacific for a practicable route.

   C. St. Louis—
      1. Culbertson sent to Flathead camp with message.
      2. Donelson and Mullan to Fort Union
      3. Lander and Tinkham to the upper Mississippi.

   D. St. Paul—
      1. Lander reports on crossing at Skook rapids.
      2. Two parties organized: Lander and Tinkham

   E. Pike Lake, "Neat starting point"—
      1. all parties meet
      2. Grover to Dead Colt Blillock, etc., to meet Donelson later at Fort Union.
3. Tinkham and Lander to reconnoitre Sheyenne R. Valley.
   a. Sheyenne River course doesn't tally with Mackay's map.
   F. Stevens encounters Red River hunters; favorably impressed.
   G. Stevens confers with the Assiniboinnes at Mouse River.

H. Fort Union--
1. Eastern division arrives.
2. Gilbertson sent with message to the Blackfeet.
3. Advance in two parties to Big Sandy; changed here to one, and Donelson made executive officer.

I. Fort Benton--
1. Route taken to here.
2. Had conferred with the Gros Ventres, August 26.
3. Bear Paw's mountain had been examined.
4. Reconnoitring parties dispatched:
   a. Grover--to cross Rockies to St. Mary's village.
   b. Donelson--to cross Rockies (also by Cadotte Pass) and to wait for Stevens at St. Mary's.
   c. Lander--to survey Marias Pass (deferred); reported to Donelson; activities from there.
   d. Tinkham--reconnaissance of plateau between the Milk and Marias rivers.
   e. Sexton and Gilbertson to Washington (Sexton's report, Walla Walla to Fort Benton).
   f. Ellin--route followed to Bitterroot; message to Flathead Indians.
5. Stevens continues by pack train; crossed Cadotte Pass.

J. Fort Owen--
2. Ellin in charge--ordered while here to explore route to Fort Hall, and examine passes.
3. Donelson--to Walla Walla.
4. Lander--went ahead to examine Bitterroot Valley.
5. Tinkham--to examine Marias Pass--follows Cut Bank river, not true Marias Pass; reports on Cadotte and Nez Percé passes.

II. From the Bitterroot Valley to Puget Sound:
A. Proceed through Coeur d'Alene Pass to the mission of Coeur d'Alene; thence to Colville.
B. Met McClellan here; received his report, given in brief
   1. McClellan describes activities in Cascade Range.
      b. Compares depth of snow with Tinkham's report.
C. To Olympia, with few further incidents.
D. Further reports of reconnoitring parties:
   1. Tinkham examines Snoqualmie Pass and reports it practicable.
   2. Brief mention of Arnold, Gibbs, Suckley, Grover.
   4. Report of John Ellin
Chapter V. Governor Stevens Goes to Washington, D.C.

I. Reasons:

1. Charged with deficiency, and told to end operations.
   a. Goes to defend himself to Jefferson Davis
2. Goes to prevent discontinuance of surveys, to urge
   the Blackfoot council, and to urge extinguishing
   Indian titles to the land.

II. Conflict with Jefferson Davis:

1. Correspondence concerning Stevens's withdrawal of
   surveys, and his deficiency incurred.
2. Davis's summary of the five expeditions.
3. Outline and criticism of Stevens's surveys.
   a. Favors McClellan's report rather than Tinkham's.

III. Results of Stevens's trip to Washington:

1. Lost government sanction of surveys; continues on
   his own initiative; meteorological record one reason.
2. Obtained government aid for Indian treaties.
   a. appropriations
   b. made Indian commissioner

Chapter VI. Governor Stevens's Indian Policy

I. Part I—Indian treaties:

A. Policy during explorations of 1853 was that offriendliness
   1. Conferences en route, and presents given

B. Councils of 1855, and resulting treaties:
   1. Puget Sound—four treaties; establishes 9 reservations
   2. Walla Walla, May 29, 1855
      a. three separate treaties; general provisions.
   3. Flathead Council, July, 1855
      a. dispute over reservation.
   4. Blackfoot council, October, 1855
      a. Cummings and Stevens preside.
      b. Common hunting-ground decided upon.

II. Part II—The Indian Wars

A. Stevens is at Blackfoot council when war starts.
   1. Returns by Coeur d'Alene Pass and makes friends
      with Indians.

B. Causes:
   1. Outlined by Stevens; restless Indians; also in-
      cited by Yakima chief.
   2. Steps taken by Stevens (nine)

C. Opposition of General Wool.
   1. Mismanages; opposes volunteers and territorial
      officers.
D. Stevens's Plan of Campaign:
   1. Search out Indian hiding-places in passes.
   2. Protect friendly Indians from hostiles.

E. After the war, Stevens defends himself against the charges of General Wool.
   1. General Wool is recalled.

Chapter VII. Isaac I. Stevens Becomes Delegate

I. His policy:
   1. Sends funds to Superintendent Nesmith.
   2. Indian treaties confirmed.
   3. Aulani road begun.
   4. Three transcontinental roads advocated.
   5. Settlement of Northwest urged.

Chapter VIII. Summary

I. Contains summary of the work done by Isaac Stevens in preparing the way for the settlement of the Northwest.
CHAPTER I
THE CREATION OF WASHINGTON TERRITORY

The section of the Oregon Territory north of the Columbia River was sparsely populated by American settlers until after 1844, the year of the immigration into Oregon which brought George V. Bush, a mulatto barred from Oregon by the negro law of that year, and Michael T. Simmons, of Kentucky, who spent the winter at Fort Vancouver. Dr. John McLoughlin had been told by the Hudson Bay Company to discourage the citizens of the United States in settling north of the Columbia, but to point out the desirability of the Willamette Valley, since the former region would probably become British territory when the Columbia River became the international boundary line.¹

In July of the next year Simmons made a trip to Puget Sound, and went as far as Whidbey Island by canoe, with five other families, and two single men, he moved to the Sound, and the town of Tumwater, originally called Newmarket, began. Supplies of wheat, peas, potatoes, and cattle were bought from the Hudson Bay Company.²

2. The spelling of geographic names is based upon the Sixth Report of the United States Geographic Board, 1886 to 1888, (Washington, 1889).
"In the following year as many American men settled north of the Cowlitz and about the head of the Sound as in 1845, but not as many families." From 1845 to 1847 the region around Disqually and Olympia was settled, flour mills and saw mills were built, and shingle-making prospered. There were few additions to the population of the Sound in 1847, due to the Chit-Cha massacres. In 1848 a mission was established below Turwater, and the first settlement was made on Whidbey Island.

With the gold rush to California, farming, building, and all other industries were suspended, but the excitement of the gold discovery made up the losses sustained by the commercial prosperity which the rapid settlement of the Pacific coast brought to the whole of the Oregon Territory, and especially to Puget Sound. The next four years witnessed further settlement and development on the Sound. An attack of the Snoqualmish Indians on Disqually led to the establishment of Fort Stelacoom. In 1850 the Orbis arrived -- the first American merchant vessel to visit the Sound since its settlement -- and American commerce began when the cargo of the Orbis was sold, profitably, practically on the ground of the Hudson Bay Company.

Stelacoom and Fort Townsend were settled, and in 1852

5. Ibid., p. 10.
7. Ibid., pp. 16 and 17.
Seattle was founded, the settlers devoting their time to cutting out timber, rather than developing agriculture. Chid-
bey Island was rapidly occupied, due to its excellent prair-
rie land; Pacific City, Baker, and Shoelwater Bay drew other
settlers, who erected mills, fisheries, and trading-houses.

With the formation of the district of Vancouver and of
Lewis and Vancouver counties in 1845, came the demand for
representation in the legislature of the Territory of Oregon,
of the region north of the Columbia River. The first public
meeting recorded in this new country was held in Lewis Coun-
ty on June 11, 1847, to protest against claim-jumping; the
second was at Tumwater, November 5, 1849, against the en-
croachments of the Puget Sound Agricultural Association,
demanding that the Hudson Bay Company withdraw its herds to
the north side of the Skikcall River within a week. This
was done.

By 1851 the northern counties felt that the Oregon
legislature asked everything for the Willamette Valley and
nothing for Puget Sound, so they were willing to listen to
Chambers's scheme for a new territory. J. F. Chapman, a law-
yer, and the founder of Chehalis City, explored north of the
Columbia in the winter of 1850-51, and wrote, "The north
must be Columbia Territory and the South the State of Oregon."

9, ibid., p. 40.
10, ibid., p. 47.
On July 4, 1851, a meeting was held at Olympia, at which it was decided to hold a convention to consider an appeal to Congress for a division of the Territory. The Cowlitz convention which met, as provided, on the 29th of August, memorialized Congress on the subject of division. Since Congress apparently took no notice of this memorial, a convention met at Monticello, November 25, 1852, and a committee of thirteen framed another memorial, representing to Congress that the Oregon Territory "lying north of the Columbia river and west of the great northern branch thereof, should be organized as a separate territory, under the name and style of the "Territory of Columbia"", and urged the following reasons, among many others:

"1. The present Territory of Oregon . . . is entirely too large an extent of territory to be embraced within the limits of one State.

"2. The said Territory possesses a sea coast of six hundred and fifty miles in extent; the country east of the Cascade Mountains is bound to that on the coast by the strongest ties of interest; . . . it would be unjust that one State should possess so large a sea-board to the exclusion of that in the interior.

"3. The proposed Territory of Columbia presents natural resources capable of supporting a population at least as large as that of any State in the Union possessing an equal extent of territory.

"4. Those portions of Oregon Territory north and south of the Columbia river must . . . rival each other in commercial advantages . . . .

"5. The southern part . . . have controlled the Territorial Legislature, and Northern Oregon has never

received any benefit from the appropriations made by Congress for said territory . . . .

"6. . . . your petitioners can entertain no reasonable hopes that their legislative enactments will ever be properly regarded under the present organization . . . ." 12

In the Oregon legislature, on January 10, 1853, F. A. Chenoweth introduced a resolution in regard to organizing a territory north of the Columbia, and on the 14th, L. S. Key substituted for it a memorial to Congress. 14 But General Joseph Lane, Oregon's delegate to Congress, had already presented the Lenticello memorial to the United States House of Representatives, and on February 8, 1853, the House considered it as a bill. Mr. Jones of Tennessee opposed the division of territory,"1 . . . there not being sufficient population for two Territories". 15

The contest was lively. President Fillmore was a Whig, but both branches of Congress were Democratic. Lem Boyd, the Speaker, was a Democrat, as was Delegate Lane. 16 When Lane was asked how many people were in the proposed new Territory, he retorted that the population "will be quite as great as was that of the whole of Oregon at the period of its organization into a Territory". 17

Lane's other arguments in favor of the bill were essen-

tially those given in the Monticello memorial and may be paraphrased as follows:

1. Either Territory -- Washington or Oregon -- would be four times as large as Ohio.
2. The line of boundary is natural, geographically, and divides the interests of northern and southern Oregon as well.
3. Puget Sound is important commercially, and the revenue collected there will "more than equal all the expenses of the new Territory".
4. Settlement and occupation of the new Territory will prevent the necessity of transportation of troops to that country for protection.\(^{16}\)

Mr. Stanton of Kentucky moved an amendment to name the Territory "Washington" instead of "Columbia", since there was already a District of Columbia. This was adopted, as well as an amendment proposed by Mr. Carter, to divide the Columbia River equally between the two territories.\(^{19}\)

Mr. Jones offered the following amendment on March 2, 1855:

\[\text{For salaries of governor and superintendant of Indian affairs, three judges, attorney, and marshall of Washington Territory, from the time of their appointment to the end of the fiscal year terminating June 30, 1854, an amount sufficient to pay the same.}\]

\[\text{For compensation and mileare of the legislative assembly... and to defray the expenses of taking the census of said Territory, the sum of $20,000.}\]

\[\text{For the permanent expenses of the Territory, including the salary of a clerk of the Executive Department, $1500.}\]

The amendment was "agreed to".

19. Ibid.
20. Ibid., p. 1045.
On March 2, 1853, the Senate passed H. R. bill No. 348,

"An act to establish the territorial government of Washington", providing that "that portion of Oregon Territory lying and being south of the forty-ninth degree of north latitude, and north of the middle of the main channel of the Columbia River, from its mouth to where the forty-sixth degree of north latitude crosses said river, near Fort Wallawalla, thence with said forty-sixth degree of latitude to the summit of the Rocky Mountains, be organized into and constitute a temporary government by the name of the Territory of Washington."31

Then the Mexican War was over, Congress was facing a territorial problem on the Pacific coast that was made more difficult by the existence of the frontier of the "Great American Desert", acting as a barrier between the America of the East and West. The overland trails leading to Oregon and California were inadequate. There were two -- both were from Fort Leavenworth, one the Santa Fe trail along the Arkansas River, and the other the Oregon trail along the Platte River, by South Pass, and down the Snake River into Oregon. These trails revealed the necessity of a transcontinental railroad route.

At first the object of a railroad to the Pacific was to aid Atlantic trade. On January 28, 1845, Representative Iratt of New York presented the memorial of J. Whitney for constructing a railroad "from Lake Michigan through the Rocky mountains to the Oregon Territory, on the shores of the Pacific ocean"; Mr. Iratt urged that the railroad would promote "the capacities of our country for warlike defense as well as all the advantages of peaceful intercourse between the people dwelling on the shores of the Atlantic".

and Pacific oceans . . .", and would become the "Highway of nations", furnishing a "direct westerly passage between Europe and China". 23

There was a distinct similarity between the proposals of Mr. Butler in 1845 and those of Senator Thomas H. Benton in 1849 and 1850; and also between Benton's proposal and the one of 1853. With the discovery of gold, and emigration from the eastern states across Nebraska, came the growth of population on the Pacific coast, and the need for protection. Senator Benton proposed a Central National Highway to the Pacific, and urged the early organization of Nebraska territory as a means of constructing the highway; . . . in this he was seconded by the efforts of the Wyandot Indians living in Nebraska through whose lands the Highway would pass. 24

On February 7, 1849, Senator Benton proposed a bill to provide for the location and construction of a central railroad from the Pacific Ocean to the Mississipi River, with a branch of said road to the Columbia river. 25 The road would be national in character, and the termini, San Francisco and St. Louis. To conciliate the Indians and get their consent, the bill proposes to surrender a sum

23. P. Butler say, The Western Frontier,
25.
of money to be expended by the President in procuring the assent of the Indians, and to the extinguishment of such titles as may be necessary for the purposes of the road.

The senator emphasized military, political, and commercial reasons for building the railroad. On December 18, 1850, he introduced another bill, essentially the same as the first. Neither bill came to a final vote.

F. P. Stanton, from the committee on Naval Affairs, had introduced a report on August 1, 1850, advocating as a result of the Memphis convention that the eastern terminus of the Pacific railroad be at Memphis. The railroad and a ship canal across the Isthmus, were combined in the report, to "give us the means of defending and protecting forever from the foot of the invader the Pacific coasts of the Union." The committee recommended two routes—one to the north, the other to the south.

The two main objections to a road to the Pacific were the physical obstructions of unoccupied plains and mountains, and the Indian frontier line along the territory of Oregon, Utah, New Mexico, and Texas.

With the passage of the Kansas-Nebraska bill on May 30, 1854, and the creation of these two new territories, the

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29. Ibid., p. 96.
Indian country was all thrown open to settlement except the part between Texas and the 37th parallel, hence were acquired from the Indians by the treaties of George H. Varnum, Commissioner of Indian Affairs. But not until 1853, when Congress authorized a series of surveys to the Pacific did anyone demand that the Indian frontier be abolished, that the tribes cede their lands west of the bend of the Missouri River, and that the Commissioner of Indian Affairs undertake negotiations to remove the tribes.30

In that year, on November 9, George Varnum, who had entered the Indian country west of Missouri and Iowa on September 2 and left it on October 11, made his annual report to the Secretary of the Interior. Excerpts are given here from the report, to show the attitude of the Indians toward giving up the land given them by the United States government. Treaties were not concluded with these Indians until 1854.

"... From the time the original Indian title to the country was extinguished under the authority of the act of 25th May, 1826, and the tribes transplanted from the States and Territories east of the Mississippi... it had always been considered a country set apart and dedicated to Indian use and purposes...

"... Congress had just before, by act of the 13 of March, directed the President to enter into negotiations with the Indian tribes west of the states of Missouri and Iowa... for the purpose of extinguishing their titles to these lands...

"It proved very difficult to quiet the Indians..."

"A civil government should be organized over the territory..."51 (Refer to text)

Commissioner Vanperry held councils with nineteen tribes, 14,304 souls, most of whom would listen to no proposals to dispose of their land.

The peace with Mexico in 1848 gave the United States the added area of California, Nevada, New Mexico, Arizona, and Utah. In this factor, and in the discovery of gold in California, the South saw an opportunity to build a railroad line which should be of advantage to them, with its western terminus in the new gold region.

Agitation for a railroad was renewed on February 9, 1867, when New Mexico presented a memorial to Congress to establish a "national railroad from the Missouri river to the Pacific ocean."52 The memorial was laid on the table, and the North's debt question was discussed first, despite the protests of Representative Hask, on February 10: "We have waited long enough... A large majority of the legislatures of the states have said that we should take a road from the Missouri to the Pacific ocean. It has been before us an absolute necessity for seven or eight years."53

On March 7, 1867, the Senate approved H. R. bill No. 336

51. U.S. Cong. Globe, 43d Cong. 1 sess. (1854), XXI, pp. 27, 28, 29
53. Ibid., p. 732.
making appropriations for the support of the Army for the
year ending the 30th of June, 1830."

Mr. President, I move
with amendments concerning the surveys for a railroad,
after such debates, section 15, Senate amendment, read:

"... and be it further enacted, that the Secretary
of War be, and he is hereby authorized, under the
direction of the President of the United States, to
employ such portion of the Corps of Topographical
Engineers, and such other persons as he may deem
necessary, to make such explorations and surveys
as he may deem advisable, to ascertain the most
practicable and economical route for a railroad
from the Mississippi river to the Pacific Ocean, and
that the sum of one hundred fifty thousand dollars
... be appropriated ... to defray the expense of
such explorations and surveys." 35

The amendment passed.

Mr. Leavitt of New York offered the objection that the
survey conflicted with state jurisdiction, and should not
be undertaken by the United States Corps of Topographical
Engineers; he moved to amend the bill, but his amendment
was not agreed to. 36

Section 15, Senate amendment, which also passed, read:

"That the engineers and other persons employed in
said explorations and surveys shall be organized in as many
distinct corps as there are routes to be surveyed, and their
several reports shall be laid before Congress on or before
the first day of February, 1831." 37

34. [263], p. 289.
35. Ibid., p. 287.
36. Ibid., p. 287.
37. Ibid.
The next section, upon which there was heated debate, read:

"... That in making such explorations and surveys, the engineers and other persons employed under the authority of this act may be directed to act in concert with any engineers employed by any individual or individuals, association or associations, for the same general object; and the Secretary of War is hereby authorized and required to receive proposals from individuals or associations for the construction of a railroad between the valley of the Mississippi and the Pacific ocean, and lay the same before Congress at the next session."38

Mr. Meade of Virginia wished to strike out all after the word "object". He said, "I do not see anything to be accomplished by it but to gratify an idle curiosity on the part of Congress as to what the various companies propose to do..."39 Mr. Strother favored the clause, since it would present to Congress "the results of the action of parties upon the practicability and feasibility of the question in the form of plans, projects, and propositions, on which statesmen can form their opinions of constitutional power."40

This last amendment, section 17, was "non-concurred in".41

39. Ibid.
40. Ibid.
41. Ibid., p. 1000.
CHAPTER III
GOVERNOR ISAAC I. STEVENS PROPOSES
AN EXPEDITION TO THE PACIFIC

In May, 1853, it became known in Washington Territory that Major Isaac I. Stevens of Andover, Massachusetts, had been appointed governor of that territory. Early in the year he had applied for the governorship, to which was attached, "ex officio", the superintendency of Indian affairs; he had also applied for the charge of the exploration of the northern railroad route. (Secretary of War Jefferson Davis had put five separate expeditions in the field early in the spring, near the thirty-second, thirty-fifth, thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth, forty-first and forty-second, and forty-seventh and forty-ninth parallels, respectively). 42 Stevens's commission as Governor of Washington Territory was issued by President Pierce on March 17, 1853. 43 He at once resigned from the army.

Major Stevens had asked the appointment because he felt he was best qualified for the position. At West Point he had been an enterprising young man, to the extent that he voluntarily undertook added duties and studies. He was admirably suited for survey work, since he had graduated at

the head of his class, specializing in mathematics and drawing. He was well fitted to lead a Corps of Topographical Engineers, since he had led a company of engineers in the Mexican War. While in charge of the Coast Survey Office at Washington, D.C., in October, 1849, he had improved the department, and was constantly alert to progress toward the West, writing, "We shall have a great session of Congress the coming winter. The whole subject of our communications with the Pacific will be discussed, railroad and ship canal across the isthmus... I have no doubt Congress will direct the necessary explorations and surveys to determine the practicability of the various schemes."

Isaac Stevens was a Democrat. The election of a Democratic President, Franklin Pierce, in November, 1853, insured a policy of exploration and settlement of the domain extending from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean. Major Stevens was strongly attracted to a field which pointed to public service and achievement.

On March 21, 1853, Stevens wrote to Jefferson Davis, proposing "to conduct an exploration to determine the emigrant route, and the route for a railroad from the sources of the Mississippi to Puget Sound, and submits a memoir for accomplishing it by means of three parties, with estimates

44. Hazard Stevens, op.cit., p. 244.
45. Ibid., p. 245.
of organization and cost in detail. The following day he submitted his project to Secretary of State Marcy, showing that he could promote the interests of the new Territory by exploring a route to it, obtaining useful information as to agricultural, mineral, commercial, and manufacturing resources, and publishing the information, thereby inviting emigrants. He called attention to the "great influence which this exploration will exercise over the Indian tribes, the exceeding efficiency which it will give to me in discharge of my duties as Superintendent of Indian Affairs, and the interesting information which it will enable me to collect in regard to their numbers, customs, locations, history, and traditions." On the same day, he addressed a similar letter to the Secretary of the Interior. Within four days his proposals to lead the expedition were accepted by the President and the three departments, and all his suggestions adopted.

Among his suggestions was one that he place as many able officers as he needed under the command of a civilian, himself. As he wrote to Davis, these officers would serve as "astronomers, engineers, artists, naturalists, draughtsmen, etc. . . The distinguished geologist, Dr. J. Evans, who has gone over the greater portion of the country between

46. H. Stevens, op.cit., p. 235
47. Ibid.
48. Ibid., p. 286.
the Mississippi and the Pacific, has explored two of the
passes in the Rocky Mountains north of the South Pass . . .
is ready to cooperate . . . I think it exceedingly impor-
tant that the whole exploration ... should be placed under
the charge of the same person, he, under general instruc-
tions from the department, giving the necessary directions
to the several parties . . . " 49

There were many steps to be taken, preliminary to the
starting of the expedition, — men to be assigned, division
of surveys to be planned, requisitions to be obtained, a
statement of policy toward the Indians to be issued, and de-
tailed instructions to be given. Governor Stevens applied
for Brevet Captain George B. McClellan to be assigned as his
principal officer, in charge of the exploration of the cas-
cade Range. Other men assigned to important positions were:

To survey: Lieutenant A. J. Donelson
Lieutenant Beekman Du Barry
Captain John V. T. Gardiner
Second Lieutenant Johnson &. Duncan
        "        Rufus Saxton, Jr.
        "        Cuvier Grover
Brevet Second Lieutenant John Aullan, Jr.

Civil Engineers: A. W. Tinkham
               Fred W. Lender
Secretary and
Astronomer: George W. Stevens
Astronomer: A. Remenyi
Botanical collector: Baird
Disbursing officer: Isaac Osgood
Geologist: John Evans
Artist: J. M. Stanley

49. R. Stevens, _op.cit._, pp. 287-288.
Surgeons and naturalists: Dr. George Suckley  
Dr. J. G. Cooper  
Draftsman: John Lambert

In his report, Governor Stevens states the reasons for conducting the explorations in three parties:

"As the field contemplated in my instructions extended from the great lakes to the Pacific coast, and from the 49th parallel to the emigrant route of the South Pass, and as no portion of this field had been explored since the days of Lewis and Clark, except a small portion towards the Pacific coast; as a portion of it was occupied by Indians supposed to be treacherous and hostile, and as it was in a high latitude, much abridging the season of active operations, it was determined that the exploration should be conducted in two divisions, operating respectively from the Mississippi River and Puget Sound; and that a depot of provisions should be established by a third party at the St. Mary's village, at the western base of the Rocky mountains, to . . . enable the exploring parties to continue in the field the longest practicable period; and that all the parties should be organized in a military manner for self-protection. . . ."51

Secretary Davis's report was more explicit as to what the eastern and western parties should do:

". . . One party, under the immediate direction of Governor Stevens, will proceed from the Mississippi river, and surveying rapidly the intermediate country, will reach as early as practicable the Rocky mountains, and examine all the passes to ascertain the most practicable one. The second party, under the command of Brevet Captain George B. McClellan, will organize at Puget Sound, or on the Columbia, and operate for a similar purpose in the Cascade range of mountains. . . Governor Stevens, as soon as the eastern party has been put to work on the Rocky mountains,

50. Isaac Stevens Report in United States War Department, Reports of Explorations and Surveys to Ascertain the Most Practicable and Economical Route for a Railroad from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, 1853-4, 13 Vols. (Washington, 1855-60), Vol. XII, Pt. I, p. 33.  
will advance rapidly with a small reconnoitring force to meet Captain McClellan and arrange the entire operations."52

Captain McClellan was also to open the military road from Fort Steilacoom to Walla Walla. The third party in the field, that of Lieutenant Sexton, was directed to "establish a depot of four thousand rations of provisions in the Bitter Root valley."53 Still another subsidiary party, under Lieutenant Donelson, was to ascend the Missouri to Fort Union, on the Yellowstone, reconnoitre and push through the Blackfoot country to the Rocky Mountains.54

Governor Stevens intended to work independently of the Hudson Bay Company, so far as possible. He reports, "Whilst I had taken the necessary precautions to get supplies from the Hudson Bay posts in case of necessity, I am anxious that such necessity should not occur, and I wrote both to Governor Simpson, at Montreal, and Governor Ogden, at Vancouver, not to accumulate supplies at their several posts for the use of my parties."55 On April 7, 1853, Lieutenant Donelson was dispatched to Montreal with letters from the British minister in Washington to Sir George Simpson, Governor of the Hudson Bay Company, to obtain all the information possible relative to the country from the Great Lakes to the Pacific. The information Stevens already had was "based upon

55. Stevens Report, Vol. XII, on. cit., p. 34
the following works: Lewis and Clarke's Travels, Irving's Astoria and Rocky Mountains; Travels by the Missionary De Smet, Nicollet, and Boone; Governor Simpson's Journey around the World; and some information... from Dr. Evans on his geological survey of those regions."56 Stevens was emphatic in his instructions to Sexton and McClellan that he wished to decline Sir George Simpson's offer of extra supplies at Hudson Bay posts:

"I... shall much prefer to be in condition to extend aid than to be obliged to receive aid from others...

... let it be our determination to have within ourselves the means of the most complete efficacy. ... the people and the Indians of the Territory should see that we have all the elements of success in our hands. The Indians must look to us for protection and counsel... I am determined, in my intercourse with the Indians, to break up the ascendancy of the Hudson Bay Company, and permit no authority or sanction to come between the Indians and the officers of this government."57

The most detailed and careful instructions were given to all the main officers. On being asked how he liked being under the command of Governor Stevens, McClellan replied,

"At any rate, I shall serve under a man of brains."58

A brief outline will serve to present the factors involved in Isaac Stevens's explorations:

1. The exploration and survey of a route for a railroad from the sources of the Mississippi River to Puget Sound, in charge of Governor Stevens, to whom all officers would report for instructions.
2. To operate from St. Paul toward the great bend of

57. Ibid., p. 297.
58. Ibid.
the Missouri River, and from there to a pass in the Rocky mountains; to establish a supply base at Fort Union; to send a second party to Puget Sound and explore the Cascades, to meet the eastern party between that range and the Rockies.

3. To explore the passes of the Cascade range and Rocky Mountains; to establish facts relating to the capacity of the country to supply materials for the construction of a railroad—front the 49th parallel to the headwaters of the Missouri River; to determine the capacity of the rivers to transport materials.

4. To assign additional officers to surveys, including Brevet Second Lieutenant John Sullivan.

5. To requisition the army to supply officers, soldiers, and civil employees with transportation, medical stores, and arms.

6. After field work should be completed, to rendezvous in Washington Territory and prepare reports.

7. To obtain $40,000 for Governor Stevens's survey.59

CHAPTER IV
THE EXPLORATIONS OF GOVERNOR ISAAC STEVENS
AND HIS PARTIES TO THE PACIFIC OCEAN

Part I. From St. Louis to the Bitterroot Valley

Governor Stevens's report outlines his instructions as follows:

"On the 8th of April, 1853, I was assigned to the duty of exploring a route for the Pacific railroad from St. Paul, or some eligible point on the Upper Mississippi, to Puget Sound. My instructions required me to examine carefully the passes of several mountain ranges, the geography and meteorology of the whole intermediate region, the character . . . of the Missouri and Columbia rivers, the rains and snows of the route, especially in the mountain passes, and, in short, to collect every species of information bearing upon the question of railroad practicability. It was necessary, moreover, to give great attention to the Indian tribes, as their friendship was important to be secured, and bore directly upon the questions both of the Pacific railroad and the safety of my party."60

The entire force under Governor Stevens's command for the exploration comprised some 240 men -- 11 officers and 76 enlisted men, 55 members of the scientific corps, and 120 civilian employees, teamsters, packers, guides, herders, voyageurs, etc.61 Definite assignments for surveys and explorations were listed in the last chapter. In his instructions to McClellan, Stevens reminded him that the "main object is a railroad survey from the headwaters of the Mississippi River to Puget Sound";62 his report to Secretary Davis explained that the object was "to determine the question of

60. Stevens Report, V, XII, op. cit., p. 51.
62. Ibid., p. 290.
practicability rather than the best route, and the details of locations. 63

Operations for the explorations were divided in three parts, as follows:

1. A general reconnaissance of the country, to observe its general features, "and everything which will be necessary in the construction of a general map of the country passed over. The result . . . will be to determine the most advantageous route to be pursued for the railroad, and to direct the movements of the party intrusted with locating it . . . to determine . . . the important points of the Missouri and Columbia rivers . . . the debouches of the mountain passes, both of the Cascade and Rocky mountain ranges.

2. "The survey and location of the railroad: A general profile of the route will be determined by means of barometrical measurements . . . everything . . . affecting the construction of a railroad will be noted, the estimated or determined grades, the nature of the excavation, facilities for obtaining stone, timber, and all building materials &c, &c." 64

3. Particular surveys, with maps, to be made of the mountain passes of the Cascade and Rocky mountain ranges. 65

On May 23, 1853, the main party of the expedition, under Governor Stevens, left St. Louis. Alexander Culbertson, Special Agent among the Blackfoot Indians, was taken into service there, and was instructed to "send forward an express on his arrival at Fort Union, with presents of tobacco for the Blackfeet, to advise them of the expedition about passing through their country, and to secure suitable guides and hunters to accompany us." 66

63. Stevens Report, V.XII, op.cit., p. 36.
64. Stevens Report, V. I, op. cit., p. 36.
65. Ibid., pp. 2-3. These maps are to be found in Vol. I.
66. Stevens Report, V.XII, op.cit., p. 38. Governor Stevens's Indian policy will be discussed fully in Chapter VI.
In April, and early in May, Stevens had dispatched several reconnoitring parties. Among these was that of Lieutenant Donelson, who, with John Mullan to make meteorological and topographical observations, was instructed to "make the best possible survey of the Missouri that is permitted by his circumstances as a passenger on the steamboat, and to prepare a report on the capacity of the Upper Missouri for steamboat navigation." Donelson was also to establish a depot of supplies at Fort Union, and to examine the country above Fort Union from the White Earth to the Big Muddy. Lander was sent to the upper Mississippi to examine crossings, while Tinkham was ordered to cooperate with him in collecting general information in that region.

Governor Stevens arrived at St. Paul on May 29. Lander had reported a week earlier on a point of departure for the main train,—"... it seems evident that the proper course of the survey would be from St. Paul's up the eastern shore of the Mississippi to Sauk rapids, thence near the Red River trail towards the headwaters of the Sauk... a very excellent route can thus be secured." Tinkham had collected much information from the guides of the country.

It was decided to send out two civil engineering parties

Note: the routes followed, and observations made, of the most important reconnoitres will be sketched, as they affected "Stevens's report.
69. Ibid., p. 16.
from St. Paul, one under Lander, to mark out a general route, the other under Tinkham, to make a topographical survey; both were to follow the route outlined by Lander -- to Sauk rapids, and then by the Red River trail to the Bois des Sioux. On June 12, Lieutenant Grover was dispatched to reconnoitre in the vicinity of White Bear Lake, to ascertain where the expedition should leave the Red River trail; he was also directed to take general charge of the parties of Messrs. Lander and Tinkham.70

The entire expedition was brought together on June 23 at Pike Lake, where the parties of Grover, Lander, and Tinkham were camped. "This," wrote Stevens, "I consider as the real starting point of the expedition, and named our camp here Camp Marcy, in honor of the Secretary of State."71

From here, Governor Stevens ordered Grover, with a party of twenty men, to proceed "in the general direction of Dead Colt Hillock, continuing to the mouth of the Yellowstone, making the best survey of the country that the means placed at his disposal would furnish, and connect his line with Lieutenant Donelson's survey of the Missouri . . . ."72, and to join him at Fort Union.

On July 4, Messrs. Lander and Tinkham were sent to reconnoitre the valley of the Sheyenne River. Stevens wrote to

70. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p.43.
71. Ibid., p.49.
72. Ibid., p.51.
Davis:

"By a comparison with Nicollet's map, it will be seen that the course of the Shyenne at its southern bend is much out of the way, and I have determined to have its southern shore carefully examined by Mr. Lander. . . . The Shyenne is a great obstacle, and the indications are very decided that the line must go south . . . but when I reach the Yellowstone, and have Lieutenant Grover's route before me, I shall be able to report more definitely on this portion of the route."

Stevens's Party followed the Red River trail, crossed the Red River, and then the James. On July 16 they encountered the Red River hunters, headed by Governor Wilkie. Governor Stevens reports: "I made some inquiries as to their views concerning the establishment of a military post in this vicinity, say at Lake Miniwakan. The suggestion met with their hearty approval."

On July 23 he conferred again with these hunters, and was very favorably impressed. "They claim the protection of both governments, and the doubt as to the position of the boundary line makes them ignorant as to which one they have the most claim upon . . . With but little care, our government could obtain the whole of these people as citizens, thus protecting and building up our frontier, and having in this vicinity always a controlling check upon the Indians."

Four days later, joined by Tinkham and Lander, who had

74. Ibid., p.67.
75. Ibid., p.70.
made an examination of the Mouse River Valley and the River of the Lakes, 76 Stevens attended a formal "reception" of the Assiniboine Indians in their camp near the Mouse River. One old man asked his help:

"My father, we hear that a great road is to be made through our country. We do not know what this is for, we do not understand it, but I think it will drive away the buffalo. We like to see our white brothers ... but we know that, as they come, our game goes back. What are we to do?" 77

Governor Stevens explained

"... that the road to be made from the Mississippi to the Pacific would not injure the Indians nor deprive them of comforts; that whites would settle along the line, and, though they would drive off the buffalo, they would also supply other articles in place of them. ... I told them that I would go through the lands of the Blackfeet and other Indians beyond the Yellowstone ... insisting on peace among all. ..." 78

Stevens was much pleased with the Assiniboines, who seemed to be favorably inclined toward the whites, and sincere in their professions of friendship.

Lieutenant Grover had reached Fort Union on July 25, having explored the Boix des Sioux, James, Sheyenne, and Mouse rivers. Governor Stevens's party and the rest of the reconnoitring parties arrived August 1. From this point, the governor sent presents by Culbertson of tobacco and goods to the chiefs of the Blackfeet, with this message: "I desire

76. Stevens' Report, XII, op. cit., p. 72.
77. Ibid., p. 74.
78. Ibid., p. 75.
to meet you on the way, and assure you of the fatherly care and beneficence of the government. I wish to meet the Blackfeet in a general council at Fort Benton. Do not make war upon your neighbors. Remain at peace, and the Great Father will see that you do not lose by it.”

Among the reports Stevens received at Fort Union were those of Donelson, of the Missouri River; Tinkham and Lander, of the Mouse River and River of the Lakes; and Grover, of his route from the Chippewa River to Fort Union.

From Fort Union the expedition advanced in two parties. Lieutenant Donelson, assisted by Mullan, was to "pursue the general course between the Missouri and Saskatchewan towards the Cypress mountains." Grover was to "continue on the usual traveled wagon road, via Milk river, to Fort Benton." This plan of August 8, however — of continuing the survey to Fort Benton in two parties — was abandoned on the west side of Big Sandy River, and on August 19 Stevens reported that the expedition would go "in one line by Milk River"; he made Lieutenant Donelson the executive officer of the expedition, subject to his, Governor Stevens's, instructions.

Stevens left Fort Union on August 10, "followed by a war party of the Blackfeet ... I desired their company for two or three days in order to impress them fully with

80. Ibid., pp. 87 and 105.
81. Ibid.
the beneficent policy of our government towards the Indians ... intending them ... to make generally known to the Blackfoot nation our objects in passing through their country.83 Before leaving the Big Sandy, the governor gained from White Man's Horse, Chief of the Blackfoot war party, a favorable description of the route through the Flathead country; the chief told him that there would be no difficulty in taking his wagons and carts through the mountains.84 Once in the Bitterroot Valley, there would be supplies from the depot established by Lieutenant Sexton.

The main party traveled along the Missouri River and the Milk River to Fort Benton, which they reached on September 1. On route, they had met the Gros Ventres on the bank of the Milk River, and on August 26 had held a council. Stevens told them he wished to make a treaty of peace between the Gros Ventres, Blackfeet, Piegans, and Bloods, and "between these and the Indians west of the mountains."85 The tribe was willing to wait until the next year, to refer their difficulties to the proposed Blackfoot Council.

Lieutenant Grover and Messrs. Lander and Stanley reached Fort Benton on September 3, having examined the Bear's Paw Mountain, and the portion between that and the Rockies.86 Reconnoitering parties were dispatched as follows from

83. Stevens Report, XII, op.cit., p.98.  
84. Ibid., p.89.  
85. Ibid., p.94.  
86. Ibid., p.102.
Fort Benton:

- - - Lieutenant Grover was to cross the Rocky Mountains by Cadotte Pass, proceed to the Bitterroot Valley and ascertain if Sexton had established a depot of provisions; in the event of not meeting him, he was to continue to the Kootenai post to get information concerning Captain McClellan, dispatch an express to inform him Stevens was at Fort Benton, and then return to that point. He was to survey the upper Missouri to connect with Donelson's survey; thence to return to Fort Benton by the route between the Milk River and the Missouri, then leave Fort Benton in winter, cross the mountains with a dog train, and determine the character of the snows and climate between Fort Benton and Puget Sound.87

- - - Lieutenant Donelson received his orders on September 7, bidding him cross Cadotte's Pass to the St. Mary's village. "In reaching the St. Mary's village, you will ... await my arrival;" and "when Mr. Tinkham gets in, he can at once join you ... With his work, and that of Mr. Lander and Lieutenant Grover, the connexion from Milk River valley with your work will be complete."88

- - - Lander was to survey the Marias Pass, and to make a reconnaissance of the Marias River, but the examination was deferred by Stevens before any real accomplishments had been made, because of a lack of harmony in Lander's party.89

87. Stevens Report, XII, op.cit., pp. 98 and 104.
89. " " ; XII, op.cit., p. 107.
In a letter to Jefferson Davis, September 18, Stevens reported that Lander "was directed to report to Lieutenant Donelson . . . in charge of the main party operating in Cadotte's Pass. It is with great reluctance I abandoned the survey of the Marias Pass. I am sanguine that it will prove the best pass, and it more naturally connects with the line of Clark's fork of the Columbia River." Later, A.W. Tinkham was to be sent out on the Marias Pass exploration.

To resume the activities of the reconnoitring parties from Fort Benton—after reporting to Donelson for instructions, Lander ran a line from the Marias to the Teton, and thence to the Sun River; from there to the upper Bearborn, and thence to the Lewis and Clark Pass. Crossing the pass, he came to the Blackfoot Fork, left it, and passed to Hell Gate River, which he mistook for the Bitterroot, and followed it to a Flathead trail east of Fort Owen. Stevens reports, "He was unable to make any observations whatever bearing upon our railroad line, excepting for seven miles of the divide, a short distance down the Blackfoot valley, and a small portion of the Hell-Gate valley."91

A.W. Tinkham reported on September 12, covering his ten days' reconnaissance which "included a route of two hun-

90. Stevens Report, V. I, pt. I, op. cit., p. 27
91. Stevens Report, V. XII, op. cit., p. 128
92. The three hyphens are to indicate reconnoitres sent out by Stevens from Fort Benton. These begin on page 51 of this thesis.
dred miles, and embraced the great plateau between the Milk and Marias rivers, for seventy-five miles west of the route of the main party, besides an examination of the Buttes, and of the Milk, Marias, and Teton rivers, for a great part of their course, enabling their course to be very accurately laid down. It showed, also, the route generally best adapted for a railroad, should it cross this plateau, instead of keeping to the valley."93

On September 8 Lieutenants Grover and Saxton had met at the summit of the Rockies, and came to Fort Benton together, arriving September 13. In his report to Jefferson Davis on September 18, Governor Stevens noted the following observations made by Saxton:

"First. That from the mouth of Wallowa-Wallowa river to Fort Benton, no insurmountable obstacle to the construction of a railroad exists, and that the Blackfoot or Cadotte's Pass is much the lowest pass through the Rocky mountains that has yet been discovered. . . .

"Second. That the region is . . . abounding in . . . materials necessary for the construction of a railroad. . . .

"Third. That . . . treaties should be entered into with all the wild tribes of Indians who inhabit the Northwest, not included in existing treaties. . . ."

- - - Lieutenant Saxton, accompanied by Alexander Culbertson, returned to Washington from Fort Benton, to urge the continuation of the surveys. Culbertson was to urge the Blackfoot Council arrangements—to get appropriations from Congress.95

93. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p.113.
94. Stevens Report, V, I; pt.2, p. 268
95. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p.117.
Lieutenant Mullan received these instructions from Governor Stevens at Fort Benton, written September 8:

"... make your way to the St. Mary's village, exploring the best pass to that point from the head waters of the Missouri River... carry from me a great message of the great father to the Flatheads... It is my determination to bring the tribes north of the Missouri, and those west of the mountains, into a general council at this point next year, and to make a lasting peace... Dwell on this." 96

Lieutenant Mullan left on September 9, traveled south to the Belt Mountains, southeast to the Muscle Shell River, and thence to the Flathead camp, where he delivered Stevens's message. He crossed the Rockies, came to the junction of the Hell Gate and Little Blackfoot rivers, and then proceeded to the Bitterroot Valley. 97 He reported that "... the route travelled by my party down the Little Blackfoot fork, and thence by the Hell Gate river to the Bitter Root valley is perfectly practicable for wagon trains." 98

Mr. James Doty, meteorologist remained at Fort Benton.

This concludes the assignments at Fort Benton. From there, Governor Stevens continued by pack train, rather than wagon, since Lieutenant Saxton had reported the latter method impracticable. 99 He hastened his journey, after learning also from Saxton that "the passes in the Bitter Root and

Cascade ranges were more difficult than those in the Rocky mountains; that they could not be crossed later than October. 100

The party proceeded up the valley of the Teton River to Sun River, and thence to the Bearborn. They crossed the Rocky Mountains at Cadotte Pass, where Stevens "was a good deal surprised to find how small an obstacle this divide was to the movement of a wagon train." 101 The pass he reported to Davis to be "... nearly 3000 feet below the South Pass, and is a much better route both in summer and in winter. It presents not the slightest difficulty to the passage of a railroad." 102

Here at the summit Governor Stevens issued a proclamation declaring the civil territorial government extended and inaugurated over the new Territory of Washington. 103 He then "pushed on over the Blackfoot prairie" to Hell Gate, and thence "crossing the Bitter Root at a good ford, we continued up its valley and reached a most excellent camp on the west side of the Bitter Root, some twenty miles from Fort Owen." 104 This was on September 27. The next day the party reached Fort Owen.

Detached parties sent from the Bitterroot examined nine passes across the main chain of the Rockies from the 49th

100. Stevens Report, V. I., pt. 1, op. cit., p. 27.
101. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p. 117.
104. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p. 121.
parallel to the Yellowstone, and four passes across the Bitterroot Range. 105 While at Fort Owen, Governor Stevens made arrangements to leave John Mullan there, to see that the rights of the Flatheads were not invaded, and gave Major Owen a license to trade with them. While stationed in the Bitterroot, Lieutenant Mullan was to explore a route to Fort Hall, and examine the mountain passes.

Lieutenant Donelson, who had been instructed to await Stevens's arrival at St. Mary's village, was now dispatched to Walla Walla over Saxton's route, and on October 6, moved "on the route of the Jocko river and Clark's Fork." 106 Land-
der went ahead of him to examine the Bitterroot Valley. A. W. Tinkham, who had been reconnoitring on the Clark Fork and in the Jocko River Valley, and who reported at Fort Owen for further instructions, was told on October 3 to "examine the Marias Pass, and returning either by Cadotte's Pass or by the pass pursued by Mr. Mullan (Mullan's Pass), or by that . . . known as the main Flathead trail, and thence by the southern Nez Perces trail to Walleah-Wallah and the military road to Olympia. Fort Benton will be visited by you to confer with Mr. Doty." 107

In spite of terrible tales of Blackfoot scalping raids related by Hugh Monroe, his guide on the reconnaissance of

September, Tinkham set out for Marias Pass with a Flathead guide. They crossed Hell Gate River to the Jocko, descending it to where it joined the Flathead. They then proceeded to Flathead Lake, left it to cross a prairie, again followed Flathead River to the fork, and took the eastern branch to the upper Marias pass—wholly impracticable. Stevens's map of the explorations of 1853 shows this upper Marias Pass and below is the "true Marias Pass", which Tinkham missed.108

Tinkham reported, on January 2, 1854, that Marias Pass was "impracticable as a wagon route, and available for a railroad only with high grades . . . and with a tunnel of at least two miles in length."109 Returning by Cadotte Pass, he reported: "The wagon route across the mountains will be found easier by Hell Gate fork than by any other passage, for perhaps a hundred miles north or south of it. The railroad route . . . is better by Cadotte’s Pass, or by the one which Mr. Lander reconnoitred by the north fork of the Sun river. . . . The valley of this fork (Hell Gate) is also better for a railroad than the Blackfoot fork."110

The southern Noz Perces Pass he described in a later report as having an average depth of snow of two feet.111

108. This map is found in Stevens Report, V. 2, op. cit.
109. Ibid., p. 525
110. Ibid., p. 526.
111. Ibid., p. 281.
PART II

From the Bitterroot Valley to Puget Sound
(including reports of Wallen and McClellan)

Governor Stevens's party proceeded to Fort Walla Walla via Coeur d'Alene mission, crossing the Bitterroot Mountains by Coeur d'Alene Pass, of which Stevens wrote, on October 11, "This pass is probably practicable for a railroad and should be examined." The next day he arrived at the mission, going from there to Spokane House, and thence to Colville, where he met McClellan and possessed himself of the main facts of that gentleman's explorations of the Cascades. Because of McClellan's report, and because of the leg-weary animals, Stevens gave up the idea of crossing the Snoqualmie Pass, and sent Captain McClellan and Lieutenant Donelson down the Columbia to Walla Walla, thence to the Salles and Vancouver, and thence to Olympia. Mr. Lander was to make a reconnaissance of the route to Puget Sound by the Columbia and Cowlitz rivers.

--- CAPTAIN McCLELLAN'S REPORT OF HIS EXPLORATION OF THE CASCADES, 1853-1854 ---

Governor Stevens had placed Captain George B. McClellan in charge of the exploration of the Cascade Range, particu-

112. Stevens Report, XII, op.cit., p. 132.
113. Ibid., p. 149.
larly to explore Snoqualmie and Naches passes. Previous to Captain McLellan's arrival, Stevens had conferred with gentlemen who had crossed these passes, and had learned that "it was no uncommon thing for Indians on horseback to come from the Yakima country, through the Sno-qual-moo Pass, to the Sound in the months of winter."115

On October 19, at Colville, McLellan's report was given to Stevens, with a map. His party had left Fort Vancouver on July 25, 1853. He crossed Klikitat Pass near Mount St. Helen and Adams. It presented no serious obstacles, and he said little about it.116 The next was Naches Pass, farther north, which he began to examine August 23. Here "it would not be possible to construct a wagon road along the mountain sides at any reasonable expense."117

Having satisfied himself that Naches Pass was impracticable for a railroad, he returned to camp at Wenata. From there he traveled up the valley of the Yakima and examined the Columbia River Pass and Snoqualmie Pass. In a letter to Davis, September 18, 1853, he described the valley of the Columbia, near the mouth of the Yakima, as a "vast sage desert. On the road to Steilacoom . . . there are a few limited tracts of good land; that on the sound, and for some miles

115. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p.158.
117. Ibid., 158-9.
back, is a mere mass of gravel -- perfectly worthless"; in
the same letter he wrote, "Judging from the snow-marks on
the trees, and information received from the Indians, the
snow accumulates to great depths in the narrow valleys --
I should suppose at least twenty feet -- and upon the moun-
tains some five and six feet."  

Leaving Olympia on December 23, 1853, McClellan carried
the survey of the Snoqualmie Pass up the Yakima Valley to
three miles west of the divide. On February 8, 1854, he re-
ported:

"... the Yakima Pass is barely practicable, and that
only at a high cost of time, labor, and money. The Co-
lumbia River Pass is not only undoubtedly practicable,
but is remarkably favorable... I have mentioned Se-
attle as the proper terminus of the road, whether it
crosses the mountains by the main Yakima or by the
Columbia Pass... The examination of the passes of
the Cascade mountains was necessarily limited to a
hasty reconnaissance."  

Of Seattle, after a trip down the Sound, he had written
to Stevens, on January 31, 1854: "... of all the harbors
between the north end of Whidbey's Island and Olympia, that
of Seattle is by far the best... It is, therefore, in my
opinion, the proper terminus for any railroad extending to
the waters commonly known as Puget Sound"; which corres-
dponded to the opinion of Governor Stevens, who was "greatly
impressed with the important advantages of Seattle."  

120. Ibid., p.624.
121. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p.158
Captain McClellan had reached Snoqualmie Falls on January 7, 1854, but could get no Indian to guide him further. The Indians represented the snow to be up to the armpits at Lake Nooksack, and twenty-five feet in depth at the summit of the pass. McClellan's report of January 31 stated that he "reluctantly determined to return, being forced to the conclusion, that if the attempt to reach the pass were not really impracticable, it was at least inexpedient under all the circumstances in which I was placed." Stevens excused his withdrawal, writing to Jefferson Davis:

"It was unfortunate that . . . severe weather set in. . . . In consequence of this, and finding considerable snow . . . Captain McClellan . . . deemed it imprudent to go farther, and thence returned . . . we know from his examinations that the route is somewhat more difficult than has been previously reported. A railroad line can be brought down . . . but at the cost of an expensive tunnel." 124

Concerning A. T. Tinkham's observations of Snoqualmie Pass, and his finding but seven feet at the summit on the 21st of January, Captain McClellan said, "I do not think that any important conclusion should be based on the results of Mr. Tinkham's trip; they ought to be verified later in

122. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p. 163.
124. Note: In Stevens Reports, V.I, pt. 3, on page 198, a report from McClellan to Stevens is misdated Feb. 25, 1854. It should be Feb. 25, 1854. For proof, see Stevens letter to Davis, Jan. 31, 1854, 33 Cong. 1 sess. H.Jx. Soc. No. 129, p. 516. The expedition didn't start until May, 1853!
Governor Stevens had praised McClellan's earlier expeditions in the Cascade Range, reporting on October 29, 1853:

"To Captain McClellan, his officers and men, too much credit cannot be ascribed for their indefatigable exertions... They can point with just pride to the determination of two practicable passes... of the Cascade range, and to a most admirable development of the unknown geography of the region eastward to the Columbia." 126

(This completes the section of the thesis on McClellan's report).

Governor Stevens's own route from Colville took him to Snake River, and thence to Walla Walla, where on November 6 Lieutenant Donelson arrived, and Captain McClellan a day later. No special incidents occurred from there to Olympia, where the parties arrived on November 25, having come by way of the Dales, and thence to Vancouver.

Lander, who had been directed to proceed up the Yakima and over the Naches Pass to the Sound, had given up examination of the pass, saying it was not on the railroad line. 127

Governor Stevens, determined not to give up the idea of

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126. Note: On January 31, Tinkham had found the snow at the summit "running as high as seven feet"; McClellan reported twenty-five feet in an ordinary winter, and had turned back three miles from the summit. "A personal difference between Stevens and McClellan grew out of this matter of the snow in the Cascade Passes, Stevens preferring to indorse the view of Tinkham rather than that of McClellan, and friendly relations were severed until the two met in Washington during the war, when a reconciliation took place." Smalley, op.cit., 83-84. See, also, the next page of this thesis.
127. Stevens Report, XII, op.cit., p. 156.
crossing the Cascades to Puget Sound, had examined the country carefully all the way to Olympia, and

"... saw that not only was it entirely practicable for a railroad line to the sound, but that the work was light, and the material for construction of all kinds inexhaustible ... I resolved to get my line to the sound, and accordingly dispatched an express to the Walla-Walla, directing Mr. Tinkham on his arrival at the point to cross to Puget Sound by the Sno-qual-moo Pass, my object being two-fold: to get at some facts which would decisively settle the question of the depth of snow, ... as well as really to connect our work with the sound itself."128

Stevens did not wish to accept Captain McClellan's verdict of the impracticability of the pass, nor to relinquish further examination, as Lander had done.

On December 12, 1853, Tinkham received his instructions. He carried the line to Seattle, crossing the pass January 20, 1854. He carefully measured the depth of the snow and reported the average to be about six feet from Lake Kitchelus to the summit. On the west side of the Cascades,

"... the snow rapidly disappears; fourteen miles from the summit there was but eight inches of snow, and thence it gradually faded away as approach was made to the shores of the Sound; for only a few miles was the snow six feet deep; the whole breadth over twelve inches deep was somewhat less than sixty miles in extent;" he was satisfied "that it afforded fair facilities both in its ascent and descent for a wagon and railroad -- either with the use of eighty-feet grades for a limited number of miles and a short tunnel, or with a longer tunnel and easy grades."129

Tinkham was commended by Governor Stevens for his energy and

judgment, and in accomplishing what had not been done previ-
ously by McClellan. 130 On December 19, 1853, Stevens in-
formed Jefferson Davis that Puget Sound could be reached by
two practicable routes, "the line of the Snoqualmie Pass
with a single tunnel . . . and the line of the Columbia and
Cowlitz with somewhat easier grades." 131

Since the surveys of many of Governor Stevens's recon-
noitering parties are not to be included in this thesis, they
may be summed up briefly--the most important of the minor
ones. Lieutenant Richard Arnold, in 1854 and 1855, completed
the military road which he had surveyed under McClellan's
direction, across the mountains by the Naches Pass, from
Steilacoom to Walla Walla. In December, 1853, George Gibbs,
ethnologist, explored the route connecting Shoalwater Bay,
near the mouth of the Columbia, with the interior; Dr. George
Suckley reported on the navigability of the Bitterroot, Clark
Fork, and Columbia rivers; Mr. Tinkham's surveys have been
discussed at length, as have those of Captain McClellan;
Lieutenant Grover had come from Fort Benton to the lower
Columbia. By expresses, and by the trips of Grover and Mullan,
the route between the Bitterroot Valley and Olympia was kept
open.

James Doty, who had been stationed at Fort Benton, had

traveled up the Missouri River to the Great Falls, and from there along Sun River to Marias Pass, returning to Fort Benton; he then went to the Bitterroot Valley, by Lewis and Clark Pass, following Lander's trail, and thence to Fort Owen; from there he proceeded to Olympia by Governor Stevens's trail over Coeur d'Alene Pass.132

Doty believed that Tinkham's description and topography of Marias Pass showed that he had not passed through it, as we have seen to be the case. Doty's diary of May 25 shows that he found a fork in the Marias River which, he said,

"... flows through a fine valley, and no mountains are visible in the west. This is the proper route through the Marias Pass, as is evidenced by the fact that an old lodge trail passes up this branch ... My interpreter informs me that the Indian who came as Mr. Tinkham's guide from St. Mary's said, that after reaching Fort Benton they came through the pass at Cut Bank river, a branch of the Marias twenty-five miles north of this, and thus my conjectures that H.T. could never have seen the Marias Pass are confirmed."133

Doty and his guide had followed the old lodge trail. After about thirty miles of travel, they struck the main stream of the Marias. A few miles farther brought them to a summit from which they could observe the pass. Maps of the region were prepared, to aid further survey, since Doty had been ordered to return to Fort Benton. The survey was never completed, since Stevens had received orders from Jefferson Davis that no funds were available.134

132. Stevens Report, XII, on cit., pp. 185-6.
133. Stevens Report, V.1, pt.2, on cit., p.348.
134. Stevens Report, V.1, pt.1, on cit., p.72.
Early in July Doty visited John Mullan in the Bitterroot. On his return to Fort Benton, he wrote to Stevens from Crown Butte Creek, just beyond the Bearbourn River: "... Lieutenant Mullan’s wagon road from this point to the St, Mary’s Valley is practicable, in my opinion, and ... may be made an excellent road."135 On September 7, he left Fort Benton and traveled up the Teton River, over the prairie to Sun River, crossed it and went south to the Bearbourn. He reported that "The country from Sun river to this point ... is not favorable for a railroad ..." but advocated rather a line "nearly upon the route of the main train" because

"... first, it connects with the head of navigation ... the Missouri River, upon which materials for the construction of the road, and supplies, will necessarily be transported; secondly, ... adopting Lewis and Clark’s Pass of the main chain of the Rocky mountains, touching the head of navigation on the Missouri and passing as near as practicable to the northern bend of the Missouri, immediately below the mouth of the Bear or Marias river, this is the shortest route; and third, the ... difference in the cost of construction will more than counterbalance the extra distance to be travelled."136

Through Lewis and Clark Pass to St. Mary’s Valley, Doty followed the main train trail of 1853 part way. Going to Coeur d’Alene mission he took Mullan’s route, "following up the north branch of the St. Regis Borgia to its source and crossing a low divide to the Coeur d’Alene river"; a good route.137

136. Ibid., p. 567
137. Ibid., p. 560
Lieutenant Mullan had gone from St. Mary's by Lolo Pass, meeting Doty at Walla Walla on October 9. From there Doty went on to Olympia, and Mullan to the Dalles. Doty traveled up the Yakima, following McClellan's course to the junction of the Wenas and Naches rivers; then over the military road surveyed by Arnold, which he praised: "Wagons can now come over the road with but little difficulty"; he reached Olympia forty-seven days after leaving Fort Benton, not by way of Snoqualmie Pass as directed, but by the Emigrant road, because he could get no guide. His instruments were unserviceable, also.

**JOHN MULLAN'S REPORT**

This is a brief resume of Lieutenant Mullan's surveys of 1853-4, with a few estimates from his report of 1863 on a railroad to Puget Sound.

The country south of the Blackfoot River, and between the Rocky Mountains and Bitterroot River, was thoroughly explored by Lieutenant John Mullan in 1853 and 1854. In the latter part of October, 1853, he ascended the Bitterroot to its sources and crossed the ridge to the Wisdom and Jefferson rivers. He followed the same route on November 28 from Cantonment Stevens to Fort Hall, arriving at Ross's Hole on December 3, going from there to the Big Hole Moun-

139. Ibid.,
tain, crossed it by the Big Hole Pass to the Big Hole Prairie, where he found hot springs, and thence to the Jefferson Fork, reporting that a good road could be made from the Big Hole to Jefferson Fork. From the Jefferson Fork he traveled south to the Snake River Valley, to Lewis's Fork of the Columbia and to Fort Hall.

Mullan left Fort Hall December 15, followed De Smet's trail down the Snake River, crossed the Snake River divide and Deer Lodge Prairie to Hell Gate River, and followed the Big Blackfoot and Bitterroot rivers to Fort Owen, arriving January 10, 1854. He reported: "... both routes travelled are perfectly practicable for wagons, though the return route is by far the better of the two, though from sixty to eighty miles longer."141

In March, John Mullan traveled from Cantonment Stevens to Fort Benton, crossing the mountains with no difficulty, and reported on April 2 that "the ascent and descent are so exceedingly gradual that not only was it not necessary to lock the wheels of the wagon in descending, but it was driven with the animals trotting."142

On his return, his route was from Fort Benton to the Sun River on a level road; thence to the Dearborn River, a little south of Donelson's route of September, 1853; then

141. Ibid., p.349.
142. Ibid., p.351.
southwest to Small Prickly Pear Creek, across the mountains by Mullan Pass, following the northern branch of the Little Blackfoot River, and to the Bitterroot Valley via Hell Gate River, "making the travelling time, with my wagon, twelve days from Fort Benton to Fort Owen."143 He reported this route as practicable for a railroad, pointing out that

"...the route lying over a rolling prairie country, would for a railroad involve cuts not deeper at any point than one hundred feet... this region is not the Siberia of America that it has often been represented to be."

On December 12, 1854, Lieutenant submitted a report on the two passes he considered most vital to the railroad route--the Mullan Pass, in the Rocky Mountains, and a pass in the Bitterroot Mountains, which he does not name, but which must have been the Sohon Pass, since it is the only pass he crossed which he did not name in his reports. Of Mullan Pass, he said,

"...This pass connects with the falls of the Missouri by a high-rolling prairie country on the east, and directly with the valleys of the Little Blackfoot and Hell Gate rivers on the west... it is the best pass I have yet found in the mountains, with excellent approaches on either side. This pass extends to the Bitter Root and St. Mary's valleys, by the Hell Gate defile."145 The route then followed to the Bitterroot Pass is "by the Bitter Root valley to the mouth

144. Ibid.
145. Ibid., pp. 538-9.
of the St. Regis Borgia creek; thence up this creek to the
divide of the Bitter Root mountains; to the north gut of the
Coeur d'Alene lake; thence either by the Spokane river to the
Columbia, or . . . to Snake river . . . in the vicinity of
Fort Wallah-Wallah, or . . . to the mouth of the Yakima."

Concerning this latter pass, over the Bitterroot Mount-
tains, Stevens wrote to Jefferson Davis on January 3, 1853:

"Lieut. Mullan's route over the Coeur d'Alene mountains
differs from my own in following a trail over the divide
a few miles farther north. The pass is much lower, and,
in the judgment of Lieut. Mullan, perfectly practicable
for a railroad, . . . I have herewith the honor to en-
close a copy of Lieut. Mullan's report, and to recom-
mand it to the favorable action of the department. His
estimate I consider reliable, and his plan of operations
perfectly practicable."147

In April, 1854, Lieutenant Mullan had explored Flathead
River, going by way of the Coriecan defile, separating the
Jocko River from Hell Gate; thence to the Clark Fork of the
Columbia, and to Flathead Lake; thence north to the Kootenai
River. He returned by Stevens Pass to the Cantonment in June,
and reported that "... the character of the country offered
no further obstruction to the passage of wagon trains or for
a railroad route save the divide itself . . . At this point
a tunnel from a mile to a mile and a half would be inevitable."148
He also reported that "... the section already examined to
the east of the main chain of the Rocky mountains is by far

147. Ibid., p. 538.
more feasible, by far more practicable, than that to the west of the mountains along the Clark's fork."149

Leaving Cantonment Stevens for Fort Dalles on September 19, crossing Lolo Pass to the Salmon Fork of the Clearwater, Mullan went on to the Kooskooskia River, thence to the Clearwater, and the Nez Perces' country, and then to Walla Walla and the Dalles. He advocated abandoning Lolo Pass, since it was too rough, saying,

"... from the Bitter Root valley to the Nez Perces' Camp, I can arrive at but one conclusion— that the route is thoroughly and utterly impracticable for a railroad route. From the head of Lo-Lo's fork to the Clearwater the country is one immense bed of rugged, difficult, pine-clad mountains, that can never be converted to any purpose for the use of men ... Having examined three routes across the Bitter Root mountains, I pronounce the one by the Coeur d'Alene country to be the most feasible and practicable; the only obstruction from the Bitter Root valley to the Snake River being the divide of the Bitter Root mountains, which would involve a tunnel ... and the bridging of the Bitter Root river."150

On February 14, 1863, Lieutenant Mullan submitted the final report of his explorations in connection with the construction of a military road from Walla Walla to Fort Benton, comprising a period from March, 1858, to September, 1862. In a section of the report devoted to "Railroad Data", he referred to the report submitted by the "late ex-Governor I.J. Stevens", favoring a line via the Big Blackfoot and Coeur d'Alene valleys. Mullan objected to the route, because of

150. Ibid.,op.556-7.
the deep snows and the necessary tunnels.

As to the passes in the Rocky Mountains in the east, the Cadotte Pass, at the head of the Big Blackfoot, described as preferable to the Lewis and Clark Pass, would involve a two-mile tunnel, as would the Coeur d'Alene Pass; Mullan much preferred a route by the Lewis and Clark Pass, in his later report. His idea of a line from St. Paul to Puget Sound was that from Fort Benton

"... it should hug the Missouri closely by the bluffs to its north, and thence follow the general line of the river to Three Forks, thence follow up the valley of the Jefferson Fork and cross the main range of the Rocky Mountains to the Deer Lodge Valley, and thence follow the Hell Gate to the Hell Gate road; here cross over to the Clark's Fork, via the Jocko river, and follow down this fork on its right bank to the lower end of the Pend d'Oreille lake; thence to the Spokane, and thence to the mouth of the Snake river; from thence down the Columbia to the mouth of the Cowlitz, whence a branch line can easily be adjusted to Puget Sound."151

In his general estimate of the cost of a railroad to the Pacific, Lieutenant Mullan favored the route by Lewis and Clark Pass, either by following the plateau from Fort Benton to the Sun River, a distance of fifty-five miles, or by following the Missouri River to the mouth of Sun River, 68.5 miles. The following table shows why this preference is given: (next page)

### GENERAL RECAPITULATION

**Breckinridge to Seattle**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Cost, long tunnel and cascades</th>
<th>Cost, short tunnel and cascades</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plateau route, via Cadotte's Pass</td>
<td>1,543.6</td>
<td>394,915,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plateau route, via Lewis and Clark's Pass</td>
<td>1,568.475</td>
<td>93,328,649</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri and mouth of Sun river route, via Cadotte's Pass</td>
<td>1,551.1</td>
<td>96,560,360</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri and mouth of Sun river route, via Lewis and Clark Pass</td>
<td>1,575.975</td>
<td>94,973,649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Breckinridge to Vancouver**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance</th>
<th>Total cost.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Plateau route, via Cadotte's Pass</td>
<td>1,526.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plateau route, via Lewis and Clark's Pass</td>
<td>1,551.475</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri and mouth of Sun river route, via Cadotte's Pass</td>
<td>1,534.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missouri and mouth of Sun river route, via Lewis and Clark's Pass</td>
<td>1,558.975</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*In 1859 John Mullan started the construction of a military road from Walla Walla to Fort Benton. It was built across Mullan Pass, which he had surveyed in 1853-4, and which was then called Little Blackfoot Pass.*

CHAPTER V
GOVERNOR STEVENS GOES TO WASHINGTON, D.C.

Much of the Territory of Washington that awaited Governor Stevens's organization of civil government—along the Columbia, on the Cowlitz, at Nisqually—was unsettled and unexplored, save for a "handful of settlers on the lower Columbia and the shores of Puget Sound, and a few missionary and trading posts in the interior." 153 It contained thousands of Indians who regarded the approach of the whites with hostile eyes. By the Donation Acts, Congress had invited settlers to seize land, surveyed or unsurveyed, without waiting to extinguish the Indian titles, or define the lands guaranteed to the Hudson Bay Company, which still held its posts in the Territory and claimed extensive rights as guaranteed by treaty. Both the Indians and the company were growing indignant at the encroachments of the new settlers. The original Donation Act passed in 1850 "limited the beneficiaries of the donations to those settlers who should arrive in the Territory before the first of December, 1853"; it was amended "to grant to settlers who may arrive before December, 1855, the same quantity of land... given to those who may arrive there previous to that time." 154 The bill and the amendment passed, February 1, 1853.

Governor Stevens reached Olympia on November 25, 1853. Without delay, he issued his proclamation establishing election districts, appointing time for elections, and summoning the legislature for February 28, 1854. On that day he delivered his first message. Besides recommendations concerning a code of laws, organization of militia, and survey of public land, he urged extinguishing the Indian titles and claims of foreign companies to the land; he urged that geographical and geological surveys should continue, and that three railroads be constructed across the continent. No action was taken to organize a militia, which left the people almost defenseless when the Indian War broke out less than two years later.

On February 13, Governor Isaac Stevens received an order from Secretary Davis to disband the winter reconnoitring parties and bring his operations to a close. The letter read:

"The department very much regrets that, with a full knowledge of the extent of the means at the disposal of the department for the survey intrusted to you, you have so made your arrangements as to absorb all your funds so long before the completion of the work. I have no means of meeting any further demands for the expenses of your party. In the instructions from this department of April 8, you were directed to bring your operations to a close, and submit a general report before the first Monday in February next . . . you are directed to close your work in the manner therein prescribed." Congress had made an appropriation for "deficiencies for the railroad surveys between the Mississippi river and

155. H. Stevens, V.I, op.cit., p.419.
156. Stevens Report, V.I,pt.1, loc.cit., p.72
the Pacific Ocean, forty thousand dollars" but this was insufficient to cover the deficiency incurred by Governor Stevens. In his report to the War Department and the Commissioner of Indian Affairs on September 8, 1858, he had stated that

"... to continue the survey, and to carry out the instructions with regard to the work to be accomplished, it was absolutely necessary to incur a deficiency, believing that, if the facts as they existed were known to Congress and the department, their instructions would be for me to continue the exploration. ... it was indispensable that there should be winter posts established at Fort Benton, and in the Bitter Root valley." 158

He had asked for further appropriations, since the allotment of $40,000 would be exhausted by October, adding, "We are on the eve of complete success. My parties are now exploring the passes of the mountains. My intercourse with the Indians has been of the most satisfactory character." 159

Governor Stevens explained why he had exceeded the appropriation:

"The field was almost totally new, rendering it impossible to form an estimate. Much work of reconnaissance had to be done which had previously been done for all the other routes, before a direction could be given to the railroad examinations and estimates proper. unforeseen expenses ... to conciliate the Indian tribes."

He regretted that the surveys of Snoqualmie Pass must be discontinued, and that a winter post could not be estab-

157. Stevens Reports, XII, Sec. 10, Chap. 99 of Session laws of the 33d Cong. 2 sess. is quoted on the verso of the title page in this volume.
158. Stevens Report, vi, ibid., p. 105.
lished there to procure reliable information as to the depths of the snow. He wrote, "when the time comes for building the railroad over this northern route, the engineers will then make this examination..."161

On March 26, 1854, Governor Stevens left for Washington, D.C., to prevent the discontinuance of the surveys, to urge the Blackfoot council, and to urge extinguishing the Indian title in Washington Territory, Particularly did he press upon the War Department the "... survey of mountain passes found, by reconnaissance, to be the most practicable. -specially... the Snoqualmoo Pass, and of carrying the line down to the sound,"162

Stevens's time in Washington was mainly taken up by a disagreement with Jefferson Davis relative to the northern route, since the Secretary of War had been more interested in a southern route from the time that the five expeditions had been sent out. A brief resume of Davis's criticisms of the various routes, and particularly of the northern one, will serve to show why the War Department was so intolerant of Isaac Stevens's deficiency report, and why he was ordered to close operations.

In submitting reports of the surveys to Congress in 1855, Secretary Davis recommended the route near the thirty-second parallel, characterizing it as follows:

161. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p.139.
162. Ibid., p.183
"Not only is this the shortest and least costly route to the Pacific, but it is the shortest and cheapest route to San Francisco." Other points in favor of this route were the low elevation of the mountain passes, the favorable character of the surface for a roadbed, and the temperate climate.

The route near the forty-second parallel was quickly disposed of in his report: "In the absence of instrumental surveys affording data for the construction of profiles, no opinions can be formed as to the practicability of this route for a railroad."

Neither did the Secretary of War favor a route near the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth parallels, since "Neither in soil, climate, productions, population, nor in any other respect, does it possess advantages superior to other routes favoring the construction and working of a railroad."

In comparison with the other routes, that near the thirty-fifth parallel had greater advantages—passing through or near more numerous cultivable areas, having a more abundant natural supply of water, and a greater extent of forest growth; however, its "large sum of ascents and descents" was a distinct disadvantage.

Jefferson Davis tried to discredit Governor Stevens's

163. Davis's Report, in Stevens Reports, V. I., op.cit., p. 29.
164. Ibid., p. 33.
165. Ibid., p. 16
166. Ibid., p. 19.
167. Ibid., p. 21.
surveys of the forty-seventh and forty-ninth parallels in various ways. First, he raised Stevens's estimate of the construction costs by $34,000,000, stating, "Its cost has been estimated by Governor Stevens... at $117,181,000;... It has been thought safer to add one hundred per cent to the cost at eastern prices from the eastern slope of the Rocky mountains to the Pacific. This would swell the estimate to $156,071,000." In preparing a table of costs of construction, Davis noted this increase:

"These are the estimates of the office, those of Governor Stevens having been brought to the same standard of increased cost as the other routes, and his equipment reduced to that of the other routes. His estimates were $117,181,000 and $7,030,000." (the sum of $117,181,000 was the estimate for the route from St. Paul to Seattle; and the $7,030,000, from Vancouver to Seattle).

A second disparagement of Stevens's plans for a northern route was Davis's ignoring the explorations of A.H. Tinkham, on Snoqualmie Pass, and accepting instead Captain McClellan's views, that the pass "is barely practicable, and only at a great cost of time, labor, and money," and that the country "west of the Rocky mountains to the Pacific slopes may be likewise described as one of general sterility... The severely-cold character of the climate throughout the whole route, except the portion west of the Cascade mountains, is one of its unfavorable features." 16

168. Davis's Report, in Stevens Reports, V.1, op.cit., p.11.
169. Ibid., p.51, note to Table A.
170. Ibid., pp.10-11.
Describing Governor Stevens's explorations more at length, Jefferson Davis outlined the advantages and disadvantages, with the latter uppermost, as follows:

1. From St. Paul to the crossing of the Sun River, the cost of construction would be increased by ballasting in Milk River; provisions of water by reservoirs; planting trees for fuel; transporting ties and lumber.
2. Through the Rocky Mountains, seven passes were explored, but upon only Lewis and Clark and Cadotte passes was information sufficiently complete to make projects.
   a. Lewis and Clark Pass is probably practicable.
   b. Cadotte Pass requires a tunnel 4½ miles long below the summit of 1000 feet, and is in a cold climate 800 or 1000 miles distant from a thickly-inhabited district.
3. It would be impracticable to construct a road along the Blackfoot River to Hell Gate, and thence to the Bitterroot, requiring short curves, numerous bridges, and high embankments.
4. The shorter route is more favorable—following the Blackfoot to the Jocko, thence to the Flathead River, and then to Clark's Fork.
5. From the east base of the Rocky Mountains to the Spokane River, the difficulties of construction, and the cost, would be great.
6. Snoqualmie Pass, according to McClellan, is barely practicable, and requires a huge tunnel. Information possessed is sufficient to decide against this route.
7. Construction would be expensive along the Columbia River from the Dalles to Vancouver, because of floods.
8. "The principal favorable characteristics of this route are its low profile, low grades, and the low elevation of the mountain passes, and its connexion with the Missouri and Columbia rivers. The reported sum of the ascents and descents is the least of all the routes. . . . The principal unfavorable features are, in construction, the tunnel required on the Rocky mountains, and the difficulty and expense of construction from the eastern approach of the Rocky mountains to the Spokane River, and the expense of the construction along the Columbia river, from the Dalles to near Vancouver. These . . . are serious objections to the route, not only in the money, but the time, they will consume." 171

171. Davis's Report, op.cit., p.11.
By his visit to Washington, Governor Stevens did not win the approbation of the War Department in continuing the surveys for the northern route, but he determined, nevertheless, to continue his explorations, submitting final reports to the department in 1859. A reason given for continuing was, that he had lost all the meteorological observations of 1853. "This tended to throw doubt upon my whole work as regarded the altitude of the country, and I desired to vindicate my work of 1853 by my observations in 1855."

He did succeed, however, in obtaining the sanction of the government for holding the Blackfoot council, and on July 31, 1854, Congress appropriated $45,000 "for the expenses of negotiating treaties with, and making presents of goods and provisions to, the Indian tribes in the territory of Washington"; $80,000 was appropriated "for the expenses of holding a council with, and making presents of goods and provisions to, the Blackfeet, Gros Ventres, and other wild tribes of Indians, immediately within or adjacent to the eastern boundary of Washington Territory." Congress also appropriated $50,000 for a wagon road to be constructed from Fort Benton to Walla Walla.

In his second message to the legislature of Washington Territory, delivered December 5, 1854, Governor Stevens in-

voked their support in behalf of the Indians, saying, "I throw myself unreservedly upon the people of the Territory, not doubting that they will extend to me a hearty and generous support in my efforts to arrange on a permanent basis the future of the Indians of this Territory." 175

On his return to the Territory, he paid special attention to Lieutenant Bullan's route to Coeur d'Alene, and reported, "... the valley of the St. Regis de Borgia, in its upper portions, was more narrow and less practicable than that of the Coeur d'Alene. I found, however, that in every portion of this valley there was room enough to lay a wagon road or a railroad..." and "in crossing of the St. Regis de Borgia it would not be necessary in any case to resort to bridges requiring piers." 177 He was satisfied that a railroad line could be "laid down the Bitter Root to the mouth of the St. Regis de Borgia." 178

In the summer of 1855, Major Owen made a trip from Fort Owen to the Dalles and back. He noted in his journal of July 17,. "...I have been in the road Governor Stevens passed a Short Time ago & found the road Somewhat benefited by the cutting and removing of much timber the trail he followed kept around the base of the Mountain but I preferred crossing the Mountain..." 179

175. H. Stevens, V. I., op. cit., p. 446.
177. Ibid., p. 204.
178. Ibid., p. 209.
CHAPTER VI
GOVERNOR STEVENS'S INDIAN POLICY

Part I. Indian Treaties

To Isaac Stevens's office of governor in 1853 was added that of Superintendent of Indian Affairs. Constant effort was made by Stevens and by all of his party on the expedition of 1853-4 to establish friendly relations with Indian tribes along their route, all of which was to lay the foundations for the treaties drawn up in 1855, which would make construction of a railroad peaceful.

Stevens expressed the main part of his policy briefly, in a letter to Commissioner Manypenny, as follows:

"The great end to be looked to is the gradual civiliza­tion of the Indians, and their ultimate incorporation with the people of the Territory . . . . 
"It is obviously necessary that a few reservations of good lands should be set apart as permanent abodes for the tribes . . . ."

During the whole course of the 1853 and 1854 explora­tions, the Indians were friendly. They were met in councils throughout the route, and presents were given to them, with kind words from the Great Father. Governor Stevens had been authorized by George W. Manypenny, Commissioner of Indian Affairs, to "negotiate treaties of peace and friendship with any of the tribes you may chance to meet under such circum-

stances" (while surveying) "but you will be careful to make no promises of presents or provisions to them beyond what it may be in your power to fulfill at the time of such negotiations"; Stevens was to make all his purchases from American citizens, when practicable, and "embrace every opportunity to impress on the Indians that it is the American government, and not the British, that confers upon them these benefits." 181 This policy was carried out.

Stevens also had authority to hold councils with the Indian tribes, and to make treaties "with such as were not included within the limits of any existing superintendency. This applied especially to the Blackfeet, who were the only Indians on the route not included either within the northern or western superintendency." 182

As was mentioned in an earlier chapter, Governor Stevens had secured the services of Indian Agent Culbertson at St. Louis. Mr. Culbertson assured him that they should have no difficulty in securing the confidence of the Blackfeet Indians.

From near Fort Union, Stevens wrote to Manypenny that

"Mr. Culbertson assures me that they will receive us with every hospitality. As special agent, he has sent out express, and every preparation is made to secure a full council of that tribe at Fort Benton, on my arrival there about the first of September." 183

182. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p. 34.
On August 26 and September 10, Governor Stevens had met and talked with the Gros Ventres and Assiniboines, respectively, and had been hospitably received. Lieutenant Saxton had reported that the Indian tribes from the Columbia River to Fort Benton were friendly, and that he found a prevailing dread of the Blackfeet, which had led to the abandonment of the St. Mary's village. Saxton had met Major Owen at the Spokane River. Owen had abandoned his post in the Bitterroot from fear of the Blackfeet, but Saxton's arrival enabled him to return and reestablish it.

In accordance with his instructions to "negotiate treaties of peace and friendship", Governor Stevens held a conference with the Blackfeet, Piegans, and Bloods at Fort Benton on September 21, 1853. They were very friendly, and agreed to meet, in council, the Flatheads, Gros Ventres, Nez Perces, and other tribes with whom they had difficulties on the buffalo plains; they agreed to send no more war parties into the Flathead country before the council was held. On September 30 and October 1, Governor Stevens conferred with the Flatheads, who agreed to peace, and to the proposed council. They were told that Stevens would send word to Lieutenant Mullan,

186. Ibid., p. 116.
"who would inform them when to go to Fort Benton. They replied that they were satisfied." 187

On October 12, en route to Coeur d'Alene Lake, Governor Stevens talked with some Nez Percees and Coeur d'Alenes, who also agreed to attend the proposed council. 188

Alexander Culbertson had been dispatched to Washington, D.C., in September, 1853, to urge upon Congress and the War Department the making of an appropriation in the deficiency bill to defray the expenses of a council to be held at Fort Benton the next year. 189 As a result, when Governor Stevens was ready to return to the Territory, after his visit to Washington City, $80,000, as previously stated, had been allotted for bringing the Indians to the council.

In August, 1854, he received instructions to enter at once upon negotiations, his principal aim to be the

"...extinguishment of Indian claims"; the concentration of tribes on reservations located "so as not to interfere with the settlement of the Territories respectively" (Oregon and Washington); a few simple stipulations to be fulfilled; the provision of annuities to be applied for, for "the establishment of farms, the purchase of implements of agriculture, or any other objects of benefit to the Indians." 190

Governor Stevens's treaty-making force consisted of himself; James Doty, secretary; George Gibbs, surveyor; H. A. Goldsborough, commissary; B. F. Shaw, interpreter; Colonel

189. Stevens to Culbertson, September 21, 1853, 33d Cong. 1 sess. op. cit., p. 465.
M. T. Simmons, agent.\textsuperscript{191}

The first of the Indian treaties concluded in the Territory of Washington by Governor Stevens were those with the tribes of Indians occupying lands around the head of Puget Sound and adjacent inlets -- the Nisqually, Puyallup, Steilacoom, and others. In six weeks he had met and "treated with" over five thousand Indians, and concluded four separate treaties by which the Indian title to the whole Puget Sound basin was extinguished: -- the treaty at Medicine Creek, December 26, 1854; at Point Elliott, January 22, 1855; at Point no Point, January 26; and at Neha Bay, with the Makah tribe near Cape Flattery, on January 31. By these treaties he established nine reservations, provided annuities, abolished slavery, excluded liquor, and extended government protection.\textsuperscript{192}

A series of councils was next held with the Walla Walla, Flathead, and Blackfeet Indians, during the summer and autumn of 1855. Rather than to present a detailed account of these councils, which resembles each other closely, let it suffice to sketch the interesting features connected with each.

Governor Stevens met first with the Indians of the Upper Columbia. The council was formally opened on May 29, 1855, at Camp Stevens, in the Walla Walla Valley, but the treaties were

\textsuperscript{191} H. Stevens, V.I., \textit{op.cit.}, p.452.
not concluded until the 9th and 11th of June, with Stevens as commissioner for the Territory of Washington, and Joel Palmer acting as commissioner for the Oregon Territory.

Stevens's journal describes this as a council such as "had never been equaled by any council held with the Indian tribes of the United States", its great importance in the necessity "of opening this land by treaty to occupation by the whites, that bloodshed and the enormous expense of Indian wars might be avoided." During the council, the governor invited the Indians to speak freely, but they were slow to respond. Yellow Serpent, chief of the Walla Wallas, bitterly distrusted the whites. The Cayuses, under Kamiakan, conspired with the Walla Wallas and Yakimas to massacre the whites at the council. The conspiracy was discovered by Lawyer, leader of the Nez Perces, and his tribe offered protection to Governor Stevens.

Three treaties were concluded at this Walla Walla council, -- the Walla Walla Treaty, on June 9, with the Walla Wallas, Umatillas, and Cayuses; the Yakima Treaty the same day, and the Nez Perce Treaty of June 11. All the treaties were essentially the same except for reservations. The first reservation was on the Umatilla River; the Yakima reservation on the Yakima River, and the Nez Perces' on the Clearwater Valley.

Let us examine the Walla Walla Treaty: Article I provided

195. Ibid., p.111.
for the usual land session and for a reservation. Article II provided that $100,000 be expended for the "use and benefit of the confederated bands herein named", while Article III provided for the expenditure of $250,000 for buildings and equipment. In Article IV the United States agreed to erect mills, a hospital, and schools, a blacksmith shop, and a carpenter shop. Article V provided dwelling houses for the head chiefs, and Article VI provided for the survey of the reservation and the granting of allotments. Article VII stated: "The annuities of the Indians shall not be taken to pay the debts of individuals." Articles 8, 9, 10, and 11 provided, respectively, that the Indians be friendly with United States citizens, and with other Indian tribes; that liquor traffic be prohibited; that "highways and railroads shall have the right of way through the reservation"; and that the treaty became effective when ratified.

After the treaties were signed, Governor Stevens asked each tribe to send delegations to the Blackfoot council, and then proceeded to the Flathead country, where a treaty was

197. Ibid.
198. Ibid., p. 696.
199. Ibid., p. 697.
200. Ibid.: Note: Major John Owen was at Walla Walla at the time of the council. His diary of June 4 tells us that he "Laid over and visited the Council Ground Saw Gov. Stevens Mr. Doty & other Distinguished Gents of the Commission." (Owen, op. cit., p. 103.)
drawn up similar to those at Walla Walla. Here the Flathead, Pend d'Oreille, andootenai Indians were present. The council met from July 2 to 15 at Council Grove, nine miles west of the present city of Missoula, and a treaty was negotiated with Victor, chief of the Flatheads. The government wanted the three tribes to unite on one reservation, either in the upper Bitterroot Valley, or in the Jocko region, which was Pend d'Oreille territory. Neither tribe wanted to leave its own country. Victor wanted to live in the Bitterroot Valley, but neither of the other two chiefs, Alexander and Michel, could agree. The treaty as finally drawn up, "excluded from white settlement a considerable part of the Bitterroot Valley, and provided, in the understanding of the Flatheads, that they should have a permanent home there", 201 with a reservation extending from the source of the Jocko River to Flathead Lake.202

The treaty at Council Grove, in the words of Reen Arthur L. Stone, gave the white man "his first strong foothold upon this region which has become the garden spot of the west, and in this fact lies the great importance of the Stevens treaty." 203

The last of the councils held by Governor Stevens, to open the Indian country to the settlement of the white man, was the Blackfoot Council. From the scene of the Flathead

council, he had gone to Fort Benton by way of the Hell Gate and Big Blackfoot rivers, over Lewis and Clark Pass, and along the Bearborn, Sun, and Teton rivers. Stevens "spent the whole day . . . examining the approaches to the summit pass, and those to Cadotte's Pass, ten miles farther south, and determining the altitudes and grades, and reached camp long after dark", 204 on July 26.

The council ground was near the mouth of the Judith River, with commissioners Isaac Stevens and Alfred Cummings, Superintendent of Indian Affairs for Nebraska Territory, presiding. Joel Walker was also appointed, but decided to stay in Oregon. Major Owen attended the council, and "apparently acted unofficially for the Flathead tribe." 205 The Indians began arriving in August,—Piegans, Bloods, Blackfeet, Gros Ventres, Flatheads, Upper Pend d'Oreilles, Kootenais, and Nez Perces—but due to a delay in the arrival of the cargo of treaty goods and supplies, the council was not opened until October 16. Commissioner Cummings was so late getting up the river that his steamer could get only as far as Fort Union. As Mr. Stone so graphically described it, the cargo was unloaded there, and "towed up the stream by a force of men walking along the bank." 206

The principal question to be settled by this treaty was where the Flatheads and Pend d'Oreille should hunt buffalo,

204. H. Stevens, V.II, op. cit., p. 93.
without causing war with the Blackfoot Indians. Buffalo meat was the chief diet of the Indian. The reservation policy, and the system of issuing white men's food to the Indians meant "the abrupt upheaval of nation-old habits—with sickness and starvation in their wake. Knowing this, Stevens made provision in the treaty for a common hunting ground east of the Rockies, where the buffalo were plentiful."207

The problem to be settled by the negotiations was stated more generally by George sanypenny: "... the establishment of well defined and permanent relations of unity between the Indian tribes of that region and the United States, and a general pacification of the Indians among themselves."208

Articles I and II of the Blackfoot Treaty provided for the maintenance of peace between the signatory tribes and the United States, and with other tribes. In Article III the Blackfoot territory from the Bell Gate Pass east to the Assiniboine Shell, "thence to the mouth of Twenty-five Yard Creek, thence up the Yellowstone river to its northern source, and thence along the main range of the Rocky Mountains, in a northerly direction, to the point of beginning, shall be a common hunting-ground for ninety-nine years." 209 The Blackfoot country was defined in Article IV:

from the Hell Gate or Medicine Rock Passes, in an easterly direction, to the nearest source of the Muscle Shell River, thence down said river to its mouth, thence down the channel of the Missouri River to the mouth of Milk River, thence due north to the forty-ninth parallel, thence due west on said parallel to the main range of the Rocky Mountains, and thence southerly along said range to the place of beginning . . . ."210

The rest of the treaty resembled the other Indian treaties except for the amount of expenditures. The United States agreed to expend for the Piegan, Blood, Blackfoot, and Gros Ventre Indians $20,000 annually for ten years in "useful goods and provisions", and $15,000 a year for ten years for instructing them in "agricultural and mechanical pursuits, and in educating their children."211

Governor Stevens wrote: "We got through with the Blackfoot treaty, everything having succeeded to our entire satisfaction."212 That the Blackfoot council, so long anticipated, had good results, is shown by the 1856 report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs, stating that

"The Blackfeet, Flatheads, Nez Perces, and the other tribes parties to the treaty of the Judith . . . have, since the negotiation of that treaty in October, 1855, remained at peace, and refused all participation in the hostilities of the Oregon and Washington Territories. The common hunting-ground provided by the treaty has produced beneficial results, and the conflicts of war and rapine have given place among them to the exchange of horses, peltry, and other articles of barbarous commerce."213

211. Ibid., p. 738.
212. Stevens Report, XII, op. cit., p. 222.
With the exception of the Treaty of Medicine Creek, these treaties were all negotiated in 1855, but only two were ratified promptly—that of Medicine Creek in 1855, and the Blackfoot treaty in 1856. The others were not ratified until March, 1859. The delay retarded the payment of annuities and the establishment of reservations, and made the Indians restless. Governor Stevens urged the confirming of the treaties, writing to Commissioner Manypenny on August 31, 1856, "If any explanations are required by the department, I will respectfully ask that I be early advised of them, in order that I may report upon the matter in season."214 Major Owen, as Sub-Agent of the Cayuse District, Washington Territory, had written on August 16:

"I have assured them . . . That the treaties Made by Gov. Stevens have at last been confirmed & Next Year they May look for their Annuities & Everything promised them in the treaty."215

The annuities arrived in July, 1860.216

Part II. The Indian Wars

The Indian wars, the Rogue River War in Oregon, and Yakima War in Washington, were regarded as one war, since the Indians in both sections were in communication with each other. The wars began while Governor Stevens was at the Blackfoot council, and C. H. Mason was acting governor of Washington.

216. Ibid., p.217.
Territory. On August 26, 1855, a Rogue River Indian shot and wounded James Buford, near the mouth of Rogue River, in the Fort Orford district. The Indian was taken prisoner, but was shot by a party consisting of Buford, his partner, and a trader named O'Brian.217

About the middle of September the Yakimas killed eight men at the Pend d'Oreille mines, and at the direction of Kamiakan, Cayuse chief, killed A. J. Bolon, special agent for the Yakimas.218 Acting governor Mason requisitioned forts Steilacoom and Vancouver for troops.

War continued in Oregon, and Governor George L. Curry called out mounted volunteers, but neither the Washington nor Oregon troops were successful in subduing the tribes.

Governor Stevens left Fort Benton on October 28; the next day, at his camp on the Yakon River, he received word from his express rider, W. H. Pearson, that the Yakimas were at war. Accompanied by Doty, and a Nez Perce delegation from the Blackfoot council, Stevens hastened by way of the Coeur d'Alene Pass. He had had reports from the Indians that this pass was blocked up with snow, and he felt that they would not expect him on that route. He surprised the Coeur d'Alenes, Spokanes, and Colvilles, held a council with them from December 3 to December 5, and "... they pledged themselves to protect

217. Hubert Howe (Reprint, History of Oregon, 1846 to 1888), 2 Vols.
218. Hoopes, op. cit., p. 117.
all white men in their country, and to take no part in the war."219 A similar council was held on December 12 with the Nez Perce, during the course of which reports arrived of the killing of the chief of the Walla Walla, Piopioxomox, by the whites.220.

Governor Stevens arrived at Olympia on January 19, 1856. On the day following his arrival, he delivered a special message to the Washington legislature, outlining the situation, and his policy:

"The war has been plotting for two or three years... a war not having its origin in these treaties, nor in the bad conduct of the whites. It originated in the native intelligence of restless Indians, who, foreseeing destiny against them,—that the white man was moving upon them,—determined that it must be met and resisted by arms... It would be expedient to raise a force of three hundred men from the Sound to push into the Indian country, build a depot, and vigorously operate against the Indians in this quarter, and nearly the same force should be raised on the Columbia River to prosecute the war east of the Cascades mountains... The Indians must be struck now."221

Governor Stevens wished to raise troops independently of the United States service of volunteers, and advocated that "...the spirit of prosecuting this war be to accomplish a lasting peace,—not to make treaties, but to punish their violation... The guilty ones should suffer, and the remainder be placed on reservations under the eye of the

219. Isaac Stevens, letter to Manypenny, December 22, 1855, found in Hoopes, op.cit., p. 123.
220. Hoopes, ibid., p. 122.
221. H. Stevens, V.II, op.cit., p.165.
the military. . ." 222 He immediately took the following steps:

1. Issued a proclamation on January 22, 1856, to raise a thousand volunteers for six months.
2. Called upon settlers to build blockhouses, and cultivate their soil.
3. Moved all Indians to reservations on the western side of Puget Sound.
4. Sent Secretary Mason to Washington, D.C., for funds for non-hostile Indians, and to enlighten Congress as to the war situation.
5. Used friendly Indians to scout against the hostiles.
6. Appealed to Portland, San Francisco, and Victoria for arms and ammunition.
7. Issued territorial scrip.
8. Resorted to impressment or seizure of supplies where necessary.
9. Enforced discipline among the troops. 223

Expresses were organized to communicate weekly with all the reservations, and bands of Indian auxiliaries were organized. Indian prisoners were treated with mercy. "None were killed except leaders and murderers. I point to the two hundred brought in from back of Seattle by the volunteers, now happy on a reservation, as proof of the humanity of our people." 224 Stevens hoped, too, to save the Nez Perces and the Spokanes, and keep them out of the war by the presence of troops to protect them from the hostile Indians.

General John E. Wool, Commander of the United States Army Division of the Pacific, opposed Governor Stevens's policy, because Stevens represented civil rather than military au-

223. Ibid., pp.165-6.
authority; Wool censured the territorial officers and volunteers, and raised a barrier between the regular and volunteer officers, leaving the conduct of the war largely in the hands of the latter. An apt description of General Wool is given by George W. Fuller, in his *History of the Pacific Northwest:*

"The government was most unfortunate in its selection of this opinionated officer for a post where knowledge of the Indians, prescience of trouble and dispatch in forestalling it were needed at that very hour... He believed that the Indians would behave better if left alone." 235

General Wool had denounced and ridiculed Stevens’s idea of a winter campaign, and had even disbanded two companies of Washington volunteers at Vancouver after they had been mustered into United States service, leaving for San Francisco immediately afterward to avoid communicating with Stevens. B.F. Shaw, who had taken Bolon's place, was directed by Mason to raise troops to be sent to escort Governor Stevens. General Wool disbanded the company.

In a letter to Wool, Governor Stevens stated his plan of interposing troops between the hostile and friendly Indians, volunteers and regulars cooperating to drive the hostiles across the Columbia into the Yakima country and "put the Indians to their last battle", but Wool retorted that he could end the war shortly without exterminating the Indians, and without

help from the volunteers. In the last paragraph of his letter Stevens had written,

"I have determined to submit to the department the course taken by the military authorities in disbanding the troops raised in the Territory of Washington for my relief. No effort was made to send me assistance. The regular troops were all withdrawn into garrison, and I was left to make my way the best I could, through tribes known to be hostile."227

In a caustic letter to Wool of March 20, 1856, he warned him that if Wool made efforts

"... to induce either the authorities to withdraw their troops, to abandon their plan of campaign ... I, as governor of Washington, will cast upon you the whole responsibility of any difficulties which may arise in consequence, and ... I will vindicate the justice of my course, and maintain my reputation as a faithful public servant."228

General Wool charged Stevens with being the cause of the war, sent criticisms of him to Washington, D.C., and prevented the ratification of the Indian treaties. Edmond S. Meany's opinion was that "Since Stevens had been appointed governor by the Democratic President, Franklin Pierce, and was elected delegate to Congress by the Democratic party, and since the Republican House, under Speaker Banks, had no part in ratifying treaties, it is clear that the obstacles in the way of the 1855 treaties were not associated with party politics. These obstacles were raised by General Wool and his personal partisans."229

228. Ibid., p.181.
229. Meany, op.cit., p.116. Note: Owen's Journal of June 27, 1856, comments: "I received some papers from below in one of which I find rather a spicy communication(next page)---
The Indian war was ended by the complete surrender or flight of the hostiles, after a campaign planned by Stevens, from the Snohomish to the Cowlitz, of searching out the hiding-places of the Indians in the mountain passes. On September 11, 1856, a council was called of the chiefs of the Nez Percés, Cayuses, Umatilles, John Days, and Des Chutes. They asked for their lands to be returned. The governor advised the Nez Percés to stand by their treaty, and told the hostiles they must "throw aside their guns and submit to the justice and mercy of the government." 230 To Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey, in command at Steilacoom, he wrote, "\' The Indians have been or will be indicted by the grand jury of the several counties. As you have proclaimed that hostilities have ceased, they are in your military possession'; 231 he thereby had the murderers brought to justice by the regular officers!

The Indians knew that the Indian department and the "military" did not cooperate, which made the bringing about of peace the more difficult. The Nez Percés remained loyal to the whites after the council, but the hostiles were incited to war a year later by Wool's officers—principally Colonel Wright and Colonel L.J. Steptoe.

In defense of the charge made against him by General (from page 78)—between Gov. Stevens & Genl. Wool in which I think his excellency rather slurs him." (in Owen, op.cit., p.134).

231. Ibid., p.228.
Wool, that he had caused the war, Governor Stevens had written to Commissioner Hanypenny,

"I did conciliate the Coeur d'Alenes, the Spokanes, the Colvilles -- all highly excited. I organized the Nez Perces, I sought ... the confidence of these tribes. ... I have given and now give my positive testimony, that the Walla-Wallas, the Cayuses, the Umatillas were bent on war; that the advance of the Oregon volunteers did not precipitate them into war, and that it and it alone opened a safe road for my party."282

In a message to the Washington Territory legislature in December, 1856, he rendered a "clear and graphic account" of his prosecution of the war, and concluded with,"'It is for you to judge how I have done my part, and for the Almighty Ruler to allot each man his desert."283

The Indian department at Washington, D.C., sustained Governor Stevens234 and the Washington Territory legislature sustained him in his proclamation of martial law, on April 3, 1856 (revoked on May 24), declaring, "'... we believe Governor Isaac I. Stevens to have been actuated by motives of purest patriotism."235

In response to a petition from the legislature of Oregon, General Wool was recalled in the spring of 1857. On April 7, 1856, the legislature of the Territory of Washington submitted resolutions "relative to the false reports made by General Wool concerning the late Indian war in Washington Territory".

declaring

"...That while we most unqualifiedly condemn the course pursued by General Wool and Colonel Wright in the late Indian war, we respect and admire the gallant conduct of the junior officers of the regular army engaged therein..."

"...That the people of this Territory are mainly indebted to... the volunteer organization of Washington Territory..."

"...That it is with pleasure we acknowledge the zeal and efficiency displayed by Governor Stevens in his management of the war..."

"...That while condemning... the imbecile and miserable counsels of General Wool... we pity the man, and allow his foul slanders to fall with contempt at our feet..."
CHAPTER VII
ISAAC I. STEVENS BECOMES DELEGATE

On March 3, 1857, the Oregon and Washington Indian superintendencies were abolished, and a joint superintendency was created, with James W. Nesmith as the new superintendent; Governor Stevens resigned as superintendent in June. He was elected delegate to Congress from Washington Territory on July 13, 1857, and on August 11, resigned as governor, and hastened to Washington, D.C.237

He saw that funds for the Washington Territory liabilities were sent to James Nesmith, the new Superintendent of Indian Affairs; secured the recommendations of President Buchanan and Secretary Thompson to the Senate in favor of confirming the Indian treaties; induced the Secretary of War to authorize the commencement of the Fort Benton-Walla Walla road, and to place Lieutenant Mullan in charge of it.238

On May 25, 1858, Delegate Stevens delivered a speech upon the Pacific railroad, declaring:

"I would not carve our way to the Pacific by a single route. It would not satisfy the country. It is not for its peace and harmony politically. It could not do the

Note: There is some discrepancy in Owen Journals, op. cit., since both Bancroft, V. III, op. cit., p. 205, and Meany, op. cit., p. 211, verify these dates given by Hazard Stevens, while Owen writes, July 2, 1857, "Stevens has been succeeded as Governor by Col. Anderson late delegate... The cause of Gov. Stevens removal not known he may have resigned." (p. 169) On July 10 he writes, "report is Gov. Stevens has been elected Delegate to Congress from Washington Territory." (p. 171)
business of the country. It is not up to the exigencies of the occasion, but carve your way to the western ocean with at least three roads.

"Considering, therefore, the greater shortness of the Northern route, and its nearer connections with both Asia and Europe, it must become the great route of freight and passengers from Asia to Europe, and even of freight from Asia to the whole valley of the Mississippi."

Isaac Stevens served as delegate until 1861. He addressed a letter from Washington City on May 20, 1860, to the railroad convention at Vancouver, pointing out the adaptability of the country for settlement, in that

"'...from Breckinridge... to the Divide of the Rocky Mountains, the route passes through a strictly cultivable country... except for one hundred fifty miles... From near the Divide of the Rocky mountains the country is capable of continuous settlement to within twenty miles of the Divide of the Bitterroot mountains. The eastern half of the Great Plain of the Columbia... consists of rich river valleys and fertile tablelands... Between the Columbia and the Cascade mountains, the line... passes through a fine grass country and through an excellent cultivable country."

In this letter Stevens gave a table of distances from the principal cities of the East to Seattle and to Benicia, on San Francisco Bay. These figures were later employed in enlisting the support of Congress for the Northern Pacific enterprise.

239. H. Stevens, V. II. op. cit., p.279.
241. Ibid., p.87.
CHAPTER VIII

SUMMARY

With the passing of the Kansas-Nebraska bill, the California gold rush, and the close of the Mexican War, all from 1848 to 1854, new territorial problems arose, and the lines of the American frontier shifted until it became necessary to abolish the Indian frontier, in order to make the West safe for the emigrant, and to give him land on which to settle.

The questions which demanded settlement were the relinquishing of Indian titles to the Western lands, the necessity for territorial division and government, and the finding of a route, or routes, which should connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, facilitate commerce, and allow for protection of the new western territories. Appropriations must be made by Congress, and surveys must be made, in conjunction with which policy, Indian tribes must be met and treated with, to clear title to the land on which transcontinental roads were to be built.

Discussions of these issues occupied Congress from 1849 to 1853, in which year Major Isaac I. Stevens became governor of Washington Territory, newly created, and in which year Congress authorized a series of five surveys to the Pacific Ocean. By his surveys Governor Stevens showed that there was an easy route from St. Paul to the Rocky Mountains, with no obstacle other than tunnels; that the Bitterroot Range could be crossed, though it offered more opposition than the main
ridge of the Rockies; that there were several practicable passes in the Cascade Range; and that his interest in this route did not cease with his surveys, but continued when he became delegate to Congress, and was to lead to great activity on the part of the newly organized Northern Pacific Company.

By his surveys, Governor Stevens disproved many accepted discrepancies of early maps, such as Nicollet's. He faced many discouragements, and overcame them—the Snoqualmie Pass surveys, and those of Marias Pass; delays because of weak, hungry animals, and unserviceable instruments; lack of capital and the support of the War Department; the undoing of much of his peaceful work with the Indians, by General Wool; the loss of his meteorological records of 1853. However, he worked successfully for two years under government auspices, and, when told to close operations of his surveys, continued the work for three years on his own initiative, using the Indian agents and troops under his command, and in 1859, submitting reports of his explorations of 1853, '54, and '55.

In 1854 and 1855 he completed the Indian diplomacy of a series of treaties for which he had laid the foundations in 1853 and 1854. He regarded his Indian treaties as a great service to the country, and as delegate for the Washington Territory, he fought for their ratification in 1859. He extinguished the Indian title to the western domain—completing the work begun by George W. M'Anypenny — protecting the interests of the Indians, while at the same time opening the
country for settlement by the whites.

In the Indian war he made every effort to protect the friendly Indians, and to keep them faithful to their treaties, despite the opposition of General Wool.

Much of Governor Stevens's success in his explorations and surveys lay in his careful estimates of distance and expense, his foresight in sending out reconnoitring parties, his careful and courteous instructions to each party, the well-timed meetings, and the loyalty he inspired in his men. He occasionally congratulated himself, but his report and the reports of his men were thorough. He gave credit and praise where it was due— even to General Wool, and to McClellan and Lander, whose mistakes he realized. He recognized the excellent management and sound judgment of Lieutenant Mullan.

A single commander, aided by these men and others as capable, Isaac Stevens had explored from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean, practicable routes for three transcontinental railroads. He had determined the navigability of three rivers which would transport supplies for the building of those railroads. He had submitted, as well, botanical and meteorological reports, with pictures and maps of the region. He had opened the West to settlement, placing the Indians on reservations, thereby destroying the Indian frontier. He had made one of the first Pacific railway reports. All this had been accomplished in the short period from 1853 to 1859, in which year the Indian treaties of 1855 were rat-
ified, and the reports of Governor Stevens were submitted to
the War Department.

When Isaac Stevens died, in the Civil War, Major John
Owen wrote in his journal this epitaph:

"What a death he died. What a loss have we on this
Coast particularly in this Territory have sustained.
In fact it is irreparable. We have no man possessing
the same energy & ability to serve our growing wants.
The development of this Mountain Section he had warmly
at heart. He possessed by Nature a mind that grasped
the entire field. He had many many warm friends &
also enemies. To the latter I will say 'De mortuis
Nil nisi bonum'. . . ."242

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(Volume I contains reports and letters of Jefferson Davis, Captain A.A. Humphreys, and Isaac Stevens. Volume XII, Br. I, is a supplement to volume I. It contains the narrative of Governor Stevens's explorations, touching lightly on Indian councils. It is illustrated by J. E. Stanley, and consists of narrative, geography, memoir, meteorology reports, and estimates. It is scholarly, readable, and complete.)
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