

Oregon Territory and Vancouver Island



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What do you know about the founding of British Columbia and Vancouver Island?



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The Oregon Territory

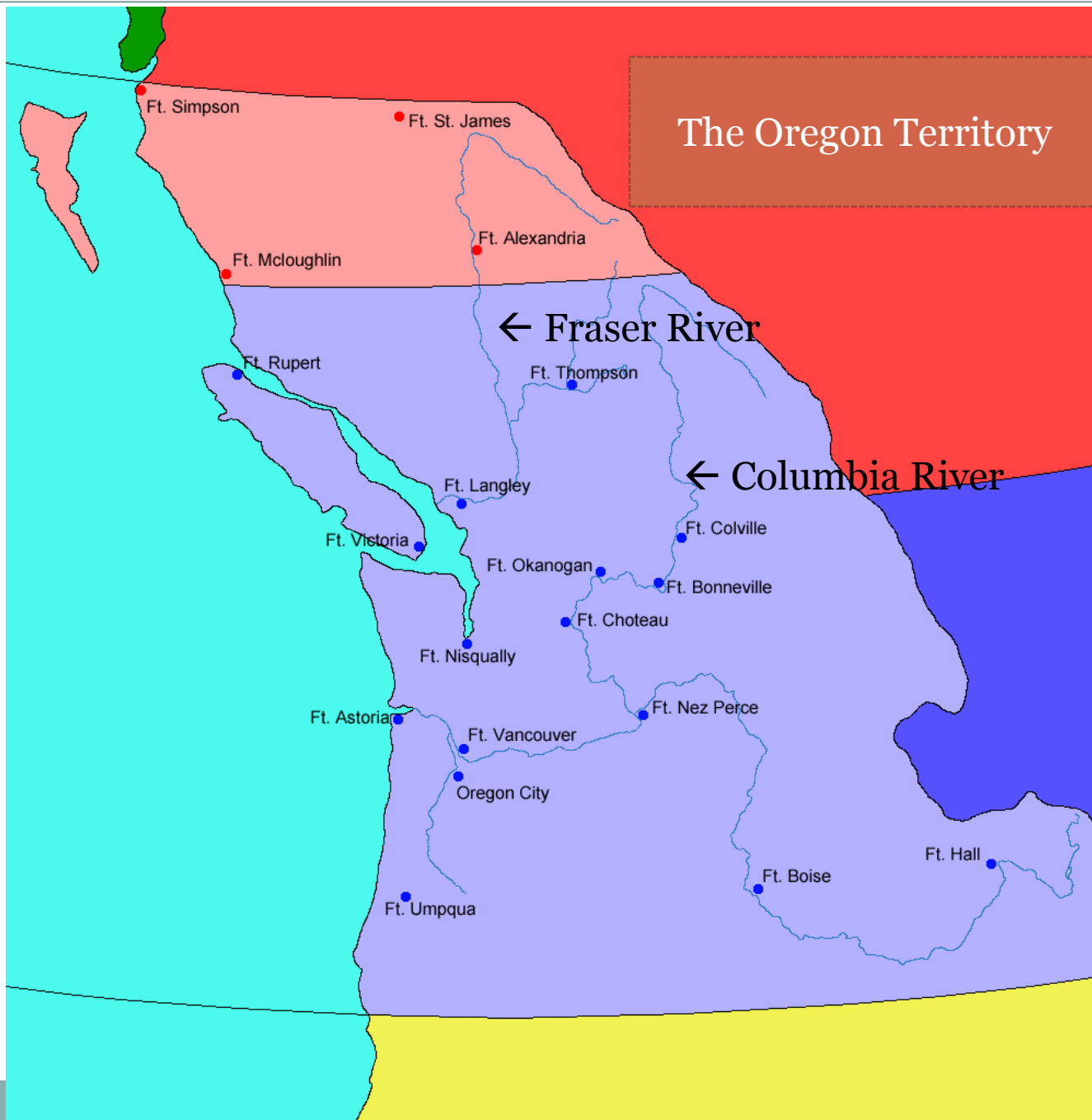


- Prior to the 1800s, British Columbia had no roads, boundary lines, cities, bridges or ferries and was inhabited by 80,000 to 100,000 First Nations people.
- In the 19th century there was a lucrative furtrade.
- 1819: The 49th parallel/latitude was established as the border between the British territories and the US.
- West of the Rocky Mountains before the Pacific Ocean remained unclaimed and was known as the Oregon Territory.

Who Owns It?



- The Oregon territory had low European population so remained unclaimed for awhile.
- The Hudson's Bay Company was operating in the territory but did not want it to be settled so it would leave the area open for the fur trade.
- The United States had a rapidly increasing population and needed more space.
- They believed in Manifest Destiny, which is the belief that the US was destined to control all of North America.



The HBC in the Oregon Territory



- 1824: the Hudson's Bay Company built Fort Vancouver on the north bank of the Columbia River to try to make the best use of the areas resources.
- It became their main trading post in the territory. John McLoughlin was put in charge and told to expand the fur trade along the Pacific coast.
- In order to offset American competition in the fur trade he encouraged them to settle on the south bank of the river and offered supplies and money to encourage this.

Treat Your Employees Well



- In 1841, the HBC manager George Simpson revisited the posts of the Pacific Coast. He was disappointed in the expansion of the fur trade, it wasn't as expanded as he hoped.
- So he cut costs and shut all trading posts on the coast other than Fort Simpson.
- This made John McLoughlin rather mad, and he felt that his hard work (fifteen years worth) was undone.
- Consequently, McLoughlin continued to promote settlement on the south bank, and discouraged all settlement to the north of the river.

54-40 or Fight



- The rising American population in the territory finally attracted the HBC/British government's attention. It was time for a permanent boundary.
- A new fort was ordered to be built on Vancouver Island in 1843. It was called Fort Victoria. James Douglas was put in charge.
- The Americans wanted the Oregon Territory. Their president James Polk was elected with the campaign slogan 54-40 or fight, which meant that they wanted up to the 54 degrees 40 minutes N latitude. But he didn't want to go to war.
- Eventually they just expanded the 49th parallel with the exception of Vancouver Island.

Vancouver Island



- In order to solidify the British claim on the region, the Crown colony of Vancouver Island was created with trade monopoly given to the HBC.
- James Douglas was the governor of the colony and Chief Factor of Fort Victoria for the HBC.
- To encourage settlement, free land was initially offered which changed to a charge of \$5 an acre (minimum purchase of 20 acres)
- Coal was discovered up island near Nanaimo and Cumberland.
- A naval base was set up near Fort Victoria and the Royal Navy became important to the emerging social life. Aristocratic Naval Officers were always in demand at parties.



Downtown Victoria, 1907

Historical Facebook



- George Simpson
- Richard Moody
- Amor de Cosmos
- John McLoughlin
- Billy Barker
- William Van Horne
- James Douglas
- Frederick Seymour
- David Oppenheimer

- Amelia Douglas
- Anthony Musgrave
- Gassy Jack Deighton
- James Polk
- Alexander Mackenzie