

The party, including Passed Midshipmen Eld and Colvocoressis, Messrs. Dana, Brackenridge, and the sergeant, proceeded up the Willamette river. They reached Champooing on the 3d, where they disembarked. In the morning they were taken to the house of Thomas M'Kay, who is one of the most noted persons in this valley, particularly among the mountain trappers. He is a man of middle age, tall, well-made, and of muscular frame, with an expression of energy and daring, and a deep-set, piercing black eye, beneath a full projecting eyebrow. Among the trappers he is the hero of many a tale, and is himself prone to indulge his guests with his personal adventures. He lives in a house that answers both for a dwelling and grist-mill, and is said to be the best belonging to a settler in the valley. This man was engaged to go as guide; and, what speaks little for his veracity and principles, at the last moment refused to do so, and afterwards made his boast that he had fooled the party, as he had not intended to go from the first. His harvest had just been reaped, which he said had produced him twenty-five bushels to the acre. M'Kay furnished them with horses, and accompanied the party to the camp, where they arrived early in the afternoon. Here all was preparation for a speedy departure, and every one fully occupied with packs, saddles, and trappings. On the 7th, the party made their final move, and after travelling only six miles, encamped near Turner's, known as the mission butcher. He owns a farm, in the acceptance of the word in Oregon, having a log-hut, an Indian woman to reside in it, and an undefined quantity of land. The hut contains no furniture to sit or lie upon, and only the few articles most needed in cooking. He does not cultivate any thing, but supports himself by killing cattle semi-weekly. Report says that he was formerly a drummer in the United States service, but for upwards of thirteen years he has led the sort of life he now does. He seems both contented and independent, and appears an honest and good-natured fellow. He has had several narrow escapes, having been twice with parties that were attacked by the southern Indians, in the passage to and from California. The last time he was one of four who escaped, subsisted on berries and roots for a fortnight, and was obliged to travel only at night, to avoid the Indians who were in search of him. He furnished our party with fresh beef of his own stock, refusing to receive pay, and seemed very much incensed that the mission should have charged for what had been obtained from them.

The country in the southern part of the Willamette Valley, stretches out into wild prairie-ground, gradually rising in the distance into low undulating hills, which are destitute of trees, except scattered oaks;