LECTURE OUTLINE: BEYOND THE MOUNTAINS

A. INTRODUCTION

B. NORTH WEST PASSAGE BY LAND

C. HUDSON’S BAY COMPANY IN THE FAR WEST
   1. Managing A Region
   2. Northwest Coast
   3. New Markets For New Exports
   4. Beyond The Mere Traffic In Peltries
   5. George Simpson Reorganizes Once Again

D. BRITISH-AMERICAN RIVALRY IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST
Alex MacKenzie
from Canada
by land
22d July 1793
Simon Fraser would follow the treacherous Fraser to the sea and provide the name of New Caledonia to today’s B.C. interior
Fort McLeod National Historic Site pictured in 1879
The Fort St. James National Historic Site
An artist’s depiction of Fraser descending the canyon
Thompson established Kootanae House in 1807
Fort Astoria at the time of the War of 1812
Fort Astoria became Fort George and served as the base for the North West Company on the Lower Columbia
Hudson’s Bay Company In The Far West

• In 1821, the North West Company merged into the Hudson’s Bay Company.

• The Company received a monopoly on trade in the area between the Rockies and the Pacific Coast.

• New Caledonia and the Columbia Districts would be consolidated in 1825 into the Columbia Department.
As governor-in-chief of the Hudson’s Bay Company’s affairs in Canada, George Simpson oversaw the restructuring of the fur trade in the West.
Fort Vancouver has been reconstructed as an American tourist site.
In 1824, Simpson appointed John McLoughlin as superintendent of the Columbia District.
The brigantine “Cadboro” arrived from England in 1826
Simpson ordered the construction of Fort Langley in 1827
Simpson is welcomed by a young James Douglas at Fort St. James during his 1828 tour of the Far West.
Port McNeill is named after Boston trader and HBC employee William Henry McNeill
The “SS Beaver” pictured in Vancouver in 1888: Arriving on the Pacific in 1836, it would remain in HBC service for 40 years.
New Markets For New Exports

• The favourable growing season at Fort Vancouver led to the development of the finest farm anywhere in British fur trade territory.

• The Kingdom of Hawaii, Mexican settlements in California, and the Russian American Company’s base at Sitka emerged in the 1830s as major markets for Columbia produce.

• The HBC’s long involvement with Hawaii began in 1827 when McLoughlin asked Aemilius Simpson of the “Cadboro” to report on the timber market there.

• In 1833, the HBC opened a store in Honolulu for the sale of salmon, lumber, potatoes and flour from forts Vancouver and Langley.
Hawaii And The Hudson’s Bay Company

- The Sandwich Islands’ most lasting “export” to the west coast was its young men, the “Kanakas,” the hiring of whom helped to solve the HBC’s labor problems in 1830s.

- Kanakas had already been employed as crewmen by the maritime fur traders, the Pacific Fur Company, and the North West Company.

- At Oahu vessels exchanged salmon and lumber for commodities needed on the coast – known by the company’s agency as “Island Produce.”

- Salt was the most important commodity.
Kanaka Bar pictured in 1968
The students of Kanaka Street Elementary
California And Alaska As Markets

• Mexico had achieved independence from Spain in 1821.

• In 1841, the Hudson’s Bay Company opened an agency in California modeled after than at Oahu.

• The store property was sold in 1846.

• The HBC sold to the Russians as part of an overall strategy to remove American merchants from the Northwest coast.

• Simpson reached an agreement with the Russian American Company in 1830 in which the HBC gained a lease to the coast in return for providing the Russians with produce and furs.
Lulu Island today is next to Vancouver International Airport
Fort Langley National Historic Site
North West Coast, 1790-1840

- Trading post
- Indigenous settlement, harbor

Landforms
Waterbodies and rivers
Haiqua (dentalia shell) was a traditional First Nations unit of exchange.
Fort Nisqually was built in 1833 as a base in Puget Sound
George Simpson reorganized the western operations again after his 1841 visit to the coast.
The HBC Focuses North

- Simpson decided in 1842 to phase out the Columbia Department depot at Fort Vancouver and to establish a new headquarters on Vancouver Island.

- Fort Vancouver had been the terminus of the York Factory Express and the interior fur brigades.

- Fort Victoria, on the other hand, was a Pacific depot, accessible to the company’s new deep-sea commerce from Oahu, Sitka, and San Francisco, as well as from London.

- Simpson decided that Captain McNeill’s way of trading from the ship’s deck was more effective and economical than trading from a series of remote posts.

- Forts McLoughlin and Taku were closed in 1843, and Stikine was finally closed in 1849 and its operations relocated to the coal deposits on Vancouver Island.
A model of Fort Victoria in the Provincial Museum
Having run on the posturing campaign motto “Fifty-Four Forty or Fight!”, a barb intended for English ears over the Oregon Country, Polk was soon embroiled in a dispute not with England, but with our neighbors to the South, in Mexico. Desiring the resource rich land of California, Polk quickly provoked a war with Mexico, defeated them, and demanded the cession of Mexico’s northwestern provinces. The Mexican Cession of 1848 included California, as well as most of the American Southwest. But the rapid expansion left Americans reeling and anxious over the future of slavery as pioneers and settlers went forth.
What is in

54-40

OR FIGHT!

Fort Vancouver compound, sketched by an officer about 1846 (H.B.C.)

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