

John Flett

Pioneer of 1841

compiled by Stephenie Flora
oregonpioneers.com

John Flett

b. 05 Aug 1815 Winnipeg, Canada

d. 12 Dec 1892 Fort Nisqually, Lakewood, Pierce Co, WA

buried [Tacoma Cemetery](#), Tacoma, Pierce Co, WA

baptized 7 Dec 1823 St. John's

son of George Flett and Margaret "Peggy" Whitford

m1. 15 Nov 1838/9 St. John's, Manitoba, Canada

Charlotte Bird

b. 1821 Red River, Canada

d. 06 Jul 1851 Washington Co, OT

buried [Forest View Cemetery](#), Forest Grove, Washington Co, OR

"Charlotte Flett (Mrs. John) died Jul 6 in W Tualatin Plains of liver disease, age 34,
survived by husband and 7 children" Oregon Spectator July 22, 1851 p. 3:1

m2. 24 Nov 1855 Washington Co, OR

Margaret McKay

b.

d.

m3. 01 Feb 1858 Forest Grove, Washington Co, OR

Ellen (Monroe) Cooper

b. 10 Feb 1836 York Factory, Manitoba, Canada

d. 17 Feb 1928 Lakewood, Pierce Co, WA

buried [Tacoma Cemetery](#), Tacoma, Pierce Co, WA

d/o David Monroe

m1. William Elliot Cooper

m2. John Flett 01 Feb 1858 Forest Grove, Washington Co, OR

NOTE: there were several other John Fletts in the area about the same time including those listed: John Flett (-Feb 1853) blacksmith at Ft. Vancouver 1839-1844; blacksmith on the vessel Beaver 1844-1853) [Lives Lived West of the Divide by Bruce McIntyre Watson]; John Flett, carpenter on barque Princess Royal 1856-1857 [Lives Lived West of the Divide by Bruce McIntyre Watson]

1845: Twality Co, OT census, John Flett, Provisional and Territorial Record #5290

1849: May 26 Washington Co, OT Tax Roll, John Flett, Intention Naturalization, no Record #

1850: Washington Co, OT, Dec 25, 1850; John Flett, 34, farmer, Red River; Charlotte, 29, Red River; Sarah, 11, Red River; Elizth, 9, Red River; Joanah, 8, OT; Margt A., 7, OT; Letitia, 6, OT; Lydia, 5, OT; David J., 3, OT; Wm G., 6/12, OT

1851: Charlotte (Mrs. John) Flett dies Jul 6 in W Tualatin Plains of liver disease, age 34, survived by husband and 7 children. [Oregon Spectator Jul 22, 1851 3:1]

1853: Washington Co, OT census, John Flett, Provisional and Territorial Record #5290

1854: Washington Co, OT Tax Roll, John Flett, Provisional and Territorial Record #8021

1855: Washington Co, OT Tax Roll, John Flett, Provisional and Territorial Record #8023

1860: Stilicom PO, Pierce Co, WA, Aug 1, 1860; John Flett, 44, farmer, \$2240 \$3570, Canada; Ellen, 24, Canada; M.A., 18, f, WT; Letitia, 15, f, OT; J.D., 11, m, WT; W.H., 9, m, WT; M.C. Cooper, 5, f, WT; E.C. Flett, 1, f, WT

1870: Steilacom PO, Pierce Co, WA, Aug 15, 1870; John Flett, 55, farmer, \$0 \$720, Br N Am; Ellen, 34, housewife, Br N Am; John, 8, WT; Annie, 6, WT; Andrew S., 3, WT; Mary Cooper, 14, OR

1880: Puyallup, Pierce Co, WA, June 16, 1880; John Flett, 64, laborer, Rupert's Island, Scotland, Rupert's Island; Elen, 45, wife, cook at reservation, Rupert's Island, Scotland, Rupert's Island; Anna J., 16, dau, keeping house, WT; Andy S., 12, son, at home, WT

1900: Hunt's Prairie, Pierce Co, WA, June 14 & 15, 1900; Ellen Flett, head, Feb 1836, 64, wd, 7-4, Canada Scotland Canada, emigrated to US 1842; George Chapman, son in law, June 1865, 34, m-4yrs, Scotland Scotland Scotland, dairyman, emigrated to US 1888; Leona G. Mann, grand dau, May 1877, 23, s, WA Germany OR; Anna J. Chapman, dau, Feb 1864, 36, m-4yrs, 0-0, WA Canada Canada



*John Flett, settler in Pierce County, W.T. - Elwood
Evans, History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and
Washington (Portland: North Pacific Publishing, 1899).*

An Old Pioneer Gone.

John Flett died at Steilacoom last evening. He was 77 years of age. Mr. Flett came to this State from Winnipeg in 1841. He was intimately connected with the early history of the Territory, having been present at many of the conferences between the Territorial officers and the Indians, both in Washington and Oregon. At several of these councils he acted as interpreter. He was also present at the final and grand council held by Governor Stevens and General Palmer with the several tribes near Walla Walla. In 1859 Mr. Flett settled at South Prairie, in Pierce county, and engaged in farming. He remained there until 1863, when he purchased his recent home near Lake View, about six miles from this city. From 1862 to 1878 he was employed on the Puyallup Indian reservation as farmer or interpreter. One of Mr. Flett's sons first discovered coal at Carbonado.

Tacoma Daily News Dec 13, 1892 p. 5

"A WELL-KNOWN SCOUT--Death of John Flett, a Famous Pioneer of This Section--Tacoma. Dec. 13. -- John Flett, who moved to Oregon territory from Manitoba in 1841, died last night near Steilacoom, aged 77. He was intimately connected with the early history of the territory, having been present at many of the conferences between the territorial officers and the Indians, both in Washington and Oregon. At several of these councils he acted as interpreter. He was also present at the final grand council held by Governor Stevens and General Joel Palmer with several tribes near Walla Walla, in 1855. In the early days he accompanied General Palmer and Indian Agent Chris Taylor to Klamath lakes and the Modoc country, that being the first party visiting that region." [Morning Oregonian, Portland, OR, December 14, 1892 p.3]

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Indians, both in Washington and Oregon. At several of these councils he acted as interpreter. He was also present at the final and grand council held by Governor Stevens and General Palmer with the several tribes near Walla Walla. In 1859 Mr. Flett settled at South Prairie, in Pierce county, and engaged in farming. He remained there until 1868, when he purchased his recent home near Lake View, about six miles from Tacoma.”
[Morning Oregonian, Portland, OR, December 17, 1892 p.4]



[History of the Pacific Northwest, Oregon and Washington, 1889, Vol I p.476a]

JOHN FLETT.—Among the schemes of the Hudson's Bay Company, in 1839 and 1840, to acquire occupancy and secure British title to the territory on the north side of the Columbia river, was an immigration to the Cowlitz and Nisqually Plains from the Selkirk settlement in the valley of the Red river of the North. It will be remembered that the Hudson's Bay Company was present in the territory west of the Rocky Mountains by virtue of a license of trade from the British Crown, which precluded it from acquiring landed possessions. Its right was a mere tenancy for years. To evade this provision, the attempt was made to form the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, which, though not consummated, yet fostered this scheme of colonization and occupancy. Under its auspices was formed the Red river colony of 1841, of which John Flett, now an aged farmer residing on Steilacoom Plains in Pierce county, is the last survivor of the then married men or heads of families who, with their families, flocks, herds and worldly possessions, constituted the Red river immigration to the Oregon territory of 1841.

company one-half the crops yearly for five years, and at the end of five years one-half the increase of the flocks.

“To this agreement twenty-three heads of families appended their names. White Horse plain, about fifteen miles west of Fort Garry, at the junction of the Red and Assinaboine rivers, was appointed as the rendezvous, and on the fourth of June, 1841, our twenty-three families, containing eighty persons all told, were assembled, with about fifty carts, seven oxen, two cows and sixty horses. On the morning of the 5th of June we broke camp, and, turning our backs to the rising sun, plunged into the wilderness. Our route lay along the north bank of the Assinaboine. We crossed the Mouse and Qu'Appelle rivers, and then turning north past Fort Pelly started for the Saskatchewan. On this vast plain we met our first buffalo, immense herds being seen feeding on the rich grasses of the valley. Here Mr. James Bird overtook us and became our guide. In this region we also met Doctor Tolmie and his party from the Columbia, and were passed by Sir George Simpson, on his tour around the world.

Mr. Flett gives the following graphic description of the journey to Oregon of that colony:

"An agreement was entered into by Duncan Fenelon, acting governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, on the one side, and a party of immigrants on the other, to the following effect:

"That the company should furnish as captain James Sinclair, Esq., should also furnish each head of a family ten pounds sterling in advance (which all accepted but A. Buxton and John Flett) also, goods for the journey, and horses and provisions at the forts on the route as needed; and on the arrival at Puget Sound the company should furnish houses, barns and fenced fields, with fifteen cows, one bull, fifty ewes, one ram, and oxen or horses, with farming implements and seed. On the other part, it was agreed that the farmers should deliver to the

"We reached the south branch a few miles above where it joins the Saskatchewan. The crossing was a difficult and dangerous work. The river was about a mile in width. A portion of the party passed safely to a small island in a small boat. The other portion, putting their carts and effects on a huge raft of dry logs, attempted to pole their raft across. The current was very swift; and they soon lost bottom and drifted down at a fearful rate towards the rapids, a short distance below. As they went by the island on which the first party had landed, they passed so near that a rope was thrown to them; and, after a long struggle, the raft was secured to the bank. When a crossing was at last effected, we passed on through open country until we arrived, on the 28th of June, at Fort Charlton, on the banks of the great Saskatchewan. We secured some horses, replenished our stock of provisions, and on the thirtieth resumed our journey. Dangers were now thickening around us. On the ground over which we were passing a great battle had been fought between the Crees and Blackfeet, the Crees being worsted. We kept men on guard night and day.

War parties were on every side. We now began to believe what others had told us, that we should never get through. Still we forced our way on, and on the 10th of July crossed the Saskatchewan river to Fort Pitt. Here we found many wounded Crees, who had fled to the fort for protection. Here we rested two days, and on the 12th again broke camp, traveling on the north side of the river until we reached Fort Edmonton, on the twentieth, where we recrossed the river. We had traveled far out of our direct route for safety, but now must face the unknown dangers. The region through which we had to pass was a fine hunting ground, buffalo being very plentiful; and the different tribes—Blackfeet, Assinaboines, Piegans, Crees—were continually striving for it, many bloody battles being fought.

“Moving southward through this region, keeping careful watch for hostiles, we again reached the waters of the South branch on the 30th of July. Here the writer and a younger brother had a narrow

escape. While out hunting we were surrounded by hostile Indians. We concealed ourselves until dark, and in the twilight swam the cold, swift river. Having stripped off our outer clothing, we fastened it on our horses and plunged in. The water was cold, icy cold, the river was very swift and about two hundred yards wide. Twice we swam the river, and after wandering about for two days at last reached camp in safety. Of all the dangers I have seen in a pioneer life of fifty years, the dangers of those two days were the worst. We overtook our party encamped at old Fort McLeod, an abandoned post of the Hudson's Bay company, now known as British Pass, or Rocky Mountain. Here we were compelled to abandon our carts and pack our goods on the backs of the oxen and horses. After long debate about what should be taken and what should be left behind, we at last had our train in readiness, and again started on our way. The oxen, however, were unused to this mode of traveling, and, becoming frightened, a stampede ensued. Then what a sight,—oxen bellowing, kicking, running; horses neighing, rearing, plunging; children squalling; women crying; men swearing, shouting and laughing; while the air seemed full of blankets, kettles, sacks of pots, pans and jerked buffalo. At last the cattle were again secured. All our goods that could be found were gathered up, the remnants repacked, and we again started.

“Crossing the South branch, we entered the timber, sometimes following an Indian trail and sometimes traveling where there was no trail. On the second day after we entered the mountains, James Bird, our guide, bidding adieu to his friends and relatives, started on his return. On the 5th of August we reached the summit, and found ourselves on a small plateau. Here we saw a huge snow-drift whose melted waters formed three little rills, one running east through a deep cañon, and finding its way through the Saskawatchan into Hudson’s Bay, another running southeast into the Missouri, and at last into the gulf, while the third sent its waters through those ‘continuous woods where rolls the Oregon.’ On the ninth day after we entered the Rocky Mountains we emerged on the western side, at the Kootenai plain, then through a belt of timber, and then over the Tobacco prairie. To avoid some marshy land which lay in our course, we climbed the projecting point of a high mountain, said to be one of the Bitter Root range. Then our route lay through a flat, marshy country until we came to a deep, sluggish river, called by the Indians, Paddling river. Then our course lay to the southwest, through a rich country with plenty of grass, until we came to Lake Pend d’Oreille. While traveling along a rocky cliff jutting towards the lake a horse, ridden by one of our women, slipped; and horse and rider rolled into the lake, being rescued with some difficulty. We crossed the lake where it is about one mile in width; and while we were engaged in crossing, our first horse was stolen. Here we left two families, who on account of sickness were unable to proceed farther.

“We arrived at Fort Walla Walla on the 4th of October. On the next day the fort was burned. Our party assisted the men of the fort to save their goods. The Indians were so numerous that it was not deemed safe to camp there; and so we traveled down the Columbia until midnight. In about four days we arrived at The Dalles, at the Methodist mission, then in charge of Daniel Lee and Mr. Perkins. On the twelfth we crossed the river; there one horse was drowned. When we reached the Cascades we found some boats on which the families, with some of the oldest men, sailed down the river; while the horses and cattle at Colville were driven to Vancouver, at which all arrived on the thirteenth.

“There we met Sir George Simpson, Peter Skeen Ogden, John McLoughlin and James Douglas; and there Sir George informed us that the company could not keep its agreement. As I remember, this was the substance of his speech: ‘Our agreement we cannot fulfill; we have neither horses nor barns nor fields for you; and you are at liberty to go where you please. You may go with the California trappers; and we will give you an outfit as we give others. If you go over the river to the American side we will help you none—very sickly. If you go to the Cowlitz we will help you some. To those who will go to the Nisqually we will fulfill our agreement.’ Of course we were all surprised and hurt at this speech. After some discussion the party divided, some going to California, several families to the Cowlitz Prairie, some to the Willamette valley, and the rest to Nisqually, where we arrived November 8, 1841, having traveled nearly two thousand miles without the loss of a single person, while three children were born on the way.

“Upon reaching Nisqually, Captain James Sinclair made a trip on the steamer *Beaver* to Whidby Island, with the view to our settlement on that island. Bras Croche, the Cree guide, who accompanied him on his trip, was asked what he thought of the *Beaver* steamer. ‘Don’t ask me,’ was his reply; ‘I cannot speak; my friends will say that I tell lies when I let them know what I have seen. Indians are fools and know nothing. I can see that the iron machinery makes the ship go; but I cannot see what makes the iron machinery itself go.’ He was a very intelligent Indian, but so full of doubt and wonder that he would not leave the vessel till he had received a certificate that he had been on board of a ship which required neither sails nor paddles. With this paper he said he could go back to his people, and, although they would not believe him, yet they would give full credence to all that was written. Captain Sinclair, on his return from Whidby Island, went to Colville and remained that winter. He crossed over to Red river the next

season. Returning to the territory, he was subsequently clerk in charge of Fort Walla Walla until the fall of 1855, when it was attacked and robbed by the hostile Indians and never afterwards occupied by the company. At the Cascades on Wednesday, March 26, 1856, when the Yākimas attacked that place, being in Bradford's store, he walked to the railroad door to look out and was shot from the bank above, and instantly killed.

"As the company furnished no houses, each man had to build his own cabin. As no plows could be obtained, John Flett and Charles McKay went to

Vancouver after iron to make some plows. They spent Christmas day at the fort, and on their return turned the first furrows which were plowed this side of the Cowlitz. Some seed wheat and some potatoes were furnished the farmers, but no teams nor cattle, although they were greatly needed. The writer tried hard to get a cow, either as per agreement or for money, but failed. Some who removed got some wild cows, but no sheep. There was much discontent; and loud murmurings were heard. Several at once left the Sound in disgust. The Flett brothers left in June, 1842, for the Willamette, more followed in the fall; and at the end of three years all had left, getting nothing for their labor or their improvements."

John Flett was born August 5, 1815, in Rupert's Land, about six hundred miles northeast of Manitoba, in the valley of the Red river of the North, his father then being in charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's store for the Cumberland district. When John was about seven years of age the family removed to the Selkirk settlement, where he continued to reside until 1836, at which time he went to the site of the present city of St. Paul, Minnesota, there being at that date three houses where that great city is now erected. Having remained there during a short season, he went to Chicago, Illinois, and stayed there about a year, during which time he assisted as a bricklayer in the building of the third brick house erected in that city of phenomenal progress.

In 1837 he returned to Manitoba, worked for a time as a blacksmith, and at intervals in hunting and trapping in the wilds of Minnesota and Dakota. In June, 1841, he joined the Red river colony, and made the journey hereinabove described in his own language. In June, 1842, he settled in Washington county, Oregon, and was engaged in farming until 1854, when he accepted the position of Indian interpreter under General Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs of Oregon. His services in that capacity were very valuable; and much is due to Mr. Flett for the successful negotiation of the treaties then made. As a recognition of those services, he was continued as interpreter and appointed also sub-agent, in which capacity he went to Southern Oregon. Alone he visited the war camp of the Rogue river Indians, and induced them to go upon the reservation. He visited the Indians at Crescent City and Port Orford. He accompanied General Palmer and Indian Agent Chris Taylor to Klamath Lake and the Modoc country, that being the first party who visited that region.

In all the meetings and councils of Superintendent Palmer with the Southern Oregon Indians, Mr. Flett accompanied him as interpreter; and on General Palmer going to the Walla Walla council, in June, 1855, Mr. Flett attended. He continued in the service of the Oregon superintendency for three years, and during that time executed many delicate and difficult missions, requiring courage and discretion. In 1859 he settled at South Prairie, in Pierce county, and engaged in farming. He remained there until 1868, when he purchased his present location near Lakeview, about six miles distant from Tacoma. From 1862 to 1878 he was

employed upon the Puyallup Indian Reservation as farmer or interpreter. He is a thorough Indian linguist, an adept in understanding the Indian character, and was long recognized as among the most efficient and valuable of the *attachés* of that department. He is a hale, vigorous man, with a family consisting of a wife and six children; and with a competency this fine old christian gentleman is rounding off in comfort a long and busy life.

Children of John Flett and Charlotte Bird:

1. Sarah Flett

b. 05 Oct 1839 Manitoba, Canada

d. 12 Apr 1882

buried [Roseburg Memorial Gardens](#), Roseburg, Douglas County, Oregon

baptized 20 Nov 1839

m'd 24 May 1853 Washington Co, OR

Nepoleon McGilvery

b.

d.

m.

Thomas Brown

b. 25 Mar 1811 Scotland

d. 20 Aug 1890

buried [Roseburg Memorial Gardens](#), Roseburg, Douglas County, Oregon

Stayed with Dr and Margaret Bailey and testified on Margaret's behalf against her husband during their divorce [The Grains by Margaret Jewett Bailey p.246]

1850: Washington Co, OT, Dec 25, 1850; John Flett, 34, farmer, Red River; Charlotte, 29, Red River; Sarah, 11, Red River; Elizth, 9, Red River; Joanah, 8, OT; Margt A., 7, OT; Letitia, 6, OT; Lydia, 5, OT; David J., 3, OT; Wm G., 6/12, OT

2. Elizabeth Flett

b. 05 Apr 1841 Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada

d. 05 Jan 1883 Puyallup, Pierce County, Washington

buried [Tacoma Cemetery](#), Tacoma, Pierce County, Washington

baptized 18 Apr 1841

m'd 28 Apr 1856 Washington Co, OR

John P. Gale

b. Jan 1829 Scotland

d. 23 Apr 1907

buried [Tacoma Cemetery](#), Tacoma, Pierce County, Washington

Stayed with Dr and Margaret Bailey and testified on Margaret's behalf against her husband during their divorce [The Grains by Margaret Jewett Bailey p.246]

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1860: Pierce Co, WA

1870: Puyallup, Pierce Co, WA

3. Joanah Flett

b.c1842

d.

1850: Washington Co, OT, Dec 25, 1850; John Flett, 34, farmer, Red River; Charlotte, 29, Red River; Sarah, 11, Red River; Elizth, 9, Red River; Joanah, 8, OT; Margt A., 7, OT; Letitia, 6, OT; Lydia, 5, OT; David J., 3, OT; Wm G., 6/12, OT

4. Margaret Aurelia Flett

b. 25 Apr 1843 Wapato, Yamhill County, Oregon

d. 27 Dec 1897 Lakewood, Pierce County, Washington

buried [Tacoma Cemetery](#), Tacoma, Pierce County, Washington

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1860: Stilicom PO, Pierce Co, WA, Aug 1, 1860; John Flett, 44, farmer, \$2240 \$3570, Canada; Ellen, 24, Canada; M.A., 18, f, WT; Letitia, 15, f, OT; J.D., 11, m, WT; W.H., 9, m, WT; M.C. Cooper, 5, f, WT; E.C. Flett, 1, f, WT

5. Letitia Flett

b.c1844

d. aft 1930

m1. John Dement Gilham

m2. Albert Haines

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1870: Puyallup, Pierce Co, WA

1880: Puyallup, Pierce Co, WA

1900:

1910: Ellensburg, Kittitas Co, WA

1930: Ellensburg, Kittitas Co, WA

6. Lydia Flett

b. c1845

d. bef 1860

1850: Washington Co, OT, Dec 25, 1850; John Flett, 34, farmer, Red River; Charlotte, 29, Red River; Sarah, 11, Red River; Elizth, 9, Red River; Joanah, 8, OT; Margt A., 7, OT; Letitia, 6, OT; Lydia, 5, OT; David J., 3, OT; Wm G., 6/12, OT

7. David James Flett

b.c1847

d.

1850: Washington Co, OT, Dec 25, 1850; John Flett, 34, farmer, Red River; Charlotte, 29, Red River; Sarah, 11, Red River; Elizth, 9, Red River; Joanah, 8, OT; Margt A., 7, OT; Letitia, 6, OT; Lydia, 5, OT; David J., 3, OT; Wm G., 6/12, OT

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8 William Harvey Flett

b. July 1850

d.

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1900: Steilacoom, Pierce Co, WA, June 9, 11, 12 & 15, 1900; William H. Flett, head, Jul 1850, 49, s, OR Canada Canada, logger

Children of John Flett and Ellen Monroe are:

1. E. C. Flett (female)

b. 1859 Pierce County, Washington

d. bef 1870 Pierce County, Washington

1860: Stilicom PO, Pierce Co, WA, Aug 1, 1860; John Flett, 44, farmer, \$2240 \$3570, Canada; Ellen, 24, Canada; M.A., 18, f, WT; Letitia, 15, f, OT; J.D., 11, m, WT; W.H., 9, m, WT; M.C. Cooper, 5, f, WT; E.C. Flett, 1, f, WT

2. John Joseph Flett

b. Feb 1862 Lakewood, Pierce Co, Washington

d. 04 Sep 1937 Tacoma, Pierce Co, Washington

buried [Tacoma Cemetery](#), Tacoma, Pierce Co, Washington

m'd Selina M. Houghton 27 Jan 1891 Pierce Co, Washington

1870: Steilacom PO, Pierce Co, WT, Aug 15, 1870; John Flett, 55, farmer, \$0 \$720, Br N Am; Ellen, 34, housewife, British N America; John, 8, WT; Annie, 6, WT; Andrew S., 3, WT; Mary Cooper, 14, OR

3. Annie Josephine Flett

b. Feb 1864 Lakewood, Pierce Co, Washington

d. 17 Sep 1921 Flett Station, Pierce County, Washington

buried [Tacoma Cemetery](#), Tacoma, Pierce Co, Washington

m'd George Chapman

1870: Steilacom PO, Pierce Co, WT, Aug 15, 1870; John Flett, 55, farmer, \$0 \$720, Br N Am; Ellen, 34, housewife, Br N Am; John, 8, WT; Annie, 6, WT; Andrew S., 3, WT; Mary Cooper, 14, OR

1880: Puyallup, Pierce Co, WA, June 16, 1880; John Flett, 64, laborer, Rupert's Island, Scotland, Rupert's Island; Elen, 45, wife, cook at reservation, Rupert's Island, Scotland, Rupert's Island; Anna J., 16, dau, keeping house, WT; Andy S., 12, son, at home, WT

1900: Hunt's Prairie, Pierce Co, WA, June 14 & 15, 1900; Ellen Flett, head, Feb 1836, 64, wd, 7-4, Canada Scotland Canada, emigrated to US1842; George Chapman, son in law, June 1865, 34, m-4yrs, Scotland Scotland Scotland, dairyman, emigrated to US 1888; Leona G. Mann, grand dau, May 1877, 23, s, WA Germany OR; Anna J. Chapman, dau, Feb 1864, 36, m-4yrs, 0-0, WA Canada Canada

4. Andrew S. Flett

b. 1867

d.

1870: Steilacom PO, Pierce Co, WT, Aug 15, 1870; John Flett, 55, farmer, \$0 \$720, Br N Am; Ellen, 34, housewife, Br N Am; John, 8, WT; Annie, 6, WT; Andrew S., 3, WT; Mary Cooper, 14, OR

1880: Puyallup, Pierce Co, WA, June 16, 1880; John Flett, 64, laborer, Rupert's Island, Scotland, Rupert's Island; Elen, 45, wife, cook at reservation, Rupert's Island, Scotland, Rupert's Island; Anna J., 16, dau, keeping house, WT; Andy S., 12, son, at home, WT

Tacoma Daily Ledger

Contributed by [Washington Archive](#)

Description: A Sketch of the Emigration from Selkirk Settlement to Puget Sound...

Date: February 18 1885

Newspaper published in: Tacoma

INTERESTING LOCAL HISTORY

A Sketch of the Emigration from Selkirk Settlement to Puget Sound in 1841. [Written for the Ledger by John Flett.]

As I am the only surviving member of the married men of the party of emigrants, which under the direction of the Hudson Bay Company left Selkirk settlement, in the valley of the Red river of the north, and came to Puget Sound in 1841, and as I have often been requested by descendants of other members of that party to leave some account of our journey; and as I also wish to correct some misapprehensions that have arisen concerning that emigration, I have

attempted to give a history of that expedition.

An agreement was entered into by Duncan Fenelon, acting governor of the Hudson's Bay Company, on the one side, and a party of immigrants on the other, to the following effect:

"That the company should furnish as captain James Sinclair, Esq., should also furnish each head of a family ten pounds sterling in advance (which all accepted by A. Buxton and John Flett) also, goods for the journey, and horses and provisions at the forts on the route as needed; and on the arrival at Puget Sound the company should furnish houses, barns and fenced fields, with fifteen cows, one bull, fifty ewes, one ram, and oxen or horses, with farming implements and seed. On the other part, it was agreed that the farmers should deliver to the company one-half the crops yearly for five years, and at the end of five years one-half the increase of the flocks.

To this agreement twenty-three heads of families appended their names. White Horse plain, about fifteen miles west of Fort Garry, at the junction of the Red and Assinaboine rivers, was appointed as the rendezvous, and on the fourth of June, 1841, our twenty-three families, containing eighty persons all told, were assembled, with about fifty carts, seven oxen, two cows and sixty horses. On the morning of the 5th of June we broke camp, and, turning our backs to the rising sun, plunged into the wilderness. Our route lay along the north bank of the Assinaboine. We crossed the Mouse and Qu'Apelle rivers, and then turning north past Fort Pelly started for the Saskatchewan. On this vast plain we met our first buffalo, immense herds being seen feeding on the rich grasses of the valley. Here Mr. James Bird overtook us and became our guide. In this region we also met Doctor Tolmie and his party from the Columbia, and were passed by Sir George Simpson, on his tour around the world.

We reached the south branch a few miles above where it joins the Saskatchewan. The crossing was a difficult and dangerous work. The river was about a mile in width. A portion of the party passed safely to a small island in a small boat. The other portion, putting their cars and effects on a hug raft of dry logs, attempted to pole their raft across. The current was very swift; and they soon lost bottom and drifted down at a fearful rate towards the rapids, a short distance below. As they went by the island on which the first party had landed, they passed so near that a rope was thrown to them; and, after a long struggle,, the raft was secured to the bank. When a crossing was at last effected, we passed on through open country until we arrived, on the 28th of June, at Fort Charlton, on the banks of the great Saskatchewan. We secured some horses, replenished our stock of provisions, and on the thirtieth resumed our journey. Dangers were now thickening around us. On the ground over which we were passing a great battle had been fought between the Crees and Blackfeet, the Crees being worsted. We kept men on guard night and day. War parties were on every side. We now began to believe what others had told us, that we should never get through. Still we forced our way on, and on the 10th of July crossed the Saskatchewan river to Fort Pitt. Here we found many wounded Crees, who had fled to the fort for protection. Here we

rested two days, and on the 12th again broke camp, traveling on the north side of the river until we reached Fort Edmonton, on the twentieth, where we recrossed the river. We had traveled far out of our direct route for safety, but now must face the unknown dangers. The region through which we had to pass was a fine hunting ground, buffalo being very plentiful; and the different tribes - Blackfeet, Assinaboines, Piegans, Crees - were continually striving for it, many bloody battles being fought.

Moving southward through this region, keeping careful watch for hostiles, we again reached the waters of the South branch on the 30th of July. Here the writer and a younger brother had a narrow escape. While out hunting we were surrounded by hostile Indians. We concealed ourselves until dark, and in the twilight swam the cold, swift river. Having stripped off our outer clothing, we fastened it on our horses and plunged in. The water was cold, icy cold, the river was very swift, and about two hundred yards wide. twice we swam the river, and after wandering about for two days at last reached camp in safety. Of all the dangers I have seen in a pioneer life of fifty years, the dangers of those two days were the worst. we overtook our party encamped at old Fort McLeod, an abandoned post of the Hudson's Bay company, now known as British Pass, or Rocky Mountain. Here we were compelled to abandon our carts and pack our goods on the backs of the oxen and horses. After long debate about what should be taken and what should be left behind, we at last had our train in readiness, and again started on our way. The oxen, however, were unused to this mode of traveling, and becoming frightened, a stampede ensued. Then what a sight, - oxen bellowing, kicking, running; horses neighing, rearing, plunging; children squalling; women crying; men swearing, shouting and laughing; while the air seemed full of blankets, kettles, sacks of pots, pans and jerked buffalo. At the last the cattle were again secured. All our goods that could be found were gathered up, the remnants repacked, and we again started.

Crossing the South branch, we entered the timber, sometimes following an Indian trail and sometimes traveling where there was no trail. On the second day after we entered the mountains, James Bird, our guide bidding adieu to his friends and relatives, started on his return. On the 5th of August we reached the summit, and found ourselves on a small plateau. here we saw a huge snow-drift whose melted waters formed three little rills, one running east through a deep cañon, and finding its way through the Saskawatchan into Hudson's Bay, another running southeast into the Missouri, and at last into the gulf, while the third sent its waters through those 'continuous woods were rolls the Oregon.' On the ninth day after we entered the Rocky Mountains we emerged on the western side, at the Kootenai plain, then through a belt of timber, and then over the Tobacco prairie. To avoid some marshy land which lay in our course, we climbed the projecting point of a high mountain, said to be one of the Bitter Root range. Then our route lay through a flat, marshy country until we came to a deep, sluggish river, called by the Indians, Paddling river. Then our course lay to the southwest, through a rich country with plenty of grass, until we came to Lake Pend d'Oreille. While traveling along a rocky cliff jutting towards the lake

a horse, ridden by one of our women, slipped; and horse and rider rolled into the lake, being rescued with some difficulty. We crossed the lake where it is about one mile in width; and while we were engaged in crossing, our first horse was stolen. Here we left two families, who on account of sickness were unable to proceed farther.

We arrived at Fort Walla Walla on the 4th of October. On the next day the fort was burned. Our party assisted the men of the fort to save their goods. The Indians were so numerous that it was not deemed safe to camp there; and so we traveled down the Columbia until midnight. In about four days we arrived at The Dalles, at the Methodist mission, then in charge of Daniel Lee and Mr. Perkins. On the twelfth we crossed the river; there one horse was drowned. When we reached the Cascades we found some boats on which the families, with some of the oldest men, sailed down the river; while the horses and cattle at Colville were driven to Vancouver, at which all arrived on the thirteenth.

There we met Sir George Simpson, Peter Skeen Ogden, John McLoughlin and James Douglas; and there Sir George informed us that the company could not keep its agreement. As I remember, this was the substance of his speech: 'Our agreement we cannot fulfill; we have neither horses nor barns nor fields for you, and you are at liberty to go where you please. You may go with the California trappers; and we will give you an outfit as we give others. If you go over the river to the American side we will help you none - very sickly. If you go to the Cowlitz we will help you some. To those who will go to the Nisqually we will fulfill our agreement.' Of course we were all surprised and hurt at this speech. After some discussion the party divided, some going to California, several families to the Cowlitz Prairie, some to the Willamette valley, and the rest to Nisqually, where we arrived November 8, 1841, having traveled nearly two thousand miles without the loss of a single person, while three children were born on the way.

Upon reaching Nisqually, Captain James Sinclair made a trip on the steamer Beaver to Whidby Island, with the view to our settlement on that island. Bras Croche, the Cree guide, who accompanied him on his trip, was asked what he thought of the Beaver steamer. 'Don't ask me,' was his reply; 'I cannot speak; my friends will say that I tell lies when I let them know what I have seen. Indians are fools and know nothing. I can see that the iron machinery makes the ship go; but I cannot see what makes the iron machinery itself go.' He was a very intelligent Indian, but so full of doubt and wonder that he would not leave the vessel till he had received a certificate that he had been on board of a ship which required neither sails nor paddles. With this paper he said he could go back to his people, and, although they would not believe him, yet they would give full credence to all that was written. Captain Sinclair, on his return from Whidby Island, went to Colville and remained that winter. He crossed over to Red river the next season. Returning to the territory, he was subsequently clerk in charge of Fort Walla Walla until the fall of 1855, when it was attacked and robbed by the hostile Indians and never afterwards occupied by the company. At the Cascades on Wednesday, March 26, 1856, when the Yakimas attacked

the place, being in Bradford's store, he walked to the railroad door to look out and was shot from the bank above, and instantly killed.

As the company furnished no houses, each man had to build his own cabin. As no plows could be obtained, John Flett and Charles McKay went to Vancouver after iron to make some plows. They spent Christmas day at the fort, and on their return turned the first furrows which were plowed this side of the Cowlitz. Some seed wheat and potatoes were furnished the farmers, but no teams nor cattle, although they were greatly needed. The writer tried hard to get a cow, either as per agreement or for money, but failed. Some who removed got some wild cows, but no sheep. There was much discontent; and loud murmurings were heard. Several at once left the Sound in disgust. The Flett brothers left in June, 1842, for the Willamette, more followed in the fall; and at the end of three years all had left, getting nothing for their labor or their improvements."

Below I give a list of those of the party already dead, with date of death and place of burial, as nearly as I can ascertain:

Name. Date. Place of Burial.

Mrs H Boxten, 1842, Nesqually, W T

Mrs J Yell, 1842, " "

Mrs James Flett, 1842, Washington Co.

James Flett, 1843, Walla Walla, W T,

Mrs La Blanc, 1844, Cowlitz, W T

M Berng, 1844, " "

Mrs St Germain, 1844, " "

David Flett, 1846, Yamhill, Or

A Spence, 1851, California

John Spence, 1851, "

William Flett, 1851, "

Mrs John Flett, 1851, Washington Co

Mrs. Jno Coneyham, ----- " "

Mrs Wm Flett, ----- " "

John Tate, ----- " "

A Berston, ----- " "

Joseph Yeal, ----- " "

Charles McKay, ----- " "

James Berston, ----- " "

Mrs A Berston ----- Cascades, W T

O H Caldron & wf, ----- Pierce county

MsSC 120

[http://research.washingtonhistory.org/collections/findingaids/flett_john_papers_mssc_120.pdf]

John Flett Papers

BIOGRAPHY

Born in Winnipeg, Canada on August 5, 1815 to George and Margaret Whilford Flett, John Flett resided during much of his youth at the Red River Settlement in Manitoba, where his father worked for the Hudson's Bay Company. Aside from a year spent in the U.S. in Chicago and Minnesota, Flett lived continuously at the Red River Settlement from 1822 until 1841 working as a blacksmith, hunter, and trapper. In 1841, John Flett, his wife Charlotte Bird Flett, and two daughters Eliza and Arilla, were among one of 23 families who accepted an offer by the Hudson's Bay Company to settle the Puget Sound area near Fort Nisqually. Seeking in part to strengthen the British claim on the country, the Hudson's Bay Company offered to provide each family ten pounds in advance and supplies for the journey. Accompanying John Flett on the journey west were three of his brothers, David, William George, and James, and their families. Arriving in the Nisqually region in November 1841, the Red River colonists found that the promises of company support had evaporated leaving the immigrants, most of whom subsequently left for the Willamette Valley, on their own. Although John Flett and his brothers tried to settle on the Nisqually Basin without assistance, the inability to secure livestock forced them to leave the region as well. Flett subsequently filed and received a donation land claim of 640 acres of land near Forest Grove, Oregon, where he resided for 17 years from 1842 to 1859.

In 1854, Flett's long involvement in Indian/ Government relations began with his appointment as interpreter for General Joel Palmer, Superintendent of Indian Affairs of Oregon. In this capacity, Flett was instrumental in the negotiation of a number of treaties with Indian tribes following a number of conflicts in the Pacific Northwest known collectively as the Indian Wars of 1855-57. Among his noted accomplishments as interpreter and negotiator was the resettlement of the Rogue River and Umpqua tribes onto reservations. As translator, Flett accompanied Palmer on several important diplomatic missions with Native American tribes, including the legendary Walla Walla Council of June 1855. Flett's work for the Oregon Superintendency of Indian Affairs under Joel Palmer continued until 1858.

In 1859, Flett filed a claim in the South Prairie area of Pierce county near the town of Orting, becoming one of the first European-American settlers in the region. In the Washington Territory, Flett continued his work as a government Indian agent, securing a post on the Puyallup Reservation as interpreter, teacher of "industry" at the Indian Boarding School, and farmer. Flett worked on the reservation in these capacities for 18 years, from 1862 to 1880. Residing on the reservation at least four of his 18 years there, (1864-1868), Flett also worked for the Puyallup Reservation's Police Force in his last year employed as an Indian Agent. Flett spent his remaining years on a 320-acre farm five miles east of Steilacoom, where he cultivated the land and managed a blacksmith shop until his death on December 13, 1892. With regard to Pierce

County, John Flett is notable for being the only Red River emigrant colonist to settle in the region and for his son being the first European-American child born on South Prairie in 1862. (For biographical information, see Washington State Genealogical and Historical Review, Vol. 2, #2, Spring 1984)

SCOPE AND CONTENT

The papers of John Flett include correspondence, legal documents, newspaper clippings, publications, and personal notes and recollections that cover the years 1850 to 1896 and offer insight into the government's interaction with and treatment of Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest during the Nineteenth century. The correspondence constitutes about half of the collection and dates from 1850 to 1892, covering the years of Flett's residence in the Washington Territory and State. Primarily focused on the years 1875 to 1892, the correspondence addresses a wide range of subjects that include family matters (Red River land claims, parents' estate), interaction with Native Americans and other Indian Agents (a police bribery case on the reservation, election of Chief head for Puyallup Reservation), Flett's involvement in education (Steilacoom Academy, Puyallup Indian Boarding School), daily economic affairs (sale of a cow), and interest in Flett's personal historical accounts of the Indian Wars (Eva Dye).

Especially interesting is the correspondence between Flett and General R.H. Milroy, which reveal undercurrents of tense relations between Flett and his supervisor on the Puyallup Reservation. Other letters pertaining to the Puyallup Reservation offer sobering glimpses of everyday life for the Native Americans there, as well as daily economic concerns and issues on the reservation.

Family correspondents include: Margaret Flett (Mother), William George Flett (Brother), Robert Flett (Brother), Reverend George Atkinson (Cousin), William Atkinson (Nephew), George Brown (Grandson), William Harvey Flett (Son), Mary Flett (Sister), and E. Gale (Daughter-in-Law).

Other correspondents: General Joel Palmer, Thomas Condon, General R.H. Milroy, Seattle Police Chief Fred Minnick, A.L. Lindsley, John Meeker, J.B. Hewitt, Augustus Kautz, Sam Black, Portland writer Eva Dye, Indian Agent W.P. Gibson, Pierce County Auditor W.B. Kelley, and John Banfield.

INCLUSIVE DATES: 1850-1896

RESTRICTIONS: None

VOLUME: .75 Linear Feet

ACCESSION NO.: 1996.28

BOX 1: Correspondence, Historical Notes and Recollections

1. Correspondence:

1850, March 8, Brother William George Flett. (family matters)

2. Correspondence:

1851, August 3, Mother Margaret and Brother William George. (family matters, Sioux Indian attack)

3. Correspondence:

1852, June 30, Brother Robert at the Red River Settlement. (family matters)

4. Correspondence:

1854, April 10, Brother Robert. (family matters, Robert's anticipated departure from the Red River Settlement)

5. Correspondence:

1855, March 29, Joel Palmer. (Treaty with warring Indian tribes, Palmer's appointment)

6. Correspondence:

1869, February 13, Daughter-in-law E. Gale. (Signing over part of the family's land to husband, John Gale)

7. Correspondence:

1870, September 23, John Flett to Uncle. (family matters)

8. Correspondence:

1871, July 27, M. McCarver. (payment for land deed)

9. Correspondence:

1875, September 7, Brother Robert. (family matters)

1875, December 20, A.L. Lindsley. (notice of an arrival of items for the Puyallup Sunday (boarding?) School)

1875, December 21, A.L. Lindsley. (Shipment of books to Flett for family and Sunday School)

1875, December 21, W.H. Wadhams. (Regarding a request for books and papers for the Puyallup Sunday School, sent to a Portland merchant)

10. Correspondence:

1876, February 19, James Tyler. (Request for renewal of membership in the church)

1876, February 19, J.V. Meeker. (Informed John Flett of statements written at the request of James Tyler)

1876, March 6, J.B. Hewitt. (donation of books to the Sunday School)

1876, March 19, W.P. Gibson. (Complications arising from the nonpayment of a worker on the reservation. Will?)

1876, March 20, R.H. Milroy. (U.S. Indian Agent on the Puyallup Reservation, appointment of Flett as a farmer for the Puyallup Reservation)

11. Correspondence:

1877, May 28, R.H. Milroy to Chief Joshua Sitwell. (La Hobits separation and reconciliation with wife) 1877, June 22, R.H. Milroy. (The death of oxen owned by the government by a train, photocopy)

1877, June 24, Sister Mary. (family matters)

1877, August 23, R.H. Milroy. (Request for repairs on a boat)

1877, September 15, R.H. Milroy. (Compensation for work on a boat)

1877, September 28, Augustus Kautz to Mrs. Gave. (Employment in the hop fields, gamblers from Seattle tempting Indians near Steilacoom into gambling. Kaut worked for a Mr. Mitchell in Olympia)

12. Correspondence:

1878, August 24, R.H. Milroy to Ellen Flett. (Mrs. Flett's appointment as the matron of the Puyallup Indian Boarding School, photocopy)

1878, September 11, R.H. Milroy. (Flett's resignation as laborer on the reservation and his salary as a teacher there)

1878, September 17, R.H. Milroy. (Flett's status as teacher of "industry" at the boarding school, and his other duties on the reservation, photocopy)

1878, October 30, Sam Black. (A payment from the Northern Pacific Railroad Company for an undescribed expense)

1878, November 30, John Flett to R.H. Milroy. (the reservation's boarding school)

13. Correspondence: 1879, January 19, Flett, as Police Chief for the Reservation, to interested parties. (Request for the apprehension of an Indian woman, Jane Samson, on the charge of adultery)

1879, February 3, Flett to Seattle Chief of Police Fred Minnick. (The bribery of a reservation police officer, incomplete letter) 1879, February 6, Fred Minnick to John Flett. (Reply from Seattle Chief of Police about the bribery situation on the reservation) 1879, October 1, Flett to R.H. Milroy. (Complaints about treatment on the reservation and policy) 1879, Flett to R.H. Milroy. (A quarterly report of the Indian Police force on the Puyallup Reservation, including names and numbers of births and deaths as well as expenses incurred by the force)

14. Correspondence:

1880, April 14, R.H. Milroy. (Referral to Mr. Littlejohn for a possible leave of absence request)

1880, June 22, John Henry Van Woert and Willie. (Family matters)

15. Correspondence:

1881, March 16, A.L. Lindsley. (Flett's absence at the dedication of the Puyallup Church, estrangement from Milroy)

1881, November 2, Unidentified writer (Kautz?) to Mrs. Gave. (Writer describes a school vacation and commencement from a training school for Indian youth in Forest Grove, Oregon. A lot of interest in this school from various parties is noted in the letter)

16. Correspondence:

1882, January 28, John Banfield. (Land near Lakeview for the establishment of a Christian school)

1882, March 2, M. Mann, a member of the Presbyterian Missionary for the Puyallup Reservation, to R.H. Milroy. (Mann appealing on behalf of Mrs. John Swan and Mr. and Mrs. Skinshirt for better treatment on the reservation. One of the issues involves the death and cremation of a John Gamble, whose relatives were not allowed to see his body after death)

1882, August 22, G.H. Atkinson. (An appointment of unidentified nature set up by Flett for John Banfield)

17. Correspondence:

1883, February 6, Unidentified brother. (Family matters, Mother's will and estate, incomplete letter)
1883, February 15, G.H. Atkinson. (Church subscriptions)
1883, March 24, W.G. Atkinson. (Family estate and matters)
1883, October 31, A.T. Burnell to Trustees of the Steilacoom Academy. (Expense and enrollment concerns with the academy)
1883, December 2, Mrs. A.N. Compton. (Family property and estate)
1883, December 10, Unidentified correspondent from Roseburg, Oregon, Compton? (Family matters, mother's inheritance, incomplete letter)
1883, A.T. Burnell to John Flett. (Burnell's resignation from teaching)

18. Correspondence:

1884, January 6, William Atkinson. (Family estate)
1884, January 10, Brother-in-law James Taylor. (Family matters)
1884, January 14, Sarah Johnstone, Flett's Niece. (Family estate)
1884, June 4, Edward M. Atkinson. (The unavailability of Reverend G. Atkinson in Portland during the month of June)

19. Correspondence:

1886, March 13, Thomas Condon. (Spaulding's expectation to return to the Nez Perce Mission in 1855)
1886, September 1, W. B. Kelley, Pierce County Auditor. (Flett's appointment as inspector)
1886, December 8, Edwin Eells, U.S. Indian Agent. (The Origin of the word "Tacoma", photocopied in pamphlet form)

20. Correspondence:

1887, August 24, J.F. Ellis. (Special meeting of the Western Washington Educational Society, Steilacoom Academy)
1887, August 26, Reverend G. H. Atkinson. (Trustee Meeting of the Western Wash. Ed. Society, Steilacoom Academy)

21. Correspondence:

1888, January 5, Mr. Nord from the Fire Council, Washington D.C. (Land title)
1888, June 20, John Banfield. (Banfield's orchard business)
1888, December 29, Son William Harvey. (Recovery of a family land claim in Red River given up earlier by John)

22. Correspondence:

1889, June 10, Son William Harvey. (Family matters)
1889, June 14, Son William Harvey. (Family matters)
1889, June 31, Son William Harvey. (Family matters)
1889, July 3, Samuel Greene. (An Association Meeting)
1889, July 9, C.H. Spinning, land abstract firm in Pierce county. (Land deal)
1889, September 14, A.C. Allen, Snohomish Nursery. (Terms for acting as an agent for the nursery)

1889, December 18, W.N. Spinning. (Misplaced promissory note)

23. Correspondence: 1890, January 8, Samuel Greene. (The sale of a missionary horse)

24. Correspondence:

1891, March 1, Grandson George Brown. (Family matters)

1891, April 3, Mrs. K.A. Arrington. (A response to Flett's request for historical information on a nearby site where a massacre was thought to have occurred in 1856. Two copies of the first page are in the folder.

1891, December 19, J.G. Murray. (Flett's interest in buying a farm)

25. Correspondence: 1892, January 17, Eva Dye. (Request for historical information for a story)

1892, February 12, Eva Dye. (A story from newspaper clippings sent by Flett)

1892, May 5, Lucian Cook. (Sale of cows)

1892, June 1, 1892, Eva Dye. (Newspaper clippings sent by Flett)

1892, July 15, Flett to E.E. Elles. (A letter to a neighbor demanding compensation for a calf killed by Elles' horse team)

26. Correspondence:

Undated. Statement by John Flett to Mr. Plumer clarifying some historical of Flett's life.

Undated. Incomplete letter most likely from John's Mother Margaret, as it refers to two of his brothers, Willie and James as children. Family matters are the main subjects.

Undated. Incomplete letter from Brother William George Flett. Flett's land claim.

Undated. Incomplete letter from Nephew William Atkinson. Chief Big Bear, a rebellion involving Indians and French "half-breeds" in 69, 70'.

Undated. From Brother William George. Family matters.

Undated. Two incomplete letters from Flett to Niece Mary and a woman interested in publishing some letters about the religious attitudes of the Indians. The other letter addresses family matters.

Undated. From Nephew William Atkinson. Family matters, family land claims.

Undated. Incomplete letter from W.J. Bowman. Land deal.

Undated. Incomplete letter from William George Flett to John. Family matters, land titles.

Undated. Incomplete letter from A.R. Compton. Family lands, Brother-in-law James Taylor is mentioned.

Undated. Incomplete letter from R.H. Milroy to unidentified recipient, although not Flett, since he is a subject discussed in the letter. An election for head chief on the reservation, procedures.

27. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian/Government Relations in Pacific Northwest. Primarily consisting of undated narrative accounts and writings pertaining to Flett's experiences in the Indian Wars and encounters with prominent Indians, these notes and recollections are very fragmentary in nature despite numbers on some of the notes that may indicate the presence of a series. Very little in the way of original order was evident when this collection was accessioned. Some of the notes could also be segments of letters that were separated and mixed in with the notes over the years. What appears to be page numbers on some of the papers indicates that Flett did secondary research on the Indian Wars, possibly in preparation for his response in the Tacoma Ledger to Ezra Meeker's contention that Chief Leschi was wrongfully executed. Some of these notes reveal an undercurrent of sympathy for the plight

of Native Americans in the Northwest, with Flett often bemoaning the fact that many “friendly Indians” were killed by “rowdes” and of the inadequacy of government policy in meeting the basic needs of Indians on the reservations.

28. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian/Government Relations in Pacific Northwest, Futility of Government Policy Toward Indians.

29. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian/Government Relations in Pacific Northwest, Treaties and Local Superintendency.

30. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian Tribes and Culture, Biographical Sketches of Prominent Indians, Including Information on Cause of Death and Relations with the “Whits.”

31. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian Tribes and Culture, Chief Leschi.

32. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian Tribes and Culture, Indian Parent-Child Relations, Puyallup School.

33. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian Tribes and Culture, Puyallup Indian Election.

34. Historical Notes and Recollections: General Notes on Indian Tribes and Culture, Rogue River Indians.

35. Historical Notes and Recollections: Indian Wars of 1855-57.

36. Historical Notes and Recollections: Indian Wars of 1855-57.

37. Historical Notes and Recollections: A narrative on a legal issue concerning some land (owned or managed by Flett) on the reservation.

38. Historical Notes and Recollections: Selkirk and the Red River Settlements.

BOX 2: Ledgers, Legal Documents, Misc., Newspaper Clippings, Publications, Receipts, a Speech

1. Ledgers: Accounting Ledger. 1880

2. Ledgers: Workman’s Time Book. (Jobs performed for Flett) 1892

3. Legal Documents: Lease of the Puyallup School Farm to John Flett, Signed by R.H. Milroy. March 1, 1877

4. Legal Documents: Oath of Office For School Director of District No. 38, Pierce County. June 19, 1886

5. Legal Documents: Property Deed, in John Flett's Name, From the Trustees of Steilacoom Academy. January 29, 1883

6. Legal Documents: Will of Charles Forrest and William Tolmie's Bond as Executor to the Will. January 22, 1852

7. Legal Documents: Will of John's Brother, James. April 1857

8. Misc.

9. Newspaper Clippings: Accounts and Stories from Early Oregon and Washington Pioneers. Newspaper articles and stories clipped from regional newspapers including the Tacoma Weekly Globe, Tacoma Daily and Weekly Ledger, Portland Oregonian, Seattle Post-Intelligencer, the Roseburg Review, and the Catholic Sentinel. Covering the years 1884 to 1892, the clippings primarily address historical topics that include first-hand narratives of early settlers to the Pacific Northwest and personal accounts of the Indian Wars of 1855-57. An article written by Flett himself, basically a response to an article by Ezra Meeker asserting Chief Leschi's innocence of the murder of some settlers (Flett argues otherwise), also appears in these files.

10. Newspaper Clippings: Flett's Article on Chief Leschi and the Indian Wars. Tacoma Weekly Ledger, June 24, 1892.

11. Newspaper Clippings: General John Logan

12. Newspaper Clippings: Indian Culture and Politics Outside of Pacific Northwest

13. Newspaper Clippings: Indian Wars of 1855-57, General

14. Newspaper Clippings: Indian Wars of 1855-57, James Elgin's Account

15. Newspaper Clippings: Indian Wars of 1855-57, James Longmire's Account

16. Newspaper Clippings: Lewis and Clark Exploration Account.

17. Newspaper Clippings: Marcus Whitman and the Whitman Mission.

18. Newspaper Clippings: Misc.

19. Newspaper Clippings: Misc.

20. Newspaper Clippings: Misc.

21. Newspaper Clippings: Pacific University (G.H. Atkinson, a Trustee, mentioned)
22. Newspaper Clippings: Puyallup Reservation
23. Newspaper Clippings: Reverend Talmage
24. Newspaper Clippings: Timber Culture
25. Publications: Carmina Sanctorum, Descriptive Pamphlet and Specimen Pages of the New Church Hymn Book. Undated
26. Publications: Extracts from the Code of Washington Territory. Undated
27. Publications: The Home Missionary. August and November 1892
28. Publications: In Memoriam, Rev. George H. Atkinson. 1889
29. Publications: Marcus Whitman, M.D., Proofs of His Work in Saving Oregon To the United States, and in Promoting the Immigration of 1843. Rev. M. Eells. 1883
30. Publications: Many Voices. Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage, D.D. Undated
31. Publications: Pentecostal Hymns No.1, A Winnowed Collection. 1896
32. Publications: State of Washington General Election Laws. 1891
33. Publications: Washington State Board of Horticulture. 1892
34. Publications: Washington State Historical Society, A Statement of Its Organization; Its Constitution, By-Laws, Officers, and "A Word To the Reader." 1891
35. Receipts: 1879-1892.
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