

EDWARD HUGGINS. — Edward Huggins was born in London, England, on the 10th of June, 1832. He received his education in Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School in that city. On the 10th of October, 1849, he sailed in the Hudson's Bay Company's ship *Norman Morrison* for Victoria, Vancouver Island, where he arrived in March, 1850. He at once entered the employ of the Hudson's Bay Company, having been engaged as clerk by Chief Factor James Douglas, afterwards Sir James Douglas, the governor of Vancouver Island. He was sent to Fort Nisqually on Puget Sound to serve as trader and clerk under Doctor W. F. Tolmie, who was at that time the agent in charge of the business of the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Agricultural Companies at that place.

At that time the business of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, and that of the Hudson's Bay Company, were entirely distinct. The Hudson's Bay Company devoted their whole attention to the trading in furs and the sale of goods, for which at that time there was a great demand and high prices obtained, consequent upon the scarcity of goods of any kind, and the utter impossibility almost of purchasers having a choice of opportunities for trading. In fact, up to 1851-52, the Hudson's Bay Company's store at Nisqually was the only trading establishment between Forts Victoria and Vancouver on the Columbia river, except perhaps a very small American establishment at Olympia, then a small cleared space in the woods, with a very small general store kept by Colonel Michael T. Simmons.

The company kept a large supply of goods on hand, worth at times from fifty to one hundred thousand dollars; and, for two or three years after 1850 they had the monopoly of the whole Indian trade. In 1850-51 large bands of the Clallam, Scadgil, Snoqualmie, Snohomish and other tribes visited Fort Nisqually every week to trade. Among them as a constant visitor was Patkanim, the chief of the Snoqualmies, who afterwards, in 1855-56, as

an ally of the Whites, took such an active part in the Indian war of those years. The Klikitats, from the eastern side of the Cascade Mountains, in those early days, also made periodical visits to the fort, bringing horses to trade; and among their number were the chiefs Owhi, Tia-ass and Kamiakin, all of whom became prominent leaders of the hostiles in the Indian war of 1855-56.

The Puget Sound Agricultural Company (whose business and purposes were entirely distinct from the Hudson's Bay Company), under the treaty of 1846, between the United States and Great Britain, claimed nearly all the prairie land in Pierce county, about one hundred and sixty thousand acres, and occupied it with large herds of cattle, sheep and horses. In 1850 that company possessed seven thousand head of horned cattle, about twelve thousand sheep and three hundred head of horses, all of which were pastured upon the Nisqually Plains, a few bands of sheep being occasionally kept on the Yelm and Tenalquot prairies, in what is now Thurston county. Up to 1855 Mr. Huggins remained at the fort in the capacity of trader and clerk; but in the fall of that year, when the Indian war broke out, the company's business upon the plains became disorganized, and the manager and herders refused to remain at the stations on account of the hostility of the Indians.

Mr. Huggins then volunteered to take charge of the business on the plains, and with about fifteen or twenty men in the fall of 1855 went to Muck. The party lived for a time in a large loghouse, and managed to safely care for the company's stock throughout the Indian war. He remained at Muck till the fall of 1859, when he succeeded Doctor William F. Tolmie as manager of the company's business in Pierce county, Doctor Tolmie having become one of the board of management of the Hudson's Bay Company's affairs at Victoria, British Columbia. In 1859 Mr. Huggins was ordered to make a trip to the Similkameen valley to report as to the feasibility of removing the company's sheep or part of them to British Columbia; and in company with three men, with a band of horses and mules, he went via Nahcness Pass and Okanagan to Similkameen, returning via the old Snoqualmie Pass.

In those days there were no settlers on the east side of the Cascade Mountains; and Mr. Huggins was obliged to ride for fourteen days before reaching the end of his journey, during all of which time he did not see a settler's house until he had reached Similkameen. When near Fort Okanagan, he visited the camp of Chief Moses and his band; and they seemed hardly to realize that peace had been proclaimed. For a time the conduct of the Indians was very suspicious, and quite unfriendly; and the party were apprehensive that they would be murdered for the sake of the horses they had. But one of Mr. Huggins' party, a courageous half-breed, who understood the Indian language, was instrumental in saving their lives. Mr. Huggins reported unfavorably as to the project; and the sheep were not removed.

In 1862 the company had but little livestock remaining; and Mr. Huggins' time was principally devoted to the trading in furs, he making periodical trips in 1863, '64 and '65 to Gray's Harbor and up

the coast, where he secured for the company in those years nearly all the skins of the sea otter that were killed in that section. He sometimes obtained as many as fifty or sixty of those handsome skins, paying for them from forty to fifty dollars each. He also made trips down the Sound and up the rivers, and was quite successful in obtaining furs. In 1867 Mr. Huggins was ordered to take charge of the Hudson's Bay Company's trading establishment at Fort Kamloops, in British Columbia, but preferred to and was permitted to remain at Nisqually.

In 1869 the United States government purchased from the Hudson's Bay and Puget Sound Agricultural Companies the rights they claimed under the Treaty of 1846 in Washington Territory; and in May of 1870 Mr. Huggins made the formal transfer of the property belonging to the companies in Pierce and Lewis counties to the United States. The business being closed in the territory, he was ordered to take charge of a fort in British Columbia; but he adopted the other alternative;—he quit the company's service and remained in this, the country of his adoption.

In 1857 he had already become an American citizen. On the retirement of the company, he took the place, part of the old Fort Nisqually, as a pre-emption claim, and has owned it ever since. He has gradually added to the extent of the old farm adjacent to the fort by the purchase of contiguous lands. As an American citizen, he has identified himself with every enterprise for the benefit of his adopted home. He long followed farming and stock-raising, and, when opportunity offered, continued to trade in furs. These occupations engaged his attention till his election in 1887 to the position of county auditor of the county of Pierce, which office he still holds to the entire satisfaction of his fellow-citizens, this being his second term.

Since March, 1887, he has resided in Tacoma, Washington. He has also served three terms as county commissioner of Pierce county, two terms of which he was chairman of the board. He is now in the prime of life, and is universally esteemed as a man. In county affairs he is thoroughly informed; and that methodic education he acquired in his long clerical service in the Hudson's Bay Company renders him most efficient and useful as auditor, accountant and financial officer of Pierce county.