

## Introduction

William Johnson was born about 1789 in England or Scotland. In November 1848 he died from “intemperance” in Portland, Oregon.<sup>1</sup> He had a wife Polly and a wife Mary.<sup>2</sup> His three children were Herbert, James, and Amelia.<sup>3</sup>

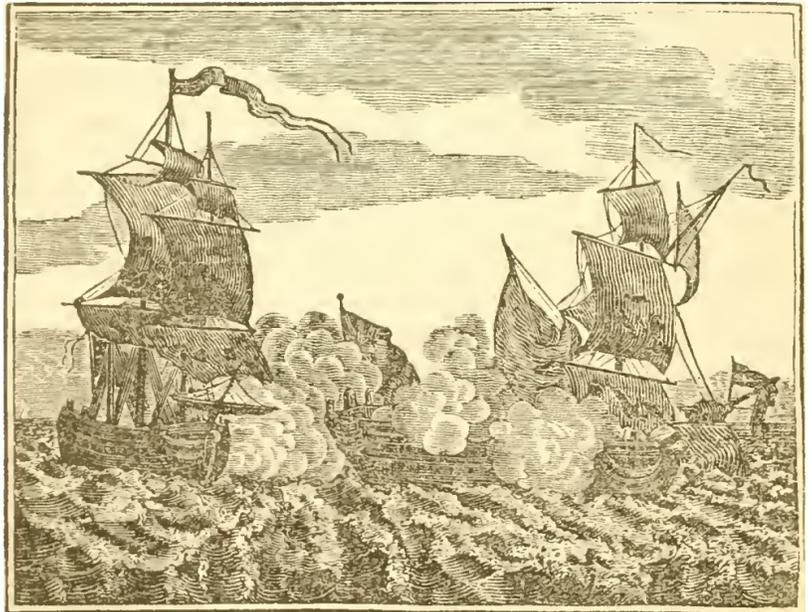
William worked for the Hudson's Bay Company as a cowherd and a trapper.<sup>4</sup> He signed the petition to bring the Catholic Church to Oregon. He was elected to early Oregon offices, but he did not serve. The only newspaper item for him was at his death. The “Friend to Temperance” announced in the 30 May 1848 issue of the Oregon Spectator that William Johnson died “reportedly of intemperance.” Further, he had owned a distillery for the last four years.<sup>5</sup>

## War of 1812 service

In 1841, Lt. Charles Wilkes of the U.S. Navy visited the French Prairie where he stopped at William Johnson's house. He wrote,

“In looking round, my eye was arrested by a print of the capture of the frigate *Guerriere* by the *Constitution*, which led me to speak concerning it, when I found he had been in that action.”<sup>6</sup>

*Constitution* and *Guerriere*, Aug. 19, 1812.<sup>7</sup>



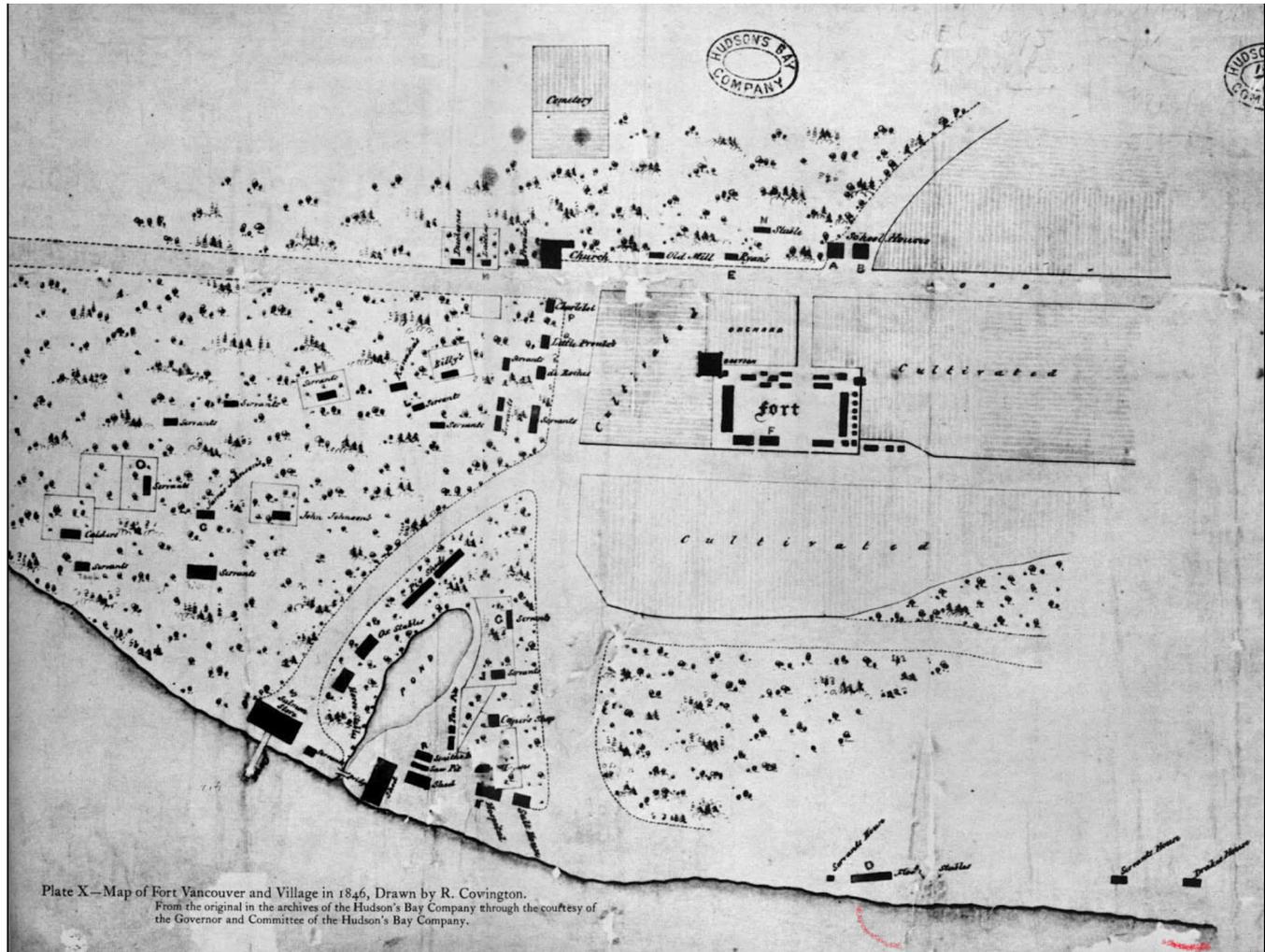
The battle between the British frigate *HMS Guerriere* and the *USS Constitution*, under the command of Captain Isaac Hull, took place on 19 August 1812 off the coast of Nova Scotia. On 3 July 1812, the ship received 31 men from the Philadelphia recruiting office. A William Johnson and a W. Johnson, a midshipmen, were included in the list.<sup>8</sup> Typically, a midshipman accompanied the recruits to their ship.<sup>9</sup> He was likely the same person who recruited the sailors. The men who were recruited were strong and healthy. They could expect to receive from \$12.00 to \$15.00 per month, plus provisions.<sup>10</sup>

An Army soldier could expect to earn about \$14.00 per month, plus one ration per day.<sup>11</sup> In 1812, the average wage for an unskilled laborer was 67 cents per day.<sup>12</sup> [If a person worked six days a week, they could earn around \$16.00 per month, and they would have to pay room and board from that sum.]

## Fur Trade

William Johnson joined the Northwest Company (NWC) in Canada in about 1817. In 1821, when the NWC merged with the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), he went to work for that company in the Columbia Department at Fort George and then Fort Vancouver. In 1825, the HBC books gave his age as 35, and he was a native of County Suffolk, England. In 1838, he was called a native of the Orkneys.<sup>13</sup>

His occupation was first given as cowherd.<sup>14</sup> In 1824, there were 24 cows at Fort George. These animals were transferred to the newly-built Fort Vancouver.<sup>15</sup> The 1829 Fort Vancouver livestock inventory listed “43 milk cows; 18 working oxen, 4 bulls; 46 heifers & steers; 43 calves, 1 year; 18 calves this spring; 108 hogs; 74 young pigs; 8 Buck goats; 11 she goats; 14 kids; 22 horses & mares.” Dairy cows were penned on the Lower Plain.<sup>16</sup>



1846 map of Fort Vancouver showing the lower plain where cows were kept.<sup>17</sup>

William was on the list of men who set out from Fort Vancouver on 6 September 1828 to join the party on the Willamette River and to proceed to the Umpqua in order to retrieve Jedidiah Smith's stolen property.<sup>18</sup>

## French Prairie

When William Johnson retired from the HBC, he settled on French Prairie. His farm was first settled in February 1833 by John Ball, a young man who came west with the Wyeth expedition. On 23 February 1833, Ball wrote to his parents,

“I shall have to begin farming with a few tools, and accommodations. But mind you, my farm is cleared, and I have the choice of a tract as large as the whole State of New Hampshire, except what is taken by seven other farmers. I shall settle in the neighborhood of those already there. I have this week returned from looking out the place; find good soil, most of it prairie; still there is timber in abundance for fencing, fire, building, etc., well dispersed over the country. The white oak often grows on the plains

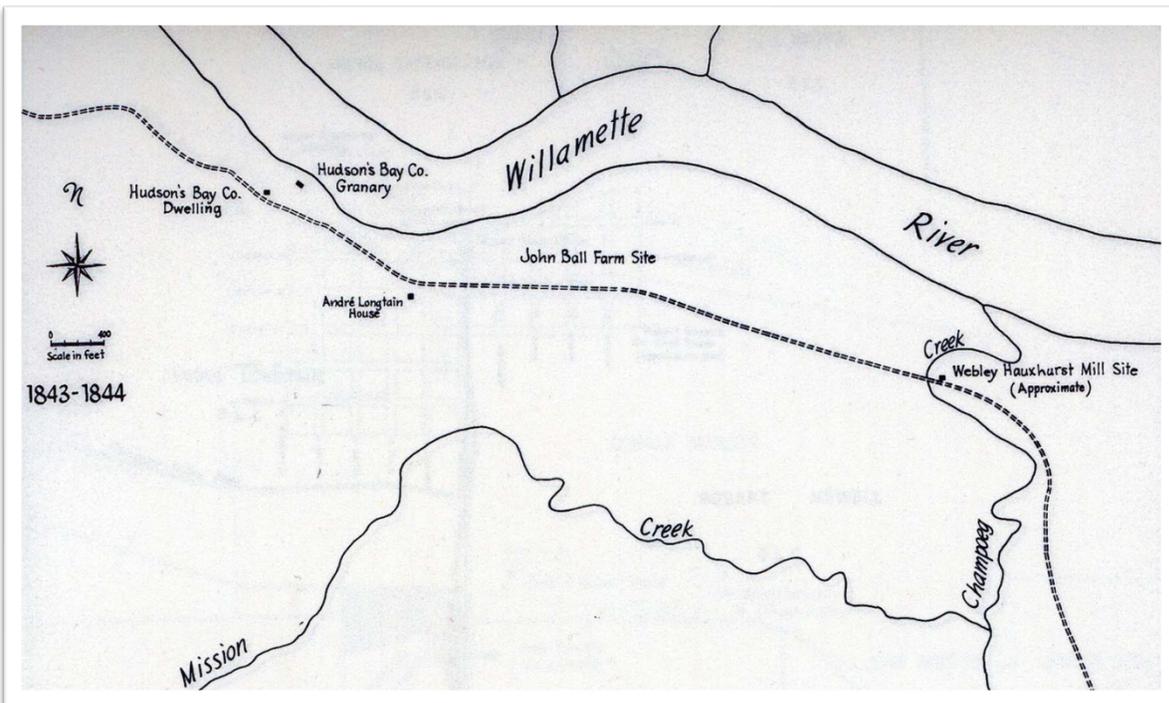
William Johnson, War of 1812 Sailor, French Prairie Settler, Builder of Portland's First House  
By Connie Lenzen

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like an orchard, and there are groves of pine and other timber. The same fir you have grows to a great height and three or four feet through, answering for all the uses you put the white pine to. There is another tree, called the red fir. The timber is like the yellow pine and grows immensely large.”<sup>19</sup>

...  
“When Doctor McLoughlin found I was bent on going, he loaned me farming utensils and seed for sowing, and as many horses as I chose to break in for teams. I took the seed and implements by boat, getting help up the Willamette to the falls, (passing the site of Portland and beyond the now Oregon City,) about fifty miles from Fort Vancouver. We carried by the falls, boat and all, and first stopped with one of the neighbors, a half-breed, J. B. Desportes, who had two wives and seven children, and plenty of cats and dogs. I caught from the prairie a span of horses with a lasso, made a harness, and set them to work. For harness I stuffed some deerskins, sewed in proper form, for collars, fitted to them for the harness, crooked oak limbs tied top and bottom with elk skin strings. Then to these strips of hide was fastened for tugs, which I tied to the drag made from a crotch of a tree. On this I drew out logs for my cabin, which, when I had laid up and put up rafters to make the roof, I covered with bark peeled from the cedar trees. This bark covering was secured by poles crossed and tied at the ends with wood strings to the timbers below. Then out of some split plank I made a bedstead and a table, and so I dwelt in a house of ‘fir and cedar.’”<sup>20</sup>

Nathaniel Wyeth was the next Ball house resident. His stay was short, and William Johnson took over from him. Robert Newell, arriving in 1843, took over from William.<sup>21</sup> The following map shows Ball's farm site.<sup>22</sup>



John McLoughlin, HBC Chief Factor, kept HBC employees who retired to farm on French Prairie on the books as employees. No service was expected of them. Rather, this provided a testing period. During that time, if the ex-employee caused trouble, they could be discharged and transported out of the country. McLoughlin also provided seed grain, a two-wheeled cart, plow, two cows, and two steers. He sold other farm implements at a discount.<sup>23</sup>

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Journals from several French Prairie visitors provide information about William and his family.

In November of 1835, U.S. Navy's William Slacum received a commission from the United States president, "To obtain some specific and authentic information in regard to the inhabitants of the country in the neighborhood of the Oregon, or Columbia river; and, generally, endeavour to obtain all such information, political, physical, statistical, and geographical as may prove useful or interesting to this Government."

Slacum reached the Columbia River at the end of December 1836.<sup>24</sup> He created a census of who was farming in 1837, and William Johnson was one of the farmers.

According to Slacum, William started his farm in 1834 and had two houses in good condition. He had enclosed 45 acres and cultivated 35. He harvested 300 bushels of wheat. He had two horses and 14 hogs.

Settler's name.	When begun	Acres closed	Acres cultivated	Crop of wheat, bushels	Horses	Hogs	Houses	Remarks
Jean Baptiste McRoy.....	1831	69	35	556	33	22	3	Good.
Andre Longtre .....	1835	45	24	400	3	33	2	Good.
Charles Plante .....	1835	60	60	800	12	14	2	Good.
Charles Rondeu .....	1836	24	24	200	9	10	1	Good.
Louis Fourier .....	1835	34	34	540	9	10	1	Good.
Joseph Gervais .....	1832	125	65	1,000	19	55	3 & 1 grist-mill	Good.
Xavier Delarout .....	1834	36	36	350	11	35	2	Good.
Joseph Delor .....	1832	28	28	280	11	28	2	Good.
E. Arquette .....	1833	80	50	600	5	31	2	Good.
Jean B. Perault.....	1832	80	60	500	4	20	3	Good.
Etteine Lucia .....	1832	70	45	740	21	45	4 & 1 grist-mill	Good.
Pierre Billique .....	1833	50	45	700	9	28	2	Good.
*Frederick Depau .....	1833	40	35	500	8	39	2	Good.
Ewing Young .....	1835	29	29	240	79 & 2 mules	30	2 & 1 distillery	Good.
†Lawrence Carmichael								
William Johnson .....	1834	45	25	300	2	14	2	Good.
‡Jas. A. O'Neil and Thos. J. Hubbard	1836	200	15	70	9	13	1 & blacksmith's shop.	
Wm. Canning, miller and millwright								
Solomon H. Smith								
Winslow Anderson								
Charles Roe, carpenter								
Elisha Ezekiel, wheelwright								
John Hord, carpenter								
Webley Hawkshurst, carpenter								
John Turner								
William Bailey								
Calvin Ebbets, stone mason								
John Rowling								
George Gay								

\*The above thirteen are all Canadians, and have been in the employ of the Hudson Bay Company.  
†Works on shares with Young. ‡Besides the crop of wheat, each of the above five have a large quantity of barley, oats, peas, and potatoes, sufficient for their support. || £300 sterling in the hands of the Hudson Bay Company.

None of the farmers owned cattle. The Hudson's Bay Company controlled the area economy – including the cattle. The company would lease two cattle to settlers, but they would not sell the cattle. William Slacum offered to take the settlers to California on his ship, the *Loriot*, where they could buy cattle and then drive them overland to Oregon. The Willamette Cattle Company enterprise was successful, and 630 cattle were brought back to the valley.

The French Prairie settlers, mostly Catholics, wanted to have their marriages blessed and their children baptized. On 5 July 1834, the settlers sent a letter to the Bishop of Juliopolis [at Red River, now Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada] via the HBC Express. They asked for a Catholic priest to be sent to them. Several months later, in the fall of 1834, Jason Lee and his fellow Methodist missionaries arrived on the prairie.<sup>25</sup>

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In the spring of 1836, the settlers sent a reminder letter to the Bishop, and William Johnson signed as the father of two children.<sup>26</sup> These two children were likely James and Herbert who were baptized by Rev. Herbert Beaver at Fort Vancouver.<sup>27</sup>

In September 1836, the Reverend Herbert Beaver and his wife, Jane, arrived at Fort Vancouver. Rev. Beaver, an Anglican minister, had been appointed Fort Vancouver Chaplain and Indian Missionary.<sup>28</sup>

Rev. Beaver baptized two of William's children.

James Johnson was baptized on 28 October 1836 at Fort Vancouver. His parents were named as William Johnson and Polly Chelsamas living on the Willamette River.

Herbert Johnson, son of William Johnson and Polly Chelsamas was baptized on 6 September 1838 at the family dwelling on the Willamette River."

Polly's tribe is given as "Chelsamas." There is no tribe with this name. There is a Chehalis tribe and a Clackamas tribe. William would have pronounced the tribal name correctly, but Rev. Beaver may not have been able to understand the name.

The Anglican Church does infant baptisms. It is likely that James and Herbert were baptized as babies.

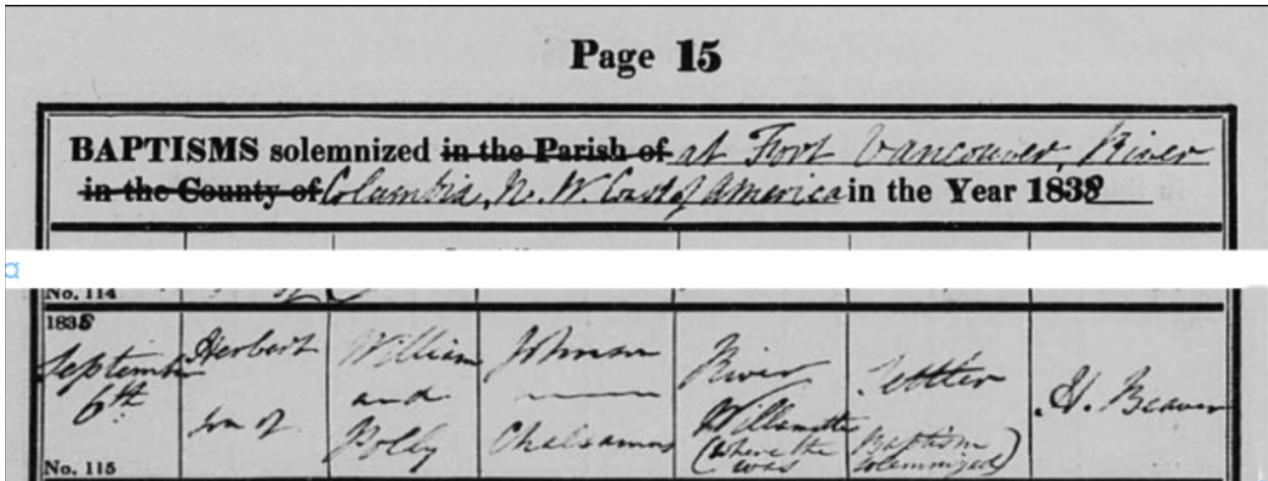
Images from the baptismal records are shown.<sup>29</sup>

CHURCH OF ENGLAND ON THE NORTHWEST COAST OF NORTH AMERICA, REGISTER OF BAPTISMS,  
1836 TO 1899

**Page 1**

**BAPTISMS solemnized in the Parish of *at Fort Vancouver, Puget*  
in the County of *Columbia, N.W. Coast of America* in the Year *1836-7***

When Baptised.	Child's Christian Name.	Parent's Name.		Abode.	Quality, Trade, or Profession.	By whom the Ceremony was performed.
		Christian.	Surname.			
1836 <i>October 28<sup>th</sup></i>	<i>James</i>	<i>William</i>	<i>Johnson</i>	<i>River</i>	<i>Settler</i>	<i>Herbert A. Beaver</i> <i>Chaplain to the</i> <i>Amalgamated Hudson's</i> <i>Bay Company.</i>
No. 1	<i>son of</i>	<i>Polly</i>	<i>Chelsamas</i>	<i>Willamette</i>		
1836			<i>Herbert</i>		<i>Herbert</i>	



In November 1838, Fathers Francois Norbert Blanchet and Modeste Demers arrived at the St. Paul wooden church the settlers had built for them. After visiting the local French-Canadian settlements, the first St. Paul mass was held on 6 January 1839. Subsequent masses were held until 3 February 1839 and then from 13 May to 10 June 1839. These sacraments were recorded in the Vancouver register. William signed a petition for Catholic priests in 1836, but no entries in the Vancouver or St Paul registers can be found for his family.

Thomas Jefferson Farnham, a member of the 1839 Peoria Party, visited the Johnson house on French Prairie.  
 "December 4, 1839

We soon crossed the stream, and entered the cabin of **Mr. Johnson**. It was a hewn log structure, about twenty feet square, with a mud chimney, hearth and fire-place. The furniture consisted of one chair, a number of wooden benches, a rude bedstead covered with flag mats, and several sheet iron kettles, earthen plates, knives and forks, tin pint cups, an Indian wife, and a brace of brown boys. I passed the night pleasantly with **Mr. Johnson**; and in the morning rose early to go to the Methodist Episcopal Mission, twelve miles above. But the old hunter detained me to breakfast; and afterwards insisted that I should view his premises, while his boy should gather the horses to convey me on my way. And a sight of fenced fields, many acres of wheat and oat stubble, potato fields, and garden vegetables of all descriptions, and a barn well stored with the gathered harvest compensated me for the delay. Adjoining **Mr. Johnson's** farm were four others, on all of which there were from fifty to a hundred acres under cultivation, and substantial log-houses and barns."<sup>30</sup>

Note: the description of "mud chimney, hearth, and fire-place" is important. In the later description of the archeological excavation of the house site, it is noted that Robert Newell, the next resident, built a wooden floor. The archeologists found artifacts buried in the floor that date to the Johnson residence.

The "brace of brown boys" could be Herbert and James Johnson.

Ewing Young, an American settler on the Prairie, had a sawmill and a store that William patronized.<sup>31</sup>  
 From Ewing Young's "Day Book."<sup>32</sup>

<b>Decr 1<sup>st</sup> 1838</b>	
Bill of Boards for <b>W Johnson</b>	
8 feet of plank 12 feet Long 1 ½ Inch thick	
<b>March</b>	\$2.87 ½
Paid <b>Johnson</b>	

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No date To 840 feet of plank 1 ½ Inch thick 150 pr Hundred	Dr \$12.60
<b>20 May</b> To Cash paid <b>Johnson</b> To Half of Six bushels of pees 80 cts To Sowing pees \$6	\$2 87 ½ \$2.40 \$3.00
To Beaver order paid <b>Johnson</b> \$22 1 Cotton Hkf	\$22.00 .50
<b>29 J</b> <b>W Johnson</b> Two Head [cattle] 29 June Paid Paid Deporty Mc ay & <b>Johnson</b>	*
<b>May 27 1840</b> Paid to <b>W Johnson</b> services & c	59.00

Ewing Young died in February 1841, without a will and apparently no heirs. With his mill, his store, his cattle, and his property, he was the wealthiest individual in the area. Up to this time, the Territory was under joint control of Britain and the United States, and the HBC was the de facto government. With no legal process that satisfied the American settlers to dispose of his estate, the settlers began a series of meetings designed to remedy this situation.

In February 1841, the French Prairie settlers met at the Methodist Mission House to discuss government. At that time, people were selected to serve various duties.

“David Leslie was elected chairman, and Sidney Smith, and Gustavus Hines were chosen secretaries.

The doings of the previous meeting were presented to the assembly, and were accepted, in part; viz: —

That a committee be chosen for framing a constitution, and drafting a code of laws; and that the following persons compose the committee, to-wit: —

Rev. F. N. Blanchet, Rev. Jason Lee, David Donpierre, Gustavus Hines, Mr. Charlevou, Robt. Moore, J. L. Parrish, Etienne Lucier and **Wm. Johnson**.

I. L. Babcock was appointed to fill the office of supreme judge with probate powers.

Geo. W. Le Breton was chosen to fill the office of clerk of courts, and public recorder.

**Wm. Johnson** was chosen to fill the office of high sheriff.

Xavier Laderaut, Pierre Billique, and Wm. McCarty, were chosen constables.<sup>33</sup>

Even though William was appointed as high sheriff, there is no record that he served in that capacity or that he helped frame the Oregon Constitution. There is, however, the record of an interview of him by Lt. Charles Wilkes in 1842 where he claimed there was “no necessity for lawyers or magistrates.”<sup>34</sup> In 1838, William was one of the signers of the Oregon Memorial to the American Congress. The memorial set out the advantages of the West and the desire of the signers to have the country become part of the United States.<sup>35</sup> He later joined the French Canadian signers who wanted to withdraw their names because of “unjust reflections on the Hudson’s Bay Company.”<sup>36</sup>

Back to Ewing Young’s register.

<b>Feb 12<sup>th</sup> 1841 William Johnson</b> Dr E. Y. Est. To 1. Pockette Knife To 2 lb Tobacco 40 c	.50 .80
<b>Feb 12 1841. William Johnson.</b> To E Young estate To side of ribs and Shoulder of Beef	3.00

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<p><b>5 March 1841.</b> Bill of Goods Recd. From Fort Vancouver for E. Young Estate by <b>Wm. Johnson</b>          1 Com. Capeau 18 s 6 d ea [A capeau is a long wrap style coat with a hood.]          2 pr Com. Cloth pants 11 s 2 d ea          1 3 point Blanket 11 s 6 d          Amount Carried over</p>		<p>3.73 1/3          4.43 1/3          2.30          \$10.46 2/3</p>
<p>The points referred to the blanket size. A three-point blanket would be about a twin-bed size blanket.</p> <p>In 1848, when William's possessions were appraised, the blanket was valued at \$4.00. The capeau was valued at \$3.75.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Shown – a 3 ½ point blanket</p>		
<p><b>5 March</b>          Amount Brot forward          1 Do 3 ½ point. 13 s 6 d          6. pipes, 6 d          12 lb. Coco. 9d          1 Tin Kittle 5s. 9d          20 lb. Sugar 8d</p>		<p>\$10.46 2/3          2.70          .10          1.80          1.15          2.70</p>
<p><b>22d March. Wm Johnson Dr., to E. Y Est.</b>          To one Stear with a big horn</p>		<p>\$25.00</p>
<p><b>May 26, 1841 Wm Johnson To E Youngs Estate</b>          3 Barrels of salt say 9 bushels Bot at sale in May 26, 184[1[          13 Files          Articles bot at sale in Sept. as per bill</p>		<p>Dr          10.50          .45          2.81</p>

In 1841, Lt. Charles Wilkes, U.S.N., was on an exploring expedition for the U.S. government when he visited the prairie. From his report,

“June 1841

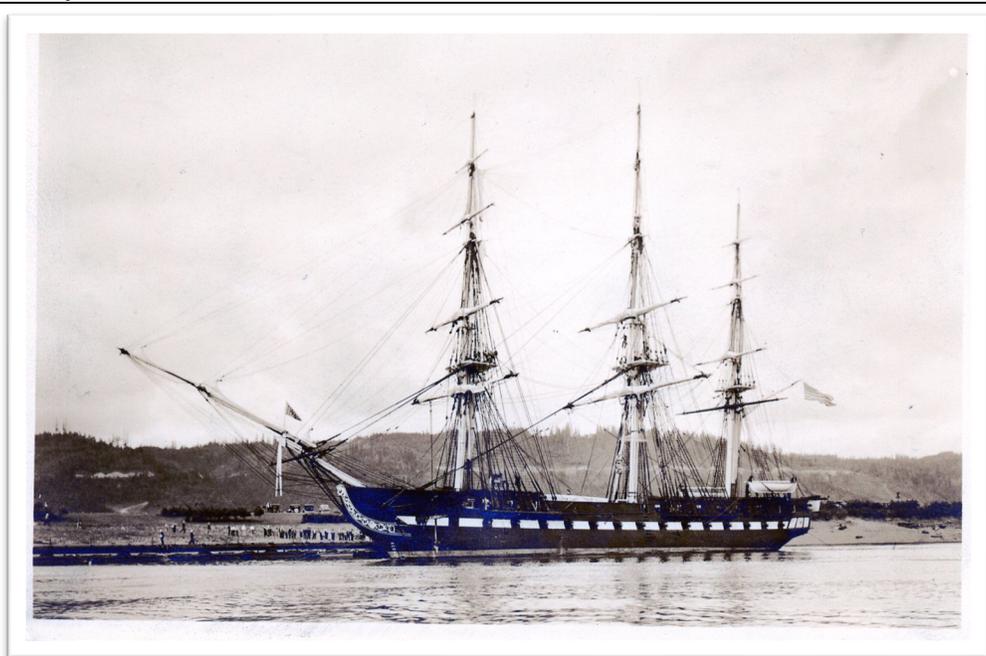
It was raining quite hard when we passed Camp Maude du Sable, a sandy point just at the opening out of the Willamette Valley, which was one of the points originally occupied when the river was first explored by the whites. About two miles further up the river is Champooing, eighteen miles above the falls, which we reached at about 4 p.m. Here we found a few log houses, one of which belonged to a **Mr. Johnson**, who gave us a hearty welcome. Mr. Johnson was formerly a trapper in the Hudson Bay Company's service, but has begun to farm here. He invited us to take up our quarters with him, and although they were not very pleasant in appearance, we thought it better to accept the invitation than to pitch our tents on the wet ground in the rain. To reach his dwelling, we passed through water over our shoes. The house had little the appearance of belonging to a white man, but his welcome made amends for many things. We were soon installed in his bed- room, where, in looking round, my eye was arrested by a print of the capture of the frigate Guerriere by the Constitution, which led me to speak concerning it, when I found he had been in that action. This at once made us old friends, for I found him familiar with the character of all our naval men, and I had much pleasure in listening to his anecdotes, and hearing him speak in

high terms of many of those officers to whom I feel personally attached. It was delightful to hear his unvarnished account of Commodore Hull's coolness and conduct in the action. Johnson asked many questions about the young officers he had known. I was equally diverted with his own adventures."

In August 1933, the reconstructed *USS Constitution* visited Portland, Oregon, and docked at Swan Island. The following photo was taken by Lee Gillam,

The ship measures 204 feet at the water line and 304 from the bowsprit to spanker. The playing field of a football field is 300 feet.

It originally carried 473 officers and men.<sup>37</sup>



Back to Wilkes' narrative.

"Finding, after the excitement of war was over, he could not be content to lead a quiet life, he determined to adopt the business of trapping. In this he was engaged until the last few years, when he had settled himself down here, and taken an Indian girl for his wife, by whom he had several children. 'To the latter he said he was desirous of giving a good education, and for this purpose he had engaged old Mr. Moore, from Illinois, to pass several months with him. Johnson had all the easy and independent character of a trapper; yet I could still perceive that he had hanging about him somewhat of the feeling of discipline that he had acquired in the service. His Indian wife is extremely useful in making everything, besides taking care of the household concerns, and is rather pretty. Johnson's estimate of her was that she was worth "half a dozen civilized wives." There is little cleanliness, however, about his house, and many of the duties are left to two young male slaves, of Indian blood, but of what tribe I did not learn. Johnson's farm consists of about forty acres under cultivation: his wheat and potatoes were flourishing, and he had a tolerable kitchen-garden. He has some little stock, but complained much of the Oregon tiger, or American panther. These voracious animals are numerous and bold: the night before we arrived, they had entered the pen and killed a calf, regardless of the dogs; and an alarm was given on the night of our stay, when all the guns were in requisition, and noise enough was made in getting ready, to scare away dozens of them.

We were informed that there are plenty of elk, and deer, and that the grizzly bear is also common. The flesh of the latter animal is very much esteemed. Wild ducks and geese are quite numerous in the spring and fall, covering the rivers, lakes, and ponds.

There are four houses and three lodges in sight of Johnson's farm, whence all the neighbours called to see us. They were just the sort of men one would expect to see in such a place. One was an old man by the name of Cannon, who had been one of the party with Lewis and Clarke, and was from his own

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account the only remaining one in the country. He likes the country, and says he thinks there is no necessity for Dr. M'Laughlin's authority or laws to govern it.

Another of these men was named George Gay, of whom I shall speak hereafter. [George Gay was married to William's wife's sister.]

We found this, as I said before, a dirty house: the people were idle and fond of lounging, and all I have yet seen are uncombed and un-shaved.

These people were quite alive on the subject of laws, courts, and magistrates, including governors, judges, &c. I was here informed that a committee had been appointed to wait upon me on my arrival at the mission, to hold a consultation relative to the establishment of settled governments. Johnson, trapper-like, took what I thought the soundest view, saying that they yet lived in the bush, and let all do right, there was no necessity for laws, lawyers, or magistrates."

[William Johnson, George Gay, and Simon Plamondon guided Wilkes around the Prairie. A few days later after touring French Prairie,]

"In the morning, before dawn, the two Indian boys belonging to Johnson came over to our hut for the purpose of looking for their milk-pans. Unknown to us, we had laid on its side, for a seat, a cupboard which contained them. This the boys came in search of, and in their haste awoke Mr. Drayton, who naturally thought they intended to steal some of our things: he accordingly pelted them with our boots and shoes, and all other articles that came to hand. This aroused us all, when a general outcry was raised, and the Indian boys made a precipitate retreat, not, however, before they had secured one of the objects of their search.

After breakfast, we crossed the river to Johnson's, and I was, on this second visit, more impressed with the filth, both in and outdoors than before."<sup>38</sup>

Back to Young's daybook

<b>Sep 1841</b> , Charged in book	
<b>Wm Johnson</b> Dr one pitcher	0.50
To one chalk line	.25
To ball moles,	.11
To one hammer & gimlet	1.05
To one Dimejohn [A demijohn holds liquid – usually alcohol.]	90
Mr. E Young Debt <b>W Johnson</b> for Going to forte George and bring up Goods for him	10 Dollars
For Making of shirts and Washing	5 Dollars
[In 1841, Wilkes wrote, "His Indian wife is extremely useful in making everything.."]	
Five Days employed in the praisment of his property	10 Dollars
For his womans board eleven Weeks	14 Dollars
To autioneering property amounting to \$1333 1/3 at 1 1/2 per cent	\$20.00
Auction Sales of <b>May 26, 1842</b>	
Chd 13 files <b>Wm Johnson</b> 3 1/2 cts ea.	.45 1/2
<b>June 13, 1843</b> , Public auction	
1 Wild Horse, Johnson	\$21.00
Lot of Harness Hames &c 50ct to <b>Johnson</b>	.50
Paid <b>W Johnson</b> for Cooking 1 day &c \$2	2.00

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In 1843, Dr. Elijah White, the first Oregon Indian Agent, made a census of settlers in the Oregon Territory. His census included the numbers of men, women, and children, and a summary of their crops for the 1842-43 year. The William Johnson household consisted of one male over the age of 18, one female over the age of 18, and two children. They had 35 acres under cultivation and had harvested 300 bushels of wheat and 98 bushels of coarse grain. They had 11 horses, 12 neat stock, and 16 hogs.<sup>39</sup>

Names of heads of families	No. of Males over 18 years	No. of females over 18 y. old	No. of children under 18 years	Acres under cultivation	Ampt. of wheat in 1842	Ampt. of Coarse grain	No. of Horses	No. of neat Stock	Sheep	Hogs
Wm Johnson	1	1	2	35	300	98	11	12		16

### Provisional Government

On 2 May 1843, a vote was taken by the settlers at Champoeg to decide if a Provisional Government should be established as a preliminary step for aligning with the United States. By a 52 to 50 vote, the Provisional Government won.<sup>40</sup> William cast one of the 52 votes.

Taxation was an issue at the meeting, and a resolution was adopted that there would be no taxes. There would be a voluntary subscription. Unfortunately, that subscription did not bring in enough money to pay for running the government. In 1844, a voluntary tax act was passed by the legislature.<sup>41</sup>

William Johnson is not found in the 1844 taxpayer list. A "Johnson" with no assets or taxes is listed.<sup>42</sup> This could indicate the time when William sold the farm to Robert Newell and moved to the Portland town site where he built the first house in Portland. George Gay, William's brother-in-law is found in the list.<sup>43</sup>

Tax Book, 1844 Names	Town Lots	Pleasure Carriages	Mills	Clocks	Watches	Horses	Mules	Cattle	Hogs	Merchandise	Total Valuation	Poll Tax Amount of tax at the rate of 1/8 of 1 per cent
Gardape, Babtiste				12	35	140		320			460	1.07x
Gay, George						400		2000	100		2547	3.68x

The Robert Newell home site was the subject of an Oregon State University archaeological dig. In her thesis, Molly Manion describes the site and the findings. One of the findings was that Robert Newell built a wood floor over William Johnson's clay floor. Artifacts buried in that clay can be attributed to John Ball and William Johnson. The ceramic patterns include Abbey Scene, British Flowers, Chinese Export, Doria or Epirus, Euphrates, Hudson, Italian, Isola Belle, Lily, Marino, Seasons, and Violet.<sup>44</sup>

Images from Harriet Munnick's ceramic collection on the St. Paul Mission Historical Society website ([www.spmhs.com](http://www.spmhs.com)) show what some of the patterns look like.



Isola Belle



Marino



Lily



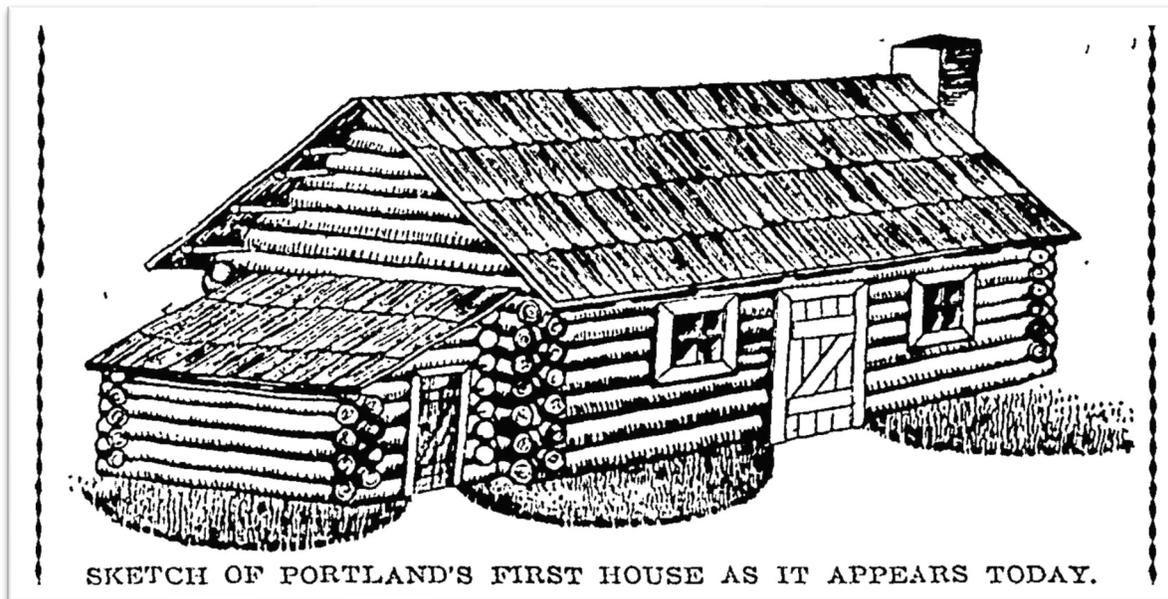
British Flowers

## 1844 – Portland, Twality County

The William Johnson family was in Portland before early 1844. William Cushing, passenger on the Brig Chenamus, wrote in his journal,

“Wednesday morning May 1<sup>st</sup> [1844], we roused out early and at 5 left our camp, with a pelting rain to comfort us on May morn. — I wonder if any of the good folks at home had such a Maying this morning as we did — The rain did not last a great while before the sun came out & the prospect of a pleasant day appeared flattering — nor were we disappointed We kept on till about noon when we reached the house of a **Mr. Johnson**, an old settler about these diggings — We were kindly received & treated to a bowl of nice bread and milk — His wife or rather woman (for very few of those who have Indian women are legally married, tho’ none the less faithful on that account) is the neatest looking squaw I have seen and from appearances keeps her house & family in as good as order as a white woman would. We remained for about an hour then took a fresh start – stopped a few moments at a place about 2 miles belonging to Captain Sylvester.”<sup>45</sup>

Clearly, the Johnson home was built before May 1844, and William was at the Champoeg meeting on 2 May 1843. This gives us a time frame for the move from French Prairie and Portland. It was after May 1843 and before May 1844. The Willamette River flooded in 1843. It could be that the Johnson house was flooded out – encouraging the family move to the Portland area.



Painting created for Portland City Council in 1904.<sup>46</sup>

The provisional government authorized a census to be taken in 1845. William Johnson, with 2 males under 12 years, 1 female under 12 years, 1 female 18 and under 45, and 1 male over 45, was enumerated in Tualatin County.[Twality]<sup>47</sup> [Twality District was formed on 5 July 1843 as one of the four Oregon districts. In 1949, Twality was renamed as Washington County. Downtown Portland was in Twality, then Washington County.]

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		George	Gear					1	1			1	1	2
		William	Johnson	2	1				1	1		3	2	5
James	John							1				1		1

The two males under 12 would have been the two sons baptized by Rev. Beaver. The one female under 12 would be his daughter Amelia. A baptism for her is found in the Oregon City Catholic Church register.

“The 12 April, 1845, We priest undersigned have baptized Amelie, aged 2 days, born of the legitimate marriage of William Johnson and of Mary, woman of the country, the godfather has been we ourselves. The father has signed with us.”<sup>48</sup>

The mother’s name is given as “Mary, woman of the country,” meaning Indian. The mother of the two sons was Polly. Since Polly is a known nickname for Mary, it is uncertain whether William had two different wives or if he had only one.

Since the daughter was “born of the legitimate marriage of William Johnson and of Mary,” that means a marriage for the couple was recorded somewhere. As noted previously, no marriage was recorded for William in the St. Paul or Vancouver church registers. Rev. Herbert Beaver’s register of marriages conducted at Fort Vancouver does not include a marriage for him.<sup>49</sup>

William, while in “good health” made a will on 6 February 1846. He bequeathed 2/3 of his estate to his children, James, Herbert, and Amelia. However,

“If they not live to the age of 21, 1/3 of the property should go to the son of William Cannon (John Cannon) and the remainder to the children of George Gay.”

He named George Gay and Samuel Campbell as executors of his estate.”<sup>50</sup>

### “Ardent spirits”

On 27 April 1846, William was indicted by in the Tuality County Court for “retailing ardent spirits.” He was, “moved and seduced by an evil heart on or about the tenth day of March A. D. 1846 at the county aforesaid did then and there sell and barter give or trade ardent spirits to one Caleb Wilkins.”<sup>51</sup>

Most early Oregon laws relating to liquor control were intended to prevent Native Americans from possessing liquor. In June 1844, Oregon's provisional government passed a prohibition law designed to prevent the sale of liquor.

“Sec. 3. That if any person shall hereafter establish or carry on a manufactory or distillery of ardent spirits in Oregon, he shall be subject to be indicted before the circuit court as for a nuisance; and if convicted, he shall be fined the sum of one hundred dollars, and the court shall issue an order to the sheriff, directing him to seize and destroy the distilling apparatus, which order the sheriff shall execute.”<sup>52</sup>

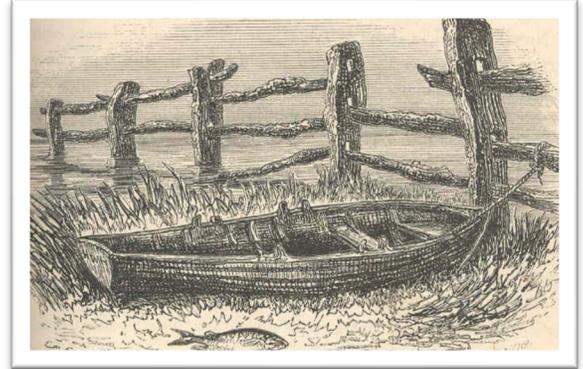
Edward Chambreau, a French-born adventurer, visited Oregon. In his biography, he told about an adventure with William Johnson.

“It was situated four miles below Oregon City on a small stream that formed a Canyon. The timber and vine maple were very thick and it was a hard place to find. The building was a small, low, log hut covered with Cedar bark. The inmates were an old mountaineer and two squaws. There were three fine rifles, powder horns and everything complete upon the shoulder strap, such as caps and rifle patches, balls and bullets in the shot pouch. I need scarcely say that the belt with a very large knife in the sheath was always around the waist.

“I don’t know what they did discover in my general appearance but without any further ceremony they proposed to me to engage in their business. Without asking me if I would be afraid to do so or not; the agreement was made.

“The kind man’s name was **Johnson** and from the history I had of him, I was satisfied he was game. When he ran away from the Man of War he was shot at several times, two balls taking effect. As I afterwards found out, he was a good shot himself, a good boxer and a number one wrestler. He said he never was thrown down until I took hold of him and as it is often the case, came near ending in a row.”

“The next morning the Skiff was made ready with the Camp equipage and a 20 gallon Keg of “Blue River”. This was hid under the things in the bottom of the boat. We avoided the Indians as much as possible, until we should reach our destination, which was near the mouth of the Cowlitz River. Johnson had previously instructed me how we should do.”



Note: A skiff is a small flat-bottom boat.<sup>53</sup>

“There were quite a number of Indians camped here, were anxious to “swop” for “Lumm” (the word for whiskey) but we told them to tell all their friends that we had come with plenty of it. By sundown they were pressing us so hard that we could not put them off any longer, we made them sit down in rows, with their different things they had to put their “Lumm” in, and while I saw whatever they had to pay for it. They were all on the beach about ten steps from the Skiff. They had kettles and skin buckets to put this in.

“We went to every one before we began to pour it out in their vessels and agreed on what should be given for this and what measure full. Having done this and everything being ready, Johnson began to pour out and I carried the things to the boat. The principal things we got in exchange were Beaver and Otter Skins and Hudson Bay Blankets. Bear in mind that the rifle is all the time hung across your back and it is against the mountaineer law for an Indian to be in his rear.

“An Indian when he drinks whiskey he will drink as long as he can hold his breath. By the time he was getting through with the last ones, the first ones were getting very funny. Johnson shouted to me to run to the boat. I ran to the boat and shoved it until I was knee deep in the water. As he had the whiskey, some of them followed him to the boat. He was retreating backwards with the Keg under his arm and his long knife in the other hand. In the meantime I covered them with my rifle. Before it takes time to tell it, he threw the last keg with what remained in it as far as he could towards the camp. This gave him a chance to get away from those who were immediately near him and he got into the boat. As I got one foot into the boat an Indian caught me by the fringe of my buckskin shirt and my friend had to knock him off with his rifle to make him let go.

“By this we lost a little time and I got into the boat. We were almost in swimming water, with three Indians hanging yet to the boat. We knocked them off by blows upon the head and shoved off just in the nick of time, because we had no more than had them loose from the boat then there was a gang of about thirty who came running and yelling with all their might. Then there was fighting among themselves.

“As it was nearly night, we got out of their reach in safety. On this trip we made very near five hundred dollars apiece. The reader can draw his own conclusion of what must of been the scene in that Indian camp with twenty gallons of this abominable stuff among them.”<sup>54</sup>

## Land claim

Oregon's provisional government permitted inhabitants to stake out claims and survey them. A legislative committee created a constitution that included rules for the claims. Any white male could claim 640 acres, and within six months of recording their claim, they were to build a home.<sup>55</sup>

William took out a claim in Twality County. On 8 January 1848, he sold four acres in the southeast corner of his claim to John Potter. The price was \$600.00.<sup>56</sup>

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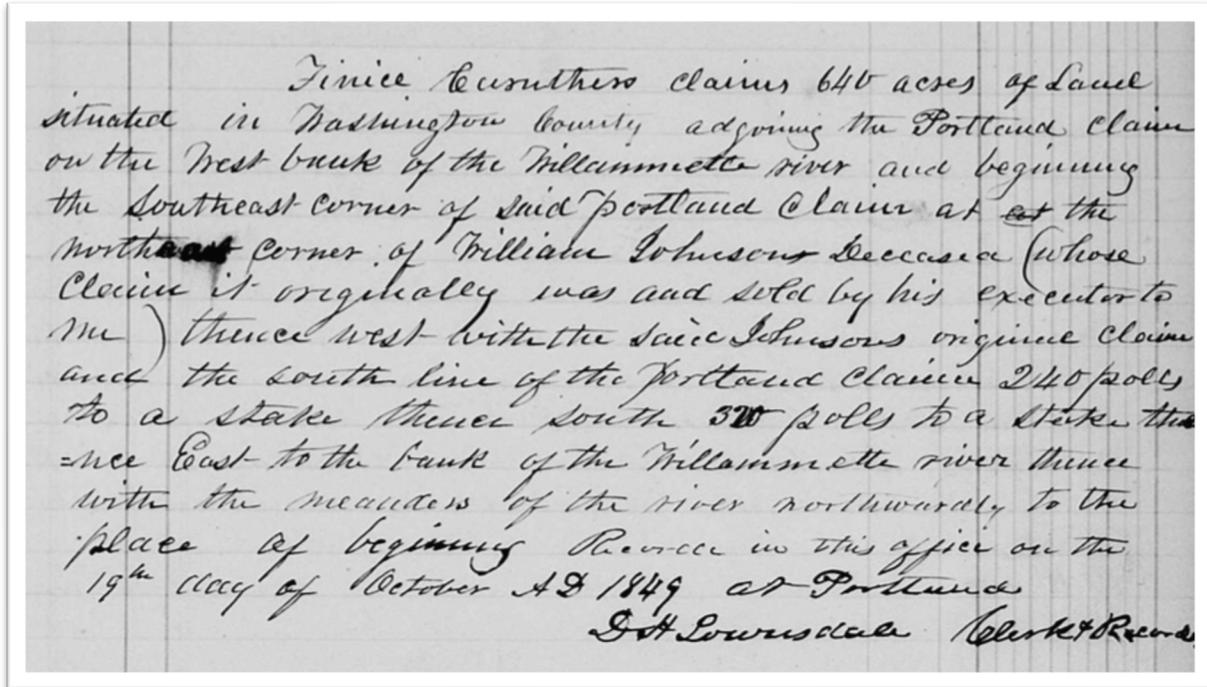
Know all men by these presents that I William Johnson of Twality county Oregon Territory for and in consideration of five hundred dollars to me in hand paid by the said Potter of the County and Territory of Oregon the receipt of which is truly acknowledged and by these presents do hereby transfer sell assign set over and quit claim unto the said Potter all my right title claim and interest in and to that certain piece parcel or lot of Land to wit Commencing at the South East Corner of my claim adjoining Jewell's claim thence running down the Willamette River fifty nine rods thence Westward eleven rods thence Southward fifty nine rods to the South line to the South East Corner of my claim thence Eastward along said line to the place of beginning the same containing four acres more or less the said Potter his heirs and assigns to have and to hold the same for ever On testifying whereof I do hereby set my hand and seal this the eighth Day of January A.D. 1848

Witness My hand  
W. Johnson (Seal)

Recorded January 15<sup>th</sup> 1848 Attest Thos. Magruder Recorder

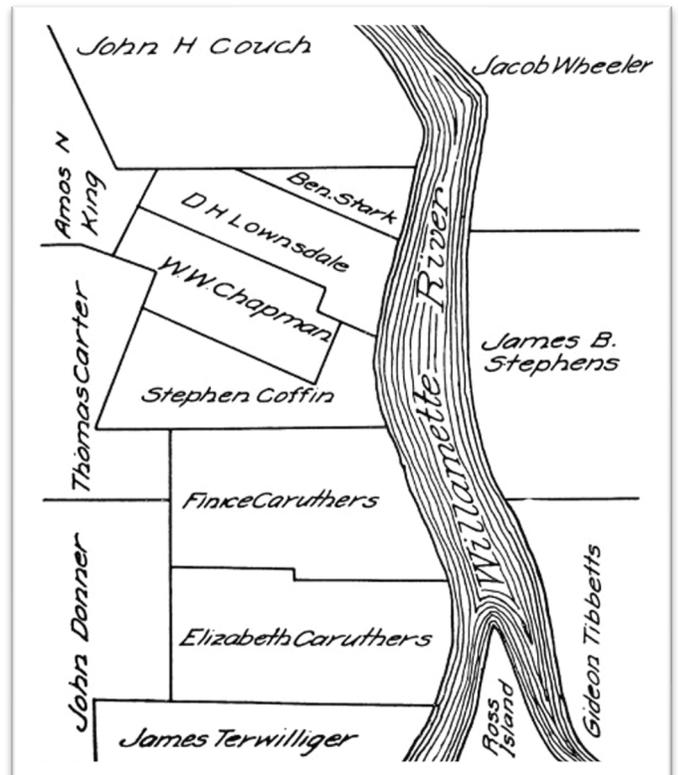
## William's death

William died in November 1848. Less than a year later, on 19 October 1849, Finice Caruther's deed for William's 640 acres was recorded in Washington County.<sup>57</sup>



Finice Caruthers claims 640 acres of land situated in Washington County adjoining the Portland claim on the West bank of the Willamette river and beginning the Southeast corner of said Portland claim at ~~at~~ the Northwest corner of William Johnsons deceased (whose claim it originally was and sold by his executor to me) thence west with the said Johnsons original claim and the south line of the Portland claim 240 poles to a stake thence south 320 poles to a stake thence East to the bank of the Willamette river thence with the meanders of the river northwardly to the place of beginning Record in this office on the 19<sup>th</sup> day of October A.D. 1849 at Portland  
G. L. Lowndale Clerk & Recorder

While the purchase was for Finice, the claim was split between Finice and his mother, Elizabeth Caruthers. The Oregon Donation Law specified that an unmarried male was eligible for 320 acres. The sketch to the right shows the Caruthers claim that we know was the Johnson claim.<sup>58</sup> The BLM survey map below shows the claims.



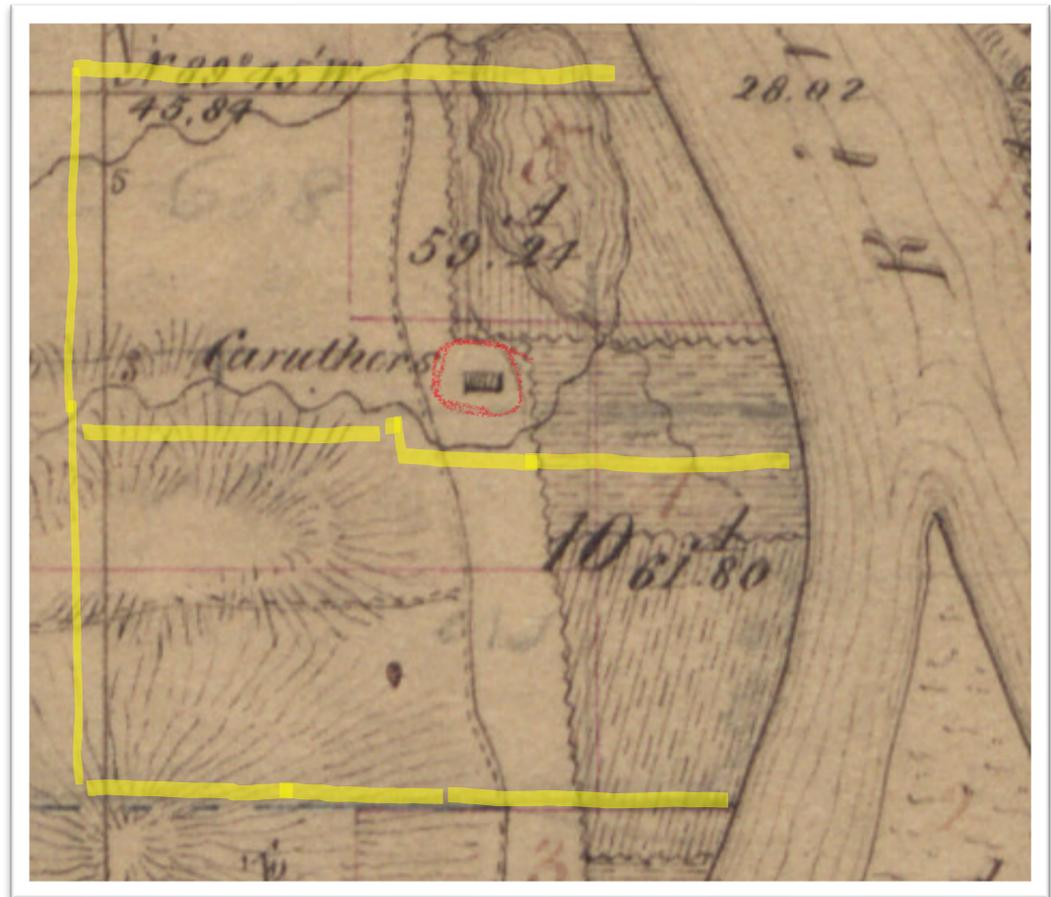
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The August 1851 General Land Office survey includes information about dwellings, fields, streams, and roads.

The Caruthers house is shown in the rectangle to the right of the "s" in Caruthers. The hash marks to the right indicate fields. A stream is shown below the house. A hill rises to the south and west of the house.

Finice Caruthers, in his Donation Land Claim, stated he settled on the land on 1 October 1850.<sup>59</sup> While he could have built the house and created the fields in less than a year, the location next to a stream suggests the house was originally the Johnson house.



William Johnson's Probate File

As noted previously, William wrote a will prior to his death. It was admitted to probate and an inventory of his personal property was made.<sup>60</sup>

*List of property appraised by*

*Meason Read, W. E. Warren and Tho Carter*

*appraisors of the following <sup>Property</sup> Belonging to the*

*Estate of Wm Johnson Deceased as given*

*under our hand this thirteenth (13) of December*

*in the year of our Lord 1848*

5 Shirts 50 - \$2.50	1 hand saw " \$ 50
4 pair pants 150 6.00	3 plumes and bits " 6.00
1 vest 50 - " 50	4 Chopping axes - " 4.00
1 Sailer Jacket 1.75	1 foot axels " " 5.00
1 Cap or coat - 3.75	1 Shave shave " " 5.00
3 Cotton handkerchiefs 3.00	1 Sifter - " " 3.00
1 Cloth cap - " 25	1 Long auger " " 1.00
2 Cotton handkerchiefs " 50	1 Pad " " 50
1 Set Bed Curtains - 1.37	1 drawing knife " " 50
1 Striped Blanket - 1.00	1 Ring and staple " " 50
1 = three pint " - 4.00	3 haws 75 = 1 pair tongs 38 = 1.13
2 = old ones 100 - 2.00	1 Large fork - " 1.25
2 = Razors, 1 Base, 1 Brush, 1 Soap 2.00	1 Saddle " " 7.00
1 Cloth Brush - " 75	1 Park Saddle " " 75
2 odd Shaws 50 - 1.00	3 tin pans " " 75
1 hair machine - 50	1 wood nail " " 50
1 top line - 1.50	1 Set of glass " " 1.37
1 2 foot rule - " 75	2 chairs " " 50
1 Plate - " 75	2 tobacco 4.00 " 8.00
3/4 D Cotton strip 40 30	1 shot gun " 6.00
1 Brog mounted Chest 10.00	1 Rifle gun " 10.00
1 Wood Chest - 3.00	1 Coffee mill " 25
1 Glass and Case - 4.00	1 grain Plane " 1.00
10 Shaws - 50	1 yack of cattle " 35.00
2 Lamps 62 - 1.25	1 Bay Horse " 35.00
9 knives & forks - 2.50	1 Bay mare " 20.00
2 pitchers 100 1.75	1 Bald mare " 25.00
1 mug, 1 Plate 15 each - 38	2 cows & calves 20 - 40.00
6 plates - 1.50	1 " " 15 - 15.00
1 oven and lid - 8.00	1 plow - " 7.00
4 camp kettles - 1.00	1 Seed Mow " 7.00
1 firing Pan - 75	1 yack & 2 calves " 7.00
1 Clack	Still tubs & firing 80.00
1 Sad iron - 1.75	1 double barreled gun - 11.00
	1 Cask lin iron - 5.00
	3 ducks - " 5.00
	2 dog faulds " 4.00

The estate inventory included one sailor's jacket, valued at \$1.75.

The USS Constitution Museum has this image of an 1812 sailor's uniform.<sup>61</sup>

R. F. Zogbaum included images of the uniforms in his painting of Hull's Victory.



Photograph. <https://www.loc.gov/item/98510153/>.



### Ordinary Seaman Uniform

*War of 1812*

The sailor's blue jacket and white trousers were emblems of his trade. Practical and durable, his clothes were ideally suited to shipboard labor. Working men everywhere wore tall round hats.

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End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> W.P.A. Newspaper Index Project, "Oregon Spectator Index, 1847 – 1854, Vol. I" (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, May 1941), 283.
- <sup>2</sup> Bruce McIntyre Watson, *Lives Lived West of the Divide A Biographical Dictionary of Fur Traders Working West of the Rockies 1793 – 1858* (Kelowna, B.C.; Centre for Social, Spatial and Economic Justice, University of British Columbia Okanagan, 2010), 491.
- <sup>3</sup> Washington County Probate Files, William Johnson, file #291, digital file; original at Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon.
- <sup>4</sup> Henry E. Reed, "William Johnson." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1933): 315. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610830>.
- <sup>5</sup> W.P.A. Newspaper Index Project, "Oregon Spectator Index, 1847 – 1854, Vol. I" (Portland, Oregon: Oregon Historical Society, May 1941), 283.
- <sup>6</sup> Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition, during the years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842*, Vol. IV (Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1845), 347-51, 364.
- <sup>7</sup> A.M. Thomas, *History of the American wars: comprising the war of the Revolution and the war of 1812* (Hartford, Conn.: House & Brown, 1847), 287. Pdf. <https://www.loc.gov/item/08010504/>
- <sup>8</sup> Transcription of Logbook of the United States Frigate Constitution, Isaac Hull, Commander, June 12, 1812 – September 16, 1812," *USS Constitution Museum*.
- <sup>9</sup> Lauren McCormack, "Food and Drink in the U.S. Navy, 1794 to 1820." (2018): <https://www.usscm.org/publications/us-naval-recruiting-during-the-war-of-1812.pdf>.
- <sup>10</sup> Lauren McCormack, "Food and Drink in the U.S. Navy, 1794 to 1820." (2018): <https://www.usscm.org/publications/us-naval-recruiting-during-the-war-of-1812.pdf>.  
[https://ussconstitutionmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm\\_uploads/2019/05/US-Naval-Recruiting-during-the-War-of-1812.pdf](https://ussconstitutionmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/dlm_uploads/2019/05/US-Naval-Recruiting-during-the-War-of-1812.pdf)
- <sup>11</sup> "Private Soldier Pay is Too Low," *State of the Union History*; <https://www.stateoftheunionhistory.com/2016/09/1812-james-madison-private-soldier-pay.html>.
- <sup>12</sup> *History of Wages in the United States from Colonial Times to 1928, Revision of Bulletin No. 499 with Supplement, 1929 – 1933* (Washington: United States Government Printing Office, 1934);  
[https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/files/docs/publications/bls/bls\\_0604\\_1934.pdf](https://fraser.stlouisfed.org/files/docs/publications/bls/bls_0604_1934.pdf),
- <sup>13</sup> Henry E. Reed, "William Johnson." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1933): 315. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610830>.
- <sup>14</sup> Henry E. Reed, "William Johnson." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1933): 314–23. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610830>.
- <sup>15</sup> John A. Hussey, "Old Fort Vancouver, 1824 – 1829," Fort Vancouver, *National Park Service*;  
<https://www.nps.gov/fova/learn/historyculture/oldfova.htm>.
- <sup>16</sup> "II. Fort Vancouver: Transition, 1829 – 1841," Fort Vancouver Cultural Landscape Report, *National Park Service*;  
<https://npshistory.com/publications/fova/clr/chap2-2.htm>
- <sup>17</sup> 1846 Covington Stockade Area Map: *Plan of Fort Vancouver* c. 1846, based on portion of map by R. Covington;  
<https://totakeresponsibility.blogspot.com/2012/07/fort-vancouver.html>
- <sup>18</sup> Henry E. Reed, "William Johnson." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 34, no. 4 (1933): 315. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610830>.
- <sup>19</sup> John Ball and Kate N. B. Powers. "Across the Continent Seventy Years Ago." *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 3, no. 1 (1902): 82–106; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609522>.
- <sup>20</sup> John Ball and Kate N. B. Powers. "Across the Continent Seventy Years Ago." *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 3, no. 1 (1902): 102-3. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609522>.
- <sup>21</sup> Mollie Jo, Manion, "Where Have All the Women and Children Gone? An Examination of Domestic Life at the Newell Farmstead (35MA41) in the Early Oregon Country, Thesis (Corvallis, OR; Oregon State University, 2014).
- <sup>22</sup> J A. Hussey, *Champoeg: Place of Transition* (Portland, OR; Oregon Historical Society, 1967), opposite p. 222.
- <sup>23</sup> John A. Hussey, *Champoeg: Place of Transition* (Portland: Oregon Historical Society, 1967), 51–2.
- <sup>24</sup> John Forsyth and William A. Slacum. "Slacum's Report on Oregon, 1836–37." *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 13, no. 2 (1912): 175–224; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20609903>.
- <sup>25</sup> Jason Lee, "Diary of Reverend Jason Lee—III." *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society* 17, no. 4 (1916): 397–430.  
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610056>.
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- <sup>27</sup> *Register of Baptisms at Fort Vancouver, River Columbia, Northwest Coast of America* (London: Shaw and Sons, FamilySearch, film 8274348, DGS 8274348.
- <sup>28</sup> Herbert Beaver and R. C. Clark. "Experiences of a Chaplain at Fort Vancouver, 1836-1838." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 39, no. 1 (1938), 22; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20611092>.
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- <sup>30</sup> Reuben Gold Thwaites, ed, *Early Western Travels, 1748 – 1846, Vol. XXIX including Farnham's Travels in the Great Western Prairies, etc October 21 – December 4, 1939* (Cleveland, Ohio: The Arthur H. Clark Company, 1906); *HathiTrust*; <https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=nyp.33433081825246&seq=13>.
- <sup>31</sup> F. G. Young and Joaquin Young, "Ewing Young and His Estate: A Chapter in the Economic and Community Development of Oregon," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, Vol. 21, No. 3 (Sep 1920), 209, 211, 213, 225, 245, 250, 302; pdf, *JStor*.
- <sup>32</sup> F. G. Young and Joaquin Young, "Ewing Young and His Estate," 240, 250, 252, 254, 266, 277, 280, 285, 290, 291; pdf, *JStor*.
- <sup>33</sup> Joseph Gaston, *The Centennial History of Oregon*, Vol. I (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1912), 166.
- <sup>34</sup> History of the Washington County Sheriff's Office, 1841 to 2009, p. 5; <https://www.washingtoncountyor.gov/sheriff/documents/history-washington-county-sheriff-s-officepdf/download?inline>.
- <sup>35</sup> Cornelius James Brosnan, "The Signers of the Oregon Memorial of 1838," *The Washington Historical Quarterly* vol. 24, No. 3 (Jul 1933), 187; pdf, *JStor*; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610776>.
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- <sup>37</sup> "Reconstruction – 'Old Ironsides' Lives Anew as a Hallowed Symbol," *Oregon Sunday Journal*, 30 July 1933, p. 31.
- <sup>38</sup> Charles Wilkes, *Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition, during the years 1838, 1839, 1840, 1841, 1842*, Vol. IV (Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1845), 347-8, 364.
- <sup>39</sup> Lists of settlers west of Rockies, 1842 by Elijah White, Indian Agent," FamilySearch DGS 8276177, image 121; citing List of Letters Received by the Office of Indian Affairs, 1842 – 1880, Oregon Superintendency, NARA M234, reel 607.
- <sup>40</sup> Charles Henry Carey, *History of Oregon*, Vol. I (Chicago: The Pioneer Historical Publishing Company, 1922), 379.
- <sup>41</sup> Leslie M. Scott, "First Taxes in Oregon, 1844." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1930): 3, 4, 5, 6. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2061051>.
- <sup>42</sup> Leslie M. Scott, "First Taxpayers in Oregon, 1844." *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (1930): 17; <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20610516>.
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- <sup>44</sup> Molly Manion, *A Settlement Model at the Robert Newell Farmstead (35MA41), French Prairie*, Thesis (Corvallis, Oregon: State University, 2006).
- <sup>45</sup> William Cushing, "Journal of a Voyage to the Columbia River and Related Papers, 1843 – [1870], WA MSS S-1734, Yale Collection of Western Americana, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, images 15-16; [https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/15826981?child\\_oid=15827017](https://collections.library.yale.edu/catalog/15826981?child_oid=15827017).
- <sup>46</sup> "First House Ever Built In Portland," *The Oregon Sunday Journal*, 24 July 1904, page 20.
- <sup>47</sup> Julie Kidd, *1845 Census of the Territory South of the Columbia and West of the Cascade Mountains* (Portland, OR; Oregon Territorial Press, 1997), 14.
- <sup>48</sup> Harriet Duncan Munnick, *Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest, Oregon City Register (1842 – 1890)* (Portland, Oregon: Binford & Mort Publishing, 1984), p. 2, B-1.
- <sup>49</sup> Register of Baptisms, Register of Marriages, Christ Church Cathedral, Victoria; Register of Baptisms at Fort Vancouver, Columbia River, Northwest Coast of America; FHL film 8274348
- <sup>50</sup> Washington County Probate Files, William Johnson, file #291, digital file; original at Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon.
- <sup>51</sup> The Oregon Historical Records Survey, Division of Professional and Service Projects, Work Projects Administration, "Historical Sketch," *Inventory of the County Archives of Oregon, No. 34, Washington County (Hillsboro)*, (Portland, Oregon: The Oregon Historical Records Survey, November 1940), 15
- <sup>52</sup> Miss A. J. Allen, comp., *Ten Years in Oregon, Travels and Adventures of Doctor E. White and Lady, West of the Rocky Mountains* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Mack, Andrus & Co., Printers, 1848), 346; <https://catalog.hathitrust.org/Record/100734653>
- <sup>53</sup> Henry William Herbert, (1851) *Frank Forester's Fish and Fishing of the United States and British Provinces of North America*, [New York City](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FMIB_44073_Skiff_and_Water_Fence.jpeg): Stringer & Townsend, p. 171; *Wikimedia commons*; [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FMIB\\_44073\\_Skiff\\_and\\_Water\\_Fence.jpeg](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:FMIB_44073_Skiff_and_Water_Fence.jpeg).
- <sup>54</sup> Biography and Recollections of Edward Chambreaux - Oregon Pioneer Compiled By His Son, William Wadhams Chambreaux Portland, Oregon, 1937; <http://www.chambreauresources.com/ned/nedlife.html>.
- <sup>55</sup> Lottie Gurley, comp. *Genealogical Material in Oregon Provisional Land Claims*, Abstracted; Volumes I-III, 1845-1849 (Portland: The Genealogical Forum of Portland, 1982), Foreword.
- <sup>56</sup> William Johnson, Twality County Land Claim, Oregon Provisional and Territorial Records, Vol 7 pg 104; digital copy from Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon.
- <sup>57</sup> Washington County, Oregon Land Claim Records; FHL 7648165, item 5, Finice Caruthers.
- <sup>58</sup> Map of Portland, Oregon land claims from Gaston book, *Wikimedia Commons*; [https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map\\_of\\_Portland,\\_Oregon\\_land\\_claims\\_from\\_Gaston\\_book.png](https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Portland,_Oregon_land_claims_from_Gaston_book.png)
- <sup>59</sup> Oregon Donation Land Claim, Oregon City Land Office, claim no. 608, Finice Caruthers; citing National Archives microfilm publication M815; digital images, Genealogical Forum of Oregon (<https://gfo.org/>) > MemberSpace > Digital Collections > Indexed Images > Oregon Donation Land Claims.

William Johnson, War of 1812 Sailor, French Prairie Settler, Builder of Portland's First House  
By Connie Lenzen

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<sup>60</sup> William Johnson Estate, Washington County, Oregon, #291; digital image, original at Oregon State Archives, Salem, Oregon.

<sup>61</sup> <https://ussconstitutionmuseum.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/1812-uniforms-1.pdf>