

# McLOUGHLIN HOUSE



The McLoughlin House is one of the few remaining pioneer dwellings in the region once known as the Oregon Country, which today consists of the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and parts of Montana, Wyoming, and the province of British Columbia. The house was built in 1845-46 by Dr. John McLoughlin, of the Hudson's Bay Company, and represents the romantic epoch of Pacific Northwest history during the transition from the fur-trading era to that of settlement. It is a memorial to a man who generously aided the American settlers immigrating to the Oregon Country. His help indirectly contributed to the final settlement of the Oregon question.

Dr. McLoughlin probably designed the house himself. It can be described as of colonial style, adapted to pioneer building conditions. With the possible exception of some of the window sashes and ceilings, the materials used were probably produced in Dr. McLoughlin's own mill at Oregon City.

#### **DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN**

He was born on October 19, 1784, of Scots-Irish ancestry, in the parish of La Riviere du Loup, below Quebec, Canada. After an informal education in medicine, he was employed by the North West Company as a physician. He became a wintering partner, or partner-in-the-field, and was a member of the commission sent to England to arrange the union of the North West and Hudson's Bay Companies in 1821. After the reorganization, he was placed in charge of the Columbia District or western department, with headquarters at Fort George and later at Fort Vancouver, which he established in 1825. As a chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Dr. McLoughlin's authority was second only to that of Gov. George Simpson, the direct representative of the London Governor and Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company. McLoughlin managed company operations from the Rocky Mountains to the Pacific Ocean and from Alaska to California.

That there were few Indian outbreaks during his administration, from 1824 to 1846, is indicative of Dr. McLoughlin's executive genius and strong control over the region. (After his retirement, however, the Oregon Country was subjected to a series of Indian wars.) He not only carried on activities associated with the fur-trading industry, but he also developed agriculture and husbandry, and opened up markets for the exportation of lumber, salmon, and flour at a time when the region was still looked upon as merely a great trapping ground.

Although primarily a fur trader and a faithful servant of the Hudson's Bay Company, McLoughlin's kindly nature made it impossible for him to ignore the needs of American settlers who, beginning with the missionaries in 1834, came in increasing numbers to locate in the Oregon Country. He sent supplies to immigrants starving at The Dalles of

the Columbia, provided passage for them in company boats, and protected them from hostile natives. He entertained the newcomers at Fort Vancouver, lent them seed grains and provisions, and directed them to the fertile Willamette Valley. According to numerous early settlers, Dr. McLoughlin's generous aid made it possible for them to survive the first winter in the Oregon Country without extreme hardship and suffering.

#### **DR. McLOUGHLIN AT OREGON CITY**

In 1828, Chief Factor McLoughlin and Governor Simpson chose the falls of the Willamette River as a site for a sawmill to produce timber for the Hawaiian Islands and Spanish American trade. According to Dr. McLoughlin's own account, he built several houses at the spot, blasted out a millrace, and in the early 1830's had a garden growing there. In 1842, the town was surveyed and named Oregon City. As capital of the provisional government, it became the chief town of the Oregon Country.

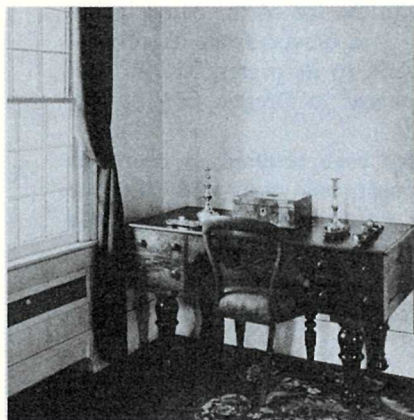
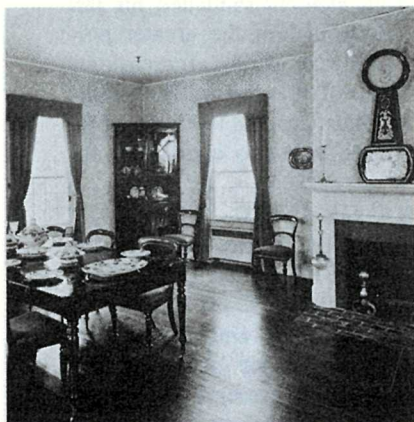
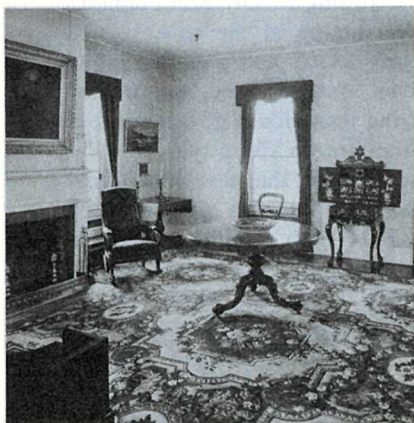
Agreeing to abide-by the laws of the new provisional government, Dr. McLoughlin's attitude was questioned by the Hudson's Bay Company. With relations between himself and Governor Simpson strained to the breaking point, McLoughlin resigned in 1845. The same year he started the construction of his home in Oregon City. He moved into the house with his family in 1846 and occupied it until his death on September 3, 1857.

Although Dr. McLoughlin was revered and respected by most, a small but vociferous element saddened his last days by legal battles that took from him the greater portion of his original Oregon City land claim. Increasingly aware of his role in the history of the region, the public has attempted to remedy past injustices. In 1921, Dr. McLoughlin was named one of Oregon's two candidates for the National Statuary Hall.

#### **THE HOUSE AND THE GRAVES**

After Dr. McLoughlin's death, the house was occupied for three years by his widow, and then until 1867 by his daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Harvey. In 1903 the Oregon City Women's Lewis and Clark Club began efforts for its preservation. Other groups subsequently joined in a common cause to preserve the house. This was finally accomplished by the McLoughlin Memorial Association in 1909, with the aid of the Municipality of Oregon City. The house was moved from its original site at Third and Main Streets to its present site in McLoughlin Park, on land donated to Oregon City by Dr. McLoughlin in 1850.

Since 1935 the house has been restored as nearly as possible to its original appearance, using federal, state and private funds. Various organizations have successfully undertaken to refurnish the house with McLoughlin articles or suitable period furniture, including a hand-carved four-posted bed, tables, desk, dishes, chest, and melodeon.

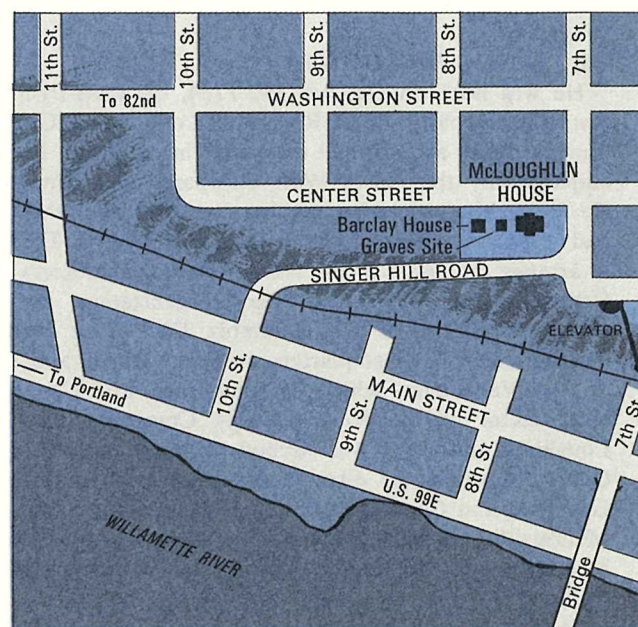


In 1970, the final resting places of Dr. and Mrs. McLoughlin were moved to the grounds of this historic site. They are located between McLoughlin House and Barclay House. It is quite fitting that their final resting place should be near the home they loved so well.

#### ABOUT YOUR VISIT

The McLoughlin House is in McLoughlin Park, between Seventh and Eighth Sts., less than 4 blocks east of Pacific Highway (U.S. 99). Bus service is available from Portland, 13 miles away.

The house is open Tuesday through Saturday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in summer and from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in winter, and on Sundays from noon to 4 p.m. An admission fee is charged. Adjacent to the McLoughlin House is the Barclay House, also a historic building.



#### ADMINISTRATION

McLoughlin House National Historic Site was established in 1941 by cooperative agreement among the McLoughlin Memorial Association, the Municipality of Oregon City, and the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. It is administered by the McLoughlin Memorial Association and the Municipality of Oregon City. Address inquiries to the Curator, McLoughlin House National Historic Site, Oregon City, OR 97045.

U.S. DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

COOPERATING WITH THE MCGLOUGHLIN MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION AND  
THE MUNICIPALITY OF OREGON CITY.

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