

The Astoria Column *Northwest Exploration*

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PACIFIC CROSSROADS

The Astoria Column stands on the Pacific crossroads. To the west lies the great Pacific Ocean; to the east is the North American continent. The Column affords vistas of sea, shoreline, mountains, the estuary of the great Columbia River and the City of Astoria.

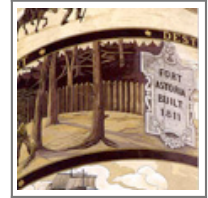
Stephen Dow Beckham, *Astoria Column*

For 300 years, Spain, England, France and Russia had competed for the prime land now constituting the states of Oregon, Washington, Idaho and parts of Montana and Wyoming.



But three events in or near Astoria enabled the U.S. to make a decisive argument that it had explored the region by water and land; it had set up commerce.

In 1792 Captain Robert Gray discovered the mouth of the Columbia River and met Clatsop Tribal Leaders.



In 1805-06, spurred by President Thomas Jefferson, explorers Lewis and Clark wintered at Fort Clatsop, five miles to the southwest.

In 1811 fur traders settled Astoria where Clatsop, Chinook and Cathlamet Indians had lived for 10,000 years.

[See Column Scenes](#)

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