

AN HISTORICAL SKETCH
Of The Life Of
Samuel Lindsay Maylor

Samuel Lindsay Maylor was born in Ballintemple, Cork, Ireland, on October 31, 1821. He received his education from private tutors at home and later at Trinity College, better known today as the University of Dublin. He was especially interested in the arts of painting, music and poetry. Later he studied engineering.

Ireland was undergoing a period of disaster. A potato famine in 1845 brought death to many. Religious rebellions caused general unrest in an overcrowded country. Between the years 1847 and 1852 more than 1,000,000 persons migrated to the United States.

In the spring of 1847 Samuel, his brother Thomas, and cousin John Lindsay, left Liverpool, England for Boston in the sailing ship Adirondack. From there they made their way into Michigan where on June twenty-first, they purchased eighty acres of land for \$271.00 near where the city of Marshall now stands. They became victims of the dreaded ague which forced them to give up their attempt to settle in the land of the free.

In the autumn they proceeded to Buffalo, New York, where they built a boat to transport them down the Welland Canal to New York City. The brothers boarded a sailing ship for Liverpool and crossed to Ireland.

Thomas remained in Ireland. Samuel joined the British Army and on March 10, 1848 was appointed Lieutenant in company No. 4 of the Fifth Regiment of the Royal Irish Fusiliers, stationed at Mahabury, Mauritius, an island in the Indian Ocean.

Beyond the distant horizon, a land of virgin forests was calling to him. He retired from the service December 26, 1848. In May, Samuel and Thomas embarked from Liverpool on the sailing ship, Granada, for the United States. They arrived in Boston, June second, boarded a schooner bound for New York and took passage south which brought them through the straits of Florida, around the western tip of Cuba, and south to the shores of Panama. The long and hazardous journey across the Isthmus was made on foot.

On the Pacific side they embarked on a vessel which took them up the coast to California, landing at San Francisco in early August of 1851. With contempt for the lawlessness of a mining town, the brothers took the first ship out, arriving at Astoria on the Columbia River. They crossed the river and walked to Tumwater at the head of Puget Sound. Here a few pioneers were establishing themselves. From a small mill, they purchased lumber and built a boat to transport them down the sound. In the location of Steilacoom, they erected a cabin and spent a few weeks there. Poor soil in this area and good news of Whidby Island caused them to move on.

With a dog companion picked up at Tumwater they followed near the shore whenever possible. The prevailing wind was strong enough to hinder any great progress. They reached Alki Point and were greeted by hordes of Indians who came from their houses to ascertain whence they came. All Indians in this region were extremely curious and lost no time in acquainting themselves with the affairs of newcomers. The brothers had no desire to mingle with savages but contrived to keep their new neighbors well pleased. A camp for the night and fresh water were necessities.

The Indians appeared friendly and were anxious to sell or trade fish and clams for almost anything. Their curiosity, and great interest kept the two men on alert guard lest their sticky fingers fail to let go of articles under such keen observation. The natives seemed to have good ideas but an equal knowledge of the accomplishment of stealing. Their naked and half clad bodies stank of smoke and filth. The men remembered the trinkets in their pack, purchased at Astoria. They were convinced this was the time to produce some. There were bright buttons, brass rings, pipes, small looking glasses, and other articles that created great excitement. Much pleased, and by way of reciprocity or to obtain more presents, they gave the men all the fish and clams desired. It was with considerable difficulty that Samuel and Thomas made their new acquaintances understand that a camp was necessary for the night. Almost forcing their way into the boat they rowed off to land further up shore. With supper hardly finished, unwelcome guests began to arrive.

As white men and natives sat around the camp fire, the gathering shadows and darkness were brightened only by the flickering light of dying embers. The minutes seemed as hours but at last one by one the red men vanished into the night.

The emigrants glanced toward the impenetrable blackness, stricken by the silence and solitude of the place. The rustling of leaves made by the wind accentuated the gloominess of their surroundings. The men were alone, but not knowing how reliable was the character of their visitors, they felt great concern lest further intimacy might terminate in disaster. With their guns every ready, a restless and wakeful night ensued.

At break of dawn they broke camp and started off across the sound. A murky sky and a strong south wind did not bid fair for travel. Before reaching the opposite shore there was real cause for worry. It was with great difficulty they were able to keep the boat from capsizing, fighting a tempestuous sea.

On a cleared spot at the water's edge was a shack where they took refuge. Among the heap of ashes close by, live coals indicated that other travelers or Indians had recently passed that way.

In the autumn of 1851 Samuel and Thomas Maylor camped and explored for a few days the area that was to become the great city of Seattle. To their knowledge there were no white people inhabiting this area at that time. Indians were everywhere. Alki Point across the bay was an extensive camping grounds for the redmen.

On the third day they made their departure, crossing over to the west side of the sound (Bainbridge Island). The magnificence of the scenery before them was enchanting. The placid sound waters with trees bordering its shores, and lofty mountains in the background stretching majestically to the sky, made this evergreen wonderland a spot of grandeur that held the newcomers spellbound. Though strangers in a foreign land, they were eager to have a part in the building of this great Northwest. They landed on the island, explored a portion of it and made camp for the night.

Rising early, breakfast was hastily prepared and the journey resumed along the west shore of the mainland. The atmosphere was cooler and there were some indications of bad weather.

Nearing the shore Pat barked and jumped up and down. He saw an animal about the size of a cat running along the beach. It had a long pointed nose, short legs, an arched back with long black fur marked with prominent white stripes down the back, a white patch on the forehead. The dog jumped into the water and swam ashore. A battle was soon in progress. The Maylors landed on the beach and advanced toward the scene of action but were suddenly stopped in their tracks by an odor that contaminated the atmosphere beyond all expression. They stared at each other and then at the dog and his victim. Pat wagged his tail with pride but his masters were not so happy. In the same breath they asked, "What is it?" A grave decision had to be made -- should they kill the dog or suffer taking him along. The men quickly made their departure, calling the dog. A good bath in the Sound did not cure all the ills of Pat but he was permitted to ride as an unwelcome guest.

According to instructions received at Tumwater, the south end of Whidby Island was quickly located. The distance across the Sound and weather conditions were considered favorable for travel.

When approximately half way across they realized to their horror that they were the center of attraction. A large canoe loaded with Indians was swiftly bearing down upon them. The two Irishmen looked at each other and breathed a prayer for their safety. In cold, sullen silence they waited for they knew not what. The dog growled and showed his teeth. The natives came up alongside and seized the boat. In guttural tones they conversed while every article was thoroughly handled and examined. Many supplies, consisting of clothing, blankets, firearms, ammunition, food, a few tools, and some other camping equipment, did not seem to interest them. In apparent disappointment they left empty-handed and without molesting their victims in any way. With chills running up and down their spines the men stared at each other and breathed a sigh of relief as well as a prayer of thanksgiving. It is not certain what these half naked savages had in mind but a good guess would be liquor. Ordinarily, any and all articles in their possession would have made the red men's eyes bulge with envy.

The south end of Whidby was reached and a landing made at Scatchet Head. Upon surveying their surroundings they hoped to find a more desirable camping place. The trip continued across Cultus Bay to Possession Point, landing on the inside or east shore.

There were no Indians here but the unmistakable signs of them were evident. Supper was prepared out in the open but camp for the night was made in a thicket which completely concealed them from view. A heavy sea was whipped up by a strong south wind which increased considerably and the night, though dry, was dark and stormy. The wind howled through the trees and rustled the underbrush. Their surroundings were extremely wild and desolate. Sleep came at a late hour when the wind by degrees lessened and the elements were comparatively quiet. In the gray dawn of another day they awoke, prepared breakfast and proceeded up the east shore of the island.

It was evident that large encampments of Indians lived here. To avoid larger numbers of them, they rowed along the north shore of Camano Island and crossed to the land now known as Charlie Miller's Point. Here in October, 1851, Samuel and Thomas set about to establish themselves before colder weather came. Samuel planned on taking a donation claim here. Thomas took a claim a mile northwest of where they built their first cabin. This was later called the James Busby farm.

Soon after the brothers arrived on the point, Thomas became ill. A doctor advised him to go to sea. At Victoria he obtained passage on a ship, which took him through the South Sea Islands and finally to Australia. After a year's absence he returned to find that another man had squatted on his land. Thomas and Samuel then abandoned their claims and in the spring of 1852 located at Mud Bay.

The following spring of 1853 they settled on the peninsula known as Maylor's Point. The land was purchased from the government for \$1.25 an acre. This ideal spot with scenes of tranquillity and picturesque beauty was an answer to their prayers. With an ax, auger, and draw knife another cabin was erected in the wilderness.

Dreams of home and of a colleen fair stirred Samuel to continued unrest. In July of 1855 he left alone by way of Panama for a visit to the Emerald Isle, arriving there in the autumn.

Samuel and Mary Barrett, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Barrett of Cork, were married December 21, 1856 in Saint Peter's Episcopal Parish Church, Liverpool, England.

On March 11, 1857 they sailed from Liverpool on the ship London, landing at Castle Gardens, New York, on April fifteenth. Samuel worked as an ornamental painter for Mr. Charles Curran, Grand Street, and Mr. DeWilt, John Street, New York, where he was made unusual offers if he would remain there. A desire to go west and to have a business of his own prompted him to decline.

On September 21, 1857 their son Paul was born. After spending the winter and spring with brother Doctor Paul Maylor in Dunkirk, New York, the family left by way of New York and Aspinwall (Panama) for San Francisco.

The rough and tedious stage coach ride across the Isthmus was one not soon to be forgotten. Arriving at San Francisco, Samuel was disappointed to

find conditions in a state of decline. Thoughts of his Island home soon found them sailing up the coast and on to Puget Sound. It was with glad hearts they finally reached their donation claim on Maylor's Point.

Samuel's knowledge as an engineer and his experience in the home workshop in Ireland made him efficient in reconstructing guns. He found much use for his knowledge as a gunsmith. His skill in this work enabled him to make many guns which were scarce at that time. Local white men and Indians from up and down the Sound, and as far away as Canada, came to have their guns repaired.

Two more sons, Thomas and Samuel, were born to the Maylors. On April 9, 1861 when Samuel was born, his mother died. Stricken with grief, Samuel took his three little ones to Victoria, B.C. to live until he could secure passage on a ship bound for Liverpool. He obtained a nurse to care for the children. Near the close of a year a ship arrived, and on March 25, 1862 he sailed with his three boys for London on the ship Princess Royal, arriving there the last of July.

On October 23, 1862 in Saint Paul's Episcopal Parish Church, Dublin, he married Margaret Corcoran, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Corcoran of Cork, a cousin to his deceased wife. Their son, Alfred, was born October 14, 1863. When their son was three weeks old, Samuel with his wife and four children sailed in the ship General Wyndham from London to Victoria, B.C. After a wearisome journey of nearly five months, and a few days in Victoria, they left on the schooner Growler (Captain Williams in charge), arriving at Oak Harbor, Whidby Island. Three more sons and a daughter were born to the Maylors, John, Joseph, Cecil, and Anna.

Pioneer life was difficult, even at its best. Margaret's frail body could not endure more years of hardship. On February 10, 1891, at the age of forty-seven, she succumbed after many weeks of illness.

Samuel was in deep mourning for Margaret and for his son Samuel, whose disappearance had caused him great sorrow. Samuel, Jr. journeyed to Nanaimo, B.C., to stay for a short time on property purchased by his father. Several months passed -- Samuel failed to return. Upon investigation it was believed by members of the family that he was slain by the Kwakiutl Indians of Vancouver Island.

Years passed and Samuel's eyes grew dim. For four years he was a helpless invalid. On September 26, 1896 he closed the final chapter of life's story, that of a courageous pioneer.

By - Juanita Maylor Bonnelle

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