



# **Astoria: John Jacob Astor and Thomas Jefferson's Lost Pacific Empire: A Story of Wealth, Ambition, and Survival**

*Peter Stark*

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In the tradition of *The Lost City of Z* and *Skeleton in the Sahara*, *Astoria* is the thrilling, true-adventure tale of the 1810 Astor Expedition, an epic, now forgotten, three-year journey to forge an American empire on the Pacific Coast. Peter Stark offers a harrowing saga in which a band of explorers battled nature, starvation, and madness to establish the first American settlement in the Pacific Northwest and opened up what would become the Oregon trail, permanently altering the nation's landscape and its global standing.

Six years after Lewis and Clark's began their journey to the Pacific Northwest, two of the Eastern establishment's leading figures, John Jacob Astor and Thomas Jefferson, turned their sights to founding a colony akin to Jamestown on the West Coast and transforming the nation into a Pacific trading power. Author and correspondent for *Outside* magazine Peter Stark recreates this pivotal moment in American history for the first time for modern readers, drawing on original source material to tell the amazing true story of the Astor Expedition.

Unfolding over the course of three years, from 1810 to 1813, *Astoria* is a tale of high adventure and incredible hardship in the wilderness and at sea. Of the more than one hundred-forty members of the two advance parties that reached the West Coast—one crossing the Rockies, the other rounding Cape Horn—nearly half perished by violence. Others went mad. Within one year, the expedition successfully established Fort Astoria, a trading post on the Columbia River. Though the colony would be short-lived, it opened provincial American eyes to the potential of the Western coast and its founders helped blaze the Oregon Trail.

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