INSIDE
Alexander, the man who knew how to cash in on show business magic
Washington State Historical Society Annual Awards

Call for Nominations

The Washington State Historical Society invites nominations for the following annual awards to recognize excellence in advancing the field of history in Washington.

- **Robert Gray Medal** — Recognizing the significant contribution of an individual or organization through projects, exhibits, educational products, or any other vehicle that informs or expands appreciation of any element of Washington history.
- **Dale Croes, Rhonda Foster, and Larry Ross.**
- **Call 253/798-5899 to RSVP. Not a member yet? Visit WashingtonHistory.org and JOIN TODAY!**

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Friday, January 25, 7–9 PM at the History Museum

This members-only event kicks off our first major exhibit of 2013—Let’s RIDE! Motorcycling the Northwest, a decade-by-decade look at the motorcycle’s journey through Washington. Call 253/798-5899 to RSVP. Not a member yet? Visit WashingtonHistory.org and JOIN TODAY!

*Exploring Washington’s Majestic State Capitol*

**By Cathleen Norman**

The Washington State Capital Furnishings Preservation Committee presents *Exploring Washington’s Majestic State Capitol*, a new book by Cathleen Norman. Illustrated with 100 historic and contemporary images, the 64-page book details the history of the state capitol buildings in Olympia and their historic furnishings as well as the locations of the capitol in the city. It features rare vintage photographs as well as striking color contemporary photos of the legislative buildings and the events and people that played significant roles in the chronicles of Olympia.

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*All proceeds from the book benefit the renovation and preservation of the historic furnishings of the capitol building.*
I have been a professional historian for nearly 50 years. Most of my career was spent teaching Pacific Northwest history and other courses in American history at Eastern Washington University (EWU). Shortly after I retired in 2001, a former student asked me to read a draft of a doctoral thesis he was writing on the Indians of the Columbia Plateau. Little did I realize then that this would lead me in a roundabout way to an astonishing discovery that explains the great success of the Jesuit mission in converting the Indians of the Northern Columbia Plateau to Christianity. The major reason for that success and the rather obscure Jesuit missionary who was responsible for it have not, hitherto, been recognized. I must say that this was not by superior research skills but by accident that I stumbled on what turned out to be a historical gold mine.

The first two-thirds of the dissertation contained a superb account of the Stone Age culture of the Salish, in which the author was able to recreate and illuminate the lives of these fascinating people. This was ethno-history at its best; I found it very helpful when I was writing a chapter on Plateau Indians for a middle school text on Washington history. The course featured lecturers from Northern California, Utah, and Arizona. All spoke on their specialty. All except one—a Blackfoot Jesuit priest—spoke in English. None of these writers had “connected the dots” to the picture that Jesuit success. This included the ability to get Indians to accept Christianity without significant disruption to tribal culture. There was another uncommon but notable explanation. Over the years and over many hundreds of interviews, I kept uncovering memories of the Jesuits successfully battling smallpox epidemics in the mid 19th century. The Indians, he said, regarded this as really “big medicine” and flocked to the Church as a result.

Father Joseph Joset was a Blackfoot Jesuit priest. Father Brown, then about 60 years old, was posted to the Spokane Mission on the Coeur d’Alene River, completed in 1853, where Father Joset was stationed.

Father Brown had spent his adult life as a priest on the Salish reservations of the Northern Columbia Plateau. He had used this opportunity to interview Indians on their relationship to the Jesuits. His basic question was this: What brought their ancestors to the Catholic Church? Wellread in Western history and familiar with oral history methods, he was in an excellent position to elicit this information from people who were skilled at preserving tribal oral traditions. The information Brown obtained supported the usual explanations for Jesuit success. This included the ability to get Indians to accept Christianity without significant disruption to tribal culture. Violence drove the Protestants from the field, but unanticipated benefactions from the Church as a result.

Although the efforts of the Black Robes in the Bitterroot Valley in a remarkably short period of time. They opened, closed, moved, and reopened missions as circumstances dictated. Jesuits often travelled with Indians on their seasonal rounds, accompanying them to canoes and fishing sites and sometimes journeying with them over the Rockies to the buffalo-busting grounds. Although the efforts of the Black Robes resulted in some success with initial contact, the evidence strongly suggests that a dramatic increase in Catholic conversions began in the early to mid 1850s. It did not occur to me right away that I might know what was responsible for the sudden increase. Gradually, however, I began to suspect that it might have been the result of Father Joseph Joset’s smallpox vaccination campaign.

I first encountered this astonishing but overlooked episode back in the early 1970s when I was teaching a course called “Northwest Indian History” as part of EWU’s Native American Studies program. The course featured lectures from Northern Plateau tribes—each one speaking on his or her specialty. All were asked to comment on a list of topics or problems. The topic of missionary contact usually produced a lively discussion. Without exception, each of the speakers (numbering more than 20 over the course of two quarters) said that the Protestants had failed but the Catholics had been successful. Many were simply articulating family and tribal oral traditions. One of the speakers, however, was well-qualified to address this subject—Father Joseph Brown, a Blackfoot Jesuit priest. Father Brown, then about 60 years old, was posted to the Spokane Indians at Wellpinit, near Spokane.

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Father Brown was quite sure that it was Father Joset who had organized one vaccination campaign in the 1850s and another when smallpox returned in the 1860s. One of the great triumphs of folk medicine, the procedure for vaccinating against smallpox had been known since colonial times. It involved finding a healthy recovering victim of the disease and obtaining matter from one of the pustules. This was then used to inoculate healthy individuals, giving them immunity to the disease. Cowpox, a weaker but similar virus, was also used for this purpose.

Years passed after that, and while I did not specifically look for confirmation of Father Brown’s information on Joset and smallpox, neither did I encounter a reference to it anywhere. Now, as I reread the monographs on the Salish tribes, I experienced a “Eureka!” moment. There in Marta Raufer’s Black Robes and Indians on the Last Frontier was a brief account of Joset’s battle with smallpox, taken from the Jesuit papers in the Jesuit archives at Gonzaga University. This account corroborated Father Brown’s information exactly. Raufer also quoted a brief passage in a letter from Father Adrian Hockeck to Father Pierre-Jean DeSmet, noting that Joset’s vaccination effort had increased “the influence of the missionaries.”
By Andrew H. Fisher

WASCO COUNTY TRUANT OFFICER T. J. Smith had a bad day on November 17, 1922. The roiling waters of the Columbia River, swelled by fall rains, had foiled his latest attempt to catch several Indian children from the tiny community on Williams Island, a narrow wedge of rock near the city of The Dalles. Nine months earlier, Smith had hesitated while school officials and federal administrators debated the question of jurisdiction. Omar Babcock, superintendent of the Warm Springs Agency, wanted the children in class but could not force them to go because they lived off the reservation. The Oregon superintendent of public instruction assumed that his officers had no power to compel the attendance of Indian wards. Frustrated with the impasse, Babcock fretted that the state’s position “left a wide open door whereby the Indians living off the reservation might evade sending their children to school.”

A gust of bureaucratic hot air soon slammed the door and pushed local authorities to pursue the truants, but the river offered them sanctuary. At low water, the reservation might evade sending their children to school. “The Columbia River Indians’ Dilemma Over Formal Education”

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COLUMBIA RIVER INDIANS’ DILEMMA

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home in America,” one reformer declared with no sense of irony, and few indigenous communities would survive the onslaught unscathed. With the blessing and assistance of federal officials, Catholic missionaries continued their long crusade to crush indigenous spirituality. Meanwhile, a national network of church and government schools worked to stamp out Native languages and lifeways before they took root in younger generations. Although religious persecution and compulsory education had deep and often damaging effects on tribal cultures and identities, the government never fully achieved its goals. Indian resistance and adaptation ensured that policies meant to speed assimilation instead produced unforeseen and even contrary results.

Boarding schools have nearly monopolized scholarly attention, but many Columbia River Indians attended public schools even before the Johnson O’Malley Act of 1934 provided federal funds to subsidize education for Native American children. Although the Indian Office operated 25 industrial schools off reservation and 81 schools on reservation, with a nationwide enrollment of over 17,000 students. An additional 9,000 pupils attended the growing number of reservation day schools, mission schools, and contract public schools. Some Mid-Columbia Indians went to flagship institutions such as Carlisle in Pennsylvania and Chemawa in western Oregon, but the majority went to reservation boarding schools. Yakama children generally attended the one at Fort Simcoe, which operated from 1861 to 1922, and Umatilla students chose between the Catholic mission school and the agency boarding school. On the Warm Springs reservation, the Indian Office ran two boarding schools until 1895, when the Simnasho building burned down and the government consolidated educational facilities at the agency. Although small and ill-equipped in comparison to the major industrial schools, these institutions shared basic methods and objectives. Using a mixture of military discipline, vocational training, and academic instruction, they worked to “kill the Indian and save the man” within their student body.

The first step lay in recruiting and retaining enough pupils to fill the buildings. Agents, who after 1893 usually held the title of school superintendent, employed a variety of carrot-and-stick techniques to encourage regular attendance. They began by advising Indian parents “to avail themselves of the great opportunities now offered to them by the Government of securing for their children, without expense to themselves, the inestimable boon of an English education, including board, clothing, and care while sick.”

If parents did not respond to friendly persuasion, agency superintendents tried withholding travel passes, lease payments, and employment opportunities. When all else failed, the Indian Office granted superintendents full authority to compel attendance. By the early 1900s, however, agents rarely resorted to the strong-arm tactics of the 19th century. Superintendent J. E. Kirk considered using force in 1901 when a group of Warm Springs Indians swore they would fight rather than put their children in school, but the captain of police refused to participate. By the early 1920s, agents generally reported that all Indians of school age attended school if they chose not to go. The Indian Office did not begin systematically tracking attendance of off-reservation children until the 1910s, and even then agents could not accurately monitor the enrollment of off-reservation children.

Using a mixture of military discipline, vocational training, and academic instruction, [schools] worked to “kill the Indian and save the man” within their students. These people are nomadic in habit and it is impossible to keep track of them. Even if agents knew where the Indians were, they could do little to prevent truancy. Superintendent Babcock managed to secure the enrollment of some children from wards, their parents contributed no property taxes to support education. The original contract system proved unnecessarily cumbersome, however, and some school officials seemed unaware that they could receive payments or require the payment of children’s tuition from their parents. (Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture, Spokane)
attendance of Indian children. As late as the 1930s, agency superintendents had to walk district administrators through the process of applying for tuition and remind them of their jurisdiction over Indian trusts. Instead of appreciation, agents received complaints from parents and school boards accusing Indians of hitching a free ride on the backs of taxpaying students. Even on the Yakama reservation, where public schools depended on Indian tuition, the idea that Indian students got something for nothing proved impossible to dispel. More than mere ignorance kept it alive. For those who wished to promote a de facto form of school segregation, the tax issue furnished a useful propaganda tool.

Racial prejudice partially explains both the hesitance of school administrators to pursue Indian truants and the reluctance of Indian parents to enroll their children. Although the districts gladly accepted tuition payments, many white parents and teachers had no desire to see Native American pupils in their classrooms. In 1922, the storekeeper at Celilo informed the Warm Springs agency that a local man “would not send [his] little girl to school on account of the Indian children going. He has been to the school board, the [county superintendent], and even took it up with the [state superintendent] to have them put out.”

Twelve years later, the school board in the Dalles still opposed the attendance of Indian children from Celilo, although board members insisted they did so only because the terrible sanitary conditions in the village made it “a horrid of epidemics.” White residents of the Goodnoe Hills district made no such excuses in 1930, when they were sure their children would do no better than their spotty attendance, wrote the Arlee district superintendent. “The white people do not want my children in school. He just wants the money you pay.”

Given the strength of anti-Indian sentiment in local white communities, parents had good cause to doubt the quality of their children’s education. With the exception of the Celilo school and some reservation districts, Indian students formed a minority at public institutions. None employed Native American teachers—unlike many boarding schools—and multicultural education had yet to be invented. A History of Oregon, the standard history textbook in Oregon primary schools from the 1920s through the 1950s, described Indians as “true savages.” While acknowledging some tribal distinctions, the authors declared, “it cannot be said that any of them possessed more than the rude beginnings of civilization. They were always poor, always very hungry and miserable.” Indian students further read,

The red man once lived under the sun; his villages once filled every valley. Now, however, his thousands of wandering hunters, his dark-eyed maidens and careless children are no more… Today only a remnant remains. They are worthy of the Nation, carefully watched over, then wages provided for. Those of the new generation, born on the reservations, have become reconciled to the real plan of life. If they can do what their ancestors could not achieve, they may survive. For, after all, if it is, the Indian vanished because he could not learn the ways of the white man. He could not survive in competition with the dominant race.

Even after the Indian New Deal introduced a measure of cultural pluralism to federal policy, public school children continued to read about helpless Indian wards confined to reservations and coddled by a benevolent government. As Johnny Jackson recalled of his schooling during the late 1930s and 1940s, “American history was all about George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, and Thomas Edison, and all those... There was no Indian history.” Jackson was among the many who remembered frequent fights with white boys who insulted Indian children. He eventually learned to box, but that could not protect him from the physical and psychical blows landed by his teachers.

The treatment of Indian students at public schools reflected their marginal status within Euro-American society. Although some instructors probably tried their best to reach Native children, others treated them with condescension and hostility, even to the point of physical abuse. In 1931, Bessee Quiemps of Underwood, Washington, wrote the Yakama agency “to report the trouble of my little Boy in school. The teacher beat him on the head and face in a fit of temper.” Johnny Jackson’s teacher “hit him on the head with a ruler, if the caught us talking to each other in our own language.” Meanwhile, he plays normally at home, talking and shouting like any other children, but that at school he seeks shelter within his shell not unlike a turtle.” Whereas his aunt explained this behavior as shyness, a white neighbor deemed the student “just dumb like lots of Indians,” and the teacher dismissed him as “a terrible draw-back to her school.” In such an inhospitable environment, it hardly seems surprising that Native children frequently failed to thrive or even stay in the classroom.

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As Field Agent Davis reported:

"Leaders. Yallup, like many Native Americans, believed that their child is dead and asking them to "the school of the white man." Yallup stubbornly defended Columbia River Indians with a kind of stubbornness that their child is dead and asking them to "the school of the white man." Yallup's request offers two valuable insights into the River People's complex and evolving attitude toward Euro-American education. First, it illustrates the desire to obtain education without compromising their own identity presented Columbia River Indians with a difficult dilemma, especially with regard to language instruction. Second, his statement reflects Yallup's influence on reservation Indians, who judged public education, especially with regard to language instruction. Public school teachers, like their counterparts in the boarding schools, expected students to speak English only—even if the teacher did not. Rock Creek resident Ellis Jim remembered with bitter irony the German American woman at the Goodnoo Hills schoolhouse who spoke her native language fluently while forbidding Indian children to speak theirs. Parents and grandparents often tried to counteract such pressure, with mixed results. Mavis Kindness, a childhood resident of Rock Creek, had hoped to attend the Chemawa boarding school; her mother withheld permission for fear that she would forsake their ancestral language. Kindness kept it and now teaches in the Yakama Nation's language preservation program, but other children were not so lucky."


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Johnny Jackson started school speaking only Sahaptin but left knowing very little. Although he could understand his parents and his grandmother, who refused to converse with him in English, he soon began to use the new language exclusively. "We never tried to talk our own language or anything in school anymore," he noted in a 1999 interview. "But later on, after we start forgetting a lot of things we were supposed to know, well it kind of bothered us." In trying to reclaim Sahaptin and other traditional knowledge as an adult, he generally turns to elders from the off-reservation community around Rock Creek when he gets stuck with something.

For Jackson's family and others, the proper balance between the "old ways" and the new became a subject of debate among adults and a source of contention for children.

Walter Speedis, who grew up at Rock Creek, went to school because his mother wanted him "to know what white man's feelings is...she was talking about ulterior motives." When he spoke English to his elders, however, they whipped him and scolded: "Don't talk English to me, I'm not a white man!" Other adults simply pretended not to hear children unless they "talked Indian." Speedis's neighbor, Elsie Gibson, willingly sent her boys off to class only because she "wanted them to learn to read and write and [interpret for] me.

Highly practical in their approach to education, many River People subordinated the pursuit of "white" knowledge to the obligations of family and the preservation of culture. By the 1940s, they had accepted formal schooling insofar as it enhanced their ability to meet threats and deal with outsiders. They rejected education to the degree it promoted assimilation and endangered their conception of traditional Indianness. Some also remained skeptical of its potential to ensure fair and honest dealings from white people, and their son Thomas in Spokane, 1925. Yallup stubbornly defended Columbia River Indian rights until his death in 1955.
Mitchell Lewis Wagon Company in Racine, Wisconsin, he entered the sawmill business and helped establish the Olympia & Tenino Railroad. In 1882 he started the Mitchell & Lewis Company in Portland and became a leading distributor of Mitchell-Wilson wagons as well as Canton Clipper plows, Champion bailing presses, Ingersoll compressors, Avery headers, and Hoosier drills. Branch offices opened in Seattle, Spokane, and Boise.

The second young man from Wisconsin, George W. Staver, entered the hardware and farm implements business after serving in the Civil War. The J. J. Case Company employed him as a consul and traveling sales representative. In 1881 Staver partnered with fellow employee W. H. Walker to form Staver & Walker, a distributor for Case equipment. They soon expanded to a complete line of implements and built an immense warehouse in Portland. Their line included threshers, engines and plows; dairy, farm and mill machinery; engines, boilers and sawmills; and wagons, buggies, carriages, and carts. Before long there were branches in most major towns in Washington, Idaho, and Oregon.

After Walker’s death in 1890, Mitchell merged his company with Staver & Walker, becoming Mitchell, Lewis & Staver. Mitchell continued as president until 1897 when his son Henry W. Mitchell became the manager. The Seattle branch—managed by another son, Frank W. Mitchell—occupied a substantial four-story building. An ad in the Seattle Times for the Mitchell, Lewis & Company shows that by 1900 the company had begun branching into pumps, compressors, and other mining equipment, which were then in great demand in Seattle. Mitchell, Lewis & Staver is still in business today.

Charles Dodd
Born in 1838, Charles Dodd grew up on the East Coast, attended Yale College, and at 17 years of age supervised a railroad construction crew on the Isthmus of Panama. Among various other pursuits, he worked in the hardware business before settling down in Portland and partnering a business as a farming equipment supplier in 1868.

Charles H. Dodd & Company established supply depots throughout the territory and lent equipment to farmers. His major product lines were Schuttler wagons, Buckeye mowers and reapers, Altman threshers, and Deere plows. Farmers paid a dollar to rent the equipment after their crops were harvested and sold. Dodd had lent thousands of dollars worth of equipment to farmers as early as 1869. When conflicts with the local tribes drove farmers from their homes, Dodd suffered great losses, but his reputation among the farmers remained undiminished. Besides Portland and Athena, Oregon, Dodd had shops in Spokane, Albany, Pullman, Colfax, and Walla Walla, Washington, as well as Moscow and Lewiston, Idaho. He was active in local politics and community service until he died in Portland on June 12, 1921.

Burrell and Knapp
Martin Strong Burrell stands out as probably the most diversified of the agricultural implement dealers. He left Ohio for Portland in 1856 and worked as a bookkeeper for the firm of Knapp & Hull, commission merchants. Hull retired in 1860 and Burrell became a partner in the company. In 1865 Burrell and Richard H. Knapp, Burrell & Company soon opened its doors on Front and Alder streets in Portland with McCormick reapers and binders, farm and mill machinery, and farm carrying tools. Soon agricultural implements grew from just a department to the whole interest of the company. Financing these machines was always a problem for farmers. Burrell established a system of national banks in Baker City and Pendleton, Oregon, and in Walla Walla, Dayton, and Colfax, Washington. He also invested heavily in a fleet of sailing vessels managed by W. H. Besse, a New Bedford, Massachusetts, sea captain.

In 1870 James Knapp sold his interest to his brother Richard. When Martin Burrell died in 1885, Richard Knapp carried on as president. Knapp, Burrell & Company prospered, did good Portland, which grew from a small town of 1,000 inhabitants into a major regional city by the turn of the century. The company eventually expanded to Spokane, Walla Walla, Colfax, and La Grande.

Daniel Best
FARM MACHINERY COMPANIES
Daniel Best began his career in the Oregon Country. In his early 20s he left his Iowa home for Steptoeville (Walla Walla), Washington. After two failed attempts in the lumber business, he worked a variety of jobs throughout the 1860s before joining his brother to work on a ranch in California. There, Best hit upon the idea of bringing grain cleaners to the ranch instead of transporting the harvest to grain cleaners in town. In April 1871, aided by brothers Zachariah and Henry, Best’s efforts resulted in his first patented machine.

The cleaning machines evolved into moving combine harvesters for the California and Oregon grain growing regions. These machines harvested, threshed, and bagged the grain in one pull through the field. The Daniel Best Agricultural Works opened in 1886 in San Leandro, California, to produce his harvesters. As the machines became larger and heavier, Best began developing and manufacturing engines to power them. His subsequent success began a new era of agriculture, in which horse and mule teams were eventually replaced by engines. Best and his major competitor, the Holt Company, were antecedents of the Caterpillar Tractor Company.

Agricultural Transformation
THE GRADUAL transformation from animal-powered to engine-powered machinery is reflected in farm implement promotional materials. The men and companies represented here are but a sampling of the developers and suppliers of agricultural machinery in the region. Their marketing materials reflect the transition from animal-powered to machine-powered implements and provide an early glimpse of an industry that helped transform agricultural efforts into profitable farming ventures in the Pacific Northwest.

Norman Reed is a retired manufacturing executive from Kent with an interest in Washington’s industrial and agricultural history. The illustrations for this article are all courtesy of the author.
Claude Alexander Conlin

“The Man Who Knows”

“Never trust the teller, trust the tale.”

—D. H. Lawrence

Claude Alexander Conlin called himself “Alexander, The Man Who Knows,” and six years after he retired from show business he sold out theaters across the United States and Canada for weeks at a time. He made millions of dollars from box office receipts and his stock-in-trade sale of books, crystal balls, Ouija boards, and related merchandise. In 1919 alone, he made $23,000 a week in Seattle, and $19,000 a week in Spokane. Conlin had taken over booth one at the Pantages Theater in New York in 1909, and his stock-in-trade sale of books, crystal balls, Ouija boards, and related merchandise was aimed at a particularly gullible audience— Astro, the Seer, by Alan Braghamton—and had adjusted his act to benefit from the character’s popularity.

In 1910, while playing in Tegucigalpa, Honduras, I had the pleasure of meeting a gentleman whom we all refer to as the French Dr. Q. “He was, of all the rogues and scoundrels, the confidence man par excellence, to be sure, or his moral worth, but by his artistic superiority. Conlin’s turban tale became the classic Hollywood model for an amoral, unprincipled, irresistible magician/confidence man. With just the right dusting of criticism, Conlin seems to condemn Dr. Q’s tactics and behavior while still admiring him for being a great trickster who is merely operating within the confines of available options. Throughout the 1930s and 1940s, motion picture audiences would see this classic model brought to the screen again and again in films like Warren Williams’s 1933 movie, The Mind Reader (note the turban); Eternally Yours, with David Niven and Loretta Young (1939); and Nightmare Alley in 1947, with Tyrone Power. To understand how the shaping of show business magic took place, we must reexamine a little Pacific Northwest history and look back on a few episodes in Conlin’s life.

When gold was discovered in the Klondike in 1896, it triggered the last great gold rush of the 19th century. By 1898 over 100,000 stampeder had rushed to the Yukon, though only 30,000 completed the hazardous journey. The most common stampeder route to the Yukon went through Skagway, Alaska, and then over dangerous Chilkoot Pass. Like so many others, Conlin sought to make his fortune in the far north. Though he did not strike it rich there, he learned a few things. Just as Conlin later amalgamated Thayer, Owen, and himself into the mysterious Dr. Q., he lent himself to being included in other people’s far-fetched tales. Many of the “facts” modern readers know about Alexander Conlin are fictions first invented by Conlin himself and then perpetuated by enthusiastic amateur historians and flat-out myth makers. Some of these are deliberate fictions, some inadvertent ones. Two of these yarns concern Conlin with Soapy Smith, an American outlaw and con artist of the late 19th century.

The first yarn puts forth that Conlin had swindled out of his money in one of Soapy’s Skagway saloons. The other alleges that Conlin shot Soapy Smith on the Juneau dock at Skagway. No one but Conlin, though, seems to have witnessed this event.

Other Klondike stories tell of Alex Conlin working a brothel, dealing Faro, and then avoiding being killed by the man’s avenging brothers and so on. Conlin may have witnessed this event. But many years then passed before their gold fields and restarted their careers, returned to Seattle from the Alaska gold fields and restored their careers, but many years then passed before their show business successes linked up again. When Conlin arrived in Seattle, he rekindled his friendship with Del Adelphio, a seasoned magician he had seen in the Yukon performing at Dawson’s Palace Theatre.

Between 1902 and 1912 Conlin worked on his magic act, perfected his mind-reading techniques, married and divorced several times, and became a father. In later life he was to say, “I have spent half my life chasing women and the other half running away from them.” He and his first wife, Jessie Cullen, formed a “Challenge Escape” act similar to the one Harry Houdini had popularized. Conlin’s second marriage, to Ethel Lyman, produced a son, Claude A. Conlin Jr., who was born at Providence Hospital. In 1909 Conlin married Della Martell, a former circus hootchy-kotchy dancer. His fourth marriage was to actress Zora Lunnour in 1912 only lasted a year. After that he reconnected with Dela Martell. Together, Conlin and Martell developed a mind-reading act they called...
Not until you had looked deep into his steel gray eyes would you notice the super normal about him.

Alexandrian thoughts and actions, his large stock of creative language, provide real insight into his life in Southern California in the 1910s and ‘20s. His proclivity for coming unusual phrases to express life situations with a sense of cynical humor is a case of studied irony. Any topic he discussed or thought about received his sardonic wit: on using alcohol as a means of persuasion, “He persuaded many a man into seeing things his way”; on nurses’ habits and the habits of nuns, “That nun’s uniform couldn’t have been a cute shape if it had been designed by Walt Disney.”

Since his Alaska sojourn, Alexander had possessed a talent for blurring the distinction between performer and con man. Los Angeles provided a perfect venue for both. In the 1910s and ‘20s...
Alexander, vaudeville entertainer suspected of smuggling alcohol, drugs and Chinese—no evidence found

It was the most quirk-intensive town in the nation. Local author Mayo Morrow promised that “any wizard, seance-maker, soothsayer, holy jumper, herb doctor, whirling dervish, snake charmer, medium, table-turner or Evil Eye, practicing any form of demonology, diabolology, joint jerking, witchcraft, thaumaturgy, spirit rapping, back rubbing, physical torture or diabolical novelty will find assurance and prosperity in Los Angeles despite fierce competition.”

Alexander was born in the Dakota Territory in 1880. His father was a prominent family of Yukon outfitters (then a fireman) and Eugene Levy, son of James Bledsoe, previously published in CO LUMBIA, has a doctorate in sociology from the University of Toronto. Darryl Beckmann is a collector, an accomplished magician, and owner of one of the oldest magic shops in the United States, Seattle’s Market Magic.

Alexander was the perfect tour guide in a strange spirit world available for purchase through his mail order business seven days a week.

He cashed in on spiritualism by targeting women’s emotions, scheduling ladies-only matinees and finding other ways to get into the wallets of the husbands. He spoke with loathing of their authoritarian nature. “Too much regulation will tell you how to act, how to think, how you must regulate every phase of your spiritual and physical life.”

True or not, local lore strongly suggests that Alexander, vaudeville entertainer suspected of smuggling alcohol, drugs and Chinese—no evidence found.

This is the only documentation that has come to light in support of the rumors about Conlin’s criminal activities while living on the Washington coast in the early decades of the 20th century. True or not, local lore strongly suggests that he did dabble in all three of the activities. The adverse publicity from this caused the presumption is that they accepted the explanation he gave them.

Conlin’s home earned a reputation for wild, drunken parties. His armed guardsmen alarmed the locals, who were warned to keep away from Rialto Beach. In 1920, a knock on the door from the bunko agents showed up at The Castle, a vaudeville theater chain.

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MAYO MORROW WINTER 2012–13

In 1926, after retiring, Alexander attempted to blackmail G. Allen Hancock, the blue-blooded founder of Hancock Oil Company. As is common, the incident occurred over a sex scandal, but Hancock refused to pay and had Conlin arrested. Not the least taken aback, the illusionist performed the streetpaleche coin trick for the arresting officers, who were excited to meet him. Joking and laughing with the police, he was detained, but after he had undergone extensive questioning a settlement was negotiated and the charges dropped.

The adverse publicity from this caused Alexander to sink in Los Angeles’ upper social circles for a while. But his photographic skills, his collector of starlet photography, and Hollywood’s short memory, eventually enabled him to regain his mantle as a renowned vaudeville illusionist. As a photographer, Conlin had started out taking “head shots” for wannabe stars. He advertised in Los Angeles newspapers, offering starters inexpensive photos for inclusion with their resumes. When he found a young lady who was willing to pose for more relaxed and casual shots, he would take those as well. He may not have published these casual photographs, but it seems likely that he kept copies of the negatives. After

Alexander was a boy, young Alexander well knew these Midwestern refugees, and he knew how to exploit it. But he knew how to get them to throw off their restriction in theaters—he had little conditioning in theaters—he had little desire to perform. In the late 1910s, at the height of his career, he built a large house near Mora, Washington, over looking a section of the Pacific Coast he named Rialto Beach, after the Rialto vaudeville theater chain.

To the local inhabitants who were mostly Indians and stump farmers, Conlin’s house was known as “The Castle.” He had two cottages built near his house. As he had done in the theaters where he worked, the mentalist wired both cottages so that he could keep an eye on the locals, both male and female occupants. From the main house, Alexander could listen in via the cottages’ hidden microphones, then use the Overheard Communications to his advantage later on in the expensive, one-on-one séances he performed. Once, during World War I, government agents showed up at The Castle, demanding to know why Alexander’s house was the source of mysterious radio signals. Since he was not arrested, the presumption is that they accepted the explanation he gave them.

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During the first two decades of the 20th century, Indian was the most popular brand of motorcycle in the world. In 1903, Indian set a world speed record for motorcycles of 56 mph. The Historical Society has a fine example of a 1918 Indian Twin Model 0, which still retains the trademark deep red color introduced by its maker in 1904. The Model 0 will be on view during Let’s Ride! Motorcycling the Northwest, a new exhibit opening at the History Museum on January 26, 2013.

The Stanley Cup is among the oldest, most prestigious symbols in sports history. It has been called one of the most recognizable trophies in the world, “the Holy Grail of hockey,” and simply “the Cup.” Others refer to it by its financier, Sir Frederick Arthur Stanley, Baron Stanley of Preston, the sixth governor general of Canada. However famous the trophy may be, it is a little-known fact that the first city in the United States to claim the coveted Stanley Cup from the Dominion of Canada was not Boston, or Chicago, or even New York. It was Seattle. In 1917, with their unmistakable green, red, and white barber-pole style sweaters, and led by the scoring tandem of Bernie Morris and Frank Foyston, the Seattle Metropolitans skated to victory as the first team in the 24-year existence of the Stanley Cup to bring it south of the international border.

The Patrick Brothers, the Seattle Metropolitans, and the Pacific Coast Hockey Association

By Matthew A. Hulton

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Originally called the Dominion Hockey Challenge Cup, the Stanley Cup was intended to be awarded to the top amateur team in Canada—there were no professional teams at the time. Lord Stanley commissioned the gold-lined silver cup in England and paid 10 British guineas for it—the equivalent of $48.67 in U.S. currency. “Dominion Hockey Challenge Cup” was engraved on one side of the cup, “From Stanley of Preston” on the other. After it was initially awarded to the Montreal Amateur Athletic Association (AAA) in 1893, the cup was contested annually in a challenge put forth by the champion team of a rival league.

Professional hockey on the Northwest Coast had humble beginnings, but in the course of a few short years it became a prominent enterprise. Two entrepreneurial brothers with a love of the game were responsible for bringing hockey to
The Patrick brothers used their connections back east to recruit some of the NHL’s biggest names. In its opening season over three-quarters of the new league’s players came from the NHL. Pacific Coast league rules were slightly different from those of the NHL. Most notably, the position of “rover”—the seventh skater, who could essentially play anywhere—was dropped in the NHL. The Wanderers held the trophy for two years, until it was awarded to the winner of the newly founded Eastern Canada Hockey Association. No longer an amateur challenge trophy, the Stanley Cup henceforth went to professional players in professional leagues.

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On December 7, 1915, the Metropolitans won their first victory, a home game against Victoria, 3-2. Although their inaugural season record was a mere .500, the team was a huge success in Seattle. Most of the players were used to the NHL rules of six-on-six and no offside, so they took the 18-game season in stride, adjusted to playing in the PCHA, and were convinced that their chances next year would be even better. The Metropolitan (above), one of the most successful teams in the early days of professional hockey on the Pacific Coast, Seattle is engendered twice on the Stanley Cup (left), first as 1917 champions, and second in 1919 with "series not completed." W hen the puck dropped for the first time in the 1916–17 season, it did so on a brand new Pacific Coast Hockey Association. Lester Patrick had lost his financial backing in Victoria, the Canadian Army appropriated the arena, and the team moved to Spokane. Donning yellow and blue jerseys, the Aristocrats turned-Canaries struggled in the standings as well as at the box office. That move left Vancouver with the only Canadian-based team in the PCHA, in a game where nearly all the players were Canadians. Along with the relocation, the season expanded to 24 games. The Metropolitans opened their sophomore season on the road. On December 2, 1916, they entered the immaculate Vancouver Arena optimistic of the new season, but left crushed 6-2. Although the Mets lost three of the four games they played in Vancouver’s 10,000-seat arena, they won three out of four on home ice. Goaltender Happy Holmes recorded the team’s first-ever victory in a game one, 4-2. Seattle bested the Canaries in three games out of four. In the second period of the January 5 game in Spokane, with his team sitting on a 4-4 record, Captain Frank Foyston engaged in what the Seattle Daily Times called “the unprofitable stunt of fighting,” resulting in a 20-minute penalty. Foyston returned in the third period to net Seattle’s only goal in a losing 5-3 effort. Seattle fans had seen some impressive wins that season, but no victory that season was more important than the March 2, 1917, game in Portland. Lose, and they would face the Vancouver Millionaires in a play-off for the 1917 PCHA Championship, win, and the PCHA title was theirs. Fifty Metropolitans fans joined their team for the train ride to Portland, and none was disappointed. The Mets won 4-3, earning the PCHA title and the chance to face the as-yet-undiscovered NHL champion. Vancouver manager/captain/coach Frank Patrick was distrustful that his Millionaires would miss the cup finals for the second year in a row. He challenged Muldoon and the Mets to a two-game exhibition to take place while the NHA championship was determined. Muldoon accepted, and Vancouver won the series with a cumulative score of 11-7. While Patrick was convinced of his team’s superiority, Muldoon made the case that the title had been decided and that his players were not willing to risk injury to play at the top of their game.

On March 17, 1917, Les Canadiens prevailed in game one, 8-4. Seattle was shaken but not disheartened. Muldoon reminded the press of how his core group of players had knocked off Montreal as members of the Stanley Cup-winning Toronto team only three years earlier. Game two was played under the NHAs six-man guidelines, and this time the Mets won with a final score of 6-1. The players returned to the PCHAs seven-man format for game three on March 23. Bernie Morris lifted the championship trophy with a final score of 5-4. The Metropolitans were just one win away from claiming the Stanley Cup. After the third game, Montreal manager George Kennedy accused the referees of costing his team the match by ejecting his seventh man with no one to replace him. PCHA president Frank Patrick dismissed the claim, and game four went as scheduled. On March 26, with a final score of 9-1, the Seattle team faced the Stanley Cup champion and the first U.S.-based team to hold that distinction. The Seattle Daily Times described the epic victory as if it had occurred on the front lines of the recently fought Battle of Somme in France: "Historians who write of the rise and fall of Les Canadiens dynasty will record how this daring band of Flying Frenchmen traveled 2,000 miles to find an adversary worthy of its steel and discovered a foe that outrivalled it in every department of the great ice game. Clerks will tell how the Montreal insurgents battled with all the skill and cunning in their power but met a team that would not yield and came away with a speed, skill and tremendous driving force before which the defense of the Canadians was futile."

The 1917-18 season brought about changes in both the PCHA and NHL ligues. When the United States entered the war in Europe, many players were drafted—and some were killed—but the eastern and western hockey associations carried on. The war boosted the game, and the Spokane Canaries had ended the previous season playing all of its games on the road. After Seattle sealed the PCHA pennant, Frank Patrick cancelled Vancouver’s last game with Spokane. That may have made his decision to disbanded the franchise easier to handle. The players were dispersed amongst Vancouver, Seattle, and Portland. Lester Patrick spent the season with the Metropolitans. With only three teams, the season was shortened to 18 games. The league championship would henceforth be determined in a two-game, total-goals playoff. Out east, the National Hockey Association was determined. Frank Calder took over as president of the newly formed National Hockey League (NHL). The NHL began the 1917-18 season with five teams. However, by season’s end, it mirrored the PCHA with three. Seattle was virtually unbeatable at home, suffering six of its seven losses on the road. Through the continued leadership of team captain Frank Foyston, the goal scoring of Bernie Morris, and the admirable goaltending of former Spokane Canary Nor “Heck” Fowler, the Mets again finished at the top of the PCHA. But Vancouver ended up with the league championship after beating Seattle 3-2 and 1-0. The Millionaires headed to Toronto to compete with the Arenas for the Stanley Cup. It is no surprise that Toronto won the NHL rules games 5-3 and 6-3, and that Vancouver won the PCHA rules games 6-4 and 8-1. The fifth and final game was played on March 30 under NHL rules. Though the Millionaires fought hard, former Metropolitans’ goalie Happy Holmes fought harder. Toronto’s Corbett Denneny broke the 1-1 tie in the third period to win it for the Arenas. In the f

Meanwhile, in the East, the Montreal Canadiens bested the heavily favored Ottawa Senators. The “Flying Frenchmen” were coming to Seattle, and the finals were set to begin on March 17, with two days between games until the best-of-five series came to an end. To show their appreciation to the fans, Pete Muldoon and Seattle Ice Arena manager C.W. Lester chose not to raise ticket prices for the finals. “We feel that fans who have been paying their money to see the games throughout the year by boosting the game alone are entitled to consideration now that we have won the championship.” Ever the promoter, Muldoon continued, “Accordingly, we have decided to let the prices stand as they are despite the fact that the games will offer the fastest hockey ever seen here.” The Canadians were physically larger, but the Mets were faster. Montreal had former PCHA star and scoring sensation Newsy Lalonde. The Seattle players had the advantage of knowing the Montreal style of play, since the majority of the Metropolitans had come from Toronto two years earlier. Seattle also had the advantage of home ice. On March 17, Les Canadiens prevailed in game one, 8-4. Seattle was shaken but not disheartened. Muldoon reminded the players that his core group of players had knocked off Montreal as members of the Stanley Cup-winning Toronto team only three years earlier. Game two was played under the NHAs six-man guidelines, and this time the Mets won with a final score of 6-1. The players returned to the PCHAs seven-man format for game three on March 23. Bernie Morris lifted the championship trophy with a final score of 5-4. The Metropolitans were just one win away from claiming the Stanley Cup. After the third game, Montreal manager George Kennedy accused the referees of costing his team the match by ejecting his seventh man with no one to replace him. PCHA president Frank Patrick dismissed the claim, and game four went as scheduled. On March 26, with a final score of 9-1, the Seattle team faced the Stanley Cup champion and the first U.S.-based team to hold that distinction. The Seattle Daily Times described the epic victory as if it had occurred on the front lines of the recently fought Battle of Somme in France: "Historians who write of the rise and fall of Les Canadiens dynasty will record how this daring band of Flying Frenchmen traveled 2,000 miles to find an adversary worthy of its steel and discovered a foe that outrivalled it in every department of the great ice game. Clerks will tell how the Montreal insurgents battled with all the skill and cunning in their power but met a team that would not yield and came away with a speed, skill and tremendous driving force before which the defense of the Canadians was futile."

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On November 11, 1918, the world rejoiced as the Great War came to an end. Victoria hockey fans had reason to rejoice as well when they welcomed back Lester Patrick and their hometown Aristocrats after a two-year hiatus. The departure of Portland from the PCHA left Seattle as the only U.S.-based team in professional hockey until the arrival of the NHL’s Boston Bruins in 1924-25. In the 1918-19 season, in a scenario that was becoming familiar to Pacific Northwest hockey fans, Seattle and Vancouver faced off in the post-season playoffs. The two-game, total-goals PCHA playoff took place in Seattle on March 12 and in Vancouver two days later. Seattle played without star goal-getter Bernie Morris, who had been arrested and convicted of evading the draft. The home team won each game—with the Mets commanding a 6-1 victory in game one and the Millionaires mustering a 4-1 victory in game two—but Seattle’s two-game total of 2 goals, as opposed to Vancouver’s total of 5, ensured the Metropolitans’ return to the Stanley Cup finals. Having finished off the Ottawa Senators, the NHL champion Montreal Canadiens eagerly awaited their Seattle engagement. The defeated team was set to bre...
injuries, but worse than that was the spread of the Spanish Flu. Back to seven-on-seven in game three, Frank Foyston dazzled the hometown crowd with four goals, allowing the Mets to carve out a 7–2 win and take the lead in the series. Game four, which took place on March 26, has been hailed as “one of the all-time classic Stanley Cup matches,” and “the greatest game ever played on the coast.” At the end of regulation play, neither team had scored. A 20-minute overtime period left nothing solved, and the battered teams skated away, leaving the match a 0–0 tie.

Since game four was ruled a “no-contest,” there was a heated discussion on how the next game should be played. Muldoon and the Mets claimed that the game five should be a PCHA rule, while Kennedy and the Canadians argued that it should be a repeat of the last game and retain the six-man play of the NHL. Montreal got its way, and the March 30 game commenced with a six-on-six format. During the game, the two toughest men on the ice—the Mets’ Gully Wilson and the Canadians’ “Bad” Joe Hall—collapsed and were rushed first U.S. city to do so. The Patrick brothers managed to tie the game, and send it to sudden-death overtime. With the championship on the line, Seattle was only one goal away from its second Stanley Cup win, but Montreal’s rookie sensation Odie Cleghorn dashed all hopes when he sealed Montreal’s 4–3 victory 15 minutes and 57 seconds into overtime.

The Mets posted an impressive 73–30 record during their nine years in the building.

John Reid, a New York University law professor and long-time inhabitut of the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, earned respect with his earlier books on the frontier. His latest volume, like two earlier books on the Overland Trail, is rich in research. The bibliography, for example, is an authoritative listing of fur trade sources. The Iroquois Indians are a focus of several chapters in Forsging a Fur Empire, but so too are the Flatheads, Blackfeet, and Shoshone. John Work, a brigade leader for the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC), has his moment of concentration by Reid, and so does Alexander Ross, although neither man can eclipse the importance of Peter Skene Ogden who wrote the map that Lewis and Clark used on the expedition is a circular intent on telling a story. Moreover, he has visited many archives and manuscript collections containing information on McDonald and his kinmen. In a more perfect world, Anderson’s book would have a stronger bibliography of secondary sources, yet to his credit he has uncovered semi-forgotten articles from long-ago issues of the Washington Historical Quarterly and the Oregon Historical Quarterly.

Last summer I enjoyed a visit with a graduate student witten by her doctoral dissertation on the fur trade era in the Pacific Northwest for the faculty at York University in Canada. To be sure, John Reid’s book is of interest to her. Anderson’s volume has less to concern her, yet she cannot ignore the travels and commentary of Angus McDonald when at Fort Nisqually, Cowitz Farm, Fort George, and Fort Langley. Together, these two tomes may also assist other fur trade scholars.

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COLUMBIA REVIEWS

Uncovering the Truth About Meriwether Lewis

More than 200 years after the celebrated return of American history’s most famous expedition, the lives of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, both before and after their epic journey, continue to excite the interest of scholarly and popular audiences. As Thomas Danisi’s latest contribution to this still-burgeoning field of study reveals, the enigmatic and ultimately tragic life of Lewis in particular maintains unworriing intrigue. Danisi and Prometheus Books appear to have banked on this fact.

Clearly a follow-up to Meriwether Lewis, the biography Danisi coauthored with John C. Jackson in 2009, and arguably a response to its critics, Uncovering the Truth About Meriwether Lewis purports to shed new light on a misunderstood historical figure and some of the key episodes that have dogged his legacy. Danisi’s research net here is no more evidence derived from exhaustive and meticulous consultation with previously unearthed or misread sources. The book is actually a compilation of largely extraneous material—some old, some new—that in the end only complicates rather than enhances our understanding of Lewis’s short and troubled life. Arranging this material chronologically from Lewis’s court-marital proceedings in 1789 to the harrowing journey on the Natchez Trace that marked his final days in 1809, Danisi attempts to examine his subject in terms of charges of indolence, financial mismanagement, alcoholism, and mental illness through a series of disjointed chapters, several of which appeared previously as articles in Western Historical Quarterly and We Proceed On.

Danisi’s effort produces mixed results. He convincingly portrays Lewis as a skillful self-represented litigant, an active and attive nervous agent of the Louisiana territory of Louisiana, a victim of the “fanatical machinations” of War Department accountant William Simons, and in control of his mental faculties except when in the throes of chronic malarial fever. Likewise, Danisi leaves little doubt that Chickasaw Indian agent James Neely did in fact tend to Lewis in his final days, and, as most scholars already acknowledge, Lewis did not fall prey to a murder conspiracy. However, Danisi’s claim that Lewis was not intoxicated when he allegedly challenged a superior officer to a duel in 1789 is based on one witness’s unquestionably credible testimony. His painstaking analysis of who actually wrote the map that Lewis and Clark used on the expedition is inconsequential, and even without Danisi’s extensive data, few would question the fact that mail was slow and often tampered with in early 19th-century America. As the book reaches its climax, Danisi argues persuasively that Lewis battled malaria intermittently for nearly 15 years but curiously rejects the all too common side effects of chronically debilitating illnesses—depression and alcoholism—as plausible explanations for Lewis’s suicide. Danisi’s final conclusion, that Lewis did not kill himself intentionally but instead shot himself following a course of treatment known as “wounding the offending part,” is a circular argument that suggests Danisi’s analysis is driven more by the persistent and undue stigma of suicide than empirical logic.

Happy Avery is doing research at the University of Montana where she specializes in American Western history.

Planet Rock Doc
Nuggets from Explorations of the Natural World

The book under review has many surprises—pleasant ones at that. The author, for one, earned a doctorate from the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences at Harvard but currently oversees the Office of Major Grant Competition at the Agricultural Research Center at Washington State University. Or, consider that in this small book of essays on Pacific Northwest natural science there are 78 chapters, each of them more-or-less the same length, about two printed pages of text. Not the least of the wonders is that this book about science is so readable. It is an effective outreach for nonscientists and a fun way to look at science from a different angle. There are no diagrams or equations to wade through. It is all accessible prose. The writing is clear and to the point. It is as if one is sitting at the bar of a local pub discussing the latest scientific findings with the author without having to lift a finger to the keyboard. The writing is conversational, engaging, and informative. The chapters present an eclectic mix of contemporary and historical nuggets from the Oregon, California, Washington, Idaho, Alaska, and British Columbia regions. One might assume that a book that is only one hundred pages long would contain the information of a much longer book. One would be wrong.

The majority of the essays focus on the exploration of the Pacific Northwest by the Lewis and Clark Expedition. While a majority of the book is concerned with the natural history of the Pacific Northwest, there are a few chapters that concern the history of the region. These include the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the Nootka War of 1791, the War of 1812, the John Day and Great Divide, and the North West Fur Company. The chapter on the North West Fur Company is particularly well written and provides a detailed account of the company and its role in the development of the region.

The book is divided into two sections: the first section contains essays on the natural history of the region, while the second section contains essays on the history of the region. The essays are broken down into topics such as animals, plants, geology, and history. Each essay is written in a clear and concise manner, making it easy for the reader to follow.

Dawn Burns is a teacher and independent scholar from Troutdale, Oregon.

Current & Noteworthy
By Robert Carriker, Columbia Reviews Editor.


John Reid, a New York University law professor and long-time habitut of the Huntington Library in San Marino, California, earned respect with his earlier books on the frontier. His latest volume, like two earlier books on the Overland Trail, is rich in research. The bibliography, for example, is an authoritative listing of fur trade sources. The Iroquois Indians are a focus of several chapters in Forsging a Fur Empire, but so too are the Flatheads, Blackfeet, and Shoshone. John Work, a brigade leader for the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC), has his moment of concentration by Reid, and so does Alexander Ross, although neither man can eclipse the importance of Peter Skene Ogden who wrote the map that Lewis and Clark used on the expedition is a circular intent on telling a story. Moreover, he has visited many archives and manuscript collections containing information on McDonald and his kinmen. In a more perfect world, Anderson’s book would have a stronger bibliography of secondary sources, yet to his credit he has uncovered semi-forgotten articles from long-ago issues of the Washington Historical Quarterly and the Oregon Historical Quarterly.

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The Olympic Peninsula Novels of Patricia Campbell

By Peter Donahue

The Olympic Peninsula has always been a source of allure and unease for non-native people, and in three novels that depict the splendor, hardship, and violence of life on the peninsula in the 1850s, Patricia Campbell (1901–1976) reckons with this response.

In Eila (1946), the title character is a well-bred Philadelphia woman who marries a logger working a claim near the settlement of Port Ludlow. His homestead is a narrow clearing accessible only by boat, so, as her husband works his “bull outfit” deep in the forest, Eila finds herself painfully isolated. At first she is awed by the enormous size of the fir and cedar trees, yet before long the terrain becomes unbearable for her: “Wet ferns, wet grass, wet leaves were so intense a green that they made her eyes ache.” When she sneaks into the logging area to save him from arrest, her husband is “bull outfit” deep in the forest, and she hears reports of Chinese Exclusion Act, he begins smuggling Chinese workers across the Strait of Juan de Fuca into the United States. When she hears reports of Chinese men being chained overhead by smugglers seeking to avoid customs officers, she fears her husband is involved. Nonetheless, on a foggy night officers, she fears her husband is involved.

Eila, with her Quaker background, takes in her husband's out-of-wedlock children and seeks to educate them, her good intentions pose problems for both herself and the children. Racial issues come further complicated when Eliza, her mother, who herself is a Klallam woman. The terrain becomes unbearable for her: “awed by the enormous size of the fir and cedar trees, yet before long the terrain becomes unbearable for her.”

As Katti enters adolescence, however, social reproach taints this Arcadia. From murmuring classmates she discovers that her mother is a well-bred local woman whom her father took up with after her biological mother died. Despite the stigma of miscegenation, Katti turns to her mother for support when self-righteous neighbors condemn her for letting a local boy seduce her. In shame, she flees to Port Townsend where she becomes a singer at a bar on Water Street, which blackens her reputation further. Nonetheless, the perseverance, Eliza’s integrity intact, yet, when events lead her to San Francisco—and into trouble—Katti’s only desire is to return to Chima-cum Valley, where the blue mountains shut out the world, and where the air was sweet with the smell of evergreens.

Following Lush Valley, Campbell wrote a novel set on Vashon Island and looks across the Puget Sound lumber port. Her fiction depicts the day in 1862 when citizens, objecting to plans to move the customs house to Port Angeles, barricaded themselves inside, only to have Smith threaten to shell it from the USS Shabrack, the ship on which he had just returned to Port Townsend. Campbell also does not gloss over the settlers’ treatment of Native Americans, recounting the brutal removal of the Klallams from nearby tidelands following the Point No-Point Treaty in 1855. The one positive historical reference in Cedarhaven is to James G. Swan, who served as an Indian agent in Neah Bay and a judge in Port Townsend.

Patricia Campbell grew up in Vashon and Seattle but spent most of her adulthood in Port Ludlow, Port Townsend, and Port Angeles. Late in her career, she published a 52-part series on the history of the North Olympic Peninsula in the Port Angeles Daily News. Her greatest contribution to the historiography of the region, though, remains her novels. According to literary critic Larissa MacFarquhar, “His work is infused with the scent of fiction and nonfiction. It is a pioneer country, without fixed laws.” What better form, then, with which to portray the often lawless Washington Territory?

Peter Donahue is a participant in the Humanities Washington Speaker Bureau. 2012–14 His talk is titled “Washington History and Historical Fiction.”
Pianist Coraile Flaskett (1890–1978) embodied the New Woman of the early 20th century. Forword thinking and independent, she expressed her progressive attitudes in her dedication to the cultural life of her community. In this image by photographer Charles Matthew Flasser, Flaskett and her days teaching piano, performing, and participating in civic life. She served on the board of directors and took up such civic causes as the preservation of her home in Tacoma. In 1918 Flaskett returned to Tacoma where she had grown up, and spent the rest of her life helping immigrants assimilate American culture by teaching free classes in history, art, and literature. In 1914 Flaskett leaving Berlin in 1914 at the onset of World War I. After a short stay in England, she played piano in Berlin with Artur Schnabel, one of the most distinguished pianists of his era, and then returned to Tacoma where she had grown up, and spent the rest of her life helping immigrants assimilate American culture by teaching free classes in history, art, and literature. In 1918 Flaskett returned to Tacoma where she had grown up, and spent the rest of her life helping immigrants assimilate American culture by teaching free classes in history, art, and literature. In 1918 Flaskett returned to Tacoma where she had grown up, and spent the rest of her life helping immigrants assimilate American culture by teaching free classes in history, art, and literature. In 1918 Flaskett returned to Tacoma where she had grown up, and spent the rest of her life helping immigrants assimilate American culture by teaching free classes in history, art, and literature.
A century of motorcycling as Northwesterners have experienced it, combining rare bikes with grand themes in regional history.