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COVER: Harold Work, a Seattle composer, published “Oriole” in 1921. His lyrics recount a story of love
between Oriole, a Native American woman, and the young chief who pursues her. Work’s work reflects
a growing interest, nationally and internationally, in folk culture. The photograph captures the avian
subject of the song, American oriole, from a field guide beginning on page 27. (Washington State Historical
Society, #1994.1.2.23)
A Most Uncivil Civil War—Registering Walla Walla for the Draft in 1864

Edited by Cary C. Collins

Assigned to Civil War-era Walla Walla to register men for the Union Army draft, Edwin Eells (1841–1917) encountered thwarted the deep divisions in a citizenry torn by conflicting allegiances to North and South. He later recorded his experiences as a federal enrolling officer during the summer and fall of 1864. Having accepted a position that seemingly no one else would take, the 23-year-old suffered, in the course of performing his duties, deep humiliations inflicted at the hands of Southern sympathizers. His perseverance and willingness to finish the job spoke volumes to his character and temperament. He refused to be intimidated, and the qualities he exhibited served him well later in life.

Eells provides valuable descriptions of the contentious and contested nature of life in Walla Walla (the largest town in the territory), and the dichotomy that existed between the rougher elements of its citizenry and the refined and religiously-disposed faction to which Eells belonged. According to historian Thompson C. Elliott in the April 1915 issue of Washington Historical Quarterly, Walla Walla was, in 1864, “a semi-Godless city . . . overrun with thieves, gamblers and women of the demimonde,” as “lively and wide-open a town as the frontier West has often produced.”

Washington was a free territory that remained loyal to the Union, although Southern Democrats and Confederate partisans resided on both sides of the Cascades. Residents of the territory did not vote in the presidential election of 1860 but were eligible for military service, and Washingtonians served in both the Union and Confederate Armies. The territory struggled throughout the war to muster men into militia service, especially east of the mountains where interest in the gold fields of Washington and Idaho predominated.

In March 1863 President Abraham Lincoln signed the Civil War Military Draft Act (or Enrollment Act), which established procedures for enrolling and conscripting eligible males between the ages of 20 and 45 into military service. Between August and November 1864, Eells registered over 1,130 men “subject to do military duty in the Ninth Sub-district of the Territory of Washington, consisting of the County of Walla Walla.” Data collected on each enroilee included his name, place of birth, age, pecuniary, complexion, professional occupation or trade, former military service, and remarks (frequently consisting of potentially disqualifying information, such as disabilities or family obligations). The Enrollment Act applied to all able-bodied male citizens and men of foreign birth seeking to become United States citizens who met the age requirement, but President Lincoln later excluded Washington Territory in his draft proclamations.

Edwin Eells was the oldest son of pioneer missionaries Cushing and Myra Eells. He and his brother Myron (1843–1907) were born at their parent’s mission station, Tshimakain, at Walker’s Prairie in what is now eastern Washington. They remained there until the bloody events at the Whitman Mission erupted in late November 1847, necessitating removal of the surviving missionaries to western Oregon. At the time that Eells assumed his position as enrolling officer, he was living with his parents and brother on the Waiilatpu mission station acreage situated outside Walla Walla. They had settled there in anticipation of Cushing Eells founding an academy on the property dedicated to the memory of the late missionaries Marcus and Narcissa Whitman. That institution of learning is today’s Whitman College in the city of Walla Walla.

Following is one chapter of a memoir written by Edwin Eells in the final years of his life. Typescript copies of the full documents, of which there are several versions, are housed in Tacoma at the Washington State Historical Society Research Center as part of the Edwin Eells papers. The edited memoir, with a working title of “My Life among the Indians” is being readied for submission to the University of Nebraska Press as a companion to Assimilation’s Agent: My Life as a Superintendent in the Indian Boarding School System (edited by Cary C. Collins, University of Nebraska Press, 2004), which was written by Edwin L. Chalcraft, Eells’s friend and colleague in the United States Indian Service.

In revising the Eells manuscript, attention has been given to readability and clarity. Long paragraphs and sentences have been divided, and grammar and spelling errors have been corrected.

It has been paramount to retain the meanings that Eells sought to convey. Note that in its original draft form the Eells memoir contains language of the mid-19th century that is offensive and unacceptable to modern audiences. The editing of the memoir endeavors to reflect sensitivity to today’s readership.

During the summer of 1864 the Civil War was dragging along, but to the national government the progress was not very satisfactory. Dark days had come. The government at Washington was sullenly lest there be foreign invasion.

If so, the north Pacific Coast was considered the weakest point. It was therefore important to discern the military strength and also the temperament of the Pacific Northwest. The enrollment of those eligible for military duty from the territorial district of Washington was undertaken. The headquarters of the pronost marshal was located at Fort Vancouver. He served to the commander of the fort at Walla Walla asking for the selection of a civilian to act in the capacity of enrolling officer. Application was tendered to several men but they, knowing too well the disposition of the community and the danger of performing that duty, wisely declined. The position was then suggested to me. I was young and patriotic and knew but little so I feared nothing. For the good of my country, I was willing to perform that kind of service. I was appointed and went to work.

I soon found that I was no longer a private individual, but had suddenly become a representative of a hated cause. The town was largely “seceded.” The colored at the fort was reportedly a rebel sympathizer who had been ordered out west to keep him from the seat of war. It took some “guts” to ride alone the length and breadth of that sparsely settled country, huring up people that had moved out west to escape from the war. Everybody seemed to know me even before I arrived. Often when I ride into a camp the children screamed and ran away to hide, the women turned pale, and the men trembled when answering the questions I was obliged to ask them. The good wife would sometimes come up and reassuringly beg of me whether I was going to have her husband taken away to war. Some of the men slipped across the Canadian line. The feelings of the women in the country districts were much more intense than that of the men. In some places they had bottles of hot water prepared to seduce me with if I attempted to enter the house.

One of the county commissioners had a large family of grown sons subject to the draft. The mother turned very angry when I called at her house. It was a rainy afternoon. I gently knocked at the door of the log cabin. Inside she was washing clothes with her back turned to the open door. I impatiently asked if any of the men of the house were about. Wheeling halfway around and looking over her shoulder, she declared: “I ain’t going to tell you where the men are. You can find them yourself.”

Tshimakain Mission at Walker’s Prairie, Oregon Territory. Edwin Eells’s parents, Cushing Eells and Myra Fairbanks Eells, cofounded the mission in 1838 and Edwin Eells and his brother Myron were born there. The mission closed following the Whitman Massacre.
She then returned to her work, scrubbing away harder than ever at her board. I then asked her who that man was walking across the field towards the house and if he lived there. She snapped out, “He's not but a sixteen-year-old boy. You don’t want him.”

From other sources I learned that the father and all of the sons were up the creek about six miles threshing grain with a machine. As it was raining hard that afternoon it was certain they would have to stop work. I turned all night with a Union man who lived about a half mile away at the very point on the road where they would have to pass on their way back. Just as dusk they came by. Taking an early breakfast, I rode over and found a dozen or young men there, all eligible. It was a rich catch. The old gentleman was very courteous and the young men were polite, but the old lady appeared very angry and accused me on her face as black as a thundercloud. Finally, when I had enumerated the names of everyone there, I learned that two of the younger boys were away. I asked the old gentleman if he would provide me with their names and by doing so save me some trouble. Of course, he said he would. So he told me their names, but when I inquired his ages he said he had so many boys that he could not remember how old each of them was. Sitting at the end of the table eating his breakfast, he turned an inquiring gaze towards his wife, who was cooking breakfasts on the stone nearby. “Neddy, look at me old man. I ain’t going to tell you how old the boys are,” she snorted. But I learned their ages later.

One day I was on Dry Creek and came to a farm where the men were threshing. It was noon and they had just finished their dinner and were sitting all round the place. I was originally trained and got fifteen or twenty names. The owner of the farm seemed to be very busy and did not find him. His wife told me he was down to the gristery. I went there, but did not see him. Then I told her that if he would give me his name and answer my other questions, I would assure every purpose and do just as well. She seemed very willing and told me his name was Duckworth. I asked if he was a brother of the man of the same name I had just enrolled inside the house. She replied that he was. She then promptly answered all my other questions. I continued on to the next house, well satisfied with my success.

There, as I knocked at the door, an old gentleman sitting at the other end of the room gruffly told me to come in. He seemed to know me and my business. He asked if I was not afraid to come there where they all were rebel sympathizers. As I stepped inside the room, I noticed a copy of the Oregonian, a strong Union newspaper, lying on the stand. I answered that I figured there was no danger in a house where they took the Oregonian. He laughed, saying that I had caught him. I had previously known that he was a staunch Union man. He then asked how I had gotten along at the next house below on the creek. “You mean Mr. Duckworth?” said he. “Mr. Duckworth?” said he. “There is no such man as that living on this creek.” “Well, she told me that was his name,” I replied. “She fooled you, that is all,” he responded. I decided not to go back just then. I finished my circuit and returned that way later. But the real trouble was in the city of Walla Walla. The saloons—and there were many of them—were hotbeds of secession. I tried to get in them during the forenoons before the men got ginned up very much. In the afternoons I enrolled the residential districts.

But on one hot day in August, 1864, as I was walking down the main street of the town at about one o’clock in the afternoon and as I was passing a large saloon that at that time seemed to be nearly empty, I was met by a young man who said, “There is a man in here who is going to Colville tomorrow and I want you to get his name. I then went back into the saloon. My blood was up and I wanted to see it through. I stepped to the bar and, while I was writing the name of the barkeeper, someone commenced throwing eggs at me through an opening in a small lean-to on the other side of the room that was used as a kitchen for preparing oysters for the gamblers on the nights they spent in the saloon. Luckily, none of the eggs hit me. They whizzed past me on each side, smashing the tumblers and decanters, which angered the barkeeper and caused him to swear. The crowd there was to be more fun. So they circled round in very considerable numbers. I kept on with my work, getting the names of one and another who appeared to be well disposed. Not long afterward, while I was standing out on the sidewalk in front of the door, someone came running through the saloon with a bucket of water. They dashed it up on the cloth awning overhead, intending that it should fall on my head. Fortunately for me but not for him, the water drenched a gentleman standing by my side, wetting his linen coat, and prompting him to head off for home.

Tip Wiseman was another man who refused to give me his name. He said he would not give it, saying the government, agin’ the whole business.” I told him I should have to report him. “I don’t care if you do. They can’t arrest me. The colonel and soldiers at the fort are all on my side and will fight for me,” he returned. I knew there was some truth in what Tip was saying, but I had to report him just the same.
with coal oil from a five gallon can. About forty men followed us to see the fun. As I opened my book to write his name, someone looked over my shoulder and said, "Don't you write that blamed _'s name on the same page as mine, blame you." "No," I said, "I keep them all on a page by themselves." It was now getting to be about four o'clock. The fun was mostly over. Many had gone away. I was taking it easy, sitting on the sidewalk in a chair that fronted the door of the building, engaging in conversation with a respectable-looking man sitting by my side. I was trying to get him to give me his name, which he seemed reluctant to do, for he turned out to be a gambler and a secessionist. Just then someone came running through the saloon again, stopping a second at the entranceway before landing a whole bucket full of water all over me and drenching me thoroughly. Blinded by the water, I was unable to see who it was. I got up and stepped into the little kitchen where there was a stove. I dried myself and went home.

In the evening the town turned wild. "Hurray for Jeff Davis" went up from many throats all up and down the street, but the Union men were sullen and mad. One man said to me, "I wish I had been in your place. There would have been two or three dead men. I never would have stood what you did. It is not right nor just to the dignity of the government." "Yes, and you would have been dead too," I said. "All they wanted was to get me excited and give them an excuse to shoot me as they did the enrolling officer in Grande Ronde [sic] the other day." The next morning I went back to the same saloon. Very soon the crowd began to gather, expecting more fun. When it had grown large enough, I squared myself around and facing them announced, "Gentlemen, I can stand as much for fun as any of you. I proved that to you yesterday. But this has gone far enough and if anything like what occurred yesterday is attempted today, I will have a company of soldiers up here from the fort and arrest you and every one of you." The crowd dispersed and I went on with my work and had no more trouble in the whole city. I had my day and won.

Weeks passed and the enrollment was finally completed. The provost marshal came up from Vancouver to arrest those who had been reported as obstructing the draft. We expected serious trouble. In company with the provost marshal, I went down to the fort and called on the colonel. We told him we wanted a company of soldiers ready for any emergency and we wanted to be armed in our muskets either. He promised fair and direct his men to be ready for us. We returned to the city a mile and a half distant. I had a fast riding horse tied where I could get to her very quickly if I needed to get to the military post in a hurry.

Tip Wiseman, the man who had bragged so loudly in the first few days, was in town and at about twelve o'clock noon the provost mar- shal tapped him on the shoulder. "You are my prisoner," he said. I was astonished, but Wiseman put up no resistance. He wished right down and went with the marshal in search of bail. He petitioned one or two townspeople on whom he thought he could rely, but was refused. They replied, "You rented the draft, did you, you fool. You go somewhere else." At length and with great difficulty, he got his bond signed and was released. Reddy and all the others, seven in all, were arrested, tried in the United States district court, convicted, and sentenced.

That was the way I fought, bled, and died for my country fifty years ago.

The threat of "foreign invasion" on the north Pacific Coast discussed by Eells is insightful. Although such an incursion failed to materialize, an approach on the mouth of the Columbia River by Britain, France, or Confederate raiders was considered a legitimate concern by federal officials, a potentiality exacerbated by ongoing tensions swirling around the Pig War boundary dispute in the San Juan Islands.

During the war years two Confederate commerce raid- ers, the CSS Alabama and the CSS Shenandoah, entered Pacific waters, the latter vessel growing notorious for firing the final shot in the Civil War at a whaling brig off the Aleu- tian Islands. In 1862 the United States, in response to possible enemy encroachment, undertook construction of what became known as the Three Fort Harbor Defense System, with Fort Cape Disappointment (after 1875 known as Fort Canby, named after the late Union Major General Edward R. S. Canby) on the Washington bank of the Columbia River and the fort at Point Adams (renamed Fort Stevens after the late Washington Territory governor and Union Army officer of that name) on the south shore. Construction of a last fortification, Fort Columbia, began at Chinook Point north of the Colum- bia River in 1896. The seawall defenses erected on Paget Sound—encompassing Forts Casey, Worden, and Flaggler—date to the Fort Columbia era.

Edwin Eells’s term as enrolling officer concluded his participation in the Civil War. With the fulfillment of his duties, he reentered nongovernment life, although he later embarked upon what became an extensive 24-year career in the United States Indian Service. Serving as Indian agent on the Skokomish, Tulalip, and Puyallup Reservations, he built up an employment history that stretched from 1871 to 1895.

In terms of the dynamics of the job, his activities in the Indian Service somewhat mirrored his experiences in Walla Walla. His charge was to protect the interests of those falling under his supervision, a responsibility that entangled him in everything from verbal disputes and physical altercations to shootings and even murder investigations. This brought him into almost continuous contact with fellow countrymen opposed to the policies he was sworn by oath to uphold and carry out.

In the course of his life, Eells contributed to three pivotal eras of Pacific Northwest history. He was a young boy living with his parents during the missionary period of the 1840s. He participated in the settlement and development of Washing- ton and Oregon in the years that followed. Finally, he served as a government official tasked with administering federal Indian policies in western Washington. There can be little doubt, though, that of all the many roles he assumed during his adult life, the one he performed in Walla Walla in 1864 ranked among his most dramatic and memorable. 10

Cary C. Collins attended graduate school at Central Washington Univer- sity and Washington State University. He is currently writing a history ofTahoma National Cemetery, in Kent, Washington.
When most Washingtonians think of JCPenney stores today, the main streets of cities and small rural towns seldom come to mind. For the past 40 years the identity of James Cash Penney’s chain has become virtually synonymous with shopping malls permeating the suburbs of Seattle and Tacoma, or regional shopping centers on the fringes of places like Burlington, Union Gap, and Spokane Valley. However, JCPenney stores have been part of living and shopping in Washington for over a century, and their history goes back far beyond their contemporary suburban settings and competitors.

Penney’s Washington stores predated the modern retail chain of Costco and the arguably postmodern empire of Amazon.com, and even iconic shopping institutions like Nordstrom. The historical roots of JCPenney lay in the hearts of more than 70 cities and towns across the state, from the “largest Penney’s in the world” in downtown Seattle to rural JCPenney stores on the main streets of Cle Elum, Odessa, and Tekoa. Although JCPenney’s suburban locations are all that remain in Washington today, the downtown stores on which Penney’s chain was built served as commercial icons for shoppers across the state for the better part of the 20th century.

Washington’s retail history is rich with stories of tiny establishments that later became magnificent retail institutions. The Bon Marché, Frederick & Nelson, Rhodes, and Nordstrom all had humble beginnings in Seattle, built by modest but ambitious entrepreneurs. Even e-commerce billionaire Jeff Bezos started Amazon out of his garage in suburban Bellevue. James Cash Penney was likewise a transplant to the American West, a hard-working and innovative sales clerk who had grown up in poverty on his father’s Missouri farm. Unlike today’s Seattle-based retailers, Penney began his enterprise in the much smaller town of Kemmerer, Wyoming, then a mining and sheep ranching community of about 900 residents—a deliberate move by the 26-year-old storekeeper to stay closer to rural America. “For me, innately, cities were places to keep away from,” Penney reflected years later. “Small towns were where I was at home. I knew how to get close to the lives of small town people, learning their needs and preferences and serving them accordingly.”

From 1902 to 1911, Penney expanded his operation from one highly successful store in Wyoming to more than 20 in Utah, Idaho, and Nevada, and secured a lease for a new location in downtown Walla Walla, his first location in Washington and the 28th store in his chain. Despite its population of just 19,564, Walla Walla was at that time the largest city to host one of Penney’s stores. Every one of the previous locations opened by Penney had been in towns with fewer than 10,000 residents, several with under 1,000. As Penney continued to expand in Washington during the decade, he had no aspirations of ever operating stores in cities like Seattle, Tacoma, or Spokane. To Penney, Washington’s smaller agricultural communities were far more attractive than its larger cities, and his choices for new locations were solid proof. In 1912 he unveiled his next two Washington stores in Dayton and Wenatchee, followed by three more the following year in Centralia, Chehalis, and Colville.

For the first 12 years of his chain, Penney did not even use his own name on his stores or their newspaper
advertisements, preferring instead to keep “The Golden Rule” as a nameplate despite the fact that several merchants in the region were already doing the same. The Golden Rule trade name represented the merchandising syndicate that had given Penney his start as well as his personal philosophy for business growth. He built his stores on the idea of treating customers the way the founder himself would want to be treated, providing outstanding customer service and value by selling only quality merchandise at the lowest possible price, with hassle-free exchanges across any store in his chain.

Penney kept prices low by reducing overhead costs and selling deeply on a cash and carry basis. His opposition to credit sales was not just rooted in economics. He had a moral conviction that people should not live beyond their means, and he applied that philosophy to the early expansion of his chain. New stores were typically opened using profits from existing stores and Penney’s personal savings, rather than from bank loans. As the chain grew, ample opportunities were typically opened using profits from existing stores serving the region’s small towns, but he began to realize a potential for far greater growth by becoming a national department store chain. Not wanting to lose the philosophies that had guided the stores to their success, Penney asked his senior associates to come up with a mission statement based on the Golden Rule itself. The seven core objectives they identified, largely written by Wenatchee store manager Charles Dimmitt, became known as the “Penney Ideas” and fundamentally guided them as they set out to create America’s first transcontinental department store chain.

After formally incorporating his company in 1913, Penney reluctantly accepted that he also needed to relocate his company headquarters and home from Salt Lake City to New York. By 1914 he had taken several senior associates, including Wally Walls store manager Louis “Wilk” Hyer and Wenatchee store manager Charles Dimmitt, with him as senior executives in the new company. With formal incorporation and greater access to markets, manufacturers, and banks in New York City, the JCPenney chain began expanding east of Montana, Wyoming, and Colorado into the Midwest and adding many new stores in Washington between 1914 and 1917. Penney’s new headquarters in New York did not change his preference for small stores across Washington. Although the company unveiled new stores in such recognizable places as Pullman, Everett, and Olympia, his chain became just as visible on the main streets of Leavenworth, Montesano, Pomeroy, Ritzville, and Waitsburg.

In 1917 the JCPenney Company was operating 175 stores in 22 states, with 18 locations in Washington. At the company’s annual convention in Utah, 41-year-old Penney announced he would continue as chairman of the board, regularly visiting stores and making final decisions on major company issues, but was resigning as company president to focus on personal philanthropic and agricultural interests. His chosen successor, Earl Sams, immediately began to revamp locations with bright yellow signboards and the JCPenney stores themselves, an impact that soon reverberated across Washington. Sams had frankly expressed to Penney that the majority of his stock was being projected a “junky” appearance, largely due to non-uniform locations and Penney’s prolific design against operational efficiencies against operations against operational efficiencies. Several of these new JCPenney locations had proven to be a skilled merchandiser, standardizing best practices for advertising, and bringing in fashionable fixtures and merchandise. Sams’ new stores of Rhodes Brothers and Fisher’s, and easily identifiable department stores of Rhodes Brothers in downtown Tacoma, competing alongside the popular department stores of Rhodes Brothers had long known Penney on a personal basis and, as they retired from the business, agreed to sell their stores to him on friendly terms. Penney naturally converted their Golden Rule stores into JCPenney locations, but in keeping with the spirit of the Golden Rule, he invited all of their employees to stay on as JCPenney associates.

While most of the new JCPenney locations followed the small-town traditions of the company’s founder, Earl Sams was also taking Penney’s chain beyond rural communities. In 1924 he brought JCPenney stores into Seattle and Tacoma for the first time, with new locations in the downtown districts of Ballard and South Tacoma. In 1925, despite Penney’s reservations about opening stores in large cities, Sams opened a store in downtown Tacoma, competing alongside the popular department stores of Rhodes Brothers and Fisher’s, and easily making Tacoma the largest city in the JCPenney chain. Although JCPenney stores in downtown Seattle, where formidable department stores like Frederick & Nelson, Bon Marché, B.H. Ferrier, and I. Magnin had all emerged, was keeping that aura in mind for a future expansion. In 1929 the company planned to open 500 stores in one year, bringing the new JCPenney store to 50 additional Washington towns, an expansion unlike any previously seen across the state before or since. Even Walmart’s later incursions into Washington, up to date, resulted in only 64 stores statewide in a much smaller number of cities, compared to Penney’s high-water mark of 73 across nearly as many communities. Several of the new JCPenney locations in Washington had been existing department stores owned by competing merchants and primarily operated in the Pacific Northwest. These merchants had long known Penney on a personal basis, and as they retired from the business, agreed to sell their stores to him on friendly terms. Penney naturally converted their Golden Rule stores into JCPenney locations, but in keeping with the spirit of the Golden Rule, he invited all of their employees to stay on as JCPenney associates.
INSIDE EVERY SIZABLE COMMUNITY THROUGHOUT THE 1950S, IT WAS ALMOST A CERTAINTY THAT A JCPENNEY STORE WAS DOING BUSINESS IN THE HEART OF THE LOCAL DOWNTOWN.

Despite the emergence of anti-chain store movements in other parts of the nation, the period between the Great Depression and World War II had clearly established JCPenney stores as a popular shopping destination across the state. Penney’s low-priced, quality-tested “house brands” like Nationwide linens, Pay Day overalls, Gaymode hosiery, and Towncoven men’s wear brought value to Washingtonians from all walks of life, making them loyal Penney customers. By the late 1940s, however, JCPenney stores began to witness distinct changes in consumer behavior across the state and the nation. Facing increased competition on main streets statewide, the company’s smaller yellow and black locations were at risk of becoming grossly outdated at the dawn of a booming postwar economy.

Expanded credit, sophisticated advertising, and increased disposable income were creating customers who demanded retail “wants” as opposed to the traditional “needs” previously dictated by the Great Depression and war rationing. Penney’s competitors had already been responding to this new wave of postwar consumers. Regional chains like the People’s Store and Bon Marché began establishing formidable locations in Spokane, Longview, Walla Walla, and Yakima. Both Montgomery Ward and Sears, Roebuck continued to augment their mail order operations by expanding their physical department store presence statewide. In downtown Seattle, Frederick & Nelson and RHODES had completely revamped their flagship locations. Rhodes boasted having the first “moving staircase” in Seattle, along with a gigantic pipe organ for entertainment, while Frederick & Nelson laid claim to the state’s largest department store, with 10 floors and more than 700,000 square feet, more than three times the size of today’s largest Costco. Conversely, most of Penney’s locations at that time were only about 10,000 square feet in size—half of that in some rural locations.

In response to these challenges, JCPenney sought to modernize its many locations statewide, either by moving stores to new locations or considerably revamping and expanding existing ones. At the time, JCPenney was not interested in leaving the main streets of small towns or big cities, so “new” JCPenney stores were welcome additions to their downtown business districts. To modernize store exteriors, the company evolved from the antiquated yellow and black storefronts to smooth-clad façades with large “J. C. PENNEY CO.” lettering and vertical “PENNEYS” signs to make stores easily recognizable from downtown streets and sidewalks. In addition, antiquated wooden doors and window casings were replaced with stainless steel, and larger, illuminated display windows showed off fashions even after the store closed for the night. Throughout the interior, carpeting and tile covered hardwood flooring while ceilings were transformed from pressed tin to smooth tile and fluorescent lighting. Large departmental signage helped shoppers navigate the sprawling sales floors. Customers also benefited from its total to nearly 1,400 in all 48 states, an increase of more than 1,100 in one decade. Ten of those new stores were unveiled on Washington main streets, giving the state almost 70 JCPenney stores and placing it second only to California in the total number of JCPenney locations among western states. Nationwide, store sales were exceeding $200 million, and James Cash Penney himself was worth more than $40 million as a result of their success. Confident that the 1930s would be every bit as prosperous, Penney and his partners secured a listing on the New York Stock Exchange and took their company public on October 23, 1929. A week later they had gone from celebrating the event to witnessing the stock market crash and the onset of the Great Depression. Within two years, sales dropped at every JCPenney store nationwide, with total sales falling by $34 million from 1929 to 1931.

The company founder himself was not immune to the effects of the crash. He lost his entire savings and nearly every stock share of the company he created, ironically the result of his extensive philanthropic activities and a good-faith effort to rescue a Florida bank he had acquired. Several relatives and close friends, including former Walla Walla store manager Wilk Hyer, helped Penney regain his stock shares and recover financially.

Fortunately, the majority of JCPenney stores, with their reputation for quality merchandise at low cash prices, were not only enduring the Great Depression but in some cases gaining customers. Despite having to close four of its Washington locations, nearly 65 JCPenney stores remained statewide. In Seattle, Penney and his company even celebrated the opening of an elegant yet gigantic “metropolitan” store in 1911, on the corner of Second and Pike. Penney’s downtown Seattle store stood six stories high, with a mezzanine balcony, three basements, and even subbasements for stockrooms. At 285,000 square feet, it was almost 300 times the size of Penney’s first store in Kenimeret, significantly larger than even suburban Walmart Supercenters and Super Targets today. Penney personally led the grand opening ceremony and joined Mayor Robert Harlin in letting the eager crowd of customers into the store. Penney even waited on customers during the grand opening event. Despite the economic limitations of Penney’s cash-only sales policy and the Great Depression itself, the Seattle JCPenney became the company’s first location to top $1 million in sales in its first year of operation. By 1934, sales nationwide had finally begun to top their 1929 levels, and the success of the Seattle store led the company to open additional metropolitan JCPenney stores in Portland, San Francisco, Denver, and Minneapolis.
During the late 1940s into the early 1960s, JCPenney’s store modernizations were impossible to ignore throughout the downtowns of Seattle and Portland. A new location in downtown Spokane was able to unveil its first Washington store in 1960, Northgate Mall became Washington’s first regional shopping center. The sales floor was typically converted into the balconies above the rear of the sales floors. Furthermore, Batten understood that improved roads and the introduction of interstate highways made outdoor-town shopping more convenient and acceptable for many JCPenney locations on rural main streets. The installation of air conditioning and, of course, the thrill of riding on escalators and elevators, often for the first time in their lives, and providing the means to accompany their mothers for back-school and Christmas shopping.

The most significant factor affecting Penney’s larger stores in Seattle and Tacoma was the emergence of suburbs and bedroom communities but for decades through the main streets of Washington’s past. The company in 1963 coincided with the development of suburban shopping centers on previously rural lands, where the Department of Transportation emphasized to a great extent the potential for work at the JCPenney headquarters in New York five days a week, even into his final Washington visit. “It was his belief in the Golden Rule,” Penney emphasized to a Seattle Times reporter during his final Washington visit. “It is the reason for the success of the J.C. Penney Company.” Never having retired, Penney continued to show up for work at the JCPenney headquarters in New York five days a week, even into the 1970s, when he turned 95.

When Penney died in 1971, JCPenny increasingly abandoned its main street locations across Washington, either to relocate them into new or existing shopping malls, downsize them into tiny catalog centers, or permanently close them altogether. In 1982 the company quietly shut down its largest store nationwide remained in downtown Seattle. Even JCPenny’s newer downtown stores in Bellingham, Bremerton, Spokane, and Yakima were eventually vacated for suburban mall locations while the company concurrently exited the remaining smaller towns. Penney had personally entered almost 90 years earlier. Starting at the dizzy new Target store on the corner of Second and Pike in downtown Seattle, it is hard to believe that “the world’s largest Penney’s” stood there for more than 50 years, with a grand biographical reference to Penney’s convictions. The stores like White Front, Fred Meyer, Woolco, and Kmart, the type of retailing core continued to crumble, exacerbated by the rise of suburban discount stores like Wal-Mart and the mall. JCPenney’s future was rooted in downtown locations, at Southcenter Mall in Tukwila.

By 1979 Penney’s busiest store nationwide remained in Seattle, but it was now 13 miles south of the downtown location, at Southcenter Mall in Tukwila.

The sales floor and merchandise balcony at the Yakima JCPenney store (1960).

LEFT: In 1999, the city of Seattle and Wal-Mart came to dominate downtown Seattle, and the downtown Penney stores lost their invincibility.
WHEN HORSEPOWER WAS HORSE POWER

This 1917 poster from Yakima Valley reflects the importance of draft horses in Washington well into the 20th century. It paints horses as: “The only power that reproduces itself while it serves you. The only horsepower that’s not detrimental to your farm... it pays the farmer from 3 to 5 per cent [sic] interest on the feed by fertilizing the farm.” Pictured below is a farm wagon drawn by a pair of draft horses on the Dam Brothers Ranch near Priest Rapids, Yakima County, 1915. Horse power waned as automobile transportation increased in popularity and tractors and trucks began to dominate agriculture. During World War I over half a million draft horses provided power and transportation. Today they are mainly raised as show horses.

Sheep horn Style Bowl, 2014, by Earl Davis, Shoalwater Bay Tribe, carved wood 4” by 6” by 5.5”. Traditionally, this type of bowl was made from the horn of a bighorn sheep, shaped with the use of steam. This contemporary version is carved wood.

BY LYNETTE MILLER

The IN THE SPIRIT Contemporary Native Arts Exhibit and its companion IN THE SPIRIT Market and Festival made their debut at the Washington State History Museum in 2006. Since the inception of the juried exhibition, the annual Purchase Prize has added to the Historical Society’s collection of modern Native American art. The Purchase Prize winners through 2014 are featured here.
This year the Washington State Historical Society is observing the tenth anniversary of the IN THE SPIRIT celebration of contemporary Native American art with a special Purchase Prize exhibit at the History Museum in conjunction with the 2015 IN THE SPIRIT Exhibit. The popular annual event began in 2006 when the Historical Society partnered with the Longhouse Education and Cultural Center at The Evergreen State College to present a juried exhibit highlighted by a Native American art market and festival. Northwest tribal members, people from other US tribes, and even indigenous Hawaiians have submitted their artwork, making this a wide-ranging and fascinating exhibit. Some artists follow traditional styles and use traditional materials while others use Euro-American techniques and materials to depict Native American subjects.

The Historical Society has awarded a Purchase Prize to one of the works of art in the exhibit every year but one (2013), selecting a piece made by an artist from a Washington tribe and purchasing it for the collection. The Purchase Prize furthers the organization’s mission to collect and preserve the human history of our state. Because the Society wants the collection to be as inclusive as possible, the pieces chosen for the Purchase Prize represent a range of styles, techniques, materials, and tribes. The museum’s location in western Washington tilts the entries somewhat toward tribes west of the Cascades, and many entries are from tribes outside the state. Of the nine pieces in this collection, only two represent eastern Washington tribes.

Stylistically, these pieces range from traditional work such as John Smith’s paddle and Earl Davis’s carved bowl to very contemporary work such as Lillian Pitt’s abstract cast glass sculpture. Most of the work combines the traditional with the contemporary, yielding dynamic and surprising results.

The artists themselves are a diverse group with differing specialties and interests. George Hill (winner of the 2006 Purchase Prize) is a navy veteran who studied art at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe. He paints and sculpts and has exhibited widely. Lillian Pitt (winner of the 2007 Purchase Prize) is well-known in the Northwest for her beautiful and innovative sculptures, masks, prints, and jewelry in clay, metals, and paper, but much of her new work is in glass. She has experimented with both cast and fused glass, using this new medium to illuminate ancient Columbia River stories.

Peter Boome (winner of the 2008 Purchase Prize) is a versatile artist who has done painting, carving, and glass sculpture but is probably best known for his hand-pulled serigraphs. In addition to his

Salmon Season, 2007, by Peter Boome, Upper Skagit; stained glass and wood, 16.875" by 18.75". This stained glass panel conveys the movement of salmon as they leap upstream to spawn and eventually die.

QaXubish bySkæld (Big Families Getting Together), 2010, by John E. Smith, Skokomish; carved and painted wood, 60" by 4.625". This paddle was created to recognize the QaXubish bySkæld gathering hosted by the Skokomish Nation as part of the 2009 Canoe Journey.

People’s Shirt: Buffalo Chase Scene, 2006, by George Hill, Spokane; slate and redwood, 34" by 39". War shirts were worn to protect the wearer and give him power in hunting and war. This traditional war shirt design is executed in slate and redwood and a buffalo hunt scene is superimposed over the details of the shirt.

In Flight, 2006, by Lillian Pitt, Wasco/Yakama; cast glass, metal, 10" by 14" (without base). This piece was created by pouring molten glass into a mold made of sand and seashells.

Sea Otter Family, 2008, by Alaina Capoeman, Quinault; wool fabric, shell buttons, cedar bark, glass beads, and olivella shells; 82.75" by 61.25". The format of this wall hanging is like that of a Northwest Coast button blanket, but the natural looking animals and the unusual color palette are the artist’s innovations on a traditional form.

Point No Point Treaty Necklace, 2011, by Denise Emerson, Skokomish; Navy, leather and glass, metal, shell, and stone beads; 34" by 4.25". The Point No Point Treaty was one of the group of treaties negotiated by Isaac Stevens in 1855.

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The Skykomish River was once said to have the largest steelhead in western Washington and some of the roughest water in the area. As mining and logging slumped in the latter half of the 20th century, recreational activities such as fishing and white-water rafting evolved into a tourist industry that provided jobs for local residents. Asahel Curtis took this photograph of a couple fly-fishing on the Skykomish in May 1906. Besides sporting rubber boots, sturdy jackets, and a wicker fishing creel, both subjects wear campaign hats, which were eventually adopted by the National Park Service and later came to be identified with Smoky the Bear.

—Maria Pascualy

Accomplishments as an artist, he has earned degrees in law and environmental studies.

Alaina Capoeman (the 2009 Purchase Prize winner) takes the Northwest Coast button blanket format into a new and interesting area, portraying the natural world. She also weaves with cedar bark and has been involved in Canoe Journey, an annual Pacific Northwest multi-tribal celebration of Native American watercraft and culture, as lead puller of a Quinault canoe.

John Smith (winner of the 2010 Purchase Prize) has been involved in Canoe Journey for many years. He carved a family canoe for Emmet Oliver, the man who inspired Canoe Journey in 1989. In 2012, John led an international canoe with a Skokomish, Maori, and Anishinabe crew. He is a descendent of Henry Allen, one of the last Skokomish master canoe carvers of the 19th century.

Denise Emerson (winner of the 2011 Purchase Prize) has a degree in graphic design and has worked in various media including painting, jewelry and beadwork. She uses traditional beadwork techniques to depict subjects like Northwest treaties that are not usually seen in jewelry.

Jeffrey Veregge (winner of the 2012 Purchase Prize) is a graphic artist who has recently begun to indulge his love for comic book superheroes by presenting them in Northwest Coast formline design in his prints. This innovative combination is growing in popularity.

Earl Davis (winner of the 2014 Purchase Prize) has recently led a carving revival among members of the Shoalwater Bay Tribe. He creates wonderful carvings and teaches the craft. The History Museum will be exhibiting work by several Shoalwater Bay tribal members from June through December 2015.

These works will be on display at the Washington State History Museum from July 16 through August 30, along with the 2015 IN THE SPIRIT Exhibit. The Purchase Prize for this year’s exhibition will be announced, along with other prizes, on July 16 in an award ceremony at the exhibit opening. The IN THE SPIRIT Contemporary Native Arts Market and Festival takes place in the museum’s outdoor plaza and amphitheater on August 8. Museum admission is free that day, allowing visitors to enjoy the event, visit both exhibits inside the museum, and vote for their favorite piece in the juried exhibit. At the close of the exhibit, the artwork with the most votes receives the People’s Choice Award.

Lynette Miller is the Washington State Historical Society’s head of collections. She specializes in Native American art and has organized the annual IN THE SPIRIT exhibit since it began in 2006.
Have questions about cooking or housekeeping? Lost a cherished recipe? Planning a holiday menu? For decades, it was the women’s page food editor in the local newspaper who had the answers. Newspaper food editors writing about cooking trends, popular recipes, and local restaurants provided an important community service. Readers often responded to these columns with calls and letters to the food section.

Since the 1880s newspapers have been publishing food stories and recipes. The food pages were often a mix of food news and lighter features. Their importance to the community was truly showcased during World War II when rationing drastically changed the options available to American home cooks. Limits on meat, sugar, and coffee fueled the search for more imaginative dishes. After the war, the sharp increase in mass-produced canned food meant new products and consumer questions. Later came the popularity of TV dinners and an interest in French cooking. Prior to the early 1970s, food editors were almost always female and often had a background in journalism and home economics.

One example of a Washington food editor was Dorothy Dean, who for 45 years served readers of the Spokane Spokesman-Review. The Dorothy Dean Homemaker’s Service, which ran from 1938 to 1983, included weekly cooking demonstrations, a test kitchen, and monthly recipe leaflets. Many readers subscribed to the Dorothy Dean leaflets and regularly received recipes to be inserted into a treasured green three-ring binder. These were sometimes passed along as family heirlooms or given as wedding gifts.

During this era, food news was to be found in the Spokesman-Review’s women’s pages. Dorothy Dean was not an actual person—merely a nom de plume for the numerous women who shared the byline. It was a common practice at many newspapers for female journalists to write under a pseudonym. This was to preserve continuity, assuming that a woman would leave the post after marriage, and protect the writer’s respectability because writing for a newspaper was not deemed ladylike in some social circles.

Food writers were not the first newspaperwomen to use pen names. As other historians have noted, female reporters began using them in the late 1800s, “because for a woman to work as a newspaper reporter was considered unsavory and disreputable.” Some of the most famous female journalists of that time used
Dorothy Dean received more than 20,000 calls each year. Examples of recipe exchange columns go back to at least the 1930s.

A recipe clipped from the women's section of the Spokane Spokesman-Review, where food editors wrote under the Dorothy Dean pen name. The popular column inspired the Dorothy Dean Homemakers Service, which spanned four and a half decades.

F
do editors were a busy group, exchanging recipes with readers, explaining new dishes and products, and writing about nutrition trends and technology. Dorothy Dean received more than 20,000 calls each year. Examples of recipe exchange columns go back to at least the 1930s. Food editors regularly worked with top chefs and home cooks, and they practiced good journalism while keeping advertisers at bay during the heyday of food sections in the 1950s and 1960s.

Who were the women behind these popular pen names? At the Seattle Post-Intelligencer there were four home economists who responded to readers' questions and requests. A former food editor recalled: "Readers would call and say, 'I want a nice meatloaf recipe.'" The home economist would then go through the files at the newspaper and mail a recipe to the caller. This was standard practice at newspapers across the country where women's page journalists had a direct connection with the residents in the communities they served.

The Seattle Times saved its recipe files, which are now in the Special Collections at the Seattle Public Library. According to Jody Fenton, Special Collections manager: "Those recipes are very much of their time, which is what made me think that the collection has a real role in the history of eating. What was good? What did we desire? The recipes are a very important piece of social history." Some of the recipes reflected the times, and others are still being made today. Spokesman-Review readers were offered Swedish meatballs, "Patio Lickin' Chicken," and zucchini nut cookies. Recipes in the Seattle Times included poached red snapper, shrimp risotto, and molded aspic with artichoke remoulade.

Dorothy Dean
THE FIRST WOMAN serving in the role of Dorothy Dean for the Spokesman-Review was Estelle Calkins, who started in the mid-1930s. According to an announcement about Calkins's husband: "Husbands should smile. Life should be pleasant because of Miss Calkins—if wives listen to Miss Calkins and do all the things she tells them to do." Calkins eventually left the position to become a college professor.

The next Dorothy Dean was Edna Mae Endow Brown. She left the newspaper after two years to marry and start a family that ultimately included four children. Her future husband first saw her during a cooking demonstration. In later years he referred to her as "Dee Dee," short for Dorothy Dean. A photo of her as a food editor hung in her summer house on Lake Coeur d'Alene in Idaho.

Emma States wrote as Dorothy Dean during the war years, from 1941 to 1946, before leaving for a job in Seattle. The next Dorothy Dean was Verle Ashlock, who left after a year because she married and went to work at the university while her husband completed his college degree. In 1949 home economist Dorothy C. Raymond took over the position until she retired in 1957.

Next was Raylene Hamlen Beaton, who wrote under the Dean byline for a decade. She left after having a child at age 42. Her daughter grew up on Dean recipes. Margaret Hemphigton took up the Dorothy Dean pen in 1967. Her son-in-law, whose early experience with Dorothy Dean has taught him to appreciate quality food, quality people, and a quality life. I've learned that food and desserts made from scratch with quality ingredients are worth the extra effort.

Prudence Penny
THE HEARST NEWSPAPER chain, which owned the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, used the pen name Prudence Penny for the position of food reporter at many of its newspapers after World War II. Publisher William Randolph Hearst coined the name himself. Because it would be expensive to wire recipes across the country, a different Prudence Penny reporter worked at each of the Hearst papers.

Penny's beginnings in Seattle go back a 1963 publication described it as the centennial cookbook for Prudence Penny. Bernice Redington started at the newspaper in 1923 and published a weekly food page and a daily column under her own byline. By the early 1930s, she was writing under the Penny pen name. She left the newspaper in 1935, and Bea Donovan, who had a home economics degree from the University of Washington, worked as Penny in the late 1940s. Donovan went on to become a local television cooking personality—the King's Queen. Maurine Kelly wrote as Penny for 15 years; she died in 1968.

Dorothy Neighbors
MARION OLIVE PRIOR Ferris Guinn was likely the first food editor at the Seattle Times, writing under the pen name Dorothy Neighbors. The nom de plume was used at the newspaper from 1927 until 1980. Guinn was hired by the Times after graduating from the University of Washington in 1929 with degrees in journalism and home economics. During World War II, when events were held in Victory Square, Guinn presented a number of "Housewives Go to War" programs that advised women of ways to help the war effort. According to an article in the Times, "She was at times youthful, at times matronly, but always cheerful, competent and hospitable." In the 1940s, Jeanne Rounds Olsen and Esther Pearson wrote under the Neighbors byline. Olsen's contributions were also significant in the volunteer community. A 1942 graduate of Washington State University, she served as a WSU regent and received the university's highest honor for volunteer work. Her husband, Harold F. Olsen, wrote a biographical sketch of his wife that described her as "homemaker, mother, writer, golfer, skier, sailor and civic leader."

Joan Conner wrote as Neighbors and also covered society news at the Times. She had eight children and, though she took some time off to raise her family, she always returned to the newsroom. Her daughter Mimi McDowell said, "I am proud to say that my mother was a feminist before that phrase was coined, as well as after it was used as a pejorative label."

What They Were Cooking?
IN 1952, THE UNIVERSITY OF Indiana Press published the cookbook Coast to Coast Cookery, edited by New York food editor and cookbook author Marian Tracy. The book featured newspaper food editors from each state who contributed recipes representing various kinds of regional cooking. Tracy wrote, "The recipes in this collection have been gathered from all sections of the country by those local and vocal experts, the newspaper food editors."

Representing the Seattle Times, Maurine Kelly as Prudence Penny contributed several seafood recipes and fruit dishes. Bacon was a signature ingredient in her...
New York food editor Marian Tracy collected recipes from food editors in each state, and in 1952 they were published in book form as *Coast to Coast Cookery*. The volume included recipes from the *Times* P-I, and *Spokesman-Review* food columns.

A combination of factors led to the demise of food sections in newspaper women’s pages. Feminist leaders called for an end to women’s sections, viewing them as a ghetto for women’s news and a place that reinforced traditional gender roles. Many newspapers continued to feature food sections, but they became less popular with readers, relying instead on more syndicated content. The decline of home economics classes also contributed to food coverage becoming a more gender-neutral topic.

Readers, however, have not forgotten these women. In October 2010 the *Spokesman-Review* ran a story honoring the 75th anniversary of Dorothy Dean. Numerious readers responded with their memories. One wrote: “When I married in 1956, the only thing I could cook was fudge. A cookbook was a necessity and shortly I obtained my Dorothy Dean cookbook, which I continue to rely on to this day.” The anniversary article notes: “The women who served as the head of the department and the assistants who helped test recipes made Dorothy Dean one of the most trusted experts around. The memories of many family dinners and celebrations are intertwined with the recipes created in the Dorothy Dean kitchen at the *Spokesman-Review*.”

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In March 1971 the well-known American composer Charles Wakefield Cadman came to Tacoma with Tsianina Redfeather, a Cherokee-Creek mezzo-soprano. A reviewer for the *Tacoma Times* praised Redfeather for “calling back all the nobility, all the glory, all the grace and all the pathos of a vanishing race.”

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American composer Charles Wakefield Cadman (1881–1948), above, incorporated Native American music into common European art music forms. He toured with Tsianina Redfeather, right, a Cherokee-Creek singer, presenting lecture-recitals of his arrangements. Cadman sought to educate his audiences about vanishing native traditions while elevating their music to the status of high culture.

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The economy of the late 1800s resulted in more leisure time, and amateur and professional musical groups emerged. According to Central Washington University historian Karen Blair, women were expected to have some background in the arts—a good wife was expected to play piano "only enough to amuse and entertain," but no better. Ladies’ musical clubs were predominantly amateur organizations that offered middle-class white Protestant women an opportunity to engage in amateur musical activities.

The Ladies’ Musical Club of Tacoma was established in 1890 by a group of women who missed the artistic and cultural opportunities available east of the Rockies. Among the first of its kind on the West Coast, the Tacoma organization served as a model for later clubs in Seattle and Bellingham. Mrs. Frank Allyn, a judge’s wife and president of the organization, had been active in the city’s musical life since moving from Iowa in 1887. The group grew quickly to over 100 members and gave weekly concerts.

We simply take up the process where the Indian dropped it.”

Cadman’s Tacoma concert was in two parts. The first half consisted of compositions by Cadman himself and pieces by two other Indianist Movement composers—German-born Carlos Troyer’s “Invocation to the Sun God” and Thurlow Lieurance’s “The Rose.” The second half of the concert, “The Indian Music Talk,” included demonstrations of American Indian instruments, an explanation of rhythmic principles, and a comparative performance of “primitive” sacred music from various cultures. The audience was invited to compare an Omaha tribal prayer with a Gregorian chant and an ancient Egyptian chant. This second half of the program also grouped musical numbers into songs built upon native themes, piano music, and idealized songs, suggesting several ways that aspects of American Indian music could be incorporated into a composition.

The headline for the review in the Tacoma Times, “One Concert Program That Was American All Through,” points to the tensions implicit in this kind of music-making. Cadman recognized these tensions. In a 1915 article in Musical Quarterly, he wrote that American Indians are unquestionably a part of our country’s heritage and, as such, their music should be made known, even if the artist was not Native American himself. He saw no problem in romanticizing the traditional melodies in the name of art.

In the decade from 1880 to 1890, Tacoma’s population grew exponentially from 1,098 to 36,006. Tacoma City (Old Tacoma, the area now referred to as Old Town) and New Tacoma (now the downtown area) merged in 1884. The completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1887 brought many to Tacoma—the “City of Destiny,” as it came to be called. The population explosion supported the growth of a vibrant arts scene that was open to musical recitals like Cadman’s.

In addition to people, the railroad brought musical ensembles as well as sheet music and musical instruments. The technologies that enabled the industrial economy of the late 1800s resulted in more leisure time, and amateur and professional musical groups emerged. According to Central Washington University historian Karen Blair, women were expected to have some background in the arts—a good wife was expected to play piano “only enough to amuse and entertain,” but no better. Ladies’ musical clubs were predominantly amateur organizations that offered middle-class white Protestant women an opportunity to engage in amateur musical activities.

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In the early part of the 20th century there were many efforts to preserve American Indian music. Originally, like most folk music, it is traditionally transmitted orally and existed solely in performance. Later, ethnographers recorded the music on a phonograph and then transcribed it into Western notation, thus facilitating study and performance. Not surprisingly, in many cases the notation system was incongruous with the nature of the music being transcribed. Many pitches fell between notes of traditional major and minor scales—what musicians call quarter tones; and while the music was very rhythmic, it did not conform to Western notions of meter—the grouping of beats into patterns of strong and weak.

Moreover, American Indian music was used for religious and healing ceremonies and for oral transmission of history, not principally for entertainment. Thus it was often labeled as primitive.
The club regularly featured music from around the world. A May 6, 1892, concert featured “Characteristic Melodies from Many Lands,” including Italy, Scotland, Germany, and Spain. Karen Blair notes that this was common among ladies’ musical clubs: “Arts club members rejected the notion that the work of European writers should monopolize the arts curriculum. Instead, they embraced the cultural contributions of American artists, including that of Native Americans, African-Americans, and regionalists.”  

Consciously or not, their choice of programming positioned them against the prevalent European white male–dominated culture. This show of solidarity is particularly noteworthy in light of the growing women’s suffrage movement during this time.

Perhaps the club’s most significant undertaking was a “concert costume” of American Indian music that took place on April 16, 1915, two years before the visit by Cadman and Red Feather. The Tacoma Tribune suggests that it was the first such concert in the United States. The 65-member choir dressed in native garb, and the stage of the Tacoma Theatre was given up to an authentic American Indian encampment. A Tribune concert preview describes it as “a picture to be remembered, set with forest effects [sic] of firs and underbrush, a lovely dogwood tree in full blossom adding a touch of the true Washington forest beauty.” A photo that ran in the April 11, 1915, edition of the Daily Ledger shows the choir in costume according to the Tribune, the costumes “have been provided by many collectors who own priceless curios, and the camp accessories by many middle-class housewives.”

MANY OF THE musical selections performed were written as solos, then as choral arrangements. The concert began with a performance of Cadman’s “From the Land of the Sky Blue Water,” perhaps his most famous piece. The group also included his “The Place of Breaking Light,” “From the Land of the Sky Blue Water,” and “White Dawn is Stealing.” The choir’s performance of “Ichibuzzhi,” “sung unaccompanied except for a tom-tom, stirred the audience to demand an encore,” William Bertram, the only male performer on the program, wrote, adding that the “costumes and regalia painted their skin. The Tribune reporter wrote, “The picture presented by the performers from the mannerisms they adopted onstage, thus permitting commentary about politics, race relations, and society at large. It could also be argued that wigs, trousers, body painting, and regalia provided many middle-class housewives an opportunity to defy and explore social, gender, and ethnic norms in the context of what was ostensibly an educational performance.

There will also be a large delegation of Indian graduates who are eager to hear the story of their people’s achievements in the world of music, and to learn, of some of the highly educated ones for the first time, and from the lips of a white woman, their ancient myths, and to see what many of them have never seen, the ancient primitive Indian instruments which shall show...

All the singers will be in true Indian costume. Even this will be a novelty to some of the cultured Indians attending in the audience—quest thought, it isn’t?

From a modern perspective, it does seem queer for white, educated clubwomen to present themselves as the keepers of American Indian culture. One write-up of the event in the Daily Ledger went so far as to question the entire project, despite its popularity: “Opinions may differ as to the wisdom or futility of dressing primitive Indian cadences in the melodic and harmonized garb of perfectly civilized modern music....” Another concert by the Ladies’ Musical Club, which took place on March 8, 1927, featured “traditional melodies of the Irish and Zutus.” The concert was a benefit to raise money for Lincoln Auditions, a music lecture by Mrs. Frederick W. Hoyt. The program also included Carlos Toyer’s “Great Rain Dance,” “Incantation over a Sleeping Indian” (“Invocation to the Sun God”), and Arthur Farwell’s “Impressions of the Wa Wan Ceremonies”—will attend the lecture recital with her longtime friend, Mrs. E.C. Blanchard. Before such an audience there can be no pretense and Mrs. Henderson will surely feel herself thrilled, for all nation, to give something worth while [sic] as well as unusual. . . .”

The article also noted: “For uniqueness, remember it is the first time in the world, any where [sic], that a costume-Indian-music-lecture-recital has ever been given,” and underscored the importance of the lecture component by suggesting that even the Native Americans in the audience would learn something.

Sheet music for one of Cadman’s most famous compositions. The poem was written by Nella Richmond Elberth (1871–1944), who is credited with introducing Cadman to Native American culture and providing texts for many of his vocal works.

FACING PAGE Alice Palmer Henderson’s May 21, 1915, presentation was a benefit to raise money for a statue of President Lincoln for Lincoln Park High School in Tacoma.
The Last Novels of Archie Binns

By Peter Donahue

R

reading an Archie Binns novel is like watching Turner Clas

sic Movies. It’s always more intelligent, penetrat

ing, entertaining, and well-crafted than our modern-

day bioses allow us to expect. As Leon Wieseltier recently wrote in the New York Times, the black-and-white movies on TCM “have an integrity that most of today’s films almost always lack.” Likewise, Archie Binns’s novels—free of postmodern fillips and overblown jacket blurbs—have an integrity that so many of today’s novels lack. What’s more, Archie Binns (1899–1971) may have known more about the Northwest than any writer before or since.

The Timber Beast (1944) looks squarely at the logging industry in the early 20th cen

tury. Like Stewart Holbrook and James Stevens, his liter

ary contemporaries, Binns describes the logging—it is his history and operations. The novel revolves around the owner of a prosperous log

ning outfit’s marriage, his young wife, and his two grown sons from a previous marriage. Charlie Dow logs land acquired by his father through dubi

ous claims. He overworks his crews—“highball logging”—and his workers are regularly injured or killed. As the IWW works his crews—

his two grown sons from a previous marriage. Charlie Dow logs land acquired by his father through dubious claims. He overworks his crews—“highball logging”—and his workers are regularly injured or killed. As the IWW works his crews—

the novel is set in Hawaii, where Tom, married to a missionary, falls in love with Emily, married to an opium smuggler. After a trip in the cabin of the Galata, a beautiful white cutter, the two lovers sail across the Pacific to start a new life in the San Juan Islands, where Emily has dreamed of for so many others who have ventured over to the islands. “It’s the kind of [place] I’ve dreamed about . . . but how are we going to make a living?” Thus being the turn of the century, they buy a small island from the captain of the Galata and start homesteading.

While The Headwinds is not Binns’s best novel—being thin on plot and char

acter development—it offers a splendid depiction of life in the San Juan Islands in the early 1920s. With the help of island neighbors, Tom and Emily make a go of it. They clam and fish and cultivate an orchard. They dig a well and ferry a mill cow to their island on a scow. They host a party of Lummi Indians heading to Vancouver Island for a potlatch, and they row to Shaw Island for a potluck. With only a mallet and a fox, Tom mas

ters single-choosing, making a degree of “shingle mysticism” as he recognizes the skill is “neither in the hand of the woodworker nor in his tools but in the cedar itself.” Before long, he’s earning a living with his single mill.

In addition to his novels, Archie Binns wrote several books of nonfiction about the Northwest, among them Northwest Gateway. The Story of the Fort at Seattle (1941) and Sea in the Forest (1954). The first is a reliable, eminently readable history of Seattle. The second combines the historical record with personal anec

dotes for an informative yet often lyrical portrait of Puget Sound.

There are so many writers today whose work often focuses on the region—Outer

son, Lynch, Egan, Raban, the list goes on. Yet, as extraordinary as the work of these writers is, it lacks what Binns does, steer

ing the narrative on a true course.

Binns is again sea-bound in Christmas Morning (1954). In 180 west and 43

north, the Christmas Morning was run

ning her easting down. It was Jack’s wheel watch, but he was not allowed to stand his “rock”—it beat his legs, driving him to sing a classic Archie Binns book.

His sons, however, become disaffected with their father’s business practices. One son takes up nature photography and wanders off into the wilderness while the other moves to Greenwich Village, where he grows a long beard, chews on opium, and becomes a Tin Pan Alley songwriter. Meanwhile, Don’s young wife, who has her own conflicts of heart, watches as the two sons return to reconcile themselves with their father—and, as heirs to his logging legacy, do what’s right.

In You Roll River (1947), Binns interweaves several story lines to portray the novel’s setting on the lower Columbia River in the late 19th century. The novel is set mainly in Astoria, where houses and businesses are built on pilings reaching far into the river; clippers loaded with wheat and lumber crowd the docks, countless taverns and bagnios cater to sea

veterary sailors, and “crimpy” drug and shanghaiing unsuspect

ing young men.

Two central char

acters are Roger Col

line, a bar pilot, and his wife Rita. “We

live among wreckage!” Rita exclaims to visitors in their home, which is crammed

with florescent and jet

son collected by Col

line from the many shipwrecks along the Columbia but also

Rita’s life is the river. For the past decade, she has made a detailed study of every ship that has entered its mouth and recorded her findings in ledgers. His devotion to his work, however, has left Rita desperately pining for her husband, leading, in a star-

tling scene, to a bare-naked Rita burning his ledgers in the fireplace.

Two more central characters are Tom and Jack, who escape their abusive par

tents by sailing up river in a small cutter. It’s a profound experience for them: “The river changed you all the way through, to the center of your thinking . . . it was a wise and living world, changing and shaping you so you would be fit to live in that world.”

When they’re caught, their father turns them over to a crusty old cap

tain on a ship bound for Vancouver Island, before making a go of it. They clam and fish and cultivate an orchard. They dig a well and ferry a mill cow to their island on a scow. They host a party of Lummi Indians heading to Vancouver Island for a potlatch, and they row to Shaw Island for a potluck. With only a mallet and a fox, Tom mas

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Archie Binns aboard the three-

masted schooner Wawona.

Peter Donahue is the author of Clara and Merritt, a novel about labor and art in Seattle in the 1940s.
Inlander Histories: Timeless Tales of Spokane and the Inland Northwest, Volume 1

Reviewed by Raymond W. Rast.

Black Spokane: The Civil Rights Struggle in the Inland Northwest


Black Spokane assumes a basic knowledge of the history of Spokane. Both books also reflect the value and, to some extent, the pitfalls of local history. Ted McGregor recognizes that local history can help people understand the places they call home. The 24 articles in his collection, previously published in Spokane’s weekly Inlander, will help readers see how Spokane became the place it is today. Readers will find familiar stories tied to Spokane Gym and Bing Crosby but also more recent stories about real estate developer Walt Worthy and basketball coach Mark Few. Some stories revolve around ordination as priests in Spokane formed a chapter of the NAACP in 1919. After World War II, attorney Carl Muxey and businessman James Chase emerged as two of the chapter’s key leaders. Their divergent styles reflected significant divisions within the community. Muxey was an outspoken civil rights advocate. Chase, however, downplayed racial discrimination and in 1982 became Spokane’s first black mayor. Black Spokane contextualizes local history within national and international events, including the Cold War and the civil rights movement. At certain points, however, the book accumbs to an occasional pitfall of local history—overstating the significance of the local (as when President Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, despite the objections of “numerous Spokane residents”). Mack’s book lacks some of the richness of the stories found in Inlander Histories. Surely, the peculiarity of sources was a challenge. At the same time, some articles in Inlander Histories succumb to another pitfall of local history—they are a bit too self-congratulatory. McGregor’s collection celebrates the restoration of the Davenport Hotel, for example, but largely fails to consider the Davenport’s refusal to rent rooms to Louis Armstrong and other visiting black performers. Each book thus has its shortcomings, but they complement each other remarkably well.

Red Light to Starboard: Recalling the Exxon Valdez Disaster

Reviewed by Brian Barnes.

There are recollections of the 1989 Exxon Valdez oil spill are probably the same as young poetic images of oil-coated birds, armies of rubber-clad workers scrubbing at the shores of Prince William Sound, and allegations that the captain of the Exxon Valdez was drunk. In Red Light to Starboard, Angela Day provides a compelling account of the circumstances leading to the disaster and its effects. Day is well-suited to write about both the personal and the political dimensions of the spill. Her husband, Bobby Day, was a Valdez fisherman, and at the time of publication she was a Ph.D. candidate in political science at the University of Washington.

Arctic Ambitions: Captain Cook and the Northwest Passage

Reviewed by Dylan Burrows.

The catalog for the Anchorage Museum’s current exhibit of the same name, Arctic Ambitions, exemplifies the difficulties of marrying scholarly production with public history. In light of the prospect of an ice-free Northwest Passage, 20 scholars and public intellectuals contributed to this re-examination of the legacy of Captain James Cook’s lesser-known Arctic foray during his third and final voyage (1776–80). An official part of the Anchorage Centennial celebrations, Arctic Ambitions cautiously navigates the waters of public commemoration while surveying the colonial origins of the United States’ contemporary Arctic presence. Emerging from the test-heavy volume is the 19th-century Pacific Northwest as a site of imperial competition and, ironically, of knowledge exchange between European competitors. John Gascogne situates Cook’s earlier voyages within the “cultural matrix” of the scientific revolution while Eva Quiroz-Chisholm explores the mariner’s exchange of geographic knowledge with Russian traders and indigenous Chukchi in Russian-claimed territories.

Cook the man and his legacy shape the book’s second and third sections. Cook was not J. C. Beaglehole’s “tried man” but an agent of empire driven by his “fidelity to mission.” Aton L. Crowell argues, that moving through Unalaska, Cook introduced the region’s indigenous peoples to the “bargaining” “regular world-system.” Obeying his Royal Navy commission, Cook generated a body of knowledge that, as Barry Gough argues, marked the “rapacious” late 19th and early 20th century Euro-American sovereign claims to the Northwest Passage. In the final section, James Delgado brings the “American Arctic into focus.” No longer a site for Euro-Americans, the Northwest Passage transitions from a Cold War “strategic frontier” to the 21st century’s “commercial frontier.” The closing chapter presents undercover international Arctic Council and Inuit Circumpolar Council exemplars of pan-Arctic cooperation, charting the way toward responsible exploitation of the region’s natural resources.

Yet, profound silences haunt this narrative. In following Cook into the Arctic, the catalog leaves in its wake the incisive postcolonial critique of the heated Cook-Dole debate of the 1990s. Refusing to post-colonial’s “ideological limitations” — and that reduces the meaning of breach crossings, Nicandri evades the harsh realities faced by contemporary Arctic indigenous peoples. Richard Inglis, a past director of the Vancouver Maritime Museum, offers a more inclusive approach in chapter seven, drawing upon Mowachaht and Muchalaht oral histories and Cook’s writings for a more comprehensive understanding of the 1778 cross-cultural encounter at Nooka Sound. Without Arctic indigenous voices, discussion of a navigable Northwest Passage silences the darker legacies of Euro-American colonialism in the circumpolar north: the struggle for indigenous self-governance, cultural assimilation, food insecurity, and rising poverty.

Arctic Ambitions adeptly historicizes Cook as a man of his age, but as a piece of public history it struggles to balance the interests of its stakeholders. The resource industry’s heavy contributions to the Anchorage Museum’s newly released 70-square-meter exhibit may explain the disappointing emphasis on the Northwest Passage’s economic potential. Daunted from the legacy of Cook’s beach crossings, the catalog leaves the general reader marooned, unaware of the rising human cost of an increasingly navigable Northwest Passage.

Dylan Burrows is an archivist of Athabascan and Canadian descent at the University of British Columbia.
Congratulations this year’s Washington State Historical Society Award Winner – Recognizing Achievements in 2014

The Robert Gray Medal, the highest award bestowed by the Society, recognizes distinguished and long-term contributions to Pacific Northwest history through demonstrated excellence. The 2015 awardees is James A. Cole in recognition of his long commitment to the Puget Sound Maritime History Society and his work as author and illustrator of Drawing on Our History, Fishwings of the Pacific Northwest and Alaska.

The David Douglas Fellowship Award recognizes outstanding projects, exhibits, and individual scholar projects that expand appreciation of Washington history. The 2015 award goes to the Washington State Jewish Historical Society in recognition of its exhibit Shalom! Open for Business.

The Governor’s Award for Excellence in Teaching History in Washington State is presented for excellence in teaching Pacific Northwest history. The 2015 awardees is Bill Binfaré, Northshore Junior High School in Bothell.

The Peace and Friendship Award is presented to individuals who have advanced public understanding of the cultural diversity of Washington. The 2015 award recipient is the Woman’s Club of Bainbridge Island.

The Charles Gates Memorial Award recognizes the most significant achievement in Washington history. The 2015 award goes to the Washington State Jewish Historical Society in recognition of its exhibit Shalom! Open for Business.

The Dr. Rallman Wojahn Award is given for outstanding volunteer service to the Washington State Historical Society. The 2015 awardees is Chris Disotar of Gig Harbor.

The John M. McClure Jr. Award recognizes the best article in COLUMBIA Magazine during the previous year. The 2015 awardees is Laura Ediger, curator of the University of Puget Sound’s Abby Williams Hill Collection, for “Abby Williams Hill Artist of the West and Champion of Education, Equality, and Foreign Policy” (Winter 2014-15).

The Charles Gates Memorial Award recognizes the most significant achievement in Washington history. The 2015 award goes to the Puget Sound Maritime History Society, for “The Only Thing New in the World is the History You Do Not Know” (Summer 2015).

For more information about the Historical Society’s annual awards, visit www.WashingtonHistory.org/about/awards.

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