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COVER: With its winding channels, strong currents, and rushing tides, the San Juan Archipelago presented a challenge to Lieutenant William Broughton’s seamanship as he navigated his small warship, the British armed tender Chatham, through its uncharted waters during the 1792 British survey of the northwest coast of North America—otherwise known as the Vancouver expedition. See story beginning on page 20.
The Street Names of Richland: Lessons in History

By Melvin Adams

In December 1942 a light army plane flew over the village of Richland, Washington, near the confluence of the Yakima and Columbia Rivers. Colored Franklin Matthias, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, was aboard, having already spent some time flying over parts of Oregon, California, and Washington in search of a large, isolated, sparsely populated area with access to great amounts of water and electrical power. General Leslie Groves, commander of the top-secret Manhattan Project, had charged Matthias with building the massive reactors and processing plants that would create the plutonium needed to produce nuclear weapons.

The large section of desert north of Richland was exactly what Matthias had been looking for—there was plenty of water from the Columbia River and abundant electricity from Grand Coulee Dam upstream. The only impediments were the small villages and farms of Hanford and White Bluffs on the shores of the Columbia.

Employing its power of eminent domain, the federal government soon removed the 1,550 residents from the 62-square-mile parcel. Before long some 50,000 people descended on the Hanford area to build the complex, sprawling, first-of-its-kind plutonium manufacturing facility. Richland Village became a government town. Soon afterward, 1,500 residents from the 625-square-mile region. These agriculture pursuits are today making Richland less economically dependent on Hanford.

Another street of particular interest is Abert Avenue. Fremont named a prominent fault block and large saline lake in eastern Oregon after his boss, Colonel John James Abert—chief of Topographical Bureau, sponsor of Fremont’s expedition. It seems somehow ironic that so many of the original streets are named after corps officers but there is no Matthias or Groves Street.

Kona, Maui, Ala Wai, Aloha, Paradise, and Waikiki. Could they be a result of wishful thinking? As a geologist I also appreciate Richland’s rock and mineral street names: Jade, Quartz, Onyx, Diamond, Sapphire, Platinum, Galena, Amber, Copper, and Shale. There is a series of Hawaiian place names in West Richland that I find inexplicable: Hilo, Diamond Head, Kilauea, Waiakea, Kupolani, Kukaua, Leilani, Kona, Maui, Alii, Wai, Aloha, Paradise, and Waikiki. Could they be a result of wishful thinking?

It seems that the names given to things like streets provide a clue to what the founders of a community were like and what was important to them. If that is indeed the case, the street names of Richland reflect the history and values of a city originally focused on military engineering and science, and increasingly involved with agricultural pursuits and nature.

Melvin Adams lives in Richland. Retired after a 24-year career as an engineer and manager at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, he is a poet, naturalist, and author of Netting the Sun: A Personal Geography of the Oregon Desert (Washington State University Press).

In 1943 the tiny agricultural village of Richland became the town of Richland, where government housing was built and many of the streets were named in honor of West Point graduates and officers in the Army Corps of Engineers.

The pattern is the main street in Richland, named George Washington Way. Our first president served before West Point opened, although he did work as a land surveyor early in his career.

Another exception to naming streets after West Point graduates is Bernard Avenue, named for Baron Simon Bernard, a French engineer who became a U.S. brigadier general of engineers involved in the construction of the Port of Antwerp. He also served as an aide to Napoleon. Another street in Richland is named after a Frenchman—Louis Lebeque de Pesle DuVental, a French army engineer. When Benjamin Franklin requested trained military personnel for the young Continental Army, DuVental was sent on a leave of absence and later joined the American army. He was eventually made a brigadier general and chief of the Corps of Engineers.

Of personal interest is Goethals Drive where my ‘F’ house is located. George Washington Goethals was a true-to-form West Point graduate and officer in the Corps of Engineers. He supervised construction of the Panama Canal and, after his retirement, formed a consulting firm that worked on the Columbia Basin irrigation project, which made possible the burgeoning orchard, vineyard, and row crop industries in the Richland region.

These agricultural pursuits are today making Richland less economically dependent on Hanford.

Another street of particular interest is Abert Avenue. Fremont National Forest in Oregon, where I worked summers as a surveyor, was named after explorer John C. Fremont. In 1843 Fremont named a prominent fault block and large saline lake in eastern Oregon after his boss, Colonel John James Abert—chief of the Topographical Bureau, sponsor of Fremont’s expedition, and a West Point graduate.

An engineer with important regional ties was George Gillespie Jr., after whom Gillespie Street is named. A West Point graduate, a Medal of Honor recipient during the Civil War, and chief engineer of the Corps of Engineers, Gillespie initiated construction of the canal at the Cascades of the Columbia River and built the famous lighthouse at Tillamook Rock on the Oregon Coast.

Henry Martyn Roberts (Roberts Avenue), author of Roberts’ Rules of Order, was a West Point engineer who worked on rivers in Oregon and Washington, including the Columbia. Thomas William Symons (Symons Street), a West Point graduate at the top of his class, led a study of the inland empire of the Pacific Northwest and produced a report on the region’s geology and history that was published as a Congressional document. He eventually opened his own engineering firm and became a prominent citizen of Spokane.

He was eventually made a brigadier general and chief of the Corps of Engineers. Of personal interest is Goethals Drive where my ‘F’ house is located. George Washington Goethals was a true-to-form West Point graduate and officer in the Corps of Engineers. The town’s objections to naming streets after corps officers but there is no Matthias or Groves Street.

Robert’s Ampere was a French physicist who greatly contributed to our understanding of electromagnetism—wherefore the unit of current flow is named after him—but he was not a formative figure in the development of nuclear science. As a naturalist I particularly appreciate the large number of streets named after birds: Teal, Goldfinch, Widgeon, Swallow, Wren, Dove, Hawk, Kildare, Mallard, Grouse, Jackalope, Quail, Owl, Chuckar, Dove, Snowy Owl, Phoebe, Sage Hen, Seahawk, Rail, Swan, and Sparrow. I only wonder whether Seahawk was included for the bird connection or because of its sports association.

The street names of Richland reflect the history and values of a city originally focused on military engineering and science, and increasingly involved with agricultural pursuits and nature. If that is indeed the case, the street names of Richland reflect the history and values of a city originally focused on military engineering and science, and increasingly involved with agricultural pursuits and nature. It seems somehow ironic that so many of the original streets are named after corps officers but there is no Matthias or Groves Street. As a geologist I also appreciate Richland’s rock and mineral street names: Jade, Quartz, Onyx, Diamond, Sapphire, Platinum, Galena, Amber, Copper, and Shale. There is a series of Hawaiian place names in West Richland that I find inexplicable: Hilo, Diamond Head, Kilauea, Waiakea, Kupolani, Kukaua, Leilani, Kona, Maui, Alii, Wai, Aloha, Paradise, and Waikiki. Could they be a result of wishful thinking?

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There is a tree series that includes Cedar, Birch, Cottonwood, Chestnut, Elm, Spruce, Alder, Beech, Pine, Cypress, and Poplar, plus a few streets named after apples—Gala, Jonagold, and Fuji. There is a flower series in West Richland too: Peony, Spirea, Forsythia, Holly, Rose, Hibiscus, Iris, Primrose, Lilac, Lupine, Oxalis, Bluebell, and Buttercup.

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The Northern Pacific Coal Company Brings African American Strikebreakers to Roslyn

Hot Work

BY JACK WELCH

Although it featured all the trappings of an independent settlement, Roslyn, about 30 miles northwest of Ellensburg, was a company town from the beginning. In 1886 Logan M. Bullitt, vice president of the Northern Pacific Coal Company (a subsidiary of the Northern Pacific Railroad), had platted the town to provide coal for Northern Pacific operations in Washington Territory. By the time Roslyn was incorporated in 1890, its population numbered 1,480, and its citizens had established saloons, schoolhouses, and churches to suit their needs. It was a dynamic time in which the melting pot of nationalities and ethnicities churned and settled against the backdrop of snowcapped mountains. As the residents of Roslyn soon found, though, the town they had yet finished stirring the pot.

Not long after the company founded the town, the Knights of Labor followed. A national labor organization, the Knights’ push into Roslyn came at the apex of its influence over the American labor movement. By some estimates, the Knights claimed chapters in over half of the towns in the United States with a population of over 1,000.

The Knights’ generic platform called for a shorter workday and better working conditions in the mines. As they gained strength, they grew bolder in their demands. Tensions between the Northern Pacific Coal Company and the Roslyn mine workers began to boil over in the summer of 1888, when management laid off a number of workers who were petitioning for higher wages and an eight-hour day. In response, the Knights of Labor called for a general strike. Rather than reconcile the demands of the strikers, the Northern Pacific Coal Company hired James E. Shepperson, a local black businessman and labor recruiter, to bring in as strikebreakers over 300 black miners from Virginia, North Carolina, and Kentucky. These men were to be transported in special trains across the continent to Roslyn. While the specific motives behind the company’s decision to bring in black strikebreakers as opposed to white strikebreakers is unknown, it is likely that they were in line with a contemporary national trend of exploiting racial divides within the labor community in order to weaken the fundamental unity of collective bargaining.

This practice of hiring black strikebreakers had been developed in the coal fields of the South in the years since the Civil War. Company managers found two significant advantages in enlisting African American strikebreakers: due to their lesser social and political power, they were comparatively easy to manage and could be contracted for lower wages than their white counterparts, making them an especially enticing option for company managers who were already facing losses from the strike itself. Despite some union organizers’ efforts to unite their workers by class rather than race, deep-seated resentment against blacks along with blacks’ mistrust of whites often inhibited true labor inter racialism. Company managers used this strife to manipulate black strikebreakers, positioning themselves as protectors. For this to work managers had to stoke the flames of racism within the working class and frame the black strikebreakers as alien and devious. The white workers could not trust the black workers because the latter had stolen their jobs; the black workers could not trust the white workers because the whites often resorted to violence against them. The companies kept the black miners in check with the ever-present threat of replacement.

The Knights of Labor had dealt with the problem of race baiting before, and took steps toward promoting labor inter racialism as a countermeasure. Increasingly throughout the 1870s and 1880s, unions entertained the prospect of integrating the newly emancipated black community into their ranks. The influx of black workers, it was reasoned, would benefit the labor movement in two ways. The first was through increased membership, which would in turn increase their bargaining power in labor disputes, their influence over government policy (as African American men now could vote) and over other unions, as well as the flow of dues into union coffers. Secondly, the inclusion of blacks was seen as a way to solidify the labor movement as one purely based on class struggle as opposed to any racial ideology.

Most of the strikebreakers Shepperson brought into Roslyn came from the South via Streator, Illinois, where the Northern Pacific Coal Company had its headquarters. They were met in Streator by other black miners who had left the South to seek opportunities in the West. It is uncertain how explicit Shepperson was in describing the circumstances that awaited them in Roslyn. It is possible that the first indication they had of something amiss was when the contingent of 50 armed detectives boarded the trains at Missoula, Montana. The convoy made a brief stop in Pasco, Washington Territory, before embarking on the final leg of the journey to Roslyn on August 20, 1888. The local press picked up the curious procession and ran an article in the Daily Oregonian with the heading, “Probably Going to Roslyn: A Special Train Loaded with Negro Miners, Detectives and Winchesters.” The article opined that there would likely be “hot work”—dangerous activity—at the end of the line.

The Daily Oregonian made its prediction of “hot work” against a backdrop of similar crises that had in recent months...
FACING PAGE: An 1889 lithograph of Roslyn, the county’s sawmill, Catholic church, and schoolhouse. (Image courtesy of Washington State Historical Society, #1994.0.332_572)

The significance of this incident lay in the escalation rather than the result. The fact that the sheriff had been rendered impotent in the defense of his county sent a message to other mine owners in the region that the law could not guarantee protection against mob transgressions. The management of the Northern Pacific Coal Company took little solace in the guarantees of Samuel T. Packwood, the county sheriff. A train full of mercenaries served as their insurance policy against a similar failure. In such instances, there was no need to escalate to the point of full-scale intervention. The distance between Olympia and Ellensburg in Kittitas County meant that it would be several days before Semple’s telegram reached Sheriff Packwood, dated August 21, 1888:

"I have the honor to enclose herein a copy of the communication from the Executive of the Territory, requesting information from this office as to the report that an armed body of men composed of "detectives" acting as United States Marshals, were at Roslyn in Kittitas County in this Territory. Will you be kind enough to inform me officially at your earliest convenience what knowledge you have of the difficulties at that place which require the presence of United States Deputy Marshals, and further by what authority such Deputy Marshals are acting, and whether any offense against the United States has been brought to your knowledge, which requires their presence at Roslyn.

Markwell’s telegram was not to be dismissed lightly. The governor had experience dealing with the Salmon Wars and violence at the northern boundary of Oregon, which had been the scene of a series of disputes between Washingtoanian and Oregonian settlers over fishing rights to the Columbia River. Semple was also dealing with a more pressing issue: the consequences of a labor conflict that had turned violent at operations of the Oregon Improvement Company, which employed a group of about 150 men to storm the area owned by the Portland Land and Improvement Company. At the time, the Portland Land and Improvement Company was said to be leading a strike against the Central Northern Pacific Coal Company in Ellensburg.

The nearest depot was the town of Roslyn, located some 330 miles east of Olympia. The nearest point of the armed forces was stationed at Ellensburg, some 30 miles north of Roslyn. Semple estimated that it would be several days before Semple’s telegrams arrived at either location. At the time of the Roslyn strikes, both the 1st and 2nd batteries of the Official National Guard of Washington and the 1st Oregon Mounted Rifles were stationed at Ellensburg. However, neither unit was equipped with proper arms and uniforms; they were poorly trained and had never been engaged in combat. Despite the governor’s assurance that the Oregonian National Guard was on the way, Semple’s telegram was not met with enthusiasm.

The importance of this story can be seen in the context of the 1880s, a time of rapid economic and political change in the Pacific Northwest. The Oregon Improvement Company and the guard commander’s claims that his men were acting under federal mandate. If that proved to be true, they could not be lawfully arrested by local authorities and were unlikely to comply peacefully with any attempt made by local authorities to do so.

The immediate issue was to ascertain whether the armed body of men was actually what it claimed to be. To that end, Semple telegraphed Metcalf’s office. Metcalf in turn telegraphed U.S. Attorney W. H. White in Seattle with a copy of Governor Semple’s correspondence:

I have the honor to enclose herein a copy of the communication from the Executive of the Territory, requesting information from this office as to the report that an armed body of men composed of “detectives” acting as United States Marshals, were at Roslyn in Kittitas County in this Territory. Will you be kind enough to inform me officially at your earliest convenience what knowledge you have of the difficulties at that place which require the presence of United States Deputy Marshals, and further by what authority such Deputy Marshals are acting, and whether any offense against the United States has been brought to your knowledge, which requires their presence at Roslyn.

Markwell’s language indicates that the claim was credible enough to warrant a serious inquiry. He was not fully confident that the federal government would have informed him had there indeed been cause to send marshals into his territory. White clearly denounced the imposters at Roslyn, reporting that he knew of no violation that would necessitate the presence of federal law officers in Roslyn.

They are not acting under my instruction. And I can see no necessity for their presence in such numbers at Roslyn. In my opinion the
if such is the case, it is without instruction from the Attorney General of the United States or myself.

White went on to suggest that Metcal- fe contact Washington Territory deputy marshal T. J. Hamilton. The response was not inspiring—with the disclaimer that “my information as to the difficulties named is mainly obtained from the public press and is very meager,” Hamilton reported that he had “no knowledge of any detectives acting as deputy U.S. Marshals, or pretending to act as such, whatever.”

By now, Metcalfe was fairly certain that the men claiming to be federal marshals at Roslyn were imposters. He telegraphed District Attorney Eugene Snively at Ellensburg, who had reached the same conclusion independently. Snively had been approached by Sheriff Packwood with a copy of Governor Semple’s August 21 letter and had taken measures to arrest the intruders on the grounds of trespassing—a charge made possible by an old dispute over the rightful ownership of the Northern Pacific Coal Company’s land. But the charge was shaky at best and did not stand up for long.

Soon after the arrest of its hired guns, the company went on to request the government’s protection and also those armed hirelings, who it seems plain to us must have violated some law of our country.

The last record of violence is a December 30, 1888, telegram sent to John Kangley of the Washington militia to prepare to provide assistance at Roslyn in case matters spiraled out of control. Finally, on the morning of September 28, Governor Semple was once again spurred to action by his morning paper. While revising the Portland News, Semple came across an article detailing the circumstances to the governor of Washington Territory in our

The company guards had been allowed to remain at the scene not out of safety for the strikebreakers but because there was no lawful reason for their detention. The government went on to find a legal means of removing the guards from the site in the short term and then win a conviction that would force the mercenaries to disperse.

On August 29, Governor Semple received a strongly worded petition drafted by A. H. Harris on behalf of Roslyn’s citizens. Because the Northern Pacific Coal Company calls—Knights of Labor in negotiations, the striking miners continued their protests under their given names without explicit reference to the union. Even so, the Knights provided a rhetorical vocabulary and organizational framework from which the company was able to establish its involvement with contemporary strikes across the nation. The official representatives of the strikers, known as the “Committee of Roslyn Miners,” included Isaac Brown, J. Bailey, J. M. Baird, and M. A. Muller. About 520 citizens of Roslyn had signed the petition, which was almost half the population:

Port of Portland, Wash., showing the entrance to the mines.

WILLIAM F. WARD

The last line captures the peculiar predicament of the government—it seemed obvious to officials and strikers alike that a private army was protecting an armed body of negroes; and also those armed hirelings, who it seems plain to us must have violated some law of our country.

The pattern of tenuous work punctuated by violence continued for some time. In the aftermath of the strikes of 1888 without serious bloodshed, the bitterness resulting from the presence of the African American strikebreakers was not easily overcome. Kanashabushan Craven, a descendent of one of the town’s original black families in Roslyn, recalled what her mother, Ethel Florence Craven, once told her: “There was tremendous hate that lasted for years. It was terrible. They were coming in as strikebreakers, and being black on top of it.” In the aftermath of the strike, many of the town’s African American families had to work hard to coexist with the those they had decried as “deteriorating elements” in their petition to the governor.

After the barricades came down from Ronald’s perimeter, there remained the issue of how blacks and whites would coexist with one another both below and above ground. Such a dramatic and rapid increase in population would be difficult for any town to manage, even without the emotional factors present in Roslyn. Local citizens began to plan for a new schoolhouse in 1890. The town raised funds for construction and black citizens of Ronald volunteered one of their churches to be used as an interim schoolhouse. This account is consistent with the circumstances of the broader


In subsequent years immigrants from all over the globe continued to seek work in the Roslyn mines. By 1913 Roslyn was home to at least 24 ethnicities, including African-American, Croatian, Czechoslovakian, Dalmatian, English, Finnish, French, German, Irish, Italian, Russian, Scottish, Swedish, Syrian,Welsh, and American Indian. This provided a vibrant mix of culture and experience for the town’s schoolchildren, many of whom were first-generation immigrants. There is evidence that classrooms were well integrated in both primary and secondary institutions. In photographs, the black children are not shown grouped together, sidelined, or otherwise separated from the others.

The integration of the schools demonstrates that the tolerance forged in the mines extended to the community. Whatever prejudices whites harbored against the African Americans were not sufficient to deter them from sending their children to learn alongside the children of their black coworkers.

James Shepperson, the labor recruiter who organized the original convoy of children of their black coworkers. Daily interactions in the coal mines, the classroom, and the town square defined the role these new citizens eventually would play. The ultimate institutional acceptance of blacks in Roslyn came in 1976 when the black residents of the town. Daily interactions in the coal mines, the classroom, and the town square defined the role these new citizens eventually would play. The ultimate institutional acceptance of blacks in Roslyn came in 1976 when the black residents of the town. Daily interactions in the coal mines, the classroom, and the town square defined the role these new citizens eventually would play. The ultimate institutional acceptance of blacks in Roslyn came in 1976 when the black residents of the town. Daily interactions in the coal mines, the classroom, and the town square defined the role these new citizens eventually would play.

This letter demonstrates the influence black miners exercised after they became an essential part of the company’s operations. This correspondence also hints at the negotiations that preceded their original migration. The black workers were active in crafting the conditions of their arrangement with the company before they agreed to come to Roslyn and for years after they arrived. The company was indeed “using” them and exploiting their racial identity for its own gain, but it was indeed “using” them and exploiting their racial identity for its own gain.

Legging behind the broader community, the company continued to view its Roslyn workforce along racial lines for years after blacks had moved into Roslyn. The use of the word “municipio” in Bush’s letter suggests that the company still viewed the black miners as something akin to mercenaries hired as weapons against organized labor.

The shadow of Jim Crow loomed on the 20th-century horizon. Its approach slowly endangered much of the social and political progress blacks had achieved in the nascent postbellum period. The specific circumstances of late-19th-century Roslyn present an interesting contrast with those of the American South. Roslyn was free of the stigma of slavery and Civil War defeat that had poisoned the racial attitudes of many Southerners. Although far from a racial utopia, Roslyn was able to overcome the scourge of racism to a degree unthinkable in the postbellum South. Roslyn was perhaps an exception to the rule, but in a much broader context, few other places captured the turbulent history and delicate nuance of race relations at that time in America.

When the dust finally settled in Roslyn, 300 black strikebreakers became 300 black residents of the town. Daily interactions in the coal mines, the classroom, and the town square defined the role these new citizens eventually would play. The ultimate institutional acceptance of blacks in Roslyn came in 1976 when the town square defined the role these new citizens eventually would play. The ultimate institutional acceptance of blacks in Roslyn came in 1976 when the town square defined the role these new citizens eventually would play.

Paradise Valley, Mount Rainier National Park, 1917

Lillian Streete Voll, center, poses in this hand-tinted image with friends and family during a snowshoeing trip to Mount Rainier. From left to right are her sister Agnes, Daise Weer, and R. P. Prentys. All were members of the Mountaineers and appear in Lillian’s scrapbooks of skiing and climbing outings with her husband Otto. Historian Edmond Meany, also a Mountaineer, appears in one of the albums. Mr. and Mrs. John Voll donated this collection to the Washington State Historical Society.

—Maria Pascualy

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Spiritual Boundaries in FLUX

By Roberta Stringham Brown & Patricia O’Connell Killen

Through their life experiences and deep friendships, Indians, whites, and peoples of mixed heritage often bridged dominant religious persuasions and traditions in mid-19th-century Washington. Historical records reveal mixed or overlapping indigenous and Christian orientations, as in the case of Hudson’s Bay Métis trader William McBean, Yakama Chief Kamiakin, and Nisqually Chief Leschi. This bending or blending of spiritual boundaries should be taken into account when trying to interpret the religious motivations and behavior of historical figures.

On September 6, 1847, William McBean (1807–1892), chief trader of Fort Walla Walla, with his wife Jeanne Boucher, welcomed four Catholic clerics who had just concluded their trek over the Oregon Trail. They were French Canadians Augustin Magloire Blanchet, newly designated bishop of the Roman Catholic Diocese of Walla Walla; his deacon, Godfroi Rousseau; Father Pascal Ricard, Oblate of Mary Immaculate (OMI) from France; and his assistant, Brother Georges Blanchet (of no relation to the bishop). Ricard noted in his journal: “Mr. Mac Bean, bourgeois of the fort, welcomed us as if we were emissaries from God.” In a letter home, Rousseau wrote that McBean, “Catholic in faith and practice, received us with the greatest affection,” and insisted that the missionaries “stay at the post until Cayuse Chief Tawatoé, who had requested a mission on his land to the south on the Umatilla River, returned from the buffalo hunt.”

Perhaps elation at reaching the long journey’s end, the respectful and warm reception, a natural inclination to interpret experiences in already familiar terms, or a combination of these kept the newcomers from recognizing how dissimilar were their own spiritual outlooks from those of trader McBean, shaped as he was by a different set of life experiences.

McBean’s mother was of mixed Cree descent and his father was Scottish and French Canadian. Born at a Lake Superior post, he was educated briefly in Montreal before serving as interpreter and clerk at Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) posts in New Caledonia (British Columbia). There, in 1834, he married a daughter of Jeanne Baptiste Boucher, esteemed Métis explorer, interpreter, and member of Simon Fraser’s 1808 expedition to the Pacific. McBean and his wife spoke French (the working language of the fur trade), Métis dialects, and indigenous tongues. Like other Métis, they had a strong religious bent. In the prejudicial terms of French Canadian biographer Adrien-Gabriel Monce, OMI, the trader left a lasting impression with natives who “remembered him as a sort of lay preacher whose hybrid religion betrayed his own Cree origin, since it consisted mostly of vague notions about the Deity and the primary precept of the natural law coupled with vain observances, the main burden of which was reduced to shouting and dancing.”

McBean brought his own rich religious life to his encounter with the newly arrived clerics. In his journal entry for September 6, Blanchet wrote: “I offer Mass at 7 o’clock for the first time in my diocese. The altar is prepared in the dining room of the Fort. Mr. and Mrs. Mc Bean, all the Canadiens (implying French Canadians and Métis) and the other Catholics who came from Fort Hall to reside here, assist at it prayerfully.”

McBean hosted a second Mass on September 12. In his entry for that date, Blanchet wrote that he celebrated Mass “in a more solemn manner” and was taken with the beautiful if simple altar, “decorated with images and ribbons.” Those in attendance included settled Métis fur trade retirees, some intermarried with local Cayuse, and the two sons of chief trader Richard Grant (of Montreal). How the attendees experienced and interpreted the rituals at which the bishop presided can only be guessed.

The local piety that impressed the clerics was more complicated than they may have comprehended. According to Métis scholar Diane Payment, they were
Kamikini eventually established camps, notably at Aleshacas (Simcoe) and on Abatnam Creek, a few miles east of present-day Tampico. Through personal qualities and family connections, he emerged as one of the more influential leaders in the entire Yakima-Kittitas-Klickitat region. He also traveled to the east and northeast, areas his Palouse father had shown him as a youth, and fished for the prized spring Chinook at Kettle Falls.

Like other Indians both east and west of the Cascades, Kamiakin sought to benefit from the presence of the “King George men,” as HBC traders were called. By the early 1840s, he likely had visited and traded at major Hudson’s Bay Company posts, including Fort Colvile, Fort Vancouver, Fort Nez Perce, and Fort Walla Walla. When the 1850s rolled around, Kamiakin was a wealthy and powerful member of an elite clan whose lands, replete with gardens and livestock herds, were centrally located yet substantially removed from the posts and ports that radiated disease and the destruction of native ways.

Kamikini appears to have maintained a strong adherence to his indigenous traditions. As Scheuerman and Finley point out, central to Plateau spirituality was a form of reverential animism, a belief that nature, both terrestrial and beyond, was “mysteriously imbued by Nisim Puyp with spiritual force—and animals and plants and weather, moon and stars.” Kamiakin became familiar with these forces as an adolescent during the traditional spiritual quest for his secret tah, or tutelary spirit, an ordeal that brought out the strength and character of individuals and endowed them with the fortitude and restraint of nature. Spirit dances, sacred singing and dancing, and close contacts with shamans were integral to his life. Colestah, the youngest of Klickitat Chief Tenax’s daughters and a revered man, or woman of spirit power, was to become Kamiakin’s confidante and most beloved wife.

Why, then, did he seek to patronize Catholic missionaries? Kamiakin’s invitation launched the religious front, his inroads were mixed: “In a word, I can only say that fearing the inroads made by the Cayuse and Chirouse, the religious zeal of the Indian was not as strong as we had hoped, and the majority of the Catholic Indians around his mission at St. Joseph at Simcoe. Kamiakin’s invitation brought out the strength and character of individuals and endowed them with the fortitude and restraint of nature. Spirit dances, sacred singing and dancing, and close contacts with shamans were integral to his life. Colestah, the youngest of Klickitat Chief Tenax’s daughters and a revered man, or woman of spirit power, was to become Kamiakin’s confidante and most beloved wife.

Responding to Kamiakin’s request for a priest, 27-year-old Casimir Chirouse (1821–1892) settled in a small cabin that Kamiakin’s people built for him at Aleshacas at Simcoe (St. Joseph). With winter approaching, the band asked the missionary to join them at their winter camp close to the Yakima River. During this severely cold winter Chirouse made strides toward his eventual fluency in the Shuswap dialect of his Yakama patron.

In May 1851, Oblate Superior Ricard reported that Chirouse had developed a village of Catholic Indians around his mission at St. Joseph at Simcoe. Chirouse remained there until 1852 when, at the request of Cayuse leader Young Chief, he reopened Mission St. Anne among the Cayuse people living on the Umatilla River. The original mission had been closed during the Cayuse conflict. The second French priest to develop a friendship with Kamiakin was Father Louis Joseph D’Herboron, OM, (1822–1890), who took up residency at St. Joseph in August 1851. At his suggestion, in June 1852, the Oblates and their Indian patrons moved the mission farther north, near the boundary of Kamiakin’s vast gardens on Abatnam Creek. D’Herboron wrote of frequent hunting forays with Kamiakin and of the chief’s general support, including food and necessities for a missionary during his visit to Owhi’s camp in the summer of 1848. Kamiakin’s two uncles, Owhi and Tiesis, living in the Kittitas valley, were his principal competitors. When Bishop Blanchet arrived in 1847, both Chief Owhi and Kamiakin’s long relationship with Catholicism became familiar with these forces as an adolescent during the traditional spiritual quest for his secret tah, or tutelary spirit, an ordeal that brought out the strength and character of individuals and endowed them with the fortitude and restraint of nature. Spirit dances, sacred singing and dancing, and close contacts with shamans were integral to his life. Colestah, the youngest of Klickitat Chief Tenax’s daughters and a revered man, or woman of spirit power, was to become Kamiakin’s confidante and most beloved wife.

It may have been interclan rivalry that prompted Kamiakin’s request for a missionary in the summer of 1848.
Kamianik appears to have maintained a diffuse and personally conserving indigenous-Catholic spirituality, nevertheless, when I speak to him of baptism, he turns a deaf ear. The plans of God are incomprehensible!"  

Uppercase note, and undoubtedly a further cause for Kamianik’s continued patronage of the Oblates on his lands, was the yet deeper friendship he developed with Father Charles Pandosy, OMI (1824–1891), who had been living among primarily Chief Oosh’s followers before his transfer to the Altamaha mission in 1852. Son of a high-ranking naval officer, during his seminary years near Militari, Pandosy had excelled in classical studies (which he later applied in writing a Subaltern grammar) and become an accomplished musician. He played several instruments and enjoyed an unusually sonorous voice. In addition to his keen intellect, he possessed extraordinary physical strength and endurance and was passionate in seeking spiritual experience.

Pandosy was an intensely religious man. More than anything else he wanted to experience God. He achieved this in his work with Kamianik and his people. In a letter to his superior who had begun to question the value of the Oblates’ work among the Indians, Pandosy argued that the slow progress to date was the result of indifference on the part of the whites, including the Oblates themselves. Pandosy explained that “it costs to push an undertaking to the end, when one has but the grace of God to support one’s generous undertaking, one’s generous resolution, the spirit of a spiritual who knows to submit his body and spirit and this invisible grace will support him, will render him strong, will animate his generosity....” He sought to be that “purely spiritual” human being.

Pandosy’s own visceral experience of what he understood as God made him sensitive to spiritual power wherever he encountered it. In Kamianik the young priest found a charismatic leader who outpaced the challenges of assimilation with his attendant cultural assault through his own tradition and experience of spiritual power. For both men, spiritual power was palpable and their relationship to it integral to their beings. The dynamics of the relationship between these spiritual seekers were complex.

When discouragement about Indian missions on the part of his superior endangered his quest, Pandosy drew on his classical French education to defend the indigenous peoples and his presence among them. Against the claim that Indians were aboriginals, incapable of development, he argued: “Why would God made him sensitive to spiritual power wherever he encountered it. In Kamianik the young priest found a charismatic leader who outpaced the challenges of assimilation with his attendant cultural assault through his own tradition and experience of spiritual power. For both men, spiritual power was palpable and their relationship to it integral to their beings. The dynamics of the relationship between these spiritual seekers were complex.

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In the wake of the 1855 Battle of Walla Walla, Father Chirouse had relocated from St. Anne among the Cayuse to Puget Sound. He traveled throughout the region in the company of other Oblates, leading missions among Indian bands when invited and conducting baptisms and marriages. His fluency in varying dialects of Salish and Shaposh (Spokan) was called upon when he was summoned to minister to the imprisoned Leschi. We are told that, following a proper course of instruction and discussion, Father Chirouse converted the unjustly condemned man, whom he had also married to his youngest wife, Mary. Leschi died a martyr, that his people might obtain a more viable reservation on their namesake river rather than on the barren bluff initially proposed in the 1854 Medicine Creek Treaty.

I n the Bitter Waters of Medicine Creek, a de facto re-creation of the case against Leschi, Richard Kluger includes the chief’s conclusion to his own defense at his trial, as remembered by settler Frank Shaw: “Leschi then made the sign of the cross... and concluded in his Salish dialect, ‘There is Father, this is the Son, this is the Holy Ghost—these are all one and the same. Amen.’ Kluger muses, Why, one might ask, would Leschi, facing the likelihood of hanging, have forsaken the spiritual heritage of his people and genuflected to his white oppressor’s faith? The Indian spirits had not served him very well, Leschi might have calculated; perhaps the whites had triumphed over his own natural world. He would have traded widely in horses and maintained a considerable herd on his farm. During the late 1840s he graciously helped early American settlers establish farms along the Nisqually delta. At the time of the 1854 Medicine Creek Treaty Council, negotiators looked upon him as a Nisqually chief.

Turning to Leschi’s spiritual traditions, historians assume that his experience was like that of other indigenous peoples of the region. As an adolescent he would have undergone an important vision quest and received a personal, spirit-infused totem from an older Elder. He might have esteemed those able to use this natural world to celebrate healings, weddings, and seasonal feasts and potlatches. With other Nisquallies, he would have
LeSchi’s life suggests a spiritual outlook that was broader than contemporary interpreters might assume.

The Nisquallies also had been exposed to white Christian influences. In his 1833 journal entries, Dr. Wil- liam F. Tolmie, a Protestant Scotman who served six months at newly constructed Fort Nisqually, writes about learning vocabulary of the local “Nisqually” dia- lect from “chief Lachelet,” who frequently accompanied him hunting, guided his exploration of Mount Rainier’s lower slopes, and, with others sought out stories about the history of Christians and Jews. Official Protestant missionaries were less frequent during these years and ministered primarily to employees at Fort Nisqually. In 1836 the vast Roman Catholic Diocese of Quebec (which included the Oregon Country) sent Fathers Modeste Demers and François Blanchet to evangelize Indians and establish a mission for Métis employees at the Cowitz portage south of Fort Nisqually. Letters tell of their initial visits to the post and the Nisqually delta. A centuries-old gathering place, the area was still an active site of intertribal rituals and exchange as well as a campground for tribal members bringing in fur for trade at the fort. The newly arrived, itinerant mission- aries found a ready audience. Letters report groups of Indians as large as 500 being present when the priests preached. It is entirely possible that young Leschi, if not among the participants, was influenced by those who were.

Returning to serve for 16 years as superintendent of an HBC subsidiary, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, Tolmie de- veloped a close working relationship and friendship with Leschi, who with his brother Quimath managed Indian groups working for the company. Given Tolmie’s fascination with religion and indigenous cultures, and his acquaintance by then with several indigenous dialects, it is reasonable to posit that he engaged Leschi in conversations about his own deeply held beliefs, as he had earlier with Lachelet. Other Catholic missionaries continued to visit Puget Sound on occasion, and in 1845 Father Ricard, OMI, established the headquarters of the Oblate missions at today’s Priests’ Point Park, on Bald Inlet in present-day Olympia. Sacramental records indicate that by the mid 1850s many of the Nisquallies and members of neighboring groups had received Catholic baptism and were married by Oblate priests. Clearly Leschi was familiar with Christian beliefs and Catholic ritual practices well before he spoke in the face of his imminent execution.

Along with Koniamkin and others, Leschi knew of white commercial practices. Both gained wealth and power partly through trade with early Euro-Americans of the HBC. When a still-more-shattering wave of American whites invaded the region during the early 1850s, it was these Indian leaders whom the Americans sought out, made into chiefs, and eventually into villains. There was a culture based upon the principle of Manifest Destiny, the dangerously prophetic notion that a spiritual power, greater than any human power, destined them to occupy the land and extend their own cultural values. To make this a reality, they constructed a racial profile of the Indian as the Other, the enemy to be removed or exterminated.

Paradoxically, Indian leaders who had improved their wealth and status through selective adaptation in the midst of the pre-American white incursion were primary ob- jects in this construction. The Catholic missionaries, though not without their own prejudices and desires to convert the natives, were also labeled by Americans as “oth- ers,” as pariahs who did not belong in the United States. It is unlikely that Father Chirouse, who offered instruction to Leschi, identified himself or his religion with—in the words of Richard Kluger—“the religion of the oppressors.”

The examples presented here are intended to increase awareness of the personal, provisional, constructed, and dynamic character of lived religion, especially during a time of heightened cultural fluidity such as existed during the mid 19th century in the Pacific Northwest. There were Indians who refrained from the Catholic sacraments but who nevertheless integrated Catholic prayers, rituals, and beliefs into their traditional practices. There were those who crossed the sacramental line of baptism but did not abandon spiritual tradi- tions and practices integral to their cultures and essential to the meaning of their lives. There were also Métis of mixed descent, whose religion was often richly inclusive. These examples argue for caution in contemporary interpretations of Indian-white spiritual interactions.

Reconnaissance in the Pacific Northwest

The Chatham was a small brig-rigged merchant vessel modified for the distant duties of navigation. She was listed as an armed tender mounting ten guns, with a complement of 45. Originally she would have had a crew of 12. How crowded she must have been during Broughton’s voyage to the Pacific, looked as she was with many more men than intended as well as a year’s worth of supplies and provisions. She is often listed at 135 tons, 53’11¾” in length of the keel (length of upper deck, 60’), 21’6” in width, and 10’1” in depth. While in the San Juan Islands, the Chatham carried a cutter, a launch, and a skiff.

Appointed to the vessel were James Hancox, the second lieutenant, and Mr. James Johnstone, the master. The crew also included a boatswain, a carpenter, a surgeon (Archibald Memois), two master’s mates, four midshipmen, and one clerk (Edward Bell), two boatswain’s mates, two carpenter’s mates, two gunner’s mates, a surgeon’s mate, a sail maker, an armorer, four quartermasters, ten able seamen, and seven privates of the Marines, for the grand total of 45. The Discovery and Chatham had sailed from Ed- mouth, Cornwall, on April 1, 1791. They passed down the long oceanic corridor to eastern seas and made a port of call at Simon’s Bay, Cape of Good Hope, on July 10, 1791. Leaving there August 17, they spent about a month surveying the western end of Australia’s southern coast before making for Dusky Sound in New Zealand, where they watered and refitted. After their departure the two ships became separated in a gale, and Broughton, proceeding independently, discovered Chatham Island and arrived at the intended rendezvous, Matavai Bay, on July 10, 1792. They were about three weeks there and another five in the Hawaiian Islands, where they watered preparatory to their spring arrival on the American coast.

The two ships reached the Pacific coast of North America about one year after leaving England, William Broughton’s 1792 Exploration of the San Juan Archipelago

Late-18th-century mariners have commented on the difficulty of navigating the San Juan Island Archipelago. It’s many islands and islets, shoals and reefs, all divided by tortuous channels, riptides, and currents—a veritable maze of rocks and water—presented countless obstacles to safe and swift navigation. Anyone who has piloted a vessel through the San Juan Islands would agree that in taking the small warship Chatham through the then-uncharted archipelago Lieutenant William Robert Broughton of the British Royal Navy achieved no mean feat. He has, alas, always stood in the shadow of his more illustrious superior, Captain George Vancouver, but some of his singular maritime deeds and experiences bear recounting.

The son of a gentleman from Hammersmith, county of Middlesex, Broughton probably entered the navy in his boyhood as a volunteer first class. Destined for the quarterdeck, he served on the North American station as a midshipman during the American Revolution. Twenty-eight years of age when he took command of the Chatham in 1790, Broughton appears to have been a self-assured, straight-ahead fellow—a man of few words, but a credit to his profession. Historical and ethnographic matters held no fascination for him. He spoke fluent French—the language of diplomacy—which proved useful some months later during Vancouver’s talks with the Spanish regarding the rights of trade, navigation, and sovereignty at Nootka.

Broughton also had a streak of the bulldog in him. Vancouver held a high opinion of him on grounds of his considerable abilities, powers of observation, and zealous assiduity. Once on the northwest coast he made an impressive entry into hydrographic surveying. He worked in company with and under Captain Vancouver for a few weeks before being sent on his own, as it were, on a specific task. His reconnaissance in May 1792 of a cluster of islands now known as the San Juan Archipelago was his baptism in hydrographic science and exploration. This cluster of islands lying east of Haro Strait, west of Rosario Strait, and bounded on the south by the Strait of Juan de Fuca was not generally known to European science, nor were the waters in the Strait of Georgia.

All of Broughton’s work on the northwest coast, including his plotting of the San Juan Islands, was subordinate to Vancouver’s progress and obligations but essential in its own right. Vancouver had been charged by the British ministry with the triple and therefore complex duty of surveying segments of the Pacific coast of North and South America, determining once and for all the existence of a Northwest Passage, and settling the dispute with Spain over national rights in Nootka Sound. It seems the British government had overloaded his agenda, though certainly the Admiralty did not understand the complexity of northwest coast geography, how difficult it would be to make even a systematic reconnaissance of its sounds, bays, inlets, archipelagoes, and estuaries.

Broughton and his men did not see the San Juan Islands as a destination but rather as an impediment to navigation farther north, or back to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the open Pacific. The San Juan Islands choke, as it were, the greater bodies of water that flow from the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the Strait of Georgia. Broughton, with a single-minded purpose, only concerned himself with navigating the Chatham to, through, and around the San Juan Islands. He may have been attracted to the natural beauty of the landscape, but if he wrote anything concerning its aesthetic wonders, nothing of the sort survives.

William Broughton’s 1792 Exploration of the San Juan Archipelago

BY BARRY GOUGH

Late-18th-century mariners have commented on the difficulty of navigating the San Juan Island Archipelago. Its many islands and islets, shoals and reefs, all divided by tortuous channels, riptides, and currents—a veritable maze of rocks and water—presented countless obstacles to safe and swift navigation. Anyone who has piloted a vessel through the San Juans would agree that in taking the small warship Chatham through the then-uncharted archipelago Lieutenant William Robert Broughton of the British Royal Navy achieved no mean feat. He has, alas, always stood in the shadow of his more illustrious superior, Captain George Vancouver, but some of his singular maritime deeds and experiences bear recounting.

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making landfall slightly south of Cape Mendocino, might be missed off of Cape Chatham. Next came a northward course along the coast of present-day Oregon. When on April 27, 1792, they reached a headland north of the Columbia River, Vancouver noticed signs of river water off Cape Disappointment. From the general aspect of the sea and shore he decided it was not navigable and therefore passed it by.

**Entering the Strait of Juan de Fuca**

Before long, the vessels of discovery approached the southern entrance to the legendary Strait of Juan de Fuca. Vancouver spotted a strange ship in the distance, which turned out to be the Boston trader Columbia Rediviva, commanded by Robert Gray. He sent Peter Puget and surgon/naturalist Archibald Menzies to the Columbia to secure “information as might be serviceable in our future operations.”

Later that day observers aboard the Chatham saw a pinnacle rock near Cape Flattery. There were many hazards to navigation here. Because of its shallow draft, the Chatham was the vessel to work through narrower approaches to the open strait beyond, the Discovery following. Sailing into the Strait of Juan de Fuca, they worked along the unforgiving south shore, taking no chance that a passage might be missed. Therefore, Vancouver knew he would have to press along the mainland shore southward, examining the maze of islands and passages of Puget Sound, which Vancouver named after Puget, one of his officers.

Much of this work could be done in boats. But in the northern quarter—in fact, almost due north from his place of observation—lay what appeared to be a cluster of islands and a possible canal or passage to the north. He knew that to the northeast lay Mount Baker, signifying another portion of the continental shore. But he did not know if there was a passage out to the distant Atlantic thereabouts, nor did he know that a strait, now known as the Strait of Georgia, lay to the north, beyond those many islands. Thus was born the requirement to examine these distant islands. Menzies, an important observer to these proceedings, described the events of May 18:

> About noon the Vessels were advanced between the Island of the Main where in our return we called on board the Chatham where Captains Vancouver left orders for a short separation of the Vessels. At this time a fresh breeze sprung up at West with which we stood [southward] for Admiralty Inlet within the Chatham land up to the North West wind being dispersed to look into a large opening that appeared in that direction on the other side of this large gulph, & after obtaining what information they could of the way & general direction of it & the other branches in that quarter they were directed to follow us into Admiralty Inlet pursuing the South East Arm that was left unexplored by the Boats & keeping the Starboard [right-hand] shore of it abode all they fell in with us.

The Chatham would seek out the channels among the maze of islands to the north while the Discovery pressed on with the continental survey. In the end, the latter proved the more difficult task. All the same, the northern survey had its rewards.

Even in our own time, navigating these straits and passages is tinged with anxiety and awe. The San Juan Islands lie like a tangle of rock between the Strait of Juan de Fuca on the south and the Strait of Georgia on the north. We now know—Broughton did not—that three main channels lead from the east end of Juan de Fuca Strait to the southeast end of the Strait of Georgia. The main channel is Haro Strait, of which Boundary Pass is the continuation where it turns at Stuart Island. These now form the international water boundary between Canada and the United States. Rosario Strait and Middle Channel are the other two channels, as well as the waters forming the east end of Juan de Fuca Strait.

**Detailed from an 1866 U.S. Coast Survey navigational chart of Washington Territory’s intercoastal region, then known as “Washington Sound.”**

**William Robert Broughton, captain of the Chatham during the British survey of the North American coast in 1792.**
had reached the southern entrance of what is now called Middle Passage. This waterway forms the southern entrance to San Juan Channel, which separates San Juan Island from Lopez Island and Indeed Island and the rest of the archipelago. The brig’s cutter was sent ahead to sound for a channel. Soundings indicated good water close to a rocky island (Goose Island—marked on the left side of the bow. The Chatham followed the cutter through a passage of a mile in width. They shifted course and crossed a large sound (Griffin Bay), which opened at Turn Island into an extensive and widening channel leading to the northwest (the continuation of San Juan Channel). At Turn Island, immediately south of Shaw Island, they saw another opening—a broadening channel leading off to the northeast (Upright Channel), toward which they steered. Having experienced a mighty ebb tide, they anchored around half past eight in the evening, probably off the southern extremity of Shaw Island.

Day Two—May 19

The Chatham bore at anchor until the boats could be readied and sent for the day’s work. Broughton reported:

In the morning the Cutter went 6 miles up the NE Arm [Upright Channel]—and returned without seeing any apparent termination to it. After Breakfast I dispatched two Boats under the direction of Mr. Johnstone (the Tide of Flood having made) up the NW Arm [San Juan Channel] to explore. The wind blowing presented the Vessel’s going so conveniently and 1 rather supposed it communicated with what we call’d the true NW passage. After their departure we weighed & run up the NE passage [Upright Channel]:...and our situation was not the most eligible from the shallowness of the Ground [tending to a thoroughly reliable anchorage]. After running 2 or 3 Miles we anchored off a Sandy Spit which and the opposite Rocks form’d the Narrows of this Passage not ½ mile across.

This was the narrows between Canoe Island and Flat Point; here the channel measures less than 400 yards wide. The soundings made here showed irregular bottom. At 8 pm the boats returned. They “reported the passage which they followed up—communicated with an extensive Opening call’d by us the NW passage [Haro Strait]—and two Arms branched off from it”—the smaller of the two branching to the northwest (Spieden Channel), the other to the northeast (President Channel). By the end of the second day, the main particulars of San Juan Channel had been determined. This marked an important preliminary finding of Broughton’s survey, but he needed more details about the southern entrance to San Juan Channel, now known as Middle Channel.

Day Three—May 20

At Day Light,” recorded Broughton, “Mr. Johnstone went to sketch the entrance we had first entered from by the Strains [Middle Channel and the southern entrance to San Juan Channel] & the Tide Shanking at 8 we weighed, towing to the NE word [in Upright Channel] without any wind. By Noon we came to an Anchor having received very little assistance from the Tide in 27 fathoms at the mouth of an Inlet.... Chatham’s noon position was opposite the entrance to Harney Channel, which led to the northwest and where another inlet or passage led to the southeast, into what is now known as Lopez Sound. A third bore away from them—the entrance to East Sound.

Some indication of the difficulty of the survey is given by Broughton in this remark later the same day: “These different openings materially affect the Stream of the Tide—and though the rise and fall was considerable by the Shore—Our progress was much impeded by their irregularity & we were necessitated to remain Stationary for the day—after making another attempt in the Afternoon.” It being cloudy, no astronomical observations were taken at noon.

The cutter had returned by noon with Mr. Johnstone. “After dinner the two Boats were sent to explore the passages which presented themselves on each side of the one I meant to pursue. By dark they came back.” In one boat, Lieutenant James Hanson had gone up the passage (between Lopez and Blakely Islands!) seven or eight miles but could find no termination to it. The other passage, Harney Channel, proved to be about four miles long until it branched off into West Sound and Wasp Passage. They saw an Indian village about two miles up Harney Channel. Here, canoes came off from the village and the boats traded with them for venison—“a young Fawn they got alive.” High water was observed on shore at seven in the evening, “the Stream of Tide very inconsiderable.”

Day Four—May 21

Broughton continues: “The Morning of the 21st was Calm—at 8 we got under way—the Boats towing us towards a Narrow passage (which I supposed might carry us out to the straits) we had light Breezes and Cloudy Weather from the NE Quarter and by Noon we reach’d the 2nd Narrows having a Strong tide in our favour and carrying us through.” Presumably the Chatham had been pulled though Peavine Pass—south of Obstruction Island and north of Blakely Island—about 220 yards wide at its narrowest. Several canoes rested on the beach. Others could be seen moving seaward along the shore. Mr. Johnstone went ashore with the small boat to take the necessary angles “while we continued turning through the passage having both Boats ahead to assist us.” There was good water beneath the keel, to 15 fathoms. “We now entered a Spacesound [Roario Strait] containing several Islands & openings in all directions.”

The wind died, and the vessel was carried northward rapidly by a strong tide that set close along the shore to the westward. The tow rope parted, the Chatham drifted toward the shore and made gentle contact alongside the rocks. A change of tide setting back to the south allowed the ship to be floated, no damage done. The boats soon towed the Chatham to a location where they dropped anchor, at one in the afternoon, in 25 fathoms, no wind. When sounding for depth, the lead had got entangled in rocks and was lost, together with 20 fathoms of line.
Day Five—May 22
The day began with variable weather, the morning calm, it was "out boats and head" to the westward, which involved towing the warship with the smaller boats. The tide came on quickly and set the Chatham fast on the shore of what they thought was an opening, but which later they determined to be an island (Cypress Island). Fresh breezes came along in the afternoon, from the northwest quarter, but a strong flood tide prevented much progress. The small boat was then out on discoveries and, notwithstanding it was separated from it, Broughton decided to come to anchor in a bay on the north shore within a small island. This was Strawberry Bay on the west side of Cypress.

Several islands lay to the south of the ship via an "inlet" that was probably Thistle Island (just north of Cypress). The Galiano Islands on the west side of Rosario Strait, leading to Lopez Sound. Master Johnstone was sent in a boat to examine it, but the strength of the flood prevented it. The ebb tide made to the eastwards at seven in the evening, "at which time it became Squally with heavy rain from the NE and a great deal of Thunder."

Day Six—May 23
With the wind from the southeast, a favorable opportunity presented itself. On an easterly moving tide, they weighed anchor at six in the morning and stood on southward toward the Entrance to the archipelago. Menzies went with Broughton to the boats in all their cruising.

It had been a tiresome day, and Captain Broughton had written his note at anchor to the château, which noted: "The tide did not run with the easterly wind, and we experienced about 30 miles an hour against the wind."

The afternoon continued calm, and the easterly wind did not set, so they anchored near a projecting sand spit, which formed an abrupt point at the upper end of Entrance to Useless Bay, at the lower end of Whidbey Island. A squall came on from the south that night.

Day Seven—May 24
At daylight, taking advantage of the ebb tide, they weighed anchor and came into the wind, being forced to make a series of disadvantageous tacks. After anchoring on the east shore of the mainland near a projecting sand spit, they could still see the mouth of their entrance from the straits, about seven leagues to the northwest. At noon, taking advantage of the ebb tide, they raised anchor and worked to windward "having a fine turning Breeze from the SE Quarter." Later in the day they weighed anchor and worked their way south toward the north-west coast of the mainland near a projecting sand spit, which they named Charles Island.

The continental shore was a "straight beach in a North direction," says Broughton. They worked their vessel back and forth along this northwestern shore. This was the Strait of Georgia. Captain Vancouver later noted that this opening was "the most capacious, and presented an unbounded horizon."

Day Eight—May 25
As the first stage of Broughton's survey drew to a close, he moved toward his expected rendezvous with Captain Vancouver. At three in the morning they weighed anchor in light breezes and sailed southward. At eight o'clock they came to anchor off the east shore of a sandy spit. They were able to make an astronomical observation in what seems to have been a partly cloudy sky, calculating they were in Latitude 47°46' N (present-day Richmond Beach). They weighed again, and in light airs from the north ran up the arm. At six in the evening they saw the Discovery at anchor on the west shore, off Restoration Point, at the southern end of Blakely Island.

At dark they anchored in 26 fathoms, close over on the north shore within the sandy spit. According to James Johnstone, the Land is delightful, being in many places clear and the Soil so rich that the grass grows in several inches to man height. We were surprised in such fine Country to find scarcely any inhabitants, not a Smoke or a village seen, and only two small Canoes with 3 people in each were met by the Boats in all their cruising.

Unfinished Business
Broughton's primary discovery, and a finding of immediate use to his superior officer, was that the archipelago lay south of "an extensive arm of the Sea which opened to them, extending in promising fashion northward." This was Possession Sound. At half past six in the evening they came to anchor on the west shore of the mainland.

It had been a tiresome day, and Broughton noted that they had not increased their distance more than six miles from the last anchorage. He explained: "The Tides did not run with the easterly wind, and we experienced about 30 miles an hour against the wind."

We continued to follow the archipelago, southward, and experienced a change of wind or tide. This again was Rosario Strait—not a sound but a passage north of Orcas Island, leading to Georgia Strait. These discoveries indicated the way the vessels should continue in their northern survey. The meaning was clear: the San Juans forms an island barrier between the Strait of Juan de Fuca and what lay to the north, the broad waters of the Strait of Georgia. For all intents and purposes, the British had completed their survey of the San Juan Islands.

On June 11 the vessels left Strawbery Bay and worked up the west side of Lummi Island. Rather than going through the channel leading to Bellingham and Samish Bays, they entered a wide and spacious opening with, as Menzies wrote, "an unbounded horizon to the North West.... As we advanced we could perceive that the South West shore was composed of a broken group of Islands intersecting by numerous isles branching in every direction while the opposite shore on our right appeared straight [straight] stretching to the North West sound from Mount Baker."

In the course of his inquiries, Broughton also had seen the alluring Strait of Georgia, a broad sheet of water fronting on shores and islands to the east, north, and west. He did not speculate on what lay beyond it but, like Menzies, wrote that the waters seemed to stretch far to the north, passing through immeasurable islands.

A similar view later came from Lieutenant Whidbey, who noted: "The first Phase of our survey was found to be more promising than I had expected—without the least possible signs of a N W Passage—or do I think one exists—which without doubt will prove a great disappointment to our great Charter Surveyors. I am sorry that the business of Nootka presented our north farther North last season."

Broughton's survey of the San Juan Islands took place during the period when the Spanish and British were quarreling over Nootka. The Discovery and Chatham arrived at Nootka Sound on August 28, 1792. Waiting there for Captain Vancouver was Spanish commissioner Bodega y Quadra, hoping to settle the differences between the British and Spain. Neither party could agree, and the matter was referred back to the home governments. From Nootka, Captain Vancouver sent Broughton home to advise the Lords of the Admiralty about the progress of the survey and the negotiations with the Spanish, also for further instructions. Before undertaking this, however, his superior officer instructed him to examine the Columbia River, which he did in October 1792. His survey has a magnificently achievement and another notable contribution to the history and knowledge of the Pacific Northwest waters.
Robert Wright’s Rugged Mercy is a lovingly crafted family portrait that spans a period of 86 years, from 1894 to 1980. Much of Wright’s story centers around his grandfather, the man for whom he was named. Pulling from family stories, letters, and historical medical research, Wright describes his grandfather’s start as a medical student and continues to his career as an experienced doctor working in Idaho’s Sun Valley. Because of the variety of “Doc” Wright’s medical cases, readers get a glimpse at what life was like for those living in Idaho in the first part of the 20th century. His patients ranged from children and mothers to prostitutes and working men from the mines. Doc’s wife, experience constant worry as her husband braves snowstorms, epidemics, and difficult medical cases in and around Hailey, Idaho. He makes connections with Native Americans as well as Basque peoples and does what he can to help those in need, no matter what they are able to give him in return. Doc’s work brings him into frequent quips of “Hi guy—how’s your copperosity sagacity?”

Dott, Doc’s wife, experiences constant worry as she details what might happen while delving into the history of past quakes, the tsunamis and landslides they generated, and their causes and effects. Doughton also explores the picture she paints in a grim one. Enlivened by the stories of unconventional scientists and stitches together a picture of the spirit of the American West, Rugged Mercy succeeds as a story of family, faith, and hard work, sometimes in the midst of suffering. The lively dialogue, family photographs from the author’s own collection, and transcribed letters turn this family story into an historical record that comes to life on the page.

Reviewed by Blair Kelly.

When killer tornadoes in the Midwest and hurricanes ravaging the Atlantic and Gulf Coasts make the news, we in the Northwest consider ourselves fortunate not to suffer such extremes of Mother Nature. However, in Sandi Doughton’s new book, Full Rip 9.0, the Seattle Times science writer explores just how few of us in this region will be unaffected by a powerful earthquake of that magnitude. Running the gamut from dishes falling off shelves to the devastation of state government, she details what might happen while delving into the effects of past quakes, the tsunamis and landslides they generated, and their causes and effects. Doughton also draws on experts in the field and recollections of residents who have experience from bygone times. The picture she paints is a grim one.

Enlivened by the stories of unconventional scientists digging into the past, there are many interesting discoveries awaiting readers with a zest for history. Chapter Seven even includes an account of an Old West outlaw and the part he plays in earthquake lore. Not meant as a warning to get out of Dodge, the book offers some useful advice for folks in Seattle, Portland, and Vancouver on how they can be better informed about and better prepared for an earthquake event that is long overdue. After all, scientists believe that the Pacific Northwest will someday be the site of the biggest earthquake ever experienced in the continental United States.

It would be nice if major cataclysms like earthquakes could be confined to two-hour epics at our local movie house, but we know that they can and do happen in real life. Consider that the Pacific Northwest is capable of producing an earthquake 60 times as powerful as the 1906 San Francisco quake. Full Rip 9.0 is a well-done read at least equally deserving of the time and money one might spend on a fictional disaster film at the multiplex—and you won’t have to bother about parking.
Evelyn Bolster (1909–1977) was born in Spokane, where she lived until her mother committed suicide in 1917 by jumping off a bridge into the Spokane River. Not long after this tragic incident, her father moved the family to Olympia, where he’d taken a job. The next year, as he moved about the Northwest with Bolster’s older brother for various jobs, he sent Evelyn and her younger sister to live on her aunt and uncle’s farm in Twin Falls, Idaho. These childhood experiences serve as the basis for Bolster’s two beautifully written novels: Morning Shows the Day (1940) and Come Gentle Spring (1942).

Morning Shows the Day tells the story of three siblings—Ted, 11; Ellen, 10; and Susie, 8—living with their father in Olympia following the death of their mother. Their widower father is a firm but understanding figure, in the vein of Atticus Finch in To Kill a Mockingbird. He rears his children, or building a raft from driftwood, soling shoes, learning to sew, harvesting dinner together, rearing his children of Atticus Finch in To Kill a Mockingbird. He rears his children

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