Maritime History Comes Alive

You can expect that much will be written about the Washington State Historical Society in this space in years to come. *Columbia,* in addition to its intrinsic value as a first-rate popular journal of history, is also a logical medium for communicating news about important internal developments for the Society, such as the “Magnificent Voyagers” exhibit at the Society’s museum.

Nevertheless, it is also my intent to use this page to direct attention to the significant contributions the many subregional and local organizations are making to the understanding of state history.

A truly great accomplishment in this centennial era is the Grays Harbor Historical Seaport, headquartered in Aberdeen. This organization has set for itself the goal of re-creating the 18th-century trading ships of captains Robert Gray and John Kendrick: the Columbia Rediviva and Lady Washington.

The idea was first propagated in May 1985 by the Grays Harbor Economic Development Council, in partial response to the region’s need for a tourist attraction that would soften the blow of the depressed timber industry. As typically happens, a group of dedicated volunteers, banding together as the “Tall Ships Restoration Society,” conducted the initial promotional efforts. That same year, through the offices of Rep. Max Vekich and other legislators, the state of Washington appropriated $20,000 for a tall-ship study by the Washington Centennial Commission.

In 1986, the legislature authorized the expenditure of $500,000 in state funds for the project, if a like amount could be matched locally. A Public Development Authority, doing business as the Grays Harbor Historical Seaport, was established by the Aberdeen City Council, which subsequently issued the requisite matching bond issue. (In creating the P.D.A., the city employed the same statute that called forth the Pike Place Market authority in Seattle. This law is much underutilized by heritage organizations in Washington.)

Earlier this year the legislature granted another $500,000 to be matched by private contributions. With this bankrolling, the re-creation of Washington’s tall ships is fast becoming a reality. I had the personal privilege of being present for the keel laying of the Lady Washington on September 13, and look forward to seeing her sail out for sea trials in 1988.

***

A footnote: I recall Rep. Vekich speaking in a legislative committee meeting, calling on his patriotic reserves, and decrying the fact that Washington’s maritime historians had a greater fondness for the Englishman George Vancouver (who explored Puget Sound in 1792) than for the American Gray, who rediscovered the Columbia River that same year. (This phenomenon, accurately noted I believe, has more to do with the concentration of population on the shores of Vancouver’s waters as opposed to Gray’s than on the relative accomplishments of these great mariners.)

But in the same spirit of historical consciousness-raising, I have the private hope that the good Mr. Kendrick is not forgotten. Robert Gray is favored in history as the first American to circumnavigate the globe, as the discoverer of the great river of the West, and toponymically (a bay, county and river). Nevertheless, Kendrick was the commander of the trading expedition that brought him, Gray and the other Americans to the Northwest Coast; he was highly respected by other explorers and traders; and for a trader, he was considerably kinder to the native people with whom he dealt than were most of his associates.

—David L. Nicandri, Director

The categories of membership are as follows:

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Membership applications should be addressed to:

Washington State Historical Society
315 North Stadium Way
Tacoma, WA 98403
(206) 593-2830

A year’s subscription to either *Columbia* or *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* is included with membership. A member should specify which has been selected. Both may be obtained through payment of an additional $8.
The 20th century's latter years are times of centennials in the Northwest because so many momentous beginnings were made in the late 19th century. All are deserving of remembrance and tribute by those who have come after and benefited in many ways by what those beginnings brought.

This issue of Columbia gives attention to a centenary event that might otherwise go unnoticed—the completion of the all-important rail link between the Northwest and California. Prior to 1887, a journey up or down the Pacific Coast was an arduous undertaking, expensive and time-consuming. Travel and the movement of trade goods were discouraged if not impeded by the primitive nature of transportation. Then, all of a sudden, the last rail was laid along the twisting, up-and-down route across northern California, into the mountains and through the Willamette Valley. The trains at last had come. The arteries of travel and commerce were open, and the long-awaited development of towns and farms and mills, held back by isolation, could begin. From that beginning, and those of the Northern Pacific and later the other transcontinental lines that bridged the great gap of the plains states, there unfolded, year by year—a hundred of them—what we have to live and work with today.

The importance of railroads in the history of the Northwest cannot be overestimated. Consider the situation of Alaska and Hawaii before jet planes brought them close to the rest of the nation. They languished economically, both of them, because they were so isolated. Such was the plight of the Northwest before the railroads came.

And there wasn't much triumph or glory for those who risked all in the building of those first railroads. Those who did risk all, lost all, for it is one thing to start an enterprise and quite another to operate it profitably. These were pioneering railroads. Theirs was not the task of serving a thriving new and well-populated area. The freight and the people were not here in great numbers and quantities, waiting to be moved by rail. Agriculture and sawmilling could not grow and prosper in the time of isolation. So it was railroads first—then growth. And in the long periods of waiting for traffic to develop, the original railroad companies went broke.

But while the backers and furnishers of capital lost out, the railroads themselves had to keep running, for the rails were laid. A bankrupt railroad company did not mean a dead railroad. Furthermore, the rail companies entering the Northwest were land rich though money poor. The Northern Pacific and the Oregon and California lines were beneficiaries of the federal government's enlightened policy of incentive. Free land in vast tracts was given to build the road. But the market for such land, especially in dry areas, was limited, and as for the timber, it had so little value in a time when men talked of the "inexhaustible timber supply" that the N.P. was glad to accept $6 per acre as late as 1900 for the best old-growth timber in the Northwest when J.P. Weyerhaeuser put his company together.

The N.P. never did sell all of its land grant and a successor company, a unit of Burlington Northern, is still in the timber business. The congressional act granting land to the Oregon-California railroad builder specified that the land be sold to settlers for $2.50 an acre. There were few takers, even at that price, but later property values rose. A lawsuit in 1907 led to a Supreme Court decision saying that what remained of the land grant had to be sold by the then-owner, the Southern Pacific, to Oregon for the originally specified $2.50 per acre. Several Oregon counties are still benefiting from timber sales on what are known as the "reverted O. and C. lands."

The issue of transportation is central to another article in this interesting issue. Bill Layman of Wenatchee writes about the struggle to open the upper Columbia River to steamboat navigation so that the farmers in the northeast corner of the state could get their crops to market. Some of the pictures we obtained from Mildred McDermott of Seattle, daughter of Capt. Fred McDermott.

History is very close when you can sit in the apartment of a fragile lady who tells of living as a girl on steamboats that plied the upper Columbia when the river ran fast and dangerously turbulent before those waters were forever quieted. —John McClelland, Jr.
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Front cover: From the cover of the December 24, 1942, issue of On the Ways, a wartime magazine published jointly by the navy and Lake Washington Shipyards. Courtesy of the Special Collections Division, University of Washington Libraries. Back cover: The ferry Kalakala created something of a sensation with its streamlined superstructure placed on an older vessel at Lake Washington Shipyards. For more about L.W.S. see page 12.
The DUKE of TACOMA

And His Wonderful Museum

By Frank L. Green

A studio portrait of Clinton P. Ferry, the earliest benefactor of the Washington State Historical Society's museum in Tacoma.
After C. P. Ferry died, in 1909, the museum he started became a public responsibility. One fund-raising device was the rummage sale. This wagon was used to pick up rummage to be sold at the Ferry Museum.

It was a foggy day in the fall of 1868 when the steamer Eliza Anderson paid her first call to the little village on Commencement Bay in Washington Territory. The murky atmosphere prevented the few settlers from being aware of anything but a peculiar cacophony of sounds coming from the waterfront. The steamer was blowing its whistle with alarming frequency while being guided to the dock by answering blasts from Anthony Carr’s shotgun. After the maneuver had been accomplished, the first mail was delivered to the inhabitants, and there alighted the first passengers to arrive by ship in what was soon to be known as Tacoma, in the persons of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton P. Ferry.

The fare for the roundabout trip from Portland to Victoria and down the Sound was $75, to which was added $18 for the unscheduled stop. Ferry, a man of varied business interests, could well afford it. It was nothing compared to the money he would spend when he came to believe in the area’s future. In fact, his proprietary air soon earned him the title “Duke of Tacoma.”

By 1872 Tacoma had only about 100 inhabitants. Clustered around the Hanson, Ackerson & Company mill were a few shops, a school, a hall, a hotel and a saloon. Entertainment was scarce except for an occasional dance when musical talent was available. But, then, developing and promoting a city left little time for amusement.

Ferry had little taste for society, but he may have sensed a need for a little variety in the life of the townspeople. If so, it would explain why, on a business trip, he approached a man who billed himself as Bosco the Magician and invited him to perform in Tacoma. Bosco was not receptive at first; there seemed little to be gained by it. But he changed his mind when Ferry offered to finance the venture and split the profit, and

It was a strange marriage from the start, between a high-spirited society belle and a man of affairs 15 years her senior.

♣
The conflict in their life-styles caused violent scenes that became more and more frequent. Ferry became very upset if a gentleman of his wife's acquaintance as much as spoke to her. When Ferry was named commissioner for the Territory of Washington to the Paris World's Fair of 1888 he counted on the trip abroad to curb Mrs. Ferry's roving tendencies.

Had Ferry been at all aware of the world at large he would have realized that Paris is to a woman of his wife's tendencies what catnip is to a cat. The strain on their relationship soon went from bad to worse.

At first Mrs. Ferry spent most of her time shopping, visiting and driving in the Bois where her showy equipage attracted the attention of Baron de Vaux, chronicler of the demimonde. At one of the high-fashion establishments where she was spending her husband's money she also attracted a certain Henri Le Clerc, who spoke fluent English and proved to be an admirable guide for tours of the city. Ferry acquiesced in this arrangement as he did not speak French and was often unable to accompany his wife to social functions.

Soon, however, the green-eyed monster reared its head. Ferry heard, or thought he heard, his wife and Le Clerc, who had become a regular visitor to their lodgings, in intimate conversation. He immediately ordered the Frenchman to leave. A stormy session followed in which he accused his wife of infidelity—to which she replied by accusing him of being narrow and provincial. Ferry soon after bought a

The den of C. P. Ferry's dwelling in Geneva, showing some of the clutter he had collected.

profit there was. The small settlement turned out en masse for the entertainment.

From this small beginning Ferry continued to watch over the cultural as well as the economic development of Tacoma.

There followed a time when the citizens of Tacoma were sure the Duke had forgotten them. He had transferred his operations to San Francisco following the death of his wife, the daughter of his Tacoma partner, M. M. McCarver, and was living as a widower. Imagine the impact on Tacoma society when suddenly he appeared in town with a new Mrs. Ferry.

Evelyn Ferry was a striking woman with large, expressive hazel eyes and beautiful golden hair. Her father, W. B. Trafton, was a real estate agent in Tacoma. She and Ferry had met in Oakland where she taught music. After a courtship of 18 months they were married in Stockton in 1879. It was a strange marriage from the start, between a high-spirited society belle and a man of affairs 15 years her senior. Friends predicted trouble and it was not long in coming.

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gun in case he was ever bothered by Le Clerc again and employed a bodyguard who was also instructed to inform him of his wife’s movements.

On April 14, 1889, things came to a head when Mrs. Ferry visited Le Clerc. Shortly after her arrival Ferry, who had evidently been apprised of the visit, burst in with the commissioner of police and two detectives to have the pair arrested. Accounts vary as to what happened next.

Tacoma papers picked up the story from Paris by way of San Francisco. Both parties told their versions of the affair. According to Ferry, he had followed his wife and Le Clerc thinking to find them in flagrante delicto. Enraged by the interruption, his wife flew at him and hit him severely on the nose. Mrs. Ferry denied everything and contended that she and Le Clerc were merely talking in the most innocent manner.

Interrogation convinced the police that nothing was amiss, but Ferry was determined to take his wife to the St. Lazarre prison where she could have the company of other members of her sex who had allegedly broken the seventh commandment. Once there he left her in charge of the jailer and went to get attention for his injured nose. Since no one was there to press a valid charge against her she was released and returned home only to find that she was locked out. With nothing but the clothes on her back she was forced to stay the night in a third-class hotel as no other would accept her without luggage.

Divorce was the only solution, as serious a matter as that was in those days. At one point it looked as though agreement had been reached whereby the proceedings could be initiated by Ferry on grounds of incompatibility. Unfortunately the plan was wrecked by a new provocation.

Again accounts are at variance, but Le Clerc and Ferry confronted each other on a Paris street with results that went beyond the usual exchange of pleasantries. The two began exchanging blows. In Ferry’s version, he fought well, but got a boot in the ribs that forced him out of the fight. Le Clerc claimed that only the presence of Ferry’s bodyguard, who held him back, prevented him from giving Ferry the beating he deserved. Whichever account is to be believed, it is reported that Mrs. Ferry watched the struggle with calm indifference from her carriage.

Both men were arrested and each charged the other with assault. The charges were dropped almost as fast as they were made and attorneys managed to unscramble the whole thing before further damage was done.

Ferry returned home shortly after the incident without his wife. The case was eventually settled in Tacoma after tempers had cooled, and divorce ensued with incompatibility the sole grounds.

**During this grand tour Ferry made his first acquaintance with art galleries.** Although it had occurred to him earlier what a museum could mean to Tacoma, he had never seen one until this time. In later years he wrote of his early plans:

> WHEN THE IDEA of a public museum took birth in my brain many years ago I was living in Portland, Oregon. For many years it had been my intention to establish an art museum pure and simple. I had a great desire when I was a young man to study art, but in this then rude and undeveloped country art had no place, and I determined that if ever I had the means I would furnish the opportunity for art study to all who might desire it. Although I had from my earliest youth a taste for collecting curios and preserving things pertaining to the country which would become interesting curios in time, I had never seen a museum until on my way to Europe in 1888. Then my plan broadened, and when I reached Europe I saw the opportunity presented for the foundation of a museum which would be of interest to Tacoma with the expenditure of a comparatively small amount of money. I commenced studying museums in the different countries of Europe and making collections. The museums generally of the great cities of America have had a foundation and growth through wealth. They contain the most beautiful creations of the artist’s brain and hand, but there is not enough in them to appeal to the sympathy of a man of small means, the poor man. I endeavored to lay the foundation of an institution on the plan of some European museum which would probably broaden with its growth, a popular museum to be enlarged by the people, a museum which would contain articles that would make the large majority of visitors say, “I have something which I can place here,” and the...
A group of Tacomans stared solemnly while being photographed with a marble replica of the famous Dying Gaul. For decades it was one of the most viewed exhibits in the museum. The original is in the Vatican Museum in Rome.

museum is as I anticipated growing rapidly along those lines. There will of course have to be weeding done, as the museum grows. I have provided that the museum shall be open on Sundays, because I believe that the working man who is chained to daily labor should be entertainingly instructed on that day, as a relief from the grind of continuous weekday struggle with the world.

Ferry began shipping back the art treasures he had collected for his proposed museum in 1891. There were copies of classic sculpture, the Venus de Milo, Sleeping Ariadne, the Dying Gaul and the Discus Thrower, plus replicas of the Elgin marbles and a collection of architectural casts and cornices representing styles from early Greek to Gothic.

To begin with, nobody in Tacoma seemed to know what Ferry had in mind for these artifacts. They were stored in a stable as they arrived, with little thought given to their care. In 1892 they were displayed in what was billed as an International Trade Fair held in a large rambling building constructed for the purpose. The Dying Gaul was supposed to be the center of attention, but got mixed reviews. The men looked at it from a physical standpoint and generally believed that John L. Sullivan could have jabbed him to death. The women were chary of expressing an opinion, but one matron, after looking it over carefully from all sides, said, "I never saw a man sitting down like that, but if they would only stand him up I could tell what kind of man he was."

When Ferry returned he was astonished at what had been done to his carefully collected treasures. After threatening to move everything to Portland he was dissuaded by representatives of the city’s fledgling cultural agencies, the Art League, the Tacoma Academy of Science and the State Historical Society. They entered into a verbal agreement pertaining to the founding of a museum. Together they managed to obtain from the Board of County Commissioners free use of the vacant fourth floor of the new county courthouse.

A grand opening was held on October 28, 1893, after the rooms had been fitted and exhibits put in place, with the work going on almost up to the last moment. Reception hours were announced as from 2:00 to 5:00 in the afternoon and from 8:00 to 10:00 in the evening. The main gallery was a long hall 25 by 180 feet, with a
statuary hall 30 by 60 feet and other rooms averaging 20 by 24 feet. In addition to the works already mentioned, sculpture included copies of the Fighting Gladiator, Winged Victory and Goose Boy, plus many paintings, etchings, photographs, engravings and lithographs. Other cases of curios included military relics from Napoleonic times, coins and rare books.

A fee of 25 cents was charged at the opening to defray expenses, since there was no fixed income on hand for the purpose. Afterwards admission was free, but restricted to Sundays for a while since members of the Art League could only volunteer their services on that day.

The evening ceremonies on opening day included flowery speeches by Ferry and other dignitaries in which the hope was expressed that Tacoma would become the cultural center of the Northwest. Other contributions, both of money and artifacts, were earnestly solicited.

The plea did not fall on deaf ears. Soon were added Alaskan and Indian curios, Roman and Etruscan vases, and even a mummy shipped from Egypt.

To emphasize the educational function of the museum a drawing class was begun in 1895. Among the instructors was A. J. Russell, a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux-Arts of Paris. In January of 1897 arrangements were made with W. H. Gilstrap, a local artist of some repute, to move his studio to the museum and become its curator. From then on the various classes became a full-fledged art school.

Additions to the faculty in the coming years included Catherine Riggs, who had studied at the Corcoran Art School in Washington, D.C., and Edith L. Field, who had studied sculpture under Augustus St. Gaudens. The school year was divided into three terms of 12 weeks apiece with courses available in drawing, portrait and landscape painting, watercolors, and architectural drawing.

By this time the museum had been forced to expand and occupied the fifth as well as the fourth floor of the courthouse. One room had been given over to the ethnological and geological collections of the Tacoma Academy of Science. It was said that no other city of Tacoma's size had such a collection of artifacts. An early visitor to the museum wrote this about it:

THE VENUS OF MILO greets us, a princess in marble robes, at the threshold. She has just stepped from her chamber in the Louvre. Nearby the Gaul dies even as he has been dying for lo these many years, and just beyond is the mighty arm of the Fighting Gladiator strained for an imaginary clinch. Here on the walls are copies in bas-relief of the famous Elgin marbles, cast, some of them, from the originals in the British Museum taken from the Parthenon at Athens; period 400 B.C. The Greek Praxiteles's Cupid looks down from her niche keeping company with the Hercules head from the Farnese Palace in Italy. Capitols from the Erechthium; the Sleeping Ariadne of Naxos, with the improbable pose of the right arm; examples of the Romanesque period; statuettes from the Gothic; ornaments of the Italian, French and German Renaissance; and here...
against the north wall that wonderful bas-relief of St. Cecilia by Donatello, A.D. 1386-1466. Friezes from the hospital of Pistoja, Italy, by Giovanni della Robbia, showing the four heads, patient, physician, priest and nurse; and, finest of all, Michelangelo's bust of the Nubian Slave. ... In the corridor, outside, an unusually fine copy of the bronze Goose Boy balances laughingly on a pedestal.

Climbing one flight there are a thousand old books and engravings, dating from the 14th century. There is an ancient geography of the Nubian Slave, ... In the corridor, outside, an unusually fine copy of the bronze Goose Boy balances laughingly on a pedestal.

An ancient Indian paddle threatens momentarily to slip from its station in midair into the rickety mechanism of a high-wheel bicycle. Dusty looms rest by the side of Kitsap's canoe while the stuffed form of a black bear stands in the prow.

Below is the first piano brought to the North Coast, to Oregon City, by General McConner in 1847 and to Tacoma in 1869.

Then view the royal remains of the Divine Prophet of Min, Ankh Unifer. His hands are crossed high and he is very old. The twenty nails of his fingers and toes are left to make him look like a man. All the rest is shriveled.

As time went on and the excitement of the opening began to wear off, the museum was often unappreciated by some. It was thought to be a collection of oddities with little or no educational value. Another visitor attempted to refute this opinion:

THE FUNDAMENTAL idea of the Ferry Museum is to instruct those unable to travel; to educate the stay-at-home people—the children, the common people. ... To the public schools of the city and in the institutions of higher learning I regard the Ferry Museum as invaluable. Indeed I know of no museum where a teacher may take a class at any time without charge, or a student pursuing an important line of investigation is privileged without fee to delve into vast treasures.

For six months starting in March 1897, it was recorded that 2,300 visitors had registered. In 1902 the annual minutes showed that almost 6,000 had visited the museum during that year.

It is hard to say how much the interest would have grown or declined and how the museum would have developed if circumstances had not intervened. On October 17, 1908, the following item appeared in the local press:

"The Ferry Museum, one of Tacoma's most noted attractions for the tourists, and little appreciated by her own people, will soon be homeless. This magnificent collection ranking 12th among similar institutions in the U.S. has for the past several years been housed in the upper stories of the Pierce County Courthouse, but now the County Commissioners, finding the air of the basement debilitating to the health of the unfortunates incarcerated in the county bastille, have sapiently decided to remove it to the floors occupied by the museum."

Ferry would have liked to see the museum moved to its own building in Wright Park so as to combine his interests in parks and museums. There were those who felt the park could not accommodate such a building and proposed a site next to the Tacoma Hotel on A Street. The controversy continued for some time, but the mantle of cultural leadership was about to fall on other shoulders. Ferry died on July 31, 1909, leaving an estate appraised at $70,000, of which 40 percent was to go to the museum.

By this time W. H. Gilstrap, still curator of the museum, had also become secretary of the State Historical Society. After almost single-handedly saving the Society from being moved to Seattle, he had moved its office into the courthouse with the museum and, in effect, bound up their destinies, although they were to continue as separate entities for some years.

The two organizations worked together to buy property for a new building and to raise additional money to start construction. A triangle of land bounded by what was then Cliff Avenue, the new stadium and Commencement Bay was purchased. The first unit of the building was completed in 1911. An addition was erected in 1915. This and two further additions make up the present Washington State Historical Society building.

When Tacoma's history is written, it must mention the contribution of C. P. Ferry, who first brought culture to an outpost of civilization.

And what of Tacoma itself? It may not be the Athens of the West, but it has come a long way since Bosco the Magician.

Frank L. Green is Chief Librarian of the Washington State Historical Society.
Christmas in pioneer days was not a pile of expensive gifts, nor January bills for Father to pay. No mad scramble to get the Christmas shopping done. Mothers made bright red knitted mittens and wristbands, dressed rag dolls, while fathers made whistles and sleds. Happy the boy or girl who received a "Mother Goose" book, and older sister yardage for a new dress.

The night before Christmas was one of eager expectation in our home as well as in other homes along the Columbia River. As the visit of Santa Claus was always by way of the fireplace chimney, we hung our yarn-knitted stockings where they would be in plain sight and not overlooked when he stepped out on the brick hearth which Mother had thoroughly cleaned.

The old fireplace was a huge one, in which a back log would burn for a week, and around it winter evenings we often listened to pioneer stories told us by Grandfather Barlow while we roasted apples on the end of a stick before lighting candles and going to bed.

We roasted something else in the old fireplace that was most delicious—pig tails. In the fall of the year when Father butchered...
the hogs to be sent to market, every pig went minus his tail. Mother wrapped them in wet newspapers and buried them under hot ashes. When done, we children enjoyed a very delicious luncheon treat.

One day the Portland market manager asked Father if he raised tailless hogs. Even to this day when I see a pig in a butcher shop with a loop in its tail, I feel it should be cut off.

Happy days of childhood, when fact and fiction were swallowed alike without misgivings.

On this particular Christmas, how different from hanging up our stockings. The week before Father had gone to town, a six-mile trip in the old wagon, to the little community of Freeport, situated on the west bank of the Cowlitz River where the Longview concrete plant is now located. When Father returned from town on this particular day he brought most exciting news. There was to be a community Christmas tree and exercises in the Methodist Church on Christmas night and we were all going. Mother explained to us about the tree, and that Santa would bring his gifts for all the children to the church.

Christmas morning found several inches of snow on the crusted ground. All were up for an early breakfast of pancakes and hot sugar syrup, after which I remember walking behind Father, stepping in his tracks, to the barnyard. Watching him feed the animals, I saw he gave them an extra portion because it was Christmas morning. I felt even they sensed something different. Jennie, the little grey mare, was neighing and pawing in her stall. It seemed the cows were giving more milk. Our little pet sheep ran bleating up and down the lane, splashing snow about her. The old pig waddled over in their corner and fell down with satisfied grunts after cleaning the trough of the swill; and the barn cat, after lapping up her pan of warm milk, jumped up on a bale of hay, gave a contented meow, and began washing her face. All the animals seemed so contented on that Christmas morning.

In another part of the barn Father was giving himself a scrub, In comforts most luxurious In the old wooden tub.

After a late-afternoon meal we donned our best clothes and waited for Father to come to the front porch with the sleigh. Hot bricks, which had been heating for hours in front of the fireplace, were tucked in the hay, a brick for each pair of feet. We were off!

We had no sleigh bells, but Father hung a small cowbell on the neck of each horse. How different the sound of the cowbells seemed. Four children, each with a patchwork quilt wrapped around him, cuddled in the hay, going to a Christmas tree. The jingle of the bells was the sweetest music I had ever heard.

Away we went through the woods in a mystery of anticipation. Mt. Solo, covered with snow, stood off by itself against the gray sky. Then soon we were in sight of Mt. Coffin, majestic tree-crowned rock, all covered with snow like a great white shrine. Trees swayed in the stinging winter wind and silently dropped their white plumes on the forgotten old Indian graves. The picturesque old rock progress has now blasted away.

On we went, dusk was beginning, and the deepening of the snow deadened the sound of the sleigh runners and the horses' hoofs. A mystic silence prevailed, except for the jingling of the bells. After an hour's ride we could see light from the windows of the little Methodist Church, whose bell was calling out its Christmas greeting. Soon four children were helped from their warm nests and led up the church steps. I clung tightly to the arm of my sister, who was 11 and I just 7. Through the windows we could see the tree lighted with candles and the many gifts on its branches. Tallow candles on wooden brackets placed all around the walls lighted the church. The warm air, filled with the fragrance of the Christmas pines, rushed out from the church and greeted us.

There on the platform stood the loveliest thing I had ever seen, a lighted Christmas tree, reaching nearly to the ceiling. On the very top was a beautiful silver star, on the branches were strings of popcorn and bits of cotton, and there were toys for girls and boys. Oh! There were dolls! My little heart began to beat so very fast. Did I dare hope that Santa had left one for me! The only doll I owned was a rag one. I clung tighter to the arm of my sister and asked, "Do you think Santa brought me a doll?" Sister said, "Sh! Sh! Keep quiet."

Then very soon the superintendent began the exercises. Just Christmas songs were sung which I did not know, but I listened attentively.

With the jingling of bells, Santa burst into the room, running down one side of the church calling, "Merry Christmas, girls and boys," and the older people were replying, "Merry Christmas to you, Santa." When he reached the platform a big bag of toys, candies and nuts was taken from his back. He then ran down the other side of the church calling "Merry Christmas 'til next year." We smaller children sat enthralled, yet as he left the church everyone was quiet 'til the bells faded away.

Then came the main event of the evening—distribution of the gifts. How intently each child watched the tree, every small girl with her eyes centered on the dolls, with a longing in her heart that one would be hers. They were fast disappearing and my name hadn't been called. Once again I clutched my sister's arm and whispered, "Do you think I'll get one?" She only said, "Sh, sh! Keep quiet. Maybe."

As next to the last doll was taken from the tree the superintendent called the name, "Hattie Barlow." I was petrified with delight and homeward bound. The stillness of the night had covered the earth. The heavens were bright with numberless stars. Above Mt. Coffin was one star brighter and larger than the rest. Could it be the one the superintendent had talked about?

Soon four happy children were in dreamland. A little girl held a doll tight in her arms as she dreamed of a Christmas tree, of Santa, a star and Sister saying, "Sh! Sh! Be quiet!"

COLUMBIA 11 WINTER 1988
World War II years brought climax and then an end to production at a Kirkland yard.

By Lorraine McConaghy

Twenty-mile-long Lake Washington, now home haven for thousands of pleasure craft and little else, in another day was a busy commercial waterway. Along its shores were sawmills, docks for shipment of coal, a home port for a fleet of whaling vessels, ferry terminals and, on Yarrow Bay, a shipyard that contributed considerably to America's might in World War II.

The last vestiges of this shipyard—frame buildings and dock remnants—will soon disappear as developers move in to use the lakefront as a place for people to live and work and moor their boats, never out of sight of the broad lake and the Seattle shore and the sunsets beyond.

During World War II Yarrow Bay roared with activity as thousands of workers came in to learn quickly the shipbuilding trades needed to support the effort to win a war. The work went on with a patriotic fervor characteristic of places of production all through the Northwest—at Boeing, especially, and wood-using industries and all the shipyards in and around Puget Sound and at Vancouver.

In late 1943, less than two years after Pearl Harbor, an estimated 130,000 men and women were working in shipyards from Bellingham to Tacoma.

On every available shipyard wall Office of War Information posters presented the industrial home front as a battlefield. Grim workers stood silhouetted against a shipyard's red glare and black smoke, holding their welding "stingers" like weapons.
The steam-powered scow Squak was built and launched in 1884 at the site that would become Lake Washington Shipyards.

At Lake Washington Shipyards on Yarrow Bay, the yard newspaper On the Ways, published jointly by the navy and the shipyard, celebrated American organized labor. Its message was that free men and women would inevitably win out over "Japanazi slave labor," but only if they never let up and never forgot what was at stake.

Those workers entitled to wear the "star-sangled hard hat" fought the war on the home front by buying Liberty Bonds and building ships with "110 percent" of their energy and attention. On the Ways explored for its readers the melodrama of the war at home, in which the shipyard was the combat zone, and the defense workers who built ships "with all energy and all possible speed" were soldiers of production—as much heroes as the men who sailed into battle.

Throughout the war, editorials hammered away at the theme "This War Can Be Lost!" and warned against confidence and optimism which could so easily slide into complacency. The continual drives to buy bonds, boost production and outfit navy day lounges in the Aleutian Islands; to avoid loose talk, loafing, absenteeism and waste; to give blood and to join the Vitamins for Victory team—all were placed in the greater context of life and death, victory and defeat.

The shipyard's sense of crisis was intensified by
civilian defense drills, which prepared the yard for attack, and by security precautions, which prepared the yard for espionage or sabotage.

The navy supplied vivid accounts of the real front, including heartbreaking photographs of wounded soldiers and sailors. Graphic letters, censored for safety, recounted battle experiences—and many of these letters were from crewmen serving on vessels built at Lake Washington Shipyards or from former employees stationed overseas.

In late 1944, On the Ways estimated that more than 3,000 L.W.S. workers were in the service. The extended military metaphor for wartime shipbuilding called for more “reinforcements” to replace them, to move up into the front lines of production on the industrial home front.

The war brought the shipbuilding industry on the lake to a climactic conclusion after a long history. Lake Washington is a large body of water but originally it had no outlet to the Sound, except the shallow Black River which flowed out of the lake’s south end into the Duwamish and on to Elliott Bay, and was too shallow for steamer traffic. Any commercial craft needed in the early years had to be built on the lake and as early as 1884 the steam scow Squak was constructed. It was used to carry freight between an adjacent lake, Sammamish, and Lake Washington through a shallow connecting slough.

In 1901 the Frank Curtis family built the steamer Peerless and launched her into Yarrow Bay. This 77-foot craft was destined for Puget Sound and so had to be towed out, at high water in the spring, through the Black River. The masts, funnel and cabins were removed so it could slide under the bridges, but even so lightened it went aground on a sandbar before it reached salt water and remained there for months, awaiting a high tide.

Shortly afterward, captains George Bartsch and Harry Tompkins purchased lakefront property and began building larger steamers for the lake passenger trade as well as for the Puget Sound “mosquito fleet.”

In 1906, John Anderson merged his Lake Washington steamer interests with those of Bartsch and Tompkins. They expanded the Yarrow Bay shipyard to ten acres and invested more than $25,000 in new equipment. Anderson Shipyard built steamers for lake excursions during Seattle’s Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in 1909, and also secured a contract from the French government to build four oceangoing wooden vessels during World War I.

In 1917, the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks and the ship canal, connecting Lake Washington and Lake Union in Seattle with Puget Sound, were finished, thus opening the two lakes finally to deep-draft vessels.

Charles Burckhardt purchased the shipyard in 1923, during a time of high hopes and rapid expansion in Northwest fisheries and shipbuilding. Initially, Burckhardt used his new Lake Washington Shipyards as a freshwater winter lay-up for his salmon-cannery tenders and fishing vessels. But he also authorized active pursuit of general construction and repair contracts.

In 1935, during the depth of the Depression, the yard bid on a contract and won a unique opportunity. The ferry Peralta burned to its waterline in Oakland, California, was towed to Lake Washington by her new owners. Working to an extraordinary design, the yard rebuilt her superstructure, and launched the aluminum-clad streamlined ferry Kalakala, a Northwest tourist attraction for three decades.

In 1938, Marine News commented admiringly that management “brought home the bacon to Lake Washington Shipyards this year.” Justified by standing government orders, the shipyard invested in a new steel crane and tons of lumber to build a new set of launching ways. The U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey had ordered an oceanographic survey ship, the Explorer, and on its completion ordered a sister ship, the Pathfinder.

For many craftsmen in the ’30s at Lake Washington Shipyards, shipbuilding was a way of life, not just a job. Hardworking men with grease under their fingernails, they nevertheless were the aristocrats of their trades, members of a highly select fraternity of merit.

Some worked in a family tradition that spanned generations, going back from Lake Washington to the Great Lakes and New England. Their sons grew up in the shipyard of the ’20s and ’30s, holding lanterns while their fathers and grandfathers worked at night. They apprenticed after school, working toward their own set of tools, the hallmark of craft pride. As shipbuilding grew to include
MEN and WOMEN

YOUR NATION NEEDS YOUR HELP

All men and women who can work and are not at present engaged in an essential industry are urged to prepare themselves immediately for employment at the Lake Washington Shipyards. Training courses for such employment are given free at the War Production Training Center in Kirkland.

There is no age limit. Each recruit is graded on his or her ability to perform. Women are dispatched to the Yards with the same wages and privileges as men performing the same duties.

New Classes Start June First

New Classes in Welding, Sheet Metal and Electricity start June first. Students must register prior to that date. Come to the War Production Training Center in the basement of the Tradewell Building for full information and registration cards.

This is Your War

The labor situation is acute. Many of our young men at the yards are being called into the armed services. With the expanding program of ship construction for the US Navy at Lake Washington Shipyards hundreds of additional men and women are needed to man the production line.

Men and women, here is your opportunity. Help your country.

Enroll Today...

KIRKLAND WAR PRODUCTION TRAINING CENTER

LAKE WASHINGTON SHIPYARDS

An early wartime poster appealing to women as well as men to learn the skills needed to work at Lake Washington Shipyards.
metal, the sons of wooden-boat builders turned to shipfitting and machining.

Traditionally, each ship had been tailor-made, built system by system from the keel to the bridge. Its unique plans were traced on full-scale heavy paper templates, stored in the loft, and those elegant shapes were traced directly onto the steel plate. Shipyards were self-contained factories where nearly everything could be fabricated on site, from the anchor chain to the captain's bed.

But the war changed all that and brought new faces and new ways to Puget Sound shipyards.

In 1940, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer warmly praised Lake Washington Shipyards' success in securing a navy contract “after weeks of negotiation...under the terms of the new National Defense Program.” Standing military orders included four antisubmarine net tenders, one thousand baulk tanks to float antisubmarine nets, seven artillery lighters and six seaplane tenders.

After Pearl Harbor, the navy contracted with Lake Washington Shipyards for an additional 25 seaplane tenders. Some were completed as torpedo-boat mother ships using the basic tender hull.

The yard exploded with growth as the work force grew by more than 3,000 percent in less than four years. Two hundred and fifty men built the Pathfinder; 2,000 were working at the yard just after Pearl Harbor, and by the summer of 1943, the work force had grown to 8,000.

Early in the war the Defense Plant Corporation purchased land to the north and south of the shipyard and built an entire metal fabrication shop, three new sets of building ways and craneways to service them. A new outfitting dock was built, as well as first-aid facilities, offices and a cafeteria and lunchroom. The government blacktopped the yard, fenced it and installed a new water system. In short, the government built an entire shipyard that was triple the size of the 1939 establishment.

For the duration, Lake Washington Shipyards became a specialized factory turning out nothing but navy tenders, working on a standard hull and adding preassembled units carried from the grid by crane. Increased mechanization brought paint spray guns and automatic cutting equipment to the yard, and increased specialization necessitated a new unskilled and semiskilled work force.

At mobilization, the old hands found themselves drafted to reluctant command of legions of overnight “specialists” building ships in assembly-line fashion. As the manpower shortage grew acute, thousands of raw recruits, who had each been trained to perform one task on a repetitive basis, poured into Lake Washington Shipyards.

The blue-collar aristocrats of the prewar shipyard recognized the crisis of wartime production, but grieved at the dilution of their crafts. When the first issue of On the Ways appeared, in March 1942, its inaugural editorial mourned the passing of the “Old Days,” when “we knew each other intimately...and our wives met regularly for parties and teas, and many of us sat side by side in lodge and in church.”

This orderly prewar society disappeared beneath the avalanche of semiskilled newcomers, and the versatile small prewar shipyard vanished beneath the streamlined wartime machine.

In the first years of mobilization, the newcomers to Lake Washington Shipyards were local men recruited from Seattle bakeries, filling stations, offices and factories. Then they came from logging camps and fishing boats further afield; then there were discouraged wheat farmers from Eastern Washington, then pipeline welders from Oklahoma, and Montana cowboys, then the rural poor of the Dust Bowl, and finally the urban poor of the East.

Fresh from intensive six-week training courses, many of them had never been in a shipyard before. The inexperienced young shipfitter’s helper, asking endless questions in his Oklahoma drawl, took a lot of ribbing. A weekly column of shipyard gossip and news appeared in the Boilermakers’ 104 Reporter. It poked fun at trainees who mistook a tender hull for a building under construction or who didn’t know the meaning of various shipbuilding terms.

The manpower shortage forced the unions to suspend the traditional apprentice system, and to institute rapid rating for the duration. Between 1940 and 1945, while the average hourly shipyard pay rate rose nearly 60 percent, the amount of time required to become a journeyman mechanic fell from four years to four months.

Before the war, a shipfitter who couldn’t read his own blueprints would have been laughed out of the shipyard; oral history interviews have turned up
at least one wartime "shipfitter" who could not reliably read a ruler. One old-timer at the shipyard observed contemptuously, "They put everybody to work who could stagger down there."

Many other veterans looked with special horror on the notion of women working in the mobilized shipyard. The enormously powerful Boilermakers Local 104, which organized all shipfitters, riggers, welders, burners, lofting men and slab men in the yard, carried on a campaign of ridicule in its newsletter against the "society women and glamor girls" who had inquired about training.

In fact, the local voted five to one in the fall of 1942 to keep women out of the union. They were taking away "men's jobs." The vote, however, was overruled by the international. Local 104's business agent glumly predicted that "female girls in slacks would soon be powdering their noses in Seattle's shipyards."

And "the powder puff army," as it was called, did cause a stir. On the Ways printed a steady diet of fetching snapshots of young women in denim coveralls or welding leathers, carefully noting whether each was single, engaged or married. A letter to the editor, ostensibly about an epidemic of conjunctivitis spread by shared welding goggles, suggested that "90 percent of the affliction is caused by that d-d-d-delicious blonde from Engineering going for coffee in the mornings. What a chassis!"

The popular culture of the shipyard expected women to be pinups outside of marriage and mothers within it. Wartime blue-collar women broke the mold. Capable women who enjoyed the shipyard threatened male exclusivity there, and one man's letter to the editor of On the Ways protested, "Why can't they [women] realize that L.W.S. is still a man's yard and always will be?" Male workers interviewed later have remembered women who were "real sweater girls," on the one hand, and women who were "tough as nails" and "could take care of themselves," on the other.

Shipyard women received mixed signals from
Launching the Absecon

In March 1942, Lake Washington Shipyards launched its first seaplane tender, the Absecon. Five thousand excited spectators filled the shipyard and lined the shore along Yarrow Bay.

At precisely 2 p.m., the daughter of the chief of staff of the Thirteenth Naval District smashed a beribboned bottle of champagne against the vessel. As shipyard whistles blew and the crowd cheered, the tender slid down the ways into Lake Washington. "More trouble for Tokio [sic]!" predicted the editor of On the Ways.

A Lake Washington Shipyards worker contributed the following poem to On the Ways. Its awkward rhymes and rhythm should not obscure the heartfelt sentiment.

LAUNCHING

Another ship goes down the ways
Amidst a cheering throng
A happy occasion it is because
It helps our cause along.
For soon our enemies will feel
The full weight of our production
And L.W.S. will help to put
An end to world corruption.
This war must be fought and won
And U.S. ships can do it.
The Axis goose is cooked right now
If they but only knew it.

During the war Lake Washington Shipyards built many vessels for the navy, including seaplane tenders such as the one pictured here.
outdoors in all weathers.

In recent oral history interviews, workers from Lake Washington Shipyards have remembered broken arms and legs, deep burns and cuts, lost fingers and toes. They remembered a man who slipped off the icy rungs of his ship ladder and drowned in the lake. They remembered the wave of dysentery that hospitalized dozens in the spring of 1943. They remembered a man who died in the hospital after inhaling too much fuming zinc oxide while welding galvanized steel, and another standing on the dock and being impaled in the stomach by the hook of a swinging crane.

The home front never conformed more closely with the real front than in building ships in the freezing rain or broiling heat. Though Lake Washington Shipyards was small by nearly every standard, men and women worked together with energy and skill. They built 29 ships for the navy, and repaired nearly 500 vessels over the course of the war. Early in 1942, Marine Digest called the shipyard "a steel shipbuilding institution that has kept the Seattle district high on the national shipbuilding roll call all through the thirties"; by 1945, it was "one of the greatest repair and new construction yards on the coast."

Though Lake Washington Shipyards never won the navy "E" for excellence pennant, a navy commander who sailed the tender Chincoteague home to port after a direct hit and an onboard fire was high in praise. "You workers of Lake Washington Shipyards who built this ship have a right to be proud of her," he said. "She was a mighty, rugged, seagoing ship."

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Stagecoaches to Trains,

Completion of a rail link with California in 1887 was a momentous achievement for the Northwest.
Just 100 Years Ago

By David M. Buerge

The excursion train that brought Californians to Ashland for the O.&C. Railroad Golden Spike ceremonies.
THE FOUR decades after the first white settlers arrived in the Northwest were a time of impatient waiting. This far corner was remote from the rest of the nation. Until railroad connections came, not much could happen. There had to be a faster and cheaper way of moving people and materials in and out than on coastal steamers and sailing ships by sea, or by stagecoaches and wagons on land.

So when railroad connections finally were made, there was great rejoicing, as in 1887, just 100 years ago, when the rail line linking Oregon and Washington with California was completed. A drawing from the magazine West Shore, which accompanies this article, exults over this progressive achievement. Portland to San Francisco by stagecoach took 184 hours and the fare was $65. The new Oregon and California line could make it in 39 hours for only $20.

The completion of this line was the culmination of plans that were laid as early as 1863, only 17 years after the Northwest became a part of the Union. By then the lure of free land that brought pioneers west in droves was exciting the imaginations of railroad entrepreneurs who could get generous allocations of government land if they would extend lines into new territory.

By 1863 steamboats from San Francisco were going as far north as Marysville, on the Sacramento River, and from Portland, Oregon, as far south as Eugene on the Willamette River. Between the two was a mountainous 300-mile gap where several prosperous mining towns, the chief of which was Jacksonville, Oregon, eagerly awaited rail service. So while the Central Pacific and Union Pacific headed toward their joining at Promontory Point, Utah, plans were afoot in Sacramento to run a branch line into the burgeoning Northwest. In the spring of 1863, the California legislature gave a group of promoters the authority to make a railroad survey between Marysville and Portland. They were led by Simon G. Elliott, a county surveyor who had won a measure of fame when the route he traced through the Sierras was accepted by the Central Pacific Railroad. Elliott set out to get funding subscriptions along the way and found the greatest enthusiasm in northern California and southern Oregon, especially in Jacksonville, then an important town whose leaders dreamed of becoming even more important.

Things were different in Portland, where merchants were fearful of losing out should the southern Oregon towns gain a rail link with booming California. They gave Elliott little support. In June of 1865 the California and Oregon Railroad Company was organized in San Francisco, but in Jacksonville, Elliott and his partners were in disagreement, and in July the Oregon and California Railroad Company was reorganized without him. His place was taken by Joseph Gaston, a Jacksonville newspaperman who had helped carry the survey to Portland.

The great prizes sought by the railroad men were the land grants awarded by the federal government as a subsidy for railroad construction. In this case the grant offered 20 alternate sections of land, minus mineral rights, for every mile of track completed. Even without mineral rights, the rich timber and agri-
These regional conflicts were skillfully handled by Simon Elliott, eager to get back into the lucrative fray. With $200 borrowed from a friend, he made his way to Salem, posed as the agent of a fictitious construction firm called A. J. Cook & Company of Massachusetts, and caught the ears of the disaffected incorporators. In April 1867 the company split. Led by Elliott, the defectors organized a new company using the same name. To keep these groups straight in the confused aftermath, Oregonians resorted to naming the rivals after the side of the Willamette on which each promised to build. Gaston's Oregon Central Company became the West Side company, and Elliott's the East Side company.

Dismayed by the turn of events, many prominent members of the West Side company withdrew, and Gaston sued the East Siders, beginning a series of court battles that would drag on for years. In the meantime, Elliott got the gullible East Siders to award the construction contract to A. J. Cook & Company, and proceeded to forge bonds which he sold in San Francisco at a huge discount. With the cash this scam netted him, he began to purchase stock for the road.

The West Siders had not been idle. Bonds were sold, construction crews organized, and on April 14, 1868, ground was broken in Portland in a celebration attended by thousands. Several worthies spoke, and then in the words of the Daily Oregonian:

More speeches were called for, but someone called out, "Talk enough; let's go to work," and before anybody could have led off in any other direction, the whole mass of the people, as if moved by one impulse, began to seize upon the shovels, picks, wheelbarrows, etc., and to start the carts toward the place of beginning the first cut. The scene at this moment was one of the most animated ever witnessed in this city. Carts were hurried under the direction of Mr. Slaven to their places, were filled almost by magic, and hurried away, their places being instantly supplied by others. The people were cheering and giving all manner of demonstrations of joy.

In July 1866, Congress awarded the grant of California lands to the Oregon and California Railroad. For the Oregon lands, Congress stipulated that these should go to the company chosen for the job by the Oregon legislature and only after it had completed the first 20 miles of track. Quickly, Gaston and several other prominent Oregonians, including pioneers Jesse Applegate, Joel Palmer and J. C. Ainsworth, head of the powerful Oregon Steam Navigation Company, organized the Oregon Central Railroad. However, incorporators from towns along the route, such as Salem, fearful of being dominated by Portland capitalists, particularly Ainsworth, grew restive.

Two days later, the East Siders had their ground breaking near the Willamette River. It was more of a promotional extravaganza than the West Side event had been, but it still drew crowds. Music was provided by the U.S. Cavalry band from Vancouver bar- racks; there were booming cannon, speeches, liberal toasts, and cheers that could be heard by the West Side crews working grim-faced across the river.

In spite of these noisy beginnings, both companies were woefully underfinanced and were hard-pressed to carry on the work, but fortune smiled on the East Siders with a visit to their camp by the stagecoach king, Ben Holladay. Holladay had purchased some of Elliott's fraudulent bonds and had come up from San Francisco to judge their worth. A master himself of financial sleight-of-hand, he marveled at what Elliott had wrought virtually from thin air, and saw as clearly as Elliot the rich rewards that would come with success. But thin air was no substitute for money, the East Siders were desperate for the real thing, and Holladay had plenty of it.

The legislature was unsure which of the Oregon Central Railroads was the legitimate heir to the grant, and when the West Siders pointed out that they had the earliest endorsement, Holladay simply bought the legislature's reconsideration. Their scruples were much diluted in a riotous bacchanal Holladay provided them on the banks of the Willamette while they were in session.

Their genial, back-slapping host later...
estimated the bash cost him about $35,000—not a bad price for a state legislature.

SO THE EAST Siders were designated the real Oregon Central, but Congress would have to approve the change, and Holladay went to Washington, D.C., to see to it. Back in Oregon, Gaston had succeeded in court where he had failed in the legislature, and Holladay had the East Side company reincorporate as the Oregon and California Railroad Company. Congress would have to swallow a lengthening tale, but Holladay had already purchased an Oregon senator, George Williams, who succeeded in finessing the agreement. Flummoxed again, the West Siders attempted other moves, but Holladay checked every one, legally if he could, with bribes if he could not. When it was finally obvious that the West Side company could not build the required track in time, Holladay checkmated them by buying up their debts and threatening to foreclose. Unable to counter, Gaston and his dispirited associates surrendered their company to Holladay’s. Flush with success, he drove his crews onward, and on December 23, 1869, only hours before the deadline, the East Siders completed their 20 miles, and the land grant was theirs.

But once in hand, the 400 square miles of government land and the rest that accrued as construction progressed proved to be worth less than expected. There were too few settlers to buy it, too little freight to haul from it, and this, plus the cost of building the line and the expense of Holladay’s other ventures, brought him to the brink of ruin. By 1872 the Oregon and California Railroad

This triumphant portrayal of the opening of the railroad link between the Northwest and California was published just 100 years ago in *West Shore*, a Portland magazine.
Ben Holladay, the "stagecoach king", who rescued the first Oregon railroad company from early financial failure. He lost all in the panic of 1873.

Reached Roseburg, 150 miles from Portland, but Holladay's money river had gone dry.

In the meantime steel tendrils had extended themselves over other sections of the north-south route. In 1867 the Central Pacific had acquired control of the California and Oregon Railroad, and by 1872 had pushed its tracks as far north as Redding. In 1870 surveying had begun on the route to be taken by Jay Cooke's Northern Pacific Railroad from the Columbia River to Puget Sound. A year later there were rails from the company town at Kalama to Tenino, and by 1872 they were headed for salt water. But as 1873 began, Cooke's railroad was being threatened financially. It was becoming a familiar tale: the land grants were not the pot of gold those who lusted after them hoped they would be, and construction costs were always higher than expected. In spite of the fact that the towns on Puget Sound were willing to give virtually anything in return for being chosen as the transcontinental terminus, the N.P. could barely make its payroll.

In July, N.P. officials announced that Tacoma would win the prize, but there was a question whether construction crews would reach it by December 19, the deadline after which the company would forfeit the land grant.

In mid-September a run began on Cooke's bank; on the 18th he was forced to shut its doors, starting a financial panic that was soon felt nationwide. The N.P. was bankrupt, but construction was continued on the Tacoma line, largely on credit. In November tracks reached the outskirts of town, and the first train, a small, saddle-tanked locomotive pushing two cars, chuffed in and promptly derailed. On December 16, however, the last spike was driven home, and Tacoma became the terminus of a transcontinental...
tal railroad, albeit one separated in its midsection by a 1,500-mile gap.

Even though the panic of '73 ruined Cooke and Holladay, much of the north-south route had been built, and only the short gap between Kalama and Portland and the much longer one between Roseburg and Redding remained to be bridged. The next man to step forward and try to tie it all together was Henry Villard, a German immigrant who, like his predecessors, sought to ride the railroad to glory but ended up derailed.

Villard had made a name for himself as a war correspondent during the Civil War and as a speculator afterwards, and parlayed this into a considerable financial reputation as an agent for several German banking houses. Some of these had purchased bonds from the European and Oregon Land Company, a facade Holladay had pasted together in an attempt to get in Europe the money he could not raise in the U.S., and they were anxious over the fate of their investments.

In 1874, after the Oregon and California Company had defaulted on its interest payments on German bonds, Villard was sent to meet Holladay in New York.

LEFT:
Mountain ranges made railroad building difficult and costly. This drawing shows one of the many high wooden trestles built on the O.&C. line.

RIGHT:
The driving of the last spike, a traditional ceremony marking the completion of a railroad, called for a major observance by the Oregon and California Railroad, which was 20 years in the building. Those who responded to this invitation boarded a special excursion train in San Francisco on the afternoon of December 16, 1887, and arrived at Ashland, Oregon, in time for the spike-driving ceremony at 2 p.m. on the 17th.
Henry Villard was able to finish railroad building in the West where others had failed, but before the end of the century he too lost all when the rail lines failed to produce the expected revenue and markets for government grant land did not develop as the promoters had hoped.

Henry Villard's famous "Blind Pool" was able to raise $16 million in less than 24 hours.

in order to transfer control of the company to the bondholders who would direct its finances through an agent. Holladay balked, but Villard easily pushed him aside, and in time became the agent in charge of the Oregon and California Railroad, the Oregon Central Railroad (the old West Side company) and the Oregon Steamship Company. Impressed by the region's potential, Villard saw, as others had, the fortune that could be made developing its transportation system, and by doing what the N.P. had as yet failed to do—complete the transcontinental link. What Holladay had attempted to do with feral cunning, Villard believed he could accomplish with brilliant management.

After acquiring the Oregon Steamship Company in 1879, he built tracks up the south bank of the Columbia River, hoping to meet a line coming from the east. If he could capture the N.P. spur going to Tacoma, he would forge a link with Puget Sound, and if he could extend the Oregon and California Railroad to the Central Pacific's tracks, he could dominate the route south.

But a threat loomed in 1880 with the resurrection of the Northern Pacific from its impoverished sleep. Construction resumed on the line out of Bismarck, and Villard realized that if he was to maintain his position he would have to co-opt his rival. He accomplished this with his famous "Blind Pool," a call to 55 of the nation's most prominent businessmen to advance him money without his telling them what it was for. Such was his reputation that he was able to raise $16 million in less than 24 hours. When he had $20 million, he purchased controlling interest in the Northern Pacific and had himself voted chairman of its board of directors.

With this astonishing move, Villard became the master of Western railroad, and he set to work completing the fabric of his ambitions. A spur from Portland to Rainier, opposite Kalama, was built, and a train ferry across the Columbia completed the northern link to salt water. Tracks that had linked Portland to Walla Walla angled toward those approaching from western Montana, promising a transcontinental link. And on May 25, 1883, the Oregon and California Company began work extending the line south from Roseburg to the state line and the Central Pacific's tracks coming up from Redding.

To make sure the land grants paid off, he set up immigration bureaus in England, in northern Europe, in Boston where the Irish were pouring in, and in Topeka and Omaha to lure prospective settlers away from California. Now, combining these with the impressive network developed by the N.P., he beat the drums for the Northwest. The result was effective enough to prompt the San Francisco Chronicle to lament, "It is not the blindness of immigrants to the natural attractions of California, but the industry of the Oregon agents that robs us of the laboring thousands that seek our shores."
The interior of O.&C. engine number 1360 with Engineer B. Casey and fireman Fred Beard.

Still, it was not enough. Like the others, Villard had overestimated his ability to manage these titanic projects and had underestimated their costs. On December 16, 1883, his auditors told him the Oregon and Transcontinental, the holding company that directed his enterprises, was on the verge of bankruptcy. On December 17, he resigned, retaining control only of the Oregon and California Railroad until family pressures forced him to step down from that position at the end of 1885. By then its tracks had been built as far as Ashland, barely 26 miles from the end of the Central Pacific line. Shortly afterwards, the Oregon and California Company defaulted on bond payments and went into receivership. The final episode in the long story occurred in 1887 when the Southern Pacific, a child of the Central Pacific that had come to devour its parent, assumed control over the Oregon and California Railroad. The tracks were extended from the state line to Ashland, bypassing Jacksonville where so much had begun, and the road was completed.

On December 17, 1887, at 4:51 p.m., the last spike in the line was driven home by the light of bonfires, amid a crowd of more than 2,000 enthusiastic spectators. "Completed," headlined Portland's Oregonian. "Semi-Tropic California" and "Prolific Oregon"—not to mention Washington Territory—were finally united by steel rails.

David M. Buerge, a freelance writer specializing in history, is a consulting editor of Columbia.
Ohio Convention Demands That All of Oregon Be Part of the United States

In the early 1840s the fate of the Oregon Country was a dominant national issue. Great Britain and the United States, by treaty, were jointly occupying Oregon. But “occupying” did not mean people living on or making use of the lands and waters in the usual sense. Only British fur traders lived in that part of Oregon north of the Columbia River. What few Americans had emigrated to the Northwest were in the Willamette Valley.

Despite this situation, and despite the strong claims Britain made to northern Oregon by reason of the explorations and discoveries of George Vancouver and the Northwest were in the Willamette Valley.

As a consequence political leaders in those states devised various ways to stir up interest in the “Oregon question” and to insist that Congress and the President yield an inch to her unjust pretensions. We may as well meet her first at last—for meet her we must, or surrender our rights and our honor. I would have no red lines upon the map of Oregon. Let us keep our own, and keep it with a strong hand, if need be. We may as well contend for Oregon as for Washington—for our title to each is equally clear; and if from timidity, under the name of forbearance, we give up the former, we may soon have again to fight for the latter. No Nation ever secured its own safety, or a strong hand, if need be. We may as well contend for Oregon as for Washington—for our title to each is equally clear; and if from timidity, under the name of forbearance, we give up the former, we may soon have again to fight for the latter. No Nation ever secured its own safety, or the esteem of the world, by pusillanimity, whatever guise this may have assumed. The province of Scinde in India, and the half-civilized Sandwich Islands, have just been seized by British force. And Oregon, and I believe California, will soon follow, if our Government and People do not display more energy than we have recently put forth, and say to this ambitious Nation—“Thou shalt have none more than we, and we do not submit to thy aggression.”

Excuse me if I manifest too much zeal upon this subject. I am tired of philanthropic ambition, and of that cupidity which, joining the Bible and the Sword, would subjugate wherever there is a People to be overcome, or the fruits of their industry to be seized.

I am, gentlemen, with great regard, your obedient servant,

LEWIS CASS

To Messrs. Worthington, D. T. Disney, W. B. Hubbard and others, Oregon General Committee of Ohio.

The following Resolutions and Declaration, adopted by the Convention, comprise the most material part of its doings:

Resolved, That the right of the United States to the Oregon Territory, from 42 to 44 degrees 40 minutes north latitude, is unquestionable, and that it is the imperative duty of the General Government, forthwith, to extend the Laws of the United States over said Territory.

Resolved, further, That to encourage migration to, and
the permanent and secure settlement of, said Territory, the Congress of the United States ought to establish a line of forts from the Missouri River to the Pacific Ocean—and provide also an efficient naval force for the protection of the Territory and its citizens.

Resolved, That for the purpose of making known the causes and principles of our action, the following Declaration is unanimously adopted and now signed by the Members of this Convention, with instructions to the Officers thereof to transmit a copy to the President of the United States, and to each Member of Congress,—and also to the Executives of the several States, with a request to present the same to their respective Legislatures.

A DECLARATION
Of Citizens of the Mississippi Valley, assembled in Convention at Cincinnati, July 5, 1843, for the purpose of adopting such measures as may induce the immediate occupation of the Oregon Territory by the Arms and Laws of the United States of North America.

We, the undersigned, citizens of the Mississippi Valley, do hereby declare to our fellow citizens of her Empire, of her Empire. Citizens of the People of Great Britain and

The increase and political predominance, threatened as they seem not to have appreciated, the value of the Territory in question, and its political importance to the honor, prosperity and power of the Union, to say nothing of our commercial interests and naval predominance, threatened as they are with injury and diminution, should the North-East coasts of the Pacific Ocean pass into possession of a great Naval Power.

That as an independent member of the great family of Nations, it is due from us to the whole Commercial World that the ports on both coasts of this Continent should be held by a liberal Government, able and willing to extend and facilitate that social and commercial intercourse which an all-wise Providence has made necessary for the intellectual, improvement, the social happiness and moral culture of the Human Race.

That we owe the entire and absolute occupation of the Oregon to that posterity which, without such occupation by the citizens, laws and free institutions of our great Republic, could not profit or make available to themselves or to the world the important considerations above set forth.

That however indignant at the avarice, pride and ambition of Great Britain, so frequently, lawlessly, and so lately evinced, we, yet believe that it is for the benefit of all civilized nations that she should fulfill a legitimate destiny; but, that she should be checked in her career of aggression with impunity, and dominion without right.

That for the independence and neutrality of the Western Coasts of the American Continents, and the Islands of the Pacific Ocean, it is important that she should be restrained in the farther extension of her power on these coasts, and in the middle and eastern portion of that Ocean.

That so far as regards our rights to the Territory in question, we are assured of their perfect integrity—based as they are on discovery and exploration by our own citizens and Government, and on purchase and cession from those Powers having the pretense or the reality of any right to the same.

That beyond these rights, so perfectly established, we would feel compelled to retain the whole Territory in accordance with Mr. Monroe's universally-approved declaration of 1823,—

THAT THE AMERICAN CONTINENTS WERE NOT THENCEFORTH TO BE CONSIDERED SUBJECTS FOR FUTURE COLONIZATION BY ANY FOREIGN POWER.

Influenced by these reasons and considerations so important to the West and the whole Republic—to Liberty—to Justice and Free Governments, we do subscribe our names to this Declaration with the firm, just and matured determination never to cease our exertions till its intentions and principles are perfected, and the North American Republic, whose citizens we are, shall have established its Laws, its Arms and free Institutions from the shores of the Pacific to the Rocky Mountains, throughout the territories above specified; and we do hereby protest, as we shall continue to protest, against any act or negotiation, past, in process, or hereafter to be perfected, which shall give possession of any portion of the same to any Foreign Power; and above all do we remonstrate against the possession of any part of the North-East Coast of the Pacific Ocean by the power of Great Britain.

(Signed by Col. R. M. Johnson, President, and 90 Citizens of Six States in the Mississippi Valley.)

COLUMBIA  31  WINTER 1988
The Columbia Before It Was Tamed

How a raging river was opened to steamboat traffic.

By William D. Layman
Down the west slope of the continent for a distance of 752 miles—from the Canadian border to the sea—move the waters of a river unlike any other in this hemisphere. Now it is a docile river, tamed by dams which block its flow, but before the dam builders came, the Columbia ran wild and raging. It surged between canyon walls and through rocky rapids from its sources in Canada to the last steep place in the riverbed at the lower Cascade Rapids, upstream from the Willamette River.

No other river in America descends so much over so great a length, and since falling water has been a prime source of energy since paddles were first attached to a wheel, dam building began as soon as there was a need for electrical power and a way could be devised to construct dams across such a mighty river.

Now, after five decades, the dam building is over. The rapids of the Columbia have vanished. Nearly all is changed above Bonneville. Except for an area in the Hanford Reach, only the last hundred miles of flow on the seaward end can be seen as they were when the explorers came.
But there are records and pictures of what the river was like prior to the dam building of the 1930s. They show what was there—now buried deep in the dam-created lakes—in the years of the great salmon runs. They show the portage roads around the falls, rapids and rocky reaches. They tell of surveys and channels blasted to make it possible for steamboats to chum their way or be hauled past the worst places on the river.

The earliest users of the river had to accept it as it was. Shallow-draft canoes and cedar-plank bateaux capable of carrying up to 6,000 pounds had to be portaged around the worst rapids. At low water some of their craft could be pulled through with lines extending to shore. Descending the river was a daring challenge often accepted by men used to taking risks. It is an exhilarating experience to run a boat through white water. In the 1980s many pay for the experience on small rivers. Sometimes men paid with their lives for attempting dangerous runs on the Columbia. Hit just one rock and a craft is thrown over. Men and cargo are dumped into a boiling mass of water that drags whatever it grasps into the depths, pushing it on, perhaps not to surface until miles downstream.

Chances were taken on the Columbia because it was the Northwest's main artery of travel, and had been since it was first used by Lewis and Clark in 1805. Six years later the British North West Company built Fort Okanogan, a trading post, at the mouth of Okanogan River. In 1826, the Hudson's Bay Company established its main inland post farther up at Kettle Falls. From there bateaux carried thousands of beaver, muskrat and marten pelts downriver to Fort Vancouver. The return trip would carry men, supplies and company correspondence back to Fort Colvile at Kettle Falls. Bateaux from there would often continue on to a place called Boat Encampment just above the 52nd parallel, where a trail over Athapasca Pass connected with the Athapasca-Saskatchewan river route to the east.

The lucrative fur trade reached its zenith on the upper Columbia in the 1830s. By 1846, after diplomatic negotiations established the international border at 49 degrees north latitude, it was clear that the Hudson's Bay Company's influence was waning south of the border, yet it retained ownership of Fort Colvile until 1871, when it was abandoned. During this period the river's usefulness shifted from transporting furs to serving agriculture. Gold discoveries on the upper Columbia also drew newcomers into the area. By 1853, when the Washington Territory was formed, white migration to the upper Columbia had begun. Soon to follow was the steamboat era.—Ed.

In 1836 the steamship Beaver arrived in the Northwest. Built in England, she sailed around Cape Horn and up the Columbia to Fort Vancouver where her engines were connected. Many working along the river were no doubt skeptical, but the Beaver soon proved itself a welcome successor to the broad-beamed bateaux which could only rely on strong paddling and favorable winds. Beginning in 1850 other steam-powered river craft were built and soon there was reliable river transportation on the Columbia and tributaries such as the Willamette,
Caught in the Columbia's Maelstrom

S
ave for a few stretches, the Columbia River above Bonnersville is now a succession of lakes—long reaches of water, hundreds of feet deep, whose surfaces lie still as mirrors when they are not ruffled by whitecaps by brawling winds. The once unruffled River of the West has been subdued by its own waters.

The energy now harnessed by its joye of dams, energy that lights a hundred cities, was borne in its vast flood and expended in thundering torrents of white water. Its brutal strength could terrify and overwhelm, but also provide moments of intense exhilaration for those who dared run small boats, and occasionally a river steamer, through the swift-flowing, turbulent rapids.

Excerpts from the writings of two early travelers, Jesuit missionary Pierre DeSmet and surveyor Lt. T.W. Symons, give us firsthand descriptions, one a stark tragedy.—Ed.

Running a Rapid—Symons's Account

NOW WE ARE fairly in the rapids, and our boat is rushing madly through the foam and billows; the Indians are shouting at every stroke in their wild savage glee; it is infectious; we shout too, and feel the wild exultation which comes to men in moments of great excitement and action; as we draw near with great velocity to a huge rock which appears dead ahead.

Has old Pierre seen it? The water looks terribly cold as we think of his failing eyesight. Then an order, a shout, backing on one side and pulling on the other, and a quick stroke of the steering oar, and the rock appears on our right hand. Another command, and answering shout, and the oars bend like willows as the Indians struggle to get the boat out of the strong eddy into which Pierre had thrown her. Finally she shoots ahead and passes the rock like a flash, within less than an oar's length of it, and we shout for joy and breathe freely again. This eddy becomes in a high stage of water a veritable whirlpool, with the well at its center many feet in depth. Hence the name of Whirlpool Rapids.1

DeSmet—Eyewitness to 1841 Tragedy

NEVER SHALL I forget the sad and fatal accident which occurred on the second day of our voyage at a spot called the “Little Dalles” [Kalichen Rock]. I had gone ashore and was walking along the bank, scarcely thinking what might happen; for my breviary, papers, bed, in a word, my little all, had been left in the barge. I had proceeded about a quarter of a mile, when seeing the bargemen push off from the bank and glide down the stream with an easy, careless air, I began to repent having preferred a path along the river's side, so strewn with fragments of rocks that I was compelled at every instant to turn aside or clamber over them. I still held on my course, when all at once, the barge was so abruptly stopped that the rowers could hardly keep their seats. Regaining, however, their equilibrium, they ply the oars with redoubled vigor, but without any effect upon the barge. They are already within the power of the angry vortex: the waters are crested with foam; a deep sound is heard which I distinguish as the voice of the pilot encouraging his men to hold to their oars—to row bravely.

The danger increases every minute, and in a moment more all hope of safety has vanished. The barge, the sport of the vortex, spins like a top upon the swirling waters—the oars are useless—the bow rises—the stern descends, and the next instant all have disappeared. A deathlike chill shot through my frame—a dinness came over my sight as the cry “We are lost!” rang in my ears, and told but too plainly that my companions were buried beneath the waves. Overwhelmed with grief and utterly unable to afford them the slightest assistance, I stood a motionless spectator of the tragic scene. All were gone, and yet upon the river's breast there was not the faintest trace of their melancholy fate. Soon after the whirlpool threw up, in various directions, the oars, poles, the barge capsized, and every lighter article it had contained. Here and there I beheld the unhappy bargemen vainly struggling in the midst of the vortex. Five of them sunk never to rise again. My interpreter had twice touched bottom and after a short prayer was thrown upon the bank. An Iroquois saved himself by means of my bed, and a third was so fortunate as to seize the handle of an empty trunk, which helped him to sustain himself above water until he reached land. The rest of our journey was more fortunate. We stopped at forts Okinakane and Wallawalla [sic], where I baptized several children.2


O. C. Yocum's 1891 photograph of Kalichen Rock and Whirlpool Rapids—the site described in DeSmet's and Symons's accounts. This area is now submerged by the waters of Rufus Woods Reservoir behind Chief Joseph Dam.
In 1858 steamers were successfully introduced on the stretches above Celilo Falls—but further beyond the confluence of the Snake River there were severe problems. Even so the owners of the Oregon Steam Navigation Company as early as 1860 discussed the possibility of initiating steamer service above Priest Rapids, 400 miles south of the newly established border. However, little was known about the specifics of those waters. Early descriptions of the river were scarce because many fur-trade journals went unpublished. The most reliable information sources available prior to 1860 are the maps of Capt. Washington Hood (1838), Lt. Charles Wilkes (1841) and Gov. Isaac Stevens (1853), and these sources suggested a number of serious obstructions upriver. In 1861 Capt. John Mullan’s map was published. It included the results of Capt. Leonard White’s survey of the upper Columbia the previous year. This survey delineated the course of the river in more accurate terms and identified additional stretches of fast water. No doubt many stories about the Columbia were in circulation as well. Some were tragic, such as Father Pierre DeSmet’s account of a journey through Nespelem Canyon in 1841 when five boatmen were drowned in a large whirlpool. A detailed description of the various hazards, however, was unavailable until Lt. Thomas Symons made a remarkable reconnaissance trip downriver in September 1881.

Traveling in the bateau Witchketa, Symons made the descent from Kettle Falls to the mouth of the Snake River in 11 days. His landmark report on the river and its vicinity, published in 1882, brought increased recognition and interest in the resources of the region. The maps of that expedition, drawn by the talented Alfred Downing, gave congressmen and other interested parties the first close-up view of this major stretch of river. Symons fully believed the upper Columbia could be made navigable, but only at great expense. Even excluding a 35-mile boat railway around Grand Rapids and Kettle Falls, he estimated the costs of upper Columbia improvements at a staggering three million dollars.

As predicted in Symons’s report, pressures soon mounted for the Department of Army Corps of Engineers to make Priest Rapids passable. Leaders from the city of Ellensburg had told sternwheeler captain W. P. Gray in 1884 that they wanted boats to help ship the 500 tons of materials coming annually to their town over long, rough wagon roads. Moreover, the town’s merchants wished to supply the 20 to 30 farmsteads in Wenatchee as well as the developing mining interests in the Okanogan country.

The next year Congress responded by allocating $6,000 for a detailed survey of Priest Rapids and Cabinet Rapids, 18 miles below Wenatchee. Yet securing funds for surveying individual obstructions along the river was not favored by Maj. W. A. Jones, chief of engineers of the Military Department of the Columbia. In his annual report of 1886, Jones stated that it was perfectly obvious to him that projects for
River improvements had to be guided by a comprehensive survey. He recommended spending $115,000 to provide a survey of 767 river miles of both the Snake and upper Columbia systems. Pressing for his recommendation, Jones concluded, "These are rivers of commanding importance, and it is quite time that they be studied by light of careful surveys such as are now in progress upon the Mississippi and Missouri rivers."

Persuasive as his arguments may have sounded, competition for Department of Army project dollars was extremely keen. The next funds granted for upper Columbia survey work were used to obtain a topographical survey of the next major obstruction, Rock Island Rapids, located 13 miles below Wenatchee. It was not until 1890 that Congress adopted a resolution involving any lengthy survey on upper Columbia waters. The 1890 plan allocated $70,000 for blasting channels and installing ringbolts at Priest, Cabinet and Rock Island rapids. Ringbolts were embedded in rocks on shore. River craft attached lines to them and used winches to move upstream through swift water. This appropriation provided that up to $10,000 be spent to complete a survey from the international boundary to Rock Island Rapids, a distance of 294 miles. By this time Symons had returned to the Department of the Columbia with the new rank of captain. He selected assistant engineer William Cuthbert for the job, ordering him to begin fieldwork in March 1891 with the following assignment: first, to collect data for the topographical representation of the river and its immediate vicinity; second, to run accurate lines of levels to determine the river slopes; third, to determine the nature and extent of all obstructions to the free navigation of the river; and finally, to determine the character and amount of work necessary to secure a practicable navigation past these obstructions.

Cuthbert and his crew surveyed downstream until reaching the mouth of the Okanogan River in December 1891. As no funding extensions to continue further were granted that year, Symons was forced for the time being to end survey work on the upper Columbia.

Cuthbert's report generated nine large maps drawn by Downing to a scale of 1" = 2000' for the river and 1" = 400' for 28 of its major rapids. Included in the report were profiles of the

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**Upper Columbia River—Eastern Washington**

- Grand Coulee Dam (1942)  
- Chief Joseph Dam (1955)  
- Wells Dam (1967)  
- Rocky Reach Dam (1961)  
- Rock Island Dam (1931)  
- Franklin D. Roosevelt Lake  
- Rufus Woods Lake  
- Lake Pateros  
- Lake Entiat  
- Rock Island Reservoir
Bill Layman has lived in Washington only since 1979, but from the time of his arrival in Wenatchee, a city overlooking one of the broad slack-water stretches of the Columbia, he has been fascinated with what was there before the dams—Indian rock art, white-water rapids and great salmon runs.

He built an exhibit for the Wenatchee museum using petroglyphs rescued from cliffs of the Columbia before they were submerged. He made a search for photographs and descriptions of the river prior to the dam era. Some he found in the library of the Washington State Historical Society; Army Corps of Engineers files produced an 1889 map and a large panoramic photo of the Rock Island Rapids taken in 1891. He was surprised and pleased when Joyce Rolstad, chief of records in the Seattle district of the corps, produced a microfiche map containing a list of 150 early photos of the river in its natural state. But only a few of these photos were at hand. Where were the rest? From that moment, he knew he had a quest: to find the missing pictures.

The National Archives had no 1891-92 photos, but they had 40 taken in 1895. Layman was able to match photocopies of these with the descriptions on the map and determined that the photos were mis-dated, and were actually some of the 150 he was looking for.

Annual reports to the chief of engineers, U.S. Army, for 1891 through 1895 listed photographs taken during the same period, and in addition, gave detailed descriptions of the rapids the corps had surveyed. They also identified two photographers, George Warren and O. C. Yocum, and told of extensive mapping that had been carried out on a
survey led by Lt. Thomas Symons in 1881. Still more early photographs were found in the Federal Archives and Records Center at Sand Point in Seattle, 18 taken by B. C. Collier and as many as 100 others by Fred McDermott, the pioneer steamboater.

Then, Joyce Justice of the Seattle archives told Layman of locating more early and scarce Columbia photos in a most unlikely place—the library of Duke University in North Carolina. Duke had acquired them from a used-book dealer. They included works of such eminent frontier photographers as Sullivan, Jackson, Hillers and Bell. Duke obligingly sent Layman copies of the photos he was interested in—58 views, of which 37 turned out to be ones on the list of 150 which the National Archives did not have. These, apparently, had been reproduced in quintuplicate but displayed only once—at the 1892 Chicago World's Fair. The fate of an additional 61 remains a mystery. They include 16 of Lake Chelan, some of the earliest taken, as well as others of Cabinet Rapids, Ribbon Cliff and views of the Columbia between its confluences with the Okanogan and Spokane rivers.

Besides looking for these photographs, Layman continues to search for information about the photographs and men who preserved the river's early image. Facts about the lives of photographers Warren and Yocum and surveyor Cuthbert are few, and Layman would be interested in hearing from any of Columbia's readers who know anything about them.

To Layman, the men who took the photographs are as interesting as the pictures themselves. In some cases, their work is all we have to commemorate their lives. He recalls a moving story about a blue scrapbook of unknown authorship, containing maps and written descriptions of the upper Columbia's rapids, detailing the 1910 river improvement work carried out by McDermott, the steamboater. It had been given to Rufus Woods, who in turn gave it to his son, Wilfred Woods, editor of the Wenatchee World. When Layman visited McDermott's daughter Mildred in Seattle, she took the scrapbook with him. They discovered that the handwriting in it matched that of her father in his letters. "Mildred," Layman exclaimed, "this is your father's work!" It brought tears to her eyes. She was looking at a record of her father's life work that she had not known about. In a similar manner, Layman's efforts have succeeded in returning to all of us the image of the Columbia as it was.—Ed.

Reading his earlier 1881 account, it is clear that Symons had special feelings about the river. He was no doubt pleased to submit so thorough a report on Cuthbert's work, commenting that "a very correct idea of the river can be obtained from the maps, profiles, and these photographs." Cuthbert's survey reconfirmed what Symons had already come to believe: that the upper Columbia was unworthy of the great expenditures required to improve it. Cuthbert's estimate of improvement work was $18 million, considerably above Symons's earlier figure. In his view there were too many disadvantages to the upper Columbia for it to become commercially important. Among them he listed the obstructions such as the Little Dalles, Kettle Falls, Grand Rapids and Nespelem Canyon; the lesser rapids.
requiring auxiliary power; the generally swift and dangerous currents requiring great amounts of fuel in an area lacking adequate timber; and the topographic position of the river itself. “It must be remembered,” he stated, “that the Columbia flows through a great canyon or depression from 2,000 to 3,000 feet below the... country around it.”

With such an unfavorable report, it was hardly surprising that upper Columbia River improvements authorized in 1894 were confined to the stretch between Wenatchee and Bridgeport. Yet, over the next 15 years, a tremendous influx of immigrants settled the choicest upriver farmlands, increasing demands for sternwheeler services. An opportunity presented itself in 1905 when an updated survey between Wenatchee and Kettle Falls was authorized, but the Seattle District Corps of Engineers chief, Lt. Col. John Millis, instructed his assistant to survey no further than Bridgeport. This was bad news to farmers who had planted orchards on the rich Columbia bottomlands above Bridgeport. However, three influential figures responded to their plight. They were Dr. N. G. Blalock, director of the Open Waters Association of Washington State; Professor W. D. Lyman of Walla Walla; and Fred McDermott, veteran upper Columbia sternwheeler captain. Speaking to commercial clubs along the river, these men mounted a strong campaign to open the Columbia from the Canadian border to the Pacific Ocean.

By the end of 1907, a two-pronged strategy was devised: to seek state aid for river improvements, and to lobby the Corps of Engineers to authorize a new survey above Bridgeport. In December the latter was approved and, by January 1908, four river captains under McDermott’s leadership took Seattle district assistant engineer Eugene Ricksecker and Wenatchee photographer B. C. Collier upriver as far as Grand Rapids in the steamer Enterprise. Ricksecker, although describing the trip as unbearably cold, reported the project worthy of funding. Two months later, the new district chief, Maj. Hiram M. Chittenden, recommended allocating $175,000 to open this section of river to steamboat navigation.

It was the state of Washington, however, that took initial legislative action. In March 1909 a measure was passed to authorize $50,000 for channel improvement work above Bridgeport, and to establish the Columbia River Improvement Commission. McDermott, understandably elated at this victory, not only headed the commission but took charge of the work. In November 1909, he piloted the newly acquired sternwheeler Yakima upstream to Foster Creek Rapids. Within days the first
dynamite blasts were felt 25 miles away on the Big Bend of the Columbia Plateau.

Such action by the state of Washington was unprecedented. Congress responded in June 1910 by authorizing $100,000 to continue the effort as outlined in Chittenden’s 1908 report. For the next six years government crews worked the stretch of river between Bridgeport and Grand Rapids. Finally, after another $100,000 had been expended, the corps deemed the project completed. The goal of furnishing a reasonably safe outlet for the products of this rich and productive country was attained.

In retrospect, Symons was probably correct. While vitally important to some, commerce above Bridgeport never really thrived. For three years, from 1911 to 1914, McDermott managed a business along the Columbia from the town of Lincoln upstream to Kettle Falls. He then moved downstream to Pateros, and although he made occasional runs above Box Canyon well into the 1920s, his main business was conducted between Pateros and Bridgeport. Ironically, the demise of river transportation had been set in motion much earlier, when locomotives entered the West. After the rail lines were installed along northern Washington rivers, the boilers of the stern-wheelers grew cold.

The 214-mile stretch of river between the mouth of the Okanogan and the international boundary formed an exciting part of the Columbia’s great journey to the Pacific. Its rapids held awe and fascination for those who dared run them, be they adventurous fur traders or boatmen traveling up- and downriver under steam power. The Cuthbert survey and records left by Fred McDermott possess a value in our time not previously imagined by those who saw the river with navigation in mind. It is fortunate that such men wishing to alter the character of the upper Columbia through “river improvements” succeeded in giving future generations such a clear and lively record of its original character. Particularly, the maps and photographs serve the vital function of helping us remember the upper Columbia as it was. In this century, the three reservoirs behind Wells, Chief Joseph and Grand Coulee dams have inundated the former banks of the river. It is only with great imagination that one can sense the free-flowing river there at all. The recent discovery of these photographs once again opens the upper Columbia to visual access. We see the wild river described in the narratives of Thompson, Ross, David Douglas, John Work and others. We know better the waters that were a life source for generations of native peoples.

William D. Layman holds a master’s degree in counseling psychology from Loyola University and is in private practice in Wenatchee. He serves on the board of the North Central Washington Museum, where he is curating the upcoming children’s exhibit on the upper Columbia. Layman also is compiling a photographic history of the original upper Columbia for publication.
From March to June of 1988, the Art Gallery of Wenatchee's North Central Washington Museum will host an exhibit designed to involve children in the history of the upper Columbia River. Museum visitors will have the chance to test their pulling strength against that of a steamboat captain, to imagine themselves running the rapids in a model survey boat, and to walk the upper Columbia alongside a specially commissioned sculpture by Rich Beyers called "Coyote Leading the Salmon up the River."

Photographs of the river, many exhibited for the first time, will show the river in its original unaltered state.

Children entering the exhibit will be handed "Historical Happening Sheets" aimed at differing age levels. These sheets provide games, puzzles and clues to information that will be scattered throughout the exhibit. How surveying was practiced, how collodian photographs were taken, how sternwheelers were powered—all will come alive in the exhibit.—Ed.
ON AN UPLAND ridge between the Tennessee and Duck rivers, the old Natchez Trace crosses Tennessee State Highway 20. At this point on the west side of the trace is a clearing broken by an occasional giant oak, a persimmon, a dogwood. At one end of the clearing is a broken column of marble standing upon a granite pedestal. This is the Meriwether Lewis Monument.

Sometime during the dark hours preceding daylight of October 11, 1809, this peaceful little park was the scene of violence and horror and possible madness. Here died Meriwether Lewis, an American hero aged 35, killed either by his own hand or by a person or persons unknown. The tragedy has become one of the enduring mysteries of history.

Remarkably, even after a century and a half, there are still people in this area who hold strong opinions on the event. Through six or seven generations of families, oral tradition has turned the death of Meriwether Lewis into continuing legend.

L E W I S W A S a Virginian, an army officer chosen by President Thomas Jefferson in 1801 to serve as his secretary. Both men grew up in the Blue Ridge foothills of Albemarle County. They were imbued with a similar Southern heritage, an awareness of the importance of land and a fascination with the unknown territory beyond the frontier. The aging president saw in Lewis the son he had always wanted.

Soon after Jefferson acquired the vast Louisiana Territory in 1803, he set Lewis to planning an expedition to the Pacific Ocean. With William Clark, a friend of his army years, Lewis completed this epic journey of exploration in 1806. A hero to the nation, he was named governor of the Louisiana Territory and was soon embroiled in political contentions. His keenest desire was to arrange the journals of the great Lewis and Clark expedition for publication before spurious accounts were rushed into print to satisfy the demands of the public. Petty chores of office, however, interfered with his efforts. Adding to his frustrations were the actions of Washington bureaucrats who, even in that early time, were a bane to officials in the field. The bureaucrats refused to approve vouchers for necessary expenditures and questioned Lewis’s integrity.

Finally, Lewis decided to journey to Washington to present his official records directly to his accusers and, more important, to deliver the journals of the Lewis and Clark expedition to his publishers in Philadelphia. He left St. Louis by boat on September 4, 1809, accompanied by his free servant, John Pernier, sometimes described as a Creole. Pernier had once worked for President Jefferson in Washington. Lewis’s papers and other baggage were packed in four trunks. Not much is known about the boat, but it was probably a flatboat manned by a small crew, with a shelter at one end. Lewis’s intention was to float down the Mississippi to New Orleans and continue by sail to the East Coast.

As it usually is in early September, the weather along the river was exceedingly hot and humid. Before reaching Fort Pickering at Chickasaw Bluffs (present-day Memphis), Lewis fell ill, probably of malaria. Entries in his journal contain almost daily references to “bilious fever” and “pills of opium and tartar.” It is worth noting here that, during the expedition to the Pacific, Lewis served as medical officer. He was well supplied with laudanum, an opium-based medicine that is habit-forming and can eventually cause mental deterioration. When he arrived at Fort Pickering on September 15, he was evidently in such a condition that the fort’s commander, Captain Gilbert Russell, decided to detain him there “until he recovered, or some friend might arrive in whose hands he could depart in safety.”

On the following day, Lewis was sufficiently recovered to write—in his style of haphazard spelling and colloquial grammar—a shaky letter to President James Madison informing him of his safe arrival at Fort Pickering and mentioning his physical exhaustion. “My apprehension from the beat of the lower country,” he wrote, “and my fear of the original papers relative to my voyage to the Pacific Ocean falling into the hands of the British has induced me to change my mind and proceed by land through the state of Tennessee to the City of Washington.”

Rumors of an approaching war with Britain were certainly in circulation along the river, but there may have been more behind the change of plans than Lewis cared to put down in writing. Only three years earlier, Aaron Burr and General James Wilkinson had plotted with the Spanish government to establish a separate nation from the Mississippi Valley into the Southwest. Wilkinson had concealed his treasonable activities by betraying Burr, and was now back in New Orleans commanding American troops. He possessed the power to stop anyone entering or leaving the mouth of the Mississippi. Wilkinson had preceded Lewis as governor of the Louisiana Territory, and while in office he secretly accepted payments from the Spanish government. It is possible that Lewis discovered this treachery, and if so, he may have feared Wilkinson more than the British.

T H R E E D A Y S A F T E R Lewis reached Fort Pickering, a government Indian agent, James Neelly, arrived there en route to Nashville by way of the Chickasaw Agency. Although Lewis knew the country around Fort Pickering (he had commanded the post in 1797), he must have welcomed the opportunity to travel with Neelly. They set out for the agency on September 29, with two trunks carrying Lewis’s precious
papers strapped to a packhorse: Lewis's other two trunks were left stored in the fort. The traveling party consisted of Lewis and Pernier, Neelly and his servant, and an unspecified number of Chickasaw Indians. The only source of information about the behavior of Lewis over the next 11 days comes from James Neelly, who may not have been a trustworthy man.

"On our arrival at the Chickasaw nation," Neelly later wrote to Thomas Jefferson, "I discovered that he [Lewis] appeared at times deranged in mind. We rested there ten days and came on. One day's journey after crossing Tennessee River where we encamped we lost two of our horses. I remained behind to hunt them & the Governor proceeded on, with a promise to wait for me at the first houses he came to that was inhabited by white people: he reached the house of Mr. Grinder about sunset...." One of the odd actions of Neelly was sending his servant forward with Lewis and Pernier. Most men would have kept at least one assistant to aid in the onerous search for strayed horses.

The remainder of Neelly's letter contains information given him by Priscilla Grinder, who is history's sole source for the last hours of Meriwether Lewis's life. Priscilla Knight Grinder and her husband Robert came to Tennessee from Stokes County, North Carolina; they built a cabin that became known as Grinder's Stand, an informal sort of inn for travelers between Natchez and Nashville on the Natchez Trace. Priscilla Grinder told her story to Neelly, and a few months later to ornithologist Alexander Wilson, and many years later to an anonymous schoolteacher. It is mainly from their reports that historians have pieced together the circumstances of Lewis's death.

NEELLY'S LETTER, written only a week after Lewis died, states that Robert Grinder was not at home and that Mrs. Grinder, "discovering the governor to be deranged, gave him up the house and slept in one near it." He added that the two servants spent the night in a stable loft some distance from the other house. At about 3 o'clock in the morning, Mrs. Grinder heard two pistol shots from the main house. She awakened the servants, but too late to save Lewis. "He had shot himself in the head with one pistol & a little below the Breast with the other—when his servant came in he says, I have done the business my good Servant give me water. He gave him some, he survived but a short time."

Perhaps these were all the details that Priscilla Grinder could bring herself to tell James Neelly so soon after the tragedy. Or perhaps Neelly had no reason to send a detailed account to Jefferson. He did recognize the importance of the contents of Lewis's trunks, and arranged for them to be forwarded to Washington.

About seven months after Lewis died, a Scottish-born ornithologist, Alexander Wilson, arrived at Grinder's Stand. Wilson was a friend of Lewis's, who had given him specimens of birds brought back from the expedition to the Pacific. While stopping at Nashville on a journey to St. Louis, Wilson decided to venture down the Natchez Trace to learn something about his friend's death.

"In the same room where he expired,"

Wilson later wrote, "I took down from Mrs. Grinder the particulars of that melancholy event."

Apparently, Mrs. Grinder was willing to tell Wilson many details that are lacking in Neelly's report. Governor Lewis, she said, arrived at Grinder's Stand alone about sundown and asked for a night's lodging. He was wearing a traveler's duster, blue-and-white striped. When she asked if he was journeying alone, he replied that his servants were following close behind. He removed his saddle, brought it into the inn and asked for spirits, but drank very little.

As soon as the servants arrived with the packhorses, Lewis asked Pernier for some gunpowder, saying he was certain he had some in a canister, but Mrs. Grinder was unable to hear Pernier's reply. After the servants went to the stables, Lewis began walking back and forth. "Sometimes he would seem as if he were walking up to me," Mrs. Grinder told Wilson, "and would suddenly wheel round, and walk back as fast as he could."

When she called him to supper, he sat down at the table, but ate only a few mouthfuls before he sprang up and began talking to himself in a violent manner, his face flushing. Calming himself, Lewis lighted his pipe, drew a chair to the door, and sat down, remarking to Mrs. Grinder in a kindly tone of voice, "Madam, this is a very pleasant evening." Finishing his pipe, he arose and began pacing back and forth again. Refilling his pipe, he sat down to look toward the dying light in the west. "What a sweet evening it is," he said. Although Mrs. Grinder prepared a bed for him, Lewis told her he preferred to sleep on the floor, and he called Pernier to bring his beaskins and buffalo robe. Mrs. Grinder went to the nearby kitchen-house to sleep with her children, leaving the main cabin to Lewis.

Disturbed by Lewis's strange behavior, Priscilla Grinder was unable to sleep. As the kitchen-house was only a few paces from the cabin, she could hear him walking back and forth and talking to himself "like a lawyer," she said. Sometime before sunrise she heard a pistol shot and something falling on the floor, followed by the words "O Lord!" Then she heard a second pistol fired.

A few minutes later Lewis was at her door, calling out: "O madam! Give me some water, and heal my wounds."

Why Priscilla Grinder did not respond to Lewis's cry for help has puzzled historians of the American frontier, who believe most frontier women would have done so. Years later, the Grinders' slave girl, Melindy, said she was with Priscilla and the children and that the sound of gunshots and Lewis's strange behavior made them all afraid to unbar the door.

Through chinks in the logs, Priscilla Grinder saw a shadowy figure staggering back from the door and fall against a stump between the kitchen-house and the cabin. He then crawled for some distance to a tree, where he raised himself and sat for about a minute before making his way back into the cabin.

Mrs. Grinder did not, or could not, recall how much time passed before Lewis once again returned to her door. He did not ask for water or help this time, but moved on to the well, where she heard him scraping the bucket with a gourd for water. "It appeared that this cooling element was denied the dying man!" Alexander Wilson wrote. "As soon as day broke and not before—the terror of the woman having permitted him to remain for two hours in this most deplorable situation—she sent two of her children to the barn, her husband not being at home, to bring the servants."

They found Lewis lying on the bed in the cabin, still conscious. A piece of his forehead was blown away, exposing the brain "without having bled much." Lewis uncovered his side and showed them where another bullet had entered. He begged them to take his rifle and blow out his brains, in return for which he would give them all the money he had in his trunk. "I am no coward," he kept repeating, "but I am so strong, so hard to die." He told Pernier not to be afraid, that he would not hurt him. About two hours later he died, "just as the sun rose above the trees."

James Neelly, in his letter to Jefferson, stated that he had Lewis "as decently buried as I could in that place—if there is anything
I wish by his friends to be done to his grave I will attend to their instructions.”

IN MOST VIOLENT and unexplained events involving persons of historical importance, folklore enters the telling with passage of time. The mythology of Meriwether Lewis's death was undoubtedly already in oral tradition some 30 years later when an anonymous schoolteacher from the Cherokee Nation visited the Lewis grave. He found Priscilla Grinder, who was then in her late 60s, and listened to her story.

During her conversation with the schoolteacher, Priscilla Grinder added three men to the opening scene at Grinder's Stand. The trio arrived shortly after Lewis and his servants, whereupon Lewis drew a brace of pistols and ordered them to leave. Mrs. Grinder also added a third pistol shot. She omitted her previous statement that she had sent her children to the stables for the servants and instead said she was surprised to see them coming from the stables because she believed they had shared the cabin with Lewis. John Pemier, she added, was wearing Lewis's clothes—the same outfit Lewis had arrived in. When she asked Pemier about the clothes, he replied that Lewis had given them to him. The servants then searched for Lewis on the trace and found him badly wounded and dressed in tattered clothing. Not long after they brought him back to the cabin, he died.

Whether these discrepancies were due to blurred memory on the part of Mrs. Grinder or to other tales heard by the schoolteacher, no one can say. By the 1840s there was already an oral tradition of a coroner's jury assembled by Justice Samuel Whiteside immediately after the death to hold an inquest. The jury's decision supposedly was for suicide, but at least two of the five jurors were said to have decided for murder, yet were reluctant to name the killer. Failure to find any report of this inquest has been accepted by the people of the area around the scene of Lewis's death. Today, even though they are deeply concerned by the rapid changes taking place in middle Tennessee (construction of General Motors' huge Saturn automobile plant at Spring Hill, for example), they will stop whatever they may be doing to express their opinion on what happened at Grinder's Stand. And it's not unusual for descendants of the "suspects" to state that their ancestors "might have done it."

Not too long ago, vandals invaded a graveyard near Centerville and broke the tombstones of Priscilla and Robert Grinder. A descendant retrieved them and carried them off to Nashville for restoration. It was noted at the time that the name on the stones was Grinder, not Grider, proving that historians do not always get their spellings right. As to what really happened at Grinder's Stand, only Priscilla Grinder ever told. Still, "everybody knows what happened," one native of the area recently declared. "Robert Grinder came home that night, found Meriwether Lewis in bed with his wife, and shot him. The rest of the story she just made up."

Dee Brown's books include Bury My Heart at Wounded Knee. He Lives in Little Rock, Arkansas. This article was previously printed in Southern Magazine of Little Rock, Arkansas, and is reprinted here with permission from the magazine and Dee Brown.
National Parks: The American Experience.

Ever since Alfred Runte's National Parks: The American Experience appeared in 1979 it has been a reference point for discussions about national park history. With force and analytical precision, Runte challenged earlier interpretations of the origins of our national parks, arguing that romantic and nationalistic perceptions fueled the national park movement in the United States and that Americans wanted to enshrine nature's "monuments" out West as a testament to this continent's uniqueness and national antiquity. Runte also told readers that economic considerations had more to do with park designations than landscape or ecology, that only the "worthless" lands—those with little or no economic value—achieved national park status.

Runte's strongly argued book received mixed reviews. Some criticized Runte's "worthless lands" thesis and his emphasis on monumental scenery to the exclusion of other topics. Not so much a response to these critics, Runte's revised edition expands his thesis and carries the national park story up through James Watt's tenure as secretary of the interior. Not backing down an inch, Runte writes that "the evidence for this interpretation is abundant; it is simply not always popular to accept." For this reason, the author has left the original chapters unrevised, wishing instead to discuss the continuing evolution of national park policy.

In four new chapters, Runte, a member of the history faculty at the University of Washington, treats the park managers' growing awareness of the need for ecological management, the decades-long resistance to adding nonscenic lands to the park system, the victory of the Alaska Coalition and the prospects for the future. In all of this Runte keeps to his themes: the reluctance of park managers to adopt an ecological viewpoint, the continuing power of monumentalism in selecting new units in the system and the role of economic choice in National Park Service policy-making.

Runte is best when he recounts the stubborn resistance that old-line park managers put up against the inclusion of the urban and historic battlefields parks, which they deemed substandard units. They lost that battle with the passage of the National Parks and Recreation Act of 1978, legislation that greatly expanded the National Park Service's purview and responsibilities. But the system's greatest expansion came with the success of the Alaska Coalition, which engineered the protection of 28 percent of Alaska's territory. The mainspring of the Alaska preservation movement, Runte argues, was analogous to the monumentalism of the 19th century—a romantic view of saving the last American frontier wilderness. And the principal obstacle to it again, Runte underscores, was economic vested interests.

Runte's well-chosen examples and lively prose are persuasive, but he ignores much about national park development that is pertinent. Little or no mention is made of the impact of wilderness-preservation movements on park policy, especially in the Alaska campaign and in the development of the ecosystem approach to park management. Wildlife-management issues, which are significant in many parks, are given little space. And James Watt gets off too easily. Runte ignores the Reagan administration's plan to farm out interpretive services in the parks to private contractors and the resultant demoralization of National Park Service staff. These complaints aside, Runte has delivered more of the pointed historical commentary that made his first book so valuable.

William L. Lang writes and comments about conservation issues in the 20th-century American West. He is Executive Editor of Montana, The Magazine of Western History, a publication of the Montana Historical Society.

Reviewed by Dr. Keith A. Murray.

This fine guide to Jefferson County, Washington, reminds one of the anecdote about the man who said that while he enjoyed reading the dictionary, he wished it didn't change the subject so often. The entries in Simpson's work begin with "The Abundant Life Seed Foundation," and conclude with a short discussion of the "Zucchini." In spite of its curious organization, the book is a delight to read. The four contributors to the publication, along with its chief editor, have a marvelous sense of dry humor, earthy at times but never vulgar. This is not a "booster" book. It gives the unvarnished and undecorated story of the rise and fall of Port Townsend.

Typical of the style is an entry for "Swimming" where the short comment is "Brrrrrrr" (p. 262). On page 183 is listed "One-downmanship" which is the antonym of "one-upmanship." On page 90 may be found the definition for a "Forks Tuxedo": a clean pair of overalls. Among these gems of wry humor are many excellent and serious essays on Port Townsend architecture, the Hoko archaeological site, and a matter-of-fact entry about John Huelsdonk, the legendary "Iron Man of the Hoh." Here are also first-rate short essays on such topics as railroad building, the Crown Zellerbach mill, Victory Smith, boat building, and a general survey of Port Townsend arts.

The book is not perfect. On page 1 and again on page 211, the name of the tough descendants of Rev. Cushing Eells is misspelled. On page 202 the entry discusses organ pipes ranging "from two inches to sixteen inches in length." Sixteen feet, maybe! In the article on Victory Smith, Mark Welch mentions his death in the wreck of the Brother Jonathan without saying a word about the effect of this disaster on subsequent Pacific Northwest history. Similarly the article on "Blanket Bill" Jarman is inadequately treated. There are constant references to the Kah Tai area, but it does not appear anywhere in the index. Citizens of Colorado might well complain about the statement...
on page 176 that “Mount Rainier is the tallest peak in the continental United States.”

These annoyances, however, are minor compared with the excellence of the whole book. The maps are instructive, the print is easy to read, and the black-and-white sketches by Robin Bittle are very good.

Port Townsend has always fascinated this reviewer, who used to tell his university classes that the people of Washington do not realize what they have in this well-preserved, Victorian frontier city. With this book in hand, anyone who takes a walking tour of the community will find a wealth of information about what he is seeing as he wanders about. He may learn more than he really wants to know!

Dr. Keith Murray is Professor Emeritus in the Department of History at Western Washington University where he taught a generation of Washingtonians the history of their state. He is considered the dean of Pacific Northwest historians.

Reviewed by J. William T. Youngs.

He named Elliott Bay, Bainbridge Island, Gig Harbor and some 300 other places in the Northwest. Leader of the 1838-1842 United States Exploring Expedition, Charles Wilkes completed the work begun by Lewis and Clark. He made the Northwest familiar to the East, solidifying interest in the region as a part of the United States.

Frances Barkan sees in Wilkes a complex man, as remarkable for his limitations as for his abilities. He was an excellent navigator and surveyor, but he was tactless and even cruel in his treatment of his men. “The picture that emerges,” says Barkan, “is that of a difficult, stiff-necked, rebellious man with a streak of self-destructiveness.”

These flaws limited his effectiveness and led ultimately to his court-martial and forced retirement from the navy. But he is remembered today for the one great accomplishment of his life, the Wilkes Expedition.

This attractive volume studies the expedition from several angles. Essays by Frances Barkan summarize Wilkes’s career as a whole, the expedition to the Northwest and subsequent American policy towards the new lands. Making good use of Wilkes’s own narrative and other records of the expedition, she succeeds in developing a colorful portrait of the explorers in Puget Sound.

“The mildness of the day & the freshness of everything around us from the last night’s shower added additional beauties to the glowing scenery,” Wilkes writes in a typical passage. “Our route lay through alternate prairies & magnificent forest of tall pines and cedar passing by fords several fine streams of water.”

In such vignettes the reader is carried along with the expedition to the old Northwest.

Essays by Les Eldridge and Drew Crooks and illustrations by the explorers themselves add to the richness of this volume. Eldridge provides a concise overview of early explorers in the Northwest, placing the Wilkes Expedition in historical perspective. And Crooks contributes an interesting glossary of places named by Wilkes. The illustrations show Mt. Rainier, Indian artifacts, wildlife and other subjects as seen through the eyes of the explorers.

All in all this is an excellent book, suitable for a scholar’s library or for the book rack in a modern-day explorer’s sailboat or camper.

J. William T. Youngs is Professor of History at Eastern Washington University.

Reviewed by Dr. Kenneth N. Owens.

The Palouse people originally made their homeland in the lower Snake River country. By language and culture they were closely related to the Yakimas, Nez Percés, Wanapums and other native groups of the interior plateau region. Lewis and Clark included them among the Nez Percés, an error repeated by later travelers, military and civilian officials, and some scholars.

Early in the course of white frontier expansion into their country, the Palouses received a reputation as “bad Indians,” supposedly treacherous and aggressive outcasts from the surrounding tribes. This negative image remained intact through the Cayuse War, the Yakima War and the military campaigns of 1858. Colonel George Wright’s program of military intimidation eventually defeated the Palouses, effectively ending Indian resistance in the Columbia River basin.

Because they failed to gain federal recognition as a tribal entity, the Palouses were not able to secure their own treaty reservation. For years many of them continued to live in their ancestral country without any guaranteed title to their lands. After the conclusion of the Nez Percé War in 1877, however, virtually all of the Palouses were forced out, moving either to the Colville or the Nez Percé reservation. Under reservation conditions their separate ethnic identity was further obscured, though Palouse traditions were kept alive in memory.

Clifford Trazer, head of the American Indian Studies program at San Diego State University, and Richard Scheuerman, a faculty member of Wenatchee Valley College, have collaborated to write this first full-scale history of the Palouse people. Their emphasis is on the struggle between the Palouses and the Anglo-Americans during the pioneer era, with limited attention given to Palouse efforts for survival since that time.

The work has its flaws, chief among them an imbalanced emphasis due to the authors’ reliance on a few traditional informants. Ideally, closer editing would have improved the literary style and prevented small blunders. Flaws aside, Trazer and Scheuerman have added to our understanding of the encounter between peoples during the Pacific Northwest’s pioneer era.

Dr. Kenneth N. Owens is Professor of History and Native American Ethnic Studies at California State University, Sacramento.

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DEPRESSION-YEAR GREETINGS

Even in the depression years of the 1930s a few newspapermen could afford to send year-end greetings to news sources and friends. One of these was the well-known marine editor of the Portland Oregonian, Lawrence Barber, who sent this card in 1936. It shows him with the tools of his trade, notebook and camera, among the ships and boats that he wrote about in hundreds of Oregonian columns. Everyone's concern at that time was "recovery." The nation and the world were suffering through the longest economic depression in history. Barber expressed the hope of all when he wrote the headline forecasting prosperity in the coming year. The hopes were not realized.—Ed.
A story of high adventure at sea.

Long ago and far away, far away was here.

In 1838, 450 sailors in six sailing ships set out for the far, uncharted corners of the world. They became the first to prove the existence of a seventh continent at the South Pole. They mapped the cannibal islands of the South Pacific. And, in the third year of their voyage, they touched upon the northwest coast of North America and began the first systematic exploration and map making of the territory around the great inland sea called Puget Sound. The four-year adventure of the first U.S. Exploring Expedition led by Lt. Charles Wilkes is an almost forgotten early chapter in Northwest history. The prestigious Smithsonian traveling exhibition, The Magnificent Voyagers, will retell the saga of America's first voyage of exploration. The exhibition uses the fabulous trove of cultural objects, scientific specimens and curiosities, and detailed paintings, illustrations and maps from the expedition to weave a rich tale of Pacific Rim explorers 150 years ago.

And this time, The Magnificent Voyagers will not be far away. Beginning October 3 and running through the end of the year, The Magnificent Voyagers will be at the Washington State Historical Society Museum in Tacoma, overlooking the bay where the explorers commenced their mapping of the remote Oregon Territory. This fall, give in to the lure of the sea and the romance of the age of exploration. Go back in history with The Magnificent Voyagers and explore the distant lands and cultures of the Pacific. You may never find the Northwest the same way again.

Washington State Historical Society Museum
OCTOBER 3 THROUGH DECEMBER 27, 1987

Museum Hours
Tues.-Sat., 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m.
Sun., Noon-5 p.m.
Tues.-Sat., Evenings, 6:30-10 p.m.
(By Reservation Only)
Closed: Mondays, Nov. 26 and Dec. 25

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