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The Boeing 307 Stratoliner

The first pressurized airliner made a unique contribution to the World War II effort.

By Mark Jaroslaw

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A pioneer family's memoir.

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Cultivating a historical perspective helps a Palouse agribusiness face the challenges of the future.

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Museum for the 21st Century

A sneak preview of what you'll find inside the new Washington State History Museum.

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A close look at Indian rock art in the region of the Columbia River Gorge.

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A Northwest Tale

Frederick Balch's previously unpublished short story, "How a Camas Prairie Girl Saw the World."

Introduction by Stephen L. Harris

Correspondence/Additional Reading

Columbia Reviews

Recent books of interest in Northwest history.

Edited by Robert C. Carriker
One morning in 1944, five of America's top ranking military leaders—Generals Eisenhower, Marshall, Arnold and Clark and Admirals King and Towers—made a secret flight across the Atlantic to help lay the groundwork for the largest, most ambitious military assault of all time... D-Day.

History didn't record what strategems Eisenhower and company discussed on that secret flight. But that senior military officers (including a future president) were even able to cross the treacherous Atlantic at the height of the war is a testament to an extraordinary airplane—the Boeing 307 Stratoliner.

The Stratoliner was the 747 of her day. But to fully appreciate her place in aviation history you have to peel back the calendar. In the years before World War II, an evolutionary force—call it "pushing the envelope"—was making its way into the design of American commercial aircraft. In Seattle Boeing had already introduced the first modern airliner, the sleek twin-engine 247, which could cross the country seven hours faster.
than anything in the skies. But something else was already revving up on Boeing's drawing boards.

That "something else" was the Boeing 307 Stratoliner, a giant, four-engine, bullet shaped hotel-in-the-air. It cruised at a record-breaking 220 miles an hour, offered a clubby spaciousness for 33 passengers, and enjoyed the world's first pressurized airline cabin (allowing the plane to be flown at a then-incredible 20,000 feet). The Stratoliner was the world's first four-engine airliner in scheduled domestic service, and after being drafted into military service flew more than 3,000 transatlantic missions and pioneered critical supply routes for the Air Transport Command (ATC).

Boeing only built ten Stratoliners, but the few that existed won genuine affection. "Everyone who flew 'the Strat' loved her," said one retired TWA veteran. "It was a rugged, will-built airplane, and you could always count on her to get you home." Three of these indomitable planes were still plowing the airways in the 1970s, shuttling international diplomats across Indochina during the Vietnam War. Today only one Stratoliner is known to have remained intact; it is now under restoration for the Smithsonian Institution.

The Winning Round

By the mid 1930s United, American and TWA were starting to find out a painful truth—their planes were too slow, too vulnerable to weather, and passenger loads had to be sacrificed for fuel reserves. Worse yet, the airlines' profitability was directly tied to government mail contracts.

A bigger, faster aircraft was needed, with enough seats to allow the airlines to wean themselves from dependence on mail subsidies. Boeing jumped into the lead with its 247, a 10-passenger monoplane generally credited with introducing the "twin-engine" era in commercial aviation. Almost overnight it made the stout Ford Tri-Motor a flying antique.

But Boeing's chief competitor wasn't dawdling; aviation was accelerating too fast for that. Within a year Douglas

A ABOVE: Before their demobilization in 1944 TWA's Stratoliners completed more than 3,000 ocean journeys. Here the Apache is inspected in Africa before heading out again.

OPPOSITE PAGE: When war broke out TWA's five Stratoliners were our only transatlantic landplanes. They ferried military personnel and critical supplies, and pioneered many wartime supply routes. Passengers included such military and political VIPs as Eisenhower, Churchill and de Gaulle.

THE STRATOLINER'S WAR YEARS

September 1, 1939. War erupts in Europe after the Germans invade Poland. Hughes' world speed record plans are skuttled.

December 24, 1941. TWA withdraws its five Stratoliners from domestic service in preparation for their mobilization by the Army's Air Transport Command.

January 1942. TWA's Stratoliners are purchased (and designated as C-75s) by the ATC. Pan Am's three Stratoliners remain airline property, but arrangements are made for the airline to maintain their Latin American routes under the ATC's direction.

February 26, 1942. The C-75s begin overseas military service. The first flights carry badly needed antitank ammo and medical supplies to British forces to hold off Rommel in Libya.

April 18, 1942. A Boeing Stratoliner flies into China to rescue survivors of the famed Doolittle raid on Tokyo.

November 1942. The only recorded combat damage to any of the Stratoliners occurs near Iceland, when a British convoy mistakes one of them for a German bomber. Despite minor flak damage, the Boeing transport manages to reach its destination safely.

March 1944. Some of America's most important military leaders—including Generals Eisenhower, Marshall, Arnold and Clark and Admirals King and Towers—are flown by Stratoliner to London to begin D-Day planning.

July 1944. The eight commercial Stratoliners are "honorably discharged" (and succeeded by the Army's new C-54s). After 28 months of service, TWA's Stratoliners had completed some 3,000 accident-free ocean crossings.

April 1, 1945. TWA's Stratoliners, having been refurbished, return to commercial service.
ABOVE: In 1935 Boeing played an expensive hunch—it began designing the world’s first pressurized airliner. Four years later Plant Two rang with the sounds of the Stratoliner’s construction.

Boeing took extra precautions to maintain the integrity of the Stratoliner’s pressurization system.

LEFT: The shape of the cabin—completely circular—was designed to better distribute the forces of cabin pressure. BELOW: Workers soaped down each airplane to check for air leaks. Window seals were carefully tested.

The photographs in this article appear courtesy of The Boeing Company Archives.
Aircraft retaliated with a powerful new transport of its own. Its 14-passenger DC-2 flew faster than the 247 and won enthusiastic acceptance from domestic operators. What really sealed the 247's fate was the introduction the following year of the still more powerful, 21-seat DC-3.

But while the industry concentrated on speed, range and capacity, it was high-altitude flight that remained out of reach, and everyone suffered. Passengers and crew were at the mercy of surface-weather turbulence at unpressurized altitudes of 5,000 to 10,000 feet, and airline schedules, crewing and aircraft overhauls could be sabotaged by even a minor storm. By now it was clear that if air travel didn't break out of conventional altitudes it would never realize its full potential.

In 1935 Boeing played an expensive hunch. Even while the Depression nibbled at the company treasury, Boeing President C. L. Egtvedt gave the go-ahead for a commercial derivative of the company's successful new B-17 "Flying Fortress." [Everyone] who saw the four-engine bomber, "said Egtvedt, "usually exclaimed, 'What a transport it would make.' [What they didn't know] was that even then we were already working to bring a four-engine transport to life."

Before long, Boeing managed to successfully "marry" the B-17's sturdiest elements (the wings, engines and tail section) with some of the latest high-altitude experimentation provided by the army, TWA and Pan American. Five years later, after an expensive development program and the tragic loss of a prototype, the Stratoliner received its commercial certification, and the first high-altitude, pressurized airliner was introduced.

A Technological Milestone
Converting military aircraft into commercial transports was fairly straightforward by the mid 1930s. At least four countries—England, France, Germany and Japan—were all involved in such projects. What distinguished the Boeing project was that it was being designed for the new, high-altitude "air-ocean" environment, and that raised difficult questions in the new science of pressurization. For example: How was it possible to create a normal cabin environment above 8,000 feet without the additional weight of individual oxygen equipment? How could this pressurized cabin be continuously regulated to ensure passenger and crew comfort at altitudes of up to 20,000 feet? What sort of fuselage could withstand the stresses of pressurization?

By the spring of 1936 valuable headway had been made. Plans called for the Stratoliner's cabin to be "supercharged," an experimental procedure in which engine-driven pumps stoked the cabin with additional air above 8,000 feet (at that point, a regulating device would automatically kick in, stabilizing the onboard climate in response to fluctuations in cruising altitude). Boeing seemed halfway home, except for one thing—in 1936 cabin-pressure regulators did not even exist. So, working in a garage-sized lab, with a small, Depression-struck budget, Boeing mechanical engineers set off on their own path and, in time, produced the world's first commercial cabin-pressure system.

Later, when they wanted to check the pressure regulator's reliability, Boeing was forced to decline their request for a $6,000 "altitude testing chamber" because there was no room in the budget. Undiscouraged, the engineers bought an ordinary 55-gallon oil drum for $2.50 and devised a rudimentary—and highly effective—testing chamber of their own.

No less ingenuity was required for the design of the Stratoliner's fuselage. Not only did the Boeing giant have to withstand the still-unknown forces of pressurization, but for competitive reasons it had to demonstrate even greater passenger comfort than the DC-3.

What emerged was a mirror-finished, aluminum-covered, wide body airplane whose cigar-like contours not only had the most practical shape for a pressure cylinder but allowed for greater speed and cabin space. "The design of the supercharged cabin was carried out with practical simplicity," former Boeing Vice President Bob Minshall wrote. "We decided to make] the Stratoliner completely circular from nose to tail so that its atmospheric pressure loads were evenly distributed. This had the additional advantage of providing excellent streamlining and . . . maximum cabin volume."

Despite Boeing's eagerness to introduce the Stratoliner and shake Douglas Aircraft's grip on the transcontinental market, the company moved cautiously, acutely sensitive to the not-fully-understood hazards of pressurization.

In fact, the Stratoliner was the first of the Boeing commercial transports for which an additional margin of safety was built into the airplane by implementing structural redundancy. While the Stratoliner only flew with a modest two-and-a-half pounds per square inch of supercharging, the structure was engineered to withstand a differential pressure of six pounds per square inch. All doors, windows and hatches were specially reinforced, all skin seams were additionally sealed with neoprene tape, the fuselage rivets were drilled in double rows to further guarantee against air leaks, and even the pressurization system was designed in duplicate to maintain continuous operation. According to Boeing chief engineer Wellwood Beall, the Stratoliners were all pressurized on the ground and even hand-brushed with soapy water to make it easier to detect escaping air. The search was so thorough that it was conducted after hours in order to make sure any whistling leaks could be heard.

By 1937 the biggest technical problems had been resolved and orders started coming in. Eventually, Pan American took three Stratoliners while TWA took five.

On the last day of December 1938, Boeing test pilot Eddie Allen lifted off from Boeing Field for the Stratoliner's maiden flight. It lasted 42 minutes, and when Allen landed he was beaming. "It handled beautifully," he told reporters.

Just 11 weeks later tragedy struck in the foothills near
Mount Rainier. While on a demonstration flight, the first Stratoliner prototype crashed, killing all ten crew members aboard. Later, as a result of a careful analysis of the unfortunate accident, modifications were made to the Stratoliner's rudder and vertical fin design, and flight testing resumed.

That summer Allen successfully tested the Stratoliner at a pressurized altitude of 22,000 feet. "It didn't feel any different than flying at ordinary altitudes," he told reporters. "That's the wonderful thing [about pressurization]. You can't tell you're up that high."

The Four-Engine Era

In 1940 commercial aviation was flying high and safely. Passenger volume soared to 2.2 million and, in a single 12-month period, not one air fatality occurred in 150 million air miles. That summer also marked an important milestone: the beginning of the four-engine era in this country.

On July 8 TWA introduced Stratoliner service with a 12-hour, 18-minute flight from New York to Los Angeles (it was two-and-a-half hours faster than the DC-3, and, with link-ups to the Boeing 314 Clipper, travelers could continue with four-engine service to Hong Kong and Lisbon).

Once in domestic operation TWA's Stratoliners stopped at Chicago, Kansas City and Albuquerque; Pan Am flew their 307s from Miami, New Orleans and Brownsville, Texas, into Mexico City and Central and South America.

Within months both airlines were overwhelmed with reservations. What the Stratoliner offered its passengers (largely business travelers and the well-to-do) was an intimate, almost club-like setting with spacious six-person compartments, each wood-paneled and stylishly upholstered (designed by the renowned Raymond Loewy and furnished by Chicago's Marshall Field & Co.).

The Stratoliner boasted two uniformed stewardesses, china-and-linen meal service, comfortable Pullman-style bunks, a nearly 12-foot-wide cabin, air-conditioning, advanced sound-proofing; even designer restrooms ("so spacious," noted a TWA brochure, "even the tallest man needn't crouch to shave").

With the exception of occasional weather anomalies the Stratoliner's pressurized cabin took passengers over the most turbulent conditions and eliminated the discomfort of ascents and descents. "The Stratoliner changed the way everyone thought about flying," observed one former aviation executive. "It wasn't just a fancy plane ... it was the first that you could fly 'over the weather,' as we used to say. You could cross the whole country and sometimes never hit the kind of rough weather everyone had come to associate with flying. One flight was so smooth I climbed into the bunk and slept all the way to Kansas City.

On the flight deck, too, Boeing provided several innovations, including gyro compasses, remote indicating compasses and celestial navigation equipment, and it was the first land-based airliner whose crew included a flight engineer. "The 307 was a very steady aircraft . . . a real sweetheart to fly on instruments," recalled former TWA pilot Joseph Carr, adding that with only three engines operating, the Stratoliner could still climb to 18,000 feet with a maximum load (typically, it cruised at 14,000 feet).

Altogether, the 33-passenger airliner was the fastest, most comfortable commercial transport in America—the monarch of domestic air travel. Unfortunately, its reign was all too brief. Growing hostilities in Europe prevented larger commercial sales, and by 1941 Boeing had already turned its attention and energies to the B-17.

World War II broke out 16 months after the Stratoliner's introduction. While world events had a chilling effect on the Stratoliner's commercial career (some called it "the right plane at the wrong time"), those same events meant the Boeing giant was perfect for another even more important mission just around the corner.

The Stratoliner Goes to War

On the day the United States declared war each of the nation's airlines was drawn into the fight. By prior arrangement the ATC took over 200 of the industry's domestic fleet
of 360 airplanes (including Stratoliners and Boeing 314 “flying boats”) and contracted with them to airlift men and supplies to war fronts all over the world.

Airlift didn’t get much respect early in the war. According to conventional wisdom the machines that really won wars were bombers and fighters—commercial air transport was a mere “handmaiden” of the aerial combat forces.

Five years later airlift turned out to be one of the great military achievements of World War II, one in which the Stratoliners played a major role.

In the first six months of the war TWA’s four-engine “Strats” (designated as C-75s) were the only transatlantic landplanes in the American arsenal—the only air fleet capable of opening up vital, land-based supply routes abroad and transporting top military brass directly between Washington and London. Under the ATC’s direction, Pan Am’s Stratoliners also maintained their Latin American routes throughout the war.

By the spring of 1942 the big, blunt-nosed “Strats”—camouflaged and stripped down to make room for extra fuel tanks—not only pioneered the first wartime supply routes across the north, south and mid-Atlantic, but also airlifted critical ammunition and medical supplies in time for British forces to hold off Rommel in Libya.

Without pressurization gear the Stratoliners had to cross the Atlantic at low altitudes (4,500 to 7,500 feet), making them vulnerable to attack. More than once the militarized airliners evaded anti-aircraft fire from German subs surfaced off the African coast. Sometimes even the Allies took aim. One Stratoliner was mistaken for a German bomber by a British convoy and still managed to make it home after sustaining tail damage from a 20mm cannon.

In another incident, TWA Chief Pilot W. L. “Larry” Trimble said he encountered “friendly fire” over the North Atlantic but credited the Stratoliner’s maneuverability with averting a tragedy. “The moment I saw the flak I put the Stratoliner into a steep bank and shifted back to an easterly heading,” said Trimble. “Good thing, too. A moment later a shell burst right where the plane would have been.”

When they weren’t airlifting vital supplies the Stratoliners did what they were built to do—carry VIPs speedily over long distances. Between 1942 and July 1944 the Boeing transports completed thousands of accident-free Atlantic crossings, shutting some of World War II’s most important strategists, including Generals Eisenhower, Marshall, Clark and Arnold; Admirals King and Towers; and such foreign leaders as Winston Churchill, Charles de Gaulle, Queen Wilhelmina of Holland and Madame Chiang Kai-shek.

According to TWA’s Trimble, Eisenhower and Churchill even spent some time at the controls whenever they flew the Stratoliner across the Atlantic. “They both got a kick out of flying the Strat,” Trimble said. “Fact is, Churchill was a pretty fair pilot. My only complaint,” he added, “was about those damn cigars he smoked in the cockpit.”

Besides its usual ports of call the Boeing transport also made a few flights to Moscow and China. It was a Stratoliner that flew to rural China to rescue several survivors of the famed Doolittle raid on Tokyo. Occasionally, the Stratoliner also flew captured German generals to Washington for interrogation. “Whenever I was carrying high-ranking prisoners-of-war,” said Trimble, “I usually made a point of taking the Stratoliner over New York City just so I could counter German propaganda that America was a defeated country.”

In July 1944, after 28 months and more than 3,000 ocean crossings, TWA’s Stratoliners were “honorably discharged” and returned to Seattle (succeeded by the army’s new C-54s). Ex-TWA chief pilot Otis Bryan, former head of TWA’s wartime Intercontinental Division, said the Stratoliner’s World War II record was exemplary.

“It was one of the sturdiest, most durable planes I ever flew,” Bryan said. “Everything on it, from the wings to the landing gear, was built stronger than any other plane. We flew the Stratoliners continuously for over two years, and under the most extreme conditions ... and that says a lot!”

The Rise and Fall of the Piston Age

AFTER THE WAR TWA reintroduced its refurbished Stratoliners into transcontinental service. As late as 1945 they were still recognized as the nation’s largest transport in commercial operation. But the Stratoliner was soon relegated to regional and coach-class operations, overtaken by newer Douglas and Lockheed models (the DC-4s, DC-6s, DC-7s and the Constellation), as well as a limited quantity of Boeing 377 Stratocruisers.

In 1948 Pan American sold its three Stratoliners to independent freight operators in the United States and Latin America; TWA did the same in 1951. By now it was clear that the piston age was drawing to a close.

In 1955 Pan American ordered 20 Boeing 707s. Three years later the nation’s first jetliners were crossing the country. But the Stratoliner is neither gone nor forgotten.

Today the last known Boeing 307 Stratoliner is on display at an outdoor air museum in Arizona. The old Pan Am “Flying Cloud,” owned by the Smithsonian Institution, is currently being restored by retired Pan Am personnel, after which it will be flown to Washington, D.C. in preparation for permanent display at the new Air and Space Museum.

After more than three decades of service the big, mirror-finished Stratoliner earned a reputation for peacetime innovation and wartime durability, and her timely introduction of cabin pressurization was the genesis for high-altitude systems for some of the world’s best-known aircraft.

Over time, of course, aviation technology eclipsed each of her “firsts,” but not before the Boeing Stratoliner established herself as a technological pioneer—the upper limit of prewar aircraft design.

Mark Jaroslaw was a former aviation news producer for Boeing's Commercial Division, is a freelance writer living in Seattle.
Shortly after Washington became a territory Indian unrest persuaded early settlers of the southern Puget Sound region to retreat to the protection of Fort Steilacoom. The settling of newly arrived Americans on the land before treaties had been negotiated with the Indians brought about five months of conflict in 1855-56, which affected the Willis Boatman family, early pioneers to the Puyallup Valley.

**Settling the Valley**

Willis and Mary Ann Boatman came overland from Illinois to Portland in the summer of 1852. The following spring they moved north to the Puget Sound country rather than south to the Willamette Valley as they had originally planned. Willis found employment at Steilacoom in a timber camp. After building and operating a boarding house in Steilacoom for a short time, the Boatmans took out a donation land claim in the Puyallup Valley.

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**Overland Trail**

150 YEARS

early in 1854. The John Carson family accompanied the Boatmans, and they helped each other build their cabins. Others who came to the valley about that time include the Isaac and Abram Woolery families, the William Kincaid family, Adam Benston, Robert More and Ronymous Nix.

In the spring of 1854 Willis Boatman began clearing land and planting a modest garden. He wrote of this time:

> Notwithstanding all the hardships and privations of this life, I was becoming satisfied and contented. In the Spring of '55 I managed to get grain and vegetables enough to do us the coming year. We were nearly all living on potatoes straight, with pea or wheat coffee, with occasionally a sack of flour for a change. As the summer advanced our little crops matured and when harvest came, we were all surprised at the large yield that we had on our little patches of ground. We got our stuff all harvested and most of it threshed and put away in good shape.

About this time another dark cloud began to make its appearance; this time in the shape of an Indian war.

**Rumors of Conflict**

The Indian uprising of 1855-56 occurred within the context of the
Oregon Donation Land Act passed by Congress in 1850, which provided for transferring land ownership to the early settlers without fee. However, title to these lands was not to be given until treaties were made with the Indians, whereby they would relinquish their ownership to the United States.

It then became Governor Isaac Stevens’ task to convince the Indians to accept treaty proposals, including the restriction of Indians to reservations. Native peoples of the Puget Sound region, prior to treaty talks, were generally friendly to their new white neighbors and, in the main, willing to share the land with them. The first of a series of treaty councils in the territory was held at Medicine Creek (known today as McAllister Creek) on the Nisqually flats, where Indians of the southern Puget Sound area met and essentially accepted Stevens’ proposals.

Although most of the Indians west of the Cascades had signed the treaty, some who realized exactly what was being asked of them did not. Foremost among this latter group was Leschi of the Nisqually Tribe.

Although not a chief, he was an able communicator and was considered a wise man among his people. Because his mother was from east of the Cascade Mountains, Leschi had ties with tribes there. He had become a successful farmer and had adopted the dress and many of the ways of the whites. He was friendly with and respected by his white neighbors. Nevertheless, he was chosen as the leader of the western Indian opposition, a position he did not particularly want but accepted in order to protect the rights of his people.

Only a few hundred warriors were under his command. A large majority of the Indians west of the mountains did not get involved in the conflict. In fact, many assisted the settlers against the warring faction.

Besides several attacks on individuals or small groups, the fighting in western Washington was limited to a few skirmishes, most of which occurred along the White River, southeast of present-day Auburn, and on Connells Prairie, a few miles east of Sumner.

The Seattle town site was also attacked but was easily defended from its two blockhouses. The sloop Decatur also lent considerable assistance to the defense of the Seattle settlement. Two whites were killed in the skirmish.

The army regulars and a volunteer militia made up of local settlers suffered minimal losses in western Washington during the conflict. Indian casualties were doubtless much greater.

The shots that actually opened the war on the west side of the Cascades were those that killed Lieutenant James McAllister and Michael Connell, of the volunteer militia, on October 27, 1855, on what became known as Connells Prairie. The two men had been dispatched previously to “apprehend” Leschi in an attempt to place the Indians on reservations. The following day, Sunday, three families were attacked by several Indian bands at White River. Nine settlers were killed and their homes burned.

Willis and Mary Ann Boatman in 1865, ages 39 and 32, respectively.
The site on Connells Prairie where, on October 27, 1855, Lieutenant McAllister and Michael Connell died, the first casualties of the Indian conflict in western Washington. Pictured from left to right in this memorial photo are a coterie of pioneer historians: W. H. Bowman, John Van Ogle, W. P. Bonney, C. H. Ross, George Himes, and C. S. Barlow.

Henry Whitesall's claim was on land in the Orting area, eight or so miles up the Puyallup Valley from the Boatman claim. Isaac Lemon and Addison H. Parmah had claims two or three miles southeast of present-day Sumner. Elhi was an early Pierce County post office situated on what was known as Lemon's Prairie, about two miles east of today's Alderton.

Anyway, these four men got warning to every settler in the valley. The next morning about daybreak we were awakened by an Indian's voice, low but insistent, at the door: "hello! hello! Boatman, hello! Boatman, Boatman!" I hurried to the door and found "old Salitat" [sic] looking grave and terrified. "My people on warpath," he whispered. "If they know I tell, they kill me. Take your klootchman and mokst tenas [wife and two children] to the Fort. My people kill and burn."

Regarding "old Salitat" (Salatat), Willis further stated:

When Mary and I settled on this place we found an old Indian chief and his squaw living in their teepee on a part of our land. We made no effort to drive them away, but treated them kindly, soon becoming warm friends. To this old Indian (Salatat) we no doubt owe our lives. . . . This particular case always impressed me more than the other experiences we passed through because of the fact that we made a true friend out of the old Indian.

Flight to Fort Steilacoom

During the same night the settlers up the valley got the same news from one of the hostile Indians who came to notify the Puyallup Indians of their plans. . . . [The settlers met at one of the neighbor's and held a consultation as to what to do. Some were in favor of staying and fortifying, others for leaving. We finally concluded to go. That afternoon all the teams in the valley were hitched up and those who owned them loaded up most of their bedding and clothing. We had no team of our own, so we were obliged to leave all that we had except one bed and a change of clothing for the children.

A news story of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer in 1907 stated, "A neighbor . . . in the possession of a wagon and two horses, loaded on whatever of provisions the few families of the vicinity most needed, including a freshly slaughtered hog of the Boatmans, killed for the occasion."

A great many things were left that we might have taken such as my watch, hanging in the wall, and all the little treasures my wife hung on to clear across the plains, over the Oregon Trail. But, when we returned after the war everything was gone. We could not complain though, as they left our house standing. All other houses were burned. . . . True to the old Indian's word, the hostile tribe swept down on our home the next day and, finding us
gone, destroyed everything we had left behind.

According to the newspaper story:

While the Boatman house was left intact, it was rifled of its contents. The potatoes hidden under the cabin floor, twenty-eight bushels of wheat on which they were depending for bread, a barrel of sugar, and a keg of syrup were all stolen. The dishes taken from the cupboard were found years later behind logs and buried beside trees.

One of the Boatmans' daughters, possibly Caddie, summed up the situation at hand:

The news spread like wildfire up the valley. Soon all settlers grasped the situation; only one ox team and wagon [among] a dozen families in peril, 16 miles to safety, no time to lose in speculation or mourning for the things that would have to be left behind. They hastily hid what of their possessions they could not take with them and, with that degree of resignation that only a pioneer can boast of, left for Fort Steilacoom over a newly made road through the thick timber and over the prairies 16 miles away. . . . The Puyallup River and Clark's Creek had to be crossed. The river they forded at the John Carson donation claim.

This crossing was about where the Meridian Street bridge in Puyallup is today. A news article of 1957 reported that those settlers on the north side of the river had to take their wagon apart and then ferry it and its contents across on two lashed-together canoes. On the other side the wagon was reassembled and reloaded. The daughter's account continued:

At Clark's Creek they were compelled to take apart and carry the wagon and its contents across the creek on a footbridge, as the water was too deep to ford. They swam the oxen across. . . . Women and children walked beside the wagon, and helped to push it up hills and over rough places while the men carried their rifles, some with axes and tools to fix impossible [impassable?] places in the trail. Twice they were interrupted by Indians on this trip, but clashes were averted and the caravan finally arrived at Fort Steilacoom.

One of these encounters was further described by the Boatman daughter:

A body of Indians stepped in front of the ox team and directed that they should halt. The driver, one Christopher Kincaid, became angered by their insolence and made an attempt to strike one of the Indians with his oxen whip, when Mrs. Boatman grabbed his arm and begged him not to do so, but allow her to settle the difficulty. This she did by talking to them and begged them to go away. She spoke to them in the Chinook language of which she had learned enough to make herself understood in the short time she had lived among them. What the consequences might have been had the driver struck the Indian with the whip we do not know, but in all probabilities would have been very serious.

Ezra Meeker, who had settled about five miles east of Fort Steilacoom in what is today part of south Tacoma, was one of the early arrivals at the fort, having heard of the Indian uprising. He therefore had the opportunity to observe the frantic arrival of settlers seeking protection, and he wrote the following colorful description:

Some came on foot with scanty clothing, and no food; some came with wagons piled high with household furniture, some with chicken coops piled in promiscuously with other effects, some driving cattle, some sheep, some swine (property they could not possibly care for at the fort), some horse teams, some with oxen, others with pack horses, while many a mother came packing the

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Fort Steilacoom, c. 1865.
Construction took place during 1857-58 by civilian carpenters, Willis Boatman among them.
youngest child on her back and leading
the others. All day the never-ending
stream came from the prairies nearby,
supplemented in the afternoon and
until late at night and the next day by the
contingent from Puyallup and farther
outlying settlements.

A sorry mess this, of women and
children crying, some brute[s] of men
cursing and swearing, oxen and cows
bellowing, sheep bleating, dogs howl-
ing, children lost from parents, wives
from husbands... in a word, the
utmost disorder.

Although known as Fort Steilacoom, it
"was not a fort but simply an en-
campment in log cabin and light board
houses," Meeker stated.

Difficult Times

BOATMAN FAMILY RECORDS are
sketchy for the period immediately af-
after their arrival at Fort Steilacoom. It is
clear, however, that Willis Boatman
was among a company of volunteers
commanded by John Carson and in-
cluding Ezra Meeker that, on Novem-
ber 8, 1855, departed for the lower part
of the Puyallup Valley to look after the
property of the settlers who had left
their homes for the protection of the
fort. They returned safely after six days,
having learned that all the homes there
had been looted and burned except for
the Boatmans', which, though it had
been looted, was not burned.

Boatman wrote:

Then began a terrible time for us all.
Besides being in constant danger from
the Indians, we were getting desperately
poor. I did any sort of odd job I could
get... to keep soul and body together.

About February '56 most of us ran
short of money, credit, and provisions.
I went to the Commander at Fort
Steilacoom [Lieutenant Colonel Silas
Casey] and told him that he must give
me work or provisions, that my family
was suffering for something to eat.
"Sorry," he said, "we've got all the men
we need." But I was desperate. I told
him I had to have work and that I had a
wife and two babies and we were driven
off our place by the Indians and I must
have work or that we would starve. He
then told me to go with the company to
Puyallup and that he would see that my
family did not suffer.

Since Boatman referred to
having been employed by the
Quartermaster's Corps, the
"company" mentioned above
was apparently a United States military
company and not a volunteer group.
His first job was to help construct a
blockhouse along the Puyallup River
on the John Carson place, a mile or so
west of his own claim. It was built by
the regulars primarily to protect the
ferry crossing, a vital link in the wagon
road from Fort Steilacoom to the
Muckleshoot Prairie (just southeast of
present-day Auburn). This blockhouse
later became known as Fort Maloney,
but it was washed away during winter
floods of 1862-63.

Boatman continued his civilian em-
ployment in the Quartermaster's Corp
for the following two years, until March
1858. During this time he worked on
the construction of blockhouses, barracks on the Muckleshoot Prairie and the buildings at Fort Steilacoom, some of which have been or are now being renovated by the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association.

Captain W. W. Delacey, in charge of the engineers in the Washington Territory Volunteers, reported that 41 blockhouses were built, mostly west of the Cascades, by the Quartermaster's Corps and volunteer troops. Another 26 blockhouses and 4 stockades were constructed by settlers during the hostilities.

Boatman was also engaged in hauling supplies to men in action during the war and probably in building wagon roads in the region of today's Puyallup, South Prairie, Yelm, Steilacoom and other nearby communities.

**Final Attack—Leschi Captured**

Boatman's writings continue with the following story, recording incidents that took place shortly after the building of the first blockhouse on the banks of the Puyallup River:

Col. Casey came from the fort with a company of soldiers when the blockhouse was done, and we moved up to Elhi and camped and I went on back . . . to see about my family. When I got to Fort Steilacoom I found that I had another fine son, born a few days after I had left. But I couldn't stay, I had to go back and earn what I could.

Charles Boatman, this writer's grandfather, was born February 18, 1856. Late in the evening on February 28 Willis rejoined Casey and his men at Isaac Lemon's place at the foot of Elhi Hill. Casey was on route to the Muckleshoot Prairie to join forces with Captain Maloney and thus establish a strong position.

It was 9 or 10 o'clock when I caught up with them, tired . . . and sleepy. . . . Next morning, just about the peep o'day, the whole camp was roused by a shot from the picket. We heard an Indian scream, then firing from all sides from the Indians who were hidden in the woods, waiting to attack Col. Casey. This Kenasket, who led the attack, was one of the leading warriors, and his purpose was to shoot the colonel when he came down the hill in the morning. The fellow was well armed and had an Indian boy following him, carrying a double-barreled shotgun; but the picket shot him in the shoulder and dragged him into camp. Then the rest of the band disappeared.

The capture and eventual death of the aggressive Kanasket was a significant loss to the Indian forces. The Indian conflict in the Puget Sound area soon came to an end. After
leaving the Puyallup River crossing Colonel Casey split his forces, sending Lieutenant A. V. Kautz northward up the Stuck River valley (near present­day Sumner) and thence eastward to the Muckleshoot Prairie. Colonel Casey took an easterly route toward Connells Prairie, where fortifications were being constructed by the volun­
teers. He then was to turn north, cross the White River, meet Lieutenant Kautz and his men, and move on to the Muckleshoot Prairie.

On March 1 Lieutenant Kautz and his 50 troops were attacked by hostile forces at the White River crossing. Because Colonel Casey and his men had not yet reached the White River from Connells Prairie, Kautz dispatched messengers for help. By three o'clock 54 additional men had joined the fray to help repel the Indian attackers.

On March 10 the final skirmish of the war was fought on Connells Prairie between hostile Indians and an all-volunteer force under Major Gilmore Hays. Captain Joseph White's engineers, a force of about 40 men, had been sent from Connells Prairie to build a blockhouse and ferry at the the attack was broken up and, once again, the Indians fled.

In both March skirmishes the Indians had chosen the battleground and nevertheless been defeated. Short on ammunition and food, the warring Indians became disheartened and disbanded, eventually making their way back over the mountains, knowing that they had lost their cause.

After the hostilities ceased Leschi fled eastward over the Cascades. There he surrendered to Colonel George Wright of the United States Army, having been promised no retribution. Governor Stevens, however, was set on punishing Leschi. The Indian leader remained in hiding but eventually was betrayed by his nephew Sluggia, who sought to collect on Stevens' promised reward of 50 blankets.

Even though Leschi claimed to have fought only to protect the rights of his people and to have harmed no innocent civilian settlers, claims that were proven to be true, the governor prevailed in the end. After two trials and a decision by the Territorial Supreme Court, Leschi was convicted and sentenced to hang.

There were those who strongly believed in Leschi's innocence. Among them were Dr. William F. Tolmie of Fort Nisqually and Ezra Meeker. A final attempt was made to prevent the execution by detaining the sheriff so that he could not perform the duty. However, the execution took place on February 19, 1858.

The Boatmans reestablished themselves on 160 acres near Gravelly Lake (east of Steilacoom), where they resided for some 15 years. During this time, however, Willis Boatman made frequent visits to the Puyallup Valley homestead, planting crops in the spring and harvesting in the fall. Eventually the Boatmans moved back to the valley permanently and built a new home. Although it has been moved and altered somewhat, the house still stands, known today as the Wall Apartments, alongside the Valley Highway between North Puyallup and Sumner.

In the late 1800s the Boatmans became major growers of hops, the valley's first commercial crop. Boatman later turned to banking. In 1889 he was a principal organizer and, for a number of years, president of Puyallup's second bank, the Farmers Bank of Puyallup, which later became the Puyallup State Bank.

Willis and Mary Ann had seven children: George, John, Charles, Cad­die, Ernest, Lettie and Lucy. Mary Ann died in 1911 at age 78. Willis lived on with remarkable good health until his death in 1926 at the age of 99.

Weldon Willis Rau, great-grandson of Mary Ann and Willis Boatman, is a retired state research geologist. A strong interest in his pioneer heritage prompted him to prepare a book-length manuscript entitled "Pioneering the Washington Territory" from which this story is excerpted.
Today I manage a family-owned business that serves 2,500 farmers in 28 towns of the inland Northwest. It is a land of striking contrasts where, according to historical geographer Donald Meinig, "the forest thins, then abruptly ends, and a different kind of country, open and undulating, rolls out before the viewer like a great interior sea." Our firm provides farmers who grow wheat, barley, lentils, potatoes, corn, and alfalfa on this great interior sea with the tools of what Wayne Rasmussen has called the "[postwar] agricultural revolution." These tools include applied chemistry to replenish depleted soils, mechanical tools to help conserve the land, and agronomic know-how to help manage the resource wisely.

We also operate a large ranch where we raise livestock, wheat and barley as we have done for three generations—ever since John and Archie McGregor first came to the land as itinerant "tramp" sheepherders 110 years ago.

Historical perspective is an essential element in the management of our business. As a youngster growing up in one of the few remaining company towns in the state I was taught by people whose agricultural experiences were rich and varied about a land not far removed from pioneer days.

The Channeled Scablands where I lived, a land deeply scarred by glacial floodwaters, had changed little since Paul
Tramp sheepmen John and Archie McGregor got into their Sunday best for this 1886 portrait.

Kane and Gustav Sohon sketched its grandeur in the 1840s. The last non-reservation Palouse Indian, grandson of a powerful chief, died five years before I was born. But the legends he had told of how the land was formed were still alive in the community. Grave sites for many Palouses overlooked our valley from a bluff on the range a mile from our house.

The Mullan Road, a pack trail left behind by teamsters and their mules, remained visible on deeply rutted nearby hillsides. The ditches of the turn-of-the-century Palouse Irrigation Project on the hill behind our house had once been intended to provide water to 400,000 acres of the Columbia Basin.

Next door was the Hooper Hotel, our ranch boarding house, originally built to house the laborers who carved the irrigation trenches out of basaltic bedrock.

Above the scabrock canyons around town was a more tractable land of Palouse wheat fields where Dad would show us tack barns filled with saddles, bridles, leather sewing machines and the single-furrow “footburner” three-horse plows he’d seen used to “break” the prairie when he was young. But the most vivid sense of history and the demands of the land came from the people who lived in the town:

—The gruff old ranch hand who let me follow along as he maintained the yards in town but who in his younger years had “broken” wild horses for a living and had “mule-skinned” teams that hauled supplies to the newly settled land;

—The sheep foreman who taught me how to herd the animals that he called “them damned sheep” and who told me of his battles to save the animals from hostile weather, coyotes, bobcats, bears, and their own herd instinct throughout a career that spanned 55 years from the time he left his homeland in the French Pyrenees;

—His successor as foreman, a veteran Basque herder who had first tended sheep at the age of nine on his family farm before coming to our ranch to begin a 35-year career of careful, dedicated husbanding of McGregor sheep and cattle;

—The aged farmer who recalled seeding by hand broadcasting, threshing by running ten horses in a circle over cut crops and then using a pitchfork to fan the trampled grain out in the wind;

—The veteran cattle and wheat rancher who told of the hundreds of itinerant harvesters—the water bucks, engineers, hoe downs, mustard punchers, header box drivers, sack sewers and IWW labor organizers once employed to bring in the crops—and who recalled the hardships of the Great Depression when cheap wheat and slaughtered work horses were fed to hogs in a desperate move to generate enough income to survive;

—The neighbor woman who recalled working in a mobile cook shack for 64 consecutive 16-hour days to prepare meals for the hungry work crews;

—My grandmother who, after she moved from Chicago to a rough, remote homestead, spent her first summer in the Palouse alone, cutting the wild grasses next to the house with a scissor to make a lawn while grandfather was in the mountains with the sheep.

My father told me stories about Jock Macrae, 60 years a McGregor sheepman, who came to the scabrock after quitting a law office job in his native Scotland and prospecting around the world from Tierra del Fuego to Australia to northern Canada. A typical Macrae story was told to William O. Douglas by fellow sheepman Billy McGuffie:

One summer night, John Duncan McRae, a freen o’mine, and I went into Spokane, dirty and thirsty, from a wary job a’loading sheep. We went into a pub and had a drink. As we came out we met up with a Salvation Army lassie with a tambourine who walked up to Jock for a donation. “What dae ye want, lassie?” Jock asked. “Some money for the Lord,” she replied. With a twinkle in his eyes, Jock countered, “How old are ye, lassie?” “Eighteen,” was her answer. Jock said, “Well, I am 87 and will be seein’ the Lord lang afore ye and I’ll just gie him the penny mysel.” There was a pause and then Jock said, “It all goes to show that the Scotchman isn’t stingy; he’s just cautious.”
During my undergraduate years at Whitman College, Tom Edwards and Bob Whitner taught me about the history of the American West, providing me with a broader perspective about the people and the land I had known so well. Larry Dodd helped me learn how to use regional archival material. Whitner encouraged me to study the Mullan Road, the rutted pack trail I'd seen on the scabland hills near my home, for my honors thesis. The road, I learned, had much to do with the early emergence of Walla Walla as the largest town in Washington Territory. Walla Walla merchants, equipped with goods from San Francisco and Portland, shipped supplies via mule pack trains to the Idaho and Montana mines and competed successfully for trade with St. Louis firms who shipped their products up the Missouri on steamboats. Many of the first scabland ranchers, I learned, had first reconnoitered the country as mule packers participating in this trade.

The friendship, enthusiasm and unswerving support Whitner provided led me to follow his suggestion and continue my studies at the University of Washington with his former mentor Vern Carstensen. Carstensen worked hard to help me take charge of my chosen masters and doctoral subject—a case study of the McGregor agricultural business as an example of a century of evolution in ranching and farming on the Columbia Plateau.

Take charge of your narrative, get it pointed and formulated, get it to unfold on your terms,” Vern urged. “Ouch,” he wrote when the words “demise” and “agrarian” appeared in the text, “Check the dictionary on these terms, then avoid their use.” I learned a clearer writing style: “Material must be presented in an orderly fashion, not splattered. Control your data, don’t let it control you. Sharpen and get perspective.” Fortunately the word “troglodytic” (originating from a cave dweller), a term the professor used in conversation, did not appear in my manuscript review. The training and encouragement I received from him inspired me to continue in the history field, first as a graduate student in Seattle and at Wisconsin-Madison, then as a sabbatical fill-in for Tom Edwards at Whitman College. I decided to return to help manage the family business into the next century because of what had remained the same—the resilience, skill and dedication of the long-term employees who had participated and sometimes led in meeting the challenges faced by farmers and ranchers. I felt it important to continue a century-old business that could assist farmers in answering the biggest

Shearing crew at Archie’s Camp on the McGregor ranch (c. 1900). Archie McGregor stands at far left. Crews like this one traveled from ranch to ranch every spring. Shearing with the hand-held “blades” required a great deal of skill and a strong back.
challenge our generation faces in agriculture—to meet the growing demand for foodstuffs worldwide while working ever more diligently to improve environmental stewardship and increase farmer profitability.

Marcus Whitman said, “All my plans require time and distance.” All too often we in business find plenty to keep us busy but face a short supply of time and distance, or perspective, within which to evaluate the challenges we face.

History does provide a perspective, a broader framework in which to view the challenges of the present. For over a century we have been learning how to adapt the patterns of agriculture to the environmental constraints of the Northwest farm belt.

Two winters ago frigid northeast winds assaulted bare wheat fields with wind-chill factors down to 60 degrees below zero. Millions of acres of winter wheat, more than 80 percent of the crop in many areas, died that day. Does this devastation mean impending disaster for all of us associated with grain production? A study of past experiences provides evidence of more than a dozen times when winter wheat has fallen victim to the vagaries of hostile winter weather. Yet we have usually been successful in recording credible yields when forced to re-seed in the spring. History provides reassurance that we have faced such losses before and persevered.

Dismal grain prices have led many an economist to predict that wheat markets would remain sour for a long time. Not too long ago the world supply of cereal grains was viewed as dangerously low, and some warned of an impending international food emergency. I recall studying many fervent long-range projections made earlier in the century. Nary an acre of wheat, it was said in 1926 by one well-regarded expert, would again be raised on the plateau, and millions of acres of ground that had once produced grain would be converted to pastures for dairy cattle.

My father often recalled times when every public speaker apparently agreed that long-term prospects would be either forever balmy or unremittingly somber. “The predictions at the time seemed to be sensible and well founded,” he recalled. “The only problem I could see,” he noted, “is that within a couple of years the agreed-upon trend was proven entirely wrong.” Prudence dictates a steady hand in responding to market variations that can change rapidly. The uncertainties of distant markets have plagued inland Northwest agriculture for generations. I am reminded of the story told by my family of a sheepman who sent his wool to Boston. When the wool arrived it wasn’t worth enough to pay the freight. His broker wired him and told him he owed $150. The sheepman wired back and said, ‘Do not have $150. Am sending more wool.’ Long-term survival requires resilience and confidence that conditions will improve.

I have recently reviewed the history of environmental stewardship over our agricultural lands in presentations to regional scientists and researchers. Early in the century attempts made to import practices used in other regions led to serious losses of valuable topsoil, particularly the use of stubble burning, moldboard plowing, and tilling of fallow ground six, eight, or even ten or more times in a single season to release nutrients, control weeds and prepare a seedbed. One early farmer recalled working diligently to “mulch the soil fine, harrow it to death, and let it blow awhile.”

The methods used to combat pests were crude, ranging from formaldehyde to protect seed, to sodium chlorate for weed control (some old-timers recalled that if this product got caught in pants cuffs, the pants would catch on fire), to the liberal use of arsenic to combat spider mites on apples. “Drought problem solved” stated a 1911 advertisement in Successful Farming that urged “progressive” farmers to assault hilltops with DuPont brand dynamite to combat soil compaction, improve water retention and release nutrients for the growing crop. Growers could write DuPont for a copy of the pamphlet entitled “Farming with Dynamite.”

Pullman farmer J. S. Klemgard defiantly declared in 1907, “We wheat growers have been called land robbers and it has been said that the father was robbing his son, but I believe that our children’s children will be raising wheat here in the Palouse country.”

In 1914 a group of concerned farmers urged state college scientists to assist them and “pointed to the fact that farmers had settled in this district, raised large crops with little effort on the virgin soil, became overconfident and exploited the soil until it became deficient in humus and infected with weeds, thus resulting in agricultural disaster.”

A new era of cooperation among scientists, farmers, and farm suppliers began; dedicated efforts were made to improve and adapt farming practices to overcome everyday field problems. Many plant breeders, soil scientists, public and private agronomists and engineers contributed mightily toward improving productivity and efficiency. While we have been able to coax ever more bountiful harvests from our land, I am nevertheless reminded of the metaphor used by Vernon Carstensen—at times we seem to have a bear by the tail.

The realization that emphasis on protecting our soils was not a temporary concern but part of an 80-year-long struggle inspired our company and others to make major efforts to develop and put in the field soil-conserving equipment developed in conjunction with university researchers. The 25-fold decline in Americans living on farms since my family first began raising livestock here illustrates the major task we face in demonstrating our careful stewardship of the land to ever-increasing numbers of urban neighbors unfamiliar with agriculture.

While the tools of agricultural chemistry are far more selective and safe than the arsenic and dynamite of earlier days or the supposedly miraculous products of the 1950s, we must devote much of our time, effort and financial resources to upgrading product handling at our plants and to applied...
TOP: The fledgling village of Hooper in 1913. In the foreground is the irrigation canal that brought Palouse River water to the semi-arid land. McGregor Land and Livestock Company apple orchards are visible in the distance. The large building at left is the Hotel Glenmore (Hooper Hotel).

BOTTOM: Sherman McGregor selling hats in the McGregor Land & Livestock store at Hooper (c. 1925). The general store carried a vast array of products.
Main Street, Walla Walla, in 1877.
Walla Walla emerged as the first town of consequence in eastern Washington, serving first as an entrepot for miners and packers who hauled supplies over the Mullan Road pack trail to mining camps in northern Idaho and Montana.

research that helps farmers develop management practices best suited to their land. For us this has meant committing 25 percent of our capital expense budget to environmental improvements we see as desirable. We also have three research scientists on staff who do applied testing and research (with USDA and universities) near each of the 28 towns we serve.

A sense of the long-term nature of such challenges has helped our company make whatever small contribution it could in such recent improvements. The broader picture has continued to be one of land grant researchers, individual farmers, and industry working together to continue the process of fine-tuning efforts to hitch science to the plow.

One of the biggest challenges Vernon Carstensen alluded to was the struggle of farmers and the federal government to manage the marketing of the large crops and occasional surpluses we have long produced. I well recall once testifying about farm exports before the House Agricultural Committee, only to find myself stuck in the middle of an acrimonious congressional debate about the benefits and drawbacks of 60 years of federal farm programs. While I was far from an expert on the potpourri of current programs, I was fortunate to be able to rely on what historians had taught me about the policies of the past.

"History rarely teaches us what to do in the future," Richard White, a fellow Carstensen graduate student of the early 1970s recently noted. "Mostly what it teaches us is a powerful dose of humility." I am reminded of some of the dreams my grandfather and his contemporaries had for our land. "The miracle of irrigation," they felt, would bring an "imminent" rush of 80,000 settlers to transform the austere and unspoiled beauty of the scablands into an agricultural paradise. Hooper remains 70,980 people short of those early projections.

While the Seattle City Council is currently interested in developing a portion of the old Mullan Road pack trail, their objective is to make our neighborhood the recipient of the tailings of urban growth. A coulee one mile from our little town is now being considered as a handy potential receptacle for millions of tons of garbage from across the mountains, a far cry from the rush of agricultural settlers hoped for by my forefathers.

While agriculture in our region has been ever-changing, improvements have come only through the difficult process of trial and error. Our own individual contributions will be but a small part of the intertwined process of continuing the century-long trend toward improving our productivity and our management of the land. At times our most favored personal efforts will fall short, as did the McGregor's plans for the greater Hooper urban area. Yet it is essential that we work together to continue to assure an abundant supply of safe food at an affordable price so that we can again repeat the bold prediction J. S. Klengard made 80 years ago—that our children's children will be growing large crops on the fertile hills of the interior Northwest.

It is well to recall the dedication and hard work of the sheepherders, mule skinners, harvest hands and the farmers who "broke" the prairies of this great interior grassland sea. No matter how much we improve the tools of the trade, our businesses will succeed only to the extent that they benefit from the contributions of similarly skilled, enthusiastic and opinionated people.

We in agriculture can make headway only by keeping in mind the successes and failures of previous generations who came to convert the prairies of the inland Northwest into productive farms and ranches. If we can benefit from the experiences of those who first tried to domesticate the land, we will not be forced to seek piecemeal solutions to each and every challenge that comes our way. Historical perspective provides a sense of the people and the land, invaluable assets in the long-term business that is agriculture.

Alex McGregor is president of The McGregor Company and vice president of McGregor Land and Livestock Company. He is author of Counting Sheep: From Open Range to Agribusiness on the Columbia Plateau (1989).
WASHINGTON IS THE SECOND most populous state of the Far West, yet it often fails to think of itself historically. Part of this circumstance lies in a cultural tradition of being a land with periodic bursts of population growth. Many newcomers seem more interested in getting a start on their future than in looking back on the past. What's needed is a “flagship” state historical museum that can serve as the great civic storyteller of Washington’s tales and traditions.

In the mid 1980s Amtrak abandoned Tacoma’s Union Station, the city’s most notable historic landmark. It came dangerously close to becoming one more derelict building in a central business district that was becoming moribund. Three groups coalesced to address the general and particular problems of bringing the station back to life. The first to emerge was a citizens group, Save Our Station (SOS). Its objective was to find an alternative use that would save the station from the wrecking ball. In addition to federal officials, SOS approached key members of the Pierce County legislative delegation who in turn adopted the idea of situating a new Washington State Historical Society Museum next to the station as one of their principal legislative objectives. Concurrently, corporate and philanthropic leaders came to see the new museum as an ideal project for the redevelopment of downtown Tacoma and the enrichment of the cultural life of the city and the state of Washington.

In the six years since the idea took root the station has been restored to its former grandeur and now houses the federal district courts. The museum project, too, is now well underway.

The Building
A 100,000-SQUARE-FOOT structure, the new Washington State History Museum will flow elegantly south from Tacoma’s restored Union Station.
ABOVE: Visitors start their encounter with history in the lobby. This great space leads directly into the state history gallery while a grand stair beckons one up to overlooks and temporary exhibits.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM: A cloud of posters with WPA, New Deal and World War II production themes highlights the close link between the Depression and the War. In front of this montage the figure of "Rosie the Riveter" completes the scene symbolizing the two major events that reshaped Washington during the 1930s and '40s.

Architect Charles Moore and his partner Arthur Andersson are in the process of designing the museum while Herb Rosenthal and Andy Kramer work to design a dynamic exhibit that will tell the story of Washington's history. Rosenthal's experience in creating successful international expositions, visitor centers and museum exhibits ensures that the new history museum will be one of the best examples of a contemporary center for informal learning and enrichment in the country.

History museums are not Rosenthal's normal milieu. The Society consciously avoided choosing an exhibit designer with "book on the wall" tendencies, wanting a consultant experienced in reaching science museum and trade show levels of performance. An uncommonly creative communicator, Rosenthal has the ability to convey large volumes of information through symbols, metaphors and interactive devices. His unique approach promises world's fair excitement in a history museum setting. The project's combination of location, architecture, exhibit

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media and scholarship promises urbanity, large and involved audiences, and a solid interpretation.

History helps us understand ourselves and others. It can be entertaining, too. A sense of history helps develop our perception and judgment and equips us with knowledge of the institutions and values we share and which have shaped our aspirations. State history has been described as the ideal focal point for study—local enough to be familiar yet large enough to enable generalizations and pattern-making. Effective state and provincial museums can give people a sense of meaning, rootedness and hope. In short, the new Washington history museum can make a difference in the way people see themselves, their past, and their future.

ABOVE: On one side of the railway platform a cutaway freight car groans under the load of Washington products being shipped eastward. On the other side a passenger car carries immigrants and craftsmen heading west.
Inside the Exhibits

Stepping inside the new history museum will be an astonishing experience. The basic concept is to present a two-track interpretation of state history. Down the center "aisle" a highly symbolic, metaphorical approach is to be employed. Branching off to either side will be four large bays and a handful of smaller ones that present rich displays full of artifacts, enhancing the central gallery.

The visitor will first discover an Indian lodge with seating to allow demonstrations by native interpreters, artists and storytellers. Next are two pioneer village settings, which portray the rigors of frontier life—one in the arid Columbia Plateau whose economy is based on river and overland travel; and one on Puget Sound, reliant on the magnificent Douglas fir stands and saltwater commerce.

Running transversely across the main gallery are railroad tracks symbolizing a pivotal era in Washington history—the completion of the transcontinental railroads in the late 19th century. Visitors will literally cross the tracks separating life in Washington before and after the railroad's arrival. On the tracks are cutaway versions of a passenger car and a boxcar. They reveal in representative form the means by which thousands of emigrants arrived, juxtaposed with the manner by which products were transported eastward.

No industry profited more from the integrating connections offered by the railroad than did the timber industry. Its story will be told within the confines of a construct called the "lumber monument."

In the double-height space that follows is a full-scale replica of an electrical tower, a familiar form in the Northwest landscape of the 1930s and '40s once construction of the Bonneville and Grand Coulee dams was completed and the electrical grid put in place. The idea beyond the symbol is that Washington today is in many ways a product of federal investments in hydroelectric and reclamation projects dating from that era.

Beyond the tower is a large map of Washington. Part of the Encyclopedia Washingtonia™ concept, the map is an attention-getting device meant to encourage people to interact with it.
via computer driven video monitors. A visitor will be able to press the screen and call up almanac-like data (e.g., place name origins) or scan a photographic archive of images on a particular topic.

Behind the map is the “Columbia River Passage.” Through this audio-visual presentation visitors will traverse the Columbia River in both time and space from its source to its mouth.

Several side galleries are to contain equally compelling amplification of these main themes. A section entitled “The Natural Setting” combines an educational cross-sectional display of the Washington landscape (describing how it was formed and its current characteristics) with a portrayal of how the natural backdrop has shaped historic patterns.

An adjacent section billed as “The Encounter” tells the story of Native American contact with various newcomers in a series of three-dimensional vignettes. Possibilities include Robert Gray meeting the Chinooks in 1792; Lewis and Clark with the Nez Perce in 1805; the Wenatchee Indians sighting David Thompson in 1812; or Isaac Stevens in a treaty parley with Spokan Garry in 1855.

A gallery entitled “Washington Comes of Age” offers more detail on the period of 1880 to 1920, with full-scale interpretations of the eastern Washington agricultural boom, shipbuilding, and the fledgling Boeing aircraft manufactory in Seattle.
The marquee for the “Emergence of Modern Washington” story is a diorama of a “Rosie the Riveter” figure working on the hull of one of Henry Kaiser’s World War II victory ships. Once inside this area of the museum visitors will witness a depression-era setting, interpretations of New Deal investments in the region, and the galvanic effect of war industries on the economy of the state.

The entire experience will leave visitors with the sense that they have not merely looked back on Washington’s past but have also participated in the events that make this state’s history distinctive.
Americans seem to have always had a penchant for the different, the alternative, the bizarre. It is, perhaps, this willingness to tolerate these differences that has contributed to our diversity. This 1922 handbill promoting lectures given by Yogi Wassan—a recent addition to the Society's Special Collections—indicates that the Pacific Northwest has not been immune to these fads and fancies. The handbill is just one example from the Society's ephemera collections, which include similar items from spiritualists, tent meetings, and fortune tellers.
REMNANTS of a VANISHED CULTURE

COLUMBIA RIVER ROCK ART

By James D. Keyser
Of the ancient Indian culture and traditions that once dominated the Lower Columbia region, much has been lost. Epidemics decimated the native population and "progress" in the form of dams and roads destroyed or buried dozens of village sites. The only visible remains of this once-flourishing culture are scattered petroglyphs and pictographs. Today these figures, carved and painted on the stark basalt cliff walls, form a ghostly reminder of the spiritually rich native civilization that took root, flowered and then all but died there in days gone by.

For purposes of this article the Lower Columbia sub-area is defined as the Columbia River watershed between Priest Rapids and The Dalles, excluding the Snake River. Included are the basins of the Yakima, John Day, and Deschutes rivers. Geographically, the area is bounded by the Cascades on the west, the Yakima-Columbia drainage divide to the north, the Snake River drainage to the east and the Great Basin on the south.

Lower Columbia terrain is arid, forested only atop low mountain ranges scattered throughout the region. Major rivers provide most of the region's water and served to concentrate prehistoric occupation in villages along the Deschutes, Columbia, and Yakima, which are deeply entrenched in narrow canyons for most of their lower reaches. These picturesque, basalt-rimmed gorges provide nature's best canvas for several hundred sites of the Columbia Plateau Indian rock art tradition.

Dams along these rivers have drowned more than half of the known rock art. We have reasonably good records of more than 150 of these inundated sites due to early scientific interest in the area and the efforts of dedicated amateur researchers who photographed and recorded many designs before they were lost.

Although Lewis and Clark traversed this terrain in 1805-1806, the first mention of any Lower Columbia rock art was made by the Wilkes expedition of 1841. Around 1900 early photographers, including Edward S. Curtis, took pictures of a few sites.

Professional interest in this rock art began between 1910 and 1940, when university and museum archaeologists conducted limited field work in the Yakima, Columbia, and Deschutes river valleys. During the two decades of dam building on the Lower Columbia (1950-70) professional archaeologists recorded rock art from The Dalles to Pasco, responding to its imminent destruction. Most of this work remains only partially published.

Avocational rock art researchers, including some professional artists, also took an interest in the area and photographed or copied many designs. The work of these amateurs continues today with the recording efforts of Greg Bettis and the recent publication by Malcolm and Louise Loring of descriptions of more than 120 sites along the Columbia and throughout northern Oregon.

Since 1975 renewed professional interest has focused on rock art near The Dalles. Books by Beth and Ray Hill (1974) and John Woodward (1982) illustrate some of the more well-known sites, but the primary work has been by Richard McClure. Between 1978 and 1983 McClure visited all remaining Columbia River sites and compiled an interpretive synthesis in several published works, including a rock art chronology for The Dalles-Deschutes area.

**ROCK ART STYLES**

Over 160 rock art sites are found in the Lower Columbia area. Almost 90 of these are along the Columbia River between The Dalles and Pasco. Other large concentrations occur along the Deschutes River and in the Yakima and John Day river drainages. These sites compose...
four distinct rock art styles in the Columbia Plateau rock art tradition.

**Yakima Polychrome Style**
The Yakima polychrome style consists primarily of red and white polychrome pictographs of arc faces, rayed arcs and rayed circles. A few stick men with rayed heads and abstract red and white human figures also occur. Sometimes the characteristic rayed arc faces and elaborate, concentric, rayed circles are inscribed as petroglyphs. More than half of the 50 known sites show the use of white pigment. Yakima polychrome sites occur in the Yakima and Little Klickitat river valleys and along the entire length of the Lower Columbia River, with clusters near The Dalles and at the mouths of the Deschutes and John Day rivers.

**Central Columbia Plateau Style**
The central Columbia Plateau style includes both pictographs and petroglyphs like those found throughout the western Columbia Plateau, particularly along the Columbia River between Priest Rapids and Wenatchee. Characteristic motifs are stick figure humans, rayed arcs and rayed circles, and simple block body animal figures or spread-eagled thunderbirds. Twin figures and hunters with bows and arrows are special human depictions in this style. Some hunting scenes involve large herds of mountain sheep. Horses with riders, appearing at 11 sites, are the latest examples of this art style.

**Long Narrows Style**
The Long Narrows style occurs as both petroglyphs and pictographs primarily along the Columbia River but also at a few northern Oregon sites. Most sites lie between The Dalles and the mouth of the John Day River, and on the lower stretches of the Deschutes and John Day rivers. Common motifs are stick, stylized figures; grotesque grinning faces, curvilinear abstractions; elaborate concentric, spoked or rayed circles; and abstract human and animal forms with eyes, ribs and internal organs. Many figures appear to represent mythical beings or water monsters. Faces, some with hats, have ears; broad, grinning mouths; and concentric-circle eyes. The most famous of these is Tsagiglalal.

**North Oregon Rectilinear Style**
The north Oregon rectilinear style occurs primarily as red pictographs of simple stick figure humans and animals and numerous rectilinear abstracts. These rectilinear figures comprise more than 50 percent of the paintings in northern Oregon’s Deschutes and John Day river basins.

Sites of this style are clustered densely in several favorable locales in the Lower Columbia area, although many are now inundated or destroyed by construction activities. Each of these clusters originally had examples of the Yakima polychrome, central Columbia Plateau and Long Narrows styles. Certain sites consisted of single drawings or small groups of figures, but others each contained hundreds of figures and were the largest sites in the Columbia Plateau. Nearly 500 separate designs were noted at Petroglyph Canyon before it was inundated.

Sites also cluster in the Deschutes River drainage, although not as densely as along the Columbia River. These sites tend to be smaller than the Columbia River sites; the largest have fewer than 100 individual glyphs.

Rock art preservation is poor in the Lower Columbia area due to site destruction by dam building, road construction and vandalism. As in the central Columbia Plateau, a once rich prehistoric art heritage has been significantly reduced in the last 50 years, making the surviving examples an even more precious resource.

**Rock Art Motifs**

**Motifs in Lower Columbia rock art are divided into ten categories:**

- Humans
- Mythical beings
- Faces
- Animals
- Bear tracks
- Rayed arcs and circles
- Polychrome rayed figures
- Stars
- Linear geometrics
- Tally marks
She Who Watches

CARVED AT FOUR sites on the Lower Columbia River is a striking petroglyph face with a mouth stretched wide in an exaggerated grin. One figure wears a women's basket hat; another has earrings. Two of these faces overlook cemeteries of early historic Indian villages in the Long Narrows area just above The Dalles. The largest face was named Tsagliqalal—She Who Watches—by the Wishram Indians who lived there.

Identical images carved in bone, stone and antler have been recovered from cremation sites near The Dalles, often burned as burial offerings. Found to be associated with trade items of copper and iron, these images date to the historic period between A.D. 1700 and A.D. 1840, just before and during the first entry of European Americans into the Pacific Northwest. Tsagliqalal's strong association with cremations and cemeteries suggests that this figure represents a death cult guardian spirit. But why the emphasis on death?

We know that permanent villages at The Dalles were trading centers that attracted people from far Beyond the Columbia Plateau. Indian traders arrived in ocean-going canoes from as far away as southern Alaska and northern California, and horsemen came from the Mandan villages in North Dakota. Trade flourished and thousands of items changed hands in the annual fairs.


These epidemics killed thousands of Indians who had no immunity to the foreign diseases. Populations living in large communal villages where people crowded into close contact in unsanitary conditions would have been especially susceptible. Travelers from long distances would have brought infections from many different sources and left them to flare up among the inhabitants of these towns. Such horrendous plagues, which started with no apparent reason and were almost impossible to survive, wiped out 90 percent of the Wishram population originally living in the Long Narrows. Thousands of cremation burials along the Lower Columbia River attest to the severity of these episodes for all tribes in the region.

Among these people medicine and curing were the provenance of shamans. Evil spirits invading a person's body caused disease. Shamans cured by driving out the evil with stronger guardian spirits. Imagine how helpless the Wishram shamans must have felt in the face of unknown diseases that responded to none of the traditional cures.

Tsagliqalal was one response to these dread diseases. In 1957 an old Wishram woman shaman told an interviewing archaeologist, "Tsagliqalal is for death. . . . People grin like that when they're sick. . . . When people look at you like that, you get sick."

These inexplicable plagues and the terrible constant presence of death aroused in these people a fascination with dying and the development of a death cult guardian spirit to deal with their own vulnerability. On the cliffs above their ancient villages Tsagliqalal still watches—mute testimony to the agony of a vanished culture.

The Tsagliqalal motif in portable art and at other petroglyph sites near The Dalles.
The rock art figures reproduced in this article were rendered by James D. Keyser.

A variety of Lower Columbia human-like and animal-like figures represent mythical beings. Most of these occur in the Long Narrows style.

Lizards or salamanders are more common in Lower Columbia rock art than elsewhere on the Columbia Plateau.

Human Figures

Humans are the most common Lower Columbia rock art form. Simple stick figures predominate, with more than 600 examples. Most are found in the north Oregon rectilinear and central Columbia Plateau styles. Humans are also indicated by handprints at six sites.

Stick figures and block body humans usually have a dot or open circle for a head, three- or five-fingered hands, and phallic images that identify some as males. One body block figure possesses female genitalia. Although action scenes are rare, there are 30 horsemen and several hunting scenes with archers or spearmen. The numerous horse and rider drawings probably reflect the frequent visits of mounted traders coming from the eastern Columbia Plateau and northwestern plains.

Twin figures, like those found in the mid-Columbia area, occur at four sites. Near The Dalles one site has a panel of eight sets of twins, six with rayed arcs. These stylized figures show a relationship between the rock art of the two areas.

Almost 30 percent of the stick figure humans at Lower Columbia river sites have a rayed head or associated rayed arc—identical to examples found as far north as central British Columbia. The stylistic consistency of this design throughout the western Columbia Plateau strongly suggests that it had inherent symbolic meaning for artists from all of the tribes living in this region.

Faces

Faces or masks are painted or carved at 40 sites. More than half are formed by a rayed arc that frames dots and lines representing eyes, nose and mouth. Other faces range from simple circles with facial features to elaborate, stylized mask-like designs.

Some mask faces represent mythical beings; Tsagiglalal is a well-known example. Indians of the historic period (c. A.D. 1700 or later) sometimes called these water monsters, a generic term for a panoply of mythical beings prevalent in their religion. Most of these particular mask faces belong to the Long Narrows style, and show some relationship to Northwest Coast art, which commonly depicts faces.

Mythical Beings

A wide variety of highly stylized human-like and animal-like figures do not seem to represent real people or animals. Some even mix human and animal traits in the same drawing. These bizarre figures typically show ribs or other internal organs, facial features and exaggerated appendages. Examples include Tsagiglalal, various water monsters, Spedis Owl and other half-man, half-bird creatures. Tsagiglalal and Spedis Owl are each present at several sites in very similar form; others are individual, unique portrayals. These designs, probably denoting mythical beings, define and characterize the Long Narrows style and are found primarily at sites along the Columbia River.

Animals

Pictured less frequently than humans, animals vary significantly in number among the four styles. Only about half the sites have animals, although about 700 individual designs have been identified. More than 400 animal drawings are mountain sheep; others include deer, elk, birds, horses, lizards, dogs, insects, bison, a turtle and a bear.

The presence or absence of animal portrayals is a distinguishing characteristic of the four Lower Columbia styles. Yakima polychrome sites have almost no animal figures. Animals are also painted infrequently at north Oregon rectilinear sites; a few lizards and unidentified quadrupeds are recorded. In contrast, more than 600 individual figures are painted or carved at sites along the Columbia River itself, in both the central Columbia Plateau and Long Narrows styles. Fewer than 75 of these animals cannot be assigned to a species. Mountain sheep and deer, identified by their characteristic horn and antler shapes, are most common.

The 12 rock art dogs are all shown in
hunting scenes chasing deer or mountain sheep. One site in northern Oregon shows deer being driven by dogs toward a waiting hunter. Birds are common. They include spread-eagled avians and stylized figures such as Spedis Owl that appear to represent mythical beings. Fish occur at only seven sites, usually as single figures. One clearly represents a salmon or steelhead trout. The scarcity of fish portrayals in this region’s rock art contrasts with their central position in the local tribes’ subsistence economy and the fact that Long Narrows has been a major fishing station for 8,000 years.

**Bear Tracks**
Bear paws, closed U or V shapes with claws at the wide end, are carved or painted at 15 sites. Groupings of three tracks account for nearly all 200 examples; the others have only single tracks.

**Rayed Arcs and Circles**
Arcs and circles with rays are the most common design element in Lower Columbia rock art: more than 1,000 are painted or carved at more than 120 sites. Many sites have 20 to 50 examples, often as several different forms in close proximity. Frequently a human figure has either a rayed arc above or rays projecting directly from its head.

The explicit meaning of these designs is unknown, but their number and consistency all over the western Columbia Plateau indicate that they conveyed special meaning to the artists who created them. While the specific meaning may have changed over time across the region throughout their use, it seems likely that many of the rayed arcs and circles were intended to symbolize the concept of supernatural power, which could be acquired by humans through a guardian spirit quest and similar ritual.

**Polychrome Rayed Figures**
The Yakima polychrome style consists primarily of arc faces, rayed arcs, and concentric rayed circles found at 44 sites. More than half of the figures are pictographs, and the great majority are polychrome red and white paintings. Often these polychromes present striking, multicolored panels of elaborate pictographs: concentric circles of alternating color and arc faces or simple arcs with alternating red and white rays. A polychrome lizard at one site shows alternating red and white ribs, toes and tail stripes. Several abstract human figures show alternating red and white ribs and toes or alternating red and white concentric-circle eyes.

**Stars**
Stylized four-pointed stars, often with an open circular center, occur frequently at sites with arc faces or polychrome arcs and circles characteristic of the Yakima polychrome style.

**Linear Geometric Figures**
Many figures are classified as linear geometrics. Most common as pictographs at North Oregon Rectilinear style sites, they also occur in smaller numbers at many Columbia River sites. The majority of these are rectilinear figures encompassing squares, rectangles, grids, ladder-like forms, crosses, ribbed figures, rakes, chevrons, triangles, and zigzags. Frequently several of these elements will be combined into a single design, some of which become complex, maze-like grids. These mazes can be very large; at several sites on the upper Deschutes and John Day rivers they are more than three feet in maximum dimension.

The meaning of these figures is unknown, though their size, number, careful execution, and stylistic similarities across northern Oregon indicate that they are not merely doodles. These rectilinear geometric designs are more elaborate than anywhere else on the Columbia Plateau and occur most frequently at sites representing the north Oregon rectilinear style.

**Tally Marks**
Tally marks are short, evenly-spaced vertical lines situated in a horizontally
Painted geometric patterns involving repeated diamonds, triangles and zigzags occur occasionally in the Lower Columbia area. They appear to be associated with the Yakima polychrome style.

Complex geometric abstract petroglyphs characterize north Oregon rectilinear style rock art.

INTERPRETATION

EACH OF THE FOUR distinct styles has its own characteristic motifs but does not necessarily represent only the art of one particular tribe. Motifs from two or three styles often occur at the same site, and all four styles share some general characteristics.

Yakima polychrome rock art in The Dalles-Deschutes area likely dates between approximately 250 and 1,250 years ago. This suggestion derives from relative weathering and dated occurrences of motifs such as the diamond, triangle and ribbed human or animal figures made on portable art objects found in archaeological deposits. The concentration of sites along the Columbia River between The Dalles and the mouth of the John Day River, coupled with the occurrence here of the more complex polychrome paintings, suggests that the style originated in this area and spread upriver as far as Umatilla, Oregon, and northward to the Yakima valley. The characteristic designs are absent from the Snake River drainage, the Columbia River between Pasco and Priest Rapids, and the lower Yakima River.

Rock art of the central Columbia Plateau style has a long time span. Some scenes at Petroglyph Canyon show herds of mountain sheep and hunters using either spearthrowers or spears, but not bows and arrows. Quite probably these panels predate the arrival of the bow and arrow on the plateau and are thus older than 2,000 years. The fact that they were highly weathered and fully repatinated when they were photographed prior to their inundation supports the suggestion of great age.

Sheep hunting scenes at other sites show the use of bows and arrows, indicating that this art was made after the time of Christ. The portrayal of horses and riders and one mounted man with a gun indicates that the style continued to be used into the historic period.

Long Narrows art occurs primarily at sites near The Dalles. The few examples occurring elsewhere include Spedis Owl carved on a boulder near Skamania, Washington; two portable Tsagiglalal carvings of stone and antler found on Sauvie Island, near Portland; and occasional motifs at northern Oregon rock art sites such as Jones Canyon on the lower Deschutes River and Butte Creek in the John Day drainage.

The elaborate, bizarre forms characteristic of the Long Narrows style are strikingly different from most of the art found elsewhere on the Columbia Plateau, and stylistic criteria show strong relationships to the conventionalized art of the Northwest Coast. A relationship is also apparent between the Long Narrows style and the more abstract anthropomorphic figures of the Yakima polychrome style found at two sites near The Dalles. It seems probable, however, that these elaborate polychrome paintings were late conventionalizations of the Yakima polychrome style and were created in response to the same influences that created the highly abstract figures of the Long Narrows style.

Long Narrows art is relatively recent. The earliest examples are simple face designs possibly carved as much as 1,500 years ago, but the bulk of the art dates from much later. Excavated examples of portable art indicate that most of the characteristic features of this style did not come into vogue until approximately 1,200 years ago. These include the portrayal of ribs and teeth and the general stylization of facial features into mask-like forms. The full elaboration of the Long Narrows style must have taken place within the past 1,000 years. The culminating, most highly conventionalized forms, such as Tsagiglalal, Spedis Owl and others date...
within the last 250 years. Based on excavation and exhaustive study of portable art objects, archaeologist B. Robert Butler has indicated that the grinning face motif is restricted to the period between approximately A.D. 1700 and A.D. 1840.

The stick figure humans, rayed arcs and circles, simple block body animals, hunting scenes, and tally marks generally resemble those found elsewhere on the Columbia Plateau. However, designs in this style are sufficiently distinct from the central Columbia Plateau style in their emphasis on abstract linear geometric figures and the depiction of so many lizards. The largest paintings, found at several sites, range from three to eight feet across—the largest single paintings on the plateau. Lizards occur at 14 sites, often with more than one per site.

The north Oregon rectilinear paintings probably span a long period of time. Some Columbia River petroglyphs of rayed arcs and stick figure humans are heavily repatinated, suggesting considerable age. A few superimpositions at sites near The Dalles show stick men or rayed arcs underneath later designs of the Long Narrows and Yakima polychrome styles, further supporting the idea that the earlier designs may predate the Christian era.

Extensive research led Rick McClure to suggest that both the rayed arc and stick figure motifs were made between 3,500 and 100 years ago. Horsemen, on the other hand, must date to the historic period. Added together, these clues imply that the north Oregon rectilinear style originated prior to 2,000 years ago and lasted until historic times.

**CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES**

Most Lower Columbia rock art appears to have functioned in the realm of shamanism. The primary designs in the central Columbia Plateau and north Oregon rectilinear styles are humans with rayed arcs, rayed circles and arcs and hunting scenes. These appear to be primarily "documentary," in the sense that they demonstrate the possession and use (through successful hunts) of personal power rather than its acquisition through the vision quest ordeal.

That Lower Columbia Indians, including shamans, obtained their power by vision questing is documented ethnographically. In contrast to the artists on the northern and eastern Columbia Plateau, the people of the Lower Columbia apparently did not frequently paint the symbolism of this ritualized acquisition. Instead, individual figures showing mythical beings and humans with rayed arcs predominate.

The rayed designs probably symbolize the concept of supernatural power, especially when they surmount humans, lizards and occasionally deer and...
mountain sheep as an aura possessed by the living being. The overall feeling imparted by the majority of these carvings and paintings is that they "advertise" a person's possession of power rather than recording its nature or how it was obtained. The rayed arc faces and rayed circles of the Yakima polychrome style epitomize this idea of a person's aura of power. In these paintings the person is reduced to nothing more than a simple face of dots and lines, but the aura is a striking arc or circle of alternating red and white rays.

The mythical beings characteristic of Long Narrows art also fit with shamanic activities. Quite likely many of these figures represent beings from the rich oral tradition of myths and legends documented for the Wishram and other Lower Columbia River tribes. Among these people folk tales told of such mythical beings as a fiendish child-stealing cannibal woman; a halfman, half-fish water monster; and a cave-dwelling land monster that ate people who ventured near. Indians described a child-stealing ogress as having an ugly face, big eyes and ears; an owl was her husband. The land monster was a lizard with a rattlesnake tail who left an enormous track as it crawled along. Some mythical beings protected humans. Various water monsters living in eddies and whirlpools of the Columbia River guarded fishermen and saved people from drowning.

Many of these mythical beings served as guardian spirits, providing people with desired abilities such as speed, bravery, hunting prowess or invulnerability to war wounds. Many could also be malevolent with the power to bewitch people. Evil spirits caused illness and death by entering a person's body, sometimes at the direction of a spellcasting shaman. To cure the sick person, relatives called on a shaman whose own spirit was more powerful than the bewitching one. Curing involved secret rites, medicines, purification rituals and the use of carved images of some spirits. Tsagiglalal, found frequently as small stone and bone carvings in cremation burials and as petroglyphs above large cemeteries in the Long Narrows area, was apparently a powerful guardian spirit used as part of a death cult ritual in the early historic period.

In addition to Tsagiglalal, other mythical beings portrayed in rock art resemble those in folk tales. Some grotesque grinning faces probably represent the cannibal woman, and Spedis Owl could be her husband or the owl that figured in other myths. Other birds could represent the mythical thunderbird, bringer of thunder and lightning. A polychrome face near The Dalles has a long zigzag projection ending in a fish tail. Could this be the merman—part fish, part man—who was said to live in the Columbia River? A figure with an abstract head showing big eyes and ears and a zigzag body ending in a rattlesnake tail might represent the mythical land monster.

Obviously we cannot positively identify most of these mythical beings. Except for Tsagiglalal, we have only verbal folk tale descriptions of them, and many may not have had a standardized artistic rendering. Only Tsagiglalal and Spedis Owl show multiple similar renderings. Much of the mythologically rich oral tradition of these tribes undoubtedly died out due to devastating early historic period epidemics and the subsequent conversion to Christianity of many of the remaining people. Our knowledge of the diversity of mythical beings is certainly incomplete. It seems clear, though, that many spirit figures were portrayed in rock art by shamans attempting to solicit these beings' power to cast spells or effect cures. What other motives might stand behind the creation of these fascinating figures we can now only conjecture.

During his brief lifetime Frederic Homer Balch published only one book—The Bridge of the Gods: A Romance of Indian Oregon. Continuously in print since it first appeared in 1890, Balch’s recreation of the Columbia River Indians’ heroic past is perhaps the finest example of historical fiction yet produced by a Pacific Northwest writer.

The novel tells the story of Laura Field, an intensely disenchanted product of “the poorest and most unhappy house on the prairie.”

At first glance Laura’s tale might seem merely the stereotypical plight of a naive farm girl who, abandoned by her rural seducer, returns home to die. Balch’s story resembles other popular fiction of the 1890s that reported the griefs of country-bred youths and girls when they first encountered the complexities and temptations of America’s rapidly growing urban centers. A closer look suggests that Balch’s concern extends beyond exploring a clash between farm and city. The predictable fate of a young woman who flees from parental abuse and the crushing round of endless farm labor is illuminated by the author’s awareness of what it means to be a woman imprisoned in this tiny corner of “the new West.”

Laura is not insensible to the beauty of her physical environment (Balch’s description of the two Field girls under the spell of Mount Adams’ awesome presence is magical) but she also realizes that the lofty peaks surrounding her are really a barrier shutting out everything that can nourish her mind or spirit. She longs to escape Camas Prairie, not merely to enjoy the bright lights and excitement of “the city” but also to acquire the education and refinement denied her at home.

As Balch makes clear, Laura’s desire is not for fashionable dresses and bonnets, but for the beauty of art and music.

As the closing scenes reveal, Balch’s story is ultimately about the predicament of young women, economically dependent and socially vulnerable, in a closed frontier society that offers no opportunity to evade its harsh realities. The story’s climax lies not in Laura’s public disgrace but in her discovery of the bond between her and her mother. The relationships of the women in the family, despite the unremitting hardships and cultural deprivations they endure, are revealed as the only civilizing forces in a male-dominated world.

Balch’s profoundly ironic title—Laura finally takes the only route “beyond Camas Prairie” available to girls like her—reflects his observed experience. During a single eight-month period in 1885-86 he saw three vibrant young women, all emotionally important to him, claimed by death. His beloved half-sister Allie Gallagher Condon died of tuberculosis in September. Like Laura Field, the stricken Allie—unaccompanied by her husband—had returned to her mother’s home at Lyle, fighting to live for the sake of two small children. “Rarely,” Balch wrote, “were sufferings so complicated and terrible borne with such sweetness and patience.”
This bucolic scene west of Mount Adams illustrates the Cascade terrain in which the fictional Field family’s dairy farm was located. Living first near Goldendale and later in Lyle, Frederic Balch grew up in Mount Adams’ shadow.

The following May his favorite cousin, Frances Snider Lyle, died from complications of childbirth.

Most painful, however, was the unexpected death of Geneva Whitcomb, who caught pneumonia while attending St. Mary’s Academy at The Dalles. Two scowmen took her body across the half-frozen Columbia to Lyle, then cut off by a severe blizzard.

The only lay minister available, Balch was asked to officiate at Geneva’s funeral, a duty that traumatized him for life. When he beheld Geneva’s still features, “I knew,” he later wrote, “that I was looking for the last time upon the face of the only girl I would ever love.” That sense of irredeemable loss reappears in Mrs. Field’s final parting from her daughter.

“How a Camas Prairie Girl Saw the World,” the existence of which is not mentioned by any previous researcher, was “discovered” in 1988 at the Hood River County Museum among other Balch manuscripts donated by Mrs. W. J. Enschede to the museum 70 years earlier. In a letter to Leonard Wiley dated November 6, 1970, Mrs. Enschede wrote that in 1918 she and her husband purchased an orchard near Hood River from Gertrude Balch Ingalls, Balch’s younger sister. While cleaning out the haymow of the old barn on the property, the Enschedes had found “many appleboxes full of [Balch’s] notes and manuscripts.” Unfortunately, Mrs. Enschede was unable to take all the material with her when she moved from the farm, but she managed to salvage the six extant chapters of Kenasket: A Tale of Oregon in 1818, an early draft of the opening chapters of The Bridge of the Gods (then called Wallalah after its Indian heroine), and “a complete short story in longhand,” the work now making its debut in Columbia more than a century after it was written.

The present editor is particularly grateful to Mr. Lew Merz of Parkdale, Oregon, who aided in finding Balch’s long lost manuscripts and graciously provided photocopies of them. “How a Camas Prairie Girl Saw the World” is published with the kind permission of Mrs. Madeline Edwards, Chairman of the Hood River County Museum Board, which owns the three Balch manuscripts.

Stephen L. Harris is chairman of the Humanities Department at California State University, Sacramento. Author of several books, he is presently completing a new biography of Frederick Homer Balch.
In the new state of Washington, on the eastern slope of the Cascade mountains, shut in by the forest and the hills, and isolated from all the world, is Camas Prairie. It is thirty miles over a rough mountain road to the Columbia and the nearest railroad is yet too far away for the locomotive’s whistle to be heard.

But the prairie itself is very rich and fertile, a great dairy country, famous through all that section for its butter. That is its chief product. All spring and summer the butter is made, every farm house devoting its whole time and energy to that employment. After every churning the golden rolls are packed away in the cool cellar, or springhouse, and in the fall, just before winter sets in, they are taken to the landing return laden with flour and sugar and the like. And then, too, is purchased the new bonnet that shall shine forth resplendent at the preaching in the old log schoolhouse; the former owing to their father’s shiftless habits, the latter to his despotic, tyrannical temper, of which his wife and daughters stood in continual dread.

The two girls, Laura and Jane Field, had the poorest and the most unhappy house on the prairie; the former owing to the latter to his despotic, tyrannical temper, of which his wife and daughters stood in continual dread.

But to go back to the conversation: “Oh, it’s all well enough to brag on how tough you are, Jane, but you aint me.”

“You bet I aint, and I’m mighty glad about it, too” was the prompt reply. “I’d have to foot the bills.

Here, too, life has its sorrows and its joys, veiled though they are under homely ways, and quaint mountain dialect. Here are enacted love romances and household tragedies none the less vivid and intense because the actors are clad in print or overalls. A little patch of meadowland at the foot of a wooded slope, a log barn stuffed full of swamp hay recently cut from the meadow, and a tumbledown corral around the barn. Half a dozen mild cows are comfortably chewing their cud in the dusty corral and two girls, sisters, are just leaving it coming home from the evening’s milking, each with a foaming pail of milk in either hand. The one last to go through the bars stops to put them up, securing the cows in safety behind them for the night.

“There!” she said wearily, stopping a moment before taking up the heavy pails again, “The milking done for tonight, thank goodness! But it will be to do agin tomorrow mornin’ and tomorrow night, and so it jist goes on forever like a big wheel goin’ ‘round and ‘round and never stoppin’. It’s just crushing the life out of us girls.” And the tears stood in the beautiful eyes of the speaker as she said it.

“I’ll take a darned big wheel to crush the life out of me,” responded the other girl, tossing her head.

Indeed she looked as if she might be bright. She was the younger of the two, a short, plump girl with a good natured but rather coarse face, and her saucy black eyes and turned up nose seemed to set the world at defiance.

The other was a slender girl, slow, languid, and yet not ungraceful, and her face was one of undeveloped beauty. It was a wistful disappointed face, with just a trace of sullenness in it, yet the features were regular, the color like a rosebud. Touched with the light of culture, it would be a lovely face.

Both girls were dressed in coarse gray dresses, with aprons made of some heavy blue material, and both wore those old style sunbonnets, so rarely seen now. But coarse and heavy as her garments were, they could not disguise the rare, though uncultivated, unformed beauty of the elder girl, Laura Field.

The two girls, Laura and Jane Field, had the poorest and the most unhappy house on the prairie; the former owing to their father’s shiftless habits, the latter to his despotic, tyrannical temper, of which his wife and daughters stood in continual dread.

But to go back to the conversation: “Oh, it’s all well enough to brag on how tough you are, Jane, but you aint me.”

“You bet I aint, and I’m mighty glad about it, too” was the prompt reply. “I’d
be 'shamed of myself if I wuz you. You haint no more spirit 'n a grasshopper; so there! Here you are a mopin' 'round and wishin' you wuz some one else and off somewhere, and the Lord knows what, and when the old man comes home mad like he's always doin' and jaws Ma and licks the kids, then you go off and howl. I'd like to see him or any other doggoned man make me cry. I just r'are right up and give him as good as he sends."

"Yes, and you git taken by the shoulders and shook, like he did last night."

"I don't care, I ain't but fifteen. Just you wait till I'm bigger an' then if I don't whale on the old man jus' the way he treats us and Ma, drat his ornery old hide! I don't care if I am a girl. I'll thump him," and her eyes flashed vindictively and she stamped her foot in the loose soil to give emphasis to her words, thereby raising quite a cloud of dust which began to settle in the pail of milk at her feet.

"There!" exclaimed the older girl, "You're agitin' dust in the milk."

"What of that! The butter goes to the market. We don't have to eat it," replied the girl, then she began to laugh at her own wit. "Come," she said, catching the pail and starting up the pathway to the house. "Dad'll be yellin' for us in a minit. Let's don't be afoulin' long this way."

The other girl took her bucket wearily and followed up the steep incline. The trail was rough and the cabin was some distance away, and they soon stopped to rest again. All the world lay hushed in evening stillness; they heard only the musical tinkling of bells and the lowing of cattle from the neighboring farmhouses. They were within the edge of the forest that encloses the prairie on every side. Around them the pines were clustering darkly, and above the tree tops, white and cold in the glitter of eternal snow, rose the giant form of Mount Adams. Both the girls felt, though neither could have given it expression, the subtle charm of that soft, hushed evening hour.

In a little while Laura spoke again. "I'm sick and tired of such a life. It's jist the same ever since I can remember. Milkin' cows and sweeping floors and dishin' up grub and bein' jawed by Pa. Think of them big cities where there's such fine things. Sadie Brown, she hez folks in Portland an' she went there on a visit oncet and you'd ought to hear her tell about the way they are fixed. Carpets and pictures and a big piano; everybody has such nice manners, and they talked about music and books and such things."
“An’ they go to the theatre and see fine plays, an’ hear lectures and grand singers an’, jist everything. On’ here it’s all talk about cattle and horse trades and the next dance. I don’t see why we can’t have education and a [chance] to be something like other girls, instead of eternally slavin’ like squaws. I tell you I’m jist sick an’ tired of such a life.”

The beautiful, wistful face looked unutterably weary as she spoke. One would have said the girl was sick at heart of her lot, completely tired, hopelessly despondent.

“Then why don’t you marry Jim Harkness?” asked the other girl, looking curiously at this puzzling sister of hers, whom she could never quite understand.

“Yes, marry him, and settle down to churnin’ butter and never hearin’ nothin’ but horse trade and cattle trade, and seein’ nothin’ but the woods all my life. No, I jist won’t. Let him hang ‘round long’s he will.”

“He’s hanged ‘round a long time a’ready, land knows. If Dad would only charge him for his board we might be rich yet. But, my sakes, Laura, he has a nice piece of land, an’ a dozen cows, an’ the boss team of the prairie, an’ a good cabin all ready for you. You can’t do no better.”

“Yes, I can. There’s a world outside Camas Prairie an’ I’m goin’ to see it, too.”

“Girls! girls!” thundered a voice from the cabin on the hill. “Are you goin’ to be all night comin’ with the milk?”

“The old man, drat him!” exclaimed Jane, seizing her pails and hastily starting on her way.

“There’s someone at the house, I know,” said Laura, following her sister’s example. “Pa called us in his company tones, but won’t he jaw though after the company goes cause we’ve been so late. I jist tell you what, Jane, I ain’t goin’ to stand it much longer.”

Sure enough, there was “company” at the house. On the long, low porch that ran the entire length of the cabin front was a young man standing, holding his pony by the lariat, “talking horse” to the girls’ father. There was no fence around the house; it stood open to all comers and he had simply ridden up to the front door as they all did, and stood holding his pony and talking.

He was a great, overgrown fellow with a painful, awkward manner; long, untrimmed hair coming down to his shoulders, and a broad good-humored countenance that just now was flushing timidly at the approach of the two girls. He bowed awkwardly without lifting his hat—nobody ever lifted his hat in Camas Prairie.

“Goodevenin’, Jane, Laura.” Jane responded pleasantly; Laura a little coldly, his attentions were not exactly to her taste.

“It took a thunderin’ long time for you girls to bring the milk,” grumbled the father, a coarse, petulant, domineering man, with bristling red hair and a face that looked as if it were rarely washed. “Why didn’t you get around sooner?”

“’Cause we jist didn’t, so now,” snapped back Jane dauntlessly.

“There, girls, there,” said the mother, a faded anxious little woman who lived in perpetual dread of her husband’s outbreaks of temper. “Go along and strain the milk.” And she hurried them off in time to prevent an explosion.

The young man’s face fell at their departure, but he stood his ground and talked unlimited horse to the old man in hope of seeing them again. By and by they came back and seated themselves, as was their wont, on the steps; the old man was called away and the youth was at leisure to devote himself to the girls, which he lost no time in doing.

“Say, girls,” he said, hastening to seat himself beside them, “There’s to be a sing at Millers’ tonight. Don’t you want to go?”

“A sing! Who cares for a sing!” replied Jane indifferently.

“Yes,” he said in a lower key, “but there’s goin’ to be a dance afterward. Bill Saukes will bring his fiddle an’ we’ll just have a way up time, and lots of fun. Yer Pa’s a church member an’ objects to dancin’, but can’t you manage to get off somehow?”

“Yes, of course we’ll go,” exclaimed the volatile Jane, while Laura objected.

“’Praps there’ll be whiskey there an’ somebody’ll get drunk, like they did out at Simpsons’.”

“No, there won’t,” said Jim, “by Jingo, our boys will shut down on that. You’ll come, won’t you, Laura?” and his love for her shone in the great coarse face as he
As the pigs rutting in the dooryard of this settler's log cabin demonstrate, living conditions in the newly created state of Washington could be primitive. Batch's heroine, Laura Field, fled this environment to seek a more fulfilling existence in Portland, then a city of 50,000.

looked at her, ennobling it for the moment. At length the unwilling beauty gave her consent and he passed into the seventh heaven of awkward delight. The next thing to be considered was Dad's consent.

Jane solved the problem with characteristic sagacity.

"If we ask the old man he'll jaw 'round an' won't let us go, an' we'll miss all the fun, but if we just slip off after dark, he can't jaw till we git back, an' we won't care then. We'll have had our fun."

"Yes, but he'll take it out on poor Ma while we're gone."

"Darn his hide," said the chivalrous young lover. "I'd like to kick him till he'd promise to treat you girls better."

"Would you though?" exclaimed Jane, with a sudden vivacity. "I jist wish you would. Say, I think that if you'll ketch the old man out some dark night and whale him, jist everlastingly mau him," clenching her fists as she spoke, "I'll, I'll kiss you, Jim, an' I'll make Laura kiss you, too, so there."

At this Jim turned red to the very tips of his ears, and Laura, giving him a contemptuous glance, went indoors. Jane stayed behind to arrange with the rustic lover when and where he was to meet them.

Starting out from the house a little after dark that evening, they found him awaiting them by the big pine tree beside the trail at the foot of the hillside on which the house was built. He was holding three horses, two with sidesaddles. He helped them up, and off they went.

There was quite a gathering of young people at Mills' that night. As Jane said, "They jist everlastingly kep a'comin". They were a wild, hilarious lot, those young people. There was endless laughing and joking, an uproar of boisterous though innocent merriment. At length they all gathered around the organ and the "sing" was held, from Gospel Hymns Combined, the only song book in general use in the prairie. After that came a very carnival of fun, ending at last in a dance.

Among the guests was a stranger, stopping for a few days in Camas Prairie. He was a handsome, dashing young fellow and had, according to his own statement at least, seen the world. And one would have thought it from his many accomplishments, accomplishments which he seemed perfectly willing to display.

Sing! He sang better than Hank Smith, who had once taught singing school. And when it came to dancing, he proved himself to be by far the best dancer in the room. As to his conversational abilities, Jane said of him that he "talked a blue streak," from which it must not be inferred that the hue of his conversation was in any way dismal, but merely that he talked rapidly and interestingly. He captivated all the girls, for which it is unnecessary to say that all the boys cordially hated him.

He went home that night with Laura Field, cutting out poor Jim Harkness, who was obliged to be content with escorting Jane home.

From that time on the young stranger, Mr. Sam McCallister, devoted himself to Laura Field. There was something about the graceful, innocent girl who was so fair in her undeveloped beauty, yet with the simplicity of a child, that charmed him, bad as he was. For this man was bad, hard and evil to the core. Perhaps he loved her for the time, though it was an intensely selfish love.

He liked to see the sweet face flush and the brown eyes grow large with wonder as he told of the great world, of the glitter and gaiety of distant cities, of ballrooms and parlors where he always figured as the hero. He liked to see her eyes fill with tears as he told her of adventures, perils at sea or in distant lands. Never before had so lovely and so innocent a woman been under his
He became the embodiment of that love him with a most deep and worshipping love.

He opened a new world to her, and he became the embodiment of that world. She had never seen the ocean; now, through his picturesque, vivid talk, she saw it, blue, majestic. She had never been in a city; now she went with him down the crowded streets, carriages rolled past her, the rush and murmur of commerce and of pleasure was in her ears. She saw the art galleries, lighted up with pictures and music. When she was with him she lived in a golden haze where all that was graceful and fascinating in city life was blended in a vague but bewitching confusion. There was a world outside Camas Prairie and he was its hero.

Sometimes he said things that jarred on her, sometimes she felt vaguely that he was a little bold, a little coarse; then she chided herself for the thought and only loved him the more for her moment's disloyalty.

So time went on. Jim Harkness hardly ever came to see her now. He lived to himself in his cabin and rarely went anywhere. Desolate it must have been to him to live day after day in the cabin where every log had been chipped and notched to its place with sweet thoughts of how she was to grace it with her presence. He was disappointed, moody, heartbroken. For a time old Field was friendly with the young stranger, then he quarreled with him as he did eventually with everyone, ordered him out of his house and forbade Laura to see him. Things could end but one way. A night came when Laura kissed her mother and hugged Jane with unusual tenderness before going to her room. In the morning it was empty. She was gone, and after an anxious day they learned that she and Sam McCallister had taken the boat together that morning for Portland, whence they were to go somewhere, they would not say where. She sent her love to her mother and asked her forgiveness. She and Sam were to be married in Portland, some time they would come back, that was all. She had gone out to see the great world that lay beyond Camas Prairie.

One autumn night two years later, the wind was howling up the great canyon of the Columbia, bitter with the chill of early winter. A dreary winter's night was settling in, a few flakes were beginning to fall, there was every indication of a severe snowstorm before morning.

Up the rough mountain road that led from the steamboat landing on the Columbia to Camas Prairie two wayfarers were walking. One was a woman on horseback holding a baby in her arms, the other a man walking by the horse's side, his hand upon the horse's reins, quieting him.

It was Jim Harkness, awkward and shambling as ever, but with a look of infinite tenderness and pity in his face, the gentleness of a woman in his manner toward the poor waif whom he was conducting over that wild mountain trail. She had landed from the boat that afternoon, sick, destitute, no one to meet her, no way of getting home. Fortunately Jim had happened to be at the landing, and he was now taking her home. She was riding his horse and he was walking by her side, would have to walk all the thirty miles that stretched between them and the prairie. She and the baby were wrapped in his overcoat, which he had insisted on putting around the shivering, thin-clad form. He needed the coat himself, the wind cut through like a knife, but he scarcely felt it. Broken, faded as she was, he would have died for her, even now. It was the saddest journey he ever made. The big tears rolled down his face in the darkness but he did not let her know. He cheered her up all he could, asking no questions of her past, avoiding with infinite tenderness and pity in his face, the gentleness of a woman in his manner toward the poor waif whom he was conducting over that wild mountain trail. She had landed from the boat that afternoon, sick, destitute, no one to meet her, no way of getting home. Fortunately Jim had happened to be at the landing, and he was now taking her home. She was riding his horse and he was walking by her side, would have to walk all the thirty miles that stretched between them and the prairie. She and the baby were wrapped in his overcoat, which he had insisted on putting around the shivering, thin-clad form. He needed the coat himself, the wind cut through like a knife, but he scarcely felt it. Broken, faded as she was, he would have died for her, even now. It was the saddest journey he ever made. The big tears rolled down his face in the darkness but he did not let her know. He cheered her up all he could, asking no questions of her past, avoiding with a delicacy born of his great compassion for her everything that might touch on it in any way.

And she sat, drooping over the baby, answering him only in monosyllables, trying now and then to hush the child who slept but fitfully, waking up to cry from time to time. Once she said penitently, "Jim, you're awful good to me, after the way I've treated you." His voice faltered as he tried to answer her, and so he only drew the overcoat closer around her and went on in silence for a little while.

The fast-falling snow, caught in sudden gusts of wind, drove in their faces, stinging like blows from a lash, while its increasing depth crackled under the steps of horse and man. Night darkened around them; a hundred times they had been lost but for Jim's perfect knowledge of the road. Now and then lights twinkled on them from some cabin window, suggesting the warmth within. Then trees or intervening hillocks would shut out the friendly gleams and they would seem all alone in the night and snow. And the child, cold and shivering, began a long pitiful wail that the poor weak mother tried in vain to hush. Can you wonder that the tears came often to Jim's eyes as they went on their sorrowful darkening way!

Late that night they reached her father's cabin. It was bedtime, the family were about retiring. Old Field was at the fireplace performing that last act of all Camas Prairie householders before going to bed, the Camas Prairie curfew, so to speak. He first dug a kind of grave.
A S OLD FIELD BENT puffing and grumbling over his task and Mrs. Field stood nearby, the meek recipient of his grumbles, there came a tap at the door that startled them both. Then it was opened from the outside and a poor, forlorn wreck of a woman, a baby in her arms, crossed the threshold. Behind her, against the background of driving snow, the light fell on the familiar face of Jim Harkness.

They stared at her in amazement, then the mother knew her and sprang forward with a great cry of joy and closed her daughter to her breast. “I’ve come back at last, mommy,” sobbed the girl, as she felt her mother’s arms around her.

And then the father realized the situation. He took one step forward and flung open the door that Jim Harkness had closed behind him as he entered with Laura. “Not much you haint come home, git out of this house. You left it once and you haint acommin’ back so easy. Git out o’ my house, I say; you ain’t no child of mine no more.”

But the mother, the drudge he had trodden underfoot for years, turned on him with a fury that appalled him.

“Yo, Tom Field, dare you talk about driving your child out into the storm? Your home! Who has slaved more than I have for years to keep up this house and all I’ve got for it is to be treated like a dog! This house is as much mine as yours and she’ll stay in it. No, not another word, touch her if you dare!”

And then the poor mother lavished caresses and endearments on her child, and Jane, laughing and crying, could not pet her enough, and Jim went out into the storm with that bitter heartache we have when we see the life of one we love hopelessly wrecked and can do nothing to help.

Shall I tell you what followed her homecoming, how she shrank from everyone, even the good-natured, affectionate Jane, how she cared to see no one but her mother and her baby? A wonderful tenderness seemed to be opening up in her heart for her poor neglected mother, for so many years the domestic slave. She petted her, she called her endearing names, she seemed to entwine her very heart around her mother.

Jim would have given her a home and made her his wife even now, but she would not listen to him, would not see him, although she sent him kind, grateful messages from time to time. It was only in connection with this that she told them Sam had kept his word and made her his wife. But beyond that she would tell them nothing. There were things about her that hinted at a terrible life of mistreatment and abuse, and deserted she certainly had been at the last, but she kept the whole dark story to herself, and they never knew.

Terribly shattered from the first, she grew worse as winter set in, and at last seemed dangerously ill. Jim rode thirty miles through the deep snow to Goldendale for a doctor. The doctor refused to go. “It was too cold,” he said, “too far, the snow was too deep. It was sheer madness to undertake such a trip in midwinter.” Jim clenched his great brawny fists and said some few words that made the doctor suddenly realize that worse things might befall him than a long journey through the snow, and he went. He said there was no hope; exposure and suffering had sapped her very life and that the end was near.

It was near, so near [that] it came that day. When she felt death approaching, she bade them all goodbye and sent them out, all but her mother and her baby. Those two she kept with her till the last.

The child was asleep in its cradle, beside the bed, and she would not let her mother waken it. “Let her sleep, poor little thing,” she said quietly. “You will never let her forget me, and you’ll always be good to her. But then I know you will.”

She lay awhile in silence, clasping her mother’s hand in hers, looking into the worn, pale face to which she herself had added some lines. “Mother,” she said at length in her low, weak tones, “if I could live my life over again I’d try awful hard to be good to you.”

“You are good to me, you always have been,” cried the mother passionately. “How can I give you up?” It was terrible to give up this daughter who had been so loving to her of late; it was giving up the one sweetness her life had known.

Very soon the mother felt the hands that were clapping hers grew cold, though loving, regretful eyes still looked up into her face. “Hadn’t the preacher better come in and offer prayer, Laura? He’s in the other room, waitin’.”

“No, no,” she protested feebly. “You pray, Ma. You’re better than any preacher.”

“Child, I can’t pray, I never prayed out loud in my life, and besides, I ain’t good enough.”

“Please, Ma,” and the wistful pleading of her eyes was more than the mother could resist. She knelt down and, still holding the hand of her dying child, said brokenly,

Oh, God, be merciful to my little girl. She’s goin’ from me on the long, black road where I can’t go with her, an’ I’ve got to let go of her. Won’t thou take hold of her in thy lovin’ hand. Help her, take care of her in the darkness of the shadow of death. Oh, my poor girl, my little lamb. Oh, God, help her!” and the incoherent prayer ended in a passion of sobbing.

The fingers that yet clung around hers were like ice and their chill seemed to reach her very heart. She looked up, and through tear-dimmed eyes she caught one last look of love, and the weak lips faltered, “I guess God heard, Ma.”

Then a shudder shook the slight form, there was a faint sobbing breath, and she lay very still. She had gone to a world beyond Camas Prairie.
**CORRESPONDENCE**

**NIPSIC to NIMITZ Revisited**
I was very disappointed to read Robert C. Carriker's review of *NIPSIC to NIMITZ* (Winter 92/93). The way the review was written, one would have thought the information was not worth reading due to so many historical errors. While spelling errors are not to be encouraged, few of the mistakes would have been caught if not for the willingness of the authors to make this the best book on the subject by including an errata sheet. They should be congratulated, not panned!

*NIPSIC to NIMITZ* is the only book published on an industry very important to western Washington. There have been some previous histories put together by apprentices within the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard itself, and in 1947 an annual-like book was printed. This later book had a photograph of everyone working in the yard in 1947 but next to nothing on the yard's history. On this 50th anniversary of World War II, historians might be thankful that a history of the shipyard that played such an important role in winning the war has been published. While not everyone is interested in military history or naval shipyards, this book nonetheless fills a long-standing vacancy. There are many photographs and a centennial history such as this deserves a longer look.

The book's authors Louise Reh and Helen Ross received the Navy Department's Meritorious Public Service Medal for this publication. This is one of the highest awards the Navy can give to civilians. The book, now in its second printing, is a well-rounded historical presentation of an institution that has affected hundreds of thousands of people.

Suzanne Anest
Silverdale, WA

**Bush Blunder**
The Winter 1992/93 COLUMBIA article on George Washington Bush misstated that Michael Simmons was a member of Washington's first Territorial Legislature and that he introduced a resolution exempting Bush from the 'whites only' provision in the Donation Land Claim Act. It was actually Daniel Richardson Bigelow, one of the two members of the first council from Thurston County, who submitted the petition to grant George Bush and his wife their land.

Shanna Stevenson
Thurston County Historic Commission

**Additional Reading**
Interested in learning more about the topics covered in this issue? The volumes listed here will get you started.

**The Boeing 307 Stratoliner**


**Frontier Conflict**


**A Northwest Tale**


**A Sense of the People and the Land**


**Remnants of a Vanished Culture**


“It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own”
A New History of the American West
Reviewed by David L. Nicandri.

Richard White, John & Burdette McClelland Professor of History at the University of Washington, has become one of the best known and most respected historians of the American West. The work under review is likely to become a bestseller within the Western history field. Every serious reader of regional history should have a copy.

The title of White’s book is perfectly emblematic of its spirit. Drawn from an old cowboy song, the title is the first clue that this truly is a new history of the West. By starting in the Southwest White subtly redirects attention away from the standard interpretation of a westward-moving American frontier. Instead of the glorified sagas of successive generations of English-speaking pioneers, White’s West “is a product of conquest and of the mixing of diverse groups of people.”

“It’s Your Misfortune” is broken into five major sections, each with its own overture containing an expression of a summary thesis that binds together several topical chapters, with numerous lists of sources for further reading that are in themselves quite worthwhile. Early on White asserts that the West is not a natural region but a created one. A Chapter on territorial government places Isaac I. Stevens’ celebrated difficulties within the larger context of the breakdown of law and order throughout the West in the 1850s; witness “bloody Kansas” and the Mormon troubles in Utah.

Within his section on the economic structure of the West White offers an unusually good synthesis on the emergence of radical industrial unionism spawned by the Western Federation of Miners and its “prodigal son,” the IWW. A chapter on community formation contains insights into the movement to establish Victorian moral authority (embodied in middle class women) over rambunctious mining and cattle towns. A chapter on “Social Conflict” makes sense out of such disparate phenomena as Indian wars, Chinese deportations, the Centralia Massacre, outlaw gangs and the range wars.

The two concluding sections of the book have a principal focus on the role of the federal government in shaping the region as we see it today. Instead of liquidating ownership to vast tracts of land as it had in the 19th century, the federal government began to actively manage its holdings in the West via dams, parks and the national forests. The latter White asserts were originally designed to protect vital watersheds. Los Angeles became the dominant city within the region and took its place amidst the ranks of the nation’s great metropolitan areas. Here, the pivotal role of World War II receives appropriate amplification. As the author summarizes, the “rise of the West to a position of power within the United States has paralleled the rise of the United States to world power.”

Not only did the Pacific Coast serve as the staging area for the Pacific theater, much of the region’s modern industrial base was put into place by the federal government. The Defense Plant Corporation supplied capital for 58 percent of the West’s aluminum plants and 71 percent of the aircraft manufactories built during the war. California and Washington were also disproportionate beneficiaries of Cold War era defense contracts.

White ends his magnum opus on a note of pessimism. Citing the “aura of defeat” surrounding the West’s small towns, ranches and family farms, White sees the rural West of the future as one akin to Indian reservations that are alien places controlled by someone else. Readers of all persuasions will find much to contemplate in this first post-modern textbook of Western history.

David L. Nicandri is the director of the Washington State Historical Society.

Art of the American Frontier
The Chandler-Pohrt Collection
Reviewed by Robert C. Carriker.

Milford Chandler nurtured his youthful interest in Native Americans by occasional visits to the Field Museum in Chicago and by regular train trips to nearby Indian communities in the Great Lakes states. An entrepreneurial automotive engineer with disposable income, Chandler acquired a substantial collection of 19th-century tribal clothing and accessories between 1915 and 1926.

In the 1920s, shortly after moving to Flint, Michigan, Chandler met 15-year old Richard A. Pohrt, a young man who mirrored his own interest in things Indian. Chandler advised Pohrt to begin collecting on his own—advice he followed with a passion, particularly among the Plains tribes of Montana. The two remained friends for 55 years. As the Pohrt Collection grew, the Chandler Collection diminished in size, the result of financial reverses that forced Chandler to sell off portions of his hoard. In 1966 the two collections were combined. Today the Chandler-Pohrt Collection is principally owned by the Detroit Institute of Arts.

From March 11 to May 4 the Seattle Art Museum will show “Art of the American Indian Frontier,” an exhibition composed of selections from the Chandler-Pohrt Collection. The exhibit catalogue prepared by David W. Penny is both a useful tour guide and a wonderful souvenir. Woven textiles, bags, beadwork, necklaces, rawhide paintings, smoking pipes, tools, vessels and utensils are captured in 225 color plates and 34 duotone prints. Pacific Northwesterners with an interest in and knowledge of Columbia Plateau and Northwest Coast tribal art objects have a rare opportunity in
Northern Plains materials. Penny’s informative essays, his precise identification of items and the bold photographs make this book required reading for Seattle’s patrons of the arts.

Fleeting Opportunities
Women Shipyard Workers in Portland and Vancouver During World War II and Reconversion
Reviewed by Andrea Peake.

Fleeting Opportunities is an interesting case study and a valuable addition to the scholarship on women during World War II. The strength of Kesselman’s work resides in 35 oral history interviews she and the Northwest Women’s History Project conducted with female residents of Portland, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington, all of whom worked in shipyards before, during and sometimes after V-J Day. The interviews represent a broad spectrum of race, class, age, marital status and work experience. Kesselman realizes there are special problems inherent in oral history interviews after decades of reminiscing have shaped and reshaped recollections. Kesselman sees this not as a problem but as a strength and skillfully combines the interviews with precise documentary information.

Wartime industries in the Portland-Vancouver area permanently transformed the two cities and their economies. In 1939 only 2 percent of the nation’s shipyard work force was female, but by 1944 that percentage had increased tenfold. In the Portland-Vancouver area women exceeded even that growth, making up a whopping 27 percent of the labor force in the Kaiser shipyards. During the height of production approximately 40,000 women were employed in war-related work alone the Willamette and Columbia rivers.

Women faced great challenges when they entered the shipyards, long considered among the most “masculine” of occupations. Examples of the ambivalent attitude of male workers toward females can be seen by reading The Bo’s’n’s Whistle, a Kaiser yards publication. Clearly, many male workers, at least at first, resented the women. Wartime women in the shipyards faced many additional challenges, but none was more difficult than the search for child care. The problem of child care for working mothers nationwide reached crisis proportions during the war years. Happily, the Kaiser shipyards took a leadership role in solving this problem. By 1943 Henry Kaiser equipped his factories with child care facilities, thereby providing a much-needed service for working mothers.

Kesselman’s work is an engaging insight into the lives of the “pioneer” women who labored in the Portland-Vancouver shipbuilding industry. There is much in this short book to sustain a person’s interest in regional, labor, wartime, and women’s history.

Andrea Peake has done graduate work at the University of Washington and is currently working in the field of women’s history at Arizona State University.

Spokane & The Inland Empire
An Interior Pacific Northwest Anthology
Reviewed by Stephanie Edwards.

The Pacific Northwest has seen a large influx of newcomers. Most come to the area, on both sides of the mountains, because of its beauty, employment opportunities, recreational activities and water supply. In Spokane & The Inland Empire, editor David H. Stratton, professor of history at Washington State University, draws together a group of essays that relate to the development of one portion of the region, the Inland Northwest. Of the eight essays, five were presented at the “Centennial Forum Series: Spokane and the Inland Empire” given in 1981 to observe Spokane’s centennial celebration. The essays include reflections on historical geography, agricultural history, Native Americans, transportation, labor history, architecture and financing.

Stratton selected the essays to provide a broad background. Geographer Donald W. Meinig’s essay describes the region’s development through imperialism, regional formation and national integration. Wayne Rasmussen’s article emphasizes irrigation as a regional growth stimulus. Two essays on Native Americans are included. Clifford E. Trafzer discusses the history of the Palouse Indians, and Harvey S. Rice describes the various dwellings used by Southern Plateau tribes. Arguing that Spokane would not have become important if Edward H. Harriman had won control of the Northern Pacific Railroad, Albro Martin explores the impact of James J. Hill’s victory over his competitor. Historian Carlos Schwantes explores Spokane’s labor history up to World War I. The life of Kirtland Cutter, Spokane’s premier architect, is retold by Henry Matthews. John Fahey discusses the importance of Dutch investment in Spokane’s development.

Numerous maps and illustrations enhance these articles. Though some essays are more effective than others, they are all easily read. While Stratton’s anthology includes important subjects, articles on schools, minorities, women and church history are missing. Notes are provided, but an index would have made the book more useful. This work contains a wealth of information that aids the reader in understanding the development of Spokane as an important area in the region. Newcomers to the area can read this volume to gain an appreciation of the Inland Northwest’s heritage.

Stephanie Edwards, a native of Walla Walla, has graduate degrees in both history and library science. She is head of Special Collections at Gonzaga University’s Foley Library.

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