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Photographs by James H. Barker
Text by James H. Barker with the assistance of Robin Barker
Foreword by Mary C. Pete

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Overland Trail

150 YEARS

Water, water, every where. Nor any drop to drink," complained the ancient mariner, marooned on a ship in the middle of the sea. He would have found many a sympathetic ear among the emigrants who were going to the gold fields of California or the lush farmlands of Oregon Territory in the middle of the 19th century. Even though their route followed the Missouri, Platte, and Sweetwater rivers, keeping the water keg filled was not an easy task. "Camped without water" was a recurring phrase in the emigrant's diary. Going without affected the mood of the travelers, as Charles Gray, an emigrant on the way to California, so graphically tells us:

At a wood, we took in quite a lot and also some water, before I could get the casks full, the train moved on. Gen. Darcy had no reason for this great haste to get to the diggings! So the consequence was that although we had supper & a little water to wash dishes with—yet we had nothing to drink during the evening when we were thirsty—nothing to wash in the next morning, or cook with till 12 O'clock [sic] the next day, when I luckily fill'd 2 canteens with dirty water to drink. This may appear a very small matter, but it was a great annoyance & I merely mention it to show how great a deprivation the loss of a few gallons of water is on the plains.

Guidebooks advised the emigrants on where to camp and find fresh water, but they were not always up to date or checked for accuracy. For example, if in the year a guide was written numerous storms had filled the rivers, plenty of water could be found. A year later the travelers might find streams dried up and the expected water long gone. The stopping places suggested in a guidebook did not always prove practical either. A loose wagon wheel, a missing cow or a sick child often delayed the journey, and an unplanned stop had to be made.

At other spots along the trail no water was obtainable because the river followed terrain that would not accommodate the covered wagons. Sometimes the water simply disappeared under a sandy bed or became a dirty drizzle. "[I]mpossible to get water on account [sic] of the banks of the river being so high & difficult to ascend," bemoaned Celinda Hines, who traveled to Oregon Territory in 1853. Then the only thing to do was to grab a pail and go looking. "We had to get our water out of the river and carry it up a hedge of rock sixty or eighty feet high and very steep & then a quarter of a mile to our wagons," recalled Basil Longsworth who came to Oregon in 1853 with a large wagon train. "Very laborious," observed Abigail Scott, another early Oregon pioneer, after she had toted water for camp up a half-mile-long river bluff.

In certain areas of the trail, particularly along portions of the Platte River, the water was sullied with noxious bacteria and contained "salt or alkali substance, white as snow and half an inch thick." Many attributed the recurrent diarrhea to the polluted water and doctored themselves with vinegar, an all-purpose drink that was said to cure any ill. They even fed it to the cows that became sick from drinking too much alkaline water. One such remedy that was supposed to work every time was credited to Captain John Fremont, the noted explorer and author of the first reasonably accurate emigrant guidebook for the Great Platte River Road: "REMEDY FOR COWS. Take one-half pint each of lard and syrup; warm just sufficient to mix good, and if the animal is bloated, add to this one-half pint of good vinegar and drench them immediately."

Finding fresh water was a daily task. When the water keg was empty dinner was cold hardtack with nothing hot to wash it down. Emigrants devised many schemes. When the streams and rivers dried up or ceased to appear the crafty travelers obtained water "from the road." They would make a "well" by digging a hole two to four feet deep in the sandy

By Jacqueline Williams
About one hundred yards from the road... we saw several wells, but all the water was salt.

Even the hardy oxen could succumb to exhaustion and thirst on the long journey west.

Soil near the river or stream, lower a pail and haul out water. “Traveled about 19 miles & camped without water or wood. Got some water out of the road. Cold cold cold,” bewailed Mary Burrell. Some overlanders considered this water source superior to that obtained from rivers. Others disagreed and believed the so-called “well water was more apt to be warm, dirty, and often alive with tiny creatures.” S. H. Taylor, an early Oregon pioneer who left detailed journals about his trip west, took this view and warned that “everyone ought to have too much sense to use water from the stinking holes dug by some foolish persons in the margins of ‘slews’ and alkaline marshes.”

To get rid of river water mud and silt the emigrants used cornmeal as a makeshift filter. A drinking vessel was filled to the top with the muddy water and a handful of cornmeal added. After 20 minutes the mud, or at least most of it, was carried to the bottom with the cornmeal. The water on top would be reasonably clear and, with care, could be siphoned off. When cornmeal was not available, alum (aluminum ammonia sulfate) was substituted. If there was no time to wait, the water was drunk, mud and all.

It was commonly said among the emigrants that before they reached Oregon territory everyone had eaten a “peck of dirt.” One diarist wrote that they “generally get a pint of mud out of every pail of water.” Though we don’t know the size of the pail, a pint of mud is an enormous amount of dirt. Speculating on what would happen if someone “swallows twice his allotted amount of dirt (one peck),” a young bride named Helen Carpenter took the philosophical attitude that their overland struggles made them “impervious to what would kill ordinary mortals.” The Carpenters journeyed to California in 1857.

Cornmeal was also used to remove the sulfurous taste of the water in the Humboldt Sink. James Hutchings reported:

About one hundred yards from the road... we saw several wells, but all the water was salt. One being a little fresher than the rest I took a quart of it, and mixing it with a little panola [dried ground cornmeal], drank every drop, and was not thirsty after it altho the day was hot.
To make the alkaline water palatable the pioneers mixed it with vinegar or citric acid, sugar and essence of lemon and had an instant lemonade. Extracts of various flavors were available and emigrants usually included one or two in their provision box. An advertisement in a St. Louis newspaper described the product.

Concentrate Extract of Lemon—This extract is of such strength that a small phial produces more than a gallon of lemonade, thus at all times affording to the emigrant a pleasant beverage. It is highly recommended by physicians as an excellent preventative of scurvy.

Unfortunately, the Food and Drug Administration was not there to guarantee that you got what you paid for, and emigrants were sometimes disappointed with their purchase. This happened to the Tootle family in 1862 when they were traveling to the mines in Colorado: “Mr. Tootle brought with him a preparation of lemon (as he thought) but it proved to be tartaric acid and sugar, he had been cheated. It was refreshing, though rather a poor substitute for lemonade.”

Another source of water and a great curiosity were the Ice Springs in present-day Wyoming. Here the emigrants used large chunks of ice that when melted back at the camp site made water for cooking. The preferred method for obtaining the pure ice was to dig down four to six inches, cut a piece about as large as a pail, wrap it in a blanket and bring it back to camp. The ice was “as clear as any I ever saw and more so,” reported one satisfied emigrant.” Others said it had a bad smell and “tastes strongly of alkali.” To counteract that problem one group of men “gathered several buckets full [of ice], from which we have had Mint Juleps in abundance.” These travelers from Kentucky were obviously carrying on the Bluegrass State’s tradition of banishing the cares of the day with a tall, frosty drink.

Besides using ice from the Ice Springs, ingenious cooks took advantage of snow in the mountains. Several Fourth of July celebrations featured ice cream desserts. Thanks to Charles Parke and his detailed diary, an explicit recipe for snow ice cream survives:

**Having plenty of milk from two cows we had with us, I determined to [do] something no other living man ever did in this place and on this sacred day of the year, and that was to make Ice**
Covered wagons were nicknamed prairie schooners. For four to six months the wagon was the emigrant family's living room, kitchen, bedroom and storage room.

Cream at the South Pass of the Rockies... I procured a small tin bucket which held about 2 quarts. This I sweetened and flavored with peppermint—had nothing else. This bucket was placed inside a wooden bucket, or Yankee Pale [sic], and the top put on. Nature had supplied a huge bank of coarse snow, or hail, nearby, which was just the thing for this new factory. With alternate layers of this, and salt between the two buckets and aid of a clean stick to stir with, I soon produced the most delicious ice cream tasted in this place.

The various types of natural spring water that appeared in Wyoming, Idaho and Utah also provided water. Soda Springs, now beneath the waters of the Soda Point Reservoir in Idaho, was especially popular. That natural marvel was described in several diaries as springs of water of an alkaline taste bubbling up through the rock and forming mounds of the mineral from 2 to 20 feet high and with bases of proportional size and gas sufficient coming up to keep them constantly boiling... and the opening at the top resembles a large kettle.

The springs were surrounded by natural stone walls. In some the water had a reddish cast. Celinda Hines maintained it "equalled the best soda water... It boiled up out of the solid rock—as they all do... The vapors has the same effect which the inhaling of hartshorn [smelling salts] produces." Enterprising pioneers mixed the spring water with sugar and vinegar and considered it "makes a drink equal to any prepared soda in the States."

Another popularly named water source, Beer Springs, reminded some of the taste of "small beer," a weak brew that has a long history in this country. According to one account, Beer Springs was different because the water "is not forced up by gas, like the Sodas, but runs spontaneously." Henry Allyn said he "drank nearly a pint and it had no bad effect, but set me to belching wind from the stomach, on which it set very light."

Captain John Fremont speculated that "Beer [S]prings received their name from the...
... drank nearly a pint and it had no bad effect, but set me to belching wind from the stomach, on which it set very light.

Finding water for cooking and drinking was but one of the difficulties the emigrants encountered on their long journey west. Observing that period from the safe distance of 150 years we marvel at their courage, ingenuity and tenacity, their ability to “get water from the road” or enjoy a mint julep made with last winter’s snow. That they persevered and found ways to cope with such a fundamental challenge to survival made it possible to withstand their long, strenuous camping trip. Their ability to adapt and “make do” not only made the trip successful, it helped prepare them for an arduous life in the new territories. Certainly a bit of Yankee ingenuity was tucked into those all-purpose provision boxes.

Jacqueline Williams is a free-lance food and nutrition writer/educator and co-author of four cookbooks. This article is based on material from her new book Wagon Wheel Kitchens: Food on the Oregon Trail (August 1993).
While some Skagit Tour-goers took the boat ride on Diablo Lake, others strolled on the top of Diablo Dam. This view looks north, toward Sourdough Mountain.

By Paul C. Pitzer
Late on a summer evening in 1939 a group of tourists wandered along a wooded path beside ponds stocked with colorful goldfish and trout. Here and there they passed flower gardens of exotic and even tropical plants seemingly out of place in Washington’s North Cascades. As they climbed a steep hill, a beautiful stairstep waterfall illuminated by red and blue floodlights appeared before them. In the background melodies drifted through the tall Douglas firs. Charmed and entertained, most would remember the experience for a lifetime. And that short hike was only one small part of the old Skagit Tour orchestrated and planned by J. D. Ross, Superintendent of Seattle City Light.

Ross actively promoted public power. He used every avenue available to him to convince residents of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest that they should establish their own hydroelectric projects and acquire the facilities of privately owned operations. Of all the devices Ross used to sell public ownership, the most unique, seductive, and effective was, without question, the old Skagit Tour.

James Delmage McKinzie Ross, known as J. D., was born in 1871 in Chatham on the Thames River on the lower peninsula of Ontario. He arrived in Seattle in 1901, having just completed a trek across Canada and into Alaska in search of gold. A self-taught electrical engineer with little experience, in 1902 he approached city engineer Reginald H. Thompson with plans for the construction of a transmission and distribution system for the municipal electric plant that Seattle voters had just approved. After the successful completion of this project, Ross continued to work as an electrical engineer with Seattle City Light, becoming its superintendent in 1911. He replaced Richard Arms, the first superintendent, who lost his job when the voters recalled Mayor Hiram Gill that year.

Politically astute and increasingly powerful in Seattle, Ross soon gained a popularity there that rivaled that of the city’s mayors. As a proponent of public power who advocated that cause with evangelical zeal, Ross made enemies throughout his career. He particularly angered private power supporters and backers of Puget Sound Power and Light Company, with which City Light actively competed. This situation came to a head on March 9, 1931, when Mayor Frank Edwards accused Ross of misusing public funds, among other things, and fired him. Edwards’ backers went so far as to accuse Ross, a Republican and a Presbyterian, of being a communist. A recall election on July 13, led in part by political activist Marion A. Zioncheck, removed the mayor. The city council immediately reinstated Ross as superintendent. During the brief interim Ross went to New York and acted as consultant for that state’s power authority. While there he became acquainted with Franklin D. Roosevelt, then governor of New York.

After Mayor Edwards’ recall Ross’s influence as a proponent of public power increased regionally and nationally. He remained Superintendent of Lighting for Seattle City Light until his death in 1939. He also served as consultant on the Federal Power Commission’s national power survey in 1934 and 1935. President Franklin Roosevelt considered him as possible director of the Tennessee Valley Authority. In 1935 Ross worked as an engineer for the Power Division of the Public Works

OPPOSITE PAGE: The incline or funicular hoist, built in 1927, elevated railroad cars up the side of Sourdough Mountain to facilitate construction of Diablo and Ross dams. Through the 1930s it also carried tourists, something it continues to do today during the tour season.
Administration and later that year the president appointed him to the Securities and Exchange Commission. On October 9, 1937, Secretary of the Interior Harold L. Ickes appointed Ross the first administrator of the newly formed Bonneville Power Administration (BPA).

Throughout his years of public service Ross worked to convince Seattle and Northwest residents that public power would directly reduce the cost of electricity in the areas it served. And, Ross argued, it would indirectly lower charges elsewhere by acting as a "yardstick" against which private utility rates could be measured. He hoped that cheap, abundant power, readily available, would attract industry and build Seattle into the premier city of the Pacific Northwest.

Despite Ross's influence, selling the concept of public power met strong resistance. The lower rates provided by City Light should have cheered Seattle voters, but detractors argued that City Light actually cheated them through clever bookkeeping and nonpayment of taxes. To counter this and sell the idea of public power, Ross willingly gave talks throughout the Northwest. In an effort to build clientele and increase the demand for power, Ross arranged to have the city sell, on credit when necessary, electric heaters, ranges, refrigerators and other appliances. City crews installed, free of charge, whatever its outlets sold and maintained them in good working order for minimal repair fees.

All of this enhanced City Light's image and bolstered its popularity. But equally significant in helping to win the hearts of its customers and sell the concept of public power was the Skagit Tour. A master showman and promoter, Ross capitalized on the beauty of the North Cascades to woo supporters and leave them with warm feelings about City Light and its efforts on the Skagit and elsewhere. Fondly remembered today by those who toured City Light's Skagit Project in the 1930s, the revised version in the 1950s and '60s, or the newer, truncated excursion of more recent times, the Skagit Tour stands as J. D. Ross's premier public relations achievement. Over the years thousands of people took the trip. The tour's influence in garnering support for Ross, City Light and public power was formidable.

During 1916 and 1917 Ross petitioned the federal government to grant Seattle the right to develop a hydroelectric project on the Skagit River in the North Cascades. To promote the idea locally he often led Seattle's city council members and Mayor Ole Hanson along the roads and trails of the upper Skagit where he mesmerized them with facts and figures touting the river's million horsepower potential. Intoxicated with fresh air and impressed by the rushing river, the tall stands of virgin timber and the rugged peaks capped with snow and glaciers, the city fathers swung their support to a proposed development that opponents deemed both chimerical and outrageously expensive. Despite technical problems and increased costs that delayed construction, City Light began operating the power plant at Gorge Creek in 1924. This was the first of the three dams (Gorge, Diablo, and Ross) that today send electricity 80 miles to Seattle. Seattleites who wished to visit the new project found it isolated and remote. Since few could get to the Skagit to see it themselves, rumors about the undertaking proliferated. On June 13, 1922, the Seattle Municipal League advertised a public visit in The Seattle Star. The caravan that left Seattle at half past six on the morning of June 19 took three days to inspect construction of the weir at Gorge Creek and the still incomplete powerhouse two...
miles downstream. They were among the first to marvel at Ladder Creek Falls just behind the powerhouse. They returned with first-hand impressions that countered rumors and helped promote the project. Several more groups followed later in the year and again in 1923.

Since the initial Skagit development eventually cost over twice the original estimates, some in Seattle grumbled about such an expensive undertaking in so distant a wilderness. Ross immediately saw the potential for an expanded tour that would generate much-needed goodwill for City Light and its project, as well as for public power. In 1924 City Light advertised six one-day excursions to the Skagit at a cost of $7.50 per person. Each group could accommodate a maximum of 40 people.

The next year Ross ordered city crews to clean up the work camp at Newhalem in preparation for an enlarged and more elaborate tour. They painted the dormitory buildings used previously by construction crews and built trails around the Gorge Powerhouse (then called the Ross Powerhouse), through Ladder Creek Falls, and along the Skagit. The first regular two-day tour started in June 1926 with 27 members of a women's civic organization. They drove to Rockport in their own cars and from there traveled to Newhalem to spend the night. The next day they viewed Gorge Dam, ate in the camp cookhouse and wandered through Ladder Creek. In 1926 and 1927 about 800 people took the tour.

Ross had acquired a love of plants and an interest in horticulture from his father who raised fruits and vegetables on the family's 15-acre farm in Ontario. He decided to indulge his hobby by enhancing the Skagit project with colorful and even exotic plantings. In 1928 Ross wrote to Theodore F. Kane, supervisor of the powerhouse, instructing him to have the women of Newhalem plant flower gardens around the powerhouse and along the trails to the falls. He allocated $1,000 for seeds and shrubs. "Later we can get interest there and the Skagit admits of being a Fairyland, though it would cost money," concluded Ross. He imported a dozen orchids and had them positioned along the trails that led to Ladder Creek. Six-colored floodlights illuminated the falls at night so that tourists could enjoy the area in the late evening.

In 1929 over 2,000 people visited the Skagit for five dollars per person. Beginning in 1930, from April through November, weekend tours for 150 people not only included the train ride, meals, and Ladder Creek, but also an extended trip along the river for seven miles to see the newly completed Diablo Dam. A highlight of the adventure was a spectacular ride 300 feet up the side of Sourdough Mountain on a cable-railway incline lift—the size of two railroad cars—that had facilitated construction of the new dam.

In 1931 each tour group could accommodate 260 people. By 1935 the number had risen to 500. City Light then charged just over three dollars per person and scheduled...
three trips each week. Such large numbers outgrew the limited dormitory accommodations, prompting Ross to have work crews erect temporary platform tents each summer for the overflow.

Ross continued to expand the scope of the tour. He had the city use its small tugboats to ferry people on Diablo Lake to the site of the proposed Ruby Dam (which became Ross Dam). He increased the capacity of each trip with additional barges and later with the construction of an excursion boat he named the Alice Ross after his wife. The federal government rejected his proposal to turn the Skagit River into a National Park centering around the tour and Ladder Creek Falls.

Ross expanded the lighting yearly in Ladder Creek. By the mid 1930s it presented a spectacular display of alternating colored lights playing in the stair-step falls. Along the trails tropical and domestic plants fascinated visitors. Pools beside the pathways held trout and goldfish. Loudspeakers hidden in the trees broadcast music throughout the gardens in the evenings—Ross himself selected the recordings.

At the Diablo Camp, in the area near the base of the incline lift, Ross had his crews build a zoo of sorts. His menagerie of domestic and imported animals grew to include black squirrels from Mexico, pheasants, mountain sheep, an albino deer, nine cockatiels, six African lovebirds and, at its peak, more than 150 other birds and animals. The United States Department of Agriculture supplied 200 Chinese chestnut trees for the project on an experimental basis. Most died. A banana tree amazed visitors for a few seasons. Despite the efforts of City Light workers to transplant the more delicate plants into greenhouses or inside the warm powerhouse during the winter, few survived more than three or four seasons. Friends and acquaintances from all around the country provided Ross with animals for the zoo and cuttings or seeds for the gardens. Ross himself paid for much of the work out of his own pocket.

Ross envisioned a development along the Skagit that would make today's environmentalists shudder. On the hillsides above the lake that Ruby Dam would someday form Ross wanted a resort area for Seattle citizens. To enhance the natural beauty he thought of planting 5,000 rhododendrons and 5,000 pink dogwood trees around the powerhouses and along the lakes. He suggested 10,000 ornamental flowering cherry trees scattered among the cliffs overlooking the project, with an assortment of lilacs, clematis, wisteria and azaleas for good measure. None of this ever materialized, but the tour, as it developed, became an ongoing success.

The old Skagit Tour always lost money. Ross deliberately kept the cost low so that more people in Seattle could afford the outing. The trip seldom lacked for customers although during the 1930s City Light never advertised it. Word of mouth by satisfied participants carried its praises throughout Seattle and, despite the economic problems brought on by the Depression, people filled almost every excursion to capacity. That is strong testimony to the tour's popularity and impact.

No road extended into Newhalem until after Ross's death. He insisted on that in order to keep out "spies" from rival private power agencies. Once a group boarded City Light's train at Rockport it became a captive audience ready to experience a "soft-sell" on public power that was sugarcoated with the area's charm and beauty.
The old Skagit Tour changed and grew, seldom remaining exactly the same from one year to the next. In 1940 the trek reached its fullest development. It emerged as an elaborate production carefully orchestrated to enthrall customers and send them home as advocates of public power with happy thoughts about its potential blessings sandwiched among pleasant scenic memories of the trip.

During this latter period the tour occasionally started at King Street Station in Seattle. From there a special train took patrons to Rockport where they changed to City Light’s railroad for the ride 25 miles upriver to Newhalem. More often people drove themselves to Rockport and walked through the floral gardens around the station while they waited for the train to Newhalem. The ride up the river took just over an hour. City Light crews put the tourists in open gondolas, weather permitting, so that they could experience the full impact of the scenery in the narrow Skagit Canyon.

Once in Newhalem guides assigned the visitors to dormitories or tents. The men roomed together in one area, the women in another. Complications occasionally arose when mischievous Seattleites, familiar with the tour routine, encouraged newlyweds to use the tour as an inexpensive honeymoon. A man retaking the tour in the 1960s said that had happened to him and his bride. “There were ways around [the standard sleeping arrangements],” he said with a smile, “if you were clever enough.”

Their baggage settled, the tourists assembled for an afternoon walk over a suspension bridge crossing the Skagit and through the forest to the small Newhalem power plant that had supplied electricity during early construction. On their return they ate dinner in the Gorge cookhouse. Served family style, the meal usually included two kinds of meat, an assortment of vegetables, rolls, pies and ice cream. Of all the memories people took away with them from the old tour, they most fondly recalled the food. Nobody left the cookhouse hungry.

After dinner and a short rest City Light guides showed
This decal became the emblem of the rejuvenated though truncated 1960s Skagit Tour.

The Alice Ross traveling east across Diablo Lake toward the future site of Ross Dam, what then was the anticipated Ruby Project.

Guides carried anyone who could not manage the climb. Colored lights lit the dark paths, and more lights illuminated the falls in delightful displays of red and blue that turned the setting into the fairyland that Ross had envisioned. Next the tourists returned to the camp and attended a dance held in the meeting hall. When they finally went off to bed, soft music drifted through the night to lull them to sleep.

At six the next morning the same loud-speakers blared “Lazy Mary, Won’t You Get Up?” The cooks prepared breakfast at 7:30. Then everyone boarded the electric
train that took them along the river, past Gorge Dam, to Diablo. There they visited the zoo and rode up the side of the mountain on the incline lift. As they walked about three-quarters of a mile to Diablo Dam, out onto it and then to the boat dock on the lake behind it, workers opened the spillway gates and let water cascade over the concrete and rock ramparts. This provided an impressive view of what then was the highest spillway dam in the world—a title Diablo held briefly during the early 1930s.

In groups of 250 at a time, the Alice Ross ferried the tourists up the lake to the Ruby/Ross site. As they returned the pilot cut the engine, letting the boat drift for a few minutes as more hidden speakers played music that wafted across the lake while the visitors took in the majestic sight of Thunder Mountain, Pyramid Peak, Colonial Peak, and Sourdough Mountain. It was the romanticized stuff of picture postcards.

They arrived back in Newhalem in time for lunch. Often the cooks gave them extra pies to take home. Then they packed and took the train to Rockport. While they had been sightseeing upstream the crew at the railroad station washed their cars, serviced them, and had them ready for the drive to Seattle.

In 1941, the last year of the original tour, 15,877 people visited the Skagit. Well over 100,000 people saw the project during the 14-year period that the old tour officially operated. And that does not include the earlier trips and all of the groups that made special arrangements.

When Ross died in 1939 the driving force behind the tour expired. World War II brought the excursions to a halt. The government's desire to secure the project against possible espionage, plus the need to conserve rubber, which prompted gasoline rationing, ended the trip for the duration. Construction of the Ruby Project, by then renamed Ross Dam, made tours impossible for a few years after the war ended. People who remembered the tour, however, pressured City Light to resume the excursions. In 1953 City Light announced a series of one-day trips with 90 people in each group. From mid-July through Labor Day City Light conducted the tours on an experimental basis. They were a shadow of the old production. No zoo remained at Diablo, and lack of maintenance since 1942 had left the Ladder Creek area dilapidated and overgrown. Barges replaced the Alice Ross, which City Light had junked in 1948.

Road construction and removal of the railroad from Newhalem to Diablo disrupted the tours in 1954 and precluded them in 1955. In 1956 City Light resumed limited tours with 50 people on each trip. In 1958 two tours daily, Wednesday through Sunday, took 65 people each through the project. A small used Navy landing craft replaced the barges that had ferried people to the then complete Ross Dam and Powerhouse. After 1959 the capacity of each tour rose to 100.

In the 1970s, with the construction of the North Cross-State Highway (State Route 20), and the formation of North Cascades National Park and Ross Lake Recreational Area, people at last acquired easy access to the Upper Skagit. City Light abbreviated the trip that now starts in Diablo, includes a ride up the incline lift and around Diablo Lake, a tour of the Ross Powerhouse, and a meal. Even this truncated version of the Skagit Tour is still popular and requires reservations well in advance.

But the old Skagit Tour that J. D. Ross orchestrated and used so well to generate good relations with Seattle's citizens is long gone. Few remember it anymore. In the 1930s, however, it successfully filled a public relations role that helped bring about the success of City Light in Seattle and public power in the Pacific Northwest.

On March 5, 1951, 400 employees of the Puget Sound Power and Light Company changed employers and started working for Seattle City Light. The transfer was part of City Light's acquisition of Puget Power's holdings inside Seattle's city limits, which for the first time gave the municipally-owned utility a monopoly on power distribution rights throughout all of Seattle. That achievement completed a process that J. D. Ross had urged and strived to accomplish since the early 1930s.
IF A FIRE BOMB HITS THE HOUSE

Both the Japanese and the Nazis now put explosive charges in their incendiary bombs. Their intent, of course, is to keep us away from the bombs until serious fires get started, and to scatter the fires by explosion. These "burst" charges may go off at any time up to seven or more minutes after the bomb falls. There even may be two charges.

Short-range attack on one of these bombs, before the explosion, is dangerous. The heaviest possible stream of water, thrown from behind the strongest available cover, is the best attack. Control the fire first; then turn attention to the bomb.

Bombs falling where they will do no harm should be left to bum themselves out. Keep away from them.

Bombs falling where they may start fires should be attacked promptly, but from behind cover. A brick wall usually affords protection, walls of frame houses give only fair, NOT complete, shielding.

Use a solid stream of water on all types of fires. If the bomb has not exploded, do your fire-fighting in a prone position, behind a doorway, or play water from outside the house through a window. Take precautions against flying glass.

EQUIPMENT:

A—If available, use a garden hose, because it throws water a good distance and provides a continuous stream.
B—A pump can is the next best weapon. It can be refilled as often as necessary.
C—A stirrup pump with a can or bucket of water is effective.
D—Wet sacks, wet pieces of blanket, or a wet broom are sometimes useful to batter fires out.
E—Water, thrown with a can or dipper from a bucket, will help control the fire.
F—Sand or dirt thrown with a shovel will help extinguish some fires—such as oil fires—but should not be relied upon if water is available.

Exposure to fire and flames is dangerous. Do not expose yourself to fire. Keep covered—don’t expose yourself.

WASHINGTON STATE DEFENSE COUNCIL
and Tacoma War Council
Distributed as Part of the V-Home Campaign

IN 1942 THE WASHINGTON State Defense Council issued a poster entitled "Official Instructions, Air Raids" for posting in every home. It detailed "How to prepare for a raid" and "what to do in a raid." In September 1942 a Japanese navy plane dropped an incendiary bomb that resulted in a small fire in the mountains of southwestern Oregon. Keenly aware of the damage such devices could cause in the civilian population, the WSDC issued this supplement in April 1943 to be glued onto its 1942 poster. Although hundreds of incendiary devices were launched via balloon over the western United States, none ever caused significant damage in any populated areas.
The WRECK of the

VALENCIA

On February 24, 1903, a short distance out from Seattle's docks, a collision occurred between the 252-foot iron steamship Valencia and the smaller, 110-foot wooden steamer Georgia. For the Valencia, built in 1882 by William Cramp & Sons of Philadelphia and operated by the Pacific Coast Steamship Company, it was an ominous forerunner of the disaster that overwhelmed her three years later on the rocky coast of Vancouver Island.

A newspaper account of the first incident described severe damage to Valencia when she was rammed by the smaller boat just as it was departing for Hood Canal. "Six of the old iron plates were damaged, one being pierced completely through; two beams, two frames and two fore and aft stringers were crushed and broken." The wood-clad Georgia was reported to have come off "so lightly that she continued on her regular run very much as if nothing had happened." There were no injuries to the passengers or crew of either vessel, but Georgia later joined her victim in Moran Brothers Shipyard for repairs.

Valencia's final voyage began Saturday, January 20, 1906, under the command of Captain Oscar Johnson. Leaving San Francisco in late morning bound for Victoria by way of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, she carried 108 passengers and 65 crew members. Early Sunday morning, as she passed Cape Mendocino, the steamer encountered low visibility that soon became dense fog.

By Monday evening, navigating by compass and streaming a patent log (a mechanical device to measure distance run through water) astern and "pushed by a strong breeze,"

The Valencia leaving Seattle in a happier time.
Valencia could have been within hearing distance of the fog signal at the Tatoosh Island Lighthouse and Umatilla Lightship, at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca.

Soundings were begun at six o’clock, but without bottom contact. At half past nine the reading was 80 fathoms. Soundings were then taken every half hour until 11 o’clock, and then at 15-minute intervals, with decreasing depths of 60, 40, 30 and then 24 fathoms by 11:45 p.m. Five minutes later, with speed reduced to “slow ahead,” Valencia struck a reef just off the rocky cliffs of Vancouver Island, nine and a half miles southeast of Cape Beale Lighthouse. The lookout stationed on the bow gave no warning until it was too late.

Orders for full speed astern were immediately given, but Valencia, driven by surf and wind, pivoted on the reef until her stern was facing shore. With water rapidly pouring into the hold, Captain Johnson prudently ordered five lifeboats lowered to the rail and lashed there, his intention being to launch them in the morning since Valencia’s stern was firmly grounded and above water. The ship’s searchlight provided illumination to aid the crew in this work.

The Valencia boards passengers at a pier for one of her more successful Pacific voyages.

Six lifeboats plus a seventh used as the ship’s workboat had the capacity for 181 people; three life rafts on board added capacity for another 44 people. Passengers and crew aboard the Valencia totaled 173.

In the darkness of the early hours, despite the captain’s order to wait until daylight, terrified passengers scrambled aboard the waiting lifeboats. In the confusion the boats were clumsily lowered into the black, surging water. The situation worsened when the searchlight lost power. Three of the boats were “cockbilled” (unevenly lowered) and swamped, while the other two got ashore with nine survivors. Roughly 40 to 60 people were lost in this bungled attempt to reach the shore. Nearly all of the 65 crew members stayed on board.

As Tuesday morning dawned the nine survivors of the early abandonment overcame their exhaustion and struggled up the steep cliffs. At the top they found both telegraph and telephone lines, which they followed with great difficulty through dense undergrowth to a lineman’s hut. Inside was a telephone with which they were able to contact a Mrs. Logan at Clooose. She in turn called her husband at Carmanah Point Lighthouse. The nine remained in the hut until an aid party arrived.

The first overland attempt to aid the shipwreck victims arrived at the site about noon on Wednesday. The party consisted of the assistant lighthouse keeper and two other men from Carmanah Lighthouse. At the top of the cliff they sighted the wreck just in time to observe its final condition, and very shortly after their arrival the last of the upper works collapsed and all the survivors thereon, from 60 to 80 persons, except a few who clung to the rigging, were swept into the water and perished, some of them being drowned and some being beaten to death against the rocks. All of these persons had on life-pares, and quite a number were carried out to sea through the breakers and perished there.

As the ship disintegrated, those in the rigging must soon have found themselves in the water as well. Testimony during the Steamboat Inspection Service (SIS) investigation confirmed that all aboard Valencia wore life preservers, also that some of those who “were carried out to sea through the breakers” clung to floating wreckage and might have been rescued had one or more of the various rescue ships’ boats

Two Sweethearts Lost

LOS ANGELES, Friday, January 26, 1906. Death among angry, hissing breakers has come to two Los Angeles sweethearts who sailed on the Valencia with the anticipation of wedding bells at the end of their voyage. Iva Shaver and Earl Parker had planned for marriage when he took up some of the lands which are drawing homeseekers to the State of Washington. With Mrs. ... Rosenberger, Miss Shaver’s mother, the pair had taken passage on the Valencia at San Francisco... (Seattle Times, January 26, 1906)
been rowed down to the line of breakers.

Of the 173 people aboard Valencia, only 37 survived. None of the 17 women or 11 children were saved. Without success, crew members and some male passengers repeatedly tried to induce the terror-stricken women to board two of the life rafts whose combined capacity was 36. A third, smaller raft was lost in launching. Subsequent events proved that many of the women and children might have survived on the rafts. In the end the savagery of the elements, coupled with their fear and inability to endure the harsh physical conditions, dictated their fate.

The Pacific Coast Steamship Company in Seattle, Valencia's owner, received news of the wreck on Tuesday, January 23. The company immediately transmitted orders to its office in Victoria for Captain N. E. Cousins, scheduled to arrive shortly from Seattle in the company's steamer Queen. He was directed to land his passengers and steam to the scene of the wreck. He arrived off Carmanah Lighthouse about ten o'clock Tuesday night, and "keeping a course within a mile or two of the shore, he observed the wreck about half past nine in the morning and laid to at that point, about a mile or a mile and a half from the shore."

Captain Cousins observed evidence of life on the wreck that Wednesday morning. No rescue boats were lowered, however, because the captain decided that hazardous weather conditions made it extremely dangerous to send boats from the Queen through heavy surf to the wreck. He made his decision with the concurrence of five experienced captains on board as advisors. This inaction later prompted severe criticism from a commission charged with investigating the wreck.

A second Pacific Coast Steamship Company vessel, City of Topeka, arrived in the Queen's vicinity at about 11:30 Wednesday morning. She had been dispatched from Seattle the night before under the command of Captain T. H. McCann. The company's assistant manager, J. E. Pharo, was
also on board. He had instructions to direct the rescue operations of both ships. The City of Topeka carried extra crew members plus a doctor and two nurses. Cruising the Strait of Juan de Fuca with poor visibility, the ship sighted a raft with 18 survivors and took them aboard. After further search the steamer spent the night in the strait near Neah Bay. The next day Pharo ordered City of Topeka back to Victoria to resume her schedule. Later, this decision to abandon further rescue attempts was strongly criticized.

Two Canadian vessels, the small ocean-going tug Czar and the wrecking steamer Salvor, arrived on the scene at about the same time as the Queen. Contrary to the eyewitness account of the assistant keeper from Carmanah Lighthouse who viewed the final wreck around noon on Wednesday, the two Canadian captains said they saw no evidence of life at the disaster site. This may have been due to misty weather or too great a distance from the wreck scene. They left within half an hour of their arrival, deeming it too dangerous to attempt rescue from seaward. Making for Bamfield on Vancouver Island, they hoped to organize an overland rescue party.

None of the four rescue vessels that arrived at the scene on Wednesday—Queen, City of Topeka, Czar or Salvor—sighted the second Valencia raft, which was launched at

Lost His Mother When Valencia Went Down

J. H. WILKINS, a young man from Los Angeles reached this city early this morning and will depart tonight for Victoria in an effort to locate the body of his mother, who went down on the Valencia. He went at once to the Northern Hotel and spent the morning interviewing the survivors of the wreck who came in last night on the revenue cutter Grant. None of them, however, remembered seeing Mrs. Wilkins either before or after the boat was wrecked.

“My mother left on the Valencia for a pleasure trip to Seattle in a party of seven,” said young Wilkins this morning. “As least that was the information she wired me. I see by the passenger list that a Mrs. Wilkeson was a passenger, and that must have been her. I am going at once to Victoria and from that port I will get as near the scene of the wreck as possible, I expect to recover her body.”

The boy was absolutely heart-broken over his loss, and he could not talk without the tears streaming down his face.

(Seattle Times, January 29, 1906)
about the same time as the one the City of Topeka picked up. The second raft, with 10 people on board, drifted in a westerly direction around Cape Beale and into Barkley Sound where it grounded on Turtle Island. Local Indians found it there and helped the four people still alive. The other six had perished from exposure.

The fact that two rafts drifted through the surf along with miscellaneous flotsam from the wreck would seem to present a strong case for rowing one or more rescue boats down to the surf line. Such rescue boats could easily have been launched from any of the four vessels.

Had it not been for downed telegraph lines, tugs known to be at Cape Flattery could have been contacted for aid. The Pacific Coast Steamship Company claimed its attempts to obtain other tugs were fruitless. Two other Canadian vessels, the whaler Orion and the tug Lorne, came to the area on Thursday, January 25. They patrolled the vicinity without finding any survivors.

Had Valencia’s hull not broken apart much earlier than would be expected of a 25-year-old iron ship, more lives might have been spared. Captain Cousins criticized the Pacific Coast Steamship Company on this point in an interview published by the Seattle Times on February 2, 1906:

Knowing that the Valencia carried sugar for about 15 years, and knowing also the manner in which sugar honeycombs iron and steel, why did they allow her to run with those bulkheads in such condition that they were utterly useless when the ship struck?

In the book Modern Ship Stowage the need for care while and after carrying sugar is explained:

Sugar left on iron work may eat and corrode the metal. After discharging sugar ... the holds and bilges should be washed out with salt water and then, if possible, with fresh water to insure proper drying.

In accordance with its federally mandated duty, a customary investigation by the Steamboat Inspection Service (SIS) began in Seattle on Saturday, January 27, 1906, five days after Valencia struck. It ended 1,132 pages later in a three-volume report released on March 17.

As the hearings progressed indignation grew among local mariners, newspapers, the Chamber of Commerce and others over the partiality shown toward the steamship company by local inspectors Bion B. Whitney and Robert A. Turner.

There was apparent a studied effort to direct public attention to misdoings, either real or imaginary, of some of the survivors, and thereby permit to escape criticism of the ones who were in position to save some of the lives that were lost. ... Why was Captain Cousins of the Queen directed to go on his course

Valencia passengers rescued from a raft by the City of Topeka.

while he was working out a plan by which he could reach the wreck? Could the tugs Czar and Salvor do more than they did do? These questions are to the point and should be determined by the most searching inquiry. (Seattle Star & Herald, February 10, 1906)

Doesn’t it look to you, Mr. Reader, as though there might be some inclination on the part of inspectors Whitney and Turner to give the Pacific Company a little the best of it? (Seattle Star, January 29, 1906)

Second Officer Patterson [Peterson] of the Valencia, says Life Boats Could Have Reached Stricken Vessel Any Time During Tuesday or Wednesday—Investigation Now Being Carried On. (Headline, Seattle Star, January 29, 1906)
Master of the Steamer Orion Says Those in Charge of Rescue Fleet Are Guilty of Cold-Blooded Murder. Claims to Have Taken His Vessel to Within One Hundred Feet of Spot Where Valencia Went Down, But Was Late. . . . Charges of a most sensational character, denouncing Capt. Cousins, Capt. Patterson and those on board the fleet of steamships which were lying off the wreck of the Valencia as being guilty of nothing less than cold-blooded murder in not sending the vessels in to the ill-fated steamer and the rescue of those on board are made by the master of the Norwegian whaling steamer Orion, according to statements made to passengers on the steamer Queen City by a seaman of the whaler. (Seattle Times, February 3, 1906)

Criticism of the SIS continued to mount, placing so much pressure on Secretary Victor H. Metcalf of the Department of Commerce and Labor that he designated the so-called Slocum Commission, a panel previously appointed to investigate the sinking of the vessel General Slocum, to review the SIS report. This action prompted the following telegram, sent by the Seattle Star on February 1, 1906:

Review by the old General Slocum investigation commission of testimony being taken here before Inspectors Whitney and Turner in the matter of the Valencia wreck will not bring results. Charge is openly made by newspapers and public that local inspectors are so partial to the Pacific Coast Co., owners of Valencia, that little good can come of their investigation. Witnesses are cross-examined only when their testimony reflects upon owners and officers and crew of vessel and then in an effort to disprove their statements. Slocum board should conduct investigation—not review testimony.

Remains of Valencia at wreck site. One mast and the top of the pilot house are still visible among flotsam.

Identifies Daughter as Valencia Victim

VICTORIA, B.C., February 12. As a result of the identification of one of the bodies buried this morning as an unknown victim of the Valencia, by H. L. Rowland, of Los Angeles, as his daughter Mabel Rowland, aged 18, it is known that three more were lost in the steamship disaster than originally stated, thus bringing the total dead to 132.

H. L. Rowland and E. L. Hazard, of Los Angeles, arrived here, the former seeking two daughters, Lulu and Mabel, and the latter a son, Roy Hazard, all three of whom were known to have taken passage on the Valencia at San Francisco under assumed names.

Young Hazard, when he left Los Angeles with the girls, left a letter telling of the departures of himself and the two girls, but the letter was not mailed until after the disaster, and the Los Angeles men then knew for the first time that their children were among the missing. (Seattle Post-Intelligencer, February 13, 1906)

On February 5 The Seattle Star was forthright in its criticism of "the farce of [an] investigation [by the SIS]. . . . As the gentlemen were proceeding it meant nothing else but a clean case of whitewash for the Pacific Coast Steamship Company. Evidence of a direct nature which in effect would have placed much of the blame on the corporation was attacked and that of no consequence developed very cleverly."

On February 6 Washington State Congressman William E. Humphrey called on President Theodore Roosevelt to appoint a special commission to investigate the wreck, stating that he "did not believe that the [Seattle inspectors] . . . are competent" to handle the investigation. He said "it is an openly expressed belief in Seattle that the Pacific Coast Steamship Co. has too much to say in the present inquiry." (Seattle Star, February 6, 1906)

The secretary speedily acquiesced to the demand for an entirely new investigation. On February 7, 1906, President Roosevelt ordered the secretary to create a "Federal Commission of Investigation" to hold independent hearings in Seattle and "make thorough and complete investigation of all circumstances attending the wreck of the steamer Valencia."

Roosevelt did not leave the selection of members to the secretary; he named his own choices for the commission, including Captain William T. Burwell, United States Navy, Commandant of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

On February 14 the commission convened its hearings, interviewing all parties concerned. It adjourned March 1 and issued a 53-page report, including 6 pages of
recommendations and 10 pages of conclusions. Among its findings were the following:

(1) The Valencia went ashore through the faulty navigation of Captain Johnson, her master.

He appears to have been a man of good character, sober, and with a good reputation as a seaman, but his management of the vessel on this trip was unsatisfactory on several points . . .

(a) He acted upon the singular belief that his log was "overrunning 6 per cent," a belief that would have been justified only upon the ground that both the current and the wind were against him, whereas the wind was certainly nearly aft, and it is common knowledge among all masters along this coast that at this time of year the normal current flows toward the northward and accordingly with the course of the vessel, both of which facts would make the vessel go faster over the ground than through water, and the log would therefore fail to register the entire progress of the vessel over the ground, and thus the log would underrun, if anything, rather than overrun.

(b) Although he saw no land or lights with certainty after passing Cape Mendocino at 5:30 am Sunday, he did not commence to take soundings until 6 pm Monday, thirty-six hours later, when his last definite point of departure was at least 450 miles behind him.

(c) Even after he began to take soundings, he did not take them with sufficient frequency. He did not interpret correctly the soundings taken, and, so far as can be ascertained, he spent very little time in comparing the soundings with his chart and did not carefully study them, as he should.

Conclusion (d) pointed out that if Captain Johnson had properly studied his soundings he would have found that he was off course and should have been on his guard. A continuous line of soundings would have indicated his position "with reasonable certainty." "The safety of any vessel on this course [coming from San Francisco] which intends to enter Puget Sound depends upon its making the turn at the proper time. The entrance to the Straits [sic] is about 12 miles wide, and a master making this northerly trip knows that he must either turn and find this 12-mile entrance, or, if he continues his course, go ashore on Vancouver Island."

The report went on to criticize the Valencia's six-hour (rather than two-hour) watches for its lookouts; the lack of boat drills; and imprudent placing of lifeboats at the rail, thus prematurely open to terrified passengers. The commission also found fault with some of the steamship company's rescue efforts, criticizing the steamer Queen's return to Victoria so soon and the rescue vessels' failure to lower boats.

The last item, "failure to lower boats," was perhaps one of the major obstacles to saving lives. Several boats could, with relative safety, have been "drifted down" to a position upwind from the wreck. There they would have been in a better position to determine the height of the breakers and to pick up survivors in the water.

The final chapter contained six pages of suggestions for adding to and improving existing navigational aids. Many of the recommendations were carried out, including the installation of Swiftsure Lightship and a lifesaving station at Neah Bay.

Newspaper criticism seems to have subsided after the release of the commission's report. The document was reproduced in its entirety in the Seattle Times on April 15, 1906, except for a final paragraph signed only by commission member Captain Burwell:

I desire to recommend also that a system be established of frequent transfers of local inspectors from one port to another; and that additional life-saving stations be provided on this coast supplemental to the proposed life-saving vessel for Neah Bay, and that some provision be made for sufficient manning of vessels by seamen.

Twenty miles upriver from the mouth of the Columbia, on the Washington side, lies a small, protected cove. Except for a few decaying pilings protruding from the water, the shoreline here looks much the same as elsewhere along this stretch of the river—wooded and undeveloped. A passing boater would never suspect that during the first third of this century one of the busiest towns on the lower Columbia bustled with activity here.

Brookfield sprang up, like many other towns along the lower river in the late 1800s, to harvest the great runs of salmon. The town was established in the 1870s when J. G. Megler built a large salmon cannery on the cove and imported Slavic fishermen from Europe to bring in the catch. Megler with his keen business sense and the Slavs with their centuries-old fishing heritage proved to be a successful combination.

The town prospered between 1890 and 1930. Numerous other enterprises flourished in Brookfield—a lumber mill, barrel factory and rock quarry among them. The town's population swelled to 500. The riverboat era reached its peak during this period. First stern-wheelers and then propeller-driven steamboats made Brookfield one of their most important stops. Several a day took on canned salmon after unloading supplies at the town. The boats also carried on a brisk passenger service between Portland and Astoria.

A carelessly tossed cigarette changed the town's destiny. As a downturn began in the town's prosperity in 1931, a fire destroyed the cannery. The inferno was so intense that it could be seen from Astoria, 20 miles away.

The fire started an exodus. The cannery workers moved out promptly, followed at a slower pace by the fishermen. Family after family deserted the dying community. The last resident, Joe Tarobochi, once stated, "When I moved out, I could have bought the whole town for a few dollars." That was in 1949.

Nobody wanted the old town; it had served a purpose and was now useless and isolated. The riverboats had discontinued their daily runs and the town was inaccessible by land. Until 1950 Brookfield was shown on road maps (though no highway made its way there) because of its importance as a fishing center.

After the last diehard residents were gone the old town lay silent for several years, forgotten by a busier world. Slowly the ghost town withered. Its dynamic past fading into obscurity, Brookfield was visited only by an occasional passing boater.

In the spring of 1957 the Crown Zellerbach Corporation, which then owned the property, sent bulldozers to demolish what was left of the town. In just a few days the dozers leveled the remaining 25 abandoned houses, including the magnificent Megler mansion, once the dream home of every housewife on the lower Columbia. When the dust settled, all traces of the once bustling town were gone. The log dump Crown Zellerbach built there fell into disuse when it became more economical to truck timber to the mill than to raft it upriver. Over the years the little cove has returned to its natural state, the way it must have looked to J. G. Megler over a century ago when he envisioned it as the site for a cannery town.

Ray Fadich is a free-lance writer living in Marysville. His latest book, Last of the Rivermen, is an account of the Columbia River fishing industry and contains more information about Brookfield.
The Columbia River Cannery
Town that Vanished

By Ray Fadich

LEFT: A few of the abandoned houses that remained in Brookfield before the Crown Zellerbach bulldozers reduced them to rubble.

BELOW LEFT: The once-magnificent Megler mansion in Brookfield—the envy of every housewife for miles around—is shown here as it looked in 1957 just hours before the bulldozers came.

BOTTOM: John Boganic sits at a desk in the old Brookfield schoolhouse in 1957 looking at a tattered textbook. Boganic was born in Brookfield and attended the school in his youth. The old schoolhouse was demolished a few days after this photograph was taken.
North School in Centralia fielded a football team in the early 1900s. A later school on this site was named Edison, after Thomas Edison.
WHILE MANY WASHINGTON schools are named after the communities they serve, many others get their names from elements that figure prominently in their communities' past. A look at the histories of school names gives us interesting insights into the roots of our cities and towns. There are numerous instances of school names derived from agriculture, fur-trading, transportation, timber harvesting, metals and mining. In many cases schools were named for business entrepreneurs who served on school boards. Their business activities ranged from banking to hotel-keeping, but it was their service on school boards that led to schools being named in their honor.

**Industrialists**

THREE NATIONALLY RECOGNIZED industrialists—Henry Ford, Alexander Graham Bell and Thomas Edison—have schools named for them: the Ford School of Renton, now used for administrative offices; the Bell School of Kirkland; and Edison Schools in Centralia, Spokane and Walla Walla as well as the former Edison Technical School in Seattle.

Two regional industrialists—Floyd Paxton of Yakima and Peter G. Schmidt of Tumwater, have had schools named for them. Paxton Elementary School of Mount Vernon (no longer in operation) was a private school named for the inventor and manufacturer of the stiff plastic closing device that helps keep bread in plastic bags from drying out. His political views ran toward unregulated free enterprise, which led to the selection of his name for the “back to basics” school operated by Joan Bogensberger in Mount Vernon between 1976 and 1989.

Peter G. Schmidt was president of the Olympia Brewing Company of Tumwater from 1933 to 1953. An elementary school in Tumwater was named for him in 1957.

**Labor**

TWO WASHINGTON SCHOOLS were named for organized labor leaders: Samuel Gompers and Harry S. McIlvain. Gompers was the English-born founder of the American Federation of Labor. A Seattle high school was named for him in 1960. The Seattle-King County Labor Council asked the school board to reconsider its action and to reserve the Gompers name for a vocational school instead of a comprehensive high school. The board renamed the high school Rainier Beach and used the Gompers name for a vocational program then offered at Edison Technical School. That school has since been incorporated into the Seattle Central
Community College. McIlvaigh Middle School of Tacoma was named in 1963 for a local labor leader who helped with many campaigns to pass school tax levies and bond issues. McIlvaigh was secretary of the Central Labor Council in Tacoma for 30 years and co-founder of a local labor newspaper, the Union Advocate.

Farming

Many an early Washington school derived its name from the farming family who supplied the site for the schoolhouse. Most of those country schools have since been closed, but agriculture remains an important source of school names. Such school names as Alfalfa near Granger, Orchard Ridges for a valley pioneer who helped form a water district. John Mcloughlin, Angus MacDonald, David Thompson are also known as Little Alkali, probably a reference to the character of the farm soil.

Gilbert Elementary School in Yakima was named for H. M. Gilbert, a fruit-grower on whose land the school was built in 1951.

Morris Schott Middle School in Mattawa got its name from a leader in the movement to bring irrigation water to farmland bordering the Columbia River in Grant County, an effort that preceded the building of Wanapum Dam.

McDonald Elementary School, built in 1956 in the Central Valley School District of Spokane County, was named for a valley pioneer who helped form a water district.

Early school names in Okanogan County include Pig Liver and Flour Mill, which have a farming flavor.

Fur Trade

There is also a group of school names linked to the very first commercial enterprises in the Oregon Country—fur traders of the Hudson’s Bay Company, the North West Company and the Pacific Fur Company. That early industry is well-marked in schools named after Fort Vancouver, Fort Colville, the Hudson’s Bay Company, Peter Skene Ogden, John McLoughlin, Angus MacDonald, David Thompson and John Jacob Astor.

Hudson’s Bay High School of Vancouver was built in 1955 and named for the British trading conglomerate founded in 1607.

Canadian-born Dr. John McLoughlin served the Hudson’s Bay Company as chief factor (resident manager) of Fort Vancouver, a fur-trading post on the Columbia River. In 1825 Dr. McLoughlin established the post, which was named after Captain George Vancouver, a British explorer of Northwest waterways. Schools named for McLoughlin are operating in both Vancouver and Pasco.

Peter Skene Ogden was a Quebec-born fur trader and trailblazer for the Hudson’s Bay Company. He succeeded McLoughlin as factor at Fort Vancouver and headed up a rescue team to Fort Walla Walla in 1847 to aid the Whitman massacre survivors. Outside of Washington Ogden is better known for his exploration of Idaho, Utah, Nevada, and Northern California. He was the first Euro-American to set eyes on the Great Salt Lake. A school in Vancouver has been named for him.

Angus MacDonald was the Hudson’s Bay Company chief factor at Fort Colville, established in 1825 near what is now Kettle Falls. A high school in the city of Colville named for MacDonald in 1911 no longer exists. An elementary school in the city of Colville was named for Fort Colville in 1983. Fort Colville itself was named for Andrew Colvile [sic], a London governor of the Hudson’s Bay Company.

David Thompson explored much of the area that became Washington and wrote detailed notes of his findings. That journal became one of the first written records of the age of exploration in this part of the world. Thompson’s journeys were contracted by his employer, the North West Company, a British-chartered trading company. The high school in Colville that was named for Thompson in 1926 is no longer in operation.

There is also a school in Colville named Aster—built in 1937. No record of the origin of its name has been found to date. A street that runs up to the school grounds is named Astor, the same spelling as that of John Jacob Astor, founder of the Pacific Fur Company. The fact that at least three other schools in Colville were named for persons or agencies of the fur-trade period suggests that Aster School is an alternate spelling of Astor and that the school is named for Astor Street or John Astor.

Overland Transport

Transportation during the fur-trading period was principally by river raft and canoe. Getting goods from one place to another was so important to the region’s development that transportation became an industry in itself. Indian trails, wagon roads and railways soon equaled rivers and other waterways in commercial importance. School names in various parts of the state recognize this importance: Mullan Road School of Spokane, for example, is not named for the street outside its door but for a military road built in the late 1850s and early 1860s between Fort Benton,
Montana, and Fort Walla Walla. The road became the Inland Empire's earliest supply line.

Naches Trail is a school in Pierce County's Bethel School District named for a wagon trail over the Cascades. In 1853 a wagon train of 180 pioneers from Indiana, Illinois, Iowa, Missouri and Kentucky entered Pierce County after an 18-day trip from Selah. The Naches Trail still exists; Highway 14 now traverses it.

The old Columbia Valley Gardens School in Longview has been replaced by a new school.

This is the older, original portion of the Charles Francis Adams High School in Clarkston, Asotin County.
of the road through Chinook Pass, runs over part of it. Other early trails used by settlers and for which schools were named include Indian Trail of Spokane and Swan's Trail of Snohomish County. The latter school no longer exists.

Railroads have also had a big impact on Washington school names. The Great Northern School District in Spokane County was named in 1900 for a railroad that has since merged into the Burlington Northern. The district has but one school—Great Northern Elementary. Terminal Park Elementary School in Auburn was named in 1946 for a nearby roundhouse and rail terminal. Hilyard School of Spokane was named for a rail yard that in turn was named for James J. Hill, one-time president of the Great Northern Railroad. Freeman School District in Spokane County was named after a railroad flag stop that got its name from the flagman. The first Whitstran School in Prosser was named for two Northern Pacific Railroad nurses named Laura Whitaker and Mary Strangways.

H. R. Williams, one-time vice president of the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad, named 32 railroad sidings in Washington, some of which have become school names. Ralston School of Adams County came from Williams' list. The siding was named for the Ralston cereal company, which bought much of the wheat loaded at that siding. Mellis School of Yakima County got its name from a Northern Pacific rail siding that had been named for a local fruit grower.

The Northern Pacific Railroad began construction of a tourist hotel in Tacoma in 1891. Construction halted during the Panic of 1893. The hotel was never completed, and the abandoned building later caught fire. The Tacoma School Board bought the burned-out shell in 1903 and remodeled the stately building into Tacoma High School, later renamed Stadium High School for the landmark stadium bowl built adjacent to the school.

The Union Pacific Railroad president in the 1880s was Charles Wright. A private boys' school near Tacoma was named for him in 1957 to honor his generosity of 73 years earlier. In 1884 he had donated $50,000 toward construction of a private girls' school being established in Tacoma under the auspices of the Episcopal Church. On the day the cornerstone was laid Wright brought along his small daughter Annie to help him seal the stone. Since it seemed inappropriate to give a girls' school a man's name, the trustees decided to name the school Annie Wright Seminary for Girls as a means of expressing their appreciation for Wright's generous contribution. In 1970 the name was changed to Annie Wright School.

The president of the Union Pacific Railroad in the 1890s was Charles Francis Adams II, son of a Massachusetts congressman, grandson and great-grandson of two United States presidents. His railroad laid tracks through Idaho and into Washington's Jawbone Flats, an arid, desert-like land. Adams had Asotin Creek dammed to provide irrigation water and began selling off railroad-owned acreage for farming. The land flourished and Jawbone Flats became Clarkston, the Asotin County seat. The high school in Clarkston, completed in 1923, is named for Charles Francis Adams II.

Waterway Transport

SCHOOLS NAMED FOR commercial transportation on the waterways are not so plentiful. The Captain Gray Elementary School of Pasco is one, however. There are three Washington schools named for Captain Robert Gray, who gave the Columbia River the name it bears today. But a fourth, Captain Gray School of Pasco, was named for a different Captain Gray—William P. Gray, a local steamboat captain on the Columbia and Snake rivers. Captain Gray, who died in 1929 at age 84, was a community leader as well as a transportation pioneer.

Ray's Ferry School in Asotin County was named after pioneer settler Charles A. Ray, a ferry operator on the Grande Ronde River in the 1920s. Closed in 1942, the school was moved 30 miles in 1983 to the Asotin County Historical Museum in Asotin, where it has been restored.

Broadview-Thomson is a merger of two Seattle schools. The Thomson School, built in 1963, was named for R. H. Thomson, Seattle's visionary and controversial city engineer from 1892 to 1913. No city construction project escaped his notice. Thomson aligned Seattle's waterfront piers with the mouth of the waterway rather than at right angles to the shoreline. This design, said Thomson, made docking easier for large vessels.

Foss High School in Tacoma was named for Henry Foss, former state senator and Tacoma port commissioner. Foss was the son of the Norwegian-born founders of Foss Launch and Tug Company, a prominent Tacoma seaport firm. His mother Thea was the model for a series of fictional accounts of "Tugboat Annie" that appeared in the Saturday Evening Post during the 1930s and '40s.

Lumbering

TIMBER WAS AND is an important resource that has left its imprint with the naming of such schools as Weyerhaeuser in Eatonville; Grisdale in Grays Harbor County; Western Camp School in Lewis County; Emerson School in Hoquiam; Weatherwax, Wood and West schools in Aberdeen; Camp Seven in Klickitat County; Bordeaux School in Shelton; "Mill A" School in Skamania County; Zellerbach...
ABOVE: Eatonville Logging Camp School in Pierce County (c. 1928) was a converted boxcar. The fence was designed to keep children off the railroad tracks, just five feet away.

RIGHT: A. D. Wood School was built as a high school, the first in Aberdeen. It later housed other class levels, including a junior college, before it was demolished.

BELOW: Lindbergh High School in Renton was designed by Fred Bassetti, a nationally recognized school architect.

in Camas; R. A. Long in Longview and many others. Victoria School near Stanwood, closed for many years, was named for Victoria Shingle Mill, which donated the lumber needed to build the school. White School of Lake Stevens was named for its color. The Rucker brothers, who ran the local sawmill, kept a sparkling white coat of paint on their mill, the company housing, the fences around the mill, and the local schoolhouse. The school was closed in 1956.
Two schools and an auditorium in Monroe have been named for Frank Wagner, an independent logger who donated the land on which the schools were built. The Wagner family operated a sawmill in 1906 and a lumber company from 1911 to 1930.

Roeder School in Bellingham was named for Captain Henry Roeder who, with Russell Peabody, landed on the shores of Bellingham Bay in 1892 and built a sawmill there.

One of Longview's schools is named for Mark Morris, who was 20 years old when his uncle, R. A. Long, sent him to the Washington shore of the Columbia River in 1922 to start a town and a lumber mill. Morris hired a city planner to lay out the new town (Kessler School in Longview is named after him) and filed for the name Longview to honor his uncle.

The post office told him that a town named Long View already existed in Benton County. The town was a whistle-stop on the railroad where three families got their mail. Morris visited the people there and asked what it would take to let him have the name of their mail drop. All they wanted was a new roofed mail-drop platform alongside the railroad tracks. Morris authorized the 25-dollar expenditure and returned to his mill town with rights to the name Longview. The former Long View was renamed Barger.

Mining

MINING AND METALS are also represented among school names in Washington. Smelter School in Everett, built in the 1890s, is the most notable example. The school was named for a Guggenheim smelting operation that later moved to Tacoma. The Smelter School building still stands, though not on its original site. In 1990 it was serving as the East View Apartments, one of the oldest surviving structures in Everett.

The Youngstown School in the Humphrey Settlement, south of Seattle, opened in 1905 to serve the children of steelworkers in that area. The school's name has been linked to a steel-making city in Pennsylvania. In 1929 the name was changed to Cooper School to honor a former Seattle school superintendent.

Hutton Elementary School in Spokane was named in 1921 for Levi W. Hutton, a railroad engineer who came to Spokane in 1881. Orphaned at the age of six, Hutton saved much of his engineer's pay and invested it in what became the Hercules silver mine in Idaho. He and his wife, having no children of their own, used some of their newfound wealth to establish Hutton Settlement, which provided long-term residential care for orphans and needy or dependent children.

James Glover, often called the "father of Spokane," arrived at Spokane Falls in 1873. He later built a sawmill, operated a general store, started a newspaper (the Spokane Chronicle), became mayor, operated mines in Kellogg, Idaho, and went broke in the Panic of 1893. He died in 1921 "in difficult circumstances." Glover Junior High School in Spokane is named for him.

The Waneta School near Sunnyside is indirectly but significantly related to mining through its name. In the late 19th century African-Americans were recruited to work as strikebreakers in northern coal mines, including those in Roslyn, Washington. After the strike was settled most of the black miners and their families returned to their former homes in the South, but some took up homestead claims in the lower Yakima Valley. In 1901 these families built the Sage Valley School for their children. That name was later changed to Waneta, a phonetic spelling of Juanita, the name of a school board member's infant daughter. In 1944 Waneta School, serving both black and white children, was closed. The building now serves as a residence.

Flight

CURIOUSLY, TWO OTHER important state industries—aviation and fishing—are unrepresented among Washington school names. A Renton school is named for Charles Lindbergh who became famous for his exploits in aviation but had no direct connection to the Washington airplane industry.

Several schools in the Mukilteo, Issaquah and Bethel (Pierce County) School Districts are named for such space program vehicles as Mariner, Challenger, Apollo, Discovery, Explorer, and Voyager. The Boeing Company of Seattle was a subcontractor on some of those programs but was not prominently identified with any of them.

Two schools in Washington, one in King County and one in Yakima County, are named for Christa McAuliffe, the schoolteacher astronaut who was killed in the 1986 Challenger accident. McAuliffe had no direct Washington connection. Dick Scobee, mission commander who died in the same Challenger tragedy, was an Auburn native. A school in that town has been named after him. That is the extent of Washington school names associated with aviation or aerospace. None of those names relates directly to the largest employer in the state today—the Boeing Company.

School populations in the state are increasing, and a few new schools are opened each year. In most communities the trend is against naming a school for a local person, product or company. Seattle, Everett and Renton, however, have long traditions of naming schools for persons. If there is to be a school named Boeing or Steelhead, Flying Fortress or Crab Boat, it likely will be in one of those cities.

Kenneth L. Calkins is a Seattle-based free-lance writer. He recently compiled and edited a book on Washington school names, Name on the Schoolhouse (1992), from which information for this article was taken.
The Willapa Harbor tidelands originally known as Potter Slough in Pacific County became the site of Sea Haven, Herman Trott's 1889 boontown gamble. Banking on the eventual arrival of the Pacific Chehalis and Eastern Railroad, which was to terminate at the Willapa River and connect the harbor with the north bank of the Columbia, Trott gathered local investors (landowner Thomas Potter included) to help him "boom" the town. Together they formed the Sea Haven Land Company.

With pioneer enthusiasm the advertisement on the back of this photo enticed investors with promises of "substantial support" to "manufacturers of all kinds," and described the Willapa River as "a magnificent highway to this most perfect of harbors on the coast" and the harbor itself as "the Safest Anchorage and Protection for all vessels."

In 1890 Sea Haven boasted a hotel, a bank, a post office and The Western World newspaper (the site of this photo). One year later the fate of Sea Haven was sealed when the railroad terminus was canceled and the post office closed. Most of Sea Haven's inhabitants and investors moved to nearby South Bend. Sea Haven, "the coming metropolis," was abandoned by 1900.
A 1933 aerial view of Weyerhaeuser's Longview pulp mill.

By Robert Ficken

TIMBER & WATER
A History of the Cowlitz County Lumber Industry

COLUMBIA 35 SUMMER 1993
The juxtaposition of two factors—timber and water—caused settlers west of the Cascades in Washington and Oregon to concentrate on exploitation of the forest. From tidewater and riverside to mountain slope, vast stands of Douglas fir and other commercially desirable species awaited the woodsman’s ax. Streams, their volume sometimes enhanced through construction of rude dams, facilitated the movement of logs to mills in a land largely devoid of roads. Smaller manufacturing centers depended on the power of falling water to operate the saws that turned “round stuff” into lumber. Sawmills large and small were invariably built on navigable watercourses to provide a means of transporting their finished product to market. The water link was, in fact, an essential concern for all manufacturers involved in an export trade dependent on ocean-going ships until late in the 19th century.

These factors caused pioneer merchants of the Pacific Northwest to transfer attention from Oregon City and Portland—the centers of population—to the lower Columbia River. Sites along the great stream were closer to the sea, an important consideration for mariners who disliked the tortuous river passage between the Pacific and towns on the Willamette River. The relative absence of settlers, moreover, significantly reduced competition over timbered tracts of land. Lacking strong federal efforts to combat theft from the public domain, timber was both abundant and virtually free for the taking. Puget Sound-bound travelers arriving via the Oregon Trail generally paused along the Columbia to earn money, providing lumber mills with a convenient source of short-term labor.

All of these developments were reflected in the activities of George Abernethy, once steward of the Methodist mission in Willamette Valley and, until 1849, head of Oregon’s provisional government. That year this leading merchant of Oregon City relocated to Oak Point on the Columbia, some dozen miles downstream from the site of Longview. The point, said an early visitor, was a “a splendid site for a shipping and lumbering trade.” The Abernethy mill, powered by steam and turning out 20,000 feet of lumber a day, serviced a fleet of schooners operating between the Columbia and San Francisco. Business was brisk in the first years of the California gold rush, when Oregon lumber sold in the south for prices unmatched even in the late 20th century. Price levels fell as supply overwhelmed demand, but Oak Point continued for over two decades to be the most important manufacturing center on the river.

Logs for the Oak Point saws came primarily from local settlers, who were happy to sell the product of land-clearing operations. The activities of Ezra Meeker, reputed to be the first white resident at the site of Kalama, were typical. Before moving on to Puget Sound in the mid 1850s, Meeker felled trees on his claim by setting fires to burn in holes bored in the trunks. He formed the logs thus procured into rafts, which were then floated downstream to the Abernethy mill. On one occasion the current carried Meeker past Oak Point. Fortunately, he was able to land at Astoria, where a mill paid him a higher price for his logs.

A significant fact soon caused Oregon in general and Oak Point in particular to surrender industrial dominance of the Pacific Northwest. The Columbia joined water with timber, but it also exposed commerce to a bar-crossing of fabled danger. The voyages of explorers and fur traders had long since made the river mouth a famous place. Before venturing across the bar, it was claimed, the pious resorted to prayer and the impious to drink. San Francisco-based lumber capitalists—Pope, Talbot, Renton, and Asa Simpson among them—appreciated the implications for secure industrial investment. Instead of building giant sawmills on the Columbia, they built them, during the 1850s, on Puget Sound where navigation was safe. A regional pattern prevailed until close to the end of the 19th century—there were more mills on the Columbia and Willamette rivers, but those on Puget Sound produced most of the lumber.
Under this pattern, ventures in Cowlitz County were local in nature and usually of short duration. Logging began on the Cowlitz River in the early 1860s with oxen hauling timber out to that stream for transport to the Columbia. The first sawmill on the Cowlitz itself commenced work in 1864. A plant at Ostrander gained regionwide recognition in 1905 when it provided the towering flagpole for Portland's Lewis and Clark Exposition.

By 1900 several developments made the Columbia River more attractive to wealthy investors. Federal navigation works at the river's mouth significantly reduced the danger to shipping. At the same time an expanding railroad network opened new markets as far east of the Cascades as the Mississippi Valley. Declining supplies of commercially exploitable timber in the Pacific Northwest, the result of 50 years of logging and the creation of the first national forests and parks, increased the value of privately-owned tracts adjacent to the Columbia. Huge purchases of southwestern Washington forest by the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company, organized in 1900, reflected the new state of affairs. For the time being, however, Portland-based firms like the Hammond and Inman Paulsen companies dominated production in the Cowlitz area.

Business was brisk in the first years of the California gold rush, when Oregon lumber sold in the south for prices unmatched even in the late 20th century.
Logging, rather than lumber manufacturing, was the principal activity. Between 1900 and 1910 an average of 140 million feet of logs per year went out of Cowlitz County compared to an annual figure of 26 million feet of lumber. A substantial portion of the output went into the famous ocean-going cigar rafts, many assembled by Hammond in the Columbia River town of Stella. These California-destined leviathans commonly exceeded 700 feet in length and contained 6 million feet or more of timber.

Meanwhile, important nationwide changes in the forest industry began to affect Cowlitz County. Declining supplies of timber in the upper Mississippi Valley, previously the focal point of American lumbering, forced manufacturers in that region to look elsewhere for new sources of raw material. The vast and increasingly valuable stands west of the Cascades made the Pacific Northwest the leading candidate for investment. Although the Weyerhaeusers were the most dramatic manifestation of the changing industrial face, many other prominent persons rode the rails west to open new manufacturing centers. The Kansas City-based Long-Bell Lumber Company, founded in 1875, operated a dozen sawmills and over 100 sales outlets. It ranked, by all calculations, among the top five lumbering concerns in America. Depleted timber stocks in its home territory forced the firm to join the exodus to the Pacific Coast. Excepting Weyerhaeuser, none made the journey in more spectacular fashion.

In 1919 Robert A. Long entered into negotiations with George S. Long, the general manager of the Weyerhaeuser Timber Company. (The two Longs were unrelated.) The result was an agreement by which Long-Bell acquired six billion feet of Weyerhaeuser timber in watersheds to the Columbia. To manufacture lumber the largest sawmill in the Northwest, capable of producing 300 million feet of lumber a year, was built on the riverbank. The self-styled model city of Longview was developed to house and serve the needs of workers. The mill’s opening in 1924 was heralded throughout the region as a striking instance of the decade’s prosperity. “Everything is on such a mammoth scale,” proclaimed a visitor, “that it knocks the ordinary lumberman completely off his feet.”

It soon became apparent that Robert Long had overreached himself. Long-Bell’s huge output contributed mightily to the overproduction that sent Washington’s lumber industry into a prolonged depression. The state turned out over seven billion feet of lumber a year between 1924 and 1929, but prices declined from $27 per thousand feet to $19 in that span. Having failed to anticipate this downward trend, Long borrowed heavily to finance his ventures. By 1926 he was in serious financial difficulty. Confidential reports had banks refusing to make further loans and Long-Bell was forced to return some of its timber to Weyerhaeuser.

Major moves by Weyerhaeuser added to the industry’s problems. Prior to World War I the company only manufactured lumber at a small Everett plant on Puget Sound. After the war, however, the company moved into production in a big way. In the process Longview became one of the centers of the Weyerhaeuser operation. Purchasing 600 acres on the Columbia, the company had three mills underway by 1929. Weyerhaeuser’s total Washington output for that year was 460 million feet, exceeding Long-Bell, the industry’s previous leader.

Even without the additional lumber produced by Weyerhaeuser and Long-Bell, Washington lumbering would have been pressed to the wall by the onset of the Great Depression in late 1929. By 1932 national per capita lumber consumption fell by two-thirds. The state’s production, over seven billion feet in 1929, barely exceeded two billion in 1932. At least half of Washington’s sawmills went out of business altogether. Weyerhaeuser, with its fiscal might and sound management, was able to withstand the crisis. The already
In the postwar era the principal trend affecting Longview was the rise of pulp and paper to rival and then exceed traditional lumbering in importance.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Export cargo ready for loading aboard a Weyerhaeuser steamship, mid 1930s.

BELOW: The busy port of Longview, c. 1939, with the Long-Bell Lumber Company stacks in the distance.

overextended Long-Bell, however, lost a reported $2.6 million in 1930 and was sued by its creditors.

Brief hope for the industry came with the New Deal in 1933. Under the National Industrial Recovery Act (NIRA), lumbermen were legally empowered to control production and prices. Long-Bell's resident manager, J. D. Tennant, became chairman of the lumber code authority, charged by the federal government with responsibility for the recovery program. The code mechanism soon proved to be a failure. Artificially high prices encouraged new mills to open, adding to the problem of excess production, while code enforcement was lax. By the time the Supreme Court declared NIRA unconstitutional in 1935, Tennant's campaign had collapsed. More enduring change for Longview resulted from the justly-famous Section 7(a) of the recovery act. Since the defeat of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) in the World War I strike of 1917-18, the industry had operated virtually free of unions. Occasional organizing efforts under the auspices of the American Federation of Labor (AFL) failed to generate significant worker support. The Loyal Legion of Loggers and
Lumbermen—created by the army during the war—was perpetuated in a semi-moribund state as a sort of regional company union. Section 7(a), however, required employers to bargain with organizations freely established by their employees.

Perhaps unintentionally, the New Deal thus encouraged the founding and expansion of unions. Early creation of AFL locals centered on Longview. In January 1935 the National Labor Relations Board ruled, on the basis of an election, that Weyerhaeuser and Long-Bell must deal with the timber workers as bargaining agents. Before these negotiations could commence the Northwest council formed by the timber workers called a regionwide strike for May. The aims were a 30-hour week, a 75-cent minimum hourly wage and recognition of the union. Meanwhile, the AFL, hoping to stimulate organization of unskilled and semiskilled workers, placed the new union under the jurisdiction of the Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners (BCJ).

BCJ representative A. W. Muir arrived in the Northwest intent on preventing the strike, a reflection of the conservative stance of his brotherhood. The walkout nonetheless began, except at Longview where Muir negotiated with the managers of the Weyerhaeuser and Long-Bell mills. An agreement was reached on May 9 that provided a 40-hour week, a 50-cent minimum wage and recognition of the union as agent for its members only. Longview workers promptly repudiated both the contract and their nominal leader, closing the mills and making the strike a regional affair. The dispute lasted until July when Governor Clarence Martin, acting at the behest of management, sent the national guard and the state patrol to Tacoma, Longview and other places. By protecting strikebreakers, this action allowed the mills to reopen on the basis of Muir's Longview terms.

This was by no means a strategic victory for employers, however. The strike and the federal government's actions fastened unionization on the industry. For a time, this fact was obscured by an internal labor conflict. The increasingly radical timber worker locals chafed at the leadership of Muir and the BCJ. In July 1937 the International Woodworkers of America (IWA) organized under the auspices of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). Over the next several years the IWA clashed with the remnant BCJ forces in a series of jurisdictional strikes. Only after World War II, with the gradual merger of the AFL and the CIO, was the dispute resolved and the full implication of the union triumph realized.

In the postwar era the principal trend affecting Longview was the rise of pulp and paper to rival and then exceed
traditional lumbering in importance. Pulp and paper manufacturing in the Cowlitz country dated back to 1927 when Longview Fibre’s kraft mill commenced production. Still, the historical dominance of lumber seemed unchallenged at the end of World War II. In 1947 Weyerhaeuser employed 2,450 people in Longview, most in its sawmills. (The company had opened a pulp plant in the 1930s.) Despite its prolonged financial difficulties, Long-Bell carried 1,600 men and women on its payroll.

The forest-related future of western Washington, however, lay in the development of pulp and paper mills. Those factories, though malodorous, enabled more efficient exploitation of timber, especially of trees deemed unsuitable for manufacture into lumber. The attraction for investors was obvious. By 1960, in a symbolic moment of statistical revelation, the monetary value of pulp production in the state exceeded that of lumber. At Longview in the 1950s Weyerhaeuser began production of high-quality paper in a big way. And in a corporate transformation both poignant and symbolic, Long-Bell, the firm most intimately associated with the history of forest usage in Cowlitz County, passed into the hands of the International Paper Company.

Like most regions of Washington west of the Cascades, Cowlitz County’s economy has depended on forest exploitation since it was first settled. Pioneers with an industrial bent built sawmills, while those meaning to farm sold logs cut on their claims. Once railroads and river improvements were in place capitalists hurried in to take control of the wealth proffered by the county’s forested cover. The modern union movement depended on the continued importance of mill production, be it lumber or pulp and paper. The same juxtaposition of timber and water that had made lumbering a profitable venture accounted, in the postwar era, for the advance of pulp and paper.

Robert E. Ficken is author of a number of scholarly works on Northwest history, including The Forested Land: A History of Lumbering in Western Washington (1987) and, with Charles LeWarne, Washington: A Centennial History (1988). This essay was originally commissioned by and is published with permission of the Cowlitz County Historical Society.
A Hometown Preservation Project

A N AMBITIOUS PROJECT is being carried out by the Thorp Mill Town Historical Preservation Society (TMTTHPS) in central Washington. This grassroots organization has undertaken the restoration of the Thorp Gristmill and seeks to establish a museum on the site.

The community of Thorp began to take shape in 1868 with Charles Splawn’s arrival on Taneum Creek. He started a homestead a short distance from where Interstate 90 crosses the creek today. Splawn was soon joined by his wife and her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Fielding Mortimer Thorp, who had lived at Moxee, near Yakima. Splawn was a rancher-stockman and a gold miner. He and F. M. Thorp ran cattle on the bunchgrass range and forestlands along Taneum Creek.

When cattle drives and wagon traffic increased in the 1870s, Thorp and Splawn built and operated a trading post for travelers and local Indians. “Thorp’s Tavern” also served as a roadhouse on the Snoqualmie Trail. Innumerable pack trains hauled

By Yvonne Prater and Robin Schmith
Fielding M. Thorp, one of the first pioneer settlers at Taneum Creek, operated "Thorps Tavern" with his son-in-law Charles Splawn.

Below: A buhrstone used to grind flour in the days before mechanical grinders. This one is similar to the original buhrstone hauled from The Dalles after being shipped via the Strait of Magellan, probably from France.

flour from local gristmills west over the mountains, intermingling with the cattle drives. The first reliable road, known as the Seattle-Walla Walla Trail and Wagon Toll Road, was built over the route in 1883. The first toll gate encountered on the east side of the Cascades was at Thorp and Splawn's place on Taneum Creek.

Thorp Gristmill was also built and began operating in 1883. At a site two miles northeast of the toll road, it was the fourth of six gristmills built in what later became Kittitas County.

The origins of the Thorp gristmill can be traced to 1880 when James L. Mills, another early homesteader living within the boundaries of today's unincorporated Thorp, built a sawmill to provide lumber and beams for house and barn construction. Oren Hutchinson—Mills' neighbor and a millwright and farmer—saw an opportunity in this development. With lumber from Mills' sawmill, Hutchinson built a gristmill across the creek. Both industries were water powered.

Some time later, Gustave Huhn entered the scene as co-owner with Hutchinson. A flour sack on display at the Kittitas County Museum in Ellensburg says, "Hutchinson & Huhn's Flour Mill—Thorpe, Yakima County, Washington Territory." Research has revealed that the mill changed hands approximately 17 times and went through probate at least three times. It remained in operation for over 60 years until 1948.

Smith J. Kendall and Walter Mack, who owned the mill in 1903, brought in the latest technology when they jacked up a portion of the upper floor to replace the old buhrstones with roller mills. Old-timers recall that there were still buhrstones in the mill into the late 1940s; the stones have since disappeared.

With 400 residents at the turn of the century, Thorp was at its zenith as a service and supply center for agricultural, railroad, mining and logging operations. Significant growth began with the arrival of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1888 and continued with the construction of the Milwaukee Railroad in 1909.

Besides its mills, the town of Thorp included a creamery, blacksmith and livery stables, a grade school and a high school, two churches, two hotels, a confectionery, a barber, saloons, a hospital, two railroad stations with 10 to 12 trains passing through daily, livestock shipping facilities, surveyors, painters, carpenters, general merchandise stores and a mail-order grocery business. The general stores sold everything from groceries and hardware to dry goods and coffins. There were two potato warehouses and an apple packing shed. Later, in the age of the automobile, Thorp was on the main highway to Seattle from Walla Walla, Yakima and Ellensburg.

A box factory has operated in Thorp since 1946, so the community continues to be a mill town. The school, church, tavern, grocery, post office, two cottage industries, plus the box factory, comprise Thorp today. There are about 75 families living in the town.

In early September 1987 a public meeting was held in Thorp to gauge community interest in
restoring the gristmill, which had been placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1974. So many people came that the meeting had to be moved from a high school shop to the gym. The group selected its leadership, launched a membership drive and incorporated. Within a year and a half the group had raised enough money to buy the mill and an acre of land around it. TMTHPS currently has over 700 members and puts out a newsletter. Work parties have reroofed the mill, cleaned the building and restored the exterior of the three-story section. The Washington State Legislature appropriated $30,000 to restore the annex, and a Tacoma corporation has donated 21 acres of land adjacent to the mill. TMTHPS is making plans for a community cultural museum in the annex.

The building’s four levels contain over 20 mint-condition milling machines. Correspondence with other mills and preservation societies, together with vital oral histories, have shed light on the functions of the various machines. A whole vocabulary had to be researched to reconstruct the workflow and functions of this 19th-century equipment.

Research on the milling machinery has turned up some interesting information. For example, the mill has three machines purchased from a company based in Silver Creek, New York. At the turn of the century three-quarters of the world’s grain cleaners were made in Silver Creek, and one of them is at the Thorp mill. Two roller mills, manufactured in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, were designed by W. D. Gray for the E. P. Allis Company, which later became Allis Chalmers.

Leonard Evans, a Thorp Gristmill docent and former miller who operated machinery from the 1920s and ’30s, notes, “Judging by the variety of mill machines in the Thorp Mill, it’s quite obvious the mill could accommodate any grain a local farmer would raise for flour or for livestock mixes . . .”

Joseph Barron, owner of a steam-powered mill in Oakesdale, Washington, has visited the Thorp mill and toured it with the TMTHPS board members to explain the workings of the equipment. He also invited them to tour his own mill.

VISITORS TO THORP from mills in Montana and British Columbia have expressed deep appreciation for the preservation project. They say it is rare for a mill to be restored with all of its equipment intact. The Thorp Gristmill is now open for tours on weekends. Weekday tours can be arranged by appointment. TMTHPS president is Jerry Mann, owner of Mann Brothers Box Factory in Thorp. He can be reached at 509/964-2121 for tour arrangements or information about the mill.

Yvonne Prater is a free-lance writer/photographer working out of Ellensburg. She is a founding member of the Thorp Mill Town Historical Preservation Society. Robin Schmith is a writer and historian from central Washington.
This informative, anecdotal and honest volume by Seattle
free-lance writer Walt Crowley traces the routes that led
Seattle University to its centennial year. This Jesuit institu­tion
began in 1891 as a parish grade school. A college preparatory
program of secondary grades for boys came next, and the lower
grades were eventually discontinued. The college-level program was
then added, a combination of commercial studies augmenting the
humanities offerings. Secondary education, however, continued to
dominate the institution until World War I nearly snuffed it out. In
1931 the struggling collegiate program finally separated from Seattle
Preparatory School. Five Jesuit teachers and 46 students made the
move to the present (and original) campus site of Seattle College at
Broadway and Madison.

Depression-era hard times proved to be a godsend for Seattle
College as people sought to improve their job skills. An evening
extension school enrolled female students. Many considered coedu­cation a radical innovation for a Jesuit college; financial necessity
was the bottom line for this modification that was not sanctioned by
Jesuit higher-ups until 1948. A school of education, a cooperative
nursing program with nearby Providence Hospital and a social work
program eventually took their places alongside the college of arts
and sciences. Enrollment at the college reached 1,000 by 1939.
After World War II the GI Bill boosted enrollment to 2,500, and in
1948 the college became a university.

An overly ambitious expansion plan beginning in the late 1950s
not only strained relations with the mostly minority neighborhood
surrounding the campus but also took the university to the brink of
financial disaster. Contemporary national and international con­cerns exacerbated campus tensions in the 1960s. However, a new
president’s “courageous optimism,” paired with “financial realism,”
Crowley says, turned things around in the early 1970s. Further re­vamping of the university’s financial management and an outreach
to its namesake city turned the tide. Academic and student services
programs were rethought and the campus was largely rebuilt. Cur­rently the school is undergoing a movement to underscore its Jesuit
identity at a time when the Jesuit presence is being downsized.

The book is handsomely produced and profusely illustrated. It is
an appropriately excellent centennial publication.

Reviewed by John C. Scott, O.S.B.

Law for the Elephant,
Law for the Beaver
Essays in the Legal History of
the North American West
Edited by John McLaren, Hamar Foster and
Chet Orloff. Pasadena: Ninth Judicial Circuit
Reviewed by Brenda Farrington.

This 11-essay collection focuses on western legal history, spe­cifically transboundary law between America and Canada with a special reference to the Pacific Northwest. The essays
break new ground, in a historiographical sense, and suggest that legal
history is coming of age.

The lead essay by John Reid, America’s foremost legal historian,
sets the tone for the volume as it explains how to tackle the four
“layers” of Western legal history. He identifies the first layer as the
development of basic laws during westward expansion. Reid’s sec­ond layer consists of legal aspects unique to the North American
frontier: special jurisdiction within Indian lands, the law of such
borderlands as those between Canada and the United States at the
49th parallel, the law of cattle drives and the open range, the law of
such great fur-trading entities as the Hudson’s Bay Company, plus
mining law and water law. The third layer concerns legal resources and the situation—police, courts and lawyers that were not fully
operational—found in a 19th-century legal-minded culture moved west. Reid’s final layer is transboundary law, the elementary systems
that accompanied people in such vast territories as the Oregon
Country.

Most of the essays in this book pair American and Canadian
scholars on similar topics. For example, Richard Maxwell Brown
and Rod Macleod explore violence and disorder on the American
and Canadian frontiers. Hamar Foster and co-authors Kenneth
Coates and William Morrison deal with overlapping jurisdic­tion
problems in the Pacific Northwest. Stephen Haycox’s essay on
Alaska native rights is paired with Paul Tennant’s work concerning
aboriginal rights and the Canadian legal system. Both John Wunder
and John McClaren address discrimination against the Chinese.

Brenda Farrington teaches history at Fullerton College in California. She has
published in the field of Western legal history and is currently writing a biography
of California Supreme Court Chief Justice Rose Elizabeth Bird.
Otter Skins, Boston Ships, and China Goods

The Maritime Fur Trade of the Northwest Coast, 1785-1841


I t has long been commonplace in surveys of our region's history to identify the Northwest Coast sea otter trade during the last half of the 18th century as the prime stimulus to European and American intrusion into the Pacific Northwest. It has also been commonplace to drop discussion of the Northwest Coast trade once the sea otter bonanza had faded, about 1800 or a little after. In this new investigation of the subject geographer James R. Gibson underscores the importance of the trade while drawing attention to its unsuspected vibrancy during the early 19th century.

Drawing on material from British, Russian, Spanish and American sources, Gibson describes the incredible growth of Northwest Coast trading by aggressive ship captains and profit-driven companies that attracted capital in London, Moscow and Boston. He lays out the specifics of the classic "golden round" of Northwest Coast-China-Boston trade, detailing in statistical complications why investors rushed to finance such risky ventures and how they could obtain upwards of 500 percent returns on their investments. His descriptions of the ships, captains and crews, naval technologies and trading strategies make this book an unusual mixture of adventure, narrative, statistical analysis and economic geography.

Otter Skins is much more than a modern survey of the subject. Gibson does what others have failed to do—he dissects the trade, explaining that each segment of the multiple exchange offered a chance for profit. Manufactured goods were sold to Northwest Coast Indians; sea otter pelts had a market in China; Chinese goods had value in Boston. Gibson puts the players in perspective, explaining that the trade succeeded because Boston investors and ship captains, Hawaiian and Tlingit chiefs, and Chinese "honsho," who controlled access to the jewel of the entire trading round, all had sufficient power to pursue their own strategies. And when the resources declined, whether sea otters in the Queen Charlotte Islands or sandalwood in Hawaii, the traders inventedly exchanged what they could.

Gibson carefully documents that the trade lasted much longer than previously noted, and that it was marked by violence from its inception and fueled byavarice in all quarters. The result is an exceptionally good book. It is not only the most complete survey of the subject in print, it is also the best reasoned. Its only glaring omission—and a surprising one for a geographer—is its lack of detailed maps. But that is a small demerit in a solid and engaging study.

Current and Noteworthy

By Robert C. Carriker, Book Review Editor

F our recent publications relating to British Columbia merit recognition. The Grey Fox: The True Story of Bill Miner, Last of the Old-Time Bandits by Mark Dugan and John Boessenecker (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992; 260 pp., $24.95) recounts the true story of Bill Miner, the Robin Hood of British Columbia. Although Miner's 40-year criminal career included dedicated crime sprees across Oregon in 1903 and Washington in 1905, he made the Canadian Pacific Railway his special target because, he said, it had plenty of money and robbed the public, too. Charming to his victims, carrying weapons but never killing, Canada's best-known brigand was also the only proven homosexual outlaw the West has known. If you saw the 1983 film biography by the same title, you will find this book irresistible.

Totem Poles by author and illustrator Hilary Stewart (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991; 192 pp., $29.95) educates readers in the historical and cultural background and the types and purposes of 113 British Columbia totem poles. The book could easily be subtitled The Beginner's Book of Totem Poles. While pole no. 21 by Nisga'a artist Norman Tait occupies two pages, one illustration and one photograph in Stewart's book, it is the sole focus of a book by Vickie Jensen called Where the People Gather: Carving a Totem Pole (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1992; 190 pp., $29.95). Jensen uses 125 black and white photographs and an intimate text to capture the atmosphere surrounding the carving of Tait's imposing 42-foot unpainted portal pole and its erection at the Native Education Centre in Vancouver, British Columbia. Tait relates the inspiration for the design of this particular pole, instructs his apprentices and does the carving. Stewart's book shows an excellent appreciation of Northwest Coast totem poles as art objects, and Jensen's book may be the first to record in detail the actual process of carving. Together the two volumes are an outstanding resource.

Tom Morrison is a recent transplant to Vancouver, British Columbia, coming to the Pacific Northwest by way of his native England, Germany and Colorado. Morrison's vocation is mining (he is a graduate of the Camborne School of Mining in England), but his special talent is telling about it. Not really a biography and certainly not a technical treatise, Morrison's book Hardrock Gold: A Miner's Tale (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1992; 304 pages, $24.95) is essentially a series of tales he heard or episodes he experienced during 15 years in mines and mining camps around the world and in western Canada. Morrison is something of a wag, and his stories of underground mining in the 20th century can be both intriguing and hilarious. Cherry Hunter illustrates the text with 23 nicely prepared etchings.

ADDRESS ALL REVIEW COPIES AND RELATED COMMUNICATIONS TO: Robert C. Carriker, Department of History, Gonzaga University, Spokane, WA 99258.
Good Taste
Straightaway I am enclosing a check to keep me alive and receiving Columbia. It gets better-looking by the year and is most interesting. I envy your artwork and layout, which are in the best of good taste.

—Virginia Urrutia
Kelso

Now available...
the history of the Society

WIND to the PAST
THE WASHINGTON STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S FIRST CENTURY

by John McClelland, Jr.

John McClelland, Jr., extending a long and distinguished association with the Historical Society, has written the history of its first 100 years. McClelland gained an insider's view while serving as a WSHS board member from 1952 to 1982, and as president of the board from 1982 to 1988.

With its numerous behind-the-scenes anecdotes and 40 photographs from the Society's archives, Window to the Past should have particular appeal for members with an interest in how their organization came to be and who has helped shape it into what it is today.

196 pp., 40 illustrations, with index and appendix.
Soft cover, $19.00; with clothbound slip case, $29.00.

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

The Old Skagit Tour

Timber & Water

What's in a Name?
First Class for 100 Years, edited by Hugh Davis. Spokane: Spokane Public Schools, 1989.

Brookfield

Nor Any Drop to Drink

Thorp Grist Mill

The Wreck of the Valencia
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