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MEMBERS OF THE Washington State Historical Society (or, previously, the State Capital Historical Association) will have read by now about the merger of these two organizations that was consummated earlier this year. One of the desires of the boards of the two organizations, when they were still separate, was that the State Capital Museum in Olympia maintain its distinct identity and mission (the history of Washington’s government and political culture), while becoming an integrated part of the larger WSHS.

The process of integration has come about at several layers within the organization: from the level of the board of trustees to that of the finance office’s paying the week’s bills.

In this issue of Columbia we take one more step toward fulfilling the spirit behind the merger by publishing Mark Ezell’s essay on juvenile justice, the theme for the 1993 Governor’s Invitational Art Exhibition, sponsored annually by the State Capital Museum.

We are pleased to present Carlos Schwantes’ colorful essay on the public relations efforts of the transcontinental railroads. Also in this issue, Barbara Allen, a previous contributor to Columbia, writes about the origins and literary style of the many pioneer narratives that have come to greater public attention in this year of the 150th commemoration of the Great Migration to the Oregon Country.

About which, let me add that since the purely Washington version of a transcendent overland trip was that of the Simmons-Bush party to what is now Tumwater in 1845, Columbia will continue to feature essays on this very popular period of study for the next two years.

—David L. Nicandri
HISTORY

COMMENTARY

Juvenile Justice in Washington: Past, Present and Future

EDITOR'S NOTE
The full text of this essay, with footnotes, appears in the catalog of the 1993 Governor's Invitational Art Exhibition. The exhibit is on view in Olympia at the State Capital Museum through March 20, 1994, and in the Governor's Gallery, Legislative Building, through February 7.

UNTIL NOW THERE have been three certainties regarding juvenile justice in Washington. The first is that policies and programs relating to juvenile delinquents always create controversy; strong opinions and feelings abound on this subject. Second, someone always has a better idea about how to deal with troublesome young people; as a result, the laws and programs employed with delinquents are constantly changing. Finally, we always use institutions as one of the primary methods of handling these troubled and troubling youths. The first two truisms will probably never change. Only the third has any possibility of modification in Washington's future.

State Institutions for Kids
SHORTLY AFTER WASHINGTON achieved statehood the Washington State Reform School opened in Chehalis. This institution was intended to reform those "depraved and vicious youth[s] ... who defy their parents and who have little regard for the property of others." By building such an institution Washington was keeping in step with the rest of the country. Separate institutions for delinquent and "wayward" youths first came into being in the 1820s when New York, Boston and Philadelphia opened houses of refuge. Besides keeping minors separate from adult offenders, this type of institution was intended "to exist apart from the troubles and temptations of society in order to work its reformative or protective purposes." Many other cities followed suit, but by midcentury state reform schools began to take the place of houses of refuge. Usually located in rural areas, these schools focused more on schooling and were often organized into cottages or "families."

Though largely an institution for delinquent boys, the Washington State Reform School maintained one frequently overcrowded dormitory for girls. Many of the youths had been sent there because of "stubbornness," a euphemism of the day for truancy. The goals of the school were "to develop the good, suppress the bad and implant a noble spirit of man- and womanhood." In 1907 the institution was renamed the Washington State Training School.

The living conditions, programs and methods of discipline at the school soon became controversial issues. As one possible solution, the Washington State School for Girls was built in Centralia in 1913. The transfer of the 53 girls to the new institution in 1914 did not, however, improve conditions for the 285 boys at Chehalis. The philosophy of the new institution was, "Every girl would rather be a nice girl than not."

Now called Green Hill School, the former Washington State Training School remains in operation today, but its future as a facility for juvenile offenders is uncertain. The state must weigh the costs and benefits of spending millions of dollars to rebuild and upgrade the facility, which is in need of repair and renovation. Maple Lane School, the former Washington State School for Girls, is also still in operation while currently undergoing a major renovation. Maple Lane housed only girls until 1977 when it became coeducational, but since 1981 it has housed only boys.

There were several other facilities used to carry out the state's responsibilities toward youths who transgressed the law. Two facilities operated by the Seattle School District, the Luther Burbank School (Mercer Island) and the Martha Washington School (South Seattle), were transferred to state control in 1957. These facilities remained in operation until 1967 when Echo Glen...
Children's Center opened as a coeducational correctional institution near North Bend.

Two other institutions are no longer in use by the Division of Juvenile Rehabilitation (DJR). The Fort Worden Diagnostic and Treatment Center opened for boys in 1958, added girls in 1961, but in 1963 ceased diagnostics on committed youths and focused only on treatment until its closure in 1971.

Fort Worden's diagnostic function ended when the Cascadia Juvenile Reception-Diagnostic Center opened in Tacoma. Prompted by the occupation of the Tacoma buildings by the Puyallup Indian Tribe and by the state's desire to decentralize the diagnostic function, the Cascadia facility closed its doors in 1976.

In addition to reform schools, a forest camp program has been in constant use since the mid 1950s. This program provides forestry work experience in cooperation with the Department of Natural Resources. The state opened its first camp, the Cedar Creek Youth Forest Camp, in 1952 and has developed many more. When a new Cedar Creek Youth Forest Camp was opened in 1959, the old camp was renamed Capitol Forest Youth Camp. In 1966 these two camps were combined under one name (Cedar Creek) and one administration. Two more camps began receiving youths in 1961: Mission Creek and Spruce Canyon youth forest camps. The last two camps to be developed in Washington were Naselle and Indian Ridge in 1966 and 1969, respectively. Spruce Canyon was closed in 1972, and Indian Ridge and Cedar Creek are now operated by the Department of Corrections for adult offenders. DJR still operates Naselle and Mission Creek for juvenile offenders.

Smaller group homes are now being used in addition to the larger institutions. Group homes are usually for juveniles with short sentences or for those with longer sentences who, having served some of their time in an institution, are being transitioned back to the community. Five of the nine state-operated group homes were started in the 1960s, and all but the first two are still in use today. The Olympic Group Home for Boys opened in Seattle in 1954 and moved to Federal Way a year later. Riverside Group Home began operating in 1962 on Cushman Indian Hospital grounds in Tacoma and changed its name to Pioneer Group Home in 1969. This facility was used until the Puyallups occupied the property in 1976.

There are two other types of residences in which juvenile offenders might be housed. These facilities are operated either by county governments or private providers. Besides contracting with numerous private group homes, DJR has made arrangements for housing young people in some of the 18 secure county-operated detention facilities around the state.

While many may have the impression that Washington's juvenile institutions were filled only with youths who had committed crimes, it was not until 1967 that the legislature prohibited the institutionalization of children who had been abused, neglected or abandoned. Ten years later status offenders (e.g., runaways, truants, ungovernables) could no longer legally be placed in these institutions.

The Juvenile Court System

In the first decade of the 20th century Washington followed the lead of many other states by enacting legislation that created the juvenile court system. Any misbehavior, from skipping school or being idle to actual criminal activity, was a concern of the juvenile court. Court procedures were informal; social workers far outnumbered lawyers, and the idea of due process was foreign. For example, contrary to our current courtroom designs, the juvenile judge frequently sat beside the youth at a table in order to diagnose his or her problems.

The Juvenile Justice Act of 1977 dramatically changed Washington's system. It is now based on what some call the "just deserts" model and others refer to as the "justice model." The slang explanation is simple: "If you do the crime, you do the time."

The current system design is felt by many to be a great innovation, while others see it as a great step backwards. The argument usually has to do with differing opinions about the ideal balance between punishment and rehabilitation. The Juvenile Justice Act of 1977 puts the greatest emphasis on accountability, punishment, supervision and incapacitation.

The endless debate about how punitive or rehabilitative Washington's system is (much less how tough it should be) won't be settled here. The system is too big and complex, composed of hundreds of agencies and thousands of professionals all over the state, to characterize it one way or another. Essentially, though, the system is designed to hold youths who break the law accountable for their behavior, provide them with the full panoply of constitutional protections that the original juvenile court neglected, and deal with juvenile offenders.
in a more consistent manner. How programs that make up the system are implemented and how they are experienced by each individual youth may or may not be consistent with the design.

Prosecutors play critical decision-making roles in the daily operation of the juvenile justice system. They decide, within parameters set by state law, which offense(s) to charge, whether to divert or take the juvenile to court, and if a trial in adult criminal court should be sought. The statute governing the handling of juveniles accused of crimes is both prescriptive and flexible in that certain cases must be handled in a specific manner. In other situations the law gives prosecutors and judges wide discretion. Even youths who are diverted from juvenile court—usually first-time, minor offenders—are expected to provide restitution, pay fines or do community service work, all of which becomes part of the formal court record.

The fact that records are kept on youths even if their cases are diverted is significant. Sentencing in Washington's system is based on three factors: a youth's age, the seriousness of the current charge and his or her prior record. To explain a complex formula in simple terms, these three factors are scored on a point system and the youth's total score tells the judge what the sentence should be. For example, a youth who has between 150 and 199 points is sentenced to 21 to 28 weeks in an institution. The logic behind the point system is that youths who are older, who have committed more serious offenses and who have a more recent prior offense accrue more points. The point system used for sentencing is the essence of Washington's system and is in contrast to other state systems, which bases the length of a youth's sentence on rehabilitative needs. Notwithstanding this explanation of sentencing, judges do have the option of going above or below the prescribed sentence or, if the case warrants, developing an alternative sentence.

**Future Directions**

If it is reasonable to assume that juvenile justice in Washington will be influenced by other states, it seems that an awareness of changes and trends in the rest of the country might help predict this state's future. But it doesn't always happen this way. The 1977 changes described above are a case in point. No other state had implemented some of the policy reforms that Washington did and few, if any, have followed suit.

There are many reasons why policy innovations may or may not spread from state to state. For example, numerous other states are using fewer institutions to house juvenile offenders and have begun to rely on smaller facilities that have security levels commensurate with the youths' risk to the community. This approach has been demonstrated to be equally effective, if not more so, and no more costly than institutions. Washington seemed to be aligning itself in this direction 37 years ago when Washington's Bureau of Juvenile Rehabilitation (DJR's organizational predecessor) said that future planning in Washington should de-emphasize large institutional programs. This recommendation has been oft-repeated, most recently in 1991 by the Governor's Juvenile Issues Task Force. We continue to wait and see whether Washington will adopt such an approach.

Some argue that increases in juvenile crime or changes in its nature and seriousness will be the best predictors of future policies and programs. However, historical analysis shows that the rhythm of juvenile justice change is largely, if not totally, independent of juvenile arrest trends. For example, "get tough" approaches flourished in the 1980s when the number of juvenile arrests declined for most of the decade and began to slowly rise in the early 1990s.

Are large institutions in the future for Washington's juvenile justice? The economics say no, the politics say yes. The fiscal crunch that Washington is currently experiencing is expected to continue, and given the enormous costs of rebuilding existing institutions or starting new ones, it is likely that the state will rely on smaller facilities. Countering the economic factors is the argument by the state employees' union, as well as the towns in which these institutions operate, that jobs will be lost. Another factor that portends the continuation of institutions is the legislature's fear that they might appear to be soft on crime if they approved a system made up of smaller programs.

Obviously, which of these forces will prevail is unknown. A major factor that could tip the balance one way or another is leadership. There has been no clear and consistent leadership in the juvenile justice arena for many years. Governor Lowry is the most likely person to step forward to articulate and fight for effective public policies for delinquent youths.

Not only does Governor Lowry need to be substantively clear, but he must achieve greater collaboration among the multiple key actors in the system. The esoteric quagmire of debate on rehabilitation versus punishment should be avoided. We must remember that all of these youths, in a matter of time, will return to our communities. The state's focus should be on strengthening and adding programs known to be effective and that protect the public from crime. The public is best protected when programs work tenaciously with youths and their families and the youths become crime-free.

There are some specific challenges in Washington's juvenile justice future that deserve high-priority attention: 1) reduce the over-representation of youths of color in the system; 2) increase the system's accountability to the public in terms of fiscal checks and balances and, more importantly, in terms of performance monitoring; 3) improve and increase programs and services that focus on the reintegration of juvenile offenders into their communities, families, schools, jobs, churches, etc.; and 4) do a great deal more to prevent delinquency in the first place.

Finally, there seems to be an insipid undercurrent in most of our communities that must be overcome. It is a difficult attitude to describe but it is characterized by many citizens' desire to have offending youths out of sight (and, unfortunately, out of mind). Another characterization is the commonly-heard response to community programs, "Not in my back yard!" For Washington's juvenile justice system to be more effective, we need strong leadership that focuses on the point of an old African proverb: "It takes a whole village to raise a child."

—Mark Ezell

Mark Ezell is an associate professor at the University of Washington's School of Social Work where he has taught and conducted research since 1986. Currently on sabbatical, he is Senior Research Associate of the Center for the Study of Youth Policy at the University of Pennsylvania and is conducting a four-year study of juvenile detention reform in five cities.
The pioneer is one of the most durable characters in Pacific Northwest history. Although rarely defined, the term "pioneer" is understood to refer to original or early white settlers in a locality. Just as sturdy as the regional image of the pioneer is the custom of interviewing pioneers or encouraging them to produce their memoirs or oral reminiscences. Perhaps the best-known practitioner of the western pioneer interview was Hubert Howe Bancroft, who interviewed hundreds of such individuals in California and sponsored interviews with hundreds of others in Oregon and Washington in the latter part of the 19th century.

The custom of interviewing pioneers and the oral memoirs that resulted are intriguing for a couple of reasons. First, such interviews constituted the practice of oral history long before it became systematized by American historians in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Second, the pioneer interviews represent a certain degree of self-consciousness about the historical process of pioneering, a process that is intimately bound up with regional identity in this part of the country.

My original interest in pioneer narratives stems from a curiosity about attitudes toward the natural environment that might be reflected in such materials. But as I began to peruse the collections I discovered that, in fact, the pioneers had relatively little to say about the new physical surroundings in which they found themselves. The stories they told about their early experiences as settlers were largely about quite different things. So I shifted the focus of my research to the actual topics addressed in the pioneer interview collections—i.e., to what the pioneers liked to talk about. Exploring this dimension of the materials, I believe, can provide a deeper understanding of how the pioneer experience was perceived, not just by the pioneers themselves but also by those interviewing them or eliciting their memoirs. It can also suggest something about the enterprise of oral history in general and the nature of historical inquiry itself.

The comments and conclusions I make here are based on my examination of half a dozen or so collections of pioneer reminiscences. I limited my survey to two categories of materials: (1) oral interviews conducted with pioneers, and (2) pioneer memoirs solicited by a questionnaire or other request. Although the many published memoirs of pioneers certainly constitute a related genre, I have omitted them from consideration here since they do not represent elicited memories as do oral interviews and solicited memoirs.

The collections of interviews and elicited memoirs that I looked at were gathered over a relatively long period, from the 1890s to the 1950s, suggesting that interest in this aspect of regional history developed early and has had a remarkably long life. The collections were made for a variety of reasons and by a range of individuals and organizations. Some of the collections consisted of interviews conducted by people who had personal or professional interests in documenting pioneer experiences. One was Edmond S. Meany, of the University of Washington, who used a questionnaire to collect pioneer biographies in the 1910s and 1920s. The biographies were then published as a series in the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Eva G. Anderson of Wenatchee also conducted interviews with pioneers from the 1940s through the 1960s and published the results in a series of articles in the Wenatchee Daily World. At Washington State University in the mid 1950s students used a questionnaire to interview pioneers in eastern Washington. Portland newspaperman Fred Lockley...
interviewed several hundred Oregon pioneers in the 1920s and 1930s, publishing their stories in the Oregon Journal.

Other sets of interviews resulted from government projects. Among these were the Washington pioneer interviews conducted in the 1930s by the WPA Federal Writers Project as part of its larger mission to gather local history materials. Washington's state government also became involved in gathering pioneer reminiscences. It established the Washington Pioneer Project in 1936 "as part of a Friendly Visiting program to elderly persons receiving old age assistance through the State Department of Public Welfare," according to the introduction in As Told by the Pioneers, a three-volume work produced in 1937 as a result of the project.

Many private organizations also actively collected and published pioneer reminiscences, particularly organizations with historical ties to the subject matter. For instance, the Pioneer Ladies Club of Pendleton, Oregon, compiled and published Reminiscences of Oregon Pioneers in 1937.

Even the media entered the pioneer narrative arena. In 1892 the Tacoma Daily Ledger sponsored an "Old Settlers' Stories" contest and published a series of pieces from the entries. A similar contest sponsored by a Spokane radio station in 1931 produced a series called "Pioneer Reminiscences of the Inland Empire."

These are by no means all the collections of pioneer reminiscences that exist in the Pacific Northwest. But they are representative of the time range within which pioneer reminiscences were gathered and of the ways in which they were collected. Interest in pioneer reminiscences was not limited to the Pacific Northwest.
during this period. Numerous parallel collections, from the same range of individuals, organizations and government agencies, were made in other western states simultaneously.

While looking through the collections I was struck by the fact that the reminiscences all sounded alike. That is, in spite of differences in locale, time period and individual experiences, they all seemed to tell the same general story. My curiosity about why they were so strikingly similar led me to wonder why the materials had been gathered in the first place, how the idea of getting pioneers to tell their stories came into being, how the pioneer interview had come to be structured, and how the concept of the pioneer experience had been formulated and was reflected in the reminiscences. This is, I believe, the real heart of the matter: the very fact that the materials exist at all signifies that pioneering as a category of experience was seen as important enough—both by those who defined themselves as pioneers and by those who undertook the interviews and prompted the memoirs—to preserve memories of the experience. Preserving pioneer narratives, I might add, was as often for self-promoting or filiopietistic purposes as for strictly historical objectives.

Consciousness of pioneering as a shaping force in regional history developed early on in the Pacific Northwest and continues to be a persistent motif in regional culture, manifested in a variety of ways: from reunions held by descendants of wagon train parties to local museums with “Pioneer” and “Homesteader” in their names; from historical pageants like that in Champoeg, Oregon, to assorted signs, both civic and commercial, depicting aspects of the pioneer experience. Where did this consciousness come from and when did it appear? One might reasonably expect that it originally stemmed from the experiences of individuals involved in the settlement process themselves; the record actually suggests that some individuals thought of themselves as pioneers from the start. But the pioneer as a historical figure and the concept of pioneering as a historical experience could emerge in a collective consciousness only after the fact. While individuals may or may not have been self-conscious about what they were doing, it was only after some sort of public notion of the “pioneer experience” developed that they could adopt or have bestowed on them the pioneer identity.

That identity begins to take shape in organizations and activities established to reify the pioneer experience—the pioneer and old-timers associations that sprang up in many communities in the Pacific Northwest late in the 19th century and into the 20th. The formation of these organizations at the local and state levels suggests an emerging consciousness of the historical nature of the enterprise in which the organizations’ membership had been involved; indeed, the requirements for membership are often very explicit about that involvement. The existence of these organizations in turn helped fix public notions of pioneering as a particular kind of historical experience.
Within the context of these organizations, an individual’s identity as a pioneer was established through the reminiscing that went on during the reunions, reminding that constituted the main activity of these organizations. From these exchanges of memories individuals developed a repertoire of narratives about the “early days.” The degree to which the pioneer experience had become the subject of story is clearly reflected in the fact that in 1892 the Tacoma newspaper could solicit old settlers’ stories and expect readers to understand what was called for—the very request acknowledges the existence of such stories.

With the consciousness of pioneering as a category of experience came a communal shaping of what that experience was. If people talked together about their experiences after the fact—e.g., at reunions—then out of those conversations came some consensus of which experiences were critical, symbolic, definitive pioneer experiences. As time went on reminiscences likely focused more narrowly on specific kinds of episodes that had become, for members of these organizations, the essence of the pioneer experience. People who were defined by themselves or by others as pioneers would then be expected to talk about those kinds of experiences. A communal shaping of the past was at work, a process that begins to explain why pioneer narratives all sound alike.

To show this process at work we might begin with the “old settlers’ stories” submitted to the Tacoma Daily Ledger in 1892. Here there is no single interviewer shaping the responses according to the questions asked. Instead, people are responding to a call for memories about pioneer experiences, which makes the similarities of the accounts all the more remarkable. In that collection are several dominant themes that can be taken to represent significant and recognized elements of the pioneer experience. These aren’t the only things people talked about, but they show up in a majority of the accounts. These themes include encounters between white settlers and Indians, both on the trail and in their new homes, and the physical conditions in which they lived once they arrived in the new place. Here is a typical story from the “old settlers’ stories” collection:

The Indians generally adopted the white people’s costumes very readily, but some social habits they failed to observe, and knocking at the door for entrance was one of them. Some of them good naturedly complied with mother’s request to announce their coming by rapping on the door. Mother explained to them that it was the custom of the people to do so. They replied, as she was in an Indian country why could she not adapt herself to their customs. As many of them objected to rapping, she kept the front door locked.

One day a strange Indian, who had never seen a white woman, came to visit these Indians, and was very anxious to see a pale face. They had explained our queer custom of rapping at the door. He said anybody was a fool to stop and rap; he scoffed at the idea of any one going to a door and having some one open it for them; he could open all the doors he came to. So he came to pay his respects. The other Indians declining to accompany him, he came alone, tried the door and found it fast, so he bravely attacked the door with his war club, a few blows bringing it to the floor. Mother, not knowing what to make of it, grabbed her horse pistol and fired as the door fell, hitting him in the calves of both legs. She was alarmed at what she had done, not knowing how the other Indians would like it. As none of them appeared, she went to their camp and told them what she had done, and also what the Indian had done, but instead of being angry, they laughed and told her of his brags. Mother showed them how to make a litter to carry him to the camp. She dressed the wound, removing several buck-shot, and nursed him until he was well. He was her best friend afterward.

The narrator’s awareness of this kind of story as typical of pioneer reminiscences is reflected in the comment offered as an afterword to the story, “I presume that my friends think that we did nothing but fight Indians and wild beasts, and indeed I could write a large book full of just such stories, but we had amusements as well.”

Accounts like these of pioneer life, appearing in the newspaper and reaching thousands of readers, helped shape the contours of the “typical” pioneer experience in public consciousness, just as the reminiscing among pioneers themselves at reunions and pioneer society meetings helped shape their own sense of what had happened to them and what they had done. The effects of these forces on both personal memories and public consciousness can be seen in the pioneer interviews conducted in the 1910s and 1920s. In these interviews the same themes, the same contours of the pioneer experience as expressed in the elicited memoirs also appear in response to the questions the interviewers asked.

The pioneer interviews, in response to specific questions, sound much like the spontaneous memoirs elicited by the newspaper contest. This is because the interviewers, familiar with the public understanding of the pioneer experience, “knew” what had happened and asked about those particular elements of the narrator’s experience. In doing so they perpetuated the consciousness that pioneering comprised certain categories of experience. For instance, although Edmund Meany’s questionnaire tended to emphasize genea-
logical information, it also asked respondents to supply the dates and places of their arrival in Washington and requested “personal experiences, especially in pioneer days.”

The questions that Fred Lockley asked in his interviews are not apparent from the published materials. However, the fact that the same kinds of stories show up in his interviews as in the Meany collection and the Tacoma Daily Ledger suggests that he was looking for essentially the same kinds of stories, and that the people he interviewed understood him to be interested in those things, understood what kinds of things ought to have happened to them as pioneers. Among those were experiences during the overland migration:

There were 36 wagons in our part of the wagon train. The grown folks in several of the wagons died of cholera. Father took charge of the children who had been left orphans. When a person would die they would dig a grave in the middle of the road and drive the oxen over it so that the Indians would not dig up the body to get the clothing.

Another woman recounted a story of death on the trail in strikingly similar language:

I was 13 years old when we crossed the plains in 1847, so of course the incidents of that trip are very vivid in my memory. ... I walked most of the way across the plains, as did many of the young folks. I remember a little baby, a girl, died on the plains. We buried her in the middle of the road and drove the oxen over her grave so the Indians would not discover where she was buried.

A second theme that appears frequently in Lockley’s interviews is the natural abundance of the land the settlers found at the end of the trail:

It was easy to make a living in those days. The cougars would frequently drive the deer down to the beach and the deer would swim out beyond the breakers and not come ashore until daylight, when the cougars had gone back to the mountains. A person with a skiff could go out about daybreak and kill a deer in the water. There were deep bayous running in from the ocean. At low tide you could get a boatload of fine oysters, which were attached to the roots of the trees along the bayous. The trees along the shore were full of ducks. They had never been shot at and you could literally pick them from the trees.

In another account:

A man living on some stream on the coast certainly had an easy living when we came here. The winter storms threw enough driftwood into his front yard to last him all year. In an hour’s walk he could kill and bring in a buck for fresh meat. He could catch a dishpan full of oysters in an hour or so. He could dig rock oysters or get clams at low tide. He could catch sea fish whenever he felt so inclined. His garden furnished him carrots, beets, turnips, potatoes, and cabbage for winter use. He could pick and put up all the wild blackberries and strawberries he wanted. He could gather hazelnuts for winter use. He didn’t have to worry about the high cost of living.

Oregon pioneers, like the Washingtonians who responded to the Tacoma Daily Ledger contest, also told numerous stories about encounters with Indians, both on the trail and in their new homes:

We started across the plains in 1852. There were 62 in our party and we had 22 wagons. I was 15 years old then, and I have no more vivid memories than those of some of the scenes and incidents of our trip.

One thing I remember with a good deal of amusement was of our party being held up by Pawnee Indians. They wanted pay for our traveling through their country and killing their buffalo. Rather than have trouble, McMinn Dodson, my father, and some others concluded they would give them some small present.

The Indian chief, a wrinkled old man, put down a beautifully tanned buffalo robe and told each family to put something on the robe. My father had more cornmeal than anything else, so he put a pint of cornmeal on the robe. Another man had more salt, so he gave a couple of cups of salt, putting it, of course, in a separate pile. Another man could spare a little sugar, another a handful of pepper, and so on down the line. When all the contributions had been placed on the buffalo robe the old chief spoke to one of the Indians who took the robe by the four corners, so that all the different materials ran to the center and they went contentedly away. I have often wondered what they could call it. There were sugar, salt, pepper, flour, cornmeal, rice, and coffee. It sure would be a funny mess.

Another pioneer recounted:

One time Father had to drive to The Dalles to get provisions. The trip took about a week. ... Some of the younger Indians came to our place while Father was gone, and one of them said, “The whites stole our land. We have come to kill you.”

Mother said, “I can’t prevent your killing me. I have no
Encounters with wild animals also appear frequently as the subject of pioneer narratives:

Timber wolves were abundant in those days, as well as bears, so Mother and Father brought the sheep up at night and put them in a pen. One evening, when I was two years old, Mother left me with Grandmother Love while she went out to bring the sheep up. They were half a mile away. Unknown to my mother, I toddled out to follow her. Mother went to the top of the hill about half a mile from our log cabin to see if she could locate the sheep. Just as she got there six big timber wolves came toward her. She backed away from them, and when she had got 100 yards away she turned to run and fell over me. She grabbed me up and started to run with the wolves following her. She said she never ran so far nor so fast before, and it seemed she never would get to the cabin.

The stories gathered by Lockley appeared in the newspaper, assuring them a wide audience and further contributing to shaping collective notions about the contours of the pioneer experience. The same categories of experience, reflected in stories with the same or similar themes, appear in each subsequent set of interviews and memoirs. In the collection compiled by the Daughters of Pioneers of Washington in 1986, for instance, appear the familiar accounts of physical conditions:

When my grandfather was a young man living in the Roseburg, Oregon, area, he and one of his brothers made a trip to California. It was late in the fall when they started home. They were warned not to try coming through the morn-
The experience of crossing the plains on the Oregon Trail as a significant element of family identity is clearly reflected in the label on this 1922 family reunion photograph. It reads: "Descendants of J. C. & Eleanor Davis, who crossed the plains in 1849."

The statement is striking because of the chance of deep snow.

Being young and not willing to take advice, they started out on horses. They got up into the mountains and got into snow so deep the horses could not travel, so they turned them loose to let them go back and... continued on. They got lost and ran out of food; my grandfather said they even tried boiling pieces of leather trying to get some nourishment out of it.

Finally they were found by some Indians. My grandfather’s feet were frozen so badly he couldn’t walk for six months. An Indian woman cared for him in their camp. To help pay for his keep my grandfather knitted stockings for her.

And the collection includes the by-now-familiar story of death on the Oregon Trail:

Another story I heard was that Grandmother had a brother who was crippled. I never heard any details other than that, but the Indians were always much interested in him. They seemed to feel that he had some special power in his crippled state. When he died, he was buried in the middle of the night. The sod was put back in place and the wagons driven back and forth over the spot to cover it, for they feared the Indians would dig up his body.

In the questionnaire used by Washington State University students interviewing eastern Washington “pioneers” in the 1950s, the primary focus is on material conditions—houses, food, fuel, clothing—and on life stories. Also included is a set of questions about “unique experiences,” such as, the questionnaire suggests, frontier catastrophes, law and order, notorious characters, and Indians.

Even into the late 1970s, in an oral history interview conducted in Whitman County, Washington, the interviewer asks the narrator to tell stories he had heard about his father’s experience crossing the plains, and the man’s response suggests the continuing power of pioneering as a social force:

This fella Frank Arrowsmith, he was working down in the basement here one day, and he saw that yoke. And he said, “What year did your dad come across the plains?” And I said, “1865.” And he said, “Well, my dad did too. I wonder if they came across on the same wagon train?” So, I said, “Well, you tell me the name of the captain of the train.” He couldn’t think of it but he called Walt down—he was the oldest brother—and he had studied a little bit and he told us the name of the captain. I’ve forgotten it right now, but I told him, “They came across on the same train then.”

What all this suggests is not so much that people tended to remember the same kinds of things, but that interviewers tended to ask questions about the same kinds of experiences, questions that shaped the responses, so that the process of gathering pioneer reminiscences became a self-perpetuating system: people’s memories were shaped by communal reminiscing, which shaped interviewers’ notions of what to ask people about, which in turn reinforced the memories of those episodes and not others. So what the pioneer narratives are about is less what happened to the pioneers as individuals as they are about what people, both narrators and their audiences, thought ought to have happened as part of the pioneer experience.

Let’s go back to the discussion of the dominant themes that first showed in the “old settlers’ stories” submitted to the Tacoma Daily Ledger and that remained staples of the pioneer reminiscence through the 1950s: encounters between white settlers and Indians, and the physical conditions of early
pioneer life. I'd like to focus on the ubiquity of these themes as the chosen symbols of the pioneer experience.

One of the most intriguing features of the stories about encounters with Indians is that the encounters are neither consistently positive nor always negative. That is, in some cases the Indians are characterized as friendly, wise, and helpful; in others they are frightening, threatening, or dangerous. What this suggests is that it is the fact of encounter and not its outcome that is significant. To be able to tell a story of encountering Indians—the native inhabitants of the land displaced by white settlers—is to prove that you were a pioneer, the first of your own kind, and that you had some role to play in the “disappearance” or at least transformation of the Indians in the face of Euro-American settlement.

In stories pioneers told about physical conditions, the point of the stories is often a comparison, explicit or implicit, between the past and the present. If life was harsh (or easy) then, the stories suggest, it is only so in contrast to the present. By telling these kinds of stories pioneers offer images of themselves as agents of change, bringing the present into existence.

I began this inquiry with curiosity about how pioneers regarded the new natural environment in which they found themselves. But in these pioneer materials the environment is simply there—as abundance, as wild animals, as destructive weather. Like the stories about Indians, stories in which the natural environment figures do not express a consistent attitude toward it—e.g., a desire to conquer it. At first this seems puzzling because western historians, old and new alike, have characterized the frontier story as one of conquest or exploitation of the land, of the natural environment. But in their stories pioneers seem not to have thought of the process in that way, which suggests that in people’s own stories they reveal their own consciousness of themselves as historical actors. They share what they conceive to be the chief features of their own experience, features that are perpetuated not only in the communal discourse out of which the pioneer narratives arose but in historical discourse as well.

The question that this process raises for historians, then, is this: To what extent do we perpetuate those features of experience in terms of the regional historical subjects we pursue and the ways in which we pursue them? We understand, consciously or unconsciously, the categories of experience embodied in stories, so we look for accounts of experiences that match our expectations of those categories. This explains the structure of the questionnaires used to interview pioneers, a structure that seems to have been created along already familiar lines, that corresponded to what the interviewers already “knew.”

Looking at pioneer narratives from this perspective helps illuminate how memories of historical experiences are constructed and how historians’ avenues of inquiry are often shaped by the same processes. It suggests as well the power of these stories in molding the tenacious image of the Northwest pioneer, which not only continues to shape public consciousness of regional history in the Pacific Northwest but is invoked in public policy debates over issues that challenge that image.

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For well over a century the citizens of Columbia County have transacted their legal business in the brick and stucco building that sits today in Dayton's courthouse square. To modern eyes the venerable structure is delightfully anachronistic— as cluttered with gimcracks and gewgaws as a Victorian mantle. Despite changing tastes this charming building has been a source of pride to Columbia County since 1887 and remains the oldest functioning courthouse in Washington. The Touchet River runs through the middle of the green and peaceful county seat, creating a pleasant contrast to the dry hills beyond town. Like an oasis, Dayton felt sure that it deserved its turn-of-the-century nickname, “City of Shady Walks and Pleasant Lawns.” Still, it was a place where big things were expected. “In the valley of the sparkling river Touchet,” wrote one ecstatic visitor to Dayton in 1878, “lies the youthful village whose wonderful progress has surprised with pleasure and exceeded the most sanguine expectations of its sturdy race . . . youthful in years, but with muscles compact and frame well knit.”

In its first years, however, life was not nearly so serene or confident. Today it is hard to imagine that Columbia County was once the site of one of Washington Territory's most violent crimes, yet such was the case. While murder and rapine were rare even in Dayton's early years, there was excitement aplenty almost from the start.

In 1859 Jesse M. Day, the town's founder, came to the area, staked a claim and then departed. After a bit of wandering Day returned and in 1864 purchased the land that became Dayton. Eventually he became the proprietor of a store that he erected on his property. Day hoped to make his fortune by serving the homesteaders who were trickling into the region; before long he was doing a good business.

Starting in the 1860s, growing numbers of settlers moved into the area when it was discovered that the rolling Palouse

The Columbia County Courthouse in Dayton has stood on its square since 1887. It was said to be “the pride of every citizen in the county whose liver exercises its proper functions as intended by Dame Nature.”

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- Blind Justice

COLUMBIA 14 WINTER 1993/94
AND NOW...

Although Blind Justice no longer raises her sword and scales above the square, Columbia County's charming courthouse looks much as it did over a century ago. It is the oldest functioning courthouse in the state.

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Hills were perfect for cultivating wheat. A flour mill began operating near Day's store in 1872. The town of Dayton sprang up in the same year. The quiet little community rapidly became a center of both commerce and population.

Like most raw settlements on the Western frontier, Dayton also had a rougher side. During the late 1870s there were 15 saloons and 2 breweries serving a population of 1,500. But drinking was only part of the picture. It was gambling that attracted a far more dangerous clientele, and the exchange of wealth (both legal and otherwise) took place on a round-the-clock basis. In those days there was little paper money, only "yallerboys," and these gold coins were particularly welcome in games of chance. As one old-time Daytonite confirmed many years later, "Nothing stacks up nicer in a poker game than gold twenties."

Dayton's reputation as a resort of rascals and felons hit a high point in the winter of 1877-78. At that time some of the most eminent desperadoes of the entire West graciously paid the town a visit. Some old-timers claimed that these outlaws included the celebrated James boys, Jesse and Frank. Reportedly, the brothers wagered their $20 gold pieces in a local den of iniquity called Spark's Saloon.

Despite the occasional visiting cutthroat, Dayton had always been essentially a law-abiding town with great ambitions. The legal authorities thus saw their first duty as casting out their disorderly neighbors. Once this was accomplished, the townspeople were ready to flex their political muscles.

Originally, Columbia County was part of Walla Walla County, but the citizens were so far from the seat of government that they felt greatly inconvenienced whenever they had to transact any official business. The Daytonites were particularly vocal in their agitation to break away from Walla Walla and start life on their own. Besides, they were
not blind to the benefits that would come to them as the seat of a separate county.

Columbia County, as it was first envisioned by the ambitious burghers of Dayton, would extend all the way to the Idaho border, including what is now Garfield and Asotin counties. Since theirs was the largest settlement in the entire region, Daytonites viewed this as their rightful sphere of influence. The little town also had the advantage of being represented in the Territorial Council by an energetic delegate named Elisha Ping, who pushed through the legislation to create the new county.

At first the new jurisdiction was to be called Ping County in honor of Dayton's representative. Disputes over boundaries with Walla Walla County scotched this plan, and the bill was vetoed by Governor Ferry. When the bill resurfaced with revised wording the name had changed to Columbia County, in honor of the great river. Dayton was named temporary county seat.

After achieving their goal the citizens of the new county set about finding a permanent seat of government that would be acceptable to all. Since Dayton was on the western edge of the county the inhabitants of the eastern sections were not pleased with the site. In the election that followed Dayton won with an uncomfortably small margin. The new county government nervously came to rest on the banks of the Touchet amid grumblings aplenty from its eastern constituents.

After settling the issue of the county seat it was time to look at the matter of a suitable courthouse. Fortunately, when the town of Dayton was laid out, a square had been reserved for the county. Until that structure could be built, however, the county officers were forced to use rented rooms scattered around town. This was not an ideal situation. "The auditor's office," complained one bureaucrat, "is so small as to be a positive annoyance to the officers and all who attempt to transact business with them."

Nearly everyone agreed that a new courthouse was needed, but the citizens seemed divided on what kind to build. An early commentator summed up the controversy this way: "Some are in favor of building a good one, while others think the county cannot afford to do so, and advise the erection of a cheaper one now, and in a few years, when stronger financially, the building of one that will be an ornament and credit to the county." Until the situation cleared up there was only one building that occupied the courthouse square—a cheap, wooden frame jail.

Before the problem could be solved another, graver issue came before the citizens of the county. The Asotin and Pataha regions had chafed under Dayton's rule from the very beginning, and by the early 1880s they were ready to break away. Unlike other mother counties, Columbia made little effort to halt the defection, and the reason was a simple one: The population of the eastern side of the county had grown at a remarkable rate, and by the time of the breakup the citizens in the east far outnumbered those around Dayton. If the county division failed and a new election to move the county seat were held, Dayton stood little chance of winning. Thus, rebellious Garfield County parted amicably in 1881, and Columbia proceeded on her own newly-assured course.

With the eastern troublemakers out of the way the courthouse question was again brought before the public. Dayton's Columbia Chronicle complained in May 1883 about the sad state of affairs.

"Columbia County is now paying a yearly rental of $800 for the county offices and is forced . . . to hold her court in a building originally intended for other purposes, inconveniently arranged and at some distance from the offices of the officials."

Unfortunately, no matter how angry the editorials became, the citizens were unwilling to shell out the money to remedy the situation. They twice voted down sums to construct an inexpensive courthouse, so trials continued to be held in rooms around town.

The quality of justice was thankfully not strained by these primitive arrangements. In fact, one of Columbia County's most violent and shocking crimes was tried in a simple rented hall in Dayton. This was the brutal New York Bar murder, a case that was reported in papers like the Police Gazette and discussed in saloons and barber shops across the country. (See sidebar on opposite page.)

When all the excitement about the doings in the murder case had died down there was still no permanent courthouse in Columbia County. A long, thoughtful letter appeared in the Columbia Chronicle in 1884 decrying the absence of suitable county offices. It was false economy, the anonymous writer argued, to postpone building a courthouse. First there was the danger of losing all the county records. He pointed out that not a citizen would be free from expense if the records were destroyed by fire. Then, "Tax Payer," as he signed himself, reminded his readers that delaying the
ON THE NIGHT of July 26, 1882, two men from Pataha City went to New York Bar, a tiny community on the Snake River. They visited the warehouse run by Eli H. Cummins, freight agent for the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company. When they entered Cummins' bedroom they found the agent’s body lying in a welter of blood and gore. The man’s coin purse and currency wallet lay empty on the floor beside the viciously mutilated corpse.

The body was riddled with bullets. In all, 13 shots were fired at the man, most of them finding their mark. In addition to the gun wounds, the murderer had chopped an ax into the man three times, producing deep gashes on top of his head, across the mouth, and over the eyes. The man’s throat had also been cut with a sharp knife, the blade of which had entered the left side of the neck and been drawn around to the front, severing the windpipe and jugular vein.

While the predators were on the loose, citizens of Columbia County must have locked their doors at night and eyed their neighbors with suspicion. Fortunately, late in the year one Canada Owenby was arrested and charged with the murder of freight agent Cummins. Owenby was scheduled to be tried in Dayton's district court on January 10, 1883.

The trial lasted three days. On the last day the makeshift courtroom was packed with an eager, intensely interested audience. The evidence against Owenby was mostly circumstantial. The defendant had maintained his innocence and then kept a stony silence under questioning. The jury deliberated for 23 hours before giving up, hopelessly deadlocked.

Ironically, the strain of the situation had taken a terrible toll on Owenby's nerves, and before the jury could report he made a confession. In this he implicated two other men, J. T. McPherson and Ezra Snodderly. The latter, he claimed, had participated in planning the crime, but not the actual murder and robbery. He maintained that McPherson had fired the shots at Cummins and broken through the agent's door. "When the door flew open," he confessed, "I was right behind McPherson, and Cummins recognized McPherson and said, 'Mack, what in the world have I done to you?' McPherson answered, 'Nothin', G*d d**n you; I'll finish you!'") Next, Owenby continued, McPherson went to work on Cummins, brutally chopping and carving him up, after which the two men took his money and escaped.

AFTER THESE REVELATIONS Owenby's second trial was much faster. The jury retired for half an hour and returned with a verdict of "guilty as charged." When the decision was announced Owenby looked worn and haggard. According to the Chronicle, "He presented every evidence of one having suffered the torments of the damned."

Based on Owenby's evidence, McPherson and Snodderly were found guilty. All three were sentenced to be hanged. But while awaiting their execution, first McPherson and then Snodderly initiated appeals to the Supreme Court. The public was outraged. Fearing that the men would be freed on legal technicalities, a group of vigilantes broke into the jail on Courthouse Square, dragged McPherson out and prepared to lynch him.

The mob nearly botched the job. The rope they used was either too long or else it slipped, for when McPherson fell through the trap his feet reached the ground. This obstacle was quickly overcome by McPherson's determined executioners. According to an eyewitness, "Strong hands grasped the rope and his ponderous body swung clear between the heavens and earth, and he was literally strangled to death."

UNDERSTANDABLY, SNODDERLY LOST his interest in appeals and was soon executed legally. For security reasons Owenby was moved to the Walla Walla County Jail. On Christmas night, 1883, he and another prisoner made a daring escape. He was apprehended in the Blue Mountains several days later in a greatly weakened condition. The authorities took him back to Dayton, but his hardships were too much for him, and on January 8, 1884, "his soul went forth to meet his victim and his accomplices in the great beyond."
inevitable would simply end up costing more in the long run.
"Let the work be undertaken as early as possible," he pleaded,
"Let us see if good will not grow out of the measure, even in
a purely money point of view."

There was another vote to authorize funding for a new
courthouse shortly after this letter was published, and this
time the measure passed. Even after the electorate had spoken
progress was glacially slow, and the county’s citizens
began to wonder if they ever would see a courthouse on the
town’s square.

The Chronicle of March 6, 1886, showed that it was get-
ing as fed up as anyone. "Columbia County wants a court-
house and jail and wants them badly. . . . Both labor and
materials are cheaper than ever before. . . . Let us have a
courthouse as soon as possible by some means." At last long,
on June 1, 1886, A. J. Dexter, the structure’s stone and brick-
work contractor, turned the first sod, and the new court-
house was fairly underway.

The building’s architect was William H. Burrows. Born in
1838 in Montreal, Canada, he had designed buildings in a
variety of places before moving to Dayton in August 1878.
He had been kept busy there planning such structures as the
Hotel Dayton, the Congregational Church and other busi-
nesses and residences in the burgeoning little community.
The fact that he was a local man undoubtedly added to the
sense of community pride evoked by the courthouse.

By the end of 1887 the new building was completed and
everyone seemed pleased with the results. The structure cost
a little over $38,000, and if the comments of the press are any
indication, this was money well spent. "The attention of
strangers visiting our city," crowed the Chronicle,

is attracted by a fine building in the center of the public square
which has risen like magic during the past few months and
which is the pride of every citizen in the county whose liver
exercises its proper functions as intended by Dame Nature.

Burrows obviously took some of his inspiration from the
recently completed Walla Walla courthouse. The design of the two structures had much in
common. Still, the architect created an original
building filled with a high-Victorian exuberance and Second
Empire grandeur.

The edifice was constructed in the form of a Greek cross
with an elegant cupola topping the roof. The height of the
building from ground to tower was 86 feet. A gracious flight
of steps took the visitor up to a covered porch supported
by four Corinthian columns. The roof peaks and side pedi-
ments were adorned with bronze eagles while twin statues of
Blind Justice brandished sword and scales atop the front and
back entrances.

Unlike most public structures, this one was nearly as mag-
nificent inside as it was outside. The crowning glory of the
structure’s interior was a beautiful double stairway that swept
up from opposite sides of the building. The second floor
courtroom was equally rich, with Eastlake wainscoting,
decorative plaster work, cove cornices and a 19-foot ceiling.

Down in the bowels of the building the county jail had
four steel cells to hold the assorted wickedness of Columbia
County. In 1890 one bored prisoner even began an ephem-
ral newspaper called The Calaboose Daily News. The lead
story began, "We saw a fly travelling on the wall this morn-
ing, but he got lonesome and died. Poor fellow, we sympa-
thize with you."

The noble courthouse immediately became the center of
the community. A white picket fence went up around the
graceful square, and shady locust trees were planted on the
lawn. There was a bandstand where concerts and entertain-
ments were given on warm summer evenings. Columbia
County’s temple of justice reflected the love and pride that
the community lavished upon it. It represented small town
America at its best.

The courthouse was produced at a time when community
pride translated itself into brick and mortar. The newspaper
accounts of the time confirm this civic self-esteem. "Every
stroke of the hammer," remarked the Chronicle in 1886,

has been made and every stick of material has been selected
with the one object in view: that of doing a good job and one
that would reflect credit alike upon the county and the builders.
Daytonites celebrating Patriotic Day in April 1917. 
Later that night high school pranksters sneaked back and startled the town by shooting off the courthouse cannon.

Not one particle of the work has been slighted, and the edifice stands today a monument to honest workmanship.

Two Civil War cannons arrived in 1915 to adorn the courthouse grounds. They were promptly installed on either side of the walkway. The touchhole of one war piece was well worn, showing that it had seen a lot of action in its day. It was fated to cause one further commotion before retiring serenely on the square. A few nights after the cannons arrived in Dayton three high school pranksters decided to fire one of the old guns to see if they could surprise the sleeping town. The trio succeeded beyond their wildest hopes.

The gun had been loaded for display in a patriotic celebration, but somehow, in all the excitement, it was never fired. This was a fact that was not lost on the boys who thought it a shame to let the powder go to waste. So a little before midnight the threesome sneaked down to the courthouse square and prepared to fire the old cannon. The boys did not think the charge in the gun would speak loud enough for their purpose, so they put six pounds of powder on top of the two pounds already in the gun.

When the cannon was touched off, the rusty old weapon jumped about 20 feet into the air and belched out an explosion that was heard for miles around. The boys were catapulted a similar distance into the ozone. "Gee! What a surprise," remarked the Chronicle, "One boy said he did not know how high he went up, but he saw his hat come down after he dropped from the sky." Despite being chained to a concrete foundation, the cannon broke loose from its fetters, turned around several times and landed with the muzzle toward the courthouse.

Peace was not the only thing that was shattered that night. Nearly every windowpane in the front of the courthouse was broken by the blast. The greatest wonder of all was that the boys had not been killed. As soon as tempers in the town had cooled, most folks seemed amused by the audacity of the trick. The boys owned up to their stunt and agreed to pay for all the damage they had caused.

Almost from the start the newspaper seemed sympathetic to their plight: "Most everybody heard the noise, and that is all the boys intended," they explained. It was not long before a subscription was being circulated, and eventually a tidy sum was raised in order to help the boys pay for their prank.

In the May 19, 1917, issue of the Chronicle, "The Cannon Boys," as they were by then known, thanked the entire community for its outpouring of cash and understanding. "We take this means of expressing our thanks and appreciation of the absence of censure from the community at large for our boyish prank." After the subscription funds were paid, "there will remain eighty-five or ninety dollars to make good, which is little enough considering the result of our error." In the end, the town forgave the boys, and life on the Touchet returned to normal once more.

Schoolboy pranks were the least of the indignities the courthouse had to suffer; some troubles were insidious. Perhaps because it held such a secure place in the hearts of its citizens, the courthouse suffered through several well-intentioned "improvements" over the years. Some of these changes were justifiable, but many others were poorly planned and crudely executed.

The first modifications were not intended to alter the structure's basic character but were designed to keep its spirit intact. This is confirmed in an April 1906 newspaper report. "For twenty years," reported the Chronicle, "this seat of the county government has stood as a monument to the enterprise and progressive spirit of the people of Dayton and vicinity, but time has made its usual ravages upon the structure and its decayed and defective parts must be replaced with new and better ones."

The most dramatic change to the courthouse in 1906 was the redesign of the courtroom. Contractor Everett Eager was hired to rearrange the interior by moving the jury box and
the bench to the southeast corner of the room. The audience was thus able to take their seats without passing in front of the judge’s chair. It was a reasonable change, but it was the first of many other less sympathetic transformations.

By 1935, however, styles had changed, and the work of dismantling began. The bronze statues of Blind Justice and her accompanying eagles were taken down from the courthouse roof that year. They were considered hopelessly old-fashioned and were melted down for scrap during the early years of World War II. Bit by bit the old structure was being destroyed by age and bureaucratic neglect. The building’s Victorian exterior was by now considered as fussy as Grandma’s parlor and as dowdy as a maiden aunt. It was a streamlined, modern world, and Columbia County did not want to be saddled with an out-of-date relic, so the courthouse had to be updated.

By 1938 other indignities were in store. The old courthouse got what was termed “a face lift” that year. Workmen tore off the old exterior finish and much of the Victorian detail in a misguided attempt to modernize the old structure. By November, the Chronicle could report, “When the county commissioners said stream-lined, they were nearly right. Columbia County’s newly re-finished courthouse has taken on the appearance of a new building.” The cupola had been removed, the decorations ripped off the facade, and the entire building was painted a somber black and white. “The whole outside of the building has been changed to meet the standards of a modern building.” When the “improvements” had been completed, there was little that remained of Burrows’ original plans. The old courthouse had been stripped of its finery like a slave at the marketplace of modernization.

As early as 1947, however, many citizens were beginning to realize that they may have made a mistake. “Many are old timers,” the town’s paper announced wistfully, “who will never cease to regret the lost beauty of this, our most imposing public building, which shed its most outstanding architectural features in a wave of modernization a number of years ago.” Sixty years to the day after the courthouse had been completed, there was much cause to mourn what the county had lost.

Visitors who once looked with delight upon this monument to the enterprise and taste of our early citizens, now pass it with no thought of the age our community has attained or of the skill and imagination of our early artisans.

Heedless of a few doubters, the county had apparently decided to take modernization as far as they could. In the 1950s many of the original windows were replaced with ugly but efficient aluminum frames, several of which were soon plugged with incongruous air conditioners. Finally, nearly all of the remaining ornamentation was stripped from the building’s exterior, leaving a bare, stuccoed surface. In the end there was little of Burrows’ original design left by the architecturally insensitive changes. Another ill-conceived transformation came in 1952 when the locust trees that had shaded the square for generations were chopped down.

There were reckless outrages committed inside the old structure as well. Half of the elegant stairway was removed to make room for a toilet. Ceilings were lowered and wall partitions erected regardless of the building’s integrity. In a utilitarian sense the old courthouse was no longer functioning properly. Its patched walls and creaking floors were in need of repair if it was going to face the next century intact.

Fortunately, there were plenty of people in Columbia County who still loved the old courthouse. They were willing to lavish on her the affection that had lain dormant since the days of their grandparents. Starting in 1984 a massive restoration program was launched that promised to return the structure to its original splendor. Although it took almost a decade, the venerable temple of law was finally restored to its old glory in the summer of 1993.

For well over a century the old Victorian building has stood like a beacon of law and justice on Dayton’s gracious courthouse square. It has been a source of pride to the people of Dayton and Columbia County for many years. Now the ravages of time have been repaired so that the beautiful building will be around for other generations to enjoy. With sentiments like these, Blind Justice will feel at home on the Touchet for many years to come.

David Chapman, a teacher and writer living in Seattle, is author of Cathedrals for the Common Man, a history of Washington’s 39 courthouses, to be published by Washington State University Press.

AUTHOR’S NOTE
I owe a debt of gratitude to Ginny Butler, of the Columbia County Courthouse Restoration Fund, for supplying advice and encouragement. I am especially grateful to Columbia County historian Faye Ramwater who caught many of my errors. Thanks also to George and Linda Van Rass who took the time to show me around the courthouse while it was still under construction, and to Elizabeth Thorn for drawing my attention to several important articles.
Oregon Trail Nostalgia

This piece of 1923 sheet music, a march song inspired by the Lasky film "The Covered Wagon," was written as many early pioneers were passing from the scene. It was a time of nostalgia when the legends became much larger than life. One would guess that the words were intended not only to elevate the pioneer memory but also to inspire the youth of the decadent 1920s.

Come you heroes strong and ready!
Hear you not the bugle's call?
On with the pack;
Your gun on your back
For freedom is waiting for all. . .

We'll be known in song and story
Pioneers who blazed the way,
Over the plain through sunshine
and rain,
With grit and a "hip hooray."

The Washington State Historical Society's Special Collections Division houses a substantial and interesting collection of sheet music about Washington and the West written from the 1890s to the present.
Early Railroad Tourism in the Pacific Northwest

It is hardly coincidental that the massive and much-documented railroad promotional campaigns conducted during the 1880s and again during the first two decades of the 20th century were each accompanied by unprecedented waves of new settlers in the Pacific Northwest. "Ask any settler in some part of the West why he immigrated," observed the well-known journalist Ray Stannard Baker in 1908, "and he will invariably point you back to the beguiling road, a pamphlet, a fevered folder, an enthusiastic agent."

Over the years hundreds of different railroad brochures promoted settlement and economic development of the far Northwest, but most of the early ones only occasionally mentioned tourism. One prominent publicist for the Union Pacific in the 1870s and 1880s was Robert Strahorn, who had a passion for collecting accurate facts and figures, and for reprinting human interest stories in his pamphlets. It was almost as an afterthought that he promoted tourism. In various editions of To the Rockies and Beyond, published between 1878 and 1881, Strahorn became one of the first persons to call tourist attention to Shoshone Falls, Payette Lake, the mineral waters of Soda Springs and other natural wonders of southern Idaho, which was an area long regarded only as an unattractive desert. Railroad tourism, like development activity in general, meant transforming landscapes widely considered unappealing into veritable wonderlands.

As Strahorn understood well, few if any areas of the United States were blessed with more spectacular scenery or greater variety of outdoor activities than the Pacific Northwest, but the region did not become a tourist mecca until northern transcontinental railroads made the trip easy. It was only after completion of two such lines in 1883 and 1884...
that regional boosters found it practicable to lure tourists along with home seekers and investors. Even so, after through-passenger trains reached Portland on a daily basis from St. Paul in 1883, most tourists from the East still preferred to go to California and Colorado because of the extra time and money required to travel to the far Northwest. Nonetheless, as early as 1886 the Union Pacific Railway issued a booklet called Inter-Mountain Resorts, which called attention to Salt Lake City, Ogden Hot Springs, Yellowstone National Park and three southern Idaho destinations: Soda Springs, Shoshone Falls and Guyer Hot Springs. These places offered tourists a chance to ponder curiosities of nature and society (whether Mormons or Indians) or the opportunity to improve physical and mental health. Curiosity and health concerns were two of the driving forces behind western tourism in the late 19th century.

Hot springs were by far the most ubiquitous of early western tourist attractions. Health considerations figured prominently in advertisements for the Pacific Northwest's many hot springs, which remained popular with tourists from the 1880s through the 1920s. When Oregon Short Line tracks reached the Wood River Valley in the early 1880s, Hailey Hot Springs became Idaho's first real summer resort. Guyer Hot Springs, two miles by stage from nearby Ketchum, had waters that were "good for all nervous complaints, rheumatism, skin and blood affections. This place is much resorted to by tourists and invalids. It is a beautiful, quiet mountain retreat."

The Union Pacific also promoted Bingham Springs and Hot Lake in eastern Oregon until the popularity of hot springs waned after World War I. Of Hot Lake one promoter claimed, "The water is delightful to taste, having something of the exhilarating effect of champagne. It has cured innumerable invalids, who had tried in vain all the noted resorts of this country and of Europe."

Certainly not all geothermal attractions were located along the Union Pacific line. There were Green River Hot Springs on the Northern Pacific line east of Tacoma and, in Montana, more than 21 hot springs, including White Sulphur Springs, that "Eldorado of Ease and Elegance, where Cool Breezes Kiss Away the Burning Rays of the Summer Sun, and a Panacea for Human Ills Gushes Forth from Mother Earth." White Sulphur Springs promised guests a variety of rustic pleasures including dancing, fishing and ball playing, but transcontinental railroads continued to ignore the resort because of its remote location. Although in 1910 the White Sulphur Springs & Yellowstone Park Railway built railroads 23 miles south to meet the Milwaukee Road at Ringling, crowds of tourists from outside Montana still failed to materialize.

Health concerns also figured prominently in Western Resorts for Health and Pleasure Reached via the Union Pacific Railway, a booklet first issued in 1888. It emphasized that the "entire Rocky Mountain region is a sanitarium. It has the sun, the mountain breeze, the crisp, mild air, which combine to invigorate and heal." Simply contemplating the region's gorgeous scenery could have therapeutic benefits, especially for overstressed city dwellers, and to that end the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company issued a brochure series in the early 20th century called Restful Recreation Resorts.

A Union Pacific brochure issued in 1889, called Western Resorts for Health and Pleasure, featured Cape Horn on the Columbia, the Idaho Hotel of Soda Springs, Idaho, and Garfield Beach, Salt Lake City, Utah. It emphasized that
"along the River Rhine or the Rhone or the Hudson there is nothing that will compare with the stately palisades of the Columbia, with their cool recesses, kept sunless by the overhanging rocks, and watered by the melting snows of their own summits."

The arid Snake River Plain of southern Idaho had little of the visual appeal of the Columbia Gorge, but it too evolved into a tourist destination in the late 19th century, with the most notable attraction being Shoshone Falls. The site suffered from the handicap of isolation, but promoters used the anti-urban prejudice then common in America to transform its remoteness into an asset. "Shoshone differs from every other waterfall in this or the old country. It is its lonely grandeur that impresses one so deeply; all of the other historic places have the adjuncts of civilization, and one is almost overshadowed by a city while in their presence."

The Northern Pacific responded to Union Pacific tourist promotions with a booklet called North Pacific Coast Resorts, which included attractions as far inland as the lakes of northern Idaho. One of the earliest such facilities was Highland House, situated on Lake Pend Oreille next to Northern Pacific tracks. It was designed to accommodate tourists who wanted to take a break from long-distance train travel. Another area popular with tourists was the Washington coast north of the Columbia River. A steamboat ran from Portland to Ilwaco three times a week beginning in 1887. South of the river and down the Oregon coast was Seaside, so named by Ben Holladay who built a resort hotel there in 1872 and called it Seaside House.

In addition to being identified with good health and the beauty of nature, the Pacific Northwest emerged as a "sportsman's paradise," affording tourists unusually good opportunities for hunting and fishing. "Days and weeks are passed in fishing, boating, loafing, drinking in new life and strength and hope and ambition in every breath."

In the late 1870s hunting and trapping for sport first attracted widespread attention on the western slope of Washington's Cascade Range. This gave "exciting and profitable employment to quite a number of persons, some of them old trappers from the Rocky Mountains and various other trapping grounds of the country—tough, rugged, often morose men, hardened by exposure." As the number of city dwellers in the region grew, hunting and fishing increased in popularity, probably because the out-of-doors remained so accessible to residents of budding metropolitan centers like Portland and Seattle. Beginning in the 1880s wealthy tourists might even hire a private car built expressly for hunting and fishing parties. The Northern Pacific furnished such cars complete with cook and porter, parking them on sidings along its right-of-way for up to six weeks.

The national parks of the Pacific Northwest became favorite tourist destinations after transcontinental railroads realized their potential for generating passenger revenue. The Northern Pacific was fortunate in that the nation's first national park, Yellowstone (established in 1872), could easily be reached by stage from its main line at Livingston, Montana. A 54-mile branch line from Livingston finally reached Gardiner on the park's northern boundary in 1903. From there it was only five miles by stage to Mammoth Hot Springs Hotel.

The Northern Pacific could not keep so lucrative a source of passenger traffic to itself. In the early 20th century the bitter rivalry between railroad barons Edward H. Harriman and James J. Hill resulted in Harriman's Union Pacific extending a branch line from St. Anthony, Idaho, to Yellowstone, Montana, the western portal to the national park, in an effort to divert passenger traffic from the Hill-allied railroad to the north. Before that branch opened to tourist traffic in 1908 the Union Pacific had joined with the Chicago and North Western in 1903 to conduct escorted tours through the Yellowstone and Rocky Mountain parks. So successful was this joint venture that the two railroads added winter tours to California. The Union Pacific considered building a
This Northern Pacific brochure touts Seattle-Tacoma as an exciting vacation destination as well as a point of departure for tours of British Columbia and Alaska.

grand hotel in Yellowstone Park but dropped the idea in the early 1920s when statistics showed that by then nearly two-thirds of all visitors arrived by private automobile.

Beginning in the 1880s the Northern Pacific issued an annual Wonderland booklet to promote Yellowstone and other scenic wonders along its right-of-way. Of the national park Olin Wheeler in Wonderland '97 asked,

Why is it that those who can, do not use this vast, inspiring domain as a piece of recreation? In all the large cities of the land—New York, Boston, Philadelphia, Chicago, Baltimore, Cincinnati, St. Louis, etc., there are men and women of wealth and leisure who are sated with the monotonous humdrum of the sea shore, of fashionable watering places and resorts. Here is a region, new, far away from artificiality, where one can drink in inspiration of life from the very clouds themselves.

After Union Pacific trains reached the western gateway to Yellowstone Park, the railroad's Oregon Short Line subsidiary responded to the Wonderland booklets with its own series, beginning with Where Gush the Geysers. Where the Northern Pacific used the term Wonderland, the Oregon Short Line countered with Geyserland, and the Milwaukee Road used Pictureland, although it appropriated the older term for the title of its 1920s travel brochure, Pacific Northwest: The Wonderland.

While the Northern Pacific and Union Pacific became synonymous with Yellowstone National Park, Southern Pacific advertisements sought to promote Crater Lake National Park as a tourist destination. The Southern Pacific started conducting tours from its tracks at Medford to Crater Lake after the park was created in 1902. Beginning in 1906 the Tacoma Eastern Railroad promoted Mount Rainier National Park, and that relationship continued after the Milwaukee Road acquired the short line. During the summers in the mid 1920s the Milwaukee Road operated the National Park Limited between Seattle, Tacoma and Ashford. The train, featuring coaches, parlor cars and a cafe-observation car, required three hours and fifteen minutes to complete a one-way trip.

In much the same way, the Great Northern Railway became synonymous with Glacier National Park. James J. Hill's favorite form of outdoor recreation was fishing on the St. John River in New Brunswick, where Wall Street financiers often joined him for a combination of business and pleasure. His second son, Louis W. Hill, preferred to look west to the northern Rocky Mountains. What his father had regarded only as an obstacle for Great Northern trains to surmount, he now saw an opportunity for a magnificent new national park.

The elevation of 35-year-old, Yale-educated Louis to the Great Northern presidency in 1907 had an unmistakable effect on the railroad. Unlike his father, the younger Hill was far more interested in advertising than in day-to-day railroad operations. Some called him a public relations genius.

Louis Hill was among the leaders of a campaign that culminated in 1910 when President William Howard Taft signed legislation creating Glacier National Park. The Great Northern executive saw the preserve as America's answer to the Swiss Alps and his company's counterpart to the Northern Pacific's popular Yellowstone National Park. When the railroad created the Glacier Park Hotel Company in 1914 to operate Glacier National Park Lodge (a large hotel that opened the previous year) and other of the park's tourist facilities, Louis Hill became its president. The Great Northern spent almost a third of a million dollars that same year to promote the park.
Hill retained well-known artists like John Fery to capture the grandeur of Glacier National Park and the West. Their illustrations appeared on everything from Great Northern playing cards to wall calendars. It was in this spirit that the railroad’s famous Rocky Mountain goat symbol first appeared on freight cars in the early 1920s as a way to advertise Glacier National Park across the nation.

Hill was not interested in Glacier National Park simply for its revenue-generating possibilities. He was a romantic who genuinely loved the Rocky Mountain West. Sometimes he would remain in Glacier National Park for six or seven weeks at a time. He once suggested in all seriousness that the United States Post Office replace the faces of obscure dead Americans on its stamps with pictures of the country’s famous scenic attractions. Hill wanted school children of the United States to learn the history of the new Northwest—especially the Rocky Mountain country—not just that of Europe and the East Coast.

Louis Hill took justifiable pride in his role in developing Glacier National Park. He was a big backer of “See America First,” a campaign that sought to divert wealthy tourists from the traditional attractions of Europe to new ones in the American West. One promoter took precise aim at those affluent tourists when he entreated,

To the tourist who travels for pleasure, the slogan “See America First” applies with unusual force to the whole Rocky Mountain region, and more especially to Idaho. To the invalid seeking to restore his health, the healing properties of Idaho’s hot and mineral springs offer as many inducements as the famous waters of Carlsbad or Baden, to which may be added the pure, mountain air and the scent of pine forests, things not to be found in any European watering place.

The “See America First” slogan is attributed to numerous promoters, including Louis Hill. As early as January 1906 a See America First League was founded in Salt Lake City. American railroads spent millions of dollars annually to support the “See America First” campaign. The Great Northern even added the slogan to the covers of its passenger timetables and various tourist brochures. But nothing aided the campaign more than the outbreak of war in Europe in August 1914 and the fear of transatlantic travel after a German submarine sank the Lusitania the following year.

Railroad promotion of national parks was originally aimed at wealthy Americans who had both time and money for an extended stay. The word “vacation” was not part of the vocabulary of a pioneer generation of Pacific Northwesterners, and paid vacations for the masses were still largely unknown when the new century dawned. Most vacations were for wives and children of well-to-do businessmen. But another form of tourism—railroad excursion travel—evolved to cater to a less affluent crowd.

In lieu of vacations for both workers and business executives, brief local excursions by rail and boat became popular. One Midwestern resident remembers railroad excursions as “those crowded, grimy, exuberant, banana-smelling affairs on which one sat up nights in a day coach, or if a ‘dude’ took a sleeper, from Saturday ‘til Monday morning and went back to work a bit seedy...” But that was not always the case, particularly as excursion travel itineraries grew longer and catered to an increasingly affluent middle class. The Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company offered personally conducted excursions from Portland to the East Coast in trains that featured free reclining seats and tourist sleepers with stoves for cooking meals. “The linen is carefully laundered and it’s the best. Ladies’ and gentlemen’s toilet and lavatories in each car.”

Near to home, Seattle and Tacoma residents could easily cruise Puget Sound in a commercial steamboat or cross over to the still-pristine Olympic Peninsula. Completion of the Tacoma Eastern Railroad put the meadows of Mount Rainier within easy reach of Puget Sound residents. The railroad ran passenger trains 55 miles from Tacoma to Ashford. From there a good wagon road and stage lines enabled tourists to reach Longmire Springs, a resort with two hotels and a mineral spring, at the base of Mount Rainier.

Portland residents, like those of Seattle, Tacoma and other Pacific Northwest cities, were well-situated to take advantage of outdoor recreation made easily accessible by excursion trains and boats. Close at hand were Mount Hood and the Columbia River Gorge; and it required only slightly more time and effort to reach the coasts of Oregon or Washington. From the railroad station at Hood River a daily stagecoach wound along the 40-mile long road to Cloud Cap Inn. The Inn was a quaint log structure built in 1889 at the base of Eliot Glacier on the north shoulder of Mount Hood between 6,500 and 7,000 feet. “Ladies intending to go on the glacier or climb the mountain should provide stout ankle boots and

OPPOSITE PAGE: The Chicago, Milwaukee and Puget Sound Railway was completed in 1909 to form the Pacific Coast extension of a prosperous midwestern carrier, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul Railway.
short woolen skirts. Tourists cannot be too strongly urged to take this trip,” the Union Pacific advised in 1892.

The Spokane, Portland & Seattle Railway in mid 1916 offered numerous “Sunday Picnic” fares from Portland to points along the Columbia River Gorge. Prices for a round trip ranged from $1.25 to $1.50. For $39.10 the railroad offered special 25-ride tickets to points as far inland as White Salmon, Washington, the jumping-off point for alpine tours to 12,307-foot Mount Adams. One option for excursionists was to go one way by train and return on the Bailey Gatzert or Dalles City of the Dalles, Portland & Astoria Navigation Company. On the Columbia’s opposite bank the Oregon-Washington Railroad & Navigation Company promoted “Bonneville on the Columbia River,” a picnic grove that in 1911 boasted a dance pavilion, refreshment stand, children’s attractions, baseball diamond, camping sites and trout fishing in the nearby Columbia River. Situated only 90 minutes east of Portland by train, it was a favorite site for group picnics.

The coming of electric streetcars and interurban railroads offered still other low-cost recreation alternatives for city residents. The Spokane & Inland Empire Railroad owned a minor league baseball team in Spokane and used its games to generate passenger business. More typical was the streetcar company that for a nickel or two would whisk a patron to a bucolic setting that featured a picnic grove, small dance pavilion, and a few amusements and concession stands.

“I would want my patrons to feel that they had enjoyed a trip to the country, unmarred by familiar city sights,” explained one operator.

Trolley car parks were promoted as places where Sunday schools, fraternal societies and other associations could meet together. “The real excuse for the existence of any park is that it offers opportunity for out-of-door pleasures which would otherwise be denied to the vast majority of our urban population.” It did not hurt that “electric parks” and other recreation facilities boosted passenger traffic on trolley and interurban railways, particularly on weekends when ridership might otherwise be low.

Artificial amusement parks had to a large extent superseded picnic groves and other natural attractions by World War I. The former dated back to the Midway at the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair and during the following decade evolved into “electric parks” with brightly lit grounds that dazzled the eyes with incandescent lamps. Invariably, a variety of thrilling rides—among them the “Helter Skelter” and “Shoot the Chutes”—provided the main lure of such parks. “Speed is almost as important a factor in amusing the million[s] as is the carnival spirit,” advised one park operator.

“We as a nation are always moving, we are always in a hurry, we are never without momentum.”

In Portland an amusement park called the Oakes opened on a tree-covered sand spit in the Willamette River in 1907 and was soon billed as “Oregon’s Coney Island.” That first season open-sided trolleys carried 300,000 visitors, many of them families with small children and bulging picnic baskets.

The Seattle Electric Company owned and managed both Madrona and Leschi parks on Lake Washington. They became city property when Seattle acquired the streetcar company. Adjacent to Seattle’s Madrona Park was White City Amusement Park. Luna Park featured similar recreation in West Seattle near Alki Point. It was to promote such forms of entertainment nationwide that trolley executives formed the national Amusement Park Association in 1908.

Yet another popular attraction promoted by trolley companies was the natatorium. Ostensibly these were large,
elaborate indoor swimming pools, but many evolved into amusement parks. The “Nat,” operated by Spokane United Railways in 1924, featured an array of standard concessions: merry-go-round, Ferris wheel, electric bumper cars, penny arcade, shooting gallery and refreshment stands.

True trolley car tourism arrived in the early part of the 20th century when electric interurban lines developed distant recreation getaways for city dwellers. When it came to developing the local tourist trade, the region’s most innovative interurban company was the Spokane & Inland Empire Railroad. One of its several attractions was the dance, dining and swimming facility at Liberty Lake, nestled in the mountains about 17 miles east of Spokane. After the interurban opened a branch there in 1907, the Liberty Lake resort became so popular that the electric line built a hotel to accommodate visitors who wished to spend the night. Still farther out was Coeur d'Alene, another popular Liberty Lake cruise destination.

On the shore of Hayden Lake, just north of Coeur d'Alene, the Spokane & Inland Empire built one of the finest resort complexes in the entire Pacific Northwest. To implement its grand design for a “Green City in the Pines,” the interurban’s subsidiary Hayden Lake Improvement Company hired noted landscape architect J. C. Olmsted, of Brookline, Massachusetts—son of the man who designed New York’s Central Park—to plan the 158-acre grounds. Its centerpiece was Bozanta Tavern, a Swiss chalet-style building designed by Spokane architect Kirtland Cutter. Bozanta Tavern featured a wide veranda overlooking the lake that “has always been noted for its big, gamy cutthroat trout and bass.” The Hayden Lake resort also featured a golf course, four tennis courts, boating and bathing facilities and a mountain trail for climbers. When the original golf course was expanded from nine to eighteen holes in 1912, it became the largest course in Idaho.

The Spokane & Inland Empire was once called the most pretentious of the region’s new electric interurban systems, but it did have a way of making its corporate dreams become reality. Few other interurbans in the United States developed the kind of luxury resort that the Spokane & Inland Empire built at Hayden Lake. From the time the facility opened in 1907 until the mid 1920s, Spokane & Inland Empire trains whisked excursionists from Spokane to the lakeside retreat in its elegant parlor cars in about 90 minutes. One could leave Spokane's Interurban Depot at one in the after-
noon, arrive at the resort by half past two and complete the nine-hole golf course twice before dinner. An early morning train that left Hayden Lake at half past seven allowed a businessman to reach Spokane by nine o'clock and put in a full day's work. There was even a 25-ride family ticket that enabled a businessman to commute to work while still spending evenings and weekends with his vacationing family. Some exceptionally affluent tourists came to the Bozanta Tavern in private railway cars. A number of prominent Spokane families built summer homes near the shore of Hayden Lake.

The Spokane & Inland Empire issued a variety of attractive folders to promote its tourist traffic. One such, Hayden Lake, was mailed along with fresh pine needles "to carry the balsa of the forests direct to the recipient." There was nothing cheap about the interurban company's various brochures.

We often hear criticism about the expensive literature issued, but we insist that one folder that is artistic enough to be kept and shown or mailed to others covers more ground and makes a greater impression than twenty common, ordinary leaflets which are generally glanced over and thrown away. We have never yet seen one of our folders discarded on the floor of our cars or depots."

The electric line was an enthusiastic patron of Spokane's commercial photographers, who illustrated its brochures, companies and amusement parks.

because "a photograph can be read and the impression gained instantly."

Unfortunately for tourism on the Spokane & Inland Empire Railroad and every other interurban railway, the brochures and advertisements that ultimately made the biggest impression on Pacific Northwest travelers during the decade after 1910 were those for new models of automobiles. Steam railroad excursions and interurban resorts both proved extremely vulnerable, after the end of World War I in 1918, to a new breed of patrons called the "tin can" tourists—cost-conscious travelers who toured the West in increasing numbers in their own automobiles. The automobile made cheap family travel possible for the masses and heralded an egalitarian era of tourism that blurred the tie between railroads and national parks and virtually erased the link between trolley companies and amusement parks.

Of the many varieties of railroad tourism advertising before 1920, one enduring legacy of that early era is the promotional literature that emphasized one common theme: the Pacific Northwest as a region richly endowed with natural attractions. Nature's prodigality as manifested in national parks like Mount Rainier, Crater Lake and Yellowstone, and in a host of lesser places like Shoshone Falls, became a defining characteristic of regional identity and remains so today. What the far Northwest lacked in prominent historical attractions, such as the many Revolutionary War and Civil War battlefields scattered throughout the East, it could more than compensate for in natural attractions.

One need only compare the number of natural parks and monuments in the Pacific Northwest devoted to natural wonders—from Oregon's new Lava Lands National Monument to Idaho's Craters of the Moon—to those devoted to history, such as Fort Vancouver and the Nez Perce National Historical Park. In the East a reverse proportion existed between the number of national parks and monuments devoted to scenic wonders and the number of historical sites. This relationship is but one illustration of how the image of the Pacific Northwest as a "natural wonderland," which was so strongly emphasized in the steam and electric railroad tourist brochures, still defines the region in its own eyes and in those of modern tourists.

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Early Washington Territory's Venerable Pioneer Lawyer and Statesman

Daniel R. Bigelow

BY SHANNA STEVENSON

As pioneers in the Oregon Country, Daniel and Ann Elizabeth Bigelow were remarkable people even in a period when many had extraordinary qualities. They brought a voice for tolerance, education, equal rights and temperance to Washington Territory's political scene. These issues were at the forefront of local and territorial politics throughout Bigelow's long and varied public service.

Daniel Richardson Bigelow was a native of Jefferson County, New York, born in 1824, the youngest child of Jotham and Cylindia Bullock Bigelow. He was educated at Union College in Schenectady, New York. After teaching a year he entered Harvard University where he read law and graduated in 1850. During his Harvard years Bigelow attended meetings at which proponents of abolition, temperance and woman suffrage spoke in Boston. According to available records he was a practicing attorney until his death in 1905. He left behind a diary that he kept from 1848 until 1854 covering his time as a law student and his subsequent trip west.

After completing his Harvard studies Bigelow searched for an opportune location to practice law. He traveled first to Indiana and then to Dodgeville, Wisconsin, where he spent 16 months. News of California filled several entries in his diary and by January 1, 1851, Bigelow determined to head farther west. "I intend now to go to Oregon in the Spring, I believe that there are now many reasons why Oregon must improve rapidly, and I wish to be there to see." He set out on March 24, 1851, and arrived in Portland on October 8 after a fairly uneventful overland trip. He noted that there were 20 to 30 lawyers in Portland.

Perhaps influenced by the competition, Bigelow left Portland with the famed Denny party aboard the schooner Exact on November 8, 1851. After a turbulent trip and a stop at New York (now Alki Point in Seattle), he arrived in Olympia, which he described as principally occupied by Indians, crows, the latter very tame and plenty."

In his January 26, 1852, diary entry he noted,

Have since my arrival built me an office, and am at the present of the opinion that this is as good a location for me as is to be found in Oregon, although some more favorable point may spring up down the Sound, but the North of the Columbia now and always. Have some business and the prospect favorable considering the newness of the country.

Olympia was at that time the largest town on Puget Sound. The 1853 census counted 226 residents. Officially established in 1850 by Edmund Sylvester from Maine, the town was named the Port of Entry for Puget Sound in February 1851, and the prospects for development looked promising.

Changes in the political life of the little settlement were occurring rapidly. Oregon Territory formed a new county north of the Columbia River in January 1852. Bigelow had been one of the signatories petitioning the formation of what became Thurston County. The county seat for the newly formed jurisdiction was set at Olympia. The county encompassed much of what is now western Washington, extending to the Canadian border and east to the crest of the Cascades. Bigelow was elected Thurston County treasurer in June 1852, the first of many elective offices he held during his career.

Daniel Bigelow is often credited as the inspiration for creating a separate territory from Oregon by virtue of his oration on July 4, 1852, in Olympia. His reputation must have preceded him since he had also given a Fourth of July speech along the Oregon Trail near American Falls the year before. The
Olympia oration, delivered at the first schoolhouse on Puget Sound, was well attended by residents from all over Puget Sound. One author later praised it for its "exalted patriotism, perfect diction, faultless rhetoric, breadth of knowledge and learning." The oration did not specifically refer to a separate territory.

We are now assembled on the verge of the United States soil, no monumental shafts erected on revolutionary battlefields meet our eyes to stimulate our patriotism and awaken our sympathies. We are far removed from all such scenes, farther than the most enthusiastic actors in those scenes ever expected to the results of their labors to extend. But the scene exhibited here today shows that the great national heart sends its pulsations actively, healthfully, patriotically even to this distant extremity. We see the flag of the Union waving over us, and we feel that beneath its ample folds we are at home.

It is for this speech that Bigelow is most widely recognized in Washington history. The address was published in its entirety on September 11, 1852, in the premier issue of The Columbian, the first newspaper north of the Columbia River. The newspaper advocated the creation of a separate territory and proposed that it be named "Columbia."

Bigelow was soon put forward as a candidate for the Legislative Council of Oregon Territory, to take the seat of Columbia Lancaster of Vancouver. His rival was A. A. Denny of Seattle. The Columbian published a description of the candidate: "Mr. Bigelow is known to the citizens of Northern Oregon as an attorney at law, honorable in the practice of his profession, upright in his dealings and intercourse with the world, of fixed principles, backed with good business qualifications and a sound judgment." Bigelow, however, withdrew from the field in favor of his friend Denny.

Bigelow was admitted to practice in Oregon Territory courts along with Isaac Eby, Quincy Brooks, Simpson Moses and Elwood Evans. For a time Bigelow practiced law in partnership with Quincy Brooks.

In March 1853 Washington was created as a territory separate from Oregon. Ironically, Bigelow spent the summer of 1853 in Salem as a code reviser. He had been elected by the Oregon Legislative Assembly along with James Kelly of Clackamas County and Reuben P. Boise of Polk County to transform a patchwork of existing laws into a draft territorial code. Bigelow worked most of the summer for six dollars a day.

Upon returning to Olympia he noted, "Politics are raging considerably in W. T. (Washington Territory). . . . Several of the new Territorial officers are in town; since their arrival rowdism has greatly increased in town. . . . I am at present considered rather an odd chap, not showing respect and attention enough to the said officers etc. for which they are going to ride over me rough shod (if they can)." His strong moral principles and stance in favor of prohibition soon put him at odds with the prevailing opinions of early Olympia politicians.

Bigelow was among those who greeted Isaac Stevens, first territorial governor, who arrived in Olympia in November 1853. Stevens promptly called for elections; Bigelow was subsequently elected to the first Council of Washington Territory in February 1854 under the Democratic and Union Parties. Together with B. F. Yantis, he was one of two representatives of Thurston County and one of only nine Council members (the upper chamber) within the 27-member Washington Territorial Legislature. He represented Thurston County in 1854; Chehalis, Thurston and Sawamish counties during the 1854-55 session; and Thurston County in the 1855 session.

Bigelow was not without his detractors. "Great effort was made to defeat my election by the grocery [liquor] influence, because I do not patronize groceries. But I hope to live to see the sale of liquor prohibited as a beverage in this Territory, and decency and morality prevail."

During the first legislative session Bigelow led a citizen's group advocating the confirmation of George and Isabella Bush's land claim of 640 acres in Thurston County. Bush came to the Tumwater area in 1854 and was considered to be an extraordinarily generous man who helped many other settlers through early hardships. The Oregon Donation Land Claim Act precluded George Bush, a mulatto, from owning property. Bigelow presented a petition on March 1, 1854, signed by 56 people to memorialize Congress to pass an act granting the Bushes a claim. The legislature passed the measure, and the following year Congress granted the land to the Bushes.

Bigelow was disenchanted at the close of the first legislative session. In his diary he noted:

The Legislature adjourned sine die (indefinitely) today. I have many charges...
preferred against me in regard to my course in the Council. I am much censured by some for voting to let half breeds vote. But I believe that those half breeds who have adopted the habits of civilization, pay taxes, etc., should have the right of suffrage. And in fact I can hardly see why all who are governed by law should not have a voice in making it, in other words that man has not right to restrain his fellow man in any of his natural liberties or to deprive him of his property without his consent, and upon this ground which is certainly democratic ground, I begin to think that women's right to vote is easier ridiculed than answered by sound argument. My advocacy of the Maine liquor law has also made me many enemies. I have got the whole grocery influence bitter against me, but I have in all things endeavored to do right, although I fear I have not done as well as some others might, or I myself could have done with more industry and attention. I have acquired some experience and I hope if I ever should be a member of another Legislative body to be a more useful one. Several of the members and Federal officers are having a great spree tonight. I have but little taste for politics. They frequently compel a man to deviate a little from the path of rectitude. I have now four small offices, but hope soon to see the day when I can live on my claim entirely independent of office and politics.

Bigelow's diary entry for June 18, 1854, was brief: "I was married." The diary abruptly comes to an end after only four more entries.

Ann Elizabeth was 15 when she left her home in Grant County, Wisconsin, for the Oregon Country in 1851. Her father William White, in ill health, had gone to Oregon in 1850 because of its much-publicized salubrious clime. Margaret Steward White set off to join her husband the following year with their five children. William White met them in September 1851 at Butte Creek near the Blue Mountains after their arduous six-month journey across the Oregon Trail. The family eventually settled 12 miles east of Olympia in what was known as the Freedom Community. William White became one of the few casualties of the Indian War in Thurston County when he was killed on Chambers Prairie on March 2, 1956.

Shortly after the family's arrival Ann Elizabeth became one of the first teachers in Thurston County. She was 17 when William and Rhoda Prothero Packwood hired her for 20 dollars a month to come to their home near the Nisqually River and teach the neighborhood children. She later recalled:

My school was on the Nisqually flats. I taught the three R's with no frills. The schoolroom was one of the bedrooms in the Packwood house, and my pupils were the Packwood, McAllister and Shaser children. Every Monday . . . I rode to my school on horseback, turned the horse loose and it would run home. On Fridays my brother came for me.

Bigelow married Ann Elizabeth White at the White home on Chambers Prairie, southeast of Olympia. After their wedding the Bigelows traveled to their homestead on horseback. They set up housekeeping in what is now the woodshed on the property. In later years Ann Bigelow remembered:

I was so pleased with my two-room mansion. The furniture for this palatial home consisted of seven chairs, a table, two bedsteads, a cook stove and a stove in the living room. It was one of the long-to-be-remembered days of my life when we bought some lace curtains for the house.

Later in 1854 Bigelow built a large house on his claim on Olympia's east side. This Gothic Revival home still stands, virtually unaltered from its original design. It has been home to the Bigelow family since it was built.

Bigelow also built a new law office in 1854. That same year he was elected Thurston County School Superintendent, an office he held intermittently for 20 years. He was an early advocate of public education. He introduced the first education law of the territory in 1854 and remembered clearing land for the first schoolhouse on Puget Sound in Olympia. In 1837 Bigelow helped found the Puget Sound Wesleyan Institute. Headquartered at Washington and Union streets in Olympia, it was the first institution of its type in Wash-

Daniel Bigelow supported a number of investor-owned educational institutions as he sought to bring a college to Olympia. The Olympia Union Academy, a Methodist College, was the forerunner of what eventually became the University of Puget Sound.
ington. The school failed in 1861 and was reconstituted in 1869 as the Olympia Union Academy, a Methodist Episcopal Church school also headed by Bigelow. These were stock-supported institutions in which Bigelow invested heavily. In 1875 a new building was elected for the college on Olympia Street and East Bay Drive near the Bigelow home. These schools were the precursors of the University of Puget Sound. Bigelow sent his daughters to the school; Ann Elizabeth also attended Union Academy.

Bigelow's influence on Washington education was considerable, and his efforts for teacher education and standardization of textbooks made Olympia a regional center of early educational efforts. Historian Thomas Bibb said of him, "His speeches and reports on education are without doubt the most brilliant that were made in the early territorial period."

The Bigelows were part of the committee from Olympia in 1865 to find homes for and receive the famed "Mercer Girls" who were recruited from the Boston area by A. S. Mercer of Seattle. Of the 63 men, women and children on the second Mercer Expedition, ten eventually settled in Olympia.

Bigelow continued to run for and be elected to public office for almost 20 years. At times during the 1850s and 1860s, in fact, it seemed that Bigelow occupied every office.

"I was prosecuting attorney, probate judge, territorial auditor, member of the council, postmaster and superintendent of schools, all at once. I suppose they gave one all of the offices because there was nobody else to occupy them," the old gentleman modestly explained in later years. "Still," he added, "when one of my neighbors was asked to cast his ballot for another man he answered, 'I won't never vote for nobody else for nothin.'"

A strong proponent of equal rights and women's right to vote, Bigelow introduced a woman suffrage bill in 1871.

The full force of Bigelow's oratorical and moral stature is represented in a speech he gave on the topic before the Washington Territorial House of Representatives on October 14, 1871.

The natural rights of every human being are the same. The desire for liberty and equality or for self government is also inherent in human nature, never eradicated, however long crushed down. . . . If I understand the principles of self government, man has no more right to say that woman shall or shall not vote, than woman has to say the same of man. As a matter of natural

The Bigelow House, c. 1860. The house is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of the oldest frame buildings in Washington.
right I know of no valid argument to deny franchise to woman any more than to man. In our form of government, the more universal the right of franchise, the greater the security to individual rights, and the farther in the future, if ever, will be the day when monopolies and aristocracies shall bar the door to individual advancement and independence. There is no question but that women as a class stand upon a higher moral plane than do the men. Their votes are needed to raise politics towards that higher plane. It is not then so much the question, whether woman has a right to vote, as it is whether it is her duty to vote to save the nation and perfect civilization.

Two days after Bigelow's speech the noted suffragist Susan B. Anthony arrived in Olympia with the family of prominent Northwest suffragist Abigail Scott Duniway. Anthony appeared at Olympia Hall and was afterwards invited by Bigelow to meet several legislators in his Olympia home. Anthony recorded in her diary how favorably impressed she was with the Bigelows, although Anthony and Bigelow differed on their approaches to woman suffrage. Anthony traveled throughout the Puget Sound region and then returned to Olympia for a woman suffrage convention. She and Bigelow, working together, drafted a constitution for the Washington Territory Woman Suffrage Association.

The convention and its attendant interest apparently encouraged a reconsideration of Bigelow's bill in November 1871, but it failed again. Washington women eventually got the vote in 1883, although it was revoked by a court decision five years later. Bigelow received some credit for his role in that short-lived success. “The brief period in which women had the right to vote in the territory was partly due to his efforts and vote in the legislature,” wrote the Morning Olympian. Not until 1910 was woman suffrage permanently achieved in Washington.

There is little information about Daniel and Ann Elizabeth available after the 1870s. Perhaps Bigelow finally got his wish to “live on my claim entirely independent of office and politics.” He and his wife had a large family of four sons and four daughters and continued to live on their original land claim, which by that time had a small subsistence farm.

Bigelow died in 1905, the oldest survivor of the first territorial legislature. Allen Weir said of Bigelow, “He was . . . singularly modest, yet during all the years of his public activities he was always consistent and firm upon questions of principle. Coming to the frontier at a time when a Christian man had much to contend against, he ever stood as granite in devotion to high ideals.”

Ann Elizabeth Bigelow died in 1926 at age 90. She was eulogized as the oldest living pioneer at the time. The Tacoma Daily Ledger said of her in part:

Mrs. Bigelow was a very fine horsewoman and always kept a stable of fine blooded horses. Later, with the appearance of the automobile, she became very fond of motoring and purchased an automobile several years ago. She sold off portions of the 350-acre donation claim that she and Mr. Bigelow owned at the time of their marriage. She has always actively managed her own estate and business—the estate consisting now of her own home and a dozen homes she rented. Her orchard and garden were her pet hobbies, and she developed her home into one of the beauty spots in the capital city. She had been working among her flowers until her last recent, brief illness.

Throughout his long public service Daniel Bigelow was a strong advocate for temperance, equal rights, education and woman suffrage. He brought these ideals across the continent to Washington from the remote and sophisticated streets of Boston. Supported by his equally strong-minded wife, Bigelow's courage of conviction added a liberal dimension to early Washington and helped shape its history.

Shanna Stevenson is the Historic Preservation Officer for Thurston County and the City of Olympia.
For Christmas some lucky person was to receive a box of Société chocolates made by the Imperial Candy Company of Seattle. Sadly, the box of candy, along with stacks, bags and bins full of other Christmas mail, still awaited delivery at the Tacoma Post Office when this photograph was taken on December 28, 1922.

The Historical Society gladly accepts donations of prints or negatives of regional historical interest to add to its photograph collection. (Please contact the Society before making donations.) Readers are invited to submit historical photographs for History Album. If a photograph is to be reprinted, it must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
By J. Kingston Pierce

The Panic of 1893

The Northwest Economy Unravelled as the "Gilded Age"
Come to a Close

About mid afternoon on Monday, November 22, 1893, James L. Wheatley, an intelligent-looking man from South Dakota with thin, dark hair and a mustache, walked into the lobby of Seattle's Queen City Hotel at 112 Second Avenue. He'd been staying there for about a week while looking desperately for work in his chosen field of railroading.

Approaching the desk clerk, Wheatley asked when his rent on Room 19 would run out. "Today," replied the clerk.

After the Panic developer extraordinaire James A. Moore bought Arthur Denny's huge downtown Seattle inn. He finished it as the Washington Hotel in 1903—just in time to sign in President Theodore Roosevelt as the first guest. Three years later it was regraded out of existence.
Northwest newspapers were peppered with tales of monetary woe from late 1893 through the following year.

"I will not need it any longer," said Wheatley, in a calm, business-like manner, "so don't hold it for me." And with that, the guest wheeled about and trod upstairs to his room.

Fifteen minutes later that same man—now with his coat tightly buttoned up, a polka-dot scarf ringing his neck and a small cap on the back of his head—came bounding back down the steps. He "walked rapidly" into an apothecary at the corner of Second Avenue and Washington Street and "without the least indication of undue excitement" (according to a newspaper of the time) approached the counter to announce, "I have taken a drink of carbolic acid to commit suicide."

The druggist eyed the gentleman in astonishment. "When did you take it?"

"Just now, in the Queen City Hotel. I have been out of work and despondent because I could not get employment and wanted to die. Now I want to be saved because I regret my actions."

In less than three minutes, and despite a dose of sweet almond oil as an antidote, Wheatley had gone into convulsions and perished.

Northwest newspapers were peppered with such tales of monetary woe from late 1893 through the following year. They told of men who turned to suicide because they'd been scratched from the payrolls of factories or lost their small businesses; of women, abandoned by out-of-work spouses, who were caught stealing from markets or were booted from their apartments for lack of cash; of city treasurers who one day loaded up their bags with public funds and just disappeared. The national economy was coming apart at the seams and some Northwesterners were coming apart with it.

If the Panic of 1893 was not the first depression in the United States it was certainly the first one to stagger the Pacific Northwest economy. This region was only beginning to mature 100 years ago, and it grew too swiftly—too recently to boast adequate defense against widespread fiscal upheaval. The consequences were grim. As Archie Binns writes in Northwest Gateway, "... men who thought they knew

Seattle streetcar magnate David T. Denny (shown in front, with the beard) rides proudly aboard his Third Avenue line to Ravenna Park in 1891. Two years later he lost his empire, and his own brother helped force him into bankruptcy.
about storms and how to weather them went over like straw men. And when they picked themselves up they were empty-handed.

By the close of 1893 more than 15,000 assorted business ventures and 642 banks had gone belly up across the nation. Twenty percent of American workers (between two and three million men) lost their employment. The jobless fled Seattle, Everett, Spokane, Portland and especially Tacoma hoping to find work elsewhere, anywhere.

The Panic marked a painful, bitter end to the Gilded Age, that period of extravagance and prosperity that followed the Civil War. Few observers saw this crash coming or could have known that its devastating effects on the Northwest would continue until the Alaska Gold Rush began in 1897. Even fewer might have guessed that the political aftermath of America’s “other Great Depression” would still be felt in the Northwest a century later.

Seattle in 1893 was still recovering from the great fire that four years before had leveled 30 blocks of its original downtown, today’s Pioneer Square. Rebuilding was fast and furious. Commercial buildings, once raised in wood, now reached skyward in fireproof brick and rusticated stone. Streets were being widened and paved with brick rather than the creosoted fir planks that had served for many years.

There was talk of erecting a permanent Gothic-style city hall on Yesler Street. The new Rainier Hotel, a timber castle with a wraparound porch, rose magnificently from the northeast corner of Columbia Street and Fifth Avenue while pioneer Arthur Denny’s huge, multi-turreted hotel was taking shape above the corner of Second Avenue and Virginia Street. On the northwest flank of Mercer Island a high-wheeling former Illinois attorney named Charles Cicero (C. C.) Calkins opened an ostentatious hotel that he hoped would spur development of the West Coast’s premier vacationland.

The city felt stabbed in the 1870s by the Northern Pacific Railroad, which chose Tacoma over Seattle as its western terminus. But in June 1893 “Empire Builder” James J. Hill’s Great Northern Railroad finally opened an easy access from Elliott Bay to the rest of the nation. Meanwhile, pioneer David Denny was creating the most ambitious urban railway system Seattle had seen; real estate hustlers were busy touting “a streetcar at your door.” Other entrepreneurs ran up ponderous debts, trusting that their high-risk ventures would realize handsome returns in a surging economy. Boosters were calling the Puget Sound area “the boomiest place on earth.”

The depression of 1893 was partly the fault of federal policy. Under President Benjamin Harrison (1889-1893) the Republican-led Congress profligately spent away a $100 million Treasury surplus, mostly on enrichment programs for wealthy industrialists. In 1890 it also passed the Sherman Silver Purchase Act, which obligated the government to pay gold in exchange for millions of ounces worth of coinable silver that was being mined from western states. Unfortunately, this act assigned a value to the silver radically beyond what public markets paid. The results were a serious undermining of United States gold reserves and skyrocketing inflation.

Meanwhile the country was wobbling under the rapid shift from an agrarian to an industrial economy. The United States Census of 1890 found that for the first time the majority of Americans did not live and work on farms. Ambitious men swarmed into towns such as Seattle, Tacoma and Portland, confident that through the alchemy of being in the right place at the right moment they could convert bantam grubstakes into dynastic fortunes. But the bigger cities were already overwhelmed with annual immigrations from Europe. Disparities grew between the capitalist classes and the laboring ones, inspiring strikes and worker violence.

James J. Hill spotted trouble on the horizon as early as 1890 when he told his Seattleite son-in-law, Sam Hill, that the United States was on a collision course with “a panic that it will take five years to get over.” Most observers, however, ignored the warning signs, blithely confident that the marketplace would correct itself without government intervention.

Their confidence was dashed only ten days before the second presidential inauguration of Grover Cleveland on March 4, 1893, when the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad went bankrupt. In April the new Secretary of the Treasury confessed that the nation’s gold reserves had dipped below their traditionally acceptable level of $100 million. On May 4 the National Cordage Company, an important rope trust, failed, touching off a Wall Street selling panic on May 5—“Industrial Black Friday.” Seven weeks later, on June 27, the price of silver caved to 77 cents an ounce, down from 92.2 cents just a week before. Suddenly the value of an American silver dollar was a paltry 58 cents. Historian Bernard A. Weisberger put it nicely: “The band music of
Thundering west from Wall Street, the Panic blasted San Francisco, then spread its carnage up the coast.
Moore finally finished this Washington Hotel, opening it in 1903. Only three years later he allowed city engineers to regrade both the hotel and its hill out of existence.

Arthur's brother, David Denny, had an even rougher time. In 1889 he came convinced that electric trolleys were the ideal means of opening Seattle's hinterlands to residential development. So in 1890, with his second son, David T. Denny, he began to construct three huge sections of a rail network both north and east from the city's center. Denny seemed unconcerned when he lost money on these ventures. With a net worth of $3 million, he was one of the richest men in town, and in 1893 he bought out other rail lines serving more populated neighborhoods.

The Panic, however, derailed Denny's streetcar empire. It also spelled disaster for his holdings in real estate and his sawmill on Lake Union, the largest of its kind in King County. Three years of litigation and foreclosures followed. Eventually the banking firm Dexter Horton & Company (precursor to Seattle First Bank), where his brother Arthur served as senior vice president, moved with other creditors to force David Denny's bankruptcy.

Seattle land values sank by as much as 80 percent during the Panic. It shut down Fifth Avenue's tremendous Rainier Hotel and ended dreams of turning the Belltown area, just north of city center, into hot commercial property. It threatened the future of wonderful Woodland Park, which had been heavily landscaped and improved by Nova Scotian owner Guy Carleton Phinney. When Phinney died in September 1893 he left maintenance of the property to his beleaguered wife, who happily sold it to the city in 1899.

By reducing their leisure-time activities, including popular weekend jaunts to Mercer Island, frugal Seattleites helped cause the financial downfall of C. C. Calkins. That dervish of ambition had arrived in Seattle in 1887 with $300 in his pants. Through aggressive purchasing and resale of real estate he amassed the money needed to begin building a resort community on Mercer Island—East Seattle.

The centerpiece of this hamlet was the $30,000 Hotel Calkins, which was surrounded by fountains, broad boulevards, arc lights mounted on 80-foot poles and a bathhouse with "a complete system of Turkish baths." A 78-foot steamer carried passengers from the beach at Leschi across Lake Washington to the resort.

Calkins' luck had been in short supply even before the Panic. His daughter perished in a fall from a hotel window and then his mansion on the present site of Luther Burbank Park burned to its foundations. After 1893 Calkins couldn't peddle the land he still had available on Mercer Island and couldn't collect for some that he'd already sold. He left Washington in about 1894 to become a mine owner in California, never to return. His grand hotel became a sanitarium before going up in flames in 1908.

Some people fled town with only their life savings. Some vanished with other people's life savings in their pockets. In September 1893 Seattle city treasurer Adolph Krug hopped an early morning train to Canada, taking with him about $225,000 in public funds. At the end of November the president and

Eastern capitalists envisioned Everett (shown here in 1892) as a "New York on Puget Sound." But during the Panic wages plummeted 60 percent, houses rented for ten dollars a month, and commercial interests couldn't flee town fast enough.
Lumber interests were hurt when nervous railroads from the East cut shipments out of Washington by a third.

cashier at Buckley State Bank in Tacoma skipped town with $30,000.
Tacoma's fate during the Panic was even worse than Seattle's. The Merchants National Bank went into a temporary suspension on June 1, 1893, from which it never recovered. Failing close behind were Tacoma National Bank, State Savings, and Traders' Bank. Of the 21 banks operating in Tacoma when the Panic began, only four survived the year.
The Tacoma Hotel, an impressive brick building designed by New York architect Stanford White, stood overlooking Commencement Bay. During the Panic it went into the hands of receivers and was, unfortunately, destroyed in the 1930s. A chateau-like tourist hotel on Cliff Avenue being constructed by the troubled Northern Pacific was abandoned. It later was gutted by flames and transformed into today's Stadium High School.
Murray Morgan's Puget's Sound records the dismal tale of Paul Schulze, manager of the Northern Pacific's Land Division. He was a major stockholder in many of the largest Tacoma enterprises that went bankrupt during the Panic's first year. Morgan writes:

Schulze's house at 601 North Yakima was mortgaged beyond its worth. He owed $35,000 alimony. His debts exceeded $300,000, not counting the more than a million dollars it was later discovered he had embezzled. His assets were only about $5,000. Schulze solved his problems by withdrawing $35,000 from an account he did not have in San Francisco. After a last spasm of affluence, he returned from [Tacoma's exclusive] University Club to the big house that dominated the double block on Yakima Avenue, dined alone by candlelight, burned his papers in the kitchen stove, staring gently, said ambiguous goodbye to his Chinese cook ("I am going on a long trip"), wrote a letter to his mistress, and shot himself through the temple.

Prodded by President Cleveland, Congress repealed the disastrous Sherman Silver Purchase Act in October 1893. The Treasury Department subsequently floated four bond issues, collecting enough gold to prevent government gold payments from being suspended.

But the Northwest felt the depression's reverberations throughout the 1890s. Declines in the price of silver and elimination of the Sherman Act caused mines to close all over the West. It ended a mining expansion in Okanogan County and shut down camps at such places as Ruby, Conconully and Loop Loop. "Never again," wrote Bruce A. Wilson (Columbia, Fall 1990), "would mining attract such an influx of people [to the Okanogan], give birth to towns of consequence or so dominate the local economy."

Lumber interests were hurt when nervous railroads from the East cut shipments out of Washington by a full third. Three-quarters of the shingle plants operating in the state in 1893 were closed two years later. Large lumber concerns such as Pope & Talbot and
the Stimson Mill Company saw many of their markets dry up during the Panic and suffered still more when tariff schedules eased the flow of Canadian timber into the United States.

Foreclosures continued on farms in the Kent valley. Poorhouses throughout western Washington went bankrupt. Many Everett children simply didn’t report for school during the mid-1890s—some because they couldn’t afford books any more and some because their schools couldn’t afford to operate any more. So precious had cash become in Everett that at one point the Merchants’ Protective Association actually began publishing the names of people who spent their money in Seattle, and the Everett Times endorsed running those “traitors” out of town.

Railroads consolidated in the mid-1890s, with Hill’s Great Northern coming out the winner. In 1900, after securing majority rights in the Northern Pacific, Hill sold 900,000 acres of NP land-grant timber at six dollars an acre to Frederick Weyerhaeuser—at the time the largest single timberland transaction in American history.

Politicians were proclaiming better times ahead, but millions of men ousted from their jobs by the Panic didn’t see them. In the spring of 1894 Jacob S. Coxey, a prosperous owner of quarries and a scrap-iron business in Massillon, Ohio, decided to unify these disgruntled workers behind his own banner.

Coxey, who named his son Legal Tender, was something of an economic zealot. At the Panic’s peak he petitioned Congress to lend scrip to local communities, which could then be distributed to the unemployed in return for labor on a new interstate highway system and other public works projects. When Capitol Hill turned down his proposal he decided to deliver “a petition with boots on.”

Coxey organized a peaceful march on Washington, D.C., that would prove just how serious Americans were about improving their nation’s fiscal profile. Seventeen “commonweal armies” of the jobless were organized around the country.

Fifteen hundred displaced laborers from Seattle and Tacoma were reportedly prepared to march in April 1894. Hundreds of them left Seattle on April 28 to meet fellow protesters at Puyallup. Deputies were sworn in hastily to maintain peace and guard railroad property because Washington’s Coxeyites said they planned to ride the rails, commandeering them when money was not available. The Coxeyites were encouraged by reports on April 30 that 350 Ohio commonwealers had reached the outskirts of D.C. where, led by Coxey’s daughter Mame dressed as “Peace” on a white horse, they were ready to approach the Capitol.

By early May an organized body of about 250 Coxeyites left Puyallup aboard freight trains. The rest traveled eastward by heel and toe. Public sympathies were with the protesters, and well-wishers brought them food when they stopped in small towns.

Coxey’s bizarre arrest on May 1 in Washington, D.C., for walking illegally on tended grass, bled off some of the steam from the national march, as did
A group of Coxeyites assembled at Puyallup's Park Hotel just before their 1894 protest march east toward Washington, D.C.

a fight between railroading common-carriers and deputies in North Yakima on May 9. After the altercation, 153 alleged free-riders were arrested, 30 of them receiving 60-day sentences at McNeil Island Penitentiary.

Few Northwest marchers actually reached Pennsylvania Avenue, but one who did was Frank P. ("Jumbo") Cantwell, a bouncer and prizefighter who started his trip with 1,260 men. He concluded by helping to draft a "Bill to Provide Work for American Citizens." The bill died in Congress.

The Populist message to do away with business-as-usual politics was heard even if all the Populists themselves were not. In 1895 the Washington Legislature passed the Populists' "Barefoot Schoolboy Law," ending the practice of financing schools locally and guaranteeing a minimum amount of state support for educating all of Washington's children. A year later John R. Rogers was elected the state's first Populist governor. Although his party took control of the state House of Representatives, little of their platform passed into law. Republicans soon regained control of the legislature, and Governor Rogers died in 1901, shortly after his reelection.

Seattle's recovery from the crash came in 1897 with the discovery of Klondike gold as Elliott Bay became the frenzied embarkation point for miners shipping north. The city did everything it could after that to make up for lost time. In 1898 the business community collected $100,000 to support Moran Brothers Shipyards so that it could win the contract to build the Navy's battleship *Nebraska*. City engineer Reginald H. Thomson began an aggressive regrading project to level 94 downtown acres for construction sites. Seattle's biggest boom followed its biggest bust and lasted until about 1910.

Journalist Ray Stannard Baker well understood the city's Panic-driven determination when he wrote in 1903, a decade after the Panic began, that "In Seattle everything seems to have happened in the last 10 years."

A case could be made that the Northwest, resentful of the rest of the nation for stumbling economically just as this young region was beginning to mature, has ever since been bolder, more self-sufficient and more liberal. Manifestations of this could be found not only in its capital-intensive development but also in Washington's passage of woman suffrage in 1910, a decade ahead of most other states.

Many lessons from that first great depression went unlearned, particularly about the perils of being dependent on resources and distant markets. The Northwest did, however, learn a big lesson in politics, setting the foundations for a progressive tradition that endures to this day.

J. Kingston Pierce is a Seattle free-lance writer who contributes regularly to Seattle Weekly, Travel & Leisure, Seattle and San Francisco Focus magazines and other publications. He is author of a new history-guidebook, Seattle Access (HarperCollins).
Skagit River Memories

The article about the old Skagit tour in the summer issue of Columbia was of special interest to me because my father, George P. Bodman, was employed for a year (1921) while work was going on preliminary to the construction of the Skagit River dams. During that year our family lived in a tent at Rockport.

At that time the workmen were taken to Newhalem by train, and one time my father took us along on what must have been a special excursion for the workmen's families. At the construction site I remember crossing the river on what was a makeshift suspension bridge made of, I think, planks. There was a guard rail of some sort, but I still remember how terrified my mother was lest one of us children should slip and fall into the river that rushed below.

I have never taken the Skagit tour and have gone back to Rockport only once since we lived there, so thanks for jogging my memory about our experiences in what was then a remote and relatively inaccessible place.

Mary Pratt Bodman
Port Townsend
A Time of Gathering:
Native Heritage in Washington State
Reviewed by William L. Scudder.

There is abundant historical literature on the natives of southeast Alaska and British Columbia but considerably less on the coastal sea-goers who inhabited Washington's Olympic Coast. The tribal units of the Puget Sound area and the Columbia Plateau of eastern Washington have fared only slightly better. *A Time of Gathering* is an attempt—and a successful one—to remedy this paucity. Robin K. Wright, curator of Native American Art at the University of Washington's Burke Museum, has edited an informative, even inspirational, large-format volume with text, maps, references, appendices, index and over 200 illustrations, nearly half of them in color.

An outgrowth publication of the successful art exhibition by the same title that took place during the Washington Centennial, *A Time of Gathering* is more than an exhibit catalog—it is a verbal and visual record of the 100 works of Washington Native American art that were on public view, many for the first time, during the brief duration of the exhibition. Conceived in 1986, named in 1987, and assembled in 1988, the exhibit was shown only between April and October of 1989.

*A Time of Gathering*, the book, keeps the memory forever alive. Beyond the introductory essays, the book is composed of three sections: "Masterworks of Washington Native Art" shows photographs of each of the prehistoric, historic and contemporary works of art that comprised the exhibition. Each item is accompanied by a carefully-worded interpretation and, where possible, a short biography of the artist. "Eastern Washington Heritage" and "Western Washington Heritage" each contain seven short, previously unpublished essays about various aspects of the lives of Washington natives. Subjects include tales of "Coyote," native place names, basketry styles, methods of tule mat making, bead work, cedar house construction, native music, and thoughts about the structure and symbolism of the canoe. The section on western Washington also has a retranslation of the 1854 speech given by Chief Seattle to Governor Isaac Stevens that subsequently attracted national attention.

"A Time of Gathering," the exhibition, received the support of the Lasting Legacy Committee of the Washington Centennial Commission. Indeed, with the publication of *A Time of Gathering*, both Washington citizens and Washington Native Americans have a lasting legacy of which they can be proud.

William L. Scudder has been manager of Old Mission State Park in Cataldo, Idaho, since 1975.

Environment and Experience:
Settlement Culture in Nineteenth-Century Oregon
Reviewed by Eckard V. Toy, Jr.

Environment and Experience neither imitates nor equals John Mack Faragher's account of 19th-century rural Illinois in *Sugar Creek* (1986), but it provides a readable and interesting perspective on the first decades of Euro-American settlement in the Pacific Northwest. Tracing the history of the relationship between humans and the landscape from the 1840s to 1890s, Peter Boag focuses on Oregon's Calapooia Valley, an area sculpted by a minor tributary that empties into the Willamette River near Albany.

In its broader context, this book raises significant questions about change and continuity in and between the landscape and its inhabitants. Although their relationships with the land differed, both Native Americans and settlers intervened in the environment. Indians used fire, and the Euro-Americans cleared trees to plant crops, ditched and dammed to drain wetlands and direct the flow of water. The local Kalapuya Indians were already in decline when the first large wave of American settlers swept into the Willamette Valley in the mid 1840s. While early settlement patterns preserved much of the landscape shaped over the centuries, agricultural practices, economic changes and cultural conflict soon demoralized and displaced the surviving Kalapuyas who, according to oral tradition, saw these changes as the principal cause of their demise.

Tracing the social sources and cultural heritage of the American migration to Midwestern origins, Boag suggests that these settlers pragmatically adapted their agricultural practices and cultural beliefs to this new environment. But the Donation Land Act and the grid survey system, as Boag notes, imposed artificial uniformity on the natural landscape in the early 1850s and, within a few decades, attracted more population and stimulated the growth of towns.

Relying heavily on diary excerpts and literary and artistic evidence, Boag discusses how attitude changes toward the natural environment reflected tension between aesthetic tastes and economic practices. Numerous statistical tables, maps and illustrations reinforce his points, but some gaps remain. Explanations about social organization and political structure are disappointingly incomplete. While *Environment and Experience* may hold few surprises for readers familiar with the history of western Oregon and Washington, Boag's arguments about attitudes toward the landscape and the timing and nature of a developing market economy should be addressed by other regional historians.

Eckard V. Toy, Jr., is a former history professor at Oregon State University. He currently works as an independent historian in Parkdale, Oregon.
Window to the Past: The Washington State Historical Society’s First Century
Reviewed by Charles E. Twining.

At one time or another we have all experienced “the past as prologue,” but seldom has it been so vividly demonstrated as in John McClelland’s account of the first 100 years of the Washington State Historical Society. I acknowledge a personal debt to the author. Although I care greatly about the society, caring hardly compensates for my ignorance. Thanks to Window to the Past I feel considerably more comfortable with the history of Washington State and its primary historical agency. John McClelland, a former president of the society, knows his subject well, and his efforts provide a bridge between the present and the past.

All histories of living institutions, be they corporations, colleges or historical societies, suffer from a common problem: they are obsolete before the ink is dry. While Window to the Past is no exception, in many respects its publication is also timely in the extreme. The final pages, for example, include what will be the most significant development in the Society’s second hundred years—the planning and financing of the new museum at the Union Station site in downtown Tacoma. Another recent event, which may prove equally as important, fell beyond McClelland’s reach: the merging of two of the state’s historical societies, the State Capital Historical Society and its primary historical agency. John McClelland, a former president of the society, knows his subject well, and his efforts provide a bridge between the present and the past.

There are many lessons to be learned from Window to the Past. The Washington State Historical Society still must convince those east of the Cascades that this is also their institution. Additionally, it must obtain a level of maintenance and personnel commensurate with its new facility in Tacoma. And finally, it must maintain a reasonable balance between the museum and the library/archives responsibilities. But for the moment, it is full speed ahead. My advice is to hang on and enjoy the ride; in the meantime, pick up a copy of Window to the Past and learn from whence we came.

Charles E. Twining lives in Federal Way and is the author of the biography Phil Weyerhauser, Lumberman.

CORRECTION: Defender of the Faith, by Wilfred Schoenberg (Portland: Oregon Catholic Press), was incorrectly priced at $29.95 in the Fall 1993 issue of Columbia. The correct price is $17.95.

Current and Noteworthy
By Robert C. Carriker, Book Review Editor

Carol Ryrie Brink grew to womanhood in her grandmother’s house in Moscow, Idaho, at the turn of the century. Deciding at an early age to become a writer, she applied a natural talent for observation with an ability to tell engaging stories and became an author of children’s books. In 1936 she received the prestigious Newberry Award for children’s literature for Caddie Woodlawn. Next she turned to adult novels. During her lifetime Brink published 30 books, almost all of them receiving critical acclaim. In a bold publishing venture, one that was conceived ten years ago and is just now coming to fruition, Washington State University Press is reissuing three of Brink’s novels about eastern Washington and northern Idaho, plus a previously unpublished manuscript about coming of age in Latah County, Idaho. The Latah County Historical Society is collaborating in the four-part release, and its director, Mary E. Reed, wrote an informative forward for each book. Reed tape-recorded some of the last interviews granted by Brink before her death in 1981 and it was to Reed that Brink’s daughter entrusted her mother’s final work.

Buffalo Coat (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1993; 421 pp., $17.95) is the story of three doctors who settle in the small northern Idaho town of Opportunity during the first decades of the 20th century. It was first published in 1944 and immediately earned a place on the New York Times best-seller list. Strangers in the Forest (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1993; 314 pp., $17.95) recounts the efforts of United States Forest Service officers to instill a sense of conservation in the Idaho panhandle during the years immediately prior to the great forest fire of 1910. First issued in 1959, the book had a second life when Reader’s Digest included Strangers in its condensed book series. The award-winning 1964 novel Snow in the River (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1993; 308 pp., $17.95) interweaves the lives of three Scottish brothers who settle in eastern Washington and northern Idaho in the early 1900s. In all three reissues the text is photo-reproduced galleys originally pasted up by Macmillan Press in New York City.

Brink’s final manuscript was written in retirement in San Diego, but the focus of her reminiscence is Moscow and the inland empire of the 1890s and early 1900s. Except for correcting obvious typographical errors, the editor for the Brink project, Keith Petersen, refrained from changing anything in A Chain of Hands (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1993; 200 pp., $15.95) as much as it arrived after the author’s death. Ironically, though she wrote all of her award-winning novels in longhand, Mrs. Brink produced her final reminiscence on a computer.

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