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George Bird Grinnell
Introductions by Polly Burroughs and Victoria Wyatt

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Spanish friend of mine takes me to the fishing village of Gataria on the Bay of Biscay. He describes it as the birthplace of the first man to sail around the world. My friend went to the finest university in Spain, he reads much and has broad interests. He has never heard of Magellan. To him and to many Spaniards, the first man to sail around the world was (and might always be) Juan Sebastian de Elcano. As William Manchester explains in *A World Lit Only By Fire*, Magellan was born Portuguese, but by extraordinary effort he won command of a Spanish fleet of exploration. His death in the Philippines gave Elcano, a Spaniard, command of the final leg of his country's voyage and, by a convenient crafting of "history," gave Spain stronger claims against Portuguese competition for the new discoveries. Spanish officials expunged Magellan's name from association with leadership of the voyage. "Technically," the story was true; Magellan did not circumnavigate the globe, though it only happened by virtue of his energy and courage. The power of this "cover-up" is demonstrated by my friend's take on the 400-year-old story ... and my own.

The meaning of this to Washington history is the same as for all history. Truth is a malleable commodity. More often than we would like to admit, truth is crafted to a pointed purpose. Through time it may be crafted in dramatically different ways. The historian's responsibility is to offer perspective supported by exhaustive, open-minded research using every credible resource.

Several years ago Bob Wing, then a member of the Washington State Historical Society Board of Trustees and an executive with Puget Power, was offered the opportunity to christen a street "Puget Drive." Wing's curiosity about Peter Puget arose from a desire not to embarrass the company if Puget had a checkered past. He discovered that the Puget Sound region offered scant information on the 18th-century naval officer it is named for. His research took him to London and Calcutta. Puget's story was published for the first time in Bob Wing's book, *Peter Puget*, co-authored with Gordon Newell.

John McClelland, the Society's president emeritus, is a newspaper man by birth, training and experience. He has been associated all his life with "history's first draft"—the reporting of the daily news. Throughout his career and through the books he has written, including *Wobbly War*, John has known the value of research firsthand. In 1990 John and his wife Burdette endowed the WSHS McClelland curatorship. Ed Nolan is the current "McClelland Curator." His job is to hunt and capture collections of books, manuscripts, photos, archives and maps to add to the Society's resources.

John, Bob and Ed's work is an example of the scholarly mission of the Society: to preserve and make accessible resources in Washington and Northwest history. To many this research mission is closely associated with the Society's domicile at Stadium Way in Tacoma. David Nicandri, the Society's director, reports that the most oft-asked question at presentations on the new Washington History Museum is, "What will happen to the old museum?"

Our vision is to expand storage for historical materials at Stadium Way, providing for careful preservation of collections in hand or those yet to be acquired. What is the plan? How will we pay for it? In 1995 the Society will prepare a detailed plan for its Research Center to execute after the opening of the new museum.

This is important work. We study history for a glimpse of who we are and how we came to be that way. The more candid and accurate our understanding of the past, the more confident we can be of the future. Your Washington State Historical Society has a distinguished tradition of adding to our knowledge of the people, places and pride of Washington. It will always be our mission to present all of Washington's history.

---David E. Lamb, WSHS President
The Demise of the “New” Western History

Do not misinterpret the past for the sake of the present. 
—Frederick Jackson Turner, 1891

Curiously, it took a trip to Connecticut to get me thinking again about Owen Wister’s *The Virginian*. Heaven knows what the Western History Association was doing meeting at Yale University in New Haven—that represents a brand of colonialism our Marxist colleagues have not yet gotten around to exploring. But there we were, a bunch of Westerners in New England, searching in vain for a decent steak and a bottle of Rainier. And there I was, sitting in on sessions that explored in great depth the topics of race, class and gender on the American “periphery.” I remember in particular listening to a fellow in the audience as he railed against the “old” western historians, Frederick Jackson Turner and Ray Allen Billington especially. This fellow was really letting the old school have it—they were all a bunch of racists, sexists and apologists for brutal conquest and cultural genocide. I regret to say that I kept my mouth shut (I have never had much fire for academic politics), but that is when I got to thinking about *The Virginian*.

Do you remember that scene where Trampas and the Virginian are playing cards? Trampas keeps trying to goad the Virginian into a fight, and finally calls him a “son of a b----.” The Virginian then lays his gun on the table and says, “When you call me that, smile.” Well, I was thinking, this “new” western historian railing against Turner and Billington was definitely not smiling.

In the Fall 1994 number of *The Historian* I published an essay entitled “The Stillbirth of the ‘New’ Western History.” As it turned out, I was not the only one predicting the demise of the new social and “new” western historians and the rise of a movement to counter their excesses. A host of scholars, including Gerald Thompson, William Savage, Jr., William Goetzmann, Gerald Nash, Martin Ridge and many more have, in separate journal essays and reviews, attacked, critiqued and called for revision of this “revisionist” western history. Moreover, after delivering my paper as a luncheon address at the 1994 Phi Alpha Theta Regional Conference in Seattle, I was pleased to hear from a host of historians, students and professionals alike, requesting copies of the paper and expressing their own ideas on this important subject. Since the editors of *Columbia* were among those who expressed interest in, though not necessarily agreement with, my view on this subject, it seems appropriate at this time to review for *Columbia*'s readers the major contours of this controversy and its relevance to the study of western and Pacific Northwest history.

The “new” western history is a latter-day version of the new social history movement of the 1970s. The new social historians, profoundly affected by the volatile historical milieu of their 1960s university experiences, sought to radicalize and expand the study of American history, paying particular attention to Marxist constructs and issues of race, class, gender and environment. Somewhat belatedly, in the 1980s, the “new” western historians applied the same themes to their study of the American West. Much ink has been spilt singing the praises of the “new” western historians; indeed, a cult of personality has arisen around their intellectual spokespersons: Patricia Limerick, Richard White, Donald Worster and William Cronon. To avoid personalizing an already overly-personalized debate, I will address the “new” western historians and their hypotheses in general terms and refer the uninitiated reader to Patricia Limerick et al. (eds.), *Trails: Towards a New Western History* (1991), to gain a complete perspective on their application of race, class, gender and environmental themes to the study of the American West.

One should note at the outset that many good things have resulted from the work of the new social historians. They can share a good deal of the credit for getting American historians out of the rut of studying mainly white male politicians and generals, and finally taking a good look at the vast majority of American folk. Some of their work in women’s history is especially impressive, unearthing for the first time important stories of women’s lives throughout American history. Yet, having accomplished these goals, the new social historians were overtaken by their excesses, most importantly a “presentist” tendency to politicize historical endeavor in search of what has been called “a usable past.” In other words, they used their histories to promote a modern leftist political agenda. The “new” western historians have done the same.

A good example of this substitution of politics for scholarship is found in a recent college textbook written by one of the most respected of the “new” western historians and touted as a definitive synthesis of their work. The book has some strengths and failings and will probably not, in the long run, be adopted widely for use in western history courses. Its strangest feature is its total omission of any discussion of the frontier thesis of Frederick Jackson Turner, whose name does not even appear in the index. This omission is sort of like writing a book on evolution but neglecting to mention Charles Darwin! Book reviewers have been at a loss to explain such an omission—it certainly makes no sense from a
speak with scholarly perspective. From a political perspective, however, omitting Turner's thesis from a college western history text makes perfect sense. If you disagree with someone's ideas, omit them to make sure your readers are not exposed to them. That is good politics and bad scholarship.

Presament (the scholarly distortion of the historical past through application of modern-day prejudices) and politicization of scholarly endeavor are two of the "new" western historians' greatest failings. There are others. First, by focusing their work exclusively on the trans-Mississippi West (and by exhibiting a peculiar aversion to the word "frontier"), they have provincialized the field, excluding colonial and early national Americanists from the study of western history. And since the "new" western historians, like the new social historians, sometimes have trouble expressing themselves in the English language, educated Americans sometimes have difficulty understanding their prose. (One of the reasons for this is that these historians are drawn toward post-structuralism, a jargon-laden and now, arguably, disreputed analytical framework.)

Finally, and most importantly, one of the "new" western historians' greatest sins is that they have served up heaping portions of Progressive Era scholarship as their own, without adequately acknowledging the debt.

Perhaps some of this problem is inadvertent. Judging from their bibliographies, the "new" western historians do not seem to have read much of anything published before the early 1970s. If they had, they would know that economic determinism, multiethnic history and environmental themes are nothing new in the study of western history. While the new social historians have no doubt filled the void in women's history and lent increased sophistication to multiethnic approaches, they were preceded by scores of Indian historians and Spanish Borderlands scholars who tilled the fields they now harvest. Frederick Jackson Turner, much reviled as a racist today by the "new" historians, began his career over 100 years ago writing of "non-English" ethnic groups and Indian culture rather than in what is today referred to as the "middle ground." Turner even addressed environmental concerns, describing in one essay pioneer emigrants waging "hand-to-hand war" against the environment and calling on contemporary Americans to "save and wisely use the remaining timber" in their possession.

But it is in the realm of economic determinism that the "new" western historians owe their greatest and least acknowledged debt. Progressive scholars like Charles Beard, Vernon Parrington, and J. Allen Smith pointed to class conflict in the trans-Appalachian West in works now nearly a century old. Second generation Progressive Merrill Jensen and his student Jackson Turner Main (Turner's grandson) also pointed to and documented political and ideological differences, grounded in class, between western Jeffersonians and eastern Federalists in the early days of the American republic. This work was continued by a third generation of Progressives who studied at UCLA under John Caughey during the post-World War II years. Pacific Northwesterners are familiar with the work of Caughey's student, K. Ross Toole.

Director of the Montana Historical Society and Hammond Chair in Western History at the University of Montana during much of the 1950-1980 era, Toole provides a striking example of just how old the "new" western history really is. Today, the "new" western historians are credited with groundbreaking work in studying western economic determinism, ethnicity and environment; they also claim to have forged a brand new area of study—the heretofore "unworked" field of the 20th-century West. In fact, K. Ross Toole, beginning in 1959, researched and wrote three elegant narrative histories addressing each and every one of these topics.

In Montana, An Uncommon Land (1959), Toole traced the history of 19th-century Montana around the theme of outside economic exploitation, describing Montana as a "colonial economy." "As Eastern capital flowed westward," Toole wrote in the Progressive tradition of Turner, Beard, Jensen and Main, "control and the bulk of wealth flowed eastward." In the 1960s Toole began work on another book, one that would take this story of economic colonialism into the 20th century. Twentieth Century Montana: A State of Extremes (1972), while extending only to the Depression era, was nevertheless a path-breaking work that brought Montana's history into the modern era. Finally, in the early 1970s, Toole researched and wrote a book that introduced themes now built upon by the "new" environmental historians. In The Rape of the Great Plains: Northwest America, Cattle, and Coal (1976), Toole focused on coal strip-mining and power plants in eastern Montana.

Thus, before his subsequent untimely death from cancer, and well over a decade before the birth of the "new" western history, Montanan K. Ross Toole had already published a trilogy of Northwest history works addressing each of the themes now claimed as the "discoveries" of the "new" western historians. One can search in the bibliographies and notes of the "new" western historians for a citation from Toole, but the search will be in vain.

Surveying the failings of the "new" western historians—their provincialism, the mawkiness of their prose and analysis, and their nurturing of a cult of personality around outspoken "great historian" spokespersons—the Progressive historians and their followers appear very favorable by comparison. Of course, the Progressives had their own failings, not the least of which was an over-emphasis on economic causation to the neglect of ideological, religious, scientific and cultural motivators of human behavior. Then too, some of the Progressives, J. Allen Smith for example, politicized history, using scholarship to address contemporary reform goals.

Yet Frederick Jackson Turner, today the most maligned of the Progressives, was in fact one of the most intelligent and far-sighted of the Progressive generation. It was Turner, after all, who first...
explored socioeconomic tensions on the frontier, the role of “non-English” ethnic groups, and the relationship of frontier people to the natural environment. Moreover, it was Turner who, in a little read essay entitled “The Significance of History,” called for a multi-class, multiethnic, global and interdisciplinary study of history—a call that predates by decades and encapsulates the fundamental tenets of the New History, the American Studies Movement, the Annals school, and, of course, the “new” western history. And, finally, it was Turner who, in his conclusion to “The Significance of History,” implored scholars to be wary of presentism and politicization. “Avoid as the very unpardonable sin any one-sidedness, any partisan, any partial treatment of history,” Turner warned. “Do not misinterpret the past for the sake of the present.”

The “new” western historians’ presentism and politicization of scholarly endeavor, combined with their other failings, have ensured the stillbirth of their movement. In this they join the new social historians, whose intellectual vigor has ebbed remarkably in recent years. A tide of protest against political correctness—professors’ use of their classrooms and/or published scholarship to advocate a neo-Marxist political agenda—is sweeping the nation. And, despite leftist cries against “neo-conservative backlash,” much criticism of political correctness emanates from the left as well as the right, in scores of magazine and journal articles ranging from American Quarterly to Newsweek to the daily newspaper. In the Western History Association, a home to many non-academic professionals immune to academic fads and special pleading, the “new” western historians seem destined to remain on the periphery. They may well continue to score some political successes—their influence on nominating and program committees and editorial boards has always far outweighed their numbers. But as an intellectual movement the “new” western historians were born a decade too late; their time has passed. Now a countermovement has arisen to critique their failings, assess their achievements and move on with the study of western history.

Before closing, it is important to say that it is not enough for western historians to confine themselves to critiques of the “new” western history. The emerging western history countermovement must not only critique its predecessor, it must also propose its own alternative historical methodology. This is not as difficult as it sounds, because, unlike the “new” western historians, their revisionists need not pretend to have invented anything out of whole cloth. There is plenty of good historical writing about the west from which we can learn and grow.

Critics of the “new” western history have already established an intellectual base for the countermovement. Thompson, Ridge and other moderates agree that the new social historians and “new” western historians have done some good work and that, if we ignore their doom and gloom polemics and politicizing, we can probably learn something about race, class, gender and environment in the West from their work. At the same time, however, these critics note that the older western history, with its non-exclusive use of economic determinism and multiethnic and environmental themes, and its reliance upon narrative prose and scientific, non-presentist use of evidence, will most certainly serve western historians ably in the years to come. Together, then, a fusion of the old and new forms will lead to a more evenhanded and, ultimately, more truthful analysis of the history of the American West.

This fusion is already happening in numerous works, including Sandra Myres’s Western Women and the Frontier Experience, 1800 to 1915 (1982); Carlos Schwantes’s The Butte Irish (1985); Glenda Riley’s The Female Frontier (1988); Dave Emmons’s The View From Officer’s Row (1990), Alred Runte’s Yosemite, Embattled Wilderness (1990) and others. And Yale University has recently invited back John Mack Faragher, who will continue Howard Lamar’s tradition of writing solid, interpretive, non-presentist, narrative western history. Faragher’s Daniel Boone, Life and Legend of an American Pioneer (1992) is a model for those who seek to combine the best of the old narrative history with the methodologies and findings (but not the polemics) of the new western historians. Indeed it is Faragher who, in his own critique of the “new” western history, calls for a western history “grander and more ambitious than the current revisionism. It would be a genuinely new and tolerant western history that would inspire with tales of quiet triumphs rather than the noisy clamor of the Wild West.”

Finally, whatever our methods and the focus of our research, western historians and Pacific Northwest historians must ultimately strive to return a sense of civility to our field and our search for historical truth. This can only result from depoliticizing the scholarly process. Historians are not politicians or social reformers, at least not at the moment they sit down at their desks and begin to write. Our job is not to implement social change but to make our students and the public think seriously about the past. If, having studied history in this way, our students and readers then decide to pursue social change, in a leftist or rightist stance, then that is their own business. It is a free country, after all. This indirect seeding of social change is something we historians can take pride in or not, depending on our own perspectives and viewpoints. If our work inspires students and readers to political activism, that should result from their reading of the work, not from our force-feeding them a leftist reform agenda. Let us, then, continue this debate, but let us continue it in an atmosphere of professionalism and civility.

And let’s smile while we are arguing. The Virginian would. That’s how it’s done in the West.

—Michael Allen

Michael Allen, Associate Professor at the University of Washington Tacoma, is author of the prize-winning Western Rivermen, 1763-1861: Ohio and Mississippi Boatmen and the Myth of the Alligator Horse (1990).

AUTHOR’S NOTE
I wish to thank the following individuals, none of whom necessarily share my point of view, for their critiques of this essay: Terrence Cole, Keith Edgerton, Wilbur Jacobs, Lisa Mighetto, Gerald Thompson, George E. Webb and Carol Zabinski.
Although the military exerted a profound effect on frontier America, its role after the frontier passed is less well-known. Operating out of headquarters at Fort Vancouver, United States Army troops engaged in conflicts with the Indians of the Pacific Northwest from the 1850s through the 1870s. The army was also largely responsible for the northern railway survey of 1853-54, the most thorough reconnaissance of the geography, climate and other features of the region during the 19th century.

Another contribution of the military was the construction of roads that linked Puget Sound communities and tied western to eastern Washington; most impressive was the Mullan Road connecting Walla Walla to the Missouri River at Fort Benton. In addition, the presence of military posts at Vancouver, Steilacoom, and Walla Walla helped ensure the economic well-being of their respective communities.

Despite this considerable role, Washington's citizens complained that the regulars did not maintain a sufficiently strong presence in the territory and that they refused to act with vigor in troubled times. When Indian hostilities escalated in 1855, the governor of Washington promptly raised territorial militia despite the protest of army commanders who insisted they had the situation well in hand. Relations between the regular army and the territorial volunteers quickly deteriorated to the point that each operated independently while charges and countercharges flew between General John Wool and Governor Isaac Stevens.

When Washington Territory became a state on November 11, 1889, the frontier was quickly disappearing in the Pacific Northwest chiefly because of the completion of the transcontinental Northern Pacific Railway earlier in the decade. Tacoma, the official terminus, grew rapidly in the 1880s, and Seattle, Spokane and other communities were poised to do likewise. Despite the rapid shift of Washington from a frontier district to urban-commercial-industrial communities, the role of the regular army as perceived by citizen or soldier was firmly rooted in experiences of the past.

In 1889 the military's Department of the Columbia included Oregon, Idaho, Washington and Alaska. Its headquarters remained at Fort Vancouver, renamed Vancouver Barracks, but the army saw its major purpose as protecting inhabitants east of the Cascade Mountains from Indian threats. Aside from the headquarters post, the area west of the mountains had garrisons only at Fort Canby on the mouth of the Columbia River and Fort Townsend at the entrance to Puget Sound. These posts were maintained despite frequent recommendations from the department's commander that they be abandoned. East of the mountains there were posts at Walla Walla.

★ A dress parade at Fort Spokane in the late 1890s, not long before the post was abandoned.
Fort Sherman, at the head of Lake Coeur d’Alene, Boise Barracks, and Fort Spokane, which was not completed until the early 1890s.

Citizens in the Pacific Northwest lost no chance to remind the army that its purpose was to protect whites from the native inhabitants. In the fall of 1889 General John Gibbon reported that most army activity during the previous year had involved investigation of “sensational reports of Indian outrages,” all of which ultimately proved to be unfounded. Two years later Gibbon’s successor, August Kautz, anticipated difficulties between Indians and settlers brought into the Kootenai River area by construction of the Great Northern Railway. Again, after some months of anxiety, the fears dissipated without bloodshed. The winter of 1890-91 became an anxious time when the “Ghost Dance” movement of the prophet Wovoka spread throughout western tribes. In the Pacific Northwest the Wanapum leader Smohalla was particularly influential in promoting this last gasp effort to come to terms with the destructive effects of the white advance. In the aftermath of Wounded Knee, edgy civilians predicted a major outbreak. These fears proved unfounded as not a shot was fired in anger.

There was at least one victim, the Sanpoil leader and prophet Skolaskin, who was banished to Alcatraz Island because, according to the army, he was an inveterate troublemaker. In retrospect, Skolaskin’s exile marks the end of the Indian-white hostilities in the Pacific Northwest. However, fear of new outbreaks of violence persisted in areas east of the Cascades until the Spanish-American War.

For the most part, the officers and men who served in the Department of the Columbia between 1889 and 1898 shared the perceptions of the civilian population as to their major role. In 1890 the department consisted of about 1,300 enlisted men and 130 officers organized into 20 companies of infantry, 8 of cavalry, and 2 of artillery. Almost without exception the officers had received promotion to their 1890 rank many years earlier, often not too many years after the end of the Civil War.

A typical example was Captain Thomas Quinn, a native of Ireland, who enlisted as a musician in 1853 (the year Washington became a territory). He rose to second lieutenant during the Civil War and was brevetted captain (an honorary promotion) for service at Petersburg. In 1876 this was converted to a regular captaincy, the rank Quinn held until he retired at the end of the Spanish-American War.

The Department of the Columbia shared all of the problems that had accumulated in the army during three decades of neglect and stagnation after the Civil War. The army provided a degree of security but little challenge and almost no hope of advancement. Posts were usually isolated and boredom was a fact of life. Little was done to ameliorate these factors in the Northwest despite the challenges provided by changing conditions in the post-frontier era.

Some officials suggested marches or maneuvers as a means to keep troops physically and mentally active as well as fulfilling military objectives. But few post commanders made the effort, except perhaps for one or two brief excursions.

REGENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, Special Collections Div.
sessions into the field during the course of a year. There were constant complaints about the lack of variety in the army diet, and periodically there was talk of planting post gardens, but the projects seldom came to fruition.

A continuing concern was the inability of the troops to achieve prescribed standards of marksmanship. Most of the posts lacked an adequate firing range, and post commanders pleaded nearness to settlements or lack of sufficient ground as impediments to construction. At Fort Walla Walla a brief attempt to set up a range in the nearby Blue Mountains was abandoned when officers concluded that the logistics of moving troops back and forth was too burdensome.

Sunk in inertia and boredom, officers turned to a severe disciplinary system as a means of keeping control of equally bored troops and filling vacant hours. Court martials, feuds and internal bickering were a major leisure activity. Minor matters were pursued to great lengths; for example one quartermaster at Fort Spokane requested a formal board of survey to investigate and assign responsibility for 15 damaged tins of food. Some department commanders might protest that the men were not in fighting trim, but none could claim that requisition forms were not in proper order.

Men in the ranks reacted to army life by fighting, drunkenness, desertion and insubordination. In 1889, when there were 1,538 officers and men in the department, there were 84 court martials, 803 garrison courts, and 107 desertions. This meant that as many as 65 percent of the men were tried or deserted in a single year (the actual percentage would be less since some individuals appeared in the statistics more than once). These figures fluctuated but did not vary greatly in the years before the Spanish-American War. Department commanders and judge advocates expressed concern, but most concluded that little could be done. General Gibbon, for one, believed army men to be well cared for and not subject to undue hardships; thus, he reasoned, the causes of discontent must lie with the individual.

In an attempt to find out why men deserted, judge advocates interrogated those who were returned. Their survey concluded that desertion could usually be attributed to habitual drunkenness, worthless character, infatuation with dissolute women, or a roving disposition. No doubt, all of these factors played a role, but little allowance was made for army conditions as a possible cause, except for the concession that low pay was sometimes a factor.

These internal problems were exacerbated by a belief that society ignored or vilified the army except in times of crisis. In small towns there was some fraternization between troops and citizens, usually in sports contests or at local drinking establishments. Baseball was the sport that usually brought the two together, but even in these instances it was more often an attempt to relieve the “boys in blue” of their wages than a friendly afternoon sporting event. A typical civilian attitude was reflected in the remark, “A respectable American citizen would no more think of joining the Regular Army than he would volunteer for the penitentiary.”

In this climate of opinion, fights between soldiers and civilians were common, and on occasion more serious incidents occurred. One altercation that received national attention took place in Walla Walla in 1891. An argument between a Private Miller and a gambler named J. T. Hunt ended with Hunt shooting Miller, who died after lingering for two days. Hunt was arrested by local authorities and put in jail to await trial. One evening a group of soldiers from the fort stormed the jail, dragged Hunt out, and riddled him with rifle and pistol fire.

Two soldiers were later charged in the murder, but since no witness admitted any knowledge of the event, the charges were dropped. Embarrassed army brass deplored the vigilantism and blamed the incident on officers at Fort Walla Walla. In fact, the affair reflected the frustration of men who believed they were second-class citizens and that justice would not prevail in the civil courts if a crime were committed against an army man.

These cumulative problems did lead to efforts by military leaders and Con-

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COLUMBIA 8 SPRING 1995
gress to bring about reforms. However, well-intentioned changes did not necessarily have the desired effect. For example, enlisted men were limited to a ten-year term in an attempt to democratize the army. Officers in the Pacific Northwest complained that some career men deserted when they realized they would not be allowed to re-enlist. In similar fashion, the termination of post canteens backfired. The new regulation did limit drinking on posts, but saloons and gambling dens immediately sprang up nearby. Typical was the so-called town of Miles just outside the gates of isolated Fort Spokane. Miles consisted of a tavern and two brothels established solely for use by troops at the fort. Officers pleaded for a return to the policy of serving beer and light wines on the posts.

A major innovation of the 1890s was a plan establishing schools for enlisted men and lyceums for officers at all posts. Commanding generals like General Kautz pressured officers to participate. Kautz argued that schools would prepare the troops to offer instruction in the art of war to citizens. This would prove of value in time of war and would also serve to bring soldier and citizen closer together. Kautz predicted that the schools would change the public image of the army and attract sons of the middle class to enlist instead of “the inefficient, indolent and wandering element of the country.” Schools were started but few, least of all the men, were enthusiastic, and the disruptions of the Spanish-American War effectively brought the practice to an end.

The officers’ lyceums or debating societies were somewhat more successful. At each post the officers took turns presenting papers on various military topics. Some believed they had a great deal of wisdom to offer on the army, military tactics, and the role of the military in American society. The lyceums provided a ready forum for theories on everything from military drill and the cavalry horse to torpedo systems, foreign policy and intemperance. It is likely that many good ideas came out of the debates. Unfortunately, post officers had little impact on those further up the chain of command. The lyceums, too, became a casualty of the war.

Just as in earlier periods, the army had an economic impact in the 1890s. In the growing economy of Puget Sound this impact was minimal (at least until 1898), but in the vicinity of the posts east of the mountains the army was still a significant force. For example, in 1889 $35,000 was expended on repairs and new construction in the department and $1,145,590 paid in wages. Also important was the purchase of foodstuffs and other supplies from local dealers. During the year 43 horses were bought in Walla Walla for a total of $6,235. Another year, three private contractors in that same city shared more than $121,000 in contracts to provide straw, hay, oats, bran, coal and wood for the post. It was primarily for this reason that local chambers of commerce complained vociferously whenever rumors of post closures arose and why forts such as the one at Walla Walla remained active for many years after they had outlived their military usefulness.

A new duty for the army was its assignment to prevent violence in industrial strikes or, as union men would charge, to serve as strikebreakers. In 1886 President Grover Cleveland had called upon the army to preserve order in Tacoma, which in effect sanctioned the demands of workers that Chinese laborers leave the community. In the 1890s troops were used primarily to protect property or individuals from radical union violence. Much of the trouble came in the mines of the Coeur d’Alene region of northern Idaho. The
silver and gold mines there typified the changes that had taken place since the early placer mining days.

In 1892 the newly formed Western Federation of Miners attempted to bring all miners in northern Idaho under their organization to establish the power base necessary to confront large mining organizations on a more equal footing. When some miners resisted the arguments of union organizers they received threats of physical violence. On July 11 union members attacked nonunion workers at Wardner and other mine sites. The next day General Thomas Ruger, acting on orders from the general of the army, dispatched nine companies from Forts Vancouver, Spokane and Sherman under the command of Colonel William Carlin.

Carlin was met at Harrison with the rumor that 500 union members armed with Winchester rifles had assembled at Wardner. He decided to wait for reinforcements from Fort Keough, Montana, before advancing. Two days later they converged on Wardner where they were met by a large crowd but no Winchesters. Over the next several days Carlin ordered the arrest of some 365 men. Not a shot was fired during the entire episode, and Carlin was rewarded with promotion and command of the department.

The northern Idaho excitement was followed by a more general alarm that arose in 1894 with the emergence of Coxey’s Army, a large group of unemployed workers that vowed to commandeer trains to carry its members on their protest march to Washington, D.C. The same depression of 1893 that gave rise to Coxey’s Army had thrown the transcontinental railroads serving the Northwest—except for the Great Northern—into receivership. General Elwell Otis argued that since the railroads were under control of the courts, they were in fact government property and subject to army protection.

In April a Union Pacific train out of Portland was seized but recaptured six hours later by the army. The next month units from Fort Sherman were ordered to set up camp in the Spokane railroad yards, and in July Otis dispersed troops along the main line of the Northern Pacific in Washington. Significantly, in this year of labor unrest, Otis noted in his annual report that “for the first time in the history of this military district there is nothing to report on [the] subject [of Indians].” As the Pacific Northwest made the transition from frontier to industrial society, the army almost unwittingly changed its role also. The relationship between civilians and army personnel in the Pacific Northwest had never been cordial and the changing society of the 1890s added strains that had not existed before. In most communities the army was barely tolerated.

If citizens were not enthusiastic about the presence of the regulars in the 1890s, the revitalization of the militia was another matter. The volunteer citizen-soldier was part of a strong tradition in the United States going back to colonial times. In Washington the militia had declined as the crisis mentality of the territory’s early years faded. Statehood brought a renewed interest.

The population growth of the 1880s and 90s naturally led to the founding of new towns, which competed for railway stations, county seats and commercial enterprises. One means of enhancing community pride and visibility was the formation of a militia unit. Most states reorganized their militias in the 1880s or early 1890s, calling these new units the National Guard. Washington followed this national trend.

A typical Washington unit was Company D, created in Waterville in 1892. By the following year the company had purchased ten rifles and was boasting that it would be the best in the state in both drill and marksmanship. When new uniforms arrived, a dress ball was called for to allow the guardsmen to display their finery. The company added to its ranks by persuading the local athletic club to limit its membership to those who were enlisted in the militia unit. Because the athletic club was the community’s most popular male-oriented organization, the merger
Washington's early 20th-century coastal fortifications continued to play a role as late as World War II.

placed the guard in a strong position.

Nevertheless, spirits began to sag when the monotonous weekly drills seemed to serve no particular purpose. Interest spiked once again when annual summer encampments at American Lake near Tacoma were instituted. These included guardsmen from throughout the Northwest as well as units of the regular army. The Waterville lads were dubbed the "six-foot bunchgrassers" during friendly but lively competitions with other units. Companies created their own yells and cheers; one for Waterville included the refrain, "Hi! Hi! Hi! Higher Still, Live or Die for Waterville!"

In 1895 Waterville constructed a new armory for its company and proudly dedicated the structure with a grand barbecue served by the guardsmen. Guests arrived from miles around, depleting the town of its supply of foodstuffs by five o'clock in the afternoon. This celebration marked the high point for Company D. The guard and the community absorbed a cruel blow only a few months later when a general consolidation of the state's units resulted in the demise of the "six-foot bunchgrassers." More than half of the eastern Washington units suffered the same fate, with companies remaining only at Ellensburg, Yakima, Waitsburg, Dayton and Pomeroy. With disbelief and bitter disappointment Company D mustered out.

The year 1898 brought dramatic changes to the military—regulars and militia alike—in the Department of the Columbia. First, there was the impact of the Yukon gold rush. Alaska was part of the department, but no posts had been built or units sent there. In the fall of 1897 reports of lawlessness and disorder at Skagway and Dyea resulted in two companies sailing to the territory. The following year seven posts sprang up in the frozen north. Then, while the department struggled with the logistics of supply and transportation for these new posts, the Spanish-American War broke out.

As a consequence of the war, the California and Columbia departments were temporarily combined; companies departed for duty in Cuba or the Pacific. The guerrilla warfare that continued in the Philippines after the surrender of Spain had an impact on the Pacific Northwest for several years as troops moved through on their way to Manila. More significantly, large quantities of livestock, forage and foodstuffs were purchased in the region for use in the Pacific.

More than 500 members of the Washington National Guard replaced regular army units transferred to the front. Most of these volunteers desperately yearned to fight in the "glorious little war." A Yakima newspaper editor captured some of the patriotic fervor of the guardsmen when he wrote, "The militia boys are not trained soldiers, but they are willing to lay down life for home and fireside, and under the grand old stars and stripes will always acquit themselves with honor, while their stay-at-home traducers will be hiding in some hog pen on a back country ranch."

The closest any Northwest militia came to the war was a San Francisco army encampment where they were issued spoiled beef. In this respect, at least, the volunteers participated with the regulars in one of the war's hazards. The Yakima editor bitterly complained that the Washington boys, who were "hungry for gore and glory," were "cooped up like rats" in San Francisco by the machinations of devious army bureaucrats.

It is difficult to compare the relative economic impacts of the Yukon gold rush and the Spanish-American War on the Northwest. It appears, though, that the gold rush, with its greater visibility, was exaggerated as a factor, while the significance of the Spanish-American War was underestimated. In any event, the greatest impact of the war came after it ended. The perceived threat of attack by an industrial power from the sea shifted the focus from interior to coastal defenses.

Alfred Thayer Mahan had been preaching for some time that the balance of power had moved to those nations that controlled the seas. His words went unheeded in the Pacific Northwest until the war with Spain fostered rumors that Spanish warships were on their way from Manila to...
attack Puget Sound. Seattle citizens shook with fright when newspapers reported an enemy vessel at Victoria. A few weeks later it was widely reported that Spanish privateers were fitting out ships in Chile and Peru.

Between 1898 and 1904 coastal defenses sprouted from the Strait of Juan de Fuca to the mouth of the Columbia River. In the interior, where only a few years earlier department commanders had requested large sums for expansion, posts were now virtually abandoned. The exception was Fort Wright, opened on the outskirts of Spokane in 1899. It was correctly anticipated that troops at this key railway junction could serve the needs of the eastern portion of the Pacific Northwest. New construction or remodeling took place at Fort Flagler, Fort Worden near Fort Townsend, Fort Lawton at Seattle, Fort Casey at Marrowstone Point, and at three installations near the mouth of the Columbia River—Fort Stevens on the Oregon side, Fort Canby and the new Fort Columbia. Civilian workers under the supervision of the North Pacific Division of the Army Corps of Engineers (created in 1896 with headquarters at Seattle) took on the construction of these fortifications.

By 1899 the coastal works were well under way. At Fort Casey 16 mortar carriages had been placed and 10 more were planned; at Fort Flagler three 10-inch and two 12-inch barbette carriages were in place, and similar work, as well as the necessary quarters and other support buildings, went forward at the other locations. Fort Lawton on Magnolia Bluff just outside of Seattle was a new post envisioned as the headquarters for the Puget Sound fortifications. As portions of the various forts were completed, artillery units moved in. By 1901 the number of regular army personnel in the Department of the Columbia surpassed the figures of the 1890s and increased to about 4,000 by 1905. In 1901 army expenditures in the department totaled $424,000, a significant sum at that time.

Construction of the coastal fortifications, unlike the work on earlier forts, was meticulous, time-consuming and expensive. Engineer officers did not overlook the slightest detail, including, for example, several coats of varnish on the woodwork in the latrines. Obviously, the new construction was a boon for Puget Sound business firms.

Working for the government could have its drawbacks, as one supplier discovered when an officer returned six syrup pitchers because they were one-and-a-half pints rather than the specified quart size. The pitchers came back a second time when one-and-a-third-pint containers arrived and a third time when the pitchers were the proper size but tin rather than granite. When a lumberyard owner complained of army red tape, the district’s chief engineer unsympathetically replied that the red tape was not a “strange freak of nature” but Treasury Department regulations. He admonished, “Whenever you see fit to comply with these regulations, the bill will be paid, and not before.”

The regular army, in addition to spending munificent sums, differed in other respects when compared to the prewar years. Almost without exception, the officers whose careers dated back to the Civil and Indian wars had retired. Their replacements were either men who had entered the army during the Spanish-American War or officers who had made their reputations in that war. Two examples of the latter were generals William R. Shafter and Frederick Funston, each of whom commanded the Department of the Columbia. Many of the new officers were engineers or artillery men rather than cavalry or infantry soldiers. A symbolic indication that the old days had disappeared was General Funston’s complaint that the regulation requiring spurs as part of the dress uniform was an “unmitigated nuisance” for which there was no justification.

As the coastal fortifications neared completion, doubts arose that they would serve the purpose contemplated. General Funston grumbled that most of Fort Lawton’s 500 acres was so thick with trees that it was unusable. He fumed that the fort might as well have been built under Puget Sound for all the good it was doing. A more serious criticism suggested that fog and the usual thick smoke from summer forest fires made the forts useless as a deterrent to enemy vessels. In addition, the swift currents and tides of Puget Sound made it difficult to keep mines in place. It is perhaps fortunate that the Puget Sound defenses were never put to the test. Only Fort Stevens eventually came under fire when nine shells fired by a Japanese submarine exploded near the fort during World War II.

In a period of only 15 years the military in the Pacific Northwest underwent a metamorphosis. The regular military changed from a frontier Indian-fighting army to one oriented toward coastal defense in a potential global war. Throughout this period the army was barely tolerated by the civilian population except for the economic benefits it could bring.

The army was often the target of unfair criticism because, in most respects, it reflected attitudes of society and fulfilled a role defined by public opinion. In a democracy it was difficult for army officers, particularly at the local level, to go beyond this mandate. On the other hand, the local population expected much of the militia, but these local units served little purpose during this period, except as a source of community pride. Despite the predilections of the civilians, it was the regular army that played as important a role in peace as in war. No doubt, the regular army of the 1890s endorsed an old refrain that described an attitude common among citizens:

God and the Soldiers we adore
In time of danger, not before.
The danger gone, and all things righted
God is forgotten, the Soldier slighted.

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The POLITICS of TRANSPORTATION

By George W. Scott

THE STATE OF Washington runs the world's largest ferry system. The fleet sailing Puget Sound is as much a symbol of western Washington as Grand Coulee Dam is of the Great Columbia Plain, each mirroring evolving public expectations during the New Deal and Fair Deal eras. The stark contrasts between political and economic reality that merged in ranking the ferries public reflected changes in public opinion.

The Peabody Legacy

CHARLES PEABODY'S family began the first scheduled sailings between New York and Liverpool with packets flying a black ball flag in 1818. As special agent for the Treasury Department at Port Townsend after 1882, Peabody saw the Puget Sound's potential and formed the Puget Sound Navigation Company (PSN) in 1898. The Chipewa, a day boat with three decks brought from Toledo, Ohio, in 1900, started east-west service and became the first auto ferry in 1921. By then a "mosquito fleet" of freight-hauling coastal steamers had given way to cross-sound ferries linked to highways.

Peabody's third son, Alexander, "a man of practicality and staunch demeanor," took on the PSN presidency in 1929. A World War I Navy captain with a homburg, a bristling mustache, and hand-turned cigars, Alexander Peabody was a consummate individualist and an innovative free enterpriser. He saw and welcomed the next stage of Puget Sound development, a dual ferry-bridge system. Spans at Agate Pass (between the Kitsap Peninsula and Bainbridge Island) and Hood Canal would permit money-losing routes to be shut down. Between 1937 and 1942 Peabody met the need for larger, faster car ferries by buying, at a fraction of original cost, 14 boats of the Southern Pacific fleet idled by the San Francisco Bay bridge. "We are satisfied this ... is the answer to the Puget Sound ferry problem," he said. A futuristic aluminum-shelled "silver slug," the Kalakala, was built on the hull of the burned-out Peralta. This flagship became the planet's most photographed ferry, despite its spine-tingling vibrations.

Governor Martin: A Businessman's New Deal

BLACK BALL WAS, in fact, entering an end game. The Depression vitalized waterfront unions. The Marine Engineers Beneficial Association was joined by the Masters, Mates and Pilots in 1931. Both boycotted PSN in 1932 when Peabody fired five men for being union members. In 1934 the Ferryboat Men won a six-month contract. PSN's purchase of the Kitsap County Transportation Company evoked the first strike in 1935, tying up nine boats for 33 days. A second shutdown in 1937 drew in state government, Black Ball's franchiser. Governor Clarence D. Martin was a Cheney wheat miller and a conservative Democrat already under assault by the party's left wing. His arbiters wrought a truce, gave the ferry workers a nine-hour day and wage boosts of up to 30 percent. The cost to the company, whose profits were $60,000 in 1936, was $150,000, but offsetting fare increases raised $217,000. These fares were to be the last the state, PSN and commuters could agree on.

Thanks at first to President Franklin Roosevelt's Lend-Lease Act, employment at Bremerton's Puget Sound Naval Shipyard boomed. Seattle commuters kept six ferries busy. These volumes extended the life of the Black Ball line into the postwar era. PSN managed to survive the Depression, take over threats and World War II stresses. In 1946, at Seattle's Todd Shipyards, Peabody christened the new 100-car ferry Chinook, modestly called by her designer "the Queen Elizabeth of the Inland Seas." The new flagship proved the high tide of Peabody's ebullient postwar hopes.

After the war, however, as contracts for battleships fell, so did ridership to
Bremerton. Operating costs increased, delaying improved and expanded service. Changes in union tactics and in consumer attitudes, submerged by the war, could be seen as early as the strike of December 4, 1939. Confronting a third tie-up in five years, “Two hundred Vashon islanders swarmed aboard the Vashon armed with axes, clubs, and rocks in an attempt to seize the vessel on its final run before the strike began.”

To maintain goodwill the unions chartered the Washington, printed schedules for the “Eagle Harbor Transportation Club” or the “8-ball Line.” Peabody had no defense against patron wrath roused by the strikes, anger that came to focus on the PSN “monopoly.” Politically, the unions had denied him a way of recovering wage settlements or making capital improvements.

**Governor Wallgren: Politics Prevail Over Economics**

SQUARE-JAWED, Scandinavian Mon C. Wallgren, an Everett optometrist, was a forceful speaker, masterful storyteller and a source of local pride after he won the national amateur balk line billiards championship in 1929. In 1932 the New Deal wave carried him to Congress from the Second District. Eight years later, “at the suggestion of others high in the [Democratic] party,” he was appointed to U.S. Senator Lew Schwellenbach’s seat and rode into office with Roosevelt in November 1940.

Bored with Congress and beseeched by his party, he upset Governor Arthur Langlie, the sole Republican in state office, in FDR’s final triumph in 1944. “Mon has gone back to the state to place himself in Purgatory,” new senator Warren Magnuson presciently reported two days before Christmas. The only man to hold the state’s three highest offices was now too close to his constituency. The “ferry mess” later became a mark of “mismanagement” and a prime lever in Langlie’s return to Olympia in 1949.

Labor’s wartime truce had ended in April 1944 with demands for higher wages and a five-day work week, seniority and more vacation. Black Ball offered a 10 percent wage hike. The once reluctant Masters, Mates and Pilots, having reversed posture as they grew in numbers, held out for a 40-hour work week and arbitration of future increases. Wallgren knew by November 1946 that Black Ball was losing money. And when Peabody restored higher, prewar (1937) rates on January 1, 1947, the governor caught the negative reaction from chambers of commerce and service and civic clubs, as well as the refracted ire of local governments wanting him to free up service and freeze fares. Cross-sound transportation emerged as the preoccupying issue for many in the region.

**Ferry Service Affected** the entire Kitsap-Olympic peninsula population, now an indispensable voter bloc for gubernatorial candidates. Resistance arose from the Northwest Washington Community Council (NWCC), an umbrella for 42 civic organizations claiming to represent 150,000 riders. Between the Marine Engineers, not included in the earlier negotiations, and Captain Peabody, the NWCC saw Peabody as the likely culprit. After the engineers

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*Governors Clarence D. Martin (top), Mon C. Wallgren, and Arthur B. Langlie (bottom). Each in turn wrestled with the question of state takeover of the privately-owned Puget Sound ferry system.*

*The Vashon, one of the ferries acquired by the Puget Sound Navigation Company in 1935 when it purchased the Kitsap County Transportation Company.*
stalled boats for seven hours on February 28, 1947, and walked out on March 14, stranding 22 ferries and 10,000 commuters for seven days, the NWCC voted for state takeover.

Peabody agreed to a $36-a-month wage boost and a six-day work week, then turned to the state Toll Bridge Authority (TBA), chaired by the governor, for another 30 percent fare increase. Director of Transportation Paul Revelle cautioned the governor that the last raise had ranged from 20 to 40 percent; a new boost meant a net increase of 50 to 70 percent. After Black Ball rejected a quiet state purchase of ferries, it got a “temporary” raise only by agreeing to bond the raise and refund it if rates were found to be “excessive.”

At a hearing in Seattle City Hall on June 4, community activists tried to prove that the company was taking advantage of the public. Paul Revelle set the scene two days earlier, ordering Peabody to Olympia to explain why the new revenues were not set aside or the bond posted. Peabody said he had no choice but to use them for oil and upkeep. Stewart Krieger, Revelle’s chief accountant, testified that permanently reducing fares from 10 to 30 percent would cut service. PSN’s return of investment had dropped from 14.1 percent in 1945 to 10.9 percent in 1946. No dividends were paid from 1930 to 1940, and 4 percent annually from 1940 to 1947. The 30 percent boost should stand. Krieger also agreed that replacement costs would be doubled or tripled for the old boats, more for new ones. Given patronage trends, the company could not survive on current revenues. Users insisted that Peabody had bought “scrap vessels at scrap prices” and that the replacement set-aside should be based on what he had paid. PSN demanded that rates reflect a valuation enabling it to replace vessels and improve service.

Politics dictated otherwise. Impressed by the gap between data and opinion, Wallgren, for lack of a policy, told Revelle that the Governor’s Office would back his solution. The courts were interpreted as saying investor and consumer interests must be balanced. And the burden of cost was more important than the “technicalities” of appraisal. Original costs were placed at $10.24 million, current book value at $4.48 million. Rate payers should not have to pay for more than Peabody paid or provide capital for a “public utility.”

PSN’s assertion that replacement costs would be several times the original was informally acknowledged—and dealt with by setting a 40-year renewal cycle, not the usual 30. The courts’ 5 percent standard for telephone companies was adopted for return on investment. On July 3 the TBA rolled the new fares back two-thirds, cutting return on investment to 6.04 percent.

The public’s pleasure and Wallgren’s reprieve were brief. Peabody, warning the governor that PSN would lose $200,000 in 1947 and $1 million in 1948, offered to lease the fleet. This was “silly,” the governor responded. The state did not want the ferries temporarily. “If we had wanted to do that we could have taken them over during the war when they were making money.” Peabody appealed in Thurston County Superior Court, which suspended the TBA’s action, pending review. But in December 1947 it agreed with the TBA and the NWCC that book, not replacement value, was the right depreciation factor.

Peabody was back on the defensive when labor negotiations began in January 1948. He wrote Captain John Fox of the Inland Boatman’s Union that he expected to save money by reducing overtime. Fox responded, “Not a chance,” adding, “We think that Peabody got a helluva bum deal from the state....” The captain damned “bureaucratic bungling in Olympia” and ordered a shutdown for February 29. Revelle, irked that he and his department were being fingered, turned to the attorney general for a means to force PSN to run. A group of 540 Black Ball employees presented Revelle with a petition supporting the 30 percent raise.

Revelle told Bremertonians, “the
law doesn’t allow any compromise. . . . Peabody is a law violator.” The TBA would “probably take over . . . if forced to do so.” PSN told the court that $2 million borrowed on January 1 was spent and credit was exhausted. The court deepened the quagmire by denying Revelle a mandate, but told PSN it could not stop—or run—“except at a loss, and cannot operate at all by reason of its financial difficulties.” Downtowner pressure forced a fruitless meeting between the antagonists the next day. Neither could back down, and Peabody was back in Seattle to tie up the ferries at midnight.

For nine days the navy moved shipyard workers by LST (landing ship, tank), communities chartered boats, and private yachts sailed. It was costly, and no freight moved. Wallgren, who had been heard saying PSN was on the verge of bankruptcy, faced a new level of frustration with the primary election six months away. He told Seattle Jefferson-Jackson Day diners, “If public ownership [is] the only means to reasonable operation, then I’m in favor of state ownership.” The governor canceled PSN’s franchise and declared that the state was “definitely going into the ferry business.”

“State operation is not the answer,” Revelle advised the governor. He was “half . . . or three-fourths of the way at an equitable settlement.” Every option except the obvious one—condemnation—had now been tried. Wallgren threatened that Henry Kaiser had said he could build eight ferries for $20 mil-
lion and blithely supposed existing fares could pay the bonds. "If we could break Black Ball's monopoly, the rates would take care of themselves." The navy was queried for a quick price on surplus sub-chasers to run as "sea taxis."

Confusingly claiming the state "owns and operates" the ferries, the governor asked the Maritime Commission to run them to relieve the "critical emergency." He negotiated with Moore Drydock in San Francisco for the ferry Hayward and in April made a "verbal agreement" with Consolidated Builders of Portland for three steel hulls. "It is our intention to get into the ferry business," he repeated, "We are proceeding in an orderly manner." The trouble was, the state didn't own the terminals.

Wrongly, Attorney General Smith Troy advised the governor—to his surprise—that he had the power to condemn. Rightly, Troy told him that there was no purse—the gas tax could not be used to pay bonds. Despite this, Wallgren asked Troy to proceed, moving through the independently appointed TBA to diffuse worry in eastern Washington about subsidizing ferries from the gas tax. The TBA adopted Resolution 205, citing "excessive rates, and cessation of service," and Chapter 266, Laws of 1945, empowering the state to operate the ferries. The Gilman Company of New York was retained to make a comprehensive study; W. C. Nickum and Sons, Seattle naval architects, were given 45 days to draw preliminary plans for new ferries and docks to be paid for by bonds "hereafter in any manner revenue becomes available."

In June the Gilman Company's report undermined the governor's plans. The report advocated an $18-million ferry-bridge system. But substituting toll spans would draw ferry patrons from the five most trafficked routes. Abandoning the Seattle-Winslow run for a floating bridge across the South Sound and one at Agate Pass was correctly mocked as "a political ferry ride."

For now, the ferries had to continue, at fares just 11 percent under what Peabody had charged. Private or public, costs would be the same, but they would be higher with new boats. At Seattle's Colman Dock, Black Ball felt vindicated. "Anything that will give the people temporary service is highly satisfactory," the governor groaned.

HE CLOSER STATE ownership loomed, the greater the negative reaction. Economic reality began to penetrate the largely professional and small business leadership of the NWCC, and the organization split. Now the more "moderate" NWCC said the company should continue! The Puget Sound Ferry Users Association (PSFUA) came to life with a Democratic rank-and-file stance backing the governor. Their delegations had convinced him that they reflected public opinion. He persuaded them to advocate state operation or face further delay. Wallgren's hoped-for consensus for state ownership had drifted away.

The economic truths also stunned Peabody's beleaguered shareholders, a minority of whom offered to sell for $7.5 million. The state continued to negotiate with PSN and in August 1948 offered $5.5 million for everything except its Canadian runs. Peabody countered at $5.975 million cash. The state tried $2 million cash and the remainder in revenue bonds, and then all cash, contingent on financing. An option to buy was endorsed by the PSN board and the PSFUA. With primary elections a month away, the governor was relieved—until September 3, when the State Supreme Court labeled "premature" the TBA's "friendly" suit to validate the attorney general's opinion and the order to issue bonds. The Gilman Company's Final Report on October 15 insisted that cash flow was enough to pay for $10.5 million in revenue bonds to buy PSN and build a bridge over Agate Pass. Ten days before the general election, the TBA pressed on, calling for bond bids returnable by November 4 at ten in the morning.

Governor Langlie: The Reformer Turns Politician

WALLGREN'S OPPONENT IN 1948 was Arthur Langlie. As Seattle's mugwump mayor (1938-1940), Arthur Langlie had ratcheted the city's budget down $616,000 (on a total of less than $7 million) and raised water rates. Thanks also to Governor Martin, who got the legislature to up the cities' share of gas and liquor tax revenues, Langlie was able to balance his budget. Money from the New Deal's Reconstruction Finance Corporation (RFC) replaced the ancient street railway with electric trolleys. These circumstances had given Langlie sufficient popularity to win the governor's chair by 5,000 votes out of a million cast in 1940.

At the end of 1945 Lieutenant Langlie had slid down an LST ramp at Sand Point Naval Air Station and back into politics a chastened pragmatist. The senior partner of Langlie, Todd and Nickel clipped news items for his Olympia file, made "Lincoln Day speeches" and announced for governor in April 1948. He raged at the "veil of secrecy" over the Gilman report: "The equal of this fiasco has never been seen in this State." The legislature should investigate any sale first.

Langlie's idea of "good government," Wallgren countered, was "do-nothing government" and letting "corporations and private utilities keep a
stranglehold on the state's resources." The governor admitted to the Kitsap County Improvement Club on October 6 that he "thought we would be further along by this time." He was not about to quibble over $475,000.

True, rates would be only 11 percent lower, but "I hope there will be more traffic after the state takes over the ferries. Don't you agree?" he asked in his tentative campaign style. "In a couple of months we won't have any trouble."

Langlie knew that eastern Washington was against the takeover, and he predicted that Wallgren would sign a bill putting ferries on the state highway system. The swing and moderate Democratic voters that Langlie needed were on Puget Sound. His challenge was to convince conservatives that the system was properly a public utility, not a profit-making one. Peabody could not refuse a debate before the Seattle Chamber's transportation committee, but the pattern of previous confrontations prevailed. The captain won on facts, but Langlie won the committee. A key business group was thus neutralized, leaving Peabody justly outraged.

Wallgren's indiscretions and those of his aides made the charges of "financial irresponsibility" and "mismanagement" believable. Absent the straight party ballot and Franklin Roosevelt, Langlie got a second chance. His plurality of 21,714 equaled his margin in King County and included more than a few ferry riders. The supreme court ruled in December 1948 that the state did not have the power to acquire Black Ball. The option to buy expired. Highways director Clarence Shain moved that the issue be referred to the "newly elected governor."

Co-option Capitalist Style

In Olympia during the winter of 1949 Governor Langlie finessed a Marine Employees Commission as a union arbiter in an effort to trade union support of the new takeover bill for the new right to bargain collectively. Peabody still wanted to run as Black Ball. Langlie, however, directed the TBA to acquire the Black Ball Line. His assertion that the people had lost confidence in Captain Peabody was seconded by the PSFUA. To escape pressure from the Highways Division of the Department of Transportation, the governor created a Public Service Commission, which took over the regulatory role. Attorney George Boldt, who settled First Tacoma Narrows Bridge suits for Langlie, was hired as negotiator. Peabody stood fast.

In June 1950 the exasperated executive appealed by direct mail to the stockholders, offering par value for their depressed stocks, $3.9 million. Boldt had questionably advised him "not [to] acquire the fleet unless at fire sale prices." PSN's board reacted by instructing Peabody "to take any and all action . . . to protect the substantial asset value of the company." Langlie replied that the TBA had found replacing the ferries with bridges "entirely feasible." But while his constituents opposed reestablishing Black Ball on Puget Sound, Langlie could not force PSN to terms without a tie-up.

Once the TBA was sanctioned to
issue revenue bonds, the governor moved to buy equipment and landing sites at key crossings to break Black Ball's monopoly. Peabody tried to capture traffic from the new Agate Pass bridge by purchasing property next door at Lofall. The governor withheld state tidelands and had the Public Service Commission ask the company to "show cause" why it should not be regulated. The game was up when the courts confirmed that county charters were now under state jurisdiction. Captain Peabody's bankers kicked the props out from under him. On the last day of 1950 Langlie announced a sale for $4.944 million, except for the Canadian run, the Chinook, several small vessels, and Colman Dock. PSN's "unbridled grip" was broken. The justification was economic: takeover was necessary to develop the peninsulas without buying or building a competing system or waiting for more bridges. On May 31, 1951, ferries underway at sundown halted in mid-course. The Black Ball flag came down and the gold face of George Washington on green and white went up.

Washington's 'Peculiar Institution'

None of the governors' politically prompted predictions came to pass. Seeking a third term in 1952, Langlie projected "the world's finest bridge over saltwater"—Seattle to Bainbridge—by 1958. Would the first spans be to Bainbridge, Fauntleroy-Yashon or Bremerton? Parochialism fractured the legislature. Until the 1980s, population east of Puget Sound continued to grow faster than on the peninsula. When bond issuers doubted that the bridges would self-liquidate, Langlie filed plans "for any future benefits that may accrue" and spent $10 million on boat remodels.

"FREQUENCY OF SERVICE, shortness of routes, smaller boats at lower fares," the state promised in 1951. The prior year Black Ball had carried 3,940,000 passengers and 1,445,647 vehicles. During the first 17 years of state operation, use by passengers rose 150 percent, autos 290 percent, and total capacity rose 260 percent. The legislature created the Puget Sound Reserve Account by diverting .25 cents per gallon from the gas tax, and $250,000 went into a capital improvement fund, also as a "loan." Both were inadequate, and new vessels and terminals since have needed direct federal and state grants.

By 1983 freeways had superseded highways, Boeing's planes had replaced the railroads, and Metro's "mass transit" had made Seattle's trolleys obsolete. Washington State Ferries was valued at $200 million. New "jumbo" ferries with capacities of up to 2,000 passengers carried 18 million people and 8 million vehicles annually, making 400 trips daily during peak season. There would be no more complaints about fares, strikes, vessels or service, the state pledged. In "six or seven years," Langlie said, traffic would lower rates to a "fraction," as in New York and California. In 1951 the fare for a car and driver from Seattle to Winslow was $1.40. Today it is $5.90 ($7.10 when the "peak season" surcharge is in effect from mid-May to mid-October). The legislature precluded shutdowns by pacifying the now over 30 unions with the option of arbitration.

Captain Peabody died a bitter man. The last of his fleet had become "B.C. Ferries."

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A Source of Civic Pride and an Investment in the Future

Washington's Public Architecture

BY NORMAN J. JOHNSTON

A sponsor for over 100 years of many significant public buildings, the state of Washington has not only been a major construction client but one that has set advanced policy and design standards. On the whole, Washingtonians can take pride in their state's public architecture, which has proved that innovation and imagination pay dividends in achievements that serve us well now and are secure investments on into the future.

The state's record of innovation had an early start. In developing its first legislative building in 1893, planners sought the best talent by announcing a national competition for its design. Though the economics of the time thwarted the building's completion, the same tactic was tried again in 1911 with the announcement of a second state capitol design competition. But, rather than seeking the design of a single building, Washington declared for a group of buildings. The state's previous experience with the single-building concept had convinced it that future state growth would inevitably require expansion of capitol facilities and be better served with a design anticipating that expansion. This decision, unprecedented in the nation's history of state capitol construction, gave us the foundation for the splendor of today's Capitol Campus in Olympia: the 1911 Wilder and White group plan and its later west campus landscape plan by the Olmsted Brothers.
To preserve those campus splendors and yet accommodate post-World War II space demands, the state developed the present east campus, more than doubling total campus acreage. More recently still, a continuing program of added construction on the west and east campuses would have meant problems of building, people and traffic congestion, further inconveniences to the public, and undue impacts on Olympia and campus neighbors. Thus, rather than follow traditional practices, Washington sought a fresh alternative and in 1991, 80 years after its acceptance of the Wilder and White group plan, the state officially adopted The Master Plan for the Capitol of the State of Washington.

In doing so, Washington again established unprecedented standards for capitol construction by declaring it state policy, in cooperation with local communities, to identify preferred areas for future state office development. This resulted in the establishment of satellite campuses in the adjacent towns of Tumwater and Lacey as well as the recent construction of administrative buildings easily accessed from Interstate 5 and not requiring central campus locations. The new Labor and Industry building in Tumwater and the Department of Ecology building in Lacey are investments in satellite campus development and the start of a long-range project in partnership with those two communities.

It is hard to think of a more innovative and daring example of public architecture than the new Washington State Convention and Trade Center in Seattle—the work of TRA, Seattle architects—which opened in 1988. It is a tour de force combination of architecture, urban design and landscape architecture. The center not only enriches the vitality of its city-center setting, but, by using air rights to bridge the gap between downtown and its easterly neighbors, the structure binds the wound that was created when the interstate freeway sliced through the city.

What has been achieved is the project’s remarkable tapestry of horizontal and vertical pedestrian linkages—sidewalks, ramps, escalators, overpasses—all contributing to the movements of people whose presence reinforces the city’s downtown livability. An urban bonus has been the project’s direct pedestrian access to the existing Freeway Park, which had initiated this air-rights utilization. The architecture and landscaping of the two developments work in tandem to form a splendid urban amenity.

The University of Washington (UW) campus is another example of innovation and imagination teaming up for the public good. On land acquired in 1893, the present campus began rather prosaically with its first building, Denny Hall, located with no...
particular campus plan in mind. Even when in 1904 the Olmsted Brothers—the nation’s premier landscape architects of the time—were commissioned to prepare a plan for the campus, their first efforts failed to fully realize the site’s potential. When in 1906 they returned to the university campus as site planners for the 1909 Alaska-Yukon-Pacific (AYP) Exposition (the UW had lent the fair’s sponsors the lower two-thirds of the campus), they captured it magnificently. Their plan’s radial and circumferential routes, especially the famed Rainier Vista, drew upon the distant sights of lakes and mountains and made them partners in the grandeur and excitement of the fair’s visual environment.

Once the fair closed, the bulk of its temporary construction was removed, but the site plan lived on to define permanent university construction over the years. The Regents Plan of 1915—the work of Seattle architects Bebb and Gould—extended the design coordination of the AYP plan into the upper campus. Although subsequently amended and extended through the years, that plan still remains the campus’s underlying design rationale. It is, without doubt, the state’s most comprehensive monument to the “City Beautiful” ambitions of early 20th-century America.

Washington has made investments in its public architecture that have given us many truly magnificent buildings. The jewel in our public architecture crown is, of course, the Legislative Building. In this restrained version of classical revival design, the New York-based architectural firm of Wilder and White was particularly concerned that the capitol building, especially the dome, should be of sufficient size and height to visually dominate its group ensemble of five surrounding buildings. Rising 278 feet above the building’s terrace, the 80-foot-diameter dome was skillfully proportioned to relate comfortably not only to the building it surmounts but also to the bulk of the group plan, which was gradually filled in during the years that followed the dome’s completion in 1928. Perhaps a certain austerity accounts for the building’s success, for it avoids some of the heavy, florid frosting that too often cloys the surfaces of capitols in other states whose budgets were more generous. Our Legislative Building serves us well: approaching its 67th birthday, it will continue to symbolize the state with dignity and style for years to come.

On the new Lacey satellite campus, consider the Department of Ecology building. Not only does it give reality to a vision projected by the state’s 1991 master plan, it impressively demonstrates how policy and action join in concert to achieve splendor. With it you have a peek into the future. A state investment in planning, design and construction, the building handsomely serves the state, community and department for which it was built and is an affirmation and example of how envisioning the future and working together can produce great results.

Situated on a site in an area formerly owned by St. Martin’s Abbey, its development was rigorously guided not only
by the long-range interests of the abbey in the site but also by the value placed on its meadows, wetlands and stands of Douglas fir, plus the efforts of all concerned for the appropriate incorporation of these natural features into the site planning for the new building. That it was being designed for the Department of Ecology placed additional weight on demonstrating an exemplary treatment of the site with care and foresight. Its planning foundation was built on the collaborative efforts of representatives of the abbey, city officials, the Department of Ecology, design professionals and the general public.

There emerged a program for preserving qualities of the natural environment, acknowledging the interests of the abbey and the City of Lacey, incorporating public transit linkages, anticipating long-range development potentials for the site, and satisfying departmental program requirements. That the end result is so impressive testifies to the program and planning procedures followed and the talents of the designers (DMJM Keating, Architects, of Los Angeles) in interpreting their challenge. The building is acclaimed for its environmental and architectural successes.

The state's imaginative use of existing buildings can be seen in some of the older structures that have been retrofitted to serve present-day needs while honoring their historical and design significance. Barge Hall on the Central Washington University (CWU) campus is a case in point. Designed by E. C. Price and now listed on the National Register of Historic Places, Barge Hall was, in 1893, CWU's first building. During the hall's renovation by SERA Architects of Portland in 1993 (the year of CWU's centennial), its exterior brickwork was restored and its picturesque tower reconstructed. Interior rehabilitation included a full reworking to house the university administration while enhancing its historical character with attention to such details as millwork design, finishes and furniture selection. The lesson that all such restored buildings offers us these days is to retain their usefulness while maintaining their enriching presence in our built environments.

In summary, the historical record of the state of Washington in the search for quality, efficiency, longevity and economy in its public architecture has indeed been one of imagination, innovation and achievement. The state's efforts have, over the years, produced and preserved a number of buildings in which we all may take pride.

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By Harold F. Osborne

On September 1, 1942, with a 50-knot gale howling from the southeast and Japanese submarines prowling the Aleutian chain, the Seattle-based motor ship Crown City struck an uncharted rock beneath the surface of the Bering Sea. The 5,433-ton steel Hog Island-class freighter, heavily laden with military supplies, was shouldering through 30-foot waves when it smashed at an angle against the slanting top of the unsuspected reef. Within a few minutes it was apparent to the captain that the vessel was a total loss.

News of the wreck went unreported at the time because of the wartime press blackout and the remoteness of the site. Details can now be fitted together into a nearly full account of the loss of a valuable ship, the difficult rescue of the 53 civilian and navy men she carried and the all-but-miraculous salvage, months later, of the strategic cargo left behind when all aboard abandoned her.

In the scale of the total American maritime and naval losses of World War II, the Crown City wreck was a relatively minor event. But for the men aboard her there was danger and emotional stress. And, in retrospect a half-century later, the Crown City story can be seen as emblematic of the degree of peril into which Puget Sound mariners pushed their peacetime craft in support of the national war effort. The wreck and rescue also reveal the fragile and spotty fabric of American preparedness against enemy attack and expected invasion during the early war years.

Most shipwreck reports are based on the memories of deck officers and seamen. This account embodies the experience of a surviving engineering officer, Chief Engineer George Andresen, amplified by newly found official reports and historical sources.

The Crown City was loaded to her limit with food supplies, mobile machinery, Quonset huts, clothing, crushed rock, gasoline, airplane parts and sacked coal. When her hull

ABOVE: Ice-level view of the Crown City wreck taken shortly after the Bering Sea froze but before salvage of the cargo began. Sledge Island is visible behind the freighter's snow-covered decks.

RIGHT: The MS Crown City wreck, surrounded by the frozen Bering Sea, while salvage work was under way during the spring of 1943. This aerial view from the southeast, toward Sledge Island, shows the tracks of the salvage tractors leading toward the Seward Peninsula.
struck the rocky barrier, her forward motion halted abruptly, but not instantaneously. It took a few seconds for the 410-foot-long freighter’s mass to come to zero speed.

Although everyone aboard felt the scraping, shuddering impact through the steel decks, no one was thrown down or injured. Everyone, however, heard the heavy, piercing scream as the venerable ship’s hull plates were torn back “like opening a sardine can,” Andresen, now long retired, remembers vividly.

On the freighter’s bridge, Captain T. P. (Tom) Collon had been peering across the welter of flying “graybeard” spume and piled-up waves between his ship’s bow and Sledge Island, 25 miles west of Nome, Alaska. He intended to find a lee shelter behind the island. Whether he saw some indication of danger or only felt it prudent to slow his 10-knot speed as he approached the expected anchorage—still three or four miles away—cannot now be known. But at 5:35 in the evening he ordered the Crown City’s engine stopped.

Collon was an experienced master but a newcomer to the American Mail Line, the recently organized and refinanced Seattle company that operated the Crown City for the Army Transportation Service (ATS). Beside him on the bridge was Captain Charles Pickering, a respected veteran Bering Sea pilot. Also on duty was Second Mate Robert F. Hayes, the ship’s navigator. And it was likely that Chief Mate Barney Kirschbaum, temporarily free of any specific responsibility after hours of supervising the unloading of deck-cargo lumber in the Nome roadstead, also was on the bridge. Kirschbaum also held a master’s license.

The master, the pilot and the navigator certainly had studied the charts for their proposed 25-mile shift of anchor age, and the charts were handy to the bridge. Depth of the sea ahead was shown everywhere as 8 or 9 fathoms, roughly 50 feet. The Crown City was drawing 25 feet of water, ample flotation for the hull, even allowing for wave motion.

Four minutes after Captain Collon slowed the ship, at 5:39, the crash occurred.

In the ship’s belly, 70 feet below the bridge, Chief Andresen was at his post in the engine room, his hand ready on the throttle wheel, awaiting the next order from the bridge. He has never forgotten the ear-rending screech as the hull’s three-quarter-inch riveted steel plating was crumpled back.

Andresen is now 93 years old, slowed a bit physically, but intellectually vigorous. He recalls vividly the scene in the cavernous steel engine room, far below the water line. No one, he says, doubted that the grating noise meant disaster. Andresen, plus the first assistant engineer, the second assistant, who had the four-to-eight watch, the electrician and the oiler all stood motionless. No one yelled or spoke. No one spat out involuntary profanity. There were no dramatics.

Frozen and already frightened, they waited. Then, perhaps after 10 or 15 seconds, the engine room telegraph jangled out a new order: the indicator arrow moved to “Full Astern.” Andresen instantly whirled the throttle wheel to start the 2,500-horsepower main diesel engine in reverse. Simultaneously the second assistant slapped the telegraph answering pointer around to signal compliance—“Full Astern”—back to the bridge.

The sea astern must have boiled high as the big blades tried to unscrew the hull from its impaling rock. Captain Collon let the propeller continue to pull for what seemed like an eternity—one minute, perhaps two—before he sig-
naled to stop the propeller and the engine. The Crown City had not moved backward. It did not move now. The pounding waves did not rock it. The ship would never move again.

N ow the chief engineer could look downward through the steel mesh of the maneuvering platform surrounding the main engine. Between his feet he could see sea water streaming across the hull plates. So could his fellows on watch. Another few seconds passed as five pairs of eyes watched the flowing water mounting, several inches a minute. Then Andresen picked up the voice telephone to the bridge.

"Captain," he reported, "the bottom must be gone. There is water rising here and it will soon reach the auxiliaries. Then I'm going to have to shut them down ... they'll go out anyway. We're going to have to leave the engine room."

Andresen doesn't remember Collon's reply. By that time it was immaterial. The chief did not yet know, nor did the captain, that the bottom of the No. 5 hold, aft of the engine room, had been ripped out too. But he did know that the Crown City was doomed. Now, 52 years later, he remembers thinking, "We're just lucky the prop did not pull us off backward, or the ship would have gone to the bottom . . . fast . . . with everyone aboard."

Another thought crossed his mind: the seafaring tradition that while the captain is supposed to be the last man off a sinking ship, the chief engineer must be next to last. Andresen, known familiarly then and now to the maritime fraternity as "Two-Cycle Andy," added dryly, "I always took a dim view of that tradition, especially right then."

The officers on the bridge and the seamen on deck-watch could see at once where they were stranded. Sledge Island, a barren mountain five miles off the coast of the Seward Peninsula, lay a mile and a half off their port bow. No other vessels were in sight on the heaving Bering Sea.

The engine room crew had considerably less information. Chief Andresen's post, and that of his crew, was 15 feet above the hull bottom, surrounded on all sides by windowless bulkheads stretching upward another 40 feet. The great McIntosh & Seymour engine towered above their heads, its rocker arms and push rods at the level of the main deck.

On the bridge Collon had to face the reality of a doomed ship, cope with saving all hands and, if possible, protect the urgently needed cargo of defense material. In the engine room Andresen had to keep the power plant functioning as long as possible, but his crew, watching the flood build up, now were chattering excitedly, urging the chief to let them "get the hell out of here." They grumbled loudly and plainly showed their fright.

Only when the sea spread over the auxiliary diesel's base plates did he order both machines shut down. It was 5:55 when he rang "Finished with Engines" to the bridge and dismissed the men. They raced up the steep three-deck ladder, leaving Andresen alone.

Andresen's few minutes of delay had given radioman Arthur W. Campbell time to transmit a radio distress message, as directed by Collon. All ships were required to maintain radio silence because of enemy forces nearby. There was no radio-telephone system in place at sea at that stage of the war, and since Campbell could not use the universal distress frequency, he probably used a narrow commercial channel for his low-powered Morse message. It is not clear now to whom the signal was directed, but it may have been to the army base at Nome, for which the ship's cargo was intended. Once the generator was shut down the Crown City not only was without power, light or heat, but was mute and deaf to radio traffic as well. The ship was not only motionless but dead.

In contrast to the haste of his crew, Andresen moved slowly. He had already been dead tired from almost endless duty during the past 18 days. The new catastrophe numbed him mentally and slowed his physical responses.

By flashlight the weary chief gathered up the engine room records, thinking "the Rough Log is the only one that stands up in court." He swept his light over the control bank of dials and gauges. When any voyage is completed, the chief typically makes some superficial checks of all machinery and signs the log with final readings of all gauges before he goes ashore.

Now, he wondered, what more—or less—was a chief supposed to do when his ship crash-landed. Then he, too, climbed the long ladder, the great diesel silent around him. Once out on the weather deck he found evidence of panic.

Two of the vessel's four lifeboats had been lowered into the tossing sea, and a dozen men were trying to row them toward the mainland. Andresen could see some of his engine room crew, as well as stewards and cooks, awkwardly pulling at the oars. The 1920s-vintage lifeboats were not motorized, and those manning them had little experience in small-boat handling. Both boats were having difficulty in the heavy seas, and were being blown steadily westward.

Whether the fugitives had asked permission from the captain or one of the mates to lower the boats, and whether they
would have heeded a refusal and taken the boats anyway, Andresen never knew. But their flight, authorized or not, strongly reinforced his worry that the Crown City was in more peril than ever: there were 41 men left aboard, and only two more lifeboats.

The Arctic darkness soon surrounded the freighter. The master and pilot remained on the dark bridge, and an augmented deck watch was manned. But the majority of those aboard, including the navy gunnery crew assigned to the Crown City, gathered in the dining hall waiting and wondering whether the distress signal had been heard.

Someone brought out crackers and other dry food from the pantry, but Andresen didn’t think he could eat anything. Several men broke up crates for kindling and tried to light a fire in the galley range so coffee and other hot food could be prepared. The attempt failed—the stove only used pressured oil. There wasn’t much conversation after that, and the atmosphere inside was as gloomy as that outside.

Soon Andresen went to his cabin, following his flashlight beam. Without undressing, he lay down on his own bunk and instantly fell asleep. He had been able to get little rest since the voyage began in Seattle on August 13. During the Depression years there had been more qualified officers looking for berths than there were seagoing jobs to fill; men with chief’s papers gladly signed on as first or second assistants. Now, with the high demand for mariners of all kinds for the navy and coast guard, as well as in the war-expanded merchant navy, there were more berths than men.

On its final voyage the Crown City had to sail short one mate, and the chief mate was standing watch as well as carrying out his daily supervisory duties. Andresen’s engineers were sufficient in number but woefully short on experience. As a result, Andy had spent all day and part of every night watch on the job, unwilling to trust the complicated engine—and the ship’s safety—to the untrained officers.

When Andy awoke it was daybreak, and help had indeed arrived. Off to starboard, 500 yards away, was the lean gray shape of the USS Perry, a four-stack navy destroyer, newly reconfigured as a high-speed mine sweeper. The Perry had

Chief Engineer George Andresen looks with satisfaction at the two-cycle diesel engine in the Alaska Steamship Company’s MS Honda Knot, aboard which he served during the Korean War.
been the Crown City's dutiful escort vessel for the past ten days. Nothing could have been more reassuring.

The Perry, anchored off Nome with all lights darkened for wartime security, had learned of the Crown City wreck at 10:45 the night before. By 11:45 she had gotten steam up, hove her anchor, manned all sea watches and got under way. Like the cavalry riding to the rescue in the movies, the Perry came charging out of the night, her searchlights sweeping ahead for the final miles, to sight the wrecked Crown City 63 minutes later.

The Perry's shuttered searchlight blinked questions at the Crown City's bridge. Using a hand-held battery-operated blinker, one of the mates dit-dah-ed answers. Yes, the ship was hung up fast. Yes, she was a total loss. No, there was no danger of her immediate sinking. Yes, she probably could hold out until daylight (when rescue of the crew would be easier). No, not all the crew was still aboard; there were 12 men at sea in small boats or perhaps beached on some nearby shore, but there were 41 still on the freighter.

The sea was still running high. The Perry's skipper, Lieutenant Commander B. A. Feutsch, could not turn on his searchlights again unless absolutely necessary. He assured Captain Collon he would stand by. Then, at 1:44 a.m. he dropped his port anchor in 8 1/2 fathoms of water, paying out 75 fathoms of chain to hold it.

Rapid and decisive as the Perry's rescue effort was, the fact that it took almost five hours to get word of the freighter's distress to her guardian escort 25 miles away demonstrated tellingly how rudimentary and uncoordinated the Alaska defense communication system still was almost nine months after Pearl Harbor.

When Radioman Campbell sent his distress signal shortly after the crash, there had been two other merchant ships within five or six miles, anchored out of sight, already sheltered behind Sledge Island. They did not come to assist the Crown City because they never heard the signal.

Whoever did receive it either vacillated or routed it through some chain of command. The Perry's urgent alert came from Feutsch's tactical commander at Dutch Harbor, 750 miles southwest of Nome in the mid-Aleutians, and was routed by way of the army transport Chirikov, which was unloading at St. Michael, 125 miles southeast of Nome, on the mainland.

Feutsch's radio report after the rescue, sent to Rear Admiral B. A. Theobald, Commander of Navy Task Force Eight (assigned to defend Alaska) at Kodiak, is now in the Navy Historical Center, Washington, D.C. It does not explain the leisurely routing. It does reveal Feutsch's decisive action once he heard of the wreck.

Once it was light, the Perry had to search for more than an hour to find the first lifeboat, which had been blown many miles to the northwest—the direction of Bering Strait. The Perry had to use its motor whaleboat to bring the refugees to the destroyer since the inexperienced occupants were unable to maneuver their craft alongside the larger ship. But at 6:52 in the morning the Perry quarter-deck logged aboard the freighter's first cook, the pantry man, the maintenance man, two oilers and the cadet engineer—six in all. They were given hot coffee and blankets.

The destroyer continued its search. Forty-two minutes later, at 7:36, the Perry logged aboard the second lifeboat crew: the second assistant engineer, the third assistant engineer, the fourth assistant engineer, an oiler, the electrician and surprisingly, radioman Campbell. The lifeboats were abandoned where they were found. At 8:00 all hands mustered at stations for morning colors, with no absentees logged, while the Perry was steaming back to anchor again near the Crown City.

Then the motor whaleboat was lowered again and began shuttling through the rolling seas to bring back survivors who had been stranded all night on the freighter—six to ten men on each of the four round trips. By 10:28 the log recorded the final dramatic escape of the Crown City "brass."

Captain Collon, however, was not the last to leave the wreck. He had been up all night, worried for his ship, his crew—perhaps his career—fearful that the 21-year-old hull
would break up or float off in the rising tide.

"He seemed to be in bad shape," Andresen remembers, "so [Chief Mate] Barney Kirschbaum asked me to give him a hand getting down the ladder. Barney went just below him to support him and guide his feet onto the rungs, and I came above him, to help him shift his hands all I could."

All the survivors came down a rope ladder from the main deck. The Perry coxswain had to hold the whaleboat against the freighter's hull, and the bow seaman held the bottom of the ladder as each survivor descended backwards, holding the rope hand lines. As each reached the bottom rung, he had to make sure his final drop of a couple of feet coincided with a rising wave and not with a trough. The bow man grabbed each man in turn and helped him make the jumping transfer. The gale had subsided somewhat, but the waves, as always in storms in the shallow Bering Sea, were still at least four feet high.

Chief Engineer Andresen was the last man off the Crown City. He is not a demonstrative man, but when he set foot on the Perry's deck his relief at being rescued was far from his only emotion. "I looked back at the Crown City and had to thank the Lord I would be rid of that fouled-up ship at last. I hated that ship. I'd never wanted to be chief aboard her, and I hated that four-cycle engine. I never wanted to see her again," he recalls.

Feutsch, eager to get out of the heavy seas, had his anchor up almost before the whaleboat had been secured aboard, and moved his ship to the lee of Sledge Island. He anchored in line with the SS West Camargo, a veteran Pope and Talbot steamer, and the SS John Harvard, a Liberty freighter, both also under army contracts; the freighters had taken refuge behind the island the previous day. Feutsch and his crew were ready for a little rest.

First they had to squeeze the newcomers into spaces already crammed with 130 officers and sailors, and get them fed and checked by the pharmacist's mate. The Crown City officers were quartered in Officers' Country and in the chief petty officers' quarters. The navy gunners and merchant seamen squeezed into the Perry's crew quarters.

Earlier, and almost unnoticed by those stranded and awaiting rescue by the whaleboat, a landing craft had come alongside the wreck bringing an ATS officer and an enlisted electrician from the Nome army base, plus a civilian from Nome's Lomen Stevedoring and Warehouse Company to investigate salvage possibilities. After inspecting the Crown City's winches, the electrician said that the army's portable generators were not compatible with the freighter's power plant. It was obvious that salvage could not be undertaken from another ship unless it could be brought alongside. Since no one knew the extent of the reef, this was not an option. The Lomen foreman said his firm could not risk tugs and barges so far from port. Frustrated, the ATS officer and his crew returned to Nome, believing salvage prospects were nil.

Bright and early Thursday, September 3, Lieutenant Commander Feutsch began the final wrap-up of the rescue. At 7:15, perhaps before all concerned had breakfast, the motor whaleboat again began its busy shuttle service. First it delivered the pilot, Captain Pickering, and eight others to the West Camargo for their passage home.

Then Feutsch shifted the Perry's anchorage around the island again, to lie 500 yards off the wreck. The sea had subsided, and at 8:45 a Perry working party was dispatched to the freighter "to remove fresh provisions" and personal effects. This work continued until mid afternoon. Captain Collon's deck officers also rode to the Crown City to bring back navy equipment and the gunnery crew's classified publications. If the freighter's log was removed, it has not been found in likely government archives or in records of the American Mail Line or its successor.

Finally, the Perry steamed back to Nome to a rendezvous with the 10,000-ton personnel transport Chirikov, which was to take the remaining merchant seamen back to Seattle. All were home in a couple of weeks. The navy gunners were not so lucky. The young sailors didn't reach Seattle until six weeks after the wreck.

Two-Cycle Andy's "private cabin" for the trip home was a cot in the bottom of an empty refrigerator hold in the West Camargo. Andy still wore the coveralls from his last Crown City watch when he was reunited with his family in Kingston. He and the others aboard were paid off on October 14.

Meanwhile, back at Sledge Island, the Crown City lay motionless on her pinnacle as the darkness and cold of Alaskan winter enveloped the region.
spent years as the sole white resident of Little Diomede Island in Bering Strait. Spotting the shipwreck offshore, Father Tom swung his dog team out over the ice, clambered up the icy drifts and examined the empty ship and her cargo holds. He found that not only was the sea frozen outside the hull, but all the tons of water inside the freighter’s holds were solid ice. Known for his persuasive blarney, the priest drove his dog sled on to Nome and visited Brigadier General Edwin W. Jones, commander of the army base. After some delay, to persuade the military that a Jesuit priest might also be a qualified salvage master, the general flew with Father Tom over the wreck in a small plane while the priest explained his plan for saving the cargo. Jones found the scheme feasible and agreed to supply generators and air compressors.

Father Tom and a work party of soldiers moved in to bivouac in the wreck’s deckhouse, and the priest recruited a number of his Eskimo friends and their dog teams as additional workers. The army provided tractors and sledges.

Father Tom ran the Crown City winches himself, and directed soldiers in jack-hammering frozen blocks of cargo out of the hold. The winches lowered them to the ice below for transport to the mainland across the miles of frozen sea, some in dog sleds and some in tractor-pulled sledges. Other tractors hauled the salvaged material to the army base.

Despite wildly adverse weather, most of the cargo was safely removed over the next few weeks. Then one morning Father Tom, using his fabled “sixth sense for ice behavior,” ordered everyone off the ship just before the ice broke up in an early spring thaw. The priest refused any pay for his services. “He saw the salvage operation as his patriotic duty,” his biographer, Louis L. Renner, S.J., later wrote. “One suspects, moreover, that he found it a great adventure and delighted in it.”

The army did, however, thank him profusely, and awarded him a Citation of Commendation with high praises for the salvage. H. W. McCurdy’s Marine History of the Pacific Northwest described the priest’s work as “most noteworthy... made possible because Father Tom’s knowledge of the sea and ice conditions... was remarkable.”

Effective as the superbly managed rescue of the shipwrecked crew was, and astonishing as was the inventive salvage of the Crown City cargo, their significance can be better appreciated when considered against the backdrop of the early war years.

Two-Cycle Andy had been sailing in many parts of the Pacific Ocean for 21 years before the Pearl Harbor bombardment. He heard the news of the Japanese attack on the radio in his Kingston home on Sunday, December 7, 1941; he was between voyages while the Crown City was loading flour at Tacoma for delivery to ports in the Far East. On Monday, December 8, reporting back to the ship, he found the flour being unloaded and learned that his ship and all other freighters owned by the Maritime Commission had been commandeered for national emergency service. Without volunteering or being drafted, and having signed on in peace, he now found himself on active duty in a war.

The Crown City’s first wartime voyage took crated warplanes to South Pacific bases and Australia. A second trip unloaded war material at Anchorage, Alaska. Its third was the fatal trip to Sledge Island.

Despite the shipwreck experience, all the Crown City crew went back to sea again, with American Mail or other lines. Chief Mate Kirschbaum became master of the MS Collingsworth, another Hog Island-type vessel. On his first voyage on January 9, 1943, his ship was torpedoed and sunk by a German submarine in the South Atlantic. Kirschbaum did not survive. Third Mate Fredericks died a similar death shortly afterwards when his outward-bound Liberty ship, the MS Straub, was sunk in the Gulf of Alaska.

Andresen also sailed again, this time in a brand-new, Tacoma-built C-1 freighter, the MS Cape Fairweather, which had twin-cycle, 2,000 horse-power diesel engines. Two weeks after clearing Cape Flattery on her first voyage, the 14-knot vessel was in a shooting war, the six-months-long campaign to drive the Japanese from the Solomon Islands.

That was Andresen’s worst war-time duty. His ship continued to carry war material, such as high explosive aerial bombs, to Pacific battle zones right up to the Japanese surrender. After the war he stayed at sea. Nothing in peace, however, matched the Sledge Island wreck or the Solomons duty for fatigue and funk. He insists his career was “no different than a good many others.”

After 41 years at sea he retired in 1962 to his home in Kingston, where he still lives with his tortoiseshell cat. He is Kingston’s oldest native son and a source of pioneer Kitsap lore, tales of Mosquito Fleet steamers and, of course, two-cycle diesels.

The Crown City squatted silent on her Sledge Island perch for several years, her storm-battered hull a familiar sight to crews of ships passing en route to Teller, Kotzebue or Barrow. Then one spring in the late 1940s the first northbound freighters found her gone. Internal and external ice pressure and wave action had at last broken her ancient bottom plates farther open, so her empty hull could slide beneath the surface. Today’s charts show the position of the reef on which she perished.

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AUTHOR’S NOTE

The author gratefully acknowledges the assistance of naval historian Francis Duncan, Ph.D., of Bethesda, Maryland, with archival research and locating records.
Nine plutonium production reactors, now closed and silent, hug a 14-mile stretch of the Columbia River's Hanford Reach in the southeastern corner of Washington. Built as the core of America's atomic defense arsenal during World War II and the Cold War, this grouping forms the largest collection of full-size reactors in the world. More defense activity took place here than anywhere else, particularly during the first 25 years of operations (1944-1969), as the Hanford site raced to produce over half of the nation's supply of plutonium and nearly a quarter of the world's supply.

Hanford's B Reactor was the first full-scale nuclear reactor to operate in world history. Built by the Army Corps of Engineers and the DuPont Corporation in just 11 months, between October 1943 and September 1944, the structure is now listed in the National Register of Historic Places. B Reactor also has received special awards from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and the American Society of Civil Engineers.

The next seven reactors, D, F, H, DR, C, KE, and KW (in order of construction) were similar in most features. Built between 1943 and 1955, and shut down between 1964 and 1971, they had an average life span of just 20 years, yet they will present cleanup and waste management challenges for hundreds to thousands of years. The ninth and last defense
production facility, N Reactor, operated from 1963 to 1987. There were major differences between N and the older reactors. In particular, N's cooling system recirculated and reused water many times before returning it to the Columbia River, thus contributing less overall contamination to the river than did the older reactors.

The story of the first eight of Hanford's reactors is one of constant learning, experimentation and change. Tied in umbilical fashion to the Columbia River, these machines drew cooling water from the river, and pumped it through a series of filtration, chemical treatment, and storage buildings and tanks. The water then was passed directly through long, horizontal tubes in the reactors, where aluminum-jacketed uranium fuel rods were undergoing active neutron bombardment. From there the water was pumped out the back of the reactors, left for a brief time (30 minutes to 6 hours) in retention basins to allow for short-term radioactive decay, and then returned to the Columbia River. This cycle earned these reactors the nickname "single-pass" reactors.

The construction and general specifications of B Reactor were similar to those of most of Hanford's other single-pass reactors, although C, KE and KW were slightly larger and contained some special features. B Reactor rested on a thick concrete foundation topped with cast-iron blocks inside the 105-B Building, a reinforced concrete structure shaped like a tiered wedding cake.

Surrounded by thick shields, the reactor core itself consisted of a graphite "core" measuring 28 feet from front to rear and 36 feet from side to side and top to bottom. The entire reactor block was enclosed in a welded steel box that functioned to confine a gas atmosphere. The atmosphere of the earliest reactors was composed of helium, an inert gas selected for its heat removal capacity. Heat removal was considered important because original calculations estimated that the formation of one gram of plutonium 239 (Pu-239) liberated some 80-million BTUs (British thermal units) of energy, the equivalent of 1,000 kilowatt days.

The early Hanford reactors also were equipped with various safety and control instruments that measured temperature, pressure, moisture, neutron flux and radioactivity levels. Because no one instrument had enough range to measure neutron flux all the way from shutdown levels to the approximately one trillion times shutdown levels experienced during operations, the reactor was fitted with sub-critical, mid-range and full power flux instrumentation.

Many questions about reactor operations puzzled early Hanford scientists. For example, they worried about the possibility of "slug failures," that is, the accidental penetration by cooling water of the aluminum jackets surrounding the fuel elements. They knew that such penetration would cause the uranium to swell, thus blocking the coolant flow within the process tube. This condition would necessitate tube removal and replacement and could melt the fuel elements in that tube. Also, fuel ruptures would allow the escape of radioactive fission products. The desire to avoid the problems associated with fuel ruptures initiated intensive study of
fuel fabrication methods, corrosion principles and water treatment methods soon after World War II.

Temperature and neutron flux distribution were other topics that intrigued the early operators of Hanford's reactors. At first, "poisons" (neutron absorbing materials) were distributed in a uniform pattern throughout the reactor core during operation. This method of control produced a flux pattern that resembled a bell curve, front to rear within the reactor. Such a curve meant that while uranium elements in the center of the reactor achieved maximum or optimum irradiation, many of the fuel elements located in the rest of the reactor achieved sub-optimal irradiation, due to lower neutron flux. This situation not only was inefficient in terms of utilization of the uranium supply, it also contributed to temperature gradients that caused expansion of the graphite in the central portions of the reactor.

Shortly after World War II Hanford scientists, working under key Manhattan Project physicist C. W. J. Wende, tested several new poison patterns, with the goal of "flattening" the pronounced curve, thus evening out the distribution of neutron activity and enlarging the area of maximum flux and temperature within the reactor. They quickly learned that many alterations in poison distribution (control rod positions) would achieve higher and lower temperatures and exposures in various reactor zones. They dubbed all of these manipulations "dimpling" the reactor.

Of all the operational questions and issues that were pioneered in the Hanford reactors, almost none proved more compelling than those involving graphite. Swelling of the graphite, along with embrittlement, was a side-effect of irradiation. By late 1945 graphite expansion was causing the process tubes to bow, "binding" them too tightly with their fittings and other components, and straining the seals at the top and side corners of the reactor shields.

As a result, a graphite expansion committee was formed at Hanford in early 1946. Ultimately, concern over the graphite expansion problem and its intrinsic threat to reactor "life" led to a decision on March 15, 1946, to shut down B Reactor. However, in mid 1947, convinced by positive developments in graphite study, site managers decided to restart the reactor the following year.

By 1950 further experiments had made it clear that the addition of carbon dioxide (CO₂) to the helium in reactor atmospheres could alleviate graphite swelling. Because it had a lower heat removal capacity than helium, CO₂ allowed the carbon atoms in the graphite crystal, displaced by irradiation, to heat up, become active, and thus realign themselves. By 1954 the CO₂ additions were working so well that the oldest reactors operated with a gas atmosphere composed of 40 percent helium and 60 percent CO₂.

No early or ongoing operational issue (including the graphite puzzle) was more important to the Hanford Works than that of increasing power levels. B Reactor, along with D, F and DR, was designed to operate at 250 megawatts while H, built five years later, was designed for 400 megawatts. C Reactor, built during 1951-52, was designed for 650 megawatts. The learning curve in operations then took such a leap that the twin K Reactors, built during 1953-55, were designed for 1,800 megawatts each.

Questions concerning how to achieve higher power levels, with consequent increases in plutonium production, had intrigued Hanford scientists since World War II. In April 1949 an incremental test program that would take D Reactor to 330 megawatts was undertaken. By January 1950 this experiment was so successful that DR Reactor was being operated at 400 megawatts. With the explosion of the first Soviet atomic weapon in August 1949, the victory of the communist forces of Mao Tse-Tung in China, and the discovery of the famous Klaus Fuchs spy case, increased power levels in the Hanford reactors became even more important to perceived national defense needs. From the late 1940s through the closure of the last single-pass reactor in 1971, the Hanford story is dominated by a constant effort to achieve increased power levels.

By late 1956, under President Eisenhower's policy of "massive retaliation" and the boisterous challenges of Soviet Premier Kruschev, the World War II power levels at the three oldest reactors had more than tripled, to stand at 800 megawatts. At that time, a set of modifications, designed to allow increased coolant flow, was completed at these reactors. Similar modifications were made at the other single-pass reactors through the early 1960s, spurred by the threat of Soviet technical superiority as demonstrated by Sputnik.

These changes and the fuel and tube design improvements resulted in power level increases in the World War II reactors that reached the 2,200-2,400 megawatts range by the mid 1960s, just after the Cuban "missile crisis" had once again boosted American desire for a strong nuclear defense. The mid-1960s operating figures in the oldest HW reactors were nearly ten times the original design levels. At the KE and KW reactors, final operating levels in 1970 and 1971 stood at approximately 4,100 megawatts each.

Higher power levels were easily achieved by adding enriched uranium fuel elements (containing higher percentages of U-235). However, increased power levels presented many puzzling operational challenges in the effects they caused in reactor systems and components. By mid 1951 Hanford scientists knew that the higher temperatures associated with increased power levels could produce substantially higher fuel jacketing and tube corrosion and failure rates. But their main concerns centered around how to get additional cooling water to, through and out of the reactors in order to offset "boiling disease," a situation wherein steam might form in a process tube. If this happened at higher power levels, greater water pressures would be needed to sweep the steam from the tube and thus prevent a localized meltdown.

By mid 1953 effluent removal piping at the oldest reactors, already operating at 20 to 50 percent above design
capacity, was under intense study. At the same time, operators realized that the filtration capacity for intake water would have to be increased well beyond the original capacity of approximately 35,000 gallons per minute (gpm) per reactor. More important, however, was the need to increase the intake pumping capacity.

Meanwhile, as power levels crept upward in the oldest reactors during the late 1940s and early 1950s, fuel element ruptures became a reality. The first rupture occurred at F Reactor in May 1948, and two others occurred later that year at B Reactor. The number of fuel element ruptures increased slowly during 1949-50, but expanded dramatically in 1951 when Hanford Works experienced 115 fuel failures. This number continued to climb throughout the early 1950s, bringing further focus to fuel fabrication improvement studies.

Along with fuel element failures, higher power levels and higher temperatures brought increasing levels of corrosion and failure of process tubes. By 1953 each Hanford reactor needed an average of 200 tube replacements per year. In order to reduce the ruinous corrosion, a special “Flow Laboratory” was built in late 1951 in a modified World War II refrigeration building. It functioned to study corrosion and heat transfer within process tube simulations.

At the same time, the Hanford Works began an intense review of intake water treatments. Sodium dichromate, a key corrosion inhibitor that had been added to reactor water since World War II, was evaluated closely. Because sodium dichromate was known to have detrimental effects on the fish of the Columbia River, much experimentation with other corrosion blockers was undertaken. However, due to dramatic rises in tube and fuel element corrosion when the sodium dichromate was withdrawn, site scientists decided to continue using it.

The drive to higher and higher power levels in Hanford's reactors throughout the late 1940s and mid 1950s was accompanied by the need for several changes to enhance operating safety. The “last ditch” safety system in the five oldest reactors was replaced with tiny, neutron-absorbing, nickel-plated carbon steel balls. These balls were poised in hoppers at the top of the reactors, ready to pour in and tamp down the fission reaction if necessary. Physical braces and supports and many additional instruments also were added.

Other changes in reactor operations shortened the time required to perform routine operating chores. Since World War II loading and unloading the fuel elements from a reactor had been performed while a reactor was shut down. However, by 1950 experiments were underway to perform charge-discharge operations while a reactor was running. During the
The K-East and K-West "jumbo" reactors newly completed at the Hanford Site in 1955.

early and mid 1950s such a system was tested successfully. It operated remotely and worked by flushing fuel elements down the process tubes via high pressure water. Due to cost, this system was not installed at the five oldest reactors, but it was emplaced in the newer reactors.

Another change aimed at saving shutdown time concerned "purging" or cleansing the process tubes. Minerals, elements and suspended solids in the Columbia River's water routinely built up a film on the process tube surfaces. This situation caused heat build-up within the reactors. Since the mid 1940s operators had "purged" the film from the tubes on a monthly basis, while the reactors were shut down. However, by the early 1950s the Hanford Works was trying to conduct "hot" purges—so called because they occurred while the reactors were running. Such operations were very effective in removing reactor films, but greatly increased the levels of pollution entering the Columbia River.

To help ameliorate high levels of radioactivity, restrictions were placed on the frequency of purges that could be conducted during periods of low river flow. Also, a series of experiments was initiated to find ways to protect the river. Beginning in 1954 and continuing into the early 1960s, a series of modifications were made to the eight single-pass reactors. Intake pumping, filtration, chemical treatment and storage capacities all were increased substantially. Effluent systems likewise were strengthened and greatly enlarged.

Ironically, just as these projects were getting under way, a series of significant changes in fuel elements and process tube designs and materials took place at the Hanford Works. These developments allowed dramatic increases in reactor power levels, once again straining the newly upgraded support systems. Much of the increase in power level was made possible by the use of internally and externally cooled fuel elements, which were first tested on a production basis in 1958. These fuel elements had a full, end-to-end coolant channel down their center, in contrast to the solid configuration of the fuel elements previously used. As such, they had a vastly augmented cooling capacity.

Other operating efficiencies that came quickly in the late 1950s and early-1960s resulted from the gradual replacement of aluminum process tubes with tubes made primarily of stronger, more tensile zirconium. Also, self-supported ("projection," "bumper" or "ribbed") fuel elements were developed at Hanford. Such fuel elements allowed greater passage of cooling water, again allowing higher power levels to be sought within a margin of safety.

The higher power levels permitted by development of internally and externally cooled fuel elements, ribbed fuel elements, and new process tubes, brought multiple operating challenges to the support systems of the Hanford reactors. Strained pumps and pipes developed leaks, while electrical capacities proved inadequate. Much of the reactor instrumentation was rendered obsolete. Even the graphite swelling problem increased as neutron flux and bombardment levels rose exponentially. Safety reviews called for a mounting list of improvements.

From that time forward the primary challenge for the operators of the Hanford single-pass reactors became how to design and fund all of the support systems upgrades that were needed. One project accomplished at all of these reactors during 1960-62 was the construction of a large exhaust gas
confinement system. It was comprised of a below-ground filter building, sampling equipment and duct work that routed gases from the reactor through these filters and then back into the exhaust stack. Based on safety and control considerations, several instrumentation improvements and replacements also were approved for many of the reactors.

In January 1964 President Lyndon Johnson announced that, due to a decreased need for special nuclear material, Hanford’s reactors would be shut down in a phased sequence beginning in December 1964. After that time it became even harder to gain approval for improvement projects.

Additionally, Columbia River pollution from reactor effluent was becoming an increasingly important factor in regional and national considerations. Hanford scientists as well as health officials in Washington, Oregon and the United States Public Health Service became more and more concerned with the effects of reactor effluent in the huge river. By 1960 the total volume flow from the Hanford reactors had increased approximately ten-fold over that of the World War II period, shortening the practical retention time to only about 30 minutes and making diversion of unusual effluents to “cribs” (percolating areas dug into the earth) or other holding areas virtually impossible. Furthermore, the total amount of radioactivity reaching the Columbia River stood at nearly 14,000 curies per day.

Within this effluent flow the main isotopes of concern were phosphorus 32 (P-32), zinc 65 (Zn-65), chromium 51 (Cr-51), iron 59 (Fe-59), and arsenic 76 (As-76). Scientists had known since the late 1940s that these isotopes concentrated within aquatic plants and animals at vastly higher levels than were found in the river water itself. Multiple studies by Hanford’s chief aquatic biologist, R. F. Foster, and others pointed to the fact that the Columbia’s water could be at or below permissible levels for various radionuclides and still present a hazard to consumers of river fish, ducks and other wildlife. The majority of the studies that reported these findings were classified as secret and were not accessible by the public until years after the HW reactors had closed.

Throughout the late 1950s and early 1960s virtually every aspect of the bioaquatic and potential downstream health consequences of reactor effluent was examined, including the effects of temperature, operating purges, various purge agents and filtration aids, fuel element ruptures, sodium dichromate, and the radionuclides themselves. Various solutions were proposed and tested. Among these was the concept of passing reactor effluent through beds of aluminum shavings in order to trap various radionuclides. Laboratory tests seemed promising, but a production-size bed installed in 1960 at the D Reactor retention basin demonstrated so many shortcomings that the idea was soon abandoned.

Another concept that was explored thoroughly at Hanford was that of varying the intake water treatments. However, mixed results, combined with undesirable side effects, resulted in very little practical improvement. In the early 1960s an idea that had been explored in the 1950s for reducing radionuclide releases to the Columbia River was revived. This “inland lake” concept proposed routing reactor effluent through trenches to artificial inland lakes dug in the center of the site where the distance between land surface and the underground water table was significantly greater than it was near the reactor retention basins. Proponents of the idea pointed to the longer time period for radioactive decay and thermal cooling of effluent before the wastes finally would reach the river. However, studies conducted in the 1950s had demonstrated undesirable effects, including the wind entrainment of radioactive mist that could spread contamination over wide areas extending even to offsite. Furthermore, problematic underground mounds in the water table, caused by disposal of low-level liquid wastes from chemical processing plants near the center of the site would be worsened by the addition of reactor effluent.

As the reactor shutdowns began at Hanford in the mid 1960s, operators and scientists struggled to extend the viability of those remaining by developing environmentally acceptable means of effluent disposal. In the spring of 1967, with five single-pass reactors operating, a Hanford summary report on alternate methods of reactor effluent treatment and disposal listed several options. Conversion to recirculating cooling systems was listed as economically prohibitive. Along with related equipment changes, a total conversion cost of $32 million per reactor was estimated. Other potential solutions were also expensive and posed awkward siting problems between the reactors and the Columbia River.

It is clear that Hanford’s single-pass reactors closed for a combination of reasons, encompassing changing national defense needs and newer environmental standards and concerns. Over the years since closure, all reactor fuel has been removed and several of the support buildings have been taken down. In 1993 Hanford officials, citing deterioration and safety issues associated with the remaining ancillary buildings, committed to an accelerated program to decontaminate and decommission these structures.

At nearly the same time, a “Record of Decision” was announced with regard to the reactors themselves. After a period of “safe storage” in place, to allow for further radioactive decay, their cores will be lifted in one-piece fashion onto huge trailers and transported to the 200 Areas (central portions of the Hanford site designated for long-term waste management activities). A study to determine the feasibility of upgrading the B Reactor building itself for use as a public museum or interpretive center is now underway.

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COLUMBIA 36 SPRING 1995
**NOTICE.**

About TWENTY YOUNG ABLE BODIED FARM LABORING SERVANTS, newly married, (or with not exceeding one child each) are required to go to NORTH AMERICA, in the month of May, next. To be engaged for a Term of 5 Years, and allowed £17 per Annum Wages, with Board and Lodging for themselves and families, free of Cost. If the Parties be desirous of returning to England at the Expiration of their Engagements, a free Passage will be provided for them, but if they may wish to remain in North America, and that their conduct has given satisfaction to their Employers, A GRANT OF LAND, free of Cost, will be made to them.

Any Persons who may be desirous of accepting the proposed Terms, are requested to attend at Mr. WM. SKELTON’S Office, SUTTON BRIDGE, on Monday, 22nd Instant, between the Hours of 10 and 12 in the Forenoon; and in the meantime they may apply to him for further Particulars.

SUTTON BRIDGE, LONG SUTTON,
10th February, 1836.

H. K. CAUSTON, PRINTER, BIRCHIN-LANE, LONDON.

The Hudson’s Bay Company established an outpost at Fort Nisqually on southern Puget Sound in 1832. As the HBC’s need for agricultural products increased, the fort became the headquarters for the company’s subsidiary, the Puget’s Sound Agricultural Company.

Always on the lookout for capable young men to work on its North American posts, the HBC recruited widely in London. This rare 1836 broadside is an example of the methods used to enlist farm laborers, some of whom very likely came to Fort Nisqually.

Acquisition of this rare piece of ephemera was made possible by the Friends of the Washington State Historical Society Library.
Whole Kingdoms For the Sake of a Harbour

BY DANIEL CLAYTON

Geography colors the approach we take to the history of the Pacific Northwest. If we approach the region via the Columbia River we get drawn into a discussion of the fur trade—its importance to commercial and imperial agendas, and its relationship with native peoples and, eventually, American settlers. If we come to the region via the Oregon Trail we need to consider the ways in which Oregon and Washington emerged out of an experience of migration. There is a third route to the Pacific Northwest: via the 49th parallel and the political controversy between Britain and the United States over the Oregon Territory. The Columbia River and the Oregon Trail are powerful icons of the American frontier. It is the 49th parallel that has fascinated Canadians, and it remains a troublesome signifier of Canadian national identity.

British and American diplomats negotiated over the Oregon Territory six times between 1818 and 1846: on the first three occasions in London and on the last three in Washington, D.C. The Oregon Treaty of 1846 finished the northern partition of the continental mainland, stretching the border along the 49th parallel from the Rockies to the Gulf of Georgia, and from there implied a water division around Vancouver Island that took 30 years more to decide.

The treaty confirmed what John Quincy Adams had said in 1823 was “pointed out by the finger of nature”—that the United States had a continental destiny and that British influence in the Americas had natural limits. The 49th parallel cut the Hudson's Bay Company's vast Columbia Department in half, split many native territories, secured American dominion around the Columbia River, and coaxed Britain into establishing two colonies that sat on the new boundary. Native people, who for almost half a century had been partners in the fur trade, were now to be put on reserves and offered a subservient place in new national and imperial projects.

Traces of the world these 19th-century diplomats moved in are still alive and being renegotiated in North American debates about native issues and government. The Oregon dispute raises important questions about cultural identity and geopolitics. This essay, then, considers the history and geography of the negotiations.

Diplomacy and Space

In boundary disputes, geographical knowledge is of central importance. It is used to force concessions and delineate exclusive sovereignty. In the Oregon dispute, diplomats had to map desire and honor, and extract from the works of explorers, traders, and cartographers geographical knowledge that could be bargained with. In short, they juggled knowledge and power through the medium of space.

The Oregon Treaty was a rationalization of 70
time held that the headwaters of the Mississippi River lay above the 49th parallel, and British traders could thereby claim the right to descend the river to the Gulf of Mexico. Henry Popple's 1733 Map of the British Empire in America, which shows the 49th parallel bisecting the Mississippi, was still referred to in Britain in 1818, and a copy had hung in George Washington's war office. The headwaters of the Mississippi were discovered to lie below the 49th parallel in 1823.

The 1818 negotiations focused on maps relating to the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713. This Anglo-French Treaty adjudicated commercial competition between the two nations around Hudson's Bay, and gave that region entirely to Britain. The treaty did not delimit the exact boundary of this region, but ruled that an Anglo-French commission would determine it at a later date. A commission did meet in Paris in 1719. It didn't resolve anything, but the idea that the 49th parallel west from Lake of the Woods was an appropriate boundary dividing British and French territories as far as they extended was clearly stated in instructions given to Britain's commissioners and quickly became a British diplomatic assumption.

When the United States acquired France's American possessions in the Louisiana Purchase of 1803, it did not formally dispute this assumed boundary or the source of the Mississippi. While fixing this boundary to the Rockies in 1818, American diplomats Albert Gallatin and Richard Rush simply refused to grant Britain rights to the Mississippi and, looking beyond the mountains, suggested to Secretary of State John Quincy Adams, "There was no reason why, if the countries extended their claims Westward the same line should not be continued to the Pacific."

The idea of the 49th parallel did not just rest on British diplomatic assumptions, however. The boundary was also engraved on British, American and French maps published from 1751 onwards. Yet, the 18th-century cartography of North America was quite varied. There were maps that divided British and French territory around Hudson's Bay and Lake of the Woods—much higher than 49 degrees. Most notable of these was John Mitchell's 1755 Map of the British Colonies in North America, which was respected on both sides of the Atlantic. Why didn't United States diplomats draw on Mitchell's map to argue for a boundary west from Lake of the Woods that would run higher than 49 degrees? Gallatin said it was because he assumed that the 49th parallel was a
“positive fact” established by the commission of 1719. He did not question diplomatic assumption and saw no reason why “any geographer or mapmaker should have invented the dividing line.” He and the other diplomats were not working on blind faith. Rather, they treated maps as honest, transparent depictions of an assumed geopolitical order. Palairet’s map represents 18th-century diplomatic wisdom. Mitchell’s map did not create disputes because it did not represent this wisdom and it gave no geopolitical precedent for the existence of other boundaries.

In the negotiations of 1818 cartography and diplomacy, image and assumed reality, were tightly bound. The idea of the 49th parallel as an appropriate boundary and the maps depicting this border reinforced one another. Questions of cartographic competence and propaganda were sidelined. Diplomatic argument was rooted in an 18th-century, classical system of thought that was concerned with the classification of signs. These diplomats were interested in the relations between words and maps themselves rather than the context of their production.

In 1818, at the end of his career, Britain’s foreign secretary, Lord Castlereagh, was perhaps a late heir to this classical system of thought. His replacement, George Canning, who led Britain’s negotiating team in 1826, was a much younger man who belonged to a 19th-century modern-scientific culture concerned more with the way the Oregon Territory had been explored and used than with how ideas and assumptions about it might be classified. Gallatin, as we shall see, had his feet in both centuries.

When diplomats tried to stretch the 49th parallel to the Pacific in 1818, this 19th-century sensibility intruded. The British argued that such a boundary would bisect the British fur trade. They only hinted at an appropriate boundary—the Columbia River. Gallatin and Rush, however, clung to general lines and appealed to notions of convenience, suggesting that the most equitable division of territory would be the one that least interrupted the flow of trade. They proposed the 49th parallel, but it was unacceptable to the British.

Looking for a compromise, United States diplomats turned again to maps—in this instance, a map in an anonymous 1817 pamphlet (but credited to Simon McGillivray of the Canadian North West Company) showing a river purportedly used by British traders emptying into Puget’s Sound. On the basis of this map, Gallatin proposed a boundary line which, after crossing the Columbia at 49 degrees, “should deviate so far southwardly as to leave within the British claim all waters emptying into the sound called the Gulf of Georgia.” Castlereagh accepted Gallatin’s logic, but rejected the idea. Had Britain accepted the offer, the boundary would have ended up near Seattle.

McGillivray may have simply confused his
fictitious Caledonia River with some smaller streams in the area, but it is equally likely that he was playing a confidence trick on politicians and diplomats. Just as 18th-century maps depicting the 49th parallel reinforced diplomatic wisdom, so McGillivray may have thought his map would reinforce the idea that British traders used the Caledonia River. Neither Gallatin nor Castlereagh examined explorers' and traders' reports to verify the river's existence. They merely asked themselves another rhetorical question: Why would McGillivray have invented such a river? This is how the 49th parallel entered the diplomatic imagination. Debate about the boundary was given substance only when diplomats started to study the testimony of people with first-hand knowledge of the Oregon Territory.

Discovery and Occupation

When British and United States diplomats negotiated in 1826, they left behind 18th-century maps and diplomatic assumptions and confronted the details of discovery and occupation. Their mental political geography of North America had faltered at the Rockies; in the Oregon Territory the identity of words and maps was confounded by the activities of explorers and traders.

The negotiations of 1826 revolved around the nature of local knowledge. What linked local knowledge to diplomacy and geopolitics was the way space in the Oregon Territory had been, and might be, produced: where explorers had gone—where traders were placed—and where new commercial outlets might be anchored. In these negotiations diplomats pushed aside the work of map-makers and armchair geographers and focused on how knowledge of the Oregon Territory had been acquired.

Irritated by the United States' maritime build-up in the Pacific as well as American plans to militarize Oregon, and after being briefed about the region's economic and strategic importance by Hudson's Bay Company officials, Britain prompted the negotiations. The United States sent Gallatin back to London to negotiate with Britain's restaffed, belligerent, empire-conscious Foreign Office.

The diplomats focused on what is now the state of Washington. The British closed the negotiations of 1824 by proposing a boundary along the 49th parallel to the Columbia and then down the river to the coast. Gallatin's 1826 counter-proposal insisted on the 49th parallel to the Pacific, but would allow Britain use of the Columbia if it proved to be navigable from its point of intersection with the parallel. Britain rejected the offer but came back with a compromise, proposing the Columbia as the main boundary while giving the United States what is now roughly the Olympic Peninsula and therefore some good deep-water harbors in Puget's Sound. Gallatin thought the offer offensive—an attempt to create an American island in British territory. The border remained unsettled and the joint occupancy agreement was renewed.

IN DEBATE, GALLATIN emphasized American title and rights to the Oregon Territory derived from discovery below 49 degrees, while Britain based its case mostly on occupation. These positions were drawn, in part, from circumstance. Robert Gray, a fur trader from Rhode Island, had beaten Britain's George Vancouver past the mouth of Columbia River in 1792, and Lewis and Clark were the first explorers to examine the river from its source. Further north, Britain, Spain and America had shared in the exploration of the coast, British traders had mapped the interior, and United States sovereignty was therefore harder to prove. American traders had used the interior of the Oregon Territory for only a few years, while a British fur trade was firmly established there by the early 1800s and in 1826 had its headquarters at Fort Vancouver.

British and United States diplomats looked at explorers' and traders' reports for a "true" picture of the Oregon Territory. Yet there was no natural affinity between discovery or occupation and territorial right. Links had to be forged. Vancouver's "minute survey" of the Gulf of Georgia (named
The British objected to Gray because he was a private trader, and his trip was "a lucky adventure" rather than a scientific reconnaissance of the river, as was Broughton's survey shortly thereafter. When Britain tried to base a claim to the coast south of 49 degrees on the discoveries of the British trader John Meares, United States diplomats raised similar objections, arguing that Meares had his sights set on the Straits of Juan de Fuca. As Gallatin caustically remarked: "Meeres [sic] had given names [on the Oregon coast] indicative of his total failure [to find the Straights]—Cape Disappointment and Deception Bay."

Beyond these shared convictions, however, the two sides differed. Their respective emphases had a deeper history. The United States claimed the Columbia watershed from discovery of its source and mouth, but up to 1826 had seemed interested only in the strategic potential of the coast. "The Americans," wrote a Hudson's Bay Company lawyer, "would claim whole kingdoms for the sake of a harbour or even a mooring post." These American claims had a basis in international law, but the British objected to them because they had an "architectural" notion of title and sovereignty. Since the 16th century the primary symbol of British sovereignty overseas had been permanent buildings, and their mode of colonization had been power over land via commerce and settlement.

For Britain, discovery by itself did not constitute title. Occupation was the key, and the only Oregon Territory occupants since 1813 had been British fur traders. James Douglas, a Hudson's Bay Company trader at Fort Vancouver, summarized this British view, and the landed system of aristocratic power that lay behind it, and was baiting his American neighbors in Oregon in 1843 when he wrote to his boss, George Simpson: "If you chance to overlook a ditch on your estate and I should be the first person to stumble into it, does that simple accident invest me with any right of propriety in your broad acres? ... I should think not!"

In basing his country's claims on discovery, Gallatin, on the other hand, was harking back to Spanish methods of claiming territory, where reading a government note or planting a flag on shore need imply little more than an intention to settle and govern. He suggested that the British had occupied Oregon to conduct "a mere traffic with the natives"—that they would be transient rather than permanent dwellers—while Gray and his like had found and preserved American title for a future republic.
What both nations assumed, of course, was that they were claiming vacant land. But Gray had come to the region to trade with natives for furs—his discovery of the Columbia was incidental. The Hudson’s Bay Company had come to the region for profits rather than title to land. Lewis and Clark relied on natives to help them find their way around. Gray and other fur traders could never dodge along the coast just as they pleased. They traded in sharply-defined native territories.

When making up territorial claims from the testimony of these explorers and traders, diplomats ignored the issue of native title to land and had no intention of paying native groups for the territory they planned to take. They tried to erase this native presence and involvement in the fur trade. But were they entirely successful? This diplomatic correspondence about discovery and occupation, scientific intention and state sanction, when re-read with an eye on the present, perhaps disrupts the sagas of imperial history and nation-building because it reveals blind alleys, historical accidents, and an ambiguous white presence in the Oregon Territory. Such considerations might be used to fashion a different kind of history; one that treats natives as more than background noise, and uncovers the paradoxes involved in trying to exclude them from a seamless narrative of white history that starts with explorers and traders.

Geographical Rhetorics

SOME OF THE diplomatic correspondence alluded to here was published by government request in the 1840s, and details of the Oregon dispute filtered into British parliamentary and American congressional debates as well as the press. Whatever new meanings we might see in the pages of diplomacy were quickly folded over by politicians and commentators who, from a distance, imagined and argued over the value of the Oregon Territory. The debate was intricate, swayed the on-off boundary negotiations in Washington in the 1840s, and caused public excitement, especially in the United States. Generally, though, Americans linked value with destiny while the British viewed Oregon in a utilitarian light.

During the 1840s the United States, led by Democratic President James Polk, embarked on what David Pletcher calls a “diplomacy of annexation.” American power was shored up in Texas and California, and with Oregon in mind the expansionist president warned Britain that “no future European colony or dominion shall, with our consent, be planted or established on any part of the North American continent.” The American press padded out such sentiments.

Meanwhile, Britain’s warhorse, the Duke of Wellington, wrote, “Wherever a democratick influence or . . . press exists, we must expect to find enemies.” The dispute was also reflected in the British press. War looked likely, and British foreign secretary Lord Aberdeen, putting on a brave face, told Parliament, “Our honour is a substantial property that we can certainly never neglect.”

**Territorial Claims and Priorities**

Territorial claims and priorities were reordered slightly in the diplomacy of the 1840s, but the arguments supporting them remained essentially the same. Diplomatic tension stemmed mainly from delicate political egos. But public opinion was also taken seriously by politicians on both sides of the Atlantic, and diplomats had to be mindful of the public clamor for confrontation.

In the United States during the 1840s, debate about the Oregon Territory was high-spirited. Gallatin observed that the issue had become “one of feeling rather than of right.” Thousands of American settlers were pouring into Oregon, and a stream of information about the region started to flow back east. Extracts from emigrants’ letters home were published in eastern newspapers and journals. Editors superimposed their own commentary on these raw vignettes, translating them into the language of geopolitics.

In lieu of a boundary treaty, and in an attempt to legitimize the American desire for westward expansion, politicians and newspaper editors devised an elaborate rhetoric of American right and destiny. Some agitated for war. On the other hand, John Calhoun, an influential senator, spoke for those who doubted that diplomatic gridlock in Washington merited war with Britain. He proposed a policy of “masterly inactivity.” The sheer number of American settlers pouring into Oregon, Calhoun reasoned, would eventually seal the region’s fate. James Douglas thought this “wily old lawyer” was correct.

This cartoon and the one on the next page are from London’s Punch magazine (January-June 1846). The British had not forgotten the American War of Independence. Here, at the height of the Oregon crisis, they display indignation at expansionist President James Polk.
Other American writers described the Hudson's Bay Company as a rapacious, violent monopoly—an enemy of civilized life based on agricultural settlement, competitive markets and individual liberty backed by federal institutions—thus raising issues concerning American national identity similar to those debated today. Oregon was viewed in terms of American historical and cultural distinctiveness—it had a rhetorical place in the Union even before it acquired United States institutions.

Oregon appeared in a more instrumental light in Britain. Lord Aberdeen secretly promoted a press campaign to debase the utility of the region. He was taking advantage of Oregon's obscurity and distance in the public mind. He suggested that territorial concession need not imply a loss of national honor.

In Britain the Pacific coastline was known in some detail, thanks mainly to Vancouver, but little was known about the interior. It was introduced to the British public as an “unprofitable incumbrance [sic],” “a mere hunting ground.” In the light of such rhetoric, Aberdeen’s organ, the London Times, pronounced that “the real strength of public opinion is arrayed against a belligerent policy.”

Temper cooled, and Oregon figured merely as a commercial abstraction, a minor port of call in a global empire and not worth a costly war. National honor and rights now hinged on little more than Britain’s retention of Vancouver Island as an anchor in a buoyant Pacific trade and a British Empire based increasingly on free trade rather than protected markets and monopolies.

This mood of concession was not entirely a British creation. Gallatin also published some sobering letters in the American National Intelligencer in the mid-1840s explaining the nature of the dispute and arguing that it didn’t warrant war. But it was Britain’s compliant foreign secretary who was most eager to prevent military conflict, and debase the Oregon Territory in the press was an effective way of swaying public opinion and selling compromise to his political opponents. The United States Congress agreed to the Oregon Treaty in the summer of 1846 mindful of the fact that the Tory government in Britain was tottering and that its collapse would usher in politicians bent more on threatening war to protect national honor than on preserving peace—principally Lord Palmerston.

Such rhetoric forms more than a backdrop to the development of the Pacific Northwest. It frames an economic geography and history linking Oregon, Washington and British Columbia to the Pacific Rim. This abstract spatial language of rapacious monopolies, hunting grounds and ports of call—devoid of explorers, traders and natives—points to global economic forces that have painted over regional distinctions. Yet this debate over the Oregon Territory’s value was also marked by differing national outlooks, granting the border much of its symbolism. We can glimpse something of the future in the debates of the 1840s.

Harbors of Meaning

Many scholars, eager to pass judgment on the place of the Oregon boundary dispute in American national development and Anglo-American relations, have argued that Britain capitulated to the United States because Lord Aberdeen lost his political nerve. The negotiations of 1818 and 1826 are usually treated as sideshows to the main drama of the 1840s. In debasing the Oregon Territory, Aberdeen was slighting 50 years of exploration, trade and experience in the Pacific Northwest. Political historians have tended to follow Aberdeen’s lead, belittling the efforts of Gallatin and other diplomats who struggled to interpret this region and opened up more than one window on the past.

The diplomatic correspondence about the Oregon Territory illustrates that distinctions between fact and fiction, truth and error, are made rather than given. Geopolitical meaning was fluid, and British and American claims to Oregon were not adjudicated from any single point. The Oregon boundary dispute shows that we can take a number of different routes into the history of the Pacific Northwest.

Daniel Clayton is currently completing a Ph.D. dissertation at the University of British Columbia on the historical geography of Vancouver Island from 1774 to 1871. His writings focus on Native American-white relations and British colonialism in North America.
**Affiliate Organizations**

- Bainbridge Island Historical Society
- Ballard Historical Society
- Central Washington Agricultural Museum
- Clallam County Historical Society Museum
- Cowlitz County Historical Society
- East Benton County Historical Society
- Edmonds-South Snohomish County Historical Society
- Fircrest Civic and Heritage Association
- Fort Vancouver Historical Society of Clark County
- Franklin County Historical Society
- Friends of Fort Lewis Military Museum
- Friends of the Humanities
- Grant House Folk Art Center
- Highline School District Museum at Sunnydale
- Historic Fort Steilacoom Association
- Jefferson County Historical Society
- Kitsap County Historical Society
- Lewis County Historical Society
- Maple Valley Historical Society
- Maryhill Museum of Art
- Mukilteo Historical Society
- North Central Washington Museum Association
- Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trail Association
- Okanogan County Historical Society
- Pacific Northwest Historians Guild
- Peninsula Historical Society
- Renton Historical Society
- Spanaway Historical Society
- Sumner Historical Society
- Tumwater Historical Association
- Walla Walla Valley Pioneer & Historical Society
- Washington Trust for Historic Preservation
- Whatcom Museum of History and Art
- Whitman County Historical Society
- Wooden Boat Foundation
- Yakima Valley Museum and Historical Association

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**Additional Reading**

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

### Regulars & Militia


### “Whole Kingdoms for the Sake of a Harbour”


### Hanford’s Historic Reactors


### Washington’s Public Architecture


### The Wreck of the Crown City


### The Politics of Transportation

- **Commuters vs. The Black Ball Line**, by William J. Gore. ICP Program for the University of Alabama Press, 1959.

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Peter John De Smet, the almost ubiquitous Jesuit missionary of 19th-century American Indians, has been honored, and properly so, with as many publications about him as publications he produced in his own lifetime. The greatest of these former, Life, Letters, and Travels of Father Pierre-Jean De Smet, S.J., 1801-1873 edited by Hiram Chittenden and Alfred T. Richardson (1905; reprinted 1969), has long been accepted as the best work on the subject; it is now a scarce edition. The most important work on De Smet to appear in the 79 years since Laveille's volume is Jesuit John J. Killoren's "Come, Blackrobe," Washington State University historian Jacqueline Peterson hails the book as "so far superior to anything previously published on De Smet that this will be received as the new standard work."

Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case. Killoren's book hails the book as "so far superior to anything previously published on Father Eugene Laveille's De Smet that this will be received as the new standard work." The Life of Father De Smet, S.J., was published in Belgium in 1913, then issued in translation in the United States in 1915. These two sources have usually been regarded as standard, the one for its completeness of material then available, the other as a popular but good biography for general reading.

The most important work on De Smet to appear in the 79 years since Laveille's volume is Jesuit John J. Killoren's "Come, Blackrobe," Washington State University historian Jacqueline Peterson hails the book as "so far superior to anything previously published on De Smet that this will be received as the new standard work."

Unfortunately, this does not appear to be the case. Killoren's book is an example of the detailed, careful scholarship, mostly readable text, and excellent design one expects from the University of Oklahoma Press. It is a biography of his life, however, nor a complete account of his works; nor does it, in this reviewer's opinion, replace either of the two works mentioned above, even though both of them deserve to be replaced by new studies.

"Come, Blackrobe" contains one aspect of De Smet's life that is overdue, an account of his prolonged struggle on behalf of the Plains Indians to secure just compensation for their land and the means to live decently according to their ancestral manner. While this, for Christians at least, was not De Smet's greatest contribution to the Indians, it was important and doubtless influenced American history in some small way. Readers in the Pacific Northwest will be disappointed by the limited space allotted to De Smet's activities with plateau and mountain tribes. Understandably, given the focus of the book, this is to be excused. One should not be led, however, to believe that its coverage of the Northwest is either extensive or complete. The proper work on the life of Peter John De Smet has not yet appeared.

Father Schoenberg won the Washington Governor's Award for History in 1987 for his History of the Catholic Church in the Northwest. His next publication will be an annotated bibliography of Catholic Church history in the Pacific Northwest.

As an Idaho native and, frankly, an adoring fan of Senator Frank Church during my teenage years in southeast Idaho, I looked forward to matching this biography of my hero, co-authored by historian LeRoy Ashby and Boise television journalist Rod Gramer, with my idealized memory.

The lengthy book painstakingly traces Church's personal life and political career. Extensively documented, the biography draws upon numerous interviews and private papers to illuminate the life of one of the most enigmatic figures in Idaho politics. Elected to the United States Senate in 1956 at the age of 32, Church always looked outward from the state as he adopted an independent role in Congress. A central theme of the book is Church's personal dilemma as he tried to cast a national shadow from the small state of Idaho, a problem which plagued him throughout his career. He championed some unpopular causes, such as when he took an anti-Vietnam war stance, challenged multi-national corporations, and investigated both the CIA and the FBI. As a result, Church often won reelection by slim margins. Idahoans sometimes differed with him over these issues, but they also admired his independent style, much as they had appreciated Church's personal hero and predecessor in public office, William Borah. Ashby wrote about Borah in an earlier work.

Fighting the Odds certainly lives up to its title, as it documents Church's first fight against cancer at age 25, his congressional battles during 24 years in the senate (1957-1981), and his "late, late" 1976 presidential campaign. After being defeated in the 1980 election, Church's next opponent was pancreatic cancer, the disease to which he succumbed in 1984.

The authors write about Church from an obviously admiring viewpoint, but they balance their approach by pointing out some of the senator's foibles. Church, for example, could be very moralistic in his approach to issues, a trait that often distanced him from his colleagues. At times the authors give too much detail on such matters and not enough space in this huge book to evaluating the senator's long term impact on Idaho and the nation's history. This book reinforced my own memories of Church, particularly when Senator Church spoke at my 1967 high school graduation. I thought him much like Don Quixote in the then-popular musical, "Man of La Mancha," a comparison the senator often made of himself.

Shanna Stevenson is a historic preservation planner for Olympia and Thurston County and the author of numerous publications on local history.
From Maps to Metaphors
The Pacific World of George Vancouver
Edited by Robin Fisher and Hugh Johnston.
Reviewed by Dee Molenaar.

Taking its title from a statement by Alexander Hamilton, "I think the first duty of society is justice," this collaborative effort by several distinguished legal historians is an ambitious attempt at a forbidding topic—an interpretive history of Oregon's U.S. District Court from 1849 to 1991. Beginning with President James Polk's appointment of Oregon's first three district court justices, this book takes the reader on a well-organized, exhaustively researched and informative trip through 143 years of the court's history.

What makes this book ambitious is the authors' approach to their subject. They are not content to simply recount some of the high points from among the many cases that have come before the court since its inception. Rather, they use the history of the district court as the vehicle for a series of historical essays that offer a general examination of Oregon's history over the last century and a half.

In examining such important cases as the trial of the Cayuse Indians charged with taking part in the murder of Dr. Marcus Whitman, the courtroom struggle between the competing Oregon Railway & Navigation Company and Oregon Railway Company, Indian fishing rights cases, and even the 1985 trial of the Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh for violating U.S. immigration laws, the authors give an extensive historical and biographical account of the principals involved, including the judges who presided over each case.

Most importantly, by describing the long-term ramifications of these cases, the authors make an invaluable contribution to our understanding of how the interactions between Oregon society and the U.S. District Court for Oregon have affected each other.

Noted historian Terence O'Donnell provides a solid introduction for the book. A series of helpful appendices and the clear manner in which the book is organized and written allow the lay reader to gain understanding and insight. In short, one need not be a legal scholar to appreciate First Duty.

A veteran of the United States Navy, Brian Thornton currently teaches history at Eastern Washington University and plans to begin law school this fall.

Despite these failings, this treatise will appeal to scholars and students following the careers of those who first explored the vast Pacific, and it provides a broad treatment of the history and cultures of natives peoples met along the way.

Dee Molenaar operates Molenaar Landform Maps, a company specializing in informational maps and charts for historians, travelers and geology buffs.

THE FIRST DUTY
A History of the U.S. District Court for Oregon
Reviewed by Brian Thornton.

This scholarly volume grew out of the 1991 Vancouver Conference on Exploration and Discovery, with each of 13 chapters written by a separate conference contributor.

Documented in great detail are several centuries of European discoveries, explorations and exploitations of the south and central Pacific islands and the north Pacific coast, principally by Spanish, English and Russian explorers.

The initial essays discuss the journeys of those who rounded Cape Horn seeking the fabled wealth of the East Indies and discovered the island paradises of the South Pacific in the process. These are followed by mariners seeking the "Northwest Passage"—a year-round navigable route connecting the North Atlantic and North Pacific. Then came the whalers and fur traders, and the missionaries determined to redeem the "naked savage." The volume includes detailed descriptions of the surveying and mapping techniques, and instruments of the time, with examples of the resulting maps and writings. The personalities, strengths and weaknesses of the principal Spanish and English sea captains as well as the scientists aboard their exploring and mapping expeditions are also discussed, as are the European power struggles associated with claims of sovereignty over discovered lands and the role of native inhabitants and strong tribal leaders in the white man's efforts to colonize the coast.

A major underlying theme of the book is a critique of the philosophy and attitudes of Europeans toward the native peoples encountered in this extensive and hitherto unknown part of the world. In contrast to much that has been widely disseminated through explorers' journals and other publications—and accepted only from the viewpoint of the European culture—we are provided with a variety of perspectives and a fresh, illuminating insight into the histories, cultures, industries, artistry and religious beliefs of the peoples of the North Pacific and the "Indonesian triangle," its apexes at New Zealand, Hawaii, and Easter Island.

The book includes nearly 900 footnotes; an appendix lists Vancouver's instruments, charts and drawings. One drawback is that the reading is in places tedious and somewhat pedantic—page after page of text with few illustrations and no subheadings. The book's subtitle is misleading: Captain George Vancouver plays only a minor role until a brief mention after page 230, and the main title belies the paucity of maps. The few maps taken from explorers' published journals are poorly reproduced, and those done especially for this volume should each have occupied a full page to be legible without the need of a hand lens.
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