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From the Editor  2

History Commentary  3
A Grand Coulee reminiscence.
By Norman W. Goll

Resisting “Informal” Manifest Destiny  6
Canada’s need to defend its sovereignty against American territorial expansion was never so strong as during the gold rush years.
By Gerald Woods

History Album  13
Whatever happened to Ainsworth?

The Aqua Theater  14
A star-crossed “white elephant” on Green Lake.
By Sidney Berland

The Education of an Empire Builder  18
Trade and dominion marched hand in hand in the world of John Jacob Astor.
By James P. Ronda

Raiders from the North  24
Northern Indians terrorized Puget Sound shore dwellers, Indians and white settlers alike, from Bellingham Bay to Olympia.
By Mike Vour

From the Collection  36
The Arthur A. Denny papers.

Albert Rosellini  37
Washington’s fourteenth chief executive ushered in a new era in state government.
By Payton Smith

Columbia Reviews  44

Correspondence/Additional Reading  46

COVER: Artist Paul Kane offers a glimpse into the raiding culture of the northern Indians—defined in his time as groups from the geographic areas of modern-day northern British Columbia, southeastern Alaska and the Queen Charlotte Islands. This watercolor depicts “Northerners” returning from a foray, with a seaman in the bow of each boat brandishing their victory trophies—the severed heads of their enemies. See related story beginning on page 24. (Courtesy Stark Museum of Art, Orange, Texas)
READERS OF COLUMBIA may be interested in the process of how 
articles come to our attention. Let’s take this issue as a case study. 
I had not previously met Gerald Woods until I heard him deliver a 
paper on the North-West Mounted Police at the Pacific Northwest 
History Conference last April in Tacoma. I was quite taken by his 
talk as it offered a truly Canadian perspective on the Klondike phenomenon. On 
his way out the door to catch a ferry that would take him back home, he gladly gave 
gave me a copy to publish, and it appears here as “Resisting ‘Informal’ Manifest Destiny.” 
The quick turnaround time for Woods’s article is somewhat unusual. At one 
time COLUMBIA had a four-year backlog of articles. Although that was reassuring 
to us as editors, it troubled our relationship with authors—without whom, to state 
the obvious, there would be no magazine. Now we are down to a little more than a 
year’s backlog, which allows us to speed the appearance of essays like Woods’s that 
are unusually topical—in this case the Klondike centennial. 
Payton Smith’s piece on Governor Rosellini came to my attention when the 
editors of University of Washington Press asked me for a recommendation on 
whether or not to publish it. At the time I was reading another book and could not 
promise a prompt reply. One night, having temporarily lost interest in my earlier 
reading, I started Smith’s manuscript and couldn’t put it down. In particular, I 
found his thesis that the modern history of Washington’s state government began 
with the Rosellini administration, conformed into the article you see in this issue, 
to be the book’s greatest contribution. I further offered, as executive editor of this 
magazine, the highest compliment I could tender—an invitation to publish an 
excerpt in COLUMBIA. 
One of the things that pleases me is the many compliments I receive from 
authors who cite the careful design hand of Christina Dubois, Craig Tyler’s 
attention to detail, or the work that Elaine Miller, Joy Werlink and Ed Nolan do 
in illustrating the articles. This is what keeps many authors returning to us with 
their work. 
Lastly, it is a special pleasure to have the work of distinguished Western histori-
arian, and an old friend, James Ronda appear in our pages. 
Enjoy your reading.

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Editor
GRAND COULEE DAM: A Reminiscence

By Norman W. Goll

People will travel almost halfway around the world to stand in awe in front of the Pyramids and the Sphinx in Egypt. These ancient funerary monuments are huge, and one cannot help but be overwhelmed by them. How did the Egyptians manage, with the technology available to them 4,000 years ago, to move those massive blocks of stone, let alone pile them to reach heights of almost 500 feet? If only one could pop back in time, for a few days at least, to observe how thousands of workers toiled away in the sunbaked desert to erect these wonders of the world. . . .

It was the summer of 1936. I had just finished another season of wheat harvesting as a sack sewer in the Big Bend country (Douglas County, Washington). The Great Depression was in full swing, with permanent jobs very hard to come by. President Franklin D. Roosevelt had been elected in 1932 and was instrumental in getting a number of federally-funded public works projects started to put the vast number of unemployed back to work. Grand Coulee Dam, started in 1933, was one of those projects, and it was colossal. When completed it would be the world's largest concrete structure—over three times larger than the Great Pyramid. I had to see it, and I thought maybe I could get a job there.

So I slung my bedroll over my back and started riding my thumb, as we called hitchhiking. My route was Highway 2 from Waterville to Coulee City. At that time the road went north about 40 miles, following the floor of Grand Coulee to the job site. To appreciate the size of this coulee (a deep ravine), just imagine the Columbia River thundering through it in another age, its flow 40 times greater than that of present-day Niagara Falls.

One look at a map of Washington tells you that this part of the state is sparsely populated. It is a rugged, desolate area with hot, dry winds in the summer. In its natural state about all that exists are rocks, sagebrush and rattlesnakes. Early homesteaders found that they could eke out a living raising wheat, and that one crop was it. But to do this they had to have large amounts of land, preferably a section (640 acres) or more, because they had to use the system of summer fallowing, which left half of their land idle each year.

Picture this parched, deserted landscape, and then imagine coming upon a boom town in the middle of it with thousands of people in one little spot—it was like a mirage.

An attitude of utter freedom prevailed. There was no law. There had been one sheriff for the whole county before the project was started, and in that regard, nothing had changed in three years. The town was roaring around the clock. They worked three shifts at the dam site. Maybe some of the workers had some sense and saved their money, but as an observer on the main drag, it seemed to me that these people lived as if there was no tomorrow. This was especially so when a shift change occurred. Hundreds of workers were headed for the dam site and hundreds were headed for the strip. Their wants were few: food, drinks, dancing,
gambling, a place to sleep and women. The main street was volcanic ash that was so pulverized with all the activity that to step in it was like walking in flour about seven inches deep.

The buildings were built as cheaply as possible and stretched, it seemed, for half a mile—all tacked onto one another with no space in between. If a fire had gotten started, it would have consumed the town in short order. The commercial endeavors of this entire strip of business establishments seemed limited to a gin mill downstairs and a whorehouse or flophouse overhead. One corner in a gin mill was usually set aside as a lunch counter. If you had a stove and some dishes, you declared yourself in business. I was told there was one grocery store and one church. Likely sleeping accommodations amounted to an army cot in a bare room—no wallpaper, no water, no closet—with about five or six cots to a room, which left hardly enough space to walk to your cot. Cost: 50 cents a night.

I will never forget the little episode that happened while I was getting a bite to eat. The tattooed cook/waitress behind the counter kept up a continuous show of antics, quips and laughs, with lots of face and hand motions. I would give a good deal to hear her story, but I fear it will never be told. My impression, though, was that there wasn't much she hadn't heard, seen or done.

While I sat there another customer, possibly in his 30s, came along and swung himself over a stool. He was hairless, his shirt open about halfway down his chest. By the metal hoop, strings and bandages on one of his hands, I could tell this fellow had experienced a serious accident. His bandaged hand resembled a fan, and he soon launched into a comedy routine depicting a fan dancer hopelessly trying to keep all the vital spots covered at the same time with just one fan. The waitress enjoyed his act and, playing the "straight man," asked, "What the hell happened to you?" His answer: "You know, I was home playing the phonograph and the needle broke!"

I bummed a ride to a point on the rim where you could look down to see men and machines building the base of the dam. From this vantage point the men looked about three inches tall. I wanted to get closer and expressed my desire to a fellow walking by. He told me, "Don't worry about it. You look like a workman—just start walking and act like you belong there." So, I did. The major thing was to climb up into the huge concrete mixing tower, which was maybe 300 feet high.

The aggregate came into the tower via conveyor belts. There were four mixers in the tower, all maybe five times as large as the mixers you see on the road today. The tons of aggregate falling on metal created a terrible din. The system was for one mixer to be loading while two others were mixing the aggregate and the fourth one was discharging its mix into huge buckets that were swung out over the dam itself for emptying. You can visualize the aggregate, including cement and water, going in at the top of the tower and ready-mix concrete coming out the bottom.

From discussions I had with various workers, I understood that safety was not a high priority. I have heard it said that there is no count of the number of men buried in that pile of concrete. Even from down there near the construction site, the men looked like ants crawling around on an anthill. All the steel, forms and piping necessary before the pouring of concrete presented a tremendous potential for injury and death.

You would think a sensible person would avoid working on a job like this, but when you are young you don't dwell on the dangers. Upon inquiring about employment, I soon learned that I was ineligible because I did not have a family. The Works Progress Administration (WPA) was in control on this job and that was one of their rules. It made sense to me, but I often wonder what...
An early-day photo of B Street in Coulee City. The dust would quickly turn to muck in wet weather.

my life would have been like if I had gotten hired.

The life-style in this boom town was new to me, and at that time in my life it certainly was not there as an investigative reporter trying to give a balanced account of all that was going on. Maybe my story is on the seamy side, but it was the side I saw. It was the public side and a very interesting side. I sensed no hypocrisy—there was no need for it. As long as you didn’t bother anyone else, you could play any tune you wanted on your piano. For my part, I felt accepted and found most people generous and helpful. They were getting a bang out of life. Happiness and kindness are the main ingredients in the good life, right? It beat being unemployed and not knowing where the next meal was coming from.

It was summertime—hot and dusty. I found it fascinating just to stand and watch the goings-on from the boardwalk in front of the strip of public places. Street musicians were a common sight, either out on the walk or playing inside—usually on a guitar—hoping someone would toss a few coins their way. The joints never closed. Some of the places had live music, and as workers came off shift they would pop in for some fun. You could drink, eat and dance with the girls. Some fellows never even took off their hats or their tool belts. The girls didn’t seem to mind a few wrenches flopping around as they bounced to the music.

I feel nostalgic when I think about the fact that the road I traveled from Coulee City to the dam site and back no longer exists. It now lies at the bottom of Banks Lake, a man-made reservoir some 40 miles long created for the Columbia Basin Irrigation Project, an adjunct of the Grand Coulee Dam project. A fellow who gave me a ride told me that he was a gambler. I suppose he worked the boom towns, and by outward appearances he was successful. I recall one observation he made as we traveled along: "Most of those people will go into that job site broke and when they come out they will still be broke."

The superlatives that can be used to describe Grand Coulee Dam are many. We, the people, own it. Able to produce over ten million kilowatts of electrical power, the dam has affected the lives of thousands of people, providing them with electricity at home and power to run factories and smelters. The scope of the reclamation aspect alone has ensured that over one million acres are now many times more productive with an assured, controlled supply of water.

My eyes tear up when I hear the ballad “Roll on Columbia,” written by one of my heroes, folksinger Woodrow Wilson “Woody” Guthrie. Through the foresight of some great leaders in our society we can enjoy for generations to come the tremendous benefits of this legacy. And, wherever they are, I will never forget the men with wrenches in their belts, the cook, the fan dancer and the gambler—they are a part of Grand Coulee Dam and they cannot and should not be erased from its history.

In the end, all I can say is, I feel privileged to have seen the dam under construction. I never thought to have my picture taken in front of the project, but never mind—it would have been impossible—it was, and is, too big. Seven years later, quite by happenstance, I had my picture taken in front of the Great Pyramid in Egypt. I thought it was of some importance at the time. Now I’m of the opinion that the Pyramid was of little benefit to mankind—except as an attempt to give immortality to some ancient Egyptian king. For me it pales in significance next to the colossal concrete wonder on the Columbia River.

Norman W. Goll, of Mount Vernon, is a retired chief accountant for one of the State of Washington’s large mental institutions and a former merchant marine.

COLUMBIA 5 FALL 1997
Canada’s Struggle to Maintain Sovereignty and Law Enforcement during the Gold Rush Years

By Gerald Woods

Strong Ties Bind Canada and the United States together: common legal and political traditions, a common language, essentially common ethnicities, the world’s largest bilateral trade relationship, a considerable two-way human migration and—a fact that has become a cliché—the longest undefended border in the world. Yet the need to defend Canadian sovereignty in the face of American territorial expansion has been constant since the American Revolution.
Unsuccessful American invasions during the Revolution and the War of 1812 are the best known but not the last threats to the territorial integrity of Canada. The western regions, from the Great Lakes to the Pacific Ocean and north to the Arctic, were prime American objectives. Indeed, a significant portion of the territory governed by the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) that could have become part of Canada was lost to the American advance by border treaties of 1818 and 1846.

Even so, some Americans were not satisfied. As Theodore Roosevelt bluntly put it in one of his books, “We (Americans) were the people who could use it best and we ought to have taken it all.” As late as the 1950s, a U.S. senator suggested that Britain should settle its war debt by ceding Canada—a completely independent country—to the United States. Even today the United States is reluctant to accept Canadian sovereignty in the high Arctic.

Canadians of the 19th century learned the lessons of Texas and Oregon: Americans moved into a sparsely populated adjacent jurisdiction and created conditions leading to formal annexation by the United States. American settlers thus embodied a sort of “informal” manifest destiny, followed sometimes by the real thing. Given the importance of actual possession of the ground, a significant population of Americans in any area of the Canadian wilderness was seen as a clear and present danger.

Informal manifest destiny was confronted and rebuffed on Vancouver Island in the 1840s, in central British Columbia in the 1850s and 1860s, on the central plains in the 1870s and 1880s and in the Yukon Territory in the 1890s. In each case the overt threat came from footloose American prospectors, gamblers, whiskey traders, cattle thieves and the like. Each time, Canadians rushed into the area then generally known as “Columbia.” An estimated 30,000 arrived in 1858 alone. Miners and Indians died violently as the local tribes fought to expel the invaders. The Americans pressed on, using deadly force to drive Indians and Chinese miners off the gold-bearing sandbars of the Fraser and other rivers.

Although a treaty in 1846 established the 49th parallel as the border between the United States and British North America, no administrative, military or police presence yet existed north of the line. Given the anarchic conditions prevailing on the mainland after the gold strike, Governor Douglas unilaterally assumed jurisdiction over the Columbia territory.

Douglas decreed that miners must purchase mining licenses, file claims with the government and pay monthly mining fees in advance. He told the miners that they were present in Columbia only by sufferance, that they had no legal right to settle in the country and that the laws protected Indians equally with whites.

The American “stampeder,” as they were known, did not submit easily to Governor Douglas. They formed paramilitary groups (e.g., “Whatcom Company”) to attack Indians and other miners in what was called the “Fraser Canyon War.” Douglas appealed to British officials for naval and military forces. Fortunately for Douglas, just then a unit of military engineers arrived to mark the international boundary along the 49th parallel. Also welcome was the 84-gun HMS Ganges, carrying several hundred marines.

Douglas steamed upriver with a force of marines and engineers, where he confronted and faced down a mob of would-be republicans, but the struggle did not end. The San Francisco Herald suggested that “a U.S. frigate of suitable
force" be sent to the vicinity of Victoria. John Nugent, "special agent of the United States," claimed to represent American citizens in the British territories and urged them not to forget the "fatherly care and protection" of the U.S. government. Nugent returned to the United States on November 13, 1858, perhaps to avoid being present on the 19th when the colony of British Columbia was formally established. The name was chosen to make a point both inside and outside the colony.

Some American miners and perhaps some American officials believed that they would eventually overrun both the Vancouver Island and British Columbia colonies, which they declared to be part of "their" Oregon Territory. Politics in the interior remained turbulent. The high point of rebellion occurred in 1860 when the government mining commissioner was driven out of the Cariboo gold fields. Governor Douglas again traveled upriver to confront the troublemakers. He warned that if they did not obey the laws he would return with 500 marines, impose order and perhaps deport them. The miners maintained their fractious ways but that was their last attempt in British Columbia to create an independent state.

The creation of the Canadian confederation in 1867 and the purchase of the Hudson's Bay Company territories in 1869 created a serious security problem for the new Dominion Government. West of Fort Garry (in Manitoba at the junction of the Red and Assiniboine rivers) the prairies were entirely without formal law enforcement and were almost entirely lawless. Whiskey traders and desperadoes of every sort roamed the vast wilderness unchecked, their criminal acts unpunished. Again, Canadian sovereignty was the issue. Again, Americans were the villains, real and potential.

A treaty in 1818 had established the 49th parallel as the border from Ontario to the Rocky Mountains, but American migration to Minnesota and the Dakotas was earlier and much larger than Canadian migration to Manitoba and the Northwest territories. Goods and people bound for the Canadian West had to travel through the United States. Already there was a railroad from Minneapolis to the Manitoba border.

Peace on the prairies was essential. Indian wars cost the United States more than a million dollars a year. Canada, with less than 3.5 million people in uncertain control of almost 4 million square miles of territory, could not afford such outlays to forcibly pacify the prairie tribes. As it was, large subsidies would be necessary to extend the CPR to the west coast, a condition demanded by British Columbia when it joined the Canadian confederation in 1871.

Prime Minister John A. MacDonald believed that a paramilitary force, modeled on the Royal Irish Constabulary and British colonial police forces in India, could embody Canadian sovereignty while bringing peace and justice to the frontier. In 1873 the North-West
Mounted Police (NWMP) came into being. In 1874 the 275 members made their storied 1,000-mile march west from Manitoba to what is now Alberta. There they built Fort MacLeod, not far from the infamous American whiskey depot known as "Fort Whoop-up."

In a real sense, the Mounted Police were there to protect the Indians from marauding whites like the men from Fort Benton, Montana, who massacred several Indian families at Cypress Hills, Saskatchewan, in 1873. The force was an immediate success. Canadian sovereignty was never at issue after the arrival of the police on the western prairies. They performed all necessary government functions, acting on any given day as policeman, coroner, judge, jailer, doctor, nurse, customs collector or immigration officer.

They shut down the illegal American whiskey trade with the Indians, imprisoned or drove out American gunmen, horse thieves and wolf hunters, contained Sioux warriors who fled north after defeating General Custer, facilitated the peaceful completion of the CPR, and treated the Indians so equitably that the Blackfoot Confederacy refused to join Louis Riel and the so-called "Metis nation" in the North-West Rebellion of 1885. This was a crucial factor in the early suppression of the uprising, as was the CPR, which carried troops from the eastern provinces. And so the West was won.

The last perceived threat to Canadian sovereignty posed by American prospectors occurred in the Yukon. In 1873 gold was discovered along the Yukon River on both sides of the international border. As in other gold fields, the prospectors organized local councils—"miners' meetings"—to govern the camps. In 1894 complaints from Canadians along Forty Mile Creek about Americans selling liquor to the Indians and in general taking the law into their own hands led the federal government to order an assessment of the situation.

Superintendent Charles Constantine of the NWMP conducted the reconnaissance. He recommended that 50 officers be assigned to provide government services in the Yukon, but only Constantine, a surgeon, a customs collector and 20 other officers were sent. The small force soon mastered the situation, set up a customs office on the border and enforced Canadian law in Canadian territory.

Then, in August 1896, the discovery of rich gold deposits on Bonanza Creek initiated a massive stampede to the Klondike. Police reinforcements were
sent north "to establish customs offices on the true boundary and guard the pass." As the number of stampeders increased, more men were detailed. At the height of the gold rush there were 255 police officers and about 40,000 stampeders in the Yukon Territory. Superintendent Samuel Benfield Steele commanded the force. Sam Steele became the exemplar of all that was right or, depending on the viewpoint, all that was wrong with police actions in the Klondike.

During winter in that harsh country, stampeders could not live off the land. Therefore, the Mounted Police strictly enforced a rule, established by the commissioner of the Yukon Territory, that each person must bring in "at least 1,150 pounds of solid food besides tents, cooking utensils, prospector's and carpenter's tools, or . . . not be allowed to enter the country." This decision undoubtedly saved lives.

Below the summits of Chilkoot Pass and White Pass on the Canadian side were 60 miles of tents, stretching to the head of navigation at Lake Bennett. Around the tents the stampeders built crude boats and waited for the spring thaw. Numbers were painted on each boat by the police so that a search could be made for any that failed to reach a checkpoint. Relevant data for each passenger were recorded, including next of kin, so that corpses could be identified, relatives notified and personal items returned.

In May 1898, when the ice went out of the river, Superintendent Steele joined the rush downstream. He found several thousand boats moored near present-day Whitehorse, above Miles Canyon, "a deep and dangerous gorge with perpendicular cliffs of granite which no-one could climb, and a current which ran like a mill race." The previous day 150 boats had been smashed running the canyon, seven lives were lost, and several hundred men had lost their possessions.

Steele called the miners together and made a typical speech to a group that he knew to be mainly Americans: There are many of your countrymen who say that the Mounted Police make the laws as they go along, and I am going to do so now for your own good. Therefore the directions that I shall give shall be carried out strictly, and they are these: Corporal Dixon will be responsible for boat safety. No boat goes if he is not satisfied. No women or children will be carried in the boats. If they can get to Miles Canyon, they can walk the five miles to the end of it. The corporal will judge whether steersmen are adequate. There will be a list of pilots posted at the Mounted Police barracks. You can hire a pilot at five dollars per boat. If you have no money, the corporal will arrange free passage.

From that day, no lives were lost running Miles Canyon, although about 30,000 miners made the trip.

At Dawson Steele found a hamlet that had grown practically overnight to a city of 10,000 occupants. Unfortunately, much of it had been built on a frozen swamp. Thousands of men had camped there before moving out to the creeks. When the ice melted, the town site became a filthy quagmire without sewage disposal or clean water. Typhoid and scurvy were endemic. There were many sick and indigent stampeders with no money to buy medicine or food.

Superintendent Steele accepted the challenge; indeed, much of his reputation as a tyrant is based on his actions in Dawson. He first formed a licensing board, with himself as chairman. The board imposed costly licenses on dance halls, brothels, saloons and other liquor outlets, and levied heavy fines for violation of its ordinances. In a few months over $90,000 was raised, at an administrative cost of only $75. Thus were the sick and the poor preserved.

He then formed a health board, with himself as chairman and several doctors as members. All premises and businesses serving the public were under continual scrutiny to ensure that water for cooking or drinking was boiled and that nothing unfit for human consumption was served. Again, heavy fines were levied for failure to comply. The public health was markedly improved.

Gambling equipment was inspected to ensure that games were honest. Prostitutes were confined to a specific area and could not promenade until after four in the afternoon. No person below the age of majority could be served or employed in the saloons. Otherwise, the town and the camps ran wide open 24 hours a day, except on the Sabbath when, by Steele's order, neither work nor pleasure was allowed.

Police were stationed at the banks and in the camps, and undercover agents mingled with the crowds. As a recent author put it, "Dawson's crime statistics for 1898 . . . are so remarkable that many a novelist and screenwriter has found them impossible to believe. More than forty thousand souls poured through the town that summer—gamblers, confidence men, fugitives, prostitutes, ex-convicts, petty thieves, saloon-keepers, American gunfighters and prospectors hungry for gold and women, thirsty for hooch and . . . 'loaded for bear.' Yet in those twelve months there was not a single murder or a major theft."

Steele observed that Dawson was home to "some of the greatest criminals on the continent," many of whom he
knew from his days policing the railroad construction towns. He was ruthless in fining them heavily or even banishing them from Canadian territory. This “blue ticket to the outside” was a real deterrent to men who had made such an effort to get to the gold fields. By the spring of 1899 what Steele called “the tough element” had left town.

The public display of Canadian sovereignty included observance of May 24, Victoria Day. Steele was justly proud of the police team that won the tug-of-war competition. Given that about 90 percent of the stampeders were American, July Fourth was of course the largest celebration of the year, but Steele permitted no public ridicule of the symbols of Canadian authority. He threatened to close a theater and deport an American actor who disparaged the monarchy. That was the end of that.

Superintendent Steele had no qualms about his decisions. What had the police done in the Yukon Territory in 1898? They had set up customs offices and collected $150,000 in duties. They had inspected 30 million pounds of food. They had guided the passage of 30,000 stampeders hundreds of miles down the Yukon River with less than two dozen casualties. They had policed an overall population of 40,000 rough characters for a year with only three homicides and no major robberies.

The NWMP had established a fair means of judging the output from mining that was acceptable to the miners and had collected a 10-percent bounty for the federal government. They had organized a reliable mail service when a contractor failed to deliver. They had transported millions of dollars in gold ingots through lawless Alaska to banks in Seattle without a penny lost. They had handled every problem that arose, settling quarrels, dividing chattels and other property, registering deaths, in­

...
ABOVE: Boats moored along the Yukon River. About 7,000 were launched in the great rush of 1898.

RIGHT: Houseboat with a North-West Mounted Police identification number painted on the side.

OVERLEAF: Local Indians named the treacherous White Horse Rapids, below Miles Canyon, after an unusually strong, blond, nordic stampeder.

exploits of a few hundred men during a critical quarter-century in Canadian history. If historians have a common criticism of the Mounted Police, it might be expressed as follows: "We certainly would not want police officers today to have such authority."

"Amen!" most people would say, but that statement also misses the point. No Canadian police ever had such authority except the Mounted Police in the late 19th century when there was a national emergency. Purchase of the Hudson's Bay Company territory added 1.5 million square miles to the country, but—with all due respect to the aboriginal peoples—between Fort Garry in Manitoba and Victoria on Vancouver Island, from the American border to the Arctic Circle, it was essentially an uninhabited wilderness.

The NWMP was designed to fit the situation. It was armed and trained as a military unit, but each member had the powers of a constable and a magistrate. They did the job. When the Klondike gold rush ended, the national emergency was over and territorial sovereignty was no longer an issue.

In fact the NWMP, during the dangerous quarter century between 1874 and 1899, was no more arbitrary than present-day police officers confronted with natural disasters or other emergencies where life is at risk.

Historian W. R. Morrison perhaps put it best: "If the police were not perfect, they were undoubtedly closer to perfection than was the average Klondiker, and that is all . . . that can reasonably be expected."

Canadian-born Gerald Woods taught United States history at American and Canadian universities, then was director of research for the solicitor general of Canada. He is currently a consultant and author of The Police in Los Angeles: Reform and Professionalization and The Quality of Mercy: The Reform Tradition in Canadian Corrections (in press).
The river steamers *Mountain Gem*, J. M. Hannaford and Todd wait at the dock of the abandoned railroad construction town of Ainsworth, Washington, near the junction of the Snake and Columbia rivers. Northern Pacific Railroad engineers founded the town in 1879 as the western base of operations to lay track northeastward across the Columbia Basin.

A *New York Sun* correspondent writes of Ainsworth on September 24, 1883, “The streets are a mixture of dust and sand, ankle deep except where they are paved with old playing cards and broken whiskey bottles. Everything is dry except the river. That rushes past the town as if ashamed to stay in such company.”

Its reputation as the roughest town in the Northwest lasted for a brief five years, ending with the completion of the railroad bridge across the Snake in 1884. When the Northern Pacific moved its machine shops to Pasco that year to begin construction of the Cascade line up the Yakima valley, Ainsworth followed. The rough wood buildings, including the school, saloon and hotel, were literally transported by flatcars to Pasco. Thereafter, local farmers used the dock for a time to load their crops for shipping to market. Today the town site lies partly underwater and partly within the grounds of Sacajawea State Park.
In May 1950 a proposal was submitted to the Seattle City Council for the construction of an open, under-the-stars theater on the southwest shore of Green Lake. On August 11—75 days and $235,000 later—the 5,500-seat Aqua Theatre opened for business, just in time to help celebrate the second of Seattle's now-annual Seafair festivals. The open-air theater, complete with pool and diving towers, was to serve as a showplace for Greater Seattle, Incorporated's Aqua Follies.

Fear that the structure would "mar the beauty of the little land-locked lake" brought opposition from Green Lake residents, the PTAs of Lincoln High School and James Madison Junior High, and a few notable pioneers such as early day streetcar line developer Dr. E. C. Kilbourne and former mayor George F. Cotterill. They dubbed the project a "white elephant." Ironically, there is no record of opposition to the project based on Seattle's infamous inclement weather.

Speaking for Greater Seattle, Incorporated, Henry Broderick argued that since tourists spent $120 million a year in Washington, "it behooves communities to be entertainment minded." He predicted that the "water carnival . . . will attain national fame." Since the Alaska-Yukon Exposition of 1909, Seattle had remained little noticed by the rest of the United States.

Seattle Times columnist Don Duncan wrote that the Aqua Theatre was

the brainchild of Walter Van Camp, managing director of Greater Seattle, Inc., and civic booster extraordinaire . . . . Van Camp,
who came west from Minneapolis, home base of the Aqua Follies, wanted to stage that successor to Billie Rose's Aquacade as an adjunct to this city's new Seafair celebration and as an integral part of the city's centennial the following year. . . . Further, he said, the theater would be ideal for the presentation of Broadway musicals.

Managed by the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department and Greater Seattle, Incorporated, the Aqua Theatre was one of only three such showplaces in the nation. The pool separated the seats from the stage. The Aqua Follies—water ballets, diving exhibitions and clown acts created by Al Sheehan—alternated with short-run musical comedies such as Oklahoma, South Pacific, Brigadoon and Music Man.

According to Seattle attorney and former Aqua Theatre star Don Fleck, all roles were played by Seattle performers during the first five years. Besides Fleck, they included such local names as Wally Snellenberg, Irving Sternoff, Martha Wright and Margaret Larson. Beginning in 1956, Broadway stars took the lead roles. Ethel Merman, Bert Lahr, Kathryn Grayson, Anne Jeffries, Gretchen Wyler, Giselle MacKenzie and others now held hands with the Seattle stars. Three to five musicals were offered each year at the Aqua Theatre, each running for three or four nights.

Most of the Aqua Dears—the Aqua Follies mermaids—were recruited in Minneapolis before June 1 of each year. Seattle girls seldom appeared in the Aqua Follies because their high school and college terms ended after that date. By the time they could reach Minneapolis, training was under way, "and you can't catch up in this league," said water ballet director Shirley Price.

Seattle's Gustave Stern was the musical conductor throughout the life of the theater. German-born, he fled Nazi Germany with his wife and two small sons a few days after Hitler came to power. From 1949 on he was the Park Department's musical director at Volunteer Park concerts and the Aqua Theatre.

During the Aqua Theatre's 15-year history, inclement
According to Seattle Times columnist Louis R. Guzzo, the theater took an $11,000 loss in 1952 when two of its five musicals flopped. For 12 years the theater experienced many financial successes, intermingled with a few costly failures. But in 1964 not even “the best Aqua Follies yet” was able to rescue it. That year, the Park Board reduced Greater Seattle, Incorporated’s fees for the Follies.

Van Camp believed that the theater, though “perfect for the Aqua Follies and a few other things . . .,” was unsuited for musicals. Columnist Guzzo blamed some of the failure on Parks superintendent Paul V. Brown. Having founded the “Music Under the Stars” and concerts in the parks programs, Brown overextended himself into Aqua Theatre productions. He “took on more than he could handle, making decisions . . . that should have been made by the musical director, the stage director and the choreographer.”

Guzzo also blamed Greater Seattle, Incorporated, for “concentrating too much attention on the Aqua Follies” and inadequately
promoting the musicals while failing to significantly alter the Follies' acts from year to year.

In 1964, two years after the World's Fair had left Seattle with an array of entertainment facilities, Van Camp moved the musicals to the Opera House and decided to dump the Follies. The following year was a good one for the Follies at the Aqua Theatre. It grossed $5,000 more than the previous year. But inertia was setting in, and that year the Follies sang its swan song.

In 1969 the International Water Follies, produced by Sam Snyder of Boston, performed at the Aqua Theatre in July and August. It did not return the next year. Other heroic attempts were made to keep the showplace alive. Occasional variety shows, sky diving, fund raisers, folk and rock concerts and church services were held. But none of these sufficed, and no new ideas were forthcoming.

Disrepair and vandalism turned the theater into "a monkey on the back of the city." Now regarded as "a white elephant" even by its dearest supporters, the theater was finally torn down in 1979.

Writing in the North Central Outlook of June 2, 1966, Stan Stapp stated that no shame need be felt for the short life of the Aqua Theatre. The "cooperation of architects, businessmen, labor unions and others-[was] part of the spirit that stirred the imagination of the rest of us, and shook Seattle out of its postwar doldrums. . . [W]e have been on the go ever since."

That spirit brought forth the 1962 World's Fair, the Seattle Center and its many showplaces. "That [the Aqua Theatre] is no longer needed," Stapp added, "is only a tribute to its success in helping create the spirit that moved citizens to pass bond issues, businessmen to provide financing, and convinced the City Council to do its part in providing bigger and better showplaces—the Opera House, Playhouse, Coliseum, plus the Pacific Science Center, Space Needle and all the other benefits of Seattle Center."

The Aqua Theatre could not have held its own in the face of these improved venues with "more comfortable seating, better acoustics, heat[jing] and most of all with a roof overhead—plus the facilities to handle a much wider entertainment," Stapp concluded.

Sidney Berland is a free-lance historian and retired archivist. He was an elementary school teacher for many years, as well as a hospital worker, truck driver, warehouseman and office machine salesman.
The Americas were long both battleground and prize in a great contest for empire. From Mexico to Hudson's Bay, that struggle shaped the political and cultural destiny of the continent. In the late 18th century imperial competition took on new force and direction as the great powers of the Atlantic world increasingly eyed the Pacific and the northwesternmost parts of North America. For European empire builders the Pacific offered everything from the wealth of the China trade to solutions for the housing of criminals. With promises of personal wealth and national power, it was little wonder that the world of the Columbia should attract generations of eager explorers and ambitious statesmen.

The course of empire that flowed into Pacific waters after 1760 followed a distinctly 18th-century direction. Men as remote from each other as Thomas Jefferson, Sir Joseph Banks, Andrei Dashkov and John Jacob Astor all shared a common set of assumptions. Those assumptions both defined and gave direction to the early years of what historian William Goetzmann has called the "second great age of discovery."

Many Europeans in the 18th century were fascinated by three closely related questions. What was the definition of sovereignty and the nation-state, what were the limits of capitalism and entrepreneurship, and what was the promise of Enlightenment science? Those questions captured the attention of bureaucrats, merchants and scientists from Philadelphia and London to Paris and St. Petersburg. The age of King George III, Czar Alexander I and President George Washington did not separate business from politics. Trade and dominion marched together. Eighteenth-century diplomats and company shareholders assumed that organizations like the Hudson’s Bay Company, the Russian-American Company, and the North West Company had twin goals. The companies were in places as distant as York Factory, Canton and New Arkangel to turn a profit and extend national influence. No one doubted that there was to be a relationship between ledger figures and imperial power. In the era of John Jacob Astor and Meriwether Lewis there was no such thing as a commercial venture without implications for sovereignty and national expansion.

To concerns about politics and profit the 18th century added a third element. In the years after 1760 scientific investigation became an increasingly important part of the course
of empire. Certainly no one more fully embodied the connection between science and exploration than Britain's Sir Joseph Banks. In his role as president of the Royal Society, Banks transformed the agenda of exploration. Pacific voyages by Captain James Cook and Captain George Vancouver became both scientific and imperial ventures.

The Banks approach soon had disciples like Jefferson and Astor. While Jefferson's scientific directions to Lewis and Clark are justifiably well-known, Astor's interest in science seems all but forgotten. Writing to Albert Gallatin in May 1810, Astor promised that his western expedition, led by Wilson Price Hunt, would be pleased to provide information and observations to any student of the West. And Astor's chief field agent took that promise seriously. Hunt's overland journey to Astoria in 1811 included John Bradbury and Thomas Nuttall, the first two professional scientists to study the world of the Missouri River and the northern plains.

The symbols of the 18th century were national flags, account books and exotic specimens stowed in a naturalist's collecting bag. Sovereignty, capitalism and science all came together in the first concerted attempt to create an American commercial and political empire in the Northwest. John Jacob Astor's Pacific Fur Company, with its grand entrepôt Astoria on the Columbia River, was no mere business enterprise. Astoria represented both the expansionist energies of the American nation and the sophisticated geopolitical thought of a remarkable man.

As Astoria has long symbolized western adventure à la Washington Irving, so John Astor has come to represent a narrow-minded, money-grubbing capitalism. Contemporaries knew better. Jefferson insisted that Astoria was the fundamental act of territorial occupation that gave the United States valid claim to the entire Northwest. Astor was seen by those who knew him as a careful student of politics and international relations. When Jefferson asked about the entrepreneur's abilities, the president was told that Astor was "a man of large vision and fair character." Alexander Ross, an embittered former Astor employee, admitted that Astoria's founder had a "bouyant, aspiring and comprehensive mind." Astor was part of a long tradition that placed the fur trade in the service of territorial expansion. At a time when the new nation was grappling with its own domestic troubles, Astor thought in global terms.

The range and complexity of Astor's imperial thinking was not apparent at once, but its outlines were clear as early as 1808. In a letter to New York politician De Witt Clinton, Astor spelled out a strategy "for carrying on the fur trade in the United States even more extensive than it is done by the companies in Canada." He envisioned a series of trading houses from the Missouri to the Pacific, all the time assuming that the Pacific shore would someday be the westernmost margin of the American land empire. Although he made no mention of China in this 1808 letter, it was plain that Canton and its thriving fur market were on Astor's mind. Canton was the unspoken goal; Russian America would prove the unexpected opportunity. Less than two years after Lewis and Clark came back from the Pacific, an American promoter was preparing to make their discoveries turn a profit and coin an empire.

Over the years the temptation has been to see Astor as a no-nonsense businessman who simply followed up on what Jefferson's captains had pioneered. But Astor's thought about business and politics in the Northwest was not directly inspired by either the president or his intrepid explorers. Astor was the inheritor of an intellectual tradition that called Montreal, not Monticello, home. His tutors in the art of geopolitics were the men of the North West Company, the members of the celebrated Beaver Club, and in particular Alexander Henry the Elder. Beginning as early as 1787 Astor journeyed each year to Montreal, there to engage in his growing fur business. What happened in that city amounted to more than buying and selling. At the homes and in the counting houses of men who would someday be his rivals, Astor obtained a superb education in the western facts of life.

The course of study for that education took shape even before Astor arrived on the scene. With the fall of New France in 1760, a tidal wave of eager Anglo-American traders swept through the Great Lakes and into what are today the provinces of Manitoba and Saskatchewan. Led by men like Peter Pond, Alexander Henry the Elder, and the brothers Thomas and Joseph Frobisher, these "pedlars from Quebec" brought back both wealth and information. What emerged from their travels was a kind of trader geography made with measures of Indian information and personal observation. Pond, Henry and their companions carried home an image of the American outback, an image that would prove compelling for two generations of explorers and their patrons.

Astor learned his western geography from no less than Alexander Henry the Elder. After returning from the Northwest in 1776, Henry settled in Montreal, there to pursue the fur business from his warehouse on St. Paul Street. Away from the Athabasca country, Henry had time to think about conversations with fellow trader Peter Pond years before. Both men believed that Lake Athabasca and the Great Slave Lake formed a waterwheel whose river spokes struck west to the Pacific. The Rocky Mountains would prove no barrier since, at least in this vision of the West, they were little more than narrow ridges easily portaged.

Trader geography also embraced the notion that major western rivers had either a common source or sources at close proximity to one another. Here again was the dream of a Northwest Passage, a passage to India, what Jefferson once called "the most direct and practicable water communication across this continent for the purposes of commerce." From his sometime partner, Astor learned this hopeful geography. And he believed it. As late as 1813 Astor wrote confidently that the headwaters of the Missouri and the Columbia were "almost within sight of each other." This was the geography of imperial
expansion, one that became central to both the North West Company’s Columbian Enterprise and Astor’s Astoria.

But Astor learned more than the shape of the greater Northwest. From his Canadian friends he heard about a strategy to control the region and make it part of a national domain. During the 1780s fur trade geographer Peter Pond bombarded American, Canadian and Russian officials with maps and petitions. Those documents contained not only Pond’s geographic vision of the Northwest but also his grand program to dominate the region. The trader proposed a series of fortified posts along a line across the continent from Lake Winnipeg to the Pacific. Pond’s faithful pupil, Alexander Mackenzie, expanded that strategy. In his *Voyages from Montreal* and in nearly a dozen petitions to the British government, Mackenzie argued the merits of a trading post chain as a means sure to command the entire destiny of the Northwest. Mackenzie and Astor were not strangers. In 1798 they met in New York. Their dinner conversation may have turned on Mackenzie’s western plans, but Astor did not need this social occasion to learn about the design. By the late 1790s what became the Columbian Enterprise was everyday talk in Montreal. Alexander Henry the Elder could have filled Astor’s ear with such dreams and schemes.

Astor’s third lesson in the art of empire also came from his Canadian mentors. Pond, Mackenzie and Henry all believed that no single fur trading company had sufficient resources to direct the course of empire. Substantial government support was needed. That support might come in the form of a trade monopoly, military protection or direct financial subsidies. There were certainly ample precedents for such a partnership between crown and company. While France’s Cardinal Richelieu had used the Company of One Hundred Associates to secure New France, the Dutch Republic employed the Dutch West India Company to advance national goals, and all were aware of the intimate relationship between Whitehall and the Hudson’s Bay Company. Pond favored direct payments to the North West Company. Mackenzie envisioned something far grander. He promoted the union of the Hudson’s Bay Company and the North West Company to create a single powerful monopoly firm. That company could seize control of the entire West, thwart both American and Russian expansion, and secure reliable Indian allies.

Such proposals were the talk of Montreal, and Astor was surely caught up in the discussions. At the very least, he heard the gossip. What he sought for both his American Fur Company and the Pacific Fur Company was something akin to those Canadian ideas. Astor wanted his employees to enjoy official protection and semiofficial status. He often used the word “approbation” when describing the slippery relationship between official Washington and unofficial New York City. In the years between 1808 and 1812, approbation meant tacit support and well-wishing. Once Astoria became embroi ded in the War of 1812, its founder tended to describe his company as almost a branch of the federal establishment worthy of prompt military and naval protection. However Astor defined his enterprise, he had learned one Canadian lesson well. Playing the imperial game demanded substantial resources and the deep pockets of a national treasury.

Astor’s early letters to Jefferson and others reveal how deeply the Canadian curriculum had influenced his thinking. Geography, company strategy and government relations—Astor applied himself to each and became master of all. But that education in empire did not end in 1808. Secretary of War Henry Dearborn had described Astor as a man of large vision. Part of that vision was the ability to see and then act upon new and perhaps unexpected opportunities. One such opportunity was an opening to Russian America.

May 1810 found Astor busy tying up loose ends for his Columbia River enterprise. Preparations for the voyage of his ship Tenquin to the mouth of the Columbia were well under way, and agents of the Pacific Fur Company were hard at work in Lachine recruiting French Canadians for the proposed Hunt overland journey to Astoria. In the midst of this activity Astor put to Secretary of the Treasury Gallatin what must have seemed an odd question: Did the United States contemplate any changes in its treaty relations with Russia? That query was a quiet signal; it represented an expansion of Astor’s thinking and an extension of Astoria’s empire.

Astor’s interest in things Russian—and his pointed diplomatic question—came as a result of events that had been stirring in the North Pacific for some three decades. Since the 1780s Russian traders and their hunters had been busy exploiting the fur resources of the Alaskan coast. After years of cutthroat competition, merchants and government officials agreed on the creation of the Russian-American Company. That company, like its cousins elsewhere, was expected to fill investors’ pockets and advance Russian territorial ambitions. While the Alaska fur harvests were usually bountiful, the company labored under a number of difficulties. Inadequate
food supplies, restrictions on access to the China markets, and intense competition from Boston maritime traders hindered Russian efforts. The Russians were especially concerned about a growing weapons trade between Alaska natives and the Bostonians. Diplomatic efforts to regulate that trade had failed, and by the time the first official Russian representative was sent to the new American republic, both St. Petersburg bureaucrats and trading company functionaries were desperate for some action.

Russian hopes were pinned on Andrei Dashkov, consul general at Philadelphia, chargé d'affaires to the American Congress, and “honorable correspondent” for the Russian-American Company. Dashkov was experienced and imaginative, just the sort of diplomat who could be counted on to seize opportunities not spelled out in formal instructions. Those formal instructions from the imperial court directed him to negotiate a commercial treaty with the United States. While a seemingly innocent overture, the proposed treaty actually contained a dangerous deception. After arriving in Philadelphia late in the summer of 1809, Dashkov suggested that the first article of the treaty contain language “to forbid and not allow their subjects to furnish military goods to an enemy of the one of them at war.” Once the treaty was ratified, the imperial government would declare war on the native peoples of the Northwest Coast and invoke article one of the convention. The United States would then be obligated to restrain any weapons trading by American ships.

These clever moves did not simply fail—they were wholly ignored by the Madison administration. Frustrated by American inattention to Russian concerns, Dashkov decided to try another approach. The directors of the Russian-American Company had earlier suggested that a private American merchant with considerable capital and influence might resolve most of the company’s problems. How Dashkov met Astor remains something of a mystery. When Washington Irving wrote in the 1830s, he spun out an improbable tale in which the federal government, confronted with Russian complaints about the weapons trade, turned to Astor for advice. Irving claimed that this urgent plea suggested to Astor the possibility of including Russian America in his grand design. At least once Astor himself told a quite different story. Writing to Jefferson in 1812, Astor insisted that he approached Dashkov about the chance for mutual ventures in the North Pacific and the China trade.

The most likely sequence of events is described in a November 1809 letter from Dashkov to Alexander Baranov, the company’s chief officer in Russian America. During the fall of 1809 Astor was deeply involved in two complex maneuvers, both directly related to his western enterprise. In August he had been in Montreal discussing the possible purchase of the Michilimackinac Company. And there was the unspoken chance for a joint venture with the North West Company beyond the Rockies. At the same time, Astor was planning his first voyage in the coastal fur trade. His ship Enterprise, under Captain John Ebbeets, was in New York harbor taking on cargo. Sometime during September Dashkov heard about the Enterprise and decided that Astor was just the man the Russians needed.

The conversations between Dashkov and Astor expanded the scope of Astoria’s empire. And the talks were yet another part of Astor’s education in empire. Dashkov explained Russian problems and needs, suggesting “a direct and permanent trade with our settlements.” When he asked Astor about his western plans, the merchant confided that the Pacific Fur Company intended to establish a colony on the north bank of the Columbia River. Astoria was, of course, planted on the south side of the river. Astor may have purposely misled the Russians as part of his growing notion of a joint Russian-American presence to squeeze out the Canadians. Warming to the geopolitical benefits of cooperation between the two companies, Astor suggested that if the Russians moved south while American traders advanced north, the British would be eliminated as a power in the Northwest. Dashkov was plainly taken aback by such a daring proposal and gave only the vaguest of replies. But the Russian was impressed by Astor’s “capital, spirit of enterprise, and business acumen.”

Finding that Astor was “well disposed” toward a Russian connection, the two men fashioned a far-reaching proposal for shared undertakings. Their plan called for both companies to sign a three-year agreement. The pact made Astor sole supplier of all goods to Russian America. He was required to send at least two or three ships each year. Astor’s vessels would then be chartered by the Russian company to transport furs to Canton. Russian furs could be sold to the Chinese by Astor’s commercial agent, thus concealing their true origin. Dashkov believed that a deal with Astor might accomplish both corporate and imperial goals far quicker than any tedious negotiations with poorly informed American diplomats. He was convinced that, once other American merchants heard about Astor’s monopoly to provision Russian posts, all incentive for independent voyages would vanish. The dangerous
A weapons trade would collapse, the settlements could be fed, and furs might turn good profits at Canton.

By the late summer of 1811 Astor's chief diplomatic agent, Adrian Bentzon, was in St. Petersburg to negotiate with both the Russian-American Company and the imperial government. The true character and complexity of those talks have become plain only in the past decade with the release of new documents from Russian archives. Needless to say, Bentzon was an agile diplomat, so much so as to even outfox American ambassador John Quincy Adams. By the spring of 1812, on the very eve of war, Astor got his Russian connection.

Canadian traders and Russian bureaucrats all played essential roles in defining and expanding Astor's imperial vision. Without knowing it, those teachers prepared him for the most demanding part of his education. Nothing so matured Astor as the 'finishing school called the War of 1812.' Struggling to defend Astoria against British assault and federal indifference, Astor was compelled to give his thinking logical order and rhetorical coherence. In meetings and correspondence with President James Madison, Secretary of State James Monroe, and Secretary of the Navy William Jones, Astor demonstrated a sure grasp of international diplomacy, great power rivalries, and the place of the West in the contest for empire. What he found more difficult to grasp were lessons about bureaucratic inertia, human frailty, and the power of events to overwhelm even the most energetic of planners.

After the declaration of war against Great Britain in June 1812, Astor quickly recognized that the conflict would endanger all his fur trade dealings. Certainly what he once called his "Columbia river schemes" were at risk. Astoria was exposed to crown naval forces and, although he did not know it, many of his employees had retained their British citizenship. By the summer of 1812 Astor had put into motion a number of plans to warn Astoria and secure it against the winds of war. Those efforts involved everything from hurried letters sent to Canton to high-risk gambles that employed secret agents in London and a ship flying false flags.

But Astor pinned his greatest hopes on the chance that American naval vessels might protect Astoria. Such an expectation was not beyond the realm of the possible. For the first time there were American ships of war operating in the Pacific. Astor believed that the Pacific Fur Company was an extension of the American state in the same way that the North West Company advanced British interests. Was not his imperial outpost worthy of protection in time of war? It was a question that Astor asked repeatedly and one that found little firm answer.

Astor was no stranger to the halls of power in Washington. He understood the art of politics and knew how to use personal influence. In January 1813 he traveled to the federal city carrying a letter of introduction from Gallatin to the new secretary of the navy. Knowing that the Navy Department was a rat's nest of corruption and incompetence, Astor decided to meet instead with Secretary of State James Monroe.

Although no record of that meeting survives, an early February letter to Monroe sums up what must have been Astor's main line of argument. Thanks to the recent arrival of the North West Company's winter express in Montreal, Astor now had fairly current information from the Northwest. Canada and the United States might be at war but Astor still had his "reliable sources" across the border. Armed with that knowledge, Astor lectured the secretary on Indian relations, coastal geography and the boundless promise of the region. But such remarks were really just for openers. Astor knew that the North West Company was busy urging the British government to launch a maritime assault on Astoria. Would the federal government, he politely asked, be willing...
to stop that attack by taking formal possession "of a country which will afford wealth and comfort to many and to protect the establishment which has been made."

Astor thought that a troop contingent, perhaps some 40 or 50 men, could easily secure Astoria against any invasion. Concluding his appeal with the kind of language that would come to typify Manifest Destiny writings decades later, Astor declared "I am sure the government will readily see the importance of having possession and command of a River so extensive as the Columbia." Possession would mean not only power but national prestige. As Astor put it, "the impression which such an enterprise would make in favor of the United States" would not be lost on any potential rival. The spelling and syntax of those lines were surely smoothed out by an Astor employee, but the thought was undoubtedly his.

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Astor caught up in the troubles of a war gone sour. Monroe and his State Department could spare little time for a place so remote. By mid summer 1813 Astor was desperate for the government to take some action. Increasingly embittered by official indifference, Astor momentarily lost his temper and raged at the State Department. "Good god," he thundered, "what an object it is to be secured by Smale means." That object was made abundantly clear in a private memorandum prepared for Secretary of the Navy Jones. In the most sweeping statement he ever made of his global vision, Astor wrote the following:

The object is to secure the existence of an establishment, which, if prosperous, will place the monopoly of the fur trade of the world in the hands of this country, and at no remote period extend its dominion over a most interesting part of the opposite coast of the North American continent, and perhaps open communications of no small moment with Japan and the East coast of Asia.

Although small in size, Fort Astoria represented the grand imperial aspirations of both John Jacob Astor and the United States.

No proponent of Manifest Destiny could have put the case for an imperial America with more strength and clarity.

In petitions to an often distracted and sometimes uninterested government, Astor did not necessarily seek to compose a philosophy of empire. His concerns were more immediate and surely more pragmatic. But because Astoria and the ideas behind it grew in an age of territorial expansion, Astor could not escape an education in the rhetoric of empire. In thought and action he was the quintessential imperialist. Blurring the line between public interest and private gain, he sought to wrap his ventures in the cloak of nationalism. Jefferson's empire of liberty and Astor's own empire of commerce seemed one and the same. To advance one was to advance the other.

War and international diplomacy were not kind to Astoria. Although the United States reasserted its claim on Astoria, the post remained effectively in Canadian hands. Renamed Fort George, the trading house was soon overshadowed by Fort Vancouver. While the Columbia River post never became the center for a great commercial enterprise, Astor's vision set the course for future American ventures. Astor once wrote that the Columbia was "the key to a vast country." His education in empire-building helped put that key in American hands. Jefferson had been right after all. Astor belonged in the ranks of those who shaped the course of empire.

James P. Ronda is the H. G. Barnard Professor of Western American History at The University of Tulsa. He has written widely on the history of the exploration of the American West. His most recent books include Revealing America: Image and Imagination in the Exploration of North America and Thomas Jefferson and the Changing West.
It was a fine spring afternoon on Bellingham Bay, May 24, 1854. The waters of Puget Sound glittered on the bay shore, rippling gently on a beach of fine, smooth stones that caught the light and stitched it around the bay to Whatcom—the source of wood smoke that drifted through the dark woods above Henry Roeder’s sawmill. Joel Clayton, a prospector/engineer working a coal seam on the bay’s southern end, was drinking in all of this from his hillside cabin when two enormous canoes suddenly emerged from Hale Passage on the north end of the bay.

The raised prows, bright paint and shouts of the paddlers at every stroke identified them as “Northerners.” Knowing full well why they were coming, Clayton’s stomach must have twisted, and he probably wanted to bolt for the woods. But he had recently been elected one of three judges for the fledgling Whatcom County (population 30), so he dutifully strode down the hill to the beach. And it was a mesmerizing sight. The warriors were perfectly synchronized, biting into the placid bay for several turns, then resting their paddles abeam while the canoes cut through the water, gliding swiftly and growing larger by the second.

The canoes scudded ashore not far from where Clayton stood. The occupants seemed larger than the local Lumiis, some wearing the traditional conical spruce-root hats with potlatch rings, skin trousers and button blankets, others sporting European felt hats and wool shirts. All were heavily armed with knives, hatchets and an odd mix of firearms. The leader told Clayton they had come to trade, but Clayton knew better. No women were along, and the warriors were in paint. When this was the case, the evening almost always ended badly.

Clayton pretended to be interested in a button blanket worn by one of the Northerners but told them he would have to go to his cabin for money. This said, he ambled off the beach and once out of sight tore into the woods, scrambling uphill with the Indians in hot pursuit. Out of breath and for a moment out of view, Clayton dove under a fallen log and decided to wait it out. Frozen, he watched as the
Indians vaulted one by one over his hiding place and made for another log cabin near the coal diggings, located just above today's Boulevard Park. Several mine employees huddled inside, including a woman and two small children, while two Lummis opened fire on the Northerners. Long after dark the Northerners were still there, laying a steady fire into the cabin, hoping the occupants would give up.

Finally, near dawn, the Northerners withdrew, but not before they had ransacked and destroyed Clayton's cabin and killed two miners who tried to flank them on the beach. The raiders left the bodies headless for the horrified whites, then moved on to Whidbey Island where they destroyed several more homes.

The Northern Indians

Fear of Northern Indians—then defined as groups from today's northern British Columbia, southeastern Alaska and the Queen Charlotte Islands—had been a constant in Puget Sound long before American homesteads sprang up on the shorelines in the late 1840s. The Lummis and other Coast Salish shore-dwelling groups in the south had been raiding each other for generations. However, with the establishment in 1843 of the Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Fort Victoria, northern groups paddled south, bringing goods for barter along with a whole new dimension in the raiding culture.

Like the Vikings of northern Europe, they came out of the north without warning in swift, open craft 30 to 100 feet long and 8 feet abeam, each with a full complement of warriors, all heavily armed and without mercy. White settlers were not always clear about which group or clan was responsible for a raid. This was in large part because the raiders wore similar attire and traveled in the same large, seagoing canoes manufactured almost exclusively by the Haida from the Queen Charlotte and Prince of Wales islands. Often they were Haida; but they might also be Tlingit.
from the Stikine River in today’s southeastern Alaska, or Tsimshian from Fort Simpson along the northern British Columbia coast or the fierce Kwakiutl of northern Vancouver Island.

Raiding was deeply established in these cultures. Groups raided to avenge a wrong or to mourn a death, but more often to take booty—slaves, heads, tools, weapons and anything else not too big for the canoe—which boosted the wealth of a family or clan and cemented its status in the group. Raids against native populations in the area had become so frequent that the Limmis had fled their traditional fishing and clamming grounds in the San Juan Islands for safe haven in Bellingham Bay where heavily wooded uplands and broad vistas gave ample warning of attack.

Now the “Bostons” (Americans) had arrived, appearing rich and vulnerable with cabins full of Yankee goods, and the raids were intensifying from Whatcom to Olympia. This was cause for alarm amongst the British as well as the Americans. Thefts, murders and decapitations were bad for business, whether it be mercantile or development of real estate. No serious attempt at settlement and the march toward prosperity could be made until the raids were stopped.

Washington Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens had northern raiders in mind when he drafted one of his whirlwind treaties in the winter of 1854-55 with the Nisqually and other bands. Article XII read:

The said tribes and bands finally agree not to trade at Vancouver’s Island, or elsewhere out of the dominions of the United States; nor shall foreign Indians be permitted to reside in the reservations without consent of the superintendent or agent.

By the mid 1850s Americans on Puget Sound were becoming intimately acquainted with Northerners as individuals came south in greater numbers seeking work as a more peaceful means to accumulate wealth. These workers invariably suffered in the wake of raids by their brethren, largely because native populations on Puget Sound believed in the same code of revenge. Once word worked north that the individual had been slain, another cycle of retaliation began. It did not matter who perpetrated the deed, only that revenge be taken, however remotely related the victim might be. In the case of whites it encompassed the entire race, the principal target being someone of rank and privilege because this enhanced the status of the redeemer.

To Stevens’s mind, it was best not to tempt fate altogether. Good thing. His treaties had bred trouble enough with Indians living in his territory. By September 1855 the Yakamas had figured out the fine print in theirs and put on war paint, which inspired Indians living west of the Cascades to do the same. Now the territory had Indian troubles on all fronts, and for help it turned to the United States Army.

A new regiment had been promised to Washington Territory, but there was still no sign of it. And with northern Indian canoe sightings reported almost daily, several Whatcom County citizens started a letter-writing campaign in the Olympia Pioneer Democrat, the only newspaper west of the Cascades and north of Vancouver. In one letter, dated September 28, 1855, regional Indian commissioner/coal mine manager/country judge E. C. Fitzhugh wrote from Whatcom:

Can you give any information about the military post that is to be established? We are very much exposed, there being only some seven or eight men on this Bay. Two of those northern canoes loaded with armed Indians could easily exterminate every man, woman and child in this part of the country, and make their escape without any person in your part of the country being informed thereof. It is really time that this state of things should cease and protection to this sparsely settled
country on this frontier looking upon the hostile tribes of the British-Russia[n] America be afforded.

By December 1855 the territorial legislature had passed three memorials directing establishment of a military post on Bellingham Bay, urging Congress to allocate funds to garrison the fortress with army regulars, build a military road from the proposed Fort Bellingham to Fort Steilacoom, and to finally send steam warships to patrol Puget Sound from Budd Inlet to the Strait of Georgia because only steamships could keep up with war canoes.

However, the wheels of government had been grinding along. In mid January the newly reactivated Ninth Infantry Regiment—about 800 strong—landed at Fort Vancouver, Colonel George Wright commanding, with Lieutenant Colonel Silas Casey as second in command. The regiment was equipped with the 1841 Harper’s Ferry or “Mississippi” rifle, which had been re-bored to fire the minie ball, a munition that would account for 92 percent of the battlefield casualties in the Civil War. Wright immediately took eight companies to eastern Washington to deal with the Yakamas, while Casey headed north to Fort Steilacoom with the remaining two companies, there to contend with the Nisqually, Klikitat and other groups.

No troops were assigned to face the Northerners.

In September the Pioneer Democrat reported on the impending arrival of the steamer USS Massachusetts, which would assist the sloop of war USS Decatur (a sailing ship) and USS Active, a lightly armed side-wheeler survey ship, in providing protection to settlers.

The ships did not arrive soon enough to prevent a raiding party of Northerners from again striking the Isaac Ebey residence and three other homesteads on Whidbey Island the evening of January 19, 1856. The raiders even ransacked the revenue cutter Rival. The white settlers jumped into the lightened cutter and gave chase until they caught up with the canoes about 15 miles down-sound. The Indians surrendered several nautical items from the cutter but swore they would fight before they gave up anything else.

Shortly after the new year, the people of Whatcom took steps to protect themselves by forming a volunteer company they called the “Whatcom Rangers.” In a January 23, 1856, letter to Governor Stevens, Russell Peabody—Henry Roeder’s partner and a Ranger captain—stressed that the community soon expected an attack from the canoes:

“They say that we are all girls and that they are coming to show us what men are. Take what they want, kill what they can and take all the Lummi tribe prisoners and make slaves of them. They may not do it, but that their will is good enough we have every reason to believe them.

Peabody then (and not for the last time) asked for an armed steamer to cruise that portion of the sound, noting
that it "would relieve the minds of our settlers not a little." Finally, in a terse postscript he reported that two northern Indian women living with white men on the bay were warning that attack was imminent and that "they were afraid to stay any longer."

With no hope of seeing troops any time soon, the Rangers built a small fort on the bluff just north of the Whatcom Falls mill and prepared for the worst. It came in February when Governor Stevens called up the militia, including the Whatcom Rangers. Despite the threat from the north, the Rangers were dispatched south to Seattle. The bizarre posting did not escape the Pioneer Democrat: "We are informed (Bellingham Bay) can boast of but 30 white residents capable of bearing arms, and being efficient in the field, a company of 24 men (including a few 'half-breeds' and Indians) have been enrolled." This certainly was evidence of the patriotism of the territory's northern-most community, the newspaper lauded.

Remarkably, ten of the Indians were listed as residents of the "Northwest Coast," with names such as John Short, John Long and Ank Stout. Here were the very people the Whatcom settlers were the most up in arms about, eager to fight alongside them. The Indians signed on for $35 a month and blankets. Fitzhugh had sold Stevens on the idea of enlisting Northerners, hoping that the governor would employ them as scouts to "give them a lively chance for being killed."

It also was hoped that regular patrols by the Decatur and the revenue cutter Jefferson Davis would be enough to intimidate numerous bands of northern Indians reported in and about Vancouver Island and the San Juans.

In a letter drafted June 18, 1856, British Crown Colony Governor James Douglas warned Bellingham Bay citizens that a Haida man had accused someone living on the bay of stealing his wife. Stressing the code of retaliation, the governor urged local officials to investigate the charge and, if true, return the woman.

By then Douglas was well-acquainted with the Haida. In the summer of 1855 more than 2,000 of them arrived in Victoria and camped in the vicinity of the fort. They said they were seeking employment, but Douglas was far from convinced. In a letter to the British government he expressed "great and increasing anxiety" over the "presence of so many armed barbarians in a weak and defenceless colony."

Always one to tackle a problem head-on, Douglas appointed the first colonial militia of Vancouver Island. Although the militia was composed of but ten men, they proved more than enough to prevent disputes between the Northerners and white settlers from escalating into violence. By autumn the Haida were gone; Douglas felt that the colony had been made secure and the Indians had been provided with a quality educational experience:

They begin in fact to have a clearer idea of the nature and utility of laws, having for object the punishment of crimes and the protection of the property, which may be considered as the first step in the process of civilization.

By August 1856 the Whatcom Rangers returned from Washington's Indian war—much to the relief of Bellingham Bay residents—and were officially deactivated as a formal militia unit. The only disgruntled Whatcom citizen was Indian agent Fitzhugh who, in a letter to the territorial militia commander in Olympia, complained that he needed more blankets to pay off the "savages" who had
refused to cooperate and get killed. Meanwhile, a small item appeared in the August 29 edition of the *Pioneer Democrat*: "The brig George Emory sailed from Steilacoom on Friday last for Bellingham Bay, with Capt. Pickett and Company D, Ninth Infantry to garrison the fort at that place."

The establishment of Forts Bellingham and Townsend—the latter to be built by Company I, Fourth Infantry in October of that same year—was not only to serve as a deterrent against northern Indian raids but to lend these communities the essential perception of solidity required to attract the capital to mill lumber and, in the case of Bellingham Bay, dig Fitzhugh's coal—coal that would fuel the steamers of the United States Navy and commercial fleets. The forts also would serve notice of a strong American presence along the international border just 15 miles north on the mainland, where Great Britain and the United States still held to conflicting claims.

The Northerners were hardly intimidated. They simply paddled by, as in November 1856 when a large party clashed with the steamer *Massachusetts* on a beach near the sawmill town of Port Gamble. The Indians had been trading in the Olympia area, where one of their number had been murdered two years earlier. On the way home they took their revenge. One group attacked a small schooner, killing one of the crew, while others hit isolated settlements on the shoreline, including the Nisqually Reservation near Steilacoom.

Once alerted, the *Massachusetts* finally had an opportunity to demonstrate how steam power could bring the Northerners under control. She left her anchorage near Seattle early on November 19 and arrived in Steilacoom only to discover that the Indians had left, waging "bloody battles" with local Indians on their way out. The *Massachusetts* immediately chugged down-sound, pursuing the party to the Port Gamble encampment of Northerners employed by the sawmill. The ship's commander, Captain Samuel Swartout, immediately demanded the surrender of the raiding party, as well as the evacuation of the sawmill workers, or he would open fire.

Having yet to confront concentrated American military or naval power, the Northerners refused, countering that if it was a fight the "Bostons" wanted they could have it. They then raised a red war flag, according to the diary of Isaac Ebey, collector of customs at Port Townsend. Swartout brought the *Massachusetts* close to shore, then requisitioned the local steamer *Traveller*, which had just arrived in port with a log boom in tow. The *Traveller* and the *Massachusetts*'s launch were armed with field pieces and positioned offshore so as to prevent the Indians' escape during the night.

At dawn Swartout dispatched a flanking party ashore in heavy seas with a brass howitzer and mortar. Again he demanded a surrender. Again the red flag went up, at which time the ship's flankers opened fire in concert with withering broadsides of round and grape shot unleashed from four of the *Massachusetts*'s eight 32-pound naval guns, plus the guns aboard the *Traveller* and the launch. The Indians retreated into the thick woods to make a stand against the shore party, but the trees provided little cover from the warship's cannon and the looping howitzer rounds. By mid morning the Northerners emerged carrying a white flag. They found their village and most of their possessions—including more than 300 blankets and several fine canoes—destroyed or carried off by the sailors and marines.

As Ebey recalled:

Twenty-seven were found dead—seventeen in one place. Ten were missing. Those who were killed were dreadfully cut up. Some had been killed from splinters from trees. One woman was killed. She and another woman had come from the timber to the camp to carry off the chief who was...
wounded (and later died). They were called to come to the marines. One of them started to them, the other started to run off. She was fired upon and killed, six balls having taken effect in her body.

Swartout next ordered all of the Indians aboard the Massachusetts for the purpose of deporting them to Vancouver Island. The Indians again refused, stating that they would rather purchase canoes from the local Indians and paddle home on their own. Swartout turned down the request, rounded up the survivors, and herded them aboard the warship. American casualties amounted to one marine killed by a gunshot to the head and another struck in the thumb. Three others also were hit by musket balls, but the rounds were deflected by knife handles and pistol butts.

The Indians were fed bread and molasses, then transported to Victoria where Governor Douglas protested that these were Russian Indians and refused Swartout permission to land them. Undaunted, the American proceeded north and put the Northerners ashore on Lasqueti Island. Before the Massachusetts weighed anchor, the Indians were warned a final time never to return. Being a newcomer to Puget Sound, Swartout thought he'd taught the Northerners a lesson they would not soon forget. As one settler put it, he "flattered himself" that they would never return.

The locals knew better. The deaths of 27 Indians, including a headman, called for retaliation, and they knew it did not matter against whom. It came not one month later when a raiding party landed on San Juan Island to kill Oscar Olney, the assistant U.S. customs inspector. Olney barely escaped, which prompted the legislature to pass a law forbidding trade with Northerners and a resolution urging that the Massachusetts remain on Puget Sound. This sense of foreboding was heightened in Whatcom when in April 1857 a band of Northerners hit the beach at Sehome, broke into Louis Loscher's cabin—presumably looking for the woman Loscher claimed to have purchased from them fair and square several months before—and made off with a stack of blankets, not to mention Loscher himself.

But what about the deterrent of Fort Bellingham? In a frantic letter to Governor Stevens, Fitzhugh said that the
Loscher raid was also a scouting mission. The Northerners had reconnoitered the nascent military post and found it and its occupants so pathetic that just as soon as they could gather reinforcements they were going to return and cut off the heads of Captains Pickett and Peabody “and myself certainly,” Fitzhugh wrote.

We might all be killed as we expect no assistance from the Military Post, they having as much as they can do to protect their perimeter, their pickets not being finished and many of the soldiers being in irons in the guardhouse.

Fitzhugh hand carried his missive to the governor in Olympia and dropped off a copy at the newspaper office for effect. The Pioneer Democrat printed the letter almost verbatim, including the passage reporting that friendly Indians had spotted 14 canoes of Stikines, Haida and Bella Bellas in the Lopez Island area, about 375 men and only two women amongst them—all painted and armed . . . and all around us, gathering meaner everyday.

But there was more. The Massachusetts had left Puget Sound for refit and was to be replaced by the steamer USS John Hancock, which had not yet arrived. The Pioneer Democrat expressed alarm. For four years the raids from the north had persisted, with “murders—and some of them of the most daring character—within sight of our most populous towns,” the newspaper reported. Now there was nothing to prevent a visit from “these disagreeable neighbors.”

Fitzhugh’s Indians may or may not have been the large party that Swartout logged on his way out the Strait of Juan de Fuca aboard the Massachusetts. The steamer stopped off in Victoria where the captain consulted with Governor Douglas about northern raiding parties and other matters. With the Haida peacefully encamped about the fort, Douglas saw no cause for alarm. Consequently, Swartout saw no reason to delay his trip to San Francisco in order to overlap with the Hancock. How could he possibly know that Douglas would stir up the pot a few days later by turning away from Victoria’s inner harbor several canoes full of Northerners from Russian America seeking trade and all of the attendant excitements.

With Swartout gone, Fitzhugh told Governor Stevens he had no choice but to form his own volunteer company of miners and build his own blockhouse. Old Fort Defiance, way over on the other side of Whatcom Creek from the mines, was just too far away. All he needed to feel “cozier” was a cannon, which he believed would inspire confidence in his forces, otherwise they might just beat a path south and leave Bellingham Bay to the Lumis, the harbor seals and Henry Roeder. “They only remain now waiting for the arrival of a steamer and trusting to Providence not to be murdered in the meantime,” he concluded.

Stories of close calls, vanishing sailing craft and other raids, allegedly the work of the Northerners, abounded that spring and summer, even after the Hancock arrived. Whatcom’s Henry Roeder reported that his vessel, the H. C. Page, Captain James Carr commanding, had been chased from Port Townsend all the way up to Volcano Point by several canoes while en route to Olympia. They eventually caught up with and fired upon his vessel about 15 miles south of Steilacoom. Roeder escaped with his craft and immediately reported the incident to authorities in Olympia. Carr maintained in the Pioneer Democrat that these same raiding parties had boarded and robbed the schooner Phantom en route from Port Townsend to Victoria. State Adjutant General James Tilton had pursued these raiders in the steamer Traveller, but they were long gone.

The inferior quality of sail against the canoes was underscored again in July when the revenue cutter Jefferson Davis, with Captain Granville O. Haller and Company I, Fourth Infantry, aboard, failed to overtake a raiding party cutting through the lower sound. This same group was said to have waylaid the 15-ton schooner Wild Pigeon, bound from Steilacoom to Port Townsend with six souls. Nearly calmed in a light breeze off Vashon Island and with only the helmsman on deck, the Pigeon was overtaken and boarded by the raiders. As Whidbey Island settler Hugh Crockett wrote:

The Indians shot him and all the others as fast as they showed their heads above deck. Just off Vashon Island. When they had killed all the crew and passengers, they plundered and burned the vessel, and in a few hours there was not a vestige left of the little craft.

But the Northerners were far from finished this journey, according to Crockett. A few hours later they encountered a small ship from Utsalady near Rocky Point, just south of Port Blakey. They killed the captain and all three of his passengers, looted and burned the vessel and sent it to the bottom.

Haller had no such worries, armed to the teeth as he was aboard the Davis. But the Indians held sailing vessels in such contempt that they actually stopped off and raided a Clallam village on the way home with Haller’s sails clearly in sight. They also attempted to kidnap and murder Whidbey Island’s Dr. J. C. Kellogg in revenge for the chief they had lost at Port Gamble, but Kellogg was not at home.

Three weeks went by without further incident until midnight, August 11, 1857. That’s when the Northerners returned to Whidbey and brutally murdered and mutilated Isaac Ebey, ransacked his home and drove his family into the night.

The Ebey Massacre

Isaac Neff Ebey came west in 1846, crossing the plains to find a home in the Oregon Country. An educated man,
brave and affable, Ebey became a community leader from the start, serving in turn as a district attorney, collector of customs for the Puget Sound district, delegate to the Oregon Territorial Legislature, a captain of the Territorial Volunteers and, briefly, as adjutant general for Washington Territory and probate judge for Island County. His homestead, "The Cabins," was visited frequently by whites and Indians alike.

The Ebey murder was to 1850s-era settlers what Pearl Harbor Day would be for their great-grandchildren. It is remembered in many pioneer accounts of the period. The story varies only according to details, and these depend largely on how close the teller lived to the Ebeyes. There were a lot of the "just misses."

Henry Roeder recalled making preparations to sail his wife Elizabeth over to the islands on the Page. Elizabeth was friends with the wife of Marshall George W. Corliss, who had come west with Ebey’s party in 1846. They were staying with the Ebeyes during the session of the United States District Court, for which Ebey was prosecutor, at Penn Cove, across the prairie from the Ebey homestead. Fortunately for Elizabeth, a squall blew in and Roeder was forced to find shelter in the lee of the island, several miles from the cove. From his anchorage, Roeder said he spotted the campfires of the northern Indians who would soon visit the Ebeye household. The Northerners had been by the Ebeyes’ earlier in the day seeking provisions. In observance of the law that forbade trading with the Northerners, Ebey turned them away. On their way back to the landing they asked one of Ebey’s hired hands if Ebey were a "great chief." Indeed he was, the man replied, unaware that he was pronouncing a death sentence.

"Blanket Bill" Jarman, a Whatcom County settler who had once been enslaved by Northerners, sensed that something was up and tried to warn Ebey. He’d seen this same group gambling on the beach; the colonel "had better be on guard," he said. Ebey dismissed the warning. He and Mrs. Ebey had both met this bunch, he said, and they seemed like "good Indians." Luzena Wallace saw it differently. Three days earlier she and her husband, Colonel William Wallace, observed this same band in a tent on the beach, wearing war paint. She recalled, "I saw Indians in there with their faces painted, and when the Indians paint their faces they mean to fight." Her fears drew laughter from the menfolk, including her husband. Still another account had it that these Indians had approached Ebey on the afternoon of his death while the colonel was working in the fields. They wanted him to come down and inspect a canoe they said had been damaged. He demurred.

The raiders stole up to the house twice that evening, on both occasions given away by the colonel’s "very fierce" dog. The first time, Ebey paddled out on the porch, saw nothing, and returned to bed. The second time, Mrs. Ebey told her husband that she suspected the Indians were after the laundry she had hung on the line that afternoon. The colonel went to check and was accosted by several warriors. He asked what they wanted. They replied, "Your head," and fired two shots. Ebey turned to run and they shot him twice more, one ball piercing his heart, the other entering his ampit. They next grabbed Ebey’s ax and cut off his head.

Meanwhile, Ebey’s wife and children and the Corlisses vaulted out of the windows in the rear of the house and ran across the yard. Some fled to the woods while others bounded across the open prairie to the Robert C. Hill residence—where Judge Henry R. Crosbie was staying—about three-quarters of a mile away. Mrs. Corliss, who was in the latter group, was shot at by an Indian who had entered the house and followed the fugitives to the window.

Henry Roeder recalled:

As Mrs. Corliss climbed over the fence she was fired at twice. In her flight, Ebey, that is, Ebey’s son, was close in pursuit of her. She supposed it was an Indian; and she ran barefooted for two miles and a half to the neighbors. I have been told by the young man that he ran his best and could not keep up with her.

Mrs. Corliss, gasping, barefoot, and clad only in a nightgown, negotiated the blackberry vines and gooseberry bushes and finally made it to the Hill house, young Ebey still hot on her heels. She pounded on the door, screaming “The northern Indians have killed them all!” Hill gave Mrs. Corliss a wrap and some socks for her feet, then dispatched Indians in his employ to raise the alarm on the island. The five men staying in the cabin quickly armed themselves and tore out the door toward the Ebey residence. Not wanting to be left alone, Mrs. Corliss went with them.

The Indians already were in their canoes, paddling away, war songs wafting clearly across the black water. All the rescue party found was Ebey’s headless body and a trashed northern Indians have killed them all!” Hill gave Mrs. Corliss a wrap and some socks for her feet, then dispatched Indians in his employ to raise the alarm on the island. The five men staying in the cabin quickly armed themselves and tore out the door toward the Ebey residence. Not wanting to be left alone, Mrs. Corliss went with them.

The Indians already were in their canoes, paddling away, war songs wafting clearly across the black water. All the rescue party found was Ebey’s headless body and a trashed household—curtains and bedding shredded, crockery and furniture smashed and strewn about the yard. There was no sign of Mr. Corliss and Mrs. Ebey or her other son and daughter. It wasn’t until the next morning that the fugitives emerged from the woods where they had spent the night after slipping past the Northerners through the tall grass.

Following a hastily convened funeral—during which Ebey’s mother groped for his hand and bemoaned the fact that she could not see him—the settlers immediately set about “forting up.” The community, if not the entire territory, would remember the incident until that generation passed on. Hugh Crockett, a neighbor who helped lay the headless body in the coffin, found the memory still painful in 1892 when he wrote:
From the diary of Isaac and Emily Ebey, October 13, 1856 - Jan. 6, 1857

Tuesday, November 25 [1856]. Morning clear and pleasant. Been employed today in hauling timber up the hill. The day has been very pleasant. I think three fugitive Northern Indians passed here today. I think they must have been part of the party that escaped from the fight at Port Gamble—which I neglected to mention yesterday. It appears that a party of Northern Indians had been up the Sound and had been committing depredations as usual, robbing houses, &c. When about returning to Vancouver Island they were pursued by the U.S. Steamer Massachusetts, and overtaken at Port Gamble, where Captain I. Ellis had a number of the same tribe at work, who, as these people arrived, joined them, making the party near one hundred strong. The Captain of the steamer sent word to the Indians that they must deliver up the Indians who had been concerned in the depredations above. This they refused to do, and sent word to the Captain that if he wished to fight, they would fight him, and immediately hoisted a red flag. This was in the evening. At daylight the next morning the Captain had two parties on shore—one with a brass howitzer, and had the little steamer "Traveler" drawn up in shore and had a mortar on her. These dispositions were all made before the Indians were awake. This completed, the Captain sent Dr. Bigelow as an interpreter, to demand the Indians who were guilty. To this the Indians returned a defiant answer, hoisted the red flag, and commenced firing on the parties. The steamer then let off a broadside. The parties on the shore made a charge and waited. The enemy took refuge in the timber near by. The Captain would not suffer his men to follow them into the timber. The firing was then kept up all day, the steamer throwing her heavy metal in the timber where the Indians had taken refuge, and the mortar on this little steamer throwing shells, made dreadful havoc. Some two thousand dollars worth of property belonging to the Indians was destroyed, among which were three hundred new blankets. The next morning the Indians hoisted a white flag. Twenty-seven were found dead—seventeen in one place. Ten are missing. Those who were killed were dreadfully cut up. Some had been killed with splinters from the tree. One woman was killed. She and another woman had come from the timber to the camp to carry off the chief who was wounded (both legs being broken). They were called to come to the man's—On Saturday last, we started to the camp and went to the Indians' camp, where we were entertained by them with a feast. We were all taken from the fight at Port Gamble. We were besieged by the Indians who were superior in numbers to ours. There were thirty of them, while we had twenty-five. The Indians seemed to be rather anxious to get back to Washington. They were already hoisted off the island. One man was killed by a shot in the head, and another died from wounds. The Indians then dictated his terms to them, which was that all who were there should come aboard the steamer, and be taken to Victoria. This the Indians did not wish to do, but rather wished to purchase canoes from the other natives, and go to Victoria by themselves. This was not suffered. One marine was killed by a shot in the head, and another died from wounds. They were saved from death by the ball of the enemy striking the handle of a large knife, and the other the butt of a pistol.

The day has been pleasant. A vessel is at anchor tonight at the landing. I believe it is the schooner H. C. Page, from Bellingham Bay.

—Isaac Ebey
The tragedy threw a gloom over the entire settlement, and caused us to build stockades and blockhouses, many of which still stand. My brother and myself used to reproach ourselves somewhat for bringing our father and mother out to such an exposed country.

Aftermath

Years later most of the settlers tended to agree that the raiders were “Kake,” or Tlingit from Russian America and that the leader of the band was the brother of an Indian killed in the 1856 raids. Word filtered down the coast that the raiders stopped off at several villages on their way home, showing off Ebey’s head and serving notice that a similar fate awaited those who stood in their way. They scalped the trophy and carried it north; Hudson’s Bay Company officials at Fort Simpson reported seeing it in the possession of a raiding party passing through the area a few days later.

For more than two years the family tried to recover the head. In the summer of 1858 Hudson’s Bay factor Captain Charles Dodd thought he had located the head in a village about 750 miles north of Victoria. The trader’s first inquiry about the scalp was met by warlike threats and he was forced to back off. But when he returned a year later the tribe gave up the “scalp” for six blankets, one cotton handkerchief, three pipes, six heads of tobacco and one fathom of cotton. The trophy was delivered to Dodd in a filthy, fiber-wrapped bundle; to his horror, Dodd recognized it instantly. It remains unclear whether the skull came with the scalp, which was described in detail in the Victoria British Colonist:

The scalp is entire, with all the hair and ears. The skin is free from the fleshy matter, appears white, but slightly discolored with smoke. The beautifully fine silken hair is as natural as when struck down by the ruthless tomahawk of the savage.

Winfield Ebey, the deceased’s brother, commented at the time:

At last a portion of the mutilated remains of my Dear Brother is returned. Near Three Years have Elapsed Since his murder & now his poor head (or portion of it) returns to his home. . . . The hair looks quite Natural. It is a sad memento of the past. . . .

Revenge had been taken. The colonel was dead, and Whidbey Island and northwest Washington would never be the same. In fact, the murder had so angered the white communities, American and Canadian, that every conceivable class of commercial steamer was pressed into service to ferry soldiers from one potential trouble spot to the next. The big canoes quickly vanished from southern waters.

“As regards the northern Indians, there are none at all in our waters now nor have they made their appearance since the murder of Colonel Ebey on Whidbey’s Island,” reported Fourth Infantry commander Lieutenant Colonel Thompson Morris in a November 1857 dispatch from Fort Vancouver to his superiors in San Francisco.

Governor Douglas had confirmed to Morris that the Ebey raiders were “Russian.” The governor emphasized that these Northerners could not possibly be from the British possessions, for no “British” Indians had “ever committed outrages” in United States waters. The method of Ebey’s mutilation also confirmed for many the origin and identity of the murderers—only the Tlingit groups scalped
decapitated heads. The governor said they would have no problem getting permission from the Russians for a punitive raid. However:

As the tribe is a large one it would be absolutely necessary to send a large force—at least 500 men—so that no failure could happen to the expedition. That they should be pursued and chastised for their outrages seem[ed] to me to be desirable and the sooner it is done the better.

Morris again stressed the need for reliable steam warships on Puget Sound. The Hancock (much like the Massachusetts) was a tub that could barely make headway. What the district needed was a steam warship at all times, under direction of the army, preferably a swift side-wheeler with a long gun.

The presence alone of such a vessel would keep out the Indians, and from what I can learn, I am convinced that if the Massachusetts had remained in the sound the Indians would never have had the courage to kill Col. Ebey, as they knew very well they could have been pursued and captured.

Morris also did not think it would hurt to reinforce the “bitter hatred” the American Indians held for the Northerners. “There is hardly a tribe within our waters but has had some of their men killed by these Indians, and frequently their women and children stolen to be made slaves...”

The San Juan Dispute

By January 1859 northern parties were active again. On January 25 the schooners Blue Wing and Ellen Marie left Steilacoom for Port Townsend and were never heard from again. In April an Indian reported what had happened. As the Blue Wing passed Vashon she was attacked by a big canoe bearing ten warriors and five women; the warriors murdered the Blue Wing’s crew, then plundered and sank the vessel. They then attacked the Ellen Marie, whose captain ordered them away, then fired on the raiders, killing one as they attempted to board. The raiders retreated but renewed the attack after midnight, looting, burning and sinking the vessel with all hands.

Three weeks later the brig Swiss Boy was “swarmed” over by several hundred Northerners after she had put in to Nitinat Sound, near the Strait of Juan de Fuca, for emergency repairs. The rigging was stripped, the main mast toppled and the entire crew held prisoner for several days. One escaped and made it to Victoria where the Royal Navy promptly dispatched the 21-gun steam corvette HMS Satellite to the rescue. The Satellite caught up with and punished the raiders, released the prisoners and recovered some of the booty. The headman was arrested and taken to Victoria, much to the surprise of the Indians, who thought the

“Georgemen” would be pleased at the Indians’ treatment of the “Bostons.”

Three months later the Northerners were all but forgotten as the United States and Great Britain suddenly turned their attention to the possession and occupation of the San Juans. Captain George E. Pickett was ordered by General William S. Harney, commander of the Pacific Coast military forces, to occupy San Juan Island on July 27 under the pretext that Pickett’s company would protect all 18 American settlers there from the incursions of northern Indians. What the settlers really wanted protection from was the Hudson’s Bay Company, which grazed more than 4,000 sheep on the island and was jealous of its territory.

The island had been in dispute between the British and Americans for nearly 13 years thanks to an ambiguity in the language of the 1846 treaty that set the boundary at the 49th parallel. A joint boundary survey had been under way for more than a year to resolve the dispute, but the respective commissioners had reached an impasse with no resolution in sight, which made Harney’s move all the more provocative. But Governor Douglas was hardly an innocent victim. Only days before Pickett’s landing he had issued orders to evict as “trespassers” all American settlers on the island.

Nevertheless, there was some validity to concerns about Northerners on the island. They still quartered among the San Juan Islands on southern journeys, and they still did not mind lopping off the heads of any Americans they found.

With the onset of the crisis there were suddenly more steam warships than the Northerners had ever seen—British and American—huffing about the islands and Strait of Juan de Fuca. They had huge guns and contingents of Royal Marines and U.S. Army regulars, all armed with rifled muskets. The pickings seemed not so easy. Following the crisis, the raids continued to decline largely because American and British forces jointly occupied San Juan Island for the next 12 years, providing a double-barreled deterrent.

Finally, as more white settlers poured in during the 1860s, bringing strength in numbers and the accoutrements of modern civilization, the raids dwindled to small forays against isolated settlements and eventually ceased altogether. The Northerners came to rely more and more on the potlatch as a method of demonstrating and accumulating wealth. And many followed the precedent of a few of their brethren years before and sought employment in white society. The era of the big raids was gone forever.

Mike Vouri is park ranger/interpreter for the National Park Service at San Juan Island National Historical Park. In 1994 he curated the exhibit “George Pickett and the Frontier Army Experience” for the Whatcom Museum of History and Art. He is currently writing a book about the Pig War.
AFTER THE SELECTION of Tacoma as the western terminus of the Northern Pacific Railroad, Arthur A. Denny and a group of Seattle boosters banded together to build their own railroad eastward from Seattle. This stock certificate is from the papers of Arthur A. Denny, 1851-1899, which were recently donated to the Washington State Historical Society. The bulk of the collection consists of the records of the Seattle and Walla Walla Railroad, including stock certificates, minutes books and correspondence. The papers also contain: correspondence between Seattle and Illinois describing the fledgling Puget Sound settlement, written by members of the original Denny party, 1853; a “Plan of an Oregon outfit,” outlining the rules governing, and goods carried by, the Denny party as it traversed the Oregon Trail, 1851; political correspondence and ephemera from Denny’s tenure as territorial delegate to Congress, 1867-1869; a printed promotional plat map of Seattle, 1873; original first and second handwritten drafts of Denny’s Pioneer Days on Puget Sound, published in 1888; and miscellaneous photographs of Seattle. The Society’s museum collections received the surveyor’s compass and tape Denny used in early surveys of Seattle.
Albert Rosellini was elected Washington's 14th governor on November 5, 1956. In 1952 he had unsuccessfully sought his party's nomination for that office, losing a bitter battle to Congressman Hugh Mitchell. His 1956 campaign against Governor Arthur B. Langlie's hand-picked successor, Lieutenant Governor Emmett Anderson, had been marked by accusations of improper ties to liquor and gambling interests as well as attempts to make Rosellini's Catholic faith and Italian heritage unseen but dominant issues. Despite this and due in large part to the atrocious condition of the state's mental and penal institutions as well as the public's demand for proper services from state government, Rosellini won by over 100,000 votes.

The Mandate

Rosellini's election was a call for change and modernization in state government. The sense that the old, traditional methods of Langlie's party could not effect the changes needed was definitely part of the public mood. Also, the fact that the state had just elected a Catholic, first-generation Italian governor—the first west of the Mississippi—was proof of significant changes in the electorate. However, other forces operated to make the 1956 election a turning point for the state and its machinery of government.

For years Washington had been struggling with the tensions created by the Depression, World War II and the recognition that state government, under the old priorities, was unable to provide proper services. Mushrooming school populations and the return of the war veterans had shown that tax support of schools was inadequate. Pressures on higher education facilities necessitated expansion and additional funding. The property-based tax system, implemented in the late 1880s, was not adaptable to the state's needs. Years of revenue shortages had had many drastic consequences—among the most prominent was the state's failure to provide adequate modern penal and mental health facilities.

Population growth and mobility of people and businesses increased the pressure to build and improve the state's bridges, ferries and highways. The relationship between labor and business was
facing new, modern problems. The rise of small businesses and transformation from the prewar big business versus big labor scenario had led to the Taft-Hartley Labor Relations Act and attempts in Washington to pass “right to work” laws that sought to curb perceived exploitation by labor unions. Gone were the days of labor, timber, agriculture and banking as the predominant forces affecting state government in Olympia. The emerging economies of Asia—as well as the growth of world trade—were producing pressure in the state for expanded, modern ports and a concomitant transportation infrastructure. Along with this came the need to compete with other western states in attracting new businesses.

Launching an Administration

ALL THESE FORCES were at work in the political climate of the state when Rosellini was elected governor in 1956. Even though he had sought the office for more than four years and, more than any other political figure, had forced the political parties to focus on the need for change and modernization, he was not fully prepared to assume office. Perhaps typical of most politicians, and as he later confided to cabinet member Warren Bishop, Rosellini never considered what would have to happen if he won and he had few ideas as to a cabinet and staff. He told his inner circle and closest confidants—Dr. Leo Rosellini, Victor Rosellini and Justice Hugh Rosellini—much the same thing. Years later Victor recalls the group telling Albert that his name, background and heritage made him suspect in most people’s minds and that he would have to be very good or he would be ridden out of office at the first opportunity.

Moving quickly, Rosellini asked Charles Hodde, Harold Shefelman and Joe Dwyer to join his brain trust and help shape his administration. Their first and highest priority was selection of a strong chief of staff who would be nonpolitical and have the confidence of legislators and the press. Assisted by H. P. “Dick” Everest, acting president of the University of Washington, Rosellini interviewed Warren Bishop, a professor in the School of Political Science and Public Administration.

Bishop’s nonpartisan background, work on King County’s Metro legislation, and prior service on the Edmonds City Council attracted Rosellini; he outlined his ideas about reorganizing state government and the role of the executive branch to Bishop at their first meeting. The loose coordination of various state departments and lack of responsibility to the chief executive made reform impossible without fundamental changes in budget management throughout state government.

Rosellini believed Bishop could be instrumental in such efforts. While flattered to have been called, Bishop had reservations based mainly on rumors he had heard about the governor-elect. At the same time, he was interested in the challenge presented because he had studied the state’s budget and accounting systems as they affected municipalities and considered them archaic and ineffective. Sensing Bishop’s uneasiness, Rosellini arranged a meeting a few days later with Leo, Victor, Hugh, Harold Shefelman, Charles Hodde and professor Angelo Pellegrini. The group convinced Bishop that the new administration was dedicated to progressive reform and would be run as nonpolitically as possible; he accepted the position the next day.

THE FIRST DAYS were hectic. While Bishop directed the transition, Rosellini concentrated on key cabinet positions. Most major posts were chosen rather quickly. Among the first were Charles Hodde (State Tax Commission), Roy Betlock (Washington State Patrol), Don G. Abel (Liquor Control Board), John A. Biggs (Department of Game), William A. Bugge (Department of Highways) and Joseph D. Dwyer (Department of Agriculture). Others were ironed out by mid December. These included Jerry Hagan (Department of Labor and Industries), Louise S. Taylor (Department of Licenses), Milo Moore (Department of Fisheries), Peter Giovan (Department of Employment Securities), John Vanderzicht (Department of Parks and Recreation), Lloyd Nelson (Department of General Administration) and Earl Coe (Department of Conservation).

By the time of the inauguration only two cabinet posts...
were unfilled: Institutions and the yet-to-be-created Department of Commerce and Economic Development.
The appointment of a director of Institutions would be the most critical Rosellini had to make since the conditions in the state's institutions had been the primary issue of his campaign. He felt strongly that he would need a nationwide search for the right person to do the job. Rosellini had also stressed the need for a new department that would proactively encourage businesses to locate in the state and take steps to assist in job and infrastructure growth, thereby increasing the state's economic base. Past state efforts mainly focused on tourism. Only a person with the right credentials could successfully launch such an effort—assuming the legislation creating the post was passed. Here again Rosellini was determined to go outside the state to get the best person.

Political self-interest also motivated Rosellini's search for the best Institutions director possible. He had said he could turn things around. Failure to do so would be catastrophic, not only for the state but for Rosellini as well, since many of his critics had questioned the legitimacy and good faith of his attacks on Langlie's institutional programs. Through Dr. Will Turnbold of the National Probation and Parole Association, Rosellini heard of a "fellow in Michigan" who had done wonders to improve that state's programs—Dr. Garett Heyns. Although nearing retirement age, Heyns was intrigued by the enormous challenges presented as well as Rosellini's dedication to all-out modernization and reform. On August 3, 1957, Dr. Heyns accepted the position.

Rosellini appointed H. Dewayne Kreager to the newly created economic development post (for which the enabling legislation passed in March). A Ritzville native, Kreager had been an economic advisor to the Truman administration and Senator Warren Magnuson. After the war he had served as secretary of the National Securities Resources Board. Like Heyns, Kreager was a man of national stature with widespread business and government contacts. He assumed his post on October 1, 1957.

By any standard, the men and women chosen by Rosellini to lead his administration were extremely well-qualified. Almost without exception, they were highly educated and experienced in their fields. Years later Adele Ferguson, columnist for the Bremerton Sun and its political reporter in Olympia, quoted a long-time Rosellini foe as stating: "He made good appointments.... His department heads were as good as any that ever served here." With cabinet picks ranging from former political opponents to those who had served under Langlie, Rosellini clearly chose the best he could find without any political considerations. Though often characterized as a governor who favored cronies, political friends and the spoils system, the record of his major appointments belies any such label.

Setting a Progressive Agenda
In addition to choosing his people, Rosellini spent the early weeks identifying the themes that would establish the tone of his administration's first efforts. Almost immediately
he advised his speech writers and communication team—Bob and Lee Schulman of KING-TV, Virginia Burnside, Ed Munro, Paul Coughlin and Ed Henry—of the issues and items he wanted to discuss in his inaugural address. While certain issues—institutional reform, economic development and transportation—were obvious, Rosellini gradually felt the need to expand his address to mention almost every issue he considered important. An activist by nature, Rosellini wanted to show how the priorities of his administration would differ from not only Langlie but almost all past governors. The result was a lengthy address that took more than 45 minutes to deliver. It did, however, outline in detail those issues and problems of state government, as well as the need for leadership, that had culminated in his election and brought him to the podium before a joint session of the legislature on January 16, 1957.

Standing before his family (including his father and mother), friends, political allies, former foes and the 1957 legislature, Rosellini sounded a call for action. He reiterated his belief that there were things the state must do—rather than wait for events to happen. While not a great speech, according to observers—due mainly to his nervous mannerisms and uneasy speaking style—it consistently asked for action by state government. “We [the state] have the obligation of ‘leadership’—and we have the responsibility of ‘regulation,’” he said. He urged “purchasing park sites while still available,” “immediate action to protect against . . . air pollution,” “annual legislative sessions,” “enactment of a sound civil service system,” “establishment of modern alcoholic treatment programs,” “increased teachers’ salaries” and “expansion of the junior colleges of the state.” He insisted on “expediting the construction of the second Lake Washington Bridge,” “abolition of lien laws and ratable reductions,” “support for a world’s fair” and “passage of laws to protect the rights of persons who have been discriminated against because of race, creed or color.”

Seeking action on many fronts, and overly ambitious, this address established a long-term, progressive agenda that provided opponents with a laundry list of issues they would use against him. Yet Rosellini’s call for action reflected fully his approach to government. His career in the state senate was one of action. If some part of state government—insti-

Budget Reform: The First Step

On his first day in office Rosellini began work with Warren Bishop on changing the state budgeting and accounting procedures that had been implemented in 1921. His years in the state senate had made Rosellini aware of the inefficiencies, inequities and lack of accountability in the process. Not only was there little accountability for state moneys spent by
spent by many millions of dollars. . . . Despite this, it is my firm hope that we will [be able] to run our state for the next two years without any added taxes.” Both he and Bishop were counting heavily on budget reform to assist not only in meeting state needs with funds on hand but also in making sure that the funds ended up where they were most required.

Planning for reform began with a $175,000 appropriation to survey the present system and explore methods for establishing “a modern uniform system of accounting for all state agencies, together with . . . a related program-type budget.” With this funding a management consulting firm, Donaho and Associates, was hired to work with a bipartisan advisory committee chaired by Bishop and including Speaker John O’Brien, Hodde, Professor George Shipman, Senator Ed Munro and Peter Giovan. In addition, Rosellini asked Senator Marshall Neill and Representative Joe Chytl, Republican legislators, to participate. That group, along with the consultants, met frequently with Governor Rosellini to discuss progress in the drafting of a reform proposal.

Bishop’s committee and Donaho and Associates found existing practices “mechanical, routine and overly detailed.” There was no substantive review process, and “judgment factors as to a particular request are almost wholly lacking. . . . Single entry bookkeeping, with its concomitant lack of self-balancing features in financial record-keeping, was the state’s official accounting policy,” according to their appraisal. The activities of the budget section consisted mostly of checking for arithmetical mistakes. Further, agencies requested one appropriation for operations and another for salaries and wages, and they were prevented by law from transfers between the two, “thereby curtailing their freedom in using funds . . . as . . . needs develop during the course of the biennium.” According to Donaho, the “budget process lacks integrity and substantive review . . . the detailed proving, cross-checking, and cross-checking again which takes place in the budget section and which dominates the time and attention of the staff, is largely misdirected effort and bears only an accidental relationship to a proper budget function.”

As a result of this work, the 1959 legislature was presented for the first time with a program-oriented budget for all agencies, showing proposed operating budgets by program categories and a six-year capital improvement program by department. At the same time, the administration introduced a proposed budget and accounting act. If passed, the act would require the governor to submit a balanced budget with revenue sufficient to meet proposed appropriations. It provided for the liquidation of the general fund deficit left from the
1957 biennium, established a new accounting and reporting system, made the heads of agencies responsible for conducting their business within the budget even if revenues fell, and made the budgets more adaptable to changing needs. In addition, the act established a new central budget agency. The act was designed to link budgeting and administration so that the governor's programs could be implemented and not be stymied by the budget process. Although the measure was debated vigorously in both houses, it passed without significant amendment. For the first time in the state's history the governor could plan agency budgets on a program basis and also know how much money was being spent—and where—for those same programs.

With the passage of the act, the budget office became a part of the executive branch, with its director appointed by the governor. Chief of Staff Warren Bishop was immediately named director and added to Rosellini's cabinet. Bishop set up a new accounting department and hired a permanent staff. In meeting the charge that it "establish the vital link between budgeting and administration," the agency wrote a budget-and-accounting manual, held intensive training sessions with agencies' staff, redesigned state forms, and improved payroll and vendor payment systems.

The act implemented several other changes, including rigorous allocation control by the budget office. This enabled the governor to allot funds to the agencies with his own budgetary or policy goals in mind. Further, the act prohibited agencies from spending moneys not allotted to them by the governor. Previously, heads of agencies had personally appeared and defended their budgets before legislative committees. Now the budget director defended the entire budget, leading to more equitable treatment for similar institutions and less lobbying of individual legislators by agency heads. At the same time, regulations concerning travel by state employees, which formerly had varied from agency to agency, were made uniform.

Although for the most part the new act passed in its proposed format, some changes were made. Higher education forces resisted allotment control by the governor.
Concern was expressed about possible favoritism and lack of academic freedom. Hence, the colleges and universities were exempted. An amendment also gave the legislative budget committee a role in preparing the final executive budget. The legislative budget committee, which met between sessions with various institutions and agencies, trying to forecast eventual appropriation levels, was considered powerful and prestigious by legislators, and they were reluctant to eliminate its function. Although Bishop and Rosellini claimed that it represented an unwarranted intrusion by the legislature into the executive planning process, the reform act probably would not have passed without this amendment. In practice, the provision helped to educate the legislature in advance as to the administration's proposals and goals under the budget.

The act failed to address two areas of reform initially sought by Rosellini and Bishop. Efforts to include transportation and highway budgets under the governor's allocation process were rejected adamantly by state representative Julia Butler Hansen, powerful chair of the House Highways Committee, who insisted that the Transportation Department submit a separate budget that would go through her committee. It was still included in the governor's program budget (as part of the 1959 act) but was separately developed by that department. Further, the 1959 act did not create a coordinated planning function for all departments under the governor's direct control.

The state auditor's role in the budget process was also changed, and the auditor's office was revamped. Previously, the state auditor had examined and approved the hundreds of thousands of purchase requisitions generated by state agencies each year—called the pre-audit function. The auditor would then permit disbursement of state funds by issuing warrants to pay for these same pre-audited requisitions. Then he would approve his own actions—the post-audit function. Donaho and Associates stated that this seemed "an unwise mixture of authority" that failed to provide proper review. The consultant recommended that warrant approval and disbursement be moved to the state treasurer's office. This left the auditor with only a post-audit function, since the pre-audit function would be performed by the new budget director.

Cliff Yelle, the incumbent auditor, opposed these changes and lobbied hard to maintain his pre-audit power. As a result, a number of editorial writers commented unfavorably—accusing Rosellini of trying to usurp powers. C. J. Johns of the Olympia News said that the governor was "trying to gain absolute power over the state purse strings." He noted that the consultants hired by Rosellini to overhaul the budget system had "marveled at the lack of power held by the chief executive over expenditures," adding that they (Donaho and Associates) believed that, "the Legislature pretty well runs the show, even to the point of exercising some executive prerogative." Even Johns admitted that this move might prove to be efficient, but he doubted that the legislature would pass it. At one point, due in part to Yelle's efforts, the measure almost failed to clear the senate rules committee. Hearing of the problem in the closing hours of the regular session, Rosellini personally met with the rules committee over dinner, and the bill was finally sent to the floor where it passed by a large margin.

Ultimately, Yelle filed a lawsuit challenging the constitutionality of the change. The suit was originally argued before the Thurston County Superior Court and then was appealed to the state supreme court. Both courts upheld the act's basic constitutionality. At Rosellini's request, his advisor Harold Shefelman was appointed special assistant attorney general to defend the act. For years Yelle was bitter about the law and its changes, blaming Rosellini and Bishop for the erosion of his office's power.

The importance of the new act to state government and the governor's office cannot be overstated. Dan Evans, years after he left office, commented on the critical importance of the program budget procedure. For the first time a governor could exert executive leadership over the programs and policies of the various agencies in order to meet his responsibilities more effectively. A governor could also allocate funds where problems existed, such as in mental institutions and juvenile facilities. It was also a critical tool by which a governor and the legislature could monitor performance of state government. For example, it allowed a governor to ascertain how much money the state was spending per person per day on health care, education or incarceration. These data could be compared with amounts spent in other states and also with performance goals.

Rosellini's and Bishop's reforms were fully accepted as a method of enabling an administration to be accountable to the taxpayers and legislature. Whereas such reform was long overdue and was, perhaps, inevitable, the fact remains that it was controversial at the time and many predicted that it would not win legislative approval. Indeed, without Rosellini's personal involvement, it would not have passed the senate in 1959. Only a governor with extensive legislative experience would have known that efficient and accountable state government could not exist without budget reform. Rosellini understood that fact and made it the first priority of his administration.

Payton Smith is a Seattle lawyer and partner with the firm of Davis Wright Tremaine LLP.
Alaska 1899

Alaska 1899
Essays from the Harriman Expedition
Introductions by Polly Burroughs and Victoria Wyatt
Reviewed by Robert C. Carriker.

Celebrating the bicentennial of Robert Gray's exploration of the Columbia River in 1992 was only the first of many such events. Barely a year later several cities memorialized the sesquicentennial of the Washington segment of the Oregon Trail, and in 1995 historians commemorated the 50th anniversary of Hanford's role in ending World War II. On the horizon is the centennial of Seattle's contribution to the Klondike and Nome gold rushes and, a few years farther down the road, the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition. Sandwiched between these two national epics is the Harriman expedition.

Union Pacific Railroad magnate Edward H. Harriman's two-month-long foray to Alaska in the summer of 1899 is significant in the manner in which it contributed to science. The eleven published volumes of the expedition (1902-1905) exhibit unique-for-the-times interdisciplinary teamwork by two dozen specialists aboard the George W. Elder, a kind of floating laboratory. Poetry, photography and introspective spiritual responses to the landscape were given side-by-side consideration with detailed studies on geology, botany and culture.

Alaska 1899 contains itself with two essays by one of the participants, prominent ethnographer George Bird Grinnell. The first essay, from volume one of the reports, examines the natives of the Alaska Coast; the second, from the succeeding volume, deals with the salmon industry. The two supporting essays in this volume are an assessment of Grinnell by Polly Burroughs, Grinnell's great-niece, and a historical overview of the Harriman expedition by Victoria Wyatt. Eighty black-and-white illustrations and a map support the four essays. In many ways this book is an introduction and a sampler for those contemplating a leap into reading all eleven volumes of the expedition. One should also consider reading William H. Goetzman and Kay Sloan's book, Looking Far North: The Harriman Expedition to Alaska, 1899 (1983).

Robert C. Carriker is a professor of history at Gonzaga University, author of three books on the American West, and a vice-president of the Washington State Historical Society Board of Trustees.

Native Peoples of the Northwest

Native Peoples of the Northwest
A Traveler's Guide to Land, Art and Culture
By Jan Halliday and Gail Chehak
Reviewed by Charles N. LeWarne.

Jan Halliday set out to write a small guidebook to traditional Indian cultural museums, heritage centers and galleries of the Northwest. She joined Gail Chehak, tourism director for the Affiliated Tribes of Northwest Indians, and together they discovered much more than they thought possible. Native Peoples of the Northwest is the result of 25,000 travel-miles and years of exploration from southeast Alaska to northern California and as far east as Montana and Idaho. Clearly, there are many places for the traveler to see Native American culture preserved and practiced the way it has been for hundreds of years, as well as other places where the native tribes of the Pacific Northwest have adapted to the ever-growing and encroaching non-native population surrounding them.

The authors suggest that while they initially set out to explore traditional historical and cultural sites, which are extensive, they also found a wealth of native-owned and/or operated festivals, guide services, fish hatcheries and other businesses. These additional resources can provide insight into present-day Indian culture, experience and education beyond what is available in the history and art museums and galleries. One might expect that the island community of Ketchikan, Alaska, originally the site of a native fishing camp, is rich in Tlingit culture and supports several native endeavors. However, to find an excellent display of Northwest coastal first nations' art or newly commissioned Salish art in the Vancouver, British Columbia, airport might be a bit of a surprise.

Most of the guidebook's entries provide enough explanation to give a good idea of the activities, sights and events to expect, plus hours of operation, costs, addresses and phone numbers. Sidebars also suggest additional guidebooks, provide explanations and anecdotes, and offer other information valuable to the traveler.

The book is divided by geographical regions that influenced the lives of the Indian cultures of the past. A folding map inside the front cover shows the regions and tribes covered in the text. An appendix provides a calendar of festivals and events, a list of tribal offices and casinos, suggestions for buying Native American art, and even "Powwow Etiquette." There is also advice on what to do if you are fortunate enough to encounter a sacred site or artifact.

Though short on history, this guidebook is an effective starting point and excellent resource both for those interested in a brief exposure to Native American cultures and those looking for more.

Charles N. LeWarne, a secondary schoolteacher in Mukilteo, is a native of Washington and a graduate of its educational system.
in James J. Hill Michael Malone writes a comprehensive and fascinating account of Hill’s significance in American history and his impact on railroad transportation in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Hill’s ability to use his business knowledge, personal motivation and political talents is well-documented. Malone’s biography not only examines Hill’s life but also captures the era when the Pacific Northwest became accessible to the rest of America.

The author sets the stage by beginning with Hill’s desire to accomplish something extraordinary in his lifetime. As the biography unfolds, the reader sees Hill’s dream fulfilled. The first chapters focus on his rise from poverty to wealth, discussing the mentors who helped him along the way. As Malone recounts many of the challenges that Hill faced and the determination with which he faced them, an honest profile of the man emerges. Details about his relationship with his wife Mary and his children further enhance the narrative.

In the latter half of the book Malone illuminates the importance of Hill’s Great Northern Railway and the areas it served. Hill understood that the cities on the railroad route must be economically successful. To that end Hill nurtured the timber industry in the Pacific Northwest and agriculture in Minnesota and North Dakota.

This readable book has few faults, but it could have provided more than two maps with which to follow the railroad’s progress. Hill purchased several railroads, including the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad, which he merged with the Great Northern—today known as the Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway. It would have been helpful to clarify the routes as Hill acquired them. But this is a small point, indeed, considering that the book is otherwise captivating, as suitable for research as for pure reading enjoyment.

Jennifer Curran, a secondary schoolteacher in Seattle, is a native of Washington and a graduate of its educational system.

Current and Noteworthy

By Robert C. Carriker, Book Review Editor

Second only to the opening of the Washington State History Museum last summer, and one slot ahead of the impact of COLUMBIA Magazine, Jean Gardner’s 1989 Washington Centennial Commission was the current decade’s most significant boost to statewide interest in local history. Of late, county histories have been in vogue; three of them are particularly notable.

Geologic Road Trips in Grant County, Washington, by Mark S. Amara and George E. Neff (Moses Lake: Adam East Museum and Art Center, 1996; 93 pp., $14.95 paper), explains how ancient lava flows and mighty floods sculpted the unique channeled scablands of north central Washington. Keyed to roadside markers on 400 miles of federal and state highways in Grant County, the book suggests 15 trips and provides a detailed itinerary for each. Maps, photographs, charts, diagrams, bibliography and a glossary of geologic terms add to its usefulness. The effect of Ice Age floods on the Columbia River is the central story here, but it is much more than just the Grand Coulee, Potholes Reservoir or Dry Falls State Park.

Another publication about eastern Washington, Benton County Place Names, by Jean Carol Davis and Vickie Silliam Bergum (Kennewick: East Benton County Historical Society, 1996; 84 pp., $8.95), complements statewide place name books by Edmond Meany, Origin of Washington Geographic Names (1923); Robert Hitchman, Place Names of Washington (1985); and Doug Broken- shire, Washington State Place Names (1993). Particularly valuable in this publication is the inclusion of road names as well as place names: the Yellowstone Trail, the Wahluke Ferry Road, the Plymouth Road and so on. Benton County place names began with Native peoples and the Lewis and Clark expedition, but not much happened until after 1905 when the county was created by the state legislature. As a result, most of the place names are modern enough to be thoroughly traceable. Benton County, by the way, is named for Thomas Hart Benton, a United States senator from Missouri between 1821 and 1851.

Whatcom Places (Bellingham: Whatcom Land Trust, 1997; 97 pp., $25 paper) boasts distinguished scholar Robert Keller as the chair of its book committee, and it was he who organized the many contributors to the volume. Among the most diverse of Washington’s counties, Whatcom contains 143 miles of saltwater beaches, 3,000 miles of rivers and streams, plus lakes, mountains, islands and open spaces. For now it supports a modest population of 170,000, and this book asks the reader to consider the impact of inevitable changes in those statistics, some of which have already begun to take place. This is an advocacy book, seeking the voluntary care of land by citizen groups, businesses and landowners. That is the goal of the Land Trust, and their sincerity is evident in each page of honest text and vivid photographs.

Address all review copies & related communications to:
ROBERT C. CARRIKER
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
GONZAGA UNIVERSITY
SPOKANE, WA 99258
**CORRESPONDENCE**

**Surprise**

When the Spring 1997 COLUMBIA arrived at our home I picked it up from the top of our coffee table at the center pages 24-25. What a surprise to have the 1935 staff of the Ocean Labs jumping out at me. We have the original (8x10) picture, very same one. My husband received his Ph.D. from the University of Washington. Tommy Thompson was his major professor, so he spent several summers at Friday Harbor. We have some wonderful memories of time spent there—one summer was our honeymoon.

In our 80s but still active, we are anxious to get over to see the new museum near Union Station. My husband’s father was a railroad man and on many trips went in and out of that station as they lived in Auburn at that time.

Keep up the good work—COLUMBIA is great.

Randall & Vivian Hamm
Pullman

**Corrections**

Some of the illustrations in the Donald Johnson article in the Winter 1996-97 issue of COLUMBIA were incorrectly credited. The credit on page 39 should have read: “Dearborn-Massar photo, courtesy of Alan Liddle.” The credit on page 41 should have read: “Courtesy of and © 1996 by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation,” and the credit on page 42 should have read: “Courtesy of and © 1996 by the Frank Lloyd Wright Foundation, from a copy held by the Tacoma Public Library.”

**COMMUNAL STUDIES CONFERENCE**

“Communal Frontiers”

The COMMUNAL STUDIES Association will hold its 24th annual conference at the Washington State History Museum October 9-11, 1997, hosted by the Washington State Historical Society. The conference theme is “Communal Frontiers.” Presentation topics will include Hutterites, historic utopias, hippie-era communes, women in communities, and preservation of communal sites. There will be a preconference tour and field trips during the conference. In conjunction, WSHM will open an exhibit, “Living the Perfect Life: Communes and Utopias in Washington.” For more information and programs, please call 253/798-5884.

**Additional Reading**

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

**Resisting “Informal” Manifest Destiny**


**The Aqua Theatre**


John Jacob Astor


**Raiders from the North**


**Albert Rosellini**


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