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FRONT COVER: This postcard of Camp Wigwam, in Mount Rainier National Park near Indian Henry's Hunting Ground, shows a view of the glacier-clad mountain from the southwest. See related story beginning on page 24. (Special Collections, Washington State Historical Society)
With this issue, I would like to take a different tack with the space normally allowed me. Below is the list of awards and the organizations and people that were bestowed with these honors by the Society at our annual meeting on May 15th. The annual meeting is the apex of the Society's business year, and the awards ceremony is its emotional core. Amidst the day-to-day hub-bub of trying to make the Society an ever more creditable organization, it is both necessary and refreshing to pause a moment and recognize those who create the circumstances within which the Society hopes to prosper: the volunteers, authors, donors, partners and, simply, friends who make it all possible.

I never knew Robert Gray or David Douglas, obviously, but John McClelland and Lorraine Wojahn were members of the board when I was hired 12 years ago this summer. For me, seeing their names rotate perpetually through the life of the Society in the form of the awards named after them roots me evermore with the organization that I'm most proud to direct and reminds me of a portion of the old mountain man toast: "To those that have gone before; and to those that will come after...." It is the continuum of history that is its ultimate appeal and mystery.

So join me in congratulating this year's recipients. The future will be built on their shoulders:

**Robert Gray Medal** (the Society's highest award recognizes long-term contributions to Pacific Northwest history through teaching, writing, research, local historical society work or historic preservation): Dr. Stephanie Toothman, National Park Service historian based at the Pacific West regional office in Seattle.

**David Douglas Fellowship** (recognizes an individual or group who has made a significant contribution to Washington state or local history as either an author, curator or participant in a history-related project during the previous year): Rex Ziat, Naselle.

**Peace & Friendship Award** (recognizes a Native American who has made significant contributions to understanding the Indian heritage of the Northwest): Louie Wynne, of the Spokane tribe, Wellpinit.

**Peace & Friendship Award** (recognizes an individual who has made significant contributions to understanding the cultural diversity of the state): Royce Pollard, mayor of Vancouver.

**Charles Gates Award** (for the best contribution to Pacific Northwest Quarterly magazine in 1998): Lorraine McConaghy, Seattle.

**R. Lorraine Wojahn Award** (recognizes outstanding volunteer service advancing the work of the Washington State Historical Society): Janet Grimes, Tacoma.

**Jean Richards Award** (recognizes volunteer commitment to the Washington State Capital Museum): Cy and Phyllis Gilbert, Lacey.


**Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching** (recognizes the outstanding contribution of an individual in advancing Pacific Northwest history education): Mary Ellen Church, teacher at Kapowsin Elementary School, Graham.

**Governor's Award for Excellence in Teaching** (recognizes an outstanding contribution of a nonprofit organization in advancing Pacific Northwest history education): National History Day in Washington State, Jim Rice, state coordinator, Ellensburg.

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Editor
SELF-DESTRUCTION ON THE NATCHEZ TRACE
Meriwether Lewis's Act of Ultimate Courage

By Reimert Thorolf Ravenholt, M.D.

In his comprehensive biography, *Meriwether Lewis*, Richard Dillon in 1965 detailed the extraordinary behavior of Lewis during his last days, enabling me to provide a scientific solution (Epidemiology, May 1994) to the 184-year mystery concerning the underlying cause of his untimely death on the Natchez Trace in Tennessee on October 11, 1809. The nature of Lewis's death was so bizarre that Dillon and many others have persistently refused to believe that Lewis committed suicide, despite incontrovertible evidence that he did.

According to James Neely and Alexander Wilson, three persons—Mrs. Robert Grinder, keeper of Grinder's Stand; John Pernia, trusted servant of Lewis; and Neely's servant—were eyewitnesses to his death and reported that Lewis spoke to them as he lay dying at dawn. When Pernia came up from the barn, Lewis said, "I have done the business, my good servant. Give me some water." He also begged them to take his rifle and blow out his brains. And his last words, just as the sun tinged the treetops, were, "I am no coward, but I am so strong. It is hard to die."

Major James Neely, Lewis's traveling companion, who had remained behind at Dogwood Mudhole the previous morning to find two stray horses, arrived at Grinder's Stand within hours of Lewis's death and had ample opportunity to question each witness and examine the mortal wounds before burying the body. On October 18 from Nashville, he wrote to Thomas Jefferson: "It is with extreme pain that I have to inform you of the death of His Excellency Meriwether Lewis, Governor of Upper Louisiana who died on the morning of the 11th Instant and I am sorry to say by Suicide." Pernia carried the letter to Thomas Jefferson and some personal effects to Lewis's mother, Lucy Marks, in Virginia. Hence, both had ample opportunity to question Pernia closely concerning not only the terminal events on the Natchez Trace but also Lewis's behavior while in St. Louis, and the details of his two attempts at suicide on the riverboat before reaching Chickasaw Bluffs. It is most telling that Meriwether's mother, Lucy Marks, and his closest friends, Thomas Jefferson and William Clark, sadly but readily accepted the diagnosis of suicide. Presumably they knew something about his state of health and mind not known by many others.

At the end of his excellent book Dillon concludes: "Was Meriwether Lewis murdered? Yes. Is there proof of his murder? No. Could Lewis's death have been a suicide? Yes." Deeply empathetic to this man whose life's history he had researched so thoroughly and well, and yet unable to understand why Lewis would self-destruct, Dillon opted for a diagnosis of murder, despite the compelling evidence for suicide.

Necessitated by the eminence of the deceased, and by rumors that he might have been murdered at Grinder's Stand, a coroner's inquest was held nearby in 1809 and a verdict of "death by suicide" rendered by the jury.

Nevertheless, 187 years later, June 4-6, 1996, another coroner's inquest into the death of Meriwether Lewis was held in Hohenwald, Lewis County, Tennessee, in which I participated. This coroner's jury did not vote for murder or suicide but recommended that the remains be exhumed for examination. In January 1998 the request for exhumation was turned down by Jerry Belson, regional director, Southeast Region, National Park Service.

From my background as a very experienced physician/epidemiologist, when reading Richard Dillon's biography it came clearly to mind that Lewis's terminal illness leading to suicide was a classic case of neurosyphilis. I then researched this matter in the Lewis and Clark Journals by Moulton, Letters by Jackson, other relevant Lewis and Clark literature, and in the medical literature, finding strong support for my diagnosis that Lewis did suffer from neurosyphilis, leading to his suicide. And by backtracking in the diaries I discovered when and where he acquired his syphilis. In brief, there is compelling evidence that Lewis did suffer from syphilis acquired on the Voyage of Discovery, as here described:

While voyaging across the Louisiana Territory and to the Pacific Ocean, the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery encountered a half-dozen Indian tribes suffering from syphilis. Sexual intercourse with women of these tribes was commonplace. If not initiated by members of the corps, it was commonly urged by the Indians as a gesture of friendship and respect; and according to the diaries, numbers of corpsmen did develop syphilis and were treated by Lewis with mercury.

When encountering the Shoshoni tribe on the continental divide, along the Lemhi River, August 13-14, 1805, Lewis and
three companions had both a propitious opportunity and a compelling need for sexual intercourse: to ingratiate themselves with Chief Cameahwait and the tribe, and to bargain for needed horses. As noted by Lewis, the Indians entertained them with dancing and partying during those two nights.

Several days later, on his 31st birthday, August 18, 1805, Lewis wrote, "I viewed with regret the many hours I have spent in indolence." The following day, August 19, Lewis recorded in his diary: "I was anxious to learn whether these people had the venerial, and made inquiry through the interpreter and his wife [Sacagawea]; the information was that they sometimes had it but I could not learn their remedy; they most usually die with its effects. This seems strong proof that these disorders bothe ganarachah and Lues venereae are native disorders of America."

A few weeks later, on September 19, 1805, Lewis noted in his diary, "several of the men are unwell with the dysentary, breakings out, or irruptions of the skin have also been common with us for some time." Such skin manifestations occurring about a month after sexual exposure and infection with syphilis are characteristic of the secondary stage of syphilis and supportive of the view that Lewis and some of the men acquired syphilis about mid August. After a diary entry on September 22, Lewis ceased writing during several months; but entries by Clark record the initial severity of Lewis's illness:

September 24, 1805: "Capt Lewis Scercely able to ride on a gentle horse which was furnished by the Chief, several men So unwell that they were Compelled to lie on the Side of the road for some time." September 25: "Capt Lewis very sick ... a very hot day most of the party complaining and 2 of our hunters left here on the 22nd verry sick." September 27: "Capt Lewis very Sick nearly all the men Sick." October 4: "Capt Lewis still Sick but able to walk about a little."

The entry by Lewis on September 19 stating that "breakings out, or irruptions of the skin, have been common with us for some time"; and the entries by Clark documenting the seriousness of Lewis's illness, which incapacitated him from writing during several months; plus the fact that neither Lewis nor Clark described his illness further, all suggest that he suffered an unmentionable disease, probably syphilis, affirmed by the downward course of his health during the next four years, with development of classic signs of neurosyphilis.

Soon after the syphilis spirochete enters the new host and begins multiplying in the chancre (site of infection), large numbers of organisms enter the blood stream and are conveyed throughout the body. When the spirochetes multiply extensively in the brain, neurons are destroyed, resulting in the illness known as paresis. According to Charles Dennie (in Syphilis, Harper & Brothers: New York and London, 1928):

"The relation of a paretic to the other members of society is almost diagnostic of his disease. . . . There is often a loss of memory for recent events, although past events are fairly well recounted. There will be slight or glaring mistakes in his business correspondence. . . . Mistakes in business will be found to have crept into this man's dealings for quite a little while before recognizable symptoms appear. . . . In the depressed type of paresis the symptoms are apt to come on quite suddenly. The patient becomes melancholy and has ideas of self-destruction. In distinction to other types, he often realizes what his trouble is, and he can see his vitality becoming less day by day. Unfortunately, this realization of his condition stimulates his notion of self-destruction. While these people are as a rule harmless to other members of society, they are quite often successful in doing damage to themselves."

This description of paresis fits the development of Lewis's illness: Soon after his return to Washington, while staying several months with Jefferson in the White House, he manifested lessened judgment when dealing with matters relative to publication of the diaries. And after moving to Philadelphia at the end of March 1807 he was unable to advance his priority task, the preparation and publication of the trip memoirs. In late July, Lewis journeyed to Washington and visited the War Department before proceeding to Albemarle County where his mother, Lucy Marks, and siblings lived, and where Jefferson was during August. There he remained during six months, when he should have been in St. Louis handling his duties as governor of the Louisiana Territory.

A likely reason for this delay is that his neurosyphilis had progressed and he underwent an intensive course of mercury
treatment for syphilis—perhaps under the care of his mother and brother, Reuben Lewis, both medical practitioners. In any event, by March 1808 he was well enough that he proceeded to St. Louis and took up his duties as governor. During some months matters seemed to go fairly well there, except that he and his secretary, Frederick Bates, wrangled severely and Lewis was living far beyond his income, which led to increasing financial difficulties for Lewis in 1809. In August, to do justice to his creditors, Lewis handed over to them as security what land he had acquired in Louisiana; and as he hurriedly prepared for travel to Washington he gave his three most intimate friends his power of attorney so they could sell any of his properties to settle bills.

On September 4, 1809, attended by his servant, John Pernia, Lewis departed St. Louis by riverboat, intending to travel by water to Washington via New Orleans and the Atlantic Coast. On September 11, en route, perhaps at New Madrid, Lewis made out his will, witnessed by F. S. Trinchard: “I bequeath all my estate, real and personal, to my mother, Lucy Marks, after my private debts are paid, of which a statement will be found in a small minute book deposited with Pernia, my servant.”

On September 15 the boat reached Chickasaw Bluffs (Memphis) and Fort Pickering, where the fort’s commandant, Captain Gilbert Russell, met Lewis who had commanded a company at Fort Pickering in 1797 and was a friend of Captain Russell. According to Russell’s statement, made in 1811,

On the morning of September 15th, the boat in which he was a passenger landed him at Fort Pickering in a state of mental derangement, which appeared to have been produced as much by indisposition as other causes. The subscriber being then the commanding officer of the Fort on discovering his situation, and learning from the crew that he had made two attempts to kill himself, in one of which he nearly succeeded, resolved at once to take possession of him and his papers, and detain him until he recovered, or some friend might arrive in whose hands he could depart in safety.

Russell forbade Lewis all grain spirits, confining him to claret and light wine while he was at the fort. Lewis remained in bad mental and physical health for five days, but on the sixth day, according to Russell, “All symptoms of derangement disappeared and he was completely in his senses and this continued for ten or twelve days.”

Captain Russell took appropriate precautions to protect his friend Lewis during two weeks, until he could entrust him to the care of Major James Neely, United States Agent for the Chickasaw Tribe, who arrived on the 18th. As Lewis prepared for departure from Fort Pickering with Major Neely, he borrowed $100 from Russell and secured a saddle horse and two pack animals from Neely and Russell. On September 29 he set out with Neely and Pernia, et al, proceeding southeasterly toward the Chickasaw Agency and the Natchez Trace.

It took the party three days’ travel to reach the Chickasaw Agency. Upon their arrival Neely thought Lewis deranged again, hence they rested there two days until he had recovered sufficiently. They then proceeded up the Natchez Trace to the Tennessee River, which they crossed either that evening or the morning of the 8th by means of a ferry, operated since 1801 by George Colbert. The night of October 9 they camped at Dogwood Mudhole, about 40 miles from the ferry. The next morning two horses were missing, and it was agreed that Neely would stay behind to find them while Lewis proceeded on with the two servants, “with a promise to wait for me at the first house he came to that was inhabited by white people.”

About 18 miles above Dogwood Mudhole, at a clearing, Lewis turned off the Natchez Trace to a pair of rude cabins joined by a dogtrot. He greeted a lone woman there and learned that this was Grinder’s Stand, 72 miles from Nashville. Lewis asked for lodging, to which Mrs. Grinder assented, then asked, “Do you come alone?” To which Lewis replied that his servants would be along shortly, and took his saddle into the cabin the woman said would be his. He asked for whiskey, but drank little of what she gave him. When the servants came up, according to Alexander Wilson,

Lewis asked them about some powder for his pistols, saying he was sure he had some in a cannister, to which the servant made indistinct reply. Lewis then began pacing forth and back before his cabin, obviously upset, talking to himself. At times he would walk up almost to his startled hostess, then wheel away, wrapped in thought and anger.

Supper being ready, the governor sat down at the table but did not lose his agitation. After eating a few bits he started up, face flushed with anger, speaking to himself in a violent manner. Finally he lit his pipe and drew a chair close to the door, remarking, “Madam, this is a very pleasant evening.” He smoked for a time, then got up and resumed his impatient pacing, traversing the yard for a time. Then, regaining his composure, he took his seat, filled his pipe and lit it. Blowing clouds of smoke and staring toward the west, he observed, “What a sweet evening this is.”

Mrs. Grinder began preparing a bed for Lewis in the cabin, but Lewis stopped her, explaining that he preferred to sleep on the floor. He sent his servant for his bearkins and buffalo robe, which were spread on the floor. She then proceeded to make a bed for her children and self in the kitchen cabin, while the servants went to sleep in the barn 200 yards away. But Mrs. Grinder did not sleep, according to Alexander Wilson, who interviewed her exhaustively 18 months later:

Being considerably alarmed by the behavior of her guest she could not sleep but listened to him walking backwards and forwards, she thinks for several hours, and talking aloud, as she said, “like a lawyer.” She then heard the report of a pistol, and something fell heavily on the floor, and the words, “Oh Lord!” Immediately afterwards she heard another pistol, and in a few minutes she heard him at her door calling out, “O madam! Give me some water, and heal my wounds.” The logs being open, and unplastered, she saw him stagger back and fall against a stump that stands between the kitchen and room. He once more got to the room, afterwards he came to the kitchen door, but did not speak; she then heard him scraping the bucket with a gourd for water, but it appears that this cooling element was denied the dying man! As soon as day broke and not before, the terror of the woman having permitted him to remain for
two hours in this most deplorable situation, she sent two of her children to the barn, her husband not being at home, to bring the servants; and on going in they found him lying on the bed; he uncovered his side and showed them where the bullet had entered; a piece of the forehead was blown off, and exposed the brains, without having bled much. He begged they would take his rifle and blow out his brains, and he would give them all the money he had in his trunk. He often said, "I am no coward, but I am so strong, so hard to die." He begg’d the servant not to be afraid of him, for that he would not hurt him. He expired in about two hours, or just as the sun rose above the trees."

The many bewildering aspects of Lewis’s terminal behavior become readily understandable when viewed from the perspective that he was suffering from neurosyphilis: each successive attack of feverish spirochetal inflammation of his brain was driving him ever closer to complete and permanent madness; and, despite his fraying intellect, Lewis realized that if he continued on to Washington his syphilitic condition would become apparent to everyone, whereupon he would become an object of pity and scorn, an embarrassment to his family and friends, and the lustrous reputation gained by his great Voyage of Discovery would be wasted.

Increasing awareness of the relentless nature of his illness and his dire future no doubt oppressed him while still in St. Louis; but full realization of its malignant implications occurred en route—resulting in his making a will on September 11 followed by two suicide attempts on the riverboat, both foiled by the crew. His decision to leave Chickasaw Bluffs by land rather than by water was probably dictated by the fact that his suicide would be apparent to everyone, whereupon he would become an object of pity and scorn, an embarrassment to his family and friends, and the lustrous reputation gained by his great Voyage of Discovery would be wasted.

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Stephen Ambrose’s book Undaunted Courage is a good read, except for the ending where he opts for Lewis’s death having been due to “depression” and dismisses the diagnosis of neurosyphilis as “more intriguing and speculative than convincing.” But this throwaway quip is not in accord with his 1994 letter to me, nor is this statement from his book: “Nearly all of them suffered from ‘brakings out or irruptions of the skin,’ probably caused by venereal disease contracted from the Shoshoni women.” (p. 292)

By avoiding the diagnosis of syphilis—which fits perfectly well with all the evidence—and attributing Lewis’s suicide to depression, Ambrose unfortunately impugns his courage by implying that Lewis was such a weak character that he would self-destruct simply because he was psychologically depressed. And Ambrose has not answered the crucial question: Why was Lewis so utterly depressed that he wanted to kill himself? Of course Lewis was depressed, as any man would be if suffering successive attacks of syphilitic brain fever and seeing his life slip away. The diagnosis of neurosyphilis answers the crucial question perfectly well.

From their reactions to his death, it is apparent that Lewis’s family and closest friends knew why he killed himself. And when we now realize that he was suffering the ultimate agony of advancing neurosyphilis—losing his mind and verging on utter madness—then we can truly empathize with him and fully admire his ultimate courage in facing the facts squarely and doing what had to be done to protect his reputation and his family and friends. Ambrose is not a physician and offers no judgment of a panel of expert physicians as the basis for his preferred diagnosis of depression rather than syphilis as the cause of Lewis’s death. But the consensus of world-class epidemiologists at the Centers for Disease Control and elsewhere is that neurosyphilis is the most probable diagnosis for the underlying cause of the death of Meriwether Lewis. It fits all known facts and gives sensible meaning to many events otherwise unintelligible.

As Winston Churchill wrote of his father, who also died of syphilis: “It seemed incredible that this man . . . could be the same brilliant audacious leader who in the flush of exultant youth had marched irresistibly to power. . . . What experience can be more painful than for a man who enjoys the fullest intellectual vigour, and whose blood is quite unchilled by age, to feel the whole apparatus of expression slipping insensibly from him?”

Dr. Reimert Thorolf Ravenholt has extensive experience in the investigation of diverse infectious diseases for the federal Centers for Disease Control and the Seattle Health Department.

COLUMBIA 6 SUMMER 1999
A Celebration of TRADITION & COMMUNITY

Sumo in the Pacific Northwest, 1905-1943

By Joseph R. Svinth

Entering the ring
Yokozuna [Grand champion]
scatters salt
Even on the judges.

—Richard Hayes

Sumo wrestling's first exhibition outside Japan was probably a contest staged for King David Kalakaua of Hawaii in February 1885. A few years later, Japanese immigrants brought sumo to the Pacific Northwest, and on Tuesday, January 3, 1905, the expatriate Japanese of Vancouver, British Columbia, celebrated the fall of Port Arthur during the Russo-Japanese War with a sumo tournament staged at Vancouver City Hall. According to the Vancouver Daily Province:

There are practically no holds below the belt—not that they are prohibited, but a moment's consideration of the tactics will show that low holds are useless.... It is not necessary to place your opponent on his back, and hold his shoulders on the mat.... Not at all. Just push your opponent off the mat and he is beaten, although he may be standing as steadily on his pins as you are. Trip his toe so that he touches his fingers on the mat and he walks smilingly to his corner a beaten man. Dodge him, when he lunges at you so that he slips to his knees, and he retires to the rear row. Another thing, the [sumotori] never argues with the referee. There appears to be absolutely no doubt about the rules of the game. When a man is beaten he knows it.

The preliminaries of drinking water and pinching salt took far longer than the matches themselves, added the Daily Province. Nevertheless, “Bouts seldom last more than a minute.... Neither are there distressing waits. One duel is over and another commences immediately.” Winners probably included 140-pound Matty Matsuda who, a few months later, became a professional wrestler; the Seattle Times attributed his start to a win in a sumo tournament. There were likely sumo tournaments in nearby Steveston, too—in the 1970s an elderly Japanese Canadian named Hideo Kokubo recalled a sumo ring being built there during his childhood. “A few people who did sumo in Japan and liked it taught it here,” said Kokubo, who added that it was a regular feature of Japanese New Year's celebrations.

Sumo is the Japanese national sport—literally. The word kokugi (national game) was coined in 1904 to describe it. While the equipment is simple—a grass or sand ring and two players dressed only in loincloths—the traditions and ritual are complex.

The modern game dates to 1578, when Lord Oda Nobunaga hosted a national tournament that drew over 1,500 participants. To speed up the matches, Lord Oda's officials drew circles on the ground and introduced referees. The now-traditional straw-and-earthen ring, or dohyo, dates to the 1670s, and the 48 traditional grips and the precise size of a sumo ring (originally about 13 feet in diameter, but increased to 15 feet in 1931) were defined in 1684. The north side of the ring was designated the front, and the two teams were divided into East and West. Historically, East was on the right and West was on the left, but in the early 20th century this was reversed.

At any rate, East was the place of honor reserved for the previous year's champions. The first professional sumo tournament took place in Edo, as Tokyo was then...
When Commodore Perry visited Japan in 1856, the Japanese attempted to awe him with wrestlers such as those depicted here in this Takamizawa reproduction (c. 1930) of an 18th-century woodblock print by Hokusai.
known, in 1751. In Edo, major tournaments were held each January and June. The ground was borrowed from a Buddhist temple—originally sumo had been done to raise money for religious purposes—and a covered canvas amphitheater was built and dismantled each season. The rest of the year the rikishi (“strong men”) trained and toured the provinces.

Because performances were outdoors, they were subject to the weather. As this sometimes forced closures, a drum was beaten to tell people if the matches were going as scheduled. While most modern matches are indoors and thus immune from the weather, the drum and covered ring remain important parts of sumo ritual.

Professionals attended sumo training schools. Although businesses, these schools were also fictive households. That is, the master (oyakata) was the father, the master’s wife (the only female the rikishi, or wrestlers and trainees, normally met) was as the mother, and the rikishi were the children. The relationship was theoretically fixed: just as one cannot change parents, one was not supposed to be able to change training schools.

Masters, meanwhile, were organized into guilds. Prior to 1868 the three chief guilds were based in Kyoto, Tokyo and Osaka. Until 1926 each guild sponsored one ten-day tournament per year plus one joint national tournament. After western sports were introduced to Japan in 1868, interest in sumo temporarily declined. As a result, the Kyoto guild soon disbanded and the Tokyo and Osaka guilds merged into the Professional Japanese Sumo Association (PJSA). The government was not left out of the picture, however, and the supervisory body for the PJSA is still the Japanese Ministry of Education.

In Japan, where there are hundreds of rikishi, tournaments last around ten days. Tournaments are usually divided into three phases. Bouts between trainees come first. Next come bouts between intermediate players. Finally come bouts between established champions. Each series of bouts starts with the least experienced wrestlers and works its way up, meaning that each tournament has at least three champions, none of whom meets the others directly.

Although Europeans and Americans often exclaim that sumo is done nearly naked, a rikishi’s attire actually reflects his ranking as a wrestler. On the street, for example, trainees wear wooden clogs and cheap cotton belts while champions wear straw sandals and silk belts. While the training attire was not usually seen in the prewar United States, the competition attire was common.

The rikishi’s chief competition attire has always been a loincloth. Trainees wear white cotton loin cloths while champions wear black silk. Champions also wear embroidered aprons with decorative starched strings in front. As these aprons are expensive, junior wrestlers usually borrow them from the master. Champions, meanwhile, get them from their wealthy patrons.

There is much ritual involved in entering the sumo ring, and it is considered unlucky to avoid this ritual. Well-known rituals include stamping each leg alternately and taking water and salt from wooden buckets.

There is much ritual involved in entering the sumo ring, and it is considered unlucky to avoid this ritual. Well-known rituals include stamping each leg alternately and taking water and salt from wooden buckets. “Those who were victorious are entitled to give water to those who wrestle next on the same side,” explained Iyemasa Togawara in April 1912, “while those who were defeated are not so entitled, because they were dishonoured.” As for the salt, it is thought to sanctify the

ground and protect the wrestlers from injury and bad luck.

Rituals completed, the wrestlers stride into the ring to await their chance. If they see no opportunity or feel unlucky, then they say, “Not yet,” get another drink of water, sprinkle more salt, and try again. Rarely do professional matches start without several returns to the water and salt.

A steamship carrying the Japanese national sumo champion Hitachiyama docked in Seattle on Thursday, August 22, 1907. Said an unsympathetic reporter for the Seattle Times afterwards:

Mr. Hitachiyama is on a tour of the world, and he left Seattle this morning [August 23, 1907] for New York. He has with him his suite of six wrestlers. He keeps most of them busy bringing him things to eat and drink... Mr. Hitachiyama does not believe in a restricted diet, and he eats most of the time he is not drinking.

Still, Hitachiyama’s very presence thrilled the expatriate Japanese.

Having previously witnessed a sumo tournament in Japan, William Inglis, director of the Seattle Athletic Club, took some friends to the finals of a four-day sumo tournament held in Seattle on Monday, March 6, 1910. The Seattle coach was the judo and professional wrestling champion Tokugoro Ito. Although this evening featured the adult finals, earlier there had been a division for schoolboys. Frank Yamamoto, Mac Yasuda, George Ishihara, Mori Shigaki, Fred Hamada and Clarence Arai were among the junior players.

The venue was the basement of the Adams Hotel, at 513 Maynard Street. The finals started at nine in the evening and were not over until well after the last street cars had quit running. Besides Inglis and his friends, the audience included several hundred Issei (first-generation Japanese immigrant) men and perhaps 30 well-dressed Issei women. The following day, a Post-Intelligencer
reporter (likely sports editor Portus Baxter) told his readers:

Right in the center of the hotel’s basement the ring had been constructed. . . . Instead of using padded mats, they built up an earthen platform 12 or 14 feet square and a couple of feet high. The earth seemed fairly soft until hostilities began and then it looked hard—and sounded hard.

A gaslight—the one modern intrusion—was swung over the center of the ring. At each end there were posts. On each post hung a rice-straw basket filled with salt and under the baskets were buckets of water with quaint drinking cups. Their use was seen later.

“The wrestler must either push his adversary beyond the line of the ring or else throw him so that some part of his body above the knee touches the ground. Seldom do the bouts go more than a minute.

Shouts of encouragement rent the air while the men struggled. At the end of the brief battle each returned to his corner to wait the second bout. Each man’s second gave him a sip of water and a taste of salt. The water is symbolic of the wrestler’s willingness to sacrifice his life in the combat if necessary; the salt is symbolic of fair play; and as the men returned for the second bout salt was tossed upon their brown backs by each second. . . .

Often one of the spectators would toss a hat into the ring at the conclusion of a particularly hard-fought and exciting match. The hat was picked up by a wrestler or his second, and later the owner of the hat redeemed it by paying the wrestler a sum of money approximately what the hat was worth. It’s another way of tossing money into the ring.

Winners included Sakuraga Dake, Shiroyama, and R. Minato.

During January 1911 Ito staged a three-night-long sumo tournament at the Nippon Kan theater. Unfortunately, the results were not published in either the Times or Post-Intelligencer. Five months later, on Thursday, May 18, 1911, during the preliminaries to a wrestling match between Ito and a British wrestler named Joe Acton, Ito’s students also gave a sumo demonstration that was well-received by the mostly Japanese crowd.

There were obviously more tournaments and exhibitions between 1911 and 1929, as on January 11, 1930, a Seattle newspaper called the Japanese-American Courier described Bothell’s Johnny Funai as the reigning Class B champion and regretted that Seattle’s Eitaro Suzuki, the reigning Class A champion, would be unavailable to defend his title due to his departure for Columbia University’s Teachers College. One suspects the methods used by these Nisei (children of Issei) sumotori were a combination of football and judo rather than true sumo. Funai, for example, played varsity football in Bothell while Suzuki had turned out for Seattle’s Broadway High School team. Of the 33 Nisei sumo champions whose records were studied for this article, 24 (73 percent) played varsity or semi-professional football and 22 (67 percent) were judo black belts.

Be that as it may, there were innumerable sumo contests held during company picnics and family gatherings. The Iseri family of Ontario, Oregon, for example, has photographs that show informal wrestling matches staged during White River Valley picnics of the 1920s. Similarly, John E. Davis, who was raised south of Salem, Oregon, during the same years, later recalled that:

The Japanese American laborers from Roberts (a community near Salem) were driven to the picnic at Lakebrooke by my Father as a matter of company policy. . . . We had a fine time at the picnic, I fared pretty well in the races but, as I was not
trained in Sumo wrestling, even the little fellows half my size dumped me unceremonially out of the ring... 

Another documented tournament took place in Seattle on January 25-26, 1930. The farmers from White River and Fife trained in their barns while the sawmill workers from National and Selleck trained in their sawdust pits. The townsmen from Seattle, however, trained on canvas mats laid out in the basement of the Nippon Kan. These mats were open from seven o'clock nightly for several weeks before the competition so that "all those wishing to participate in the coming meet may come there to whip themselves into condition." The tournament itself took place upstairs on the main stage. Unlike judo matches, where the crowds usually sat in relative dignity, the sumo crowd yelled as if watching football or boxing.

In competition, Seattle's husky Kaimon Kudo lost in the first round to a Portland dentist named Kiyousa Kayama. In the second, Kayama was himself flattened by Sam Kraets, the University of Washington's 207-pound starting center, who had entered the event simply for the novelty.

The Tacoma Buddhist Church, or Oregon Young Men's Association, hosted a sumo tournament in Portland on the weekend of January 31-February 1, 1931: 48 juniors and 66 adults participated. The venue was the Longshoreman's Hall on Fourth and Everett streets. On February 2, Portland's Oregonian reported:

The arena was a large ring with a dirt floor on an elevation in the center of the hall. The referee and announcer were dressed in robes. The referee carried as his badge of office a sort of fan-shaped paddle to which was attached two long silken cords.

The grand champion was Salem's Don Sugai, a varsity football player and Amateur Athletic Union wrestler who later became a well-known professional wrestler. Of his sumo skills the Japanese-American Courier wrote that Sugai "made such a favorable impression by sending his opponent in an airplane spin that he was advanced to yakusae [champion] rank on the final night."

The Tacoma Buddhist Church hosted a tournament on the weekend of February 25-26, 1933. Teams were expected from Wapato, White River Valley, Puyallup, Seattle, Tacoma and Portland. The tournament started at two in the afternoon. Seattle's Kaimon Kudo and Fife's Joe Nishikawa, both of whom eventually became professional wrestlers, were the champions. Don Sugai of Salem, Frank Takeshita of Kent, Nobuo Yoshida of Fife, and Juro Yoshioka of Puyallup also did well.
The Yakima Valley Sumo Club held a sumo tournament in Wapato on Sunday, November 12, 1933. First place went to 190-pound Frank Iseri of Wapato. Nobuo Yoshida and Tom Hirai of Auburn also did well. "Tom Hirai was my roommate at Selleck Lumber Mill," recalls Toshio Yamanaka.

"Tori Hirai was my roommate at Selleck Lumber Mill," calls Toshio Yamanaka: "It's too bad that he didn't learn judo. He might have been like Kaimon Kudo being a pro wrestler and doing judo. Tom's father was a sumo fanatic so Tom and his brothers, George and Jim, were all active in sumo. George played for Enumclaw in the semipro football league after high school, and he was one of the best. He was also a boxer. Jim, his brother, was in a motorcycle accident and he couldn't run due to his leg injury—so no sports for him.

The Ohshu Seinen Kan hosted a tournament in Portland in 1934. A surviving photograph at the Oregon Historical Society gives indelible evidence of the involvement of both parents and the Young Men's Association: while dressed traditionally, the oldest player in the photograph is perhaps 12 years of age.

These tournaments celebrated both tradition and community, and were as memorable to the spectators as the participants. Over 60 years later, Tatsuro Yada of Salem, Oregon, recalled:

"My wife accompanied her father as a youngster to some of the Nisei sports events, including the sumo tournaments at 3rd and Davis Street. She remembers the ritual they performed before the matches as well as some of the participants.

Added Hood River's Frank Tomori:

The Japanese Association of Portland often held sumo matches in the Armory Hall or a large garage. Kyoshin Club [a gambling club] sponsored the match, and the gambling bosses all showed up... The sumo wrestlers were amateurs from various places. I myself played in the matches among the top-ranked wrestlers, under the name "Tanihibiki...."

On one occasion when I played a match, my partner was a crewman of a cargo boat from Kobe. As I won too often, the rooters for the crew member got angry... So the sponsor asked me to pretend to lose the match this time, which made my patrons angry, and everything fell apart.

The sponsor paid the hotel accommodations, meals and sake for the wrestlers and manager. But many people came to the city from various places to see the match and dropped money at hotels, restaurants and gambling houses, which meant that all in all Japanese Town in Portland prospered.

Besides enhancing group solidarity and giving gamblers something to wager upon, another purpose of a sumo tournament was to celebrate good fortune. So, to celebrate his recovery from a serious illness, a Puyallup farmer named Zendayu Yamaji threw his own tournament on Sunday, August 25, 1935. About 30 sumotori and 400 spectators participated. Tom Hirai of Auburn took first while his brother George took second. Other wrestlers who fared well at this tournament included Fife's Nobuo Yoshida, Masato Tamura, and George Makoto lwakiri. Play must have been rough, too, as Ichiro Sakano, a judo instructor at Seattle's Tentoku Kan Dojo, was commended for his efforts as "caretaker of casualties."

The Japanese-American Courier hosted a regional tournament on the weekend of March 6-7, 1937. The idea was to assist the physical development of Japanese youth through wholesome recreational activities. To keep the second-generation happy, promoters said they wanted wrestling, not stamping of feet. Indeed, said Courier sportswriter Bill Hosokawa, players were expected to fly at each other without waiting for the "spirits" to tell them when... Enough
Bainbridge Island, Bellevue, Fife, Tacoma and the White River Valley. The match was scheduled to begin at seven o’clock, after all the baseball games were over. The scheduled site was a vacant lot near Main and Maynard. Seattle’s first outdoor sumo tournament, it reminded Yoichi Matsuda of being a young boy in Japan, where sand-lot sumo was greeted with the same enthusiasm that the American kids go in for the sand-lot baseball. On warm summer evenings we’d he down to the beach, choose sides and get set for the Japanese version of the little World Series.

The public is invited.

Unfortunately, this was Seattle, not Japan. Said the Great Northern Daily News on Monday, July 3, 1939:

Showers which soaked the empty lot on the corner of Main street and Maynard avenue dampened not Yosajiro Doi’s spirit in promoting the Independence Day sumo tournament tomorrow evening. Doi announced that the joust will be held at Nippon Kan starting at 7 P.M. The public is invited. No admission will be charged.

Despite unexpected clear weather and the distraction of a Japanese American Citizens League Dance at 13th and Pike, street dances on Main Street, and boat races and fireworks at Green Lake, hundreds of people turned out to see Doi’s joust. There were 28 competitors. As usual, they were mostly judoka and football players. Said the Great Northern Daily News afterward:

Harry “Harhibo” Yanagimachi didn’t exactly pound his chest and cry out, “aah,” a la Tarzan early this morning [the competition continued well past midnight] when he won a gold cup for his outstanding grappling feat at the annual sumo tournament held at Nippon Kan. “Harhibo” merely defeated Baba, Tsuchiya, Tamura, Hirai, and Nose in succession as if he were throwing backfield men for ten yard losses on the gridiron turf.

The final match of the night featured Mitsuro Yano of Seattle and [Tom] Hirai of National which the former won after a grueling struggle.

Although no one could possibly have made a living doing sumo in America, the tournament was, by AAU standards, a professional rather than amateur event. Besides the gold cups given champions like Harry Yanagimachi, division champions like Mitsuo Yano and George Hirai received sacks of rice and runners-up like Masato Tamura, Keijiro Sasaki, and Tom Hirai received cases of soda pop. In other words, they received economically valuable prizes. And this doesn’t count the white envelopes filled with cash that winners of individual bouts received from their fans, who meanwhile bet with their coworkers and friends on the outcome of the next bout. Fortunately, the AAU never caught on, otherwise many Northwest Nisei would have been permanently barred from high school and university athletics.

Besides the gold cups given champions like Harry Yanagimachi, division champions like Mitsuo Yano and George Hirai received sacks of rice and runners-up like Masato Tamura, Keijiro Sasaki, and Tom Hirai received cases of soda pop.

The Courier’s third sumo tournament was held during the weekend of March 2-3, 1940. As usual, the venue was the Nippon Kan. Yosajiro Doi was tournament director and Heiji “Henry” Okuda was tournament chairman. T. Yoneyama of Portland threw Mitsuru Yano of Seattle to win the grand championship; Masao Kato of Portland won the round-

of the age-old ceremony will be injected to retain the traditional touch to the sport, but if you expect the long-drawn, monotonous matches of Nippon, you’re mistaken. You’re going to see streamlined sumo.

The practice pit was erected at the Nippon Kan on Monday, March 1, 1937. Competition began at six o’clock on Saturday evening and five o’clock on Sunday evening. During the competition, said Seattle’s Bill Hosokawa, “The farm-raised sons of the soil took home most of the prizes.” Fife’s Nobuo Yoshida won the overall championship while Auburn’s Matsuo Sakagami took second. Explains Auburn’s Mae Yoshida, “Their everyday physical labor was good training acquired naturally.”

Twelve-year-old Tak “Big Boy” Sagara of Auburn, weighing 210 pounds, entered the junior competition. Evidently he did well, too, as his father later took him to Japan to train. Although a photographer from the Seattle Star also attended the tournament, the Star’s editor decided that photographs of scantily-clad Japanese wrestlers would offend his readers, and he declined to print them.

The Courier held its next sumo tournament on July 4, 1939. As in 1937, Yosajiro Doi was the tournament director. Invitations were sent to players living in Snoqualmie, Eatonville, Sel­leck, National, Long Beach, Wapato,
robin individual title; and Nakagawa of White River and George Hirai of National were named runners-up.

Three California professionals named Minoru Chikami, Yoshiya Kinjo, and Takayuki Tashima provided pre-match training and gave exhibition matches. The involvement of Californians is hardly surprising, as sumo was very popular with Japanese Americans living in the Golden State.

Portland's final prewar tournament was held on the weekend of February 8-9, 1941. Said the Great Northern Daily News afterward:

Leading Nippon sumoists are noted for having excessive weight around their waists, but Seattle sportsmen in the same field proved that the lack of a "plump stomach" is no serious handicap.

Mitsuru Yano, one of the best Queen City judoists, returned home with the largest gold cup available, a sack of rice, a blanket, and five dollars. Jim Kats Yoshida earned three sacks of rice to carry home, and Joe Nakatsu came home plus two barrels of shoyu [soy sauce]. Peter Fujino, Bengal football star, also reached home, and Joe Nakatsu came home plus two barrels of shoyu [soy sauce]. Peter Fujino, Bengal football star, also reached home, and Joe Nakatsu came home plus two barrels of shoyu [soy sauce]. Peter Fujino, Bengal football star, also reached home, and Joe Nakatsu came home plus two barrels of shoyu [soy sauce].

Seattle's final prewar sumo tournament took place at the Nippon Kan on Sunday, March 30, 1941. Toshio Koga, who had wrestled professionally in Japan (his ring name was Rai-no-umi), was present to provide training.

Although the 1942 season was affected by the wartime relocation of Pacific Coast Japanese Americans, it was not ruined, as sumo immediately resumed in the camps. For example, there were some impromptu matches in Puyallup's euphemistically-named Camp Harmony during the summer of 1942. During these, Harry Yanagimachi took first while 15-year-old Shozo Komorita took second. There was also a full-scale tournament at Minidoka Relocation Center in Hunt, Idaho, on April 3-4, 1943. This tournament started at 1:00 P.M. daily and lasted until it became too dark to see. The ring was built in the warehouse area in Block 22, and as seating capacity was limited, spectators were urged to bring their own chairs. The chairman, as usual, was Mr. Doi. Winners included Tom Hirai, Harry Yanagimachi, Mitsuo Mizuki, Pete Fujino, Mitsuru Yano and Shozo Komorita.

During the war sumo was, not surprisingly, especially popular in camps where there were many Californians. Seattle's Hank Ogawa, for example, learned sumo at Santa Anita Assembly Center in 1942. Ogawa had been a football player and judoka in the Northwest before the war, and after being sent to the assembly center, he started learning sumo from a northern California champion named Hiroshi "Bud" Mukaye. In the camps Ogawa preferred sumo to judo because sumo, unlike judo, was a paying proposition. Matches were held every Sunday during the summer and fall, and the fans would put money or ration coupons into a white envelope marked with the names of two players.

The winner of the bout would then get the envelope. "I was earning $50 to $75 every Sunday in Santa Anita Camp," recalled Ogawa years later. As laboring for the government only paid $12 to $14 a month, the extra money was important to the Ogawa family, which had three children born in the wartime camps.

While sumo tournaments did not resume in Washington or Oregon following the war, Fife's Masato Tamura won a sumo championship in Chicago in 1954. Since 1977 sumo tournaments also have been featured in Vancouver, British Columbia's annual Japanese Canadian Powell Street Festival.

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Footprints along the banks of the Missouri River left by members of the Lewis and Clark expedition were washed away by the time Jedediah Smith walked along that path 18 years later. The same cottonwood trees were dropping their leaves in autumn, the same Stony Mountains were shining in the sunrise, and the very same risks and challenges were still painfully present: Which gully will offer the shortest route to the next water? Will the hunger go away soon? Will an ambush be waiting behind a nearby bluff?

Jedediah Smith expanded the Old West of Lewis and Clark to encompass the great changes occurring in America between 1804 and 1831, changes encountered and faced head-on by Smith and others. During a time when America’s boundaries were expanding at their greatest rate, Jed Smith plunged himself into the heart of the frontier from New York State across Ohio and west to the Pacific.

What forces were driving people west in this new century? This was a time when a family could move to a raw, unsettled land to seek better conditions, new resources and ready-made markets with promising opportunities. Smith’s family started in New York State, moved west into Pennsylvania following the southern shore of Lake Erie, and eventually settled in the middle of Ohio. The children of this family were a self-ameliorating group of siblings accustomed to difficult travel through new terrain while learning skills that would serve them a lifetime. Not everyone received an education on the frontier, but the Smiths were fortunate to come into contact with Dr. Titus Gordon Vespasian Simons, an extraordinary teacher, who added to the ethical values fostered by their parents. It is said that Smith read about Lewis and Clark as a teenager and was inspired by their story of adventure.

When Lewis and Clark returned to St. Louis, their knowledge was integrated into the plans of fur-trading companies that were extending their territories up the Missouri River. The most important of these were the Astorians of the Pacific Fur Company and the St. Louis-based Missouri Fur Company.

The outbound Astorians had such a difficult time with the rapids on the Snake River, a tributary of the Columbia, that by 1811 a water route to the Pacific was becoming a nightmare instead of a dream. The returning Astorians, in a west-to-east approach, were the first European Americans to use the comfortable rise of South Pass for their overland trek to St. Louis. Continuing attacks against American fur traders on the upper Missouri River by Blackfoot Indians created an environment near the Three Forks of the Missouri River that made trapping in that area next to impossible. By 1819, after several years of severe conflicts with the Blackfoot, the Missouri Fur Company retired from the trade, reporting upwards of 30 of their men killed.

Great Britain, Spain and Russia were all involved in the early 19th-century nation building that was being played out on the Pacific coast of North America. The British Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) had designs on the land north of the

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This modern sketch of Jedediah Smith is based on a written description found by the author. It shows the permanent scars left by a grizzly bear attack in 1823. No life portraits or photographs of Smith have been found.
OPPOSITE PAGE: Mission San José was one of several visited by Jedediah Smith during the golden twilight of the California mission era. The Mexican government held him there under house arrest for about five weeks.

BELOW: Jedediah Smith’s brigade of trappers-turned-wranglers blazed a trail through the rugged terrain of northern California in 1828. Along the way, they encountered cultures and geography previously unknown to Americans.

Columbia River. They fully expected an international boundary to be drawn down the middle of the river, with the north side being awarded to Great Britain.

Jedediah Smith played an active role in this transcontinental drama. He was not a pioneer-farmer moving slowly across the landscape, as envisioned by Thomas Jefferson. Nor did he fit the Lewis and Clark model of a government-sponsored explorer. Instead, he helped invent and perpetuate the image of the Yankee trader/trapper/trailblazer who was willing to take risks in an attempt to improve himself and his family.

In time Jedediah Smith earned legendary status, but his identity has been partially hidden in myth, and his adventures and character have been reinterpreted as each generation discovers or invents its own heroes.

Jed Smith saw the physical landscape of America before it was a part of the political landscape. He was an ambassador without a portfolio as he negotiated with Native Americans, Mexican bureaucracy, Catholic missionaries in Alta California, and the HBC. The route used by Smith along the Platte River became the established path for the Oregon Trail.

The accomplishments of Jedediah Smith show his determination: He was the first Euro-American to cross South Pass east to west, the first to enter California by land, and the first to cross the Nevada desert. He was the first to travel the Pacific Coast states from San Diego to the site of present-day Portland, Oregon, and up the Columbia River, almost to Canada. He did all this over an eight-year period, without any financial backing from the government, traveling more than twice as many miles as Lewis and Clark.

Pushing himself to endure hardship while striving for success, Smith once described his own purpose as following fortune. This is the story of his brigade and its travel north from Mission San José to Fort Vancouver from December 1827 to March 1829.

Smith first entered California in November 1826. His party trapped its way as far as the American River but was still a long way from the prearranged rendezvous of 1827 near Bear Lake, north of the Great Salt Lake. In May 1827 he left his party on the Stanislaus River, near present-day Knight’s Ferry in central California, and with the furs and horses safe, crossed the Sierra Nevada Mountains in the company of two others, promising to return within four months. Their journey across Nevada and Utah remains one of the epic journeys of human endurance.

Smith was reunited with the men left behind in California on September 18, 1827. Led by Harrison Rogers, Smith’s clerk, the men had fared relatively well. After two days with his party, Smith left for Mission San José (about 75 miles southwest), taking three men with him. Arriving on September 23, he vowed “as a last and only resource to try once more the hospitality of the Californias.”
Between September 23 and December 30, 1827, he involved himself in negotiations that were necessary for further travel out of California. His goal was to reach the summer rendezvous of 1828 safely, with his men and profits protected. It should be noted that Mexico governed California at this time. The language and laws were those of a foreign country, and the cultural struggles that Smith faced presented special challenges. When the local commandante, Lieutenant Ignacio Martinez, arrived at Mission San Jose, Jed learned that he was to be tried as an “intruder.” He was under house arrest at Mission San José for about five weeks.

After this time had passed, a military escort led him to Monterey, where he was detained while he waited to meet with the Mexican governor, José Echeandia. In an act of friendship, a Boston sea captain living in Monterey, John Rogers Cooper, brought Jed breakfast while he was in the guardhouse. The language barrier presenting difficulties, Smith secured the services of William Hartnell, an Englishman trading on the coast who also spoke French, German and Spanish. At one point in their discussions Governor Echeandia decided that Jedediah would have to go to Mexico City to argue his case. Fortunately, Hartnell stepped in and suggested that one of the local sea captains might become Jedediah’s agent. Cooper was selected and appointed by Echeandia. By November 7 Smith had arranged things with Cooper and presented a document to the Mexican governor at Monterey. Cooper became his certified agent.

The Franklin sailed from Monterey to San Francisco on November 15, 1827, with Jed on board. Seasick, he arrived two days later at the village called Yerba Buena (today's San Francisco), and observed seven other sailing vessels in the bay. He was soon reunited with his party, which had been waiting back on the Stanislaus River; the trappers began their resupply efforts, preparing for a return trip to the Rocky Mountains.

At this time Smith collected the beaver skins that had been gathered in his absence by the men still in California and sold them to Captain John Bradshaw of the Franklin for $3,920. By November 28, after weeks of tedious preparation around Yerba Buena, the party was back at Mission San José, anxious to leave the quagmire of Mexican bureaucracy. The group consisted of 20 men with their 65 horses and 47 traps plus 250 newly acquired half-wild horses and mules that Smith had purchased, hoping to transport them to the rendezvous and sell them for a profit.

By December 30, 1827, the expedition was on its way. The travelers crossed rivers and streams with rafts and bullboats, trapping as they progressed north through unrelenting rain. Near the end of January two men deserted with 1·1 of the valuable traps. As the party moved north they encountered Indians who were not as friendly as those they had dealt with near the missions. One especially poignant moment occurred at this time. Smith, in an attempt to make contact with some Indian women he encountered, was surprised to find a young girl no older than ten or eleven lying dead on the trail. His journal entry reveals sensitivity not usually associated with a mountain man:

Could it be possible...
Trees of Mystery:

There were 15 to 20 cedars

just near the peak were 12 to 15 feet

overhead. Where thinner

these trees, I had

not seen. Just before reaching the

Pacific Ocean, some of the

trees were...
During March and April the group traveled through the vicinity of Chico, California, and up the valley on the east side of the Sacramento River. On April 11 they crossed the Sacramento River near today's Red Bluff. At about this time it became evident to Smith that there was no route available to him (with the horses) for eastbound travel. Instead, the party turned Northwest and set off for the Pacific Coast. They were harassed by Indians again, and one Indian was shot and killed. Traveling was rough, especially since they were driving the nearly 250 horses and mules ahead of them. To advance one mile would take a whole day, and then the horses would be unfit for travel for two or three days. Occasionally there was snow up to three or four feet deep. Fog frequently obscured their view. By May 19 there were sightings of huge redwood trees, and the party camped with a distant view of the ocean. Conditions were extremely difficult as they worked their way down into the Trinity and Klamath Rivers in the Northwest corner of present-day California.

All hands working hard, to get the horses on, as they have become so much worn out, that it is almost impossible to drive through Brush—we have two men, every day that goes ahead with axes, to cut a road, and then it is with difficulty we can get along.

—Harrison Rogers's journal, June 3, 1828

This exhausted band of trappers-turned-wranglers finally reached the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of today's Wilson Creek near Requa, California, on June 10, 1828. They were near the site of present-day Crescent City on June 14. By June 23 they crossed the point that would later become the California-Oregon state line. They had been “on the road” six months since leaving Mission San José.

As the group traveled up the coast they had to cross rivers, wait for low tides, and still use axes and shovels in the rougher spots. On June 27 they made camp on the south side of today’s Rogue River. The HBC had visited this area while on a fur-hunting expedition the previous fall and winter, under the leadership of Alexander Roderick McLeod. The Rogue was observed by McLeod to be three days’ travel south of the Umpqua River. On June 28 Smith’s journal entry mentions 12 or 15 drowned animals. Over the last three days the Americans had lost 23 horses or mules.

Jedediah Smith’s last journal entry on this adventure is July 3, 1828. They were camping near the Coquille River:

At 2 Miles from camp I came to a river 200 yards wide which although the tide was low was deep and apparently a considerable River. On first arriving in sight I discovered some [two] indians moving as fast as possible up the river in a canoe. I ran my horse to get above them in order to stop them. When I got opposite to them and they discovered they could not make their escape they put ashore and drawing their canoe up the bank they fell to work with all their might to split it in pieces.

—Smith’s journal

Trade along this part of the coast had been going on between Indians and Englishmen since Vancouver’s time (1792). For Jedediah Smith’s party, trade activity was sporadic. Some local tribes would trade eagerly; others would flee or make piecemeal attacks on animals and men. On Tuesday, July 8, Harrison Rogers chronicles that arrows had been shot into eight of their animals. After trading, two Indian interpreters said to Rogers that “one Indian got mad on account of a trade he made and killed the mules and horses.”

On July 9, while camped on the east shore of Coos Bay, Rogers wrote that they talked with the chiefs about “these Indians shooting our horses but could get but little satisfaction as they say they were not accessories to it. And we, finding them so numerous and the traveling being bad, we thought it advisable to let it pass at present, without notice.” The next day, Rogers noted, Captain Smith was “somewhat of the opinion that the Indians had a mind to attack him from their behavior.”

On Saturday, July 12, one of the local Umpqua Indians stole an ax. Rogers states that the Americans were “obliged to seize him before we could scare him to make him give it up. Captain Smith and one of them caught him and put a cord around his neck.” They later found the ax buried in the sand nearby and the thief was released. The stolen ax incident was certainly related to the events that followed. The level of hostility that existed between the Americans and the Umpquas seems to have been underemphasized by both Rogers and Smith. The Umpquas were restive—if Jedediah Smith had known this perhaps the disaster ahead could have been averted.

On Sunday, July 13, the Indians told the Americans that after going 15 to 20 miles up the river they would have good traveling to the “Willamett.” The fatigued men must have given a sigh of relief upon hearing that their goal was so close. The next morning Jedediah Smith, John Turner, Richard Leland and a local Indian guide took a canoe up the Umpqua River to scout out the route ahead. Captain Smith gave orders to Harrison Rogers to keep the Indians out of camp.

They had been away from camp about three hours and were returning by canoe when a fellow tribesman shouted something from the shore that caused the Indian guide to grab Smith’s rifle and dive into the river. At the same time, two Indians fired on the group from the bushes on shore.

They later found the ax buried in the sand...
Smith ascended a nearby hill and, seeing the camp empty, assumed the worst and set off with Leland and Turner for a safe route to the ocean. Of the men left in camp, only one, Arthur Black, found his way to the ocean and safety. The remaining members of the expedition either disappeared or were killed, including a ten-year-old Willamette boy named Marion who was traveling with them as an interpreter.

Arthur Black fought his way out of the melee and hid in the coastal forest until he could find his way north to Fort Vancouver. He arrived there at around ten o'clock on the night of August 8, 1828, and spoke with the HBC chief factor, Dr. John McLoughlin. After hearing the tale from Black, McLoughlin began planning a rescue operation. He knew from Black that there was a chance that Smith and two others were still alive, so the next morning he sent Indian runners with gifts of tobacco to the various Willamette tribes asking for help in locating any survivors.

The next day, August 10, as he was preparing a heavily armed group to go look for them, Smith, Leland and Turner appeared at the gates of the fort. They had followed the Alsea River to the coast and walked north until they met the friendly Tillamooks, who directed them eastward to Fort Vancouver. It had been 27 days since they had seen Arthur Black. On the same day that Smith arrived McLoughlin wrote a letter to the Hudson's Bay Company directors in London, reviewing the events on the Umpqua. Black's story of the massacre, via McLoughlin, is the only one told by an American who survived it. Later there would be another version told to the HBC by the various tribes along the Umpqua. Here is Black's account, as told by McLoughlin:

A short time after Mr. Smiths departure their being about a hundred Indians in the camp and the Americans busy arranging their arms which got wet the day previous, the Indians suddenly rushed on them, two got a hold of his (Black's) gun to take it from him, in contending with them, he was wounded on the hands by their knives and another came with an axe to strike him on the head, which he avoided by springing on one side and received the blow on his back. He then let go his gun and rushed to the woods.

—McLoughlin letter, August 10, 1828

Within a day, McLoughlin started planning for the recovery of the Americans' property. He first sent an HBC employee, Canadian Michel La Framboise, who was married to an Indian woman, to scout ahead and find out what he could about the disposition of the horses, beaver pelts and the few remaining trade goods that the Americans possessed prior to the attack. Following soon with a larger recovery party of 38 individuals was Alexander McLeod, the HBC chief trader who only three months earlier had been among the umpquas. Jedediah Smith and the three other American survivors accompanied McLeod. They left Fort Vancouver around the middle of September and arrived at the "old Fort Umpqua" by October 9, 1828. This fort had been established back in 1820-21 by the Northwest Company before its merger with the HBC.

From October 10 to November 28, 1828, the recovery expedition wound its way down the Umpqua River, up the coast, and back to the old Fort Umpqua, collecting what it could from the various tribes that had acquired the stolen property. Smith, Black, Leland and Turner, along with the HBC brigade, viewed the site of the massacre on October 28. They buried the skeletons of 11 former friends. Five bodies were never found, adding hope that maybe some survived or suggesting that some were taken away.

Smith would have liked to punish the Indians, but McLoughlin cautioned McLeod against it. The HBC recovery mission was not punitive; it sought the unrewarded return of stolen goods. The HBC would not want to be required to reward the return of its own goods that might someday be stolen.

By the time the recovery operation was concluded, the HBC had assisted Smith in recovering: 1 rifle, 2 pistols, 1 musket, 2 vials of medicine, 660 large beaver pelts, 28 small beaver, 23 large land otter, 4 sea otter, 1 cotton shirt, 1 Russian shirt, 6 lead pencils, 39 horses, 1 blanket, some beads, 2 kettles, 3 saddles, 7 steel traps, 1 copper-covered kettle, and—most importantly from the historian's standpoint—portions of the journals of Harrison Rogers and Jedediah Smith.

The expedition was back at Fort Vancouver by December 14, 1828. The HBC Governor, George Simpson, just happened to be at Fort Vancouver when Jed Smith returned. He was on a touring expedition of New Caledonia, checking up on McLoughlin and his operation on the lower Columbia River. In two letters written to Jedediah Smith in December 1828 Simpson reviewed the events on the Umpqua by stating that McLeod had

learns that the Melancholy catastrophe was occasioned by some harsh treatment on the part of your people towards the Indians who visited your Camp some of whom they said had been beaten, and one of them bound hands & feet for some very slight offence.

—George Simpson letter, December 26, 1828

McLeod added in his own words that one of the local chiefs expressed his surprise at our [the HBC's] interference in aiding and assisting people who evinced evil intentions towards us [the HBC] as he had been informed by the people who defeated the party, they [the Americans] having communicated something about territorial claim and they would soon possess themselves of the country... Mr. Smith, when told of this, observed that he did not doubt of it but it was without his knowledge and must have been intimidated [sic] to the Indians through the medium of a slave boy attached to his party: a native of the Willamette, he could converse freely with those Indians—as to the origin of the quarrel as stated yesterday by
the old chief: Mr. Smith affirms to have tied and set him free when the ax was restored, but denies having used blows or any manner of violence except setting him.

—McLeod’s journal

Arthur Black admitted to McLeod that he saw a chief mount a horse without permission just before the attack, but that the chief was not addressed in an angry tone and that he dismounted when asked to do so by Black. There is also the suggestion by Simpson and other HBC employees that perhaps there was friction caused by flirtatious Indian females and/or solicitous behavior for sexual favors by the Americans, notably Harrison Rogers, second in command.

Whatever the cause, or causes, for the Umpqua attack might have been—headstrong American trappers bragging that this country would soon be theirs, local Indians thinking that they were helping their trading partners, chiefs seeking revenge for harsh punishment handed out for minor infractions, or jealous tribesman protecting their women from lustful strangers—it was now left to Jedediah Smith to once more pick up the pieces of his ongoing adventure and attempt to turn loss into plenty.

Although only the letters that George Simpson wrote to Jedediah Smith survive (not Smith’s replies), it is clear that Smith was trying to get out of Fort Vancouver and make it back to his partners trapping around the Salt Lake area as soon as possible. Simpson stalled Smith’s leaving by telling him about the risks of travel up the Columbia River. The HBC never sent small parties up the Columbia, and Simpson was quick to dismiss Smith’s idea of overland travel from Fort Nez Perces (Walla Walla) to Bear Lake (north of the Great Salt Lake) in the dead of winter as “imprudent.”

Simpson suggested either waiting until spring when he could accompany the HBC brigade to the Red River settlement (Winnipeg) or wait nine months to go along with the Snake River expedition that would reunite him with his partners by November 1829. At any rate, Simpson offered to pay him for the horses and beaver pelts and wrote a check for $2,700, payable to Messrs. Smith and his partners Jackson and Sublette. While writing it, he let Smith know that he didn’t need the horses and that the beaver was “of very bad quality, the worst indeed I ever saw.”

While at Fort Vancouver Smith had plenty of time to soak up the life-style at a Hudson’s Bay Company post. Chief Factor McLoughlin had done an excellent job of creating an oasis of civilization in the midst of thousands of square miles of wilderness. McLoughlin and Smith seemed to like one another, and some speculation has been made concerning how differently things might have gone had not Governor Simpson (McLoughlin’s boss) been there when Smith arrived. Perhaps he could have received more help from “Dr. John” in facilitating a speedy trip east to take up his business interests.

Apparently no record exists of what Smith did to occupy his time from December 14, 1828, until March 12, 1829, while at Fort Vancouver. During this time the final work was accomplished in moving the site of the fort from the initial, somewhat temporary, location high on the bluff (founded in 1825) to the permanent site down the bank closer to the Columbia River.

Smith would have heard the rapping of hammers and smelted the aroma of fresh cedar chips as the new fort was constructed. He would have observed the artisan crafts, the cultivated fields and orchards, and the activities of food preservation and international shipping, and perhaps he made use of the well-stocked library. The mountain man learned that the annual beaver harvest at Fort Vancouver amounted to about 30,000 skins—almost $250,000 at New York prices.

In February 1829 an unsealed letter was brought down the Columbia addressed to “Jedediah Smith, Fort Vancouver.” It was from Davey Jackson, his partner, written from the Flathead Lake area (in Montana) and purposely left open because Jackson knew that every HBC employee who touched it would read it. The letter signaled Jedediah of Jackson’s whereabouts—they had not seen each other since July 1827.

Jedediah needed only a trip up the Columbia to close a huge western circle that had begun back in the summer of 1824 when he was leader of a small trapping party that joined Alexander Ross’s HBC group and wintered with them at their Flathead Post. Whatever route was taken in March 1829 to the reunion with Jackson, it is almost certain that Smith and Black went up the Columbia in a York boat along with a spring HBC brigade, stopping at company trading posts along the way. One of these was Fort Okanogan, at the mouth of the Okanogan River.

Smith was reunited with Davey Jackson and closed his “big circle” by crossing Lemhi Pass in the early summer of 1829. He concluded his partnership in the Rocky Mountain Fur Trade in 1830 and retired to St. Louis as a successful businessman to write his story and share his knowledge of the West with mapmakers.

Though he may not have originally intended to go along, the lure of joining his own newly formed trade caravan to Santa Fe was too hard to resist. Smith left St. Louis with his partners and two of his brothers in April 1831. Just short of Santa Fe, on May 27, 1831, while out alone scouting for water, he was ambushed and killed by Comanches south of the Arkansas River. His pistols were taken into Santa Fe and traded by his attackers. A few days later his brothers and friends noticed the weapons at a Santa Fe trader’s stall and set him free.

Several versions exist, but there is no authoritative account of the untimely death of Jedediah Smith.
The First American Military Installation on Puget Sound Strongly Influenced the Region's Development

By Steve Dunkelberger and Walter Neary

Fort Steilacoom played a significant but little-known role in the settling of Washington. Understanding the circumstances surrounding its formation in 1849 helps explain Fort Steilacoom's role in the migration of settlers to Washington, a wave that continues to this day. The United States Army founded Fort Steilacoom in late August 1849. Captain Bennett Hill's Company M of the First Artillery arrived at the nearby Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Nisqually, on Puget Sound. A six-mile ride north of Fort Nisqually stood an English farm that had been abandoned six months earlier when its previous tenant, Joseph Heath, died while working the land under the HBC's subsidiary, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company. The United States government negotiated a lease for the land at $50 a month.

Dr. William Tolmie, factor of Fort Nisqually, wrote these lines in his Journal of Occurrences at Fort Nisqually on August 24, 1849: "Rode to Steilacoom this morning in company with Major Hatheway and Captain Hill in order that they might judge for themselves as to whether Steilacoom or Sequatchew would form the best winter quarters for the troops. Steilacoom received the preference on account of the number of buildings already erected there...." Thus began the first solid American military presence on Puget Sound. The fort brought signs of stability, commerce and structure. More log buildings were quickly added to the fort at a cost of about $3,000.

Between the 1820s and 1840s, as trading posts had been established in the region, employees of British fur trading companies became the first Europeans to call the Pacific Northwest home for any length of time. These posts were generally small satellite outposts, but they formed a trading network around the Pacific Northwest. American settlers at that time had largely settled south of the Columbia River. As the availability of prime land in present-day Oregon diminished, settlers moved northward into areas largely governed by British law. Dissatisfied Americans started murmuring about wanting their own government.

That murmur became a cry to the United States government after Indians attacked the Whitman Mission in 1847, killing 15 people, including the Whitmans. The American settlers wanted protection from such hostilities. An Indian attack on Fort Nisqually in May 1847 struck at the heart of the rising tide of settlements along Puget Sound. An American settler named Leander Wallace was killed in the melee.

Military posts sprang up throughout the Oregon Territory. In the main, these western forts, built to keep watch over the Indians, were shabby at best, constructed of whatever materials were at hand. Mud huts, caves and tent villages circled around a flagpole were about all a soldier of the day could expect. Very few posts had much fortification. Fort Steilacoom was one of the better defended forts, and it had permanent buildings.

When Captain Hill's company moved into the log cabins Heath had built a few years before, it became the first permanent presence of the United States government on Puget Sound. Fort Steilacoom served in other capacities as well. Soldiers at the fort provided settlers with a flow of consumers for their locally produced goods and a steady source of currency. The fort's doctor also gave medical aid to the flood of American settlers that poured into the area during the early 1850s.

Land developer Lafayette Balch foresaw the advantages of siting his land claim next to a military installation and formed Fort Steilacoom in 1850. He joined his claim with one nearby two years later. In 1854 this settlement became the first incorporated town north of the Columbia River. The fort strengthened its connections with the settlers by developing a road system throughout the territory. Civilians and soldiers built roads that networked from Bellingham and Vancouver to Spokane and Walla Walla. If all roads once led to Rome, every road in territorial Washington eventually led to Fort Steilacoom. These roads, including Old Military Road from Steilacoom to South Hill and the Byrd Mill Road to Puyallup are still in use today.

During the Indian War of 1855-56, the fort served as headquarters for the Ninth Infantry. About 80 settlers stampeded from around Puget Sound to the fort for safety. The settlers fled their farms and headed toward the fort or other safe locations in the dark of night with whatever they could carry. The handful of log buildings and a flagpole at the fort provided more security than the lonely farmhouses scattered around the prairie.

The fort was only attacked once. No one on either side was confirmed killed. A sentry spotted something moving in the shadows during the night of December 28, 1855. He fired into the darkness and later reported that he spotted figures dragging...
away a wounded person. A patrol the following morning found a small trail of blood but no body.

Colonel Silas Casey arrived with 200 soldiers on January 30, 1856. This experienced Indian fighter took charge of Fort Steilacoom and immediately clashed with Washington Territory's governor, Isaac Stevens, over how to conduct the war. These circumstances led to a martial law controversy and the infamous hanging of Chief Leschi of the Nisqually tribe.

Fort Steilacoom underwent significant growth in the aftermath of the conflict. Lieutenant August V. Kautz supervised construction of new buildings during 1857 and 1858. The Fraser River Gold Rush of 1858 hampered a frustrating construction project by tempting away portions of an already small work force. The remaining carpenters demanded an outrageous sum of six dollars a day to work on the buildings.

After the Civil War the need to protect settlers from hostile Indians faded. Fort Steilacoom was abandoned in 1868. The territorial government received the 640-acre fort and farm for use as an insane asylum. The mental hospital, which opened in 1871, is the second oldest set of governmental facilities in the state. The various fort buildings were used, remodeled, abandoned or removed as the hospital grew.

The Fort Steilacoom Historical District, with four renovated buildings, survives as an interpretive center and museum, situated on the grounds of what is now called Western State Hospital. The hospital first used the fort for wards and then staff housing. In the early 1960s the buildings sat vacant with little maintenance. In 1976 Gary Reese, a historian and Tacoma Public Library's manager of special collections, learned of the hospital's plans to tear down the buildings. Reese alerted Cy and Rita Happy, two prominent Lakewood historians. They and another historian, Patricia Laughlin, applied for a listing on the National Register of Historic Places that would protect the buildings and one square mile around them. The hospital's management responded to the application by acknowledging the importance of the buildings in Washington's history.

The hospital agreed to move its planned location of a new building. The hospital also allocated money for repair of the buildings, but it was only enough to finish two exteriors and none of the interiors. The agency agreed to lease the four buildings to a nonprofit group, Historic Fort Steilacoom Association, for the purpose of restoring the buildings. Nobody knew it at the time, but the project to restore the four buildings was to consume the weekdays of a half dozen members, with help from countless volunteers, from 1983 through 1989. The restoration team included Lyle Dunkin and Chuck Collier, who ultimately figured that they logged 6,000 hours each on the renovation—equivalent to almost three years at a 40-hour-a-week job.

The hospital had renovated the interiors many times. The team had to pay close attention to details available about the fort, including two sets of drawings from the period and a few photographs. The restorers peeled off up to 13 layers of wallpaper to get down to the original plaster. Volunteers removed modern plumbing and heavy radiators as well as non-original walls and staircases. They also tore down additions tacked onto the back of several buildings. There was a layer of fir flooring on top of a layer of maple flooring on top of the original one-by-six tongue and groove. By uncovering the original flooring, they learned where walls and stairways had been. Mysteries still abound at the fort—the "hiding hole," for instance, is a small panel cut into a bedroom floor and leading to a chamber about a foot deep. Perhaps it held jewelry, a treasured diary—or moonshine.

Two of the four buildings have been furnished as they might once have looked. One represents life within bachelor officers' quarters. Another represents the furnishings of a married officer and family. Casey's house has been restored for meeting rooms, displays and a library. The association's meetings are held in the same room where Casey denied the territorial government permission to kill Chief Leschi on federal property. The fourth building, a former chapel and chaplain's quarters, includes a sutler's store, the association's offices and an interpretive center, with a scale model of how the fort looked during its peak.

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The Glaciers of Mount Rainier—Cold, Cruel, Magnificent

BY RUTH KIRK

Mount Rainier's glaciers furnish the routes climbers use to reach the summit, today as in the past. Touted by railroad companies, they attracted tourists even before the national park was established. And they provided a major reason scientists urged national park status for the mountain in 1899.

"It would be a matter of interest to the Mazamas to contribute to the solutions of the problem of variation of glaciers by observing and recording the changes which occur among the glaciers of Oregon and Washington," So wrote glaciologist Harry Fielding Reid in the 1903 journal of the Mazamas, a Portland outdoor club. At the time, many Americans assumed that trips to the European Alps or the wilds of Alaska were the only way to see true glaciers. Yet Mount Rainier had 28 named glaciers (now dwindled to 25, owing to melt). Firsthand accounts of journeys to see the mountain’s ice easily commanded attention in Puget Sound newspapers. The Tacoma Daily Ledger for June 23, 1883, described the impressions of a distinguished party that included United States Senator George Edmunds, Northern Pacific Railroad Vice President T. E. Oakes, and Western Division Assistant Manager J. M. Buckley. They had gone up the Carbon River valley, and they remarked on the vast forest they passed through and the house of Bailey Willis, "dimensions 15 x 30 x 9, built from the butt of one cedar, which tree was only one of many in the immediate neighborhood." But it was the ice that held their full attention. Indeed, the report concluded, the men all "agreed without a dissenting voice, that there was not a scene comparable to those glaciers [anywhere else] on this continent.... They would not have missed the trip for ten times the amount of fatigue entailed."

Sixteen years later the glaciers were a major reason for establishing the mountain as a national park, and they would remain its most touted feature for years. The National Park Portfolio, published in 1916 by the Department of the Interior to promote tourism, focuses most of its Rainier text on glaciers. It barely mentions flowers, forests and other attractions. The mountain is a "frozen octopus" with "icy tentacles." It has glaciers "roaring over precipices like congealed water falls." The Nisqually Glacier is "glistening white and fairly smooth at its shining source on the mountain's summit," but its lower reaches are "soiled with dust and rent by terrible pressure into fantastic shapes."

For a volcano to be sheathed in ice seems incongruous: heat intense enough to melt rock juxtaposed with glaciers? Yet even before the Rainier volcano finished building, glaciers began sculpting its lofty flanks. They formed not because of arctic cold but because of superabundant snowfall. Only two conditions are needed. More snow must fall in winter than melts in summer, and there must be enough time for it to compact into ice and start flowing because of gravity and its own weight. This critical depth varies from several tens of feet to 200 or more, depending on exact conditions and slope. The Nisqually moves downslope an average of 8 to 18 inches per day, and as much as 72 inches per day in its thickest and steepest portions.

Crevasses form because glacier ice flows not as a viscous fluid, like asphalt, but as a solid. It follows the same laws of physics that govern, for example, the bending of iron. Stressed too far, it splits. The splits—crevasses—are a by-product of the glacier’s accommodation to rock knobs and ridges at its bed, and to different rates
RIVERS of ICE
of internal flow within the ice. Bottom ice moves more slowly than upper ice. Crevasses form. They seem almost bottomless to anyone standing at the lip and peering in for the first time, but pressure actually limits the crevasses to little more than 100 feet deep. Beyond that, they squeeze shut.

Throughout the Pleistocene epoch, which included the most recent Ice Age, Rainier received vast quantities of moisture from the Pacific, borne by westerly winds and precipitated as snow. Thus nourished, glacier tongues radiated as much as 65 miles from the mountain, gouging bedrock with sharp-edged fragments of rock held in an icy grip, and grinding and polishing because of sediments frozen into the bottom of the ice like sandpaper.

In the Nisqually valley, the townsite of Elbe once lay beneath Pleistocene ice a quarter mile thick. At White River the site of the present campground once lay beneath ice a half mile thick. The glaciers produced sheer headwalls as high as 3,000 feet, and they broadened and deepened preexisting, v-shaped stream valleys. New flows of lava might destroy parts of the icy mantle, and titanic bursts of steam might fracture it, but all such events were inconsequential. Climate dictates the waxing and waning of glaciers. When it warms enough that melt-rates exceed snowfall, glaciers retreat. When it cools enough that snow accumulation exceeds melt, glaciers advance. Scientists believe that if Rainier’s present ice were somehow stripped away, it would re-form. The mountain’s slopes are directly in the path of clouds moving inland from the Pacific and are cold. Middle elevations actually receive more snow than does the summit. Clouds rise only as much as is necessary to clear the barrier of the Cascade range, and the mountain’s top often protrudes above them. Snowfall is greatest at elevations of 5,000 to 8,000 feet, not at the top.

About 34 square miles of Mount Rainier’s slopes remain white at summer’s end, a greater area of ice and snow than that of all the other Cascades volcanoes combined. The Carbon Glacier is almost six miles long and is 700 feet thick at its center. It reaches farther down the valley than Rainier’s other glaciers, which in 1899 made it a commercial temptation for entrepreneurs. The Daily Ledger on December 14th published an article with the headline: “MOUNT TACOMA ICE: A Rather Novel Plan to Bring It Here.” The article that followed quoted the Northern Pacific’s “Division Superintendent Horner,” who announced that “prominent men of this city and a number of capitalists in New York [plan] to supply the city with absolutely pure ice” from the Carbon Glacier:

It is frozen way up in mid-air where no spurious gases ever corrupt its purity.

Overleaf: Mount Rainier’s 25 glaciers with their mantle of snow constitute a perched, frozen volume of water greater in area than that of all the other Cascades volcanoes combined. A rise in the volcano’s temperature could unleash stupendous floods. This aerial view from the northwest shows some of Rainier’s glacial “arms” reaching down the sides of the mountain.

Opposite page: The Nisqually Glacier constantly advances, but it no longer fills the valley it previously carved. For centuries it has been shortening at the snout and thinning overall, yet it still measures 400 feet thick and three miles long.
and where it is impossible for decaying vegetation to taint it. No city in the world could get purer or better ice . . . . The company proposes to utilize the timber, which is so plentiful and can be had for nothing, and build a chute and send the ice down the side of the mountain and through the valley to Tacoma and adjacent cities and villages.

This was an era when ice supplied the only refrigeration. Delivery from the chute to the city presumably would be via Northern Pacific rails; they stretched between Tacoma and Wilkeson, a few miles from the glacier. The plan never was instituted.

RAINIER'S GLACIERS are retreating, as are temperate glaciers throughout the world. "They're going extinct," sighs glaciologist Austin Post, whose aerial photography has kept watch on ice from the Andes to the Aleutians since the 1950s. "Our prettiest glaciers are threatened." Warming climate is the reason. Perhaps as much as half of the ice present in temperate regions at the beginning of the 20th century has melted. Many glaciers have entirely disappeared. Rainier's Paradise Glacier has shrunk. It was probably the mountain's most beloved ice because of exquisitely beautiful melt tunnels formed by warm air moving along the melt stream. Now the tunnels are gone, a scenic loss, as was the loss decades earlier of ice tunnels at the snout of the Nisqually Glacier. Of greater consequence, however, is the

From the earliest times, Mount Rainier's glaciers have fascinated people. Some gaze at them from afar while others prefer them underfoot. Shown here are 1950s climbers on an afternoon outing, probably on Nisqually Glacier.

RUN TO YOUR RIGHT!

Tragedy on Ingraham Glacier

By Ted Kerstetter

The weather was unsettled as we hiked from Paradise to Camp Muir the day before our try for the summit. But patches of blue showed between the racing clouds and we felt at least semi-optimistic that the climb would go. What better way to celebrate Father's Day 1981 than to stand on top of the Northwest's premier mountain!

Dinner that night at Camp Muir was basic carbo-loading fare—mounds of spaghetti heaped on our plates, washed down with plenty of liquid. We were in our sleeping bags early, but sleep was slow in coming. The guides' hut was congested, jam-packed, a symphony of snores until the wake-up call at one in the morning. Departure was set for two o'clock. My wife Gayle, our 19-year-old son Greg and I sleepily pulled on layers of polyester, wool and goose down, strapped on crampons and headlamps, and tied into climbing ropes in teams of four or five (the three of us on three different ropes). Our group, 29 altogether, headed out in single file—six rope teams slowly crossing the Cowlitz Glacier toward Cadaver Gap and Ingraham Glacier beyond. After a couple hours, three climbers decided this was not for them; they returned to Camp Muir with one of the guides.

By dawn we were at 12,300 feet on the Ingraham Glacier, a long tongue of ice dropping from far up the mountain to an icefall, a tangled mass of broken ice and snow flowing over a high cliff. Partway across the glacier the chief guide halted the long string of us and, with two fellow guides, continued upslope to reconnoiter the route ahead. The rest of us sat on the snow, facing downslope and inspecting an enormous crevasse a hundred yards below
Professor Jonathan Laitone photographed the dawn moments before the 1981 avalanche struck, knocking the camera out of his hands. He and the other disaster victims were buried under many tons of ice. Park rangers later found Laitone's camera and were able to identify its owner. They sent the camera and prints from the film that was in it to Laitone's father.

us, watching the beauty of the sunrise, and enjoying the respite. Only a muted thunder building in intensity behind us broke our reverie. We turned almost in unison to see a wall of snow and ice plummeting down the glacier directly toward us. The icefall had given way. The sight remains burned into my memory. In that moment I knew I was dead, that my life had come to its end. But the instinct to survive takes over and a shout from far across the glacier—"Run to your right! Run to your right!"—galvanized me. I was on my feet in an instant, running clumsily, crampons and heavy clothing slowing my frantic efforts to escape the oncoming avalanche. Within seconds the first of the debris struck, tossing and rolling me downslope, pounding me with chunks of ice and snow as I went. My only thought was: "Please, make it fast. Please, not a slow suffocating death."

As if in answer to my plea, a huge piece of flying ice struck between my shoulder blades, momentarily stunning me with pain. Then—quiet.

I lay face down, amazed to be alive and desperately trying to catch my breath for, what, a moment? a minute? ten minutes? Truthfully, I have no idea. But eventually, painfully, I struggled to my feet and climbed slowly upslope toward three or four other climbers looking dazed as they surveyed the aftermath. Greg was among them.

"We lost ten," he said.
"How do you know?" I asked.
"I counted. There were 21 of us resting on the glacier. Now there are only 11." (He was almost right; actually there were 22 on the glacier; 11 died.)

We spotted Gayle. She had been pushed perilously close to the yawning crevasse we sat observing only minutes ago. Now it was filled with avalanche debris and the bodies of 11 of our comrades. The guides searched frantically, shouting and listening. Only silence. Clouds descended and thickened, darkening the scene.

The TRIP BACK down the mountain was slow, somber, painful, much of it in the zero visibility of a whiteout. Separated ribs made deep breathing impossible for me; others bled through bandages covering head wounds, and limping gait testified to leg injuries.

Emotional wounds were worse. Friends lost friends. Two Seattle brothers went up together; one returned. The pregnant wife of a young Pennsylvania man gave him the trip as a Father's Day gift; he didn't return to her. A 27-year-old, full-professor mechanical engineer from Michigan died. He had written satirical comedy, designed a solar heating system for his church, and planned to study for a master's degree in art. An apprentice guide, 21 years old, newly graduated from college and looking forward to a year of study in Europe, was lost. We thought of these matters as we descended. I also thought of the guide who yelled, "Run to your right!" Had that saved lives? Almost certainly. Regrettably, I never identified and thanked him.

Two days later Gayle and I dropped Greg off at SeaTac airport, his expedition backpack carrying everything he would need for six months of work and travel in Alaska. Life went on—for some of us.

Ted Kerstetter, a retired zoology professor, survived the 1981 tragedy on the upper Ingraham Glacier—the worst disaster in American alpine history in terms of the number of lives lost.
effect on future water supplies. The loss of glacier ice will be felt by urban water users long accustomed—without thinking about it—to current rates of melt.

During the 1950s and again in the mid 1970s, some of Rainier's glaciers thickened and sent waves of active ice overriding stagnant, older ice. This produced net advances at the snout, but they were short-lived responses to climate fluctuations. The overall pattern is retreat. The Nisqually Glacier has withdrawn almost a mile since Professor Joseph LeConte of the University of California made the first measurements in 1907. The record ranks the Nisqually as the longest-monitored glacier in the western hemisphere. Photographs from the late 1800s and early 1900s show the terminus about a quarter mile below the site of the present Nisqually River bridge. Now the glacier is out of sight from the bridge and its lower reaches are so smothered by rock they no longer look like ice. The trail to its terminus has long been closed, owing to the danger of rockfall.

Native Americans saw Rainier's shifting white cloak and had a story explaining it. An unidentified "old Puyallup Indian" told the story to F. H. Saylor, purser on a Puget Sound steamer, who published it in 1899. The story tells that once, when the Great Spirit was re-creating the world, Do-ce-wallops had two wives whose jealousy upset him so much he started mistreating his people. Because of this behavior, the Great Spirit stepped in and "Tah-ma [Mount Rainier, one of the wives] was changed into a mountain as a warning to wives—a warning that would always be in view—of what jealousy would bring to them. Around her form [the Great Spirit] wrapped a mantle of white and cold, ever keeping the fire of jealousy within from bursting forth to cause harm, as she had done before."

Ruth Kirk, a Lacey resident and member of the Washington State Historical Society Board of Trustees, has won numerous awards for her many books focusing on natural science and regional history, including Snow and Exploring Washington's Past. With her husband, a National Park Service ranger and naturalist, she lived for five years in Mount Rainier National Park. She has climbed the mountain five times and hiked the park's Wonderland Trail.
The Yakama Indians won big applause from the crowd at the All Nations Parade during the Golden Potlatch celebration in Seattle in 1911. Some 60 Yakamas and Puget Sound Indians gathered at an encampment at Fourth and Lenora streets for the duration of the event. The word potlatch is from the Chinook jargon, the trade language of the North Pacific Coast Indians used when the first explorers and maritime traders arrived in the Pacific Northwest. Literally, potlatch means a gift or to give, and in a larger sense it means a festival of gift-giving in exchange for prestige.

Seattle sponsored the first “Golden Potlatch” in 1911 and named it for the gift of gold from the Klondike gold rush. In 14 years the city had changed from a growing pioneer town to a thriving city boasting 8 railroads, 57 steamship lines and 67 schools. The city kicked off the celebration with a reenactment of the arrival of the steamer Portland, the first gold ship to dock in Seattle, on July 17, 1897. The Seattle Daily Times reported enthusiastically on the gala opening-day events:

The evening of the first big Potlatch Day saw the streets still crowded with merrymaking thousands who heard band concerts at the grandstand, saw the king and queen with their courtiers escorted to the royal ball at the armory, and watched the elaborate fireworks display from barges in the harbor. The cruiser and torpedo boats were illuminated and swept the city with their searchlights. Frenzied merrymaking, the spirit of joyous revel gone mad, dominated fun-converted Seattle through four delirious hours of last night that closed a day of spectacles and din of varying accompaniment that surpassed anything of its kind in the city’s history.

The festival was a rousing success and was repeated each July for another two years until 1914 when it was suspended. Shades of the glory days of the earlier potlatches are evident in Seattle’s Seafair celebration of today.
Author's Note
I gratefully acknowledge the research assistance of Thomas Jutilla, assistant director of the Karpeles Museum, during the preparation of this article.

When the Karpeles Manuscript Museum in Tacoma came into possession of 23 letters written from 1858 to 1873 by a missionary to the Northwest, the archivists were not sure just what they had. After struggling to transcribe the letters, most of which were written "cross-hatched," they saw a compelling personal story emerge as well as some interesting firsthand accounts of the new Washington Territory.

The letters were written by D. Ellis Willes, a young Episcopalian clergyman, to his father in Connecticut. Seven of the letters were written while the young man was on the West Coast.

In editing the letters, original punctuation, capitalization and spelling have been retained whenever possible. When a word or phrase could not be read, a question mark [?] has been inserted. It is obvious that the author of the letters was not writing for public consumption.

Digging into the archives of the Episcopal Church and Yale University brought to light additional information on Willes. Records indicate that in 1860 Thomas Fielding Scott, the first Episcopal bishop of the Oregon and Washington territories, turned to the East Coast to recruit several young men to serve as missionary clergymen for the new developing diocese. One of the recruits was Reverend Willes. Other records indicate that he graduated from Yale and attended the General Theological Seminary in New York.

Following several letters that Willes wrote to his father from his first position as rector of Trinity Church in Granville, New York, and from a church in West Rutland, Vermont, we come to his experiences in the West. The personal account of the young man's doomed love affair before he moved west seems a tale well suited for daytime television: A 34-year-old clergyman falls in love with the 19-year-old daughter of a wealthy parishioner. He is forbidden by the girl's father to see her. A few letters later we find the young minister having the heart-breaking task of preaching the funeral service for his young love who has died suddenly of typhoid fever. The records of the Granville church contain this entry by Willes: "On Wednesday Oct. 26, 1859, I buried in the Cemetery of the Bishop Family in Granville the mortal remains of Mary Newcomb Graves, aged 19, a devoted and earnest communicant of Trinity Church. the right hand supporter of her pastor in works of charity and love among the
sick. ‘Death loves a shining mark’ She died Oct 24.”

In a letter dated April 30, 1860, we find the newly recruited clergyman on a steamer headed to the West Coast by way of the Isthmus of Panama. To traverse the isthmus by rail, a total of 40 miles, he must pay $25. He finds Panama hot, unhealthy and the climate debilitating, “the intense heat kills all noble and manly aspirations...” He views the natives as “the most miserable objects I ever saw.”

At 3 P.M. we embarked on the steamer Cortez for S.F. We met Balboa the discoverer of the Pacific name the Ocean. Pacific for days and days after we left and the sea as far as the eye could extend was as tranquil as a mill pond, as smooth as the [1] in summer. As we moved North, however the scene changed and our vessel at times danced quite merrily but in sixteen days from P. we were quietly [1] at the wharf our journey ended for the present. We leave Wednesday for Portland Oregon. San Francisco—what shall I say—volumes would be necessary to convey you a decent description... . .

Later he proclaims:

It is New York in miniature. Its streets are like those of New York. You meet New York faces and the bustle of activity prevailing in business quarters are essentially New York and the climate—a perfect paradise steady and equitable The thermometer never rises above 80 in the city—the nights are cool. such a thing as being awake from heat is unknown... . .

He goes on at some length describing the wonderful climate, the flora and market vegetables. As to the cattle, he writes, “The Devon, Durheim and other breeds is being engrafted to the tough market vegetables. As to the cattle, he finds the wonderful climate, the flora and objects I ever saw.”

He is staying with a judge:

His son I find went with me to Yale College... . The judge is an enthusiast with reference to the climate and the effects in promoting longevity, vivacity, vigor and energy. He said that men of sixty-five will out whip outjump and outfight anything of 50 on the Atlantic Coast and it is true as you go through the streets nothing strikes you with such force as the health and manly vigor of all you meet. None of those jaundiced compliances of the Atlantic States. Every face beams with health. Every eye is lit up with the fires of health and business men can perform a greater amount of labor in this clime than in any other and as an evidence of it the hours of business are more here than elsewhere from 9 till 5 P.M. whereas in New York they are only from 10 to 3 P.M. I am told Oregon is a fine farming region. . . . Gold mines have recently been discovered in Jacksonville Oregon exceeding in richness the richest Cal... . . I am going to get possession as soon as I can of a section of [land] and I want the whole family to come out here and locate eventually... . . Oregon is the great granary of this coast. Wheat and other grains are raised in great abundance and the finest fruits—peaches and C are being extensively grown for the California market.

The first letter that is headed Olympia, Washington Territory, is actually written from Portland. He is just making his father aware that any letters sent to him should now be directed to Olympia. It has taken just three days to go from San Francisco to Portland. He comments on his trip up the Columbia:

The first place we find on our way up is Astoria... . . The lumber business once very strong here having failed and having no farming country about it—for the Coast of Oregon is not settled and for a hundred miles inland you must go before you reach towns and villages of any note... . . up the Columbia about 110 miles you enter the Willamette and up this about 20 miles is Portland the metropolis of Oregon. a city of some 3 to 4000 inhabitants. thriving, bustling and busy—we reached here on the morning of Sunday May 6. We held services in the church and was waited on after the service by a deputation from Olympia Washington Territory who earnestly desire that I go there and establish a church I have consented and I shall probably leave in about a week Which will explain why tho writing from Portland I date from Olympia as my letters must be directed Olympia Washington Territory for some time to come Portland from whence I now write is at the head of ship and steamer navigation on the Wllamette is quite regularly laid out and for a western town is filled up with good buildings... .

Willes is beginning to feel the pinch of high western prices:

I wish Henry would buy and send me a dozen shirts. They cost so much here it would be well if possible to send them from the Coast and not by Express.

He has made contact with a Portland man who is going east and wants his brother Henry to send the shirts via the gentleman. Meanwhile, his ministerial duties are not to be neglected.

Last Sunday I went over to Fort Vancouver a military fort on the Columbia. Preached there and their families introduced to General Harney and had a long conversation with him. He is the commander on this coast is a large commanding courteous gentleman. The view from Ft. Vancouver embraces some of the finest scenery I ever beheld. No less than three mountains are to be seen from thence whose tops are perpetually covered with snow One of them, Mt. Hood is 18,000 ft high 3 times as high as Mount Washington, our New England celebrity... . . everywhere—the mountains surpass those of any other country. The Forests are composed of trees six and eight feet in diameter and hundreds of feet in height nothing is wanted but a Pacific Rail Road to develop the resources of this region. The soil is extremely rich the prairie land more tillable than even those in Illinois... . .

It is apparent that the Reverend Willes has already become imbued with a real case of Western “boosterism.” He continues,

If Henry gets a fortune with his wife I wish the whole Willes family would emigrate
hither. The climate is delightful beyond
ought you can conceive The land is rich
Westward the star of Empire makes its
way' and an Empire must soon spring up
here. There are now 500,000 of our most
active energetic businessmen here more
are arriving facilities for getting here are on
the increase—the poor Indian is being
squeezed between the advancing tide of
civilization from the East and from the
West and must soon perish . . .

By the end of May, Reverend Willes is
comfortably settled in with the family of
General Tilton, surveyor general of
Washington Territory. One might
detect a bit of snobbery in the lines
penned on May 20, 1860. Obviously
Willes is happy with his situation and
overjoyed to be rubbing shoulders with
the men of the territorial government.

I have never before or since met with
people more refined and cultivated. a socie-
ty more elevated in tone or friends more
cordial and hearty. . . . I am domiciled in
the home of the Surveyor General of the
Territory. Am made one of the family,
have a fine room board washing lodging
lights and servants indeed all that the heart
can desire. . . .

A month later, on June 29, 1860, he
again writes to his father with great en-
thusiasm about the country as well as his
own prospects:

The field opening before me is ripe even to
the harvest I have large congregations at-
tentive audiences and everything possible
to encourage me in this distant field I pay
nothing for my board as I am domiciled in
a family of educated polished and refined
people from Delaware. . . . Olympia is the
capital and I am on terms of intimacy with
the Gov, Judge and various other officials
sent out here by the U.S. Government
and most of them are from the best families
in the Atlantic states. The officers of the
Army and Navy with whom I am thrown
in contact almost daily [are] courteous and
intelligent gentlemen whom to know is a
pleasure hence my situation is all that you
could ask for in this respect then again my
ministrations are well received. . . .

After a discussion of family matters
he returns to his admiration of Olympia:

Olympia is delightfully situated on a pen-
insula of land jutting out into Puget
Sound. the bay all around is as quiet as a
mill pond though nearly a mile in width on
all sides. The shores are bold and com-
manding on all sides and by and by will
form most beautiful building sites for cot-
tages and sites for country residences
when the town becomes larger.

I have a distant hope that you and
mother and Olive will one day live in this
beautiful region with me. It is just the
country for Olive to come if she wants to
marry well for in the Pacific Coast young
ladies are scarce and young gentlemen
abundant and good catches too. The cli-
mate dear Sir is all that anyone can desire
In winter there is to be sure a considerable
rain. but none of those terrible snow
storms and cold gusty days which freeze
the blood such as we have in New England
In summer the days are warm sometimes
oppressively hot but when night comes—
as cool as an autumn evening with you
and such is the inevitable case the oldest
inhabitants never knew a hot night such as
we have when it is impossible to sleep from
heat and mosquitoes and you restlessly turn
from side to side. . . .

He turns to discussing Olympia’s fu-
ture prospects:

The Pacific Railroad when built must ter-
minate somewhere on Puget Sound for two
reasons. First, Said Road when built—will
be built to compete for the India and China
trade and nowhere on the coast from
Panama to Victoria can such quiet waters
for loading and unloading vessels be found
as those of Puget Sound still—deep and
unobstructed with no impediments to navi-
gation in the shape of sand bars and sec-
ondly the road goes through a country well
watered and timbered—which is not the
case with either the Central or Southern
route it having to haul over hundreds of
miles of waste and desert. I might add a
third reason—a road can be constructed
for millions of dollars cheaper by this Route
but aside from the region becoming depot
of the India and China trade the Lumber of
this region will as now form one great re-
source of its wealth. Pine Fir and Cedar

Masonic Hall in Olympia (established
in 1852), home of the first lodge in
Washington. On one floor of this
building the first Episcopal Church
in Washington was established by
D. Ellis Willes in 1860.
abounds in excellent quantities and of excellent quality....

In many of his letters Willes scolds his family for not writing to him. The one of July 30, 1860, is no exception. After castigating them sufficiently he laments, “We are hungry for news here on the Pacific Coast.” The letter also gives us some insight into his church situation in Olympia. “Since I last wrote you I have gotten on well in that for which I came. We have expended several hundred dollars in fitting up a room nicely for church services.”

He continues a little later:

The people are pleased with me and I believe I have the general respect of the town people. Episcopacy will have to be of slow growth for several reasons. First—because it is comparatively unknown. Secondly—Because there are in town two other denominations Methodist and Presbyterian. The Methodists are the dominant body in the territory scattered everywhere—hence every politician or any one else who has a political axe to grind courts their favor as an essential to his success. Still Olympia must be a prominent town by and by—The Capital of the Territory is here and the Methodists are soon to erect a university....

Again he repeats his arguments for the Puget Sound area to be the terminus of a transcontinental railroad.

The best route for a Pacific Rail Road is from [?] Minnesota across to Puget Sound a route presenting by far the fewest obstacles and the best harbors and waters for transhipment to the India and China trade.... sagacious men are there not a few who fully coincide in this opinion. San Francisco harbor is not the place for it seems there is a bar at the entrance which always proves more or less troublesome as you go up the Pacific—the next harbor of any value you come to are those in the vicinity of Puget Sound—time will however develop these things into a reality....

A couple of paragraphs later in the same letter Willes writes:

I suppose you expected to hear somewhat of the soil and climate of this region. I wish I could say as much of the former as the latter. The soil of the prairie lands is not deep and strong like that of Illinois and Wisconsin—of the timber land and river bottoms, it is excellent. The farmers here raise most excellent crops of wheat and oats and potatoes—corn is raised sparingly, the climate not being adapted to it—of the tame grasses Clover and Timothy thrive well. The country in some respects though heavily timbered is easily cleared. The forests are mostly of Fir which is full of pitch—when one wishes to get rid of the trees, he bores two holes in one in a slanting direction and running into each other in the shape of a letter V so that a draft of air can circulate, then puts in live coals of fire. This of course sets the fire, and the monster falls with a horrid crash. It was not for this facility in clearing it would be the work of two generations to clear a farm since the trees stand thick and are of most gigantic size—10–12 ft in diameter—and a man with an axe would have to work sharp to get one down in 3 or 4 days.

It is interesting to notice how the trees have grown from six to eight feet in diameter when he wrote from Portland to ten to twelve feet in this letter. Oh, well—so much for Oregon.

Reverend Willes continues to rhap­sodize about the climate, mentioning again the warm days in the summer, “but the nights always cool.” As to the winter,

I am told it is rainy though by no means continuous—alternating with warm and pleasant days it is however changing materially with the settlement of the country. Signifying the truth in meteorology. The settlement of a county changes its climate. We had a few days since a terrific thunder shower. Now thunder is a thing almost unknown heretofore—indeed it is a saying among the Indians—“The Bostons (a name for Americans) brot in thunder.”

The next letter from Olympia tells us of the currency problems in the West, the weakness of the United States postal system and the dearth of ministers in Washington Territory. It is dated September 10, 1860.

Enclosed please find in coin $50. At present I can send nothing else since we have no paper currency here and to buy a bill of exchange in New York—I should have either to go or send to San Francisco which would cost me much more than to send express by Wells Fargo and Company whose agent will place it in your hand or else I shall have that which will make them refund viz a receipt. This method I think is the best. Our Post Office arrangements are very deficient in this matter in England and France you can pay your money at any office and buy what is called a (money order) which will be paid at the office of destination and if lost the department makes the loss good. With us however the P.O. only engages to use ordinary diligence and if a loss happens you must pocket it, another question might arise in
are his comments regarding the territorial officers:

habitants of the village desire that I will receive from 6 to 15 hundred dollars will add to my labor but will increase my government expense). Washington Territory, befriended Willes concerning ministers:

and boarded him for free James Tilton, surveyor general of Delaware—no personal trivia brings us to the comments concerning ministers:

You can't imagine the dearth of ministers there is upon the coast! and the vast amount one can do if he is active and zealous. Why Father I find in visiting around members of our church who for years have not seen or heard a minister of their own persuasion! Why Sir the very family where I live the lady of which is a most exemplary and lovely woman from Delaware had not seen or heard but a few times in five years the service or sermon of a clergyman. . .

He also notes in the letter, "the inhabitants of the village desire that I will take charge of the school. This of course will add to my labor but will increase my revenue from 6 to 15 hundred dollars per annum."

A last interesting point in the letter are his comments regarding the territorial officers:

The inhabitants of Olympia are as well educated and intelligent a community as is found in the East being persons sent out here by the United States to discharge the duties connected with the various Federal offices of the Territory of one thing however due caution is requisite. They are mostly southern men—and an abolitionist is their abomination since the 'nigger' has to be a discarded subject of converse but as you well know I was never an abolitionist in the fullest sense of the phrase and manage to get along well—I am a Douglas man I hope and trust Douglas will be elected I think he properly represents the views and feelings of democracy.

Willes's stay in Olympia was relatively brief, despite all the rhetoric about his success and his love for the place. He left Olympia at the end of September 1861 for what were evidently greener pastures in California. Two more letters are in our possession which he wrote before departing for California—one on September 13, 1860, and one which was initially dated October 27, 1860, but which he concluded on November 13. On September 13 he writes:

Expenses here are great and had I not come well provided with clothes and my personal wants being few I should have made a hole in my pile. Double the price of anything at home and you will nearly have the same here but however will not hold true as to the price of the necessaries of living, flour is as cheap here as there if not cheaper from 5 to 7 dollars per barrel—beef from 8c-12 cents per pound—When however you come to those articles which have to be imported—round Cape Horn or across the isthmus of Panama you have to pay for them. Tea Rice and silks are cheaper because we bring them direct from China. Our Sugars are mainly from the Sandwich islands. The price of labor here is for mechanics $5 per day—in the city laborers get $40 per month and board all we want is an emigration to the coast as large as we had previous to the Indian War to make us a state in 10 years time or else send us out women for mothers if the 10,000 ladies in New England who are annually going to seed becoming genuinely unhappy yea lovesick and old maids only knew how quick they could [?] their market they would not hesitate long it seems to me. but one great difficulty and which must exist for some time and which will much retard the settlement of this country is the great distance of it from the Atlantic States. the circuitous and costly methods required to reach it together with the fact that all the Indians on the Continent are between here and home. A Pacific Rail Road is what we want and what we must have. A Bill is now in Congress postponed to next December which provides just the Road we want. A centre route and two branches if however this Bill should fail it would be many years before we on the Pacific Coast could reap much benefit from it (?) construction will take a long time.

In a latter section of this letter he tells of his visit to Victoria, British Columbia:

You may doubtless have seen that the English have a fine Colonial possession in the North West called Columbia, the capital of which is Victoria. Well last week I was invited over there by the Bishop of Columbia to the consecration of a church General and Mrs Tilton and myself went over and passed an entire week with the Rev Kendall and myself the only American Church clergy present was received with kindness and attention and admitted to the most generous hospitality during our entire stay. We were lodged and fed at the Bishops place the whole week. He is a charming gentleman earnest and devoted and I don't remember to have spent a pleasant week in my life I preached twice and I believe with general applause... . The views from Victoria resemble much some views among the Berkshires of Massachusetts On my return I stopped over Sunday at Pt Townsend and preached for them was kindly entertained and given $25.

The last letter from Olympia is filled with the usual family matters. He laments the fact that he isn't home where he could be of more help to his father.
but gratuitously adds, "I know you would not consent." He speaks of the increasing transportation available:

A line of stages run now from St. Louis to San Francisco, thence to Portland Oregon and I am just informed that on December 1. a stage will daily enter Olympia carrying the Atlantic Mail. What a wonderful stride this coast has taken since the opening of the California Gold Mines. What a wonderful future is before here when the Pacific Rail Road is opened we shall become the [ ? ] depot of that great China and India Trade with our country, England and Continental Europe.

He decries the slump in the economy. In the heat of the California gold rush the Washington economy flourished by supplying the California markets. As he writes, however, things have quieted down and California is now able to supply its own markets.

But now the situation of things has entirely changed. California exports and we have lost our main market which is only supplied by the opening and settlement of British Columbia Flour which in 1850 was worth in Oregon and Cal—from $20 to $25 per Bal. can now be bought for $3.50! Cattle which at that time commanded $100 per head will not bring now more than $25 and other things have depreciated in the same ratio. at present in this country the supply is greater than the demand and matters can only again be equalized by an extensive emigration to this coast.

His western optimism reasserts itself, however, when he relates that as many as 100,000 people have come over the plains this year into Oregon and Washington. He heralds the opening of a new road:

Lieut Mullan has just completed a wagon road to Ft Benton on the Missouri from the town of Dalles or (Falls) Oregon and one can complete the journey from D. to Ft. Benton in about 20 days from thence you can go to St Louis by flat boat and when Congress by and by makes an appropriation to remove all the obstructions from the Missouri River there will be a good way home, thus, People are living in expectation that there will be ere long another Gold Discovery somewhere in this region of the country—the whole Cascade range of Mountains is full of gold. it is yet found only in small quantities but more is found every year I think something of this kind may yet transpire Nov 13 a Discovery of pretty rich gold digging has just been made about 100 miles from Walla Walla but the rainy season has now set in and this will prevent people a thorough examination until spring again returns. but I can but hope that a good time is coming for the territory. as well as Oregon Should any-

thing of great moment transpire, you will be immediately advised by me.

The last line quoted seems almost ominous in retrospect. It is the last letter we have from him written in Washington. To put these letters into better perspective it is interesting to see what the Episcopal Church records have to say about him. In a report to the General Convention of the Church in 1862, the missionary bishop of Oregon and Washington territories, Thomas Fielding Scott, submits the official documentation of Reverend Willes's work in Washington:

Rev. Mr. Willes entered upon his duties as Missionary at Olympia, W.T. in May, 1860, and continued there until the last of September, 1860. He then
accepted an invitation to California, with my entire approbation.

We are certain from other sources that the date on which he ended service is wrong. Somehow a typo has marred our record. The leaving date was certainly 1861—not 1860. An address Bishop Scott made is printed in the Proceeding of the Eighth Annual Convention, 1860. An excerpt from it states:

Rev. Mr Willes officiated at Olympia, W.T., with encouraging prospects of usefulness. The lower story of the Masonic Hall has been leased for a time, and fitted up in a neat and comfortable manner for public worship. The attendance is good, and the friends of the Church take an interest in its prosperity.

The two newspapers in Olympia in 1860, the Pioneer and Democrat and the Washington Standard, both carried notices of the services in the "St. Johns Chapel." A lengthy article in the Pioneer and Democrat of December 28, 1860, describes the Christmas Eve program at the "St. Johns Episcopal Church."

In 1940-41 the Reverend Thomas Edwin Jessett, the rector of St. John's Episcopal Church of Olympia, wrote a brief history of the church "upon the occasion of the Parochial Diamond Jubilee." In it are several references to Reverend Willes:

The first regularly appointed missionary was the Rev. D. Ellis Willes, who arrived in June 1860. In a black leather-covered notebook he began the "church records" connected with the establishment of the Church at Olympia, Washington Territory, 1860. The book served as a parish register for fifteen years and now, mured with age, is a prized possession of the parish. His first recorded act was the baptism of George Savage, infant son of Rudolph M. and Kate L. Walker on July 8, 1860, being the Fifth Sunday after Trinity.

Reference is made in an issue of the Washington Standard to the class for Indian boys started by the church. The editor is quoted as writing:

Another feature which we wish was more common, was a class of Indian boys. It has long been a matter of surprise to us that more attention has not been bestowed by our missionaries upon the education of the Indians.

The Reverend Jessett comments, "Coming just a short time after the last Indian uprising, this speaks well for the missionary enthusiasm of Olympia's first resident Episcopal clergyman."

It is interesting to note some of the eminent men of the new territory who were among the original 14 families of St. John's Chapel, which met in the Masonic Hall. In addition to General Tilton there was Edmund Sylvester, founder of Olympia, and Samuel Percival, a prominent businessman who later built what was known as the "show place" of Olympia's west side.

General Tilton, who befriended Willes and boarded him for free (we suspect at government expense), fell into disfavor in 1861 after Abraham Lincoln became president. Tilton was considered a "Southern sympathizer" by many, and this characterization was no doubt enhanced by the fact that he evidently kept a young mulatto slave who escaped him and fled to Canada. Tilton claimed the boy was merely an orphan whom he had taken in to raise, but the local newspapers did not seem to buy this explanation. Interestingly, General Tilton is the only individual we can find that was ever accused of slavery in Washington. Evidently he was "rehabilitated," for in 1864 he turns up as president of the University of Washington Board of Regents.

Since Willes was consorting and living with a "Southern sympathizer," the unfavorable reaction toward Tilton may have rubbed off to some degree on Willes. In any event, Tilton's downfall and Willes's departure for California are closely aligned in time.

In drawing the curtain on Reverend Willes, we are dependent on his alma mater, Yale University. Among other things, we find that he was the great-grandson of Reverend Henry Willes, a 1715 graduate of Yale. The university published the following obituary of Willes:

DANIEL ELLIS WILLES, son of Horatio and Susan P. Willes, was born in Franklin, Conn., October 27, 1824. He was also a member of the two preceding classes, and spent only a part of Junior year with the class of 1850; he was admitted to a degree in 1855.

After leaving college he studied law in Detroit, Mich., was admitted to the bar in 1851, and practiced law in that city. Returning to the East on account of ill health, he taught for three years in Westchester County, N.Y., and then studied theology in the General Theological Seminary of the Protestant Episcopal Church. He was ordained deacon, June 27, 1858, by Bishop Horatio Potter, in New York City; and after brief engagements in Grinnellville, N.Y., and West Rutland, Vt., went in the spring of 1860 as missionary to the Pacific slope. After five years of this service he settled as Rector of the Advent in Brooklyn, Cal., whence he returned in 1868 to New York City. From March, 1869, to 1874, he was Rector of St. Peter's Church, Hobart, N.Y., and from 1878 until his death he was Rector of All Saints Church, Sunderland, Md.

In the autumn of 1883 his health became impaired, and though somewhat improved it was unequal to the shock caused by a fall and the consequent fracture of his arm a year later. Though he attended to his duties in the winter of 1884-85, there was a want of circulation in the injured arm, and in March secondary causes set in, and after great suffering he died at his home in Sunderland, on the 10th of April, in his 61st year.

He married in May, 1863, in San Francisco, Miss Bithynia M., daughter of Capt. Francis Peet, of Bridgeport, Conn., who survives him with their children—three daughters and two sons.

David E. Shauver is director of the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum in Tacoma and a retired member of the Education Department of Washington State University, where he taught for 30 years.

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NEW YORK TO SEATTLE IN 31 HOURS.

A recent addition to the Society's Special Collections from the Espy family papers, this 1932 timetable touted United Air Lines' service as "fastest coast to coast." Passengers for the Pacific Northwest transferred at Salt Lake City for the nine-hour flight to Seattle. The trip included a stop in Tacoma and a 25-minute flight to Boeing Field in Seattle. Passengers were assured that "Winter clothing is not required for winter air travel in modern planes."

The Society's Special Collections seeks to increase its holdings of air, railroad, bus, ferry, and ship timetables, which are frequently used by researchers.
Puget Sound's MOSQUITO FLEET

Maritime Memories of Early Steam-Driven Saltwater Transit

By Carolyn W. Callaghan

In the Pacific Northwest, rush-hour traffic predates the automobile. Long before caffeine-crazed commuters buzzed between stalled cars and carpool lanes, early morning Puget Sound was the scene of saltwater traffic snarls. The cause? The mosquito fleet, an eclectic transit system of boats numbering in the thousands swarmed the sound from 1853 until the increasingly popular automobile forced a transition to highways and car ferries in the 1930s. Passengers, mail, livestock and lumber traveled the inland waters aboard these steam-powered taxis. Some boats were barely bigger than the cedar canoes they replaced while others were the size of ocean-going vessels, providing luxurious sleeping and dining accommodations. Some, like the converted sailing vessel Beaver, had a top speed of 7 knots while others could reach speeds of 18 knots or better. The mosquito fleet was a spirited, competitive group of vessels, each with its own independent personality, but they were linked by their use of steam engines, their inland water service, and their vital role in knitting the scattered settlements of Puget Sound into a thriving economic community. Many towns owed their existence and development to the mosquito fleet. Prior to the advent of steam-powered vessels, transportation had been via sloop, schooner or Indian-powered canoe. However, steamships weren't an instant success upon their arrival to the Northwest coast. John McLaughlin had little use for the Hudson's Bay Company's acquisition, the Beaver, which was the first steamship on the Pacific Ocean. A British-built sailing vessel converted to a steamship, the Beaver was more a source of consternation for McLaughlin and entertainment for the Indians, who called her "She Who Walks On Water," than a means of transportation for the fur trade. It took ten men a full day to cut the 40 cords of wood required to maintain the Beaver's top speed of seven knots—for a single day. The Beaver's leisurely pace—work...
one day, rest one day—made her a failure in the fur trade. In the 1860s she was leased to the British government to make a survey of northern waters. By the 1870s the Beaver was demoted in rank to tugboat, but she was remembered fondly by those to whom she distributed illicit jugs of rum and necessary supplies.

The Beaver was not the only early Puget Sound steamer to operate in the red. In 1847 the Sitka, a 40-foot-long side-wheeler, arrived from Sacramento. The side-wheel design was popular at the time because two wheels—one on each side of the vessel and mounted on a common shaft or “walking beam”—made the best use of the modest power of the first steam engines. The Sitka’s incredibly slow speed—the local Indian children could swim faster—made for a dull ride, but passengers could liven up the trip by simply leaning on a side rail of the vessel, causing the opposite paddle wheel to lift completely out of the water.

Canoes, sloops and schooners continued to be the transportation rule and steamers the exception until the gold rush of 1849, when suddenly anything that could transport quantities of miners and supplies promised profit. The Columbia, another excruciatingly slow steamer, made the run from Astoria to Portland. A few months later she was left in the wake of the Lot Whitcomb, nearly twice the Columbia’s size, with a ladies’ cabin and a dining room, and able to travel at an unprecedented speed (for Puget Sound) of over 10 knots.

In 1853 the side-wheeler Fairy traveled up from San Francisco on the deck of the Sarah Warren to take on the lucrative United States mail run from Olympia to Seattle, replacing Moxlie’s Canoe Express. Mail contracts, awarded to the lowest bidder by the federal government, promised economic prosperity to the winner. However, like the Sitka, the Fairy couldn’t keep both paddle wheels in the water—she rounded the entrance to Seattle harbor lying on one side, the opposite paddle wheel spinning in the air. She was transferred to the straight run between Olympia and Steilacoom, a move that subdued her acrobatic antics.

Another early California import was the Major Tompkins, whose steam powered an iron propeller rather than twin paddle wheels. Paid to sit idle on the Sacramento River, a victim of the California steamboat wars, the Major was purchased in 1854 and placed on the Port Townsend-Victoria run. The steamer’s broad beam and rounded stern, coupled with its incredibly slowness, earned it the nickname of The Pumpkins. A navigational error resulted in the boat’s demise. In those days captains relied on whistle echoes to determine their ship’s location in foul weather. The ship’s whistle would bounce off coasts, bluffs and islands, a remarkably accurate if rudimentary navigational practice. However, the method was not infallible, and on a dark and stormy night The Pumpkins struck rock on her way to Victoria. Captain Hunt and his crew survived, but The Pumpkins did not.

What was needed was a vessel neither too big nor too small, and the Eliza Anderson proved to be just right. Launched in Portland, the Anderson steamed into Puget Sound in 1859 to take over the mail route recently acquired by the Wright brothers—Tom, John and George—of Seattle. Old Anderson, as she was quickly and respectfully dubbed, was a 144-foot side-wheeler with a massive, single-cylinder engine. Slow but dependable, she carried mail, passengers, cattle and cargo at an average speed of nine knots, and made profits as high as $6,000 a month for her owners. In later years a calliope was installed, powered by her steam boilers, and the Anderson serenaded the sound as she made her rounds. During her long, profitable career nearly everyone had traveled on the Anderson, and nearly every aspiring seaman had worked on her.

Her captains were numerous as well. Steamship captains were a distinguished group of citizens, sporting whiskers, sideburns, mustaches and blue serge. Their navigational expertise made them heroes in the community. They were paid comparably with timber barons, merchants and bankers, and were always alert to economic opportunity. D. B. Finch, one colorful captain of the Anderson, made his fortune as a seafaring teller machine. While docked at Olympia, Steilacoom, Port Madison, Port Gamble, Port Ludlow and Port Town-

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OPPOSITE PAGE:
A converted sailing vessel, the British-built Beaver was the first steamship on the Pacific Ocean. It required 40 cords of wood a day to maintain a top speed of seven knots.

RIGHT: A six-month rate war between the Anderson and the Enterprise made it cheaper to cross the sound than to cross town.
THE MOSQUITO FLEET LIVES ON

LIKE HER FAMOUS predecessor, the Eliza Anderson, the Virginia V began her varied career on a mail route in Puget Sound. In 1922 she started her day loaded with mail bags, groceries, and whatever else was needed along the route between Tacoma and Seattle. The Five made 17 stops, uniting many now-forgotten communities such as Clam Cove, Spring Beach, Maplewood and Olalla.

Times change, and the Virginia V adapted; she became an excursion boat, accommodating weddings, high school seniors, Husky football fans, and Camp Fire girls traveling to Vashon Island's Camp Sealth. The Five continued to operate as a charter vessel after the Northwest Steamship Company sold her to the nonprofit Virginia V Foundation in 1976. Sadly, like the Eliza Anderson, the Virginia V had one enemy—old age.

In 1996 the United States Coast Guard refused to relicense her for passengers until mandated renovations were made. The decrepit boiler system, the necessary overhaul of the nearly 100-year-old Haffeman steam engine, and the massive rotting and fungus growth might have combined to bring about the demise of the sole-surviving wooden steamship of the mosquito fleet. The flagship of the Puget Sound Maritime Historical Society, the Five had been listed on the National Register of Historic Sites in 1973, declared a Seattle city landmark in 1974 and a National Historic Landmark in 1992. The Virginia V Foundation vowed to restore this 125-foot witness to Puget Sound's history.

Fund-raising began in 1996. Individuals, corporations, and state and local grants have raised $2.2 million. In-kind donations and discounts from 17 companies and organizations, along with volunteer labor at monthly work parties, have combined to keep the Five alive. On March 26, 1999, the foundation was recommended for a $1 million appropriation by the Washington State Transportation Improvement Board under the T-21 Transportation Enhancement program. This major funding should be available in July 1999.

Although the estimated cost of repairs may yet change and the foundation continues to raise funds for restoration, the Virginia V optimistically plans to celebrate her March 9, 2000 birthday—78 years—not at Lake Union Drydock, but instead visiting every community on Puget Sound where she is welcome. Judging from the outpouring of financial and volunteer support, the Five will be welcome wherever she goes.

—CWC

send, Captain Finch would cash checks and lend money at a comfortable profit. A shrewd entrepreneur, he also sold butter and eggs while in Victoria's port and brought back sugar from the Sandwich Islands to sell at a high return in Seattle.

High profits seldom go unnoticed, and the Anderson's dominance of Puget Sound trade was soon challenged by a bigger and faster side-wheeler, the Enterprise. A rate war between the two steamers ensued, and for six months people found it cheaper to cross the sound than to cross town. However, it was an unfair fight, for the Wright brothers were armed with years of profit, and their losses were underwritten by their mail contract. The Enterprise lost the war and was sold to the Hudson's Bay Company. Ironically, a few years later her beam engine was sold to the Wright brothers, who used it to reinvigorate the aging Anderson.

There were other challengers to the Anderson's supremacy. The sternwheeler Alexandria was debt-ridden from the start, the Josie McNear was too slow, and the New World, although twice as fast as the Anderson with her Enterprise engine, fell victim to another Wright rate war.

Not until 1869, when the Wright brothers lost the mail run contract to the Starr brothers, did the Old Anderson enter retirement at Percival's Dock in Olympia. Manufacturing techniques and materials were catching up with concept, and steamships were proliferating on America's bays, sounds and estuaries. The Wrights purchased the bigger and faster Olympia to compete with the Starrs' North Pacific. A winner-take-all race between these two thoroughbred steamers, from Victoria to Port Townsend, resulted in the payment of an annual subsidy of $75,000 a year to keep the loser, the Olympia, in California waters. In 1871 the Olympia received an additional subsidy to stay off the run in San Francisco.

Rested but not retired, the Old Anderson was overhauled for a brief run in 1876. In 1883, after another six years of rest—the last year underwater, having sunk in her moorings—the Anderson was raised in Seattle Harbor and pumped out

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for service on the Olympia-Victoria route by Captain Tom Wright. She was no competition for the fast side-wheeler George E. Starr, a spry young vessel capable of darting ahead of the grand old dame and snatching up her fares.

The final indignity for Captain Wright was the seizure of the Anderson by the customs collector at Port Townsend due to unsubstantiated accusations of smuggling Chinese into the United States—a highly profitable but illegal activity. Unable to successfully fight the charge or pay the fine, Wright was forced to sell the Anderson to the Washington Steamboat Company. Sometime later, on a foggy night off the coast of Whidbey Island, both the Anderson, under new ownership, and the Starr entered a fog bank. Only the Anderson exited the fog under her own steam; the Starr, repeatedly rammed by the Anderson, had to be towed to port for extensive repairs.

Her age and pending lawsuits kept the Anderson tied up along the banks of the Snohomish River until the start of the Alaska gold rush. The useful life of a ship is generally 20 years, but the Anderson, entering her 40s, set off in 1897, once again in pursuit of profits. Those who weren’t among the 86 to secure passage on the Old Anderson made bets she’d never make it, and indeed, her forgotten compass, hung-over crew, and appetite for coal cast serious doubt on the venture. A run-in with the Glory of the Seas caused considerable damage to her paddle box and galley, and the passengers resented their near-constant labor to keep the steamer fueled. At Port Simpson there were grumblings. At Metlakatla there was outright mutiny and a drunken brawl. Off Kodiak Island the Anderson took a severe beating in a gale, and her passengers, lacking coal, started tearing out her interior woodwork for fuel.

Miraculously, the Anderson found shelter in a hidden cove on Kodiak Island and enough coal at an abandoned cannery to continue to Dutch Harbor. There the ailing steamer was abandoned by her disgusted passengers and crew, who continued on to Nome on a sealing schooner. In March 1898, driven ashore by another terrible storm, the doomed Anderson lay on her side, salvaged by Indians and beachcombers for wood and metal from her hull.

The aging Anderson’s end signaled the start of the mosquito fleet’s prime years. By the 1890s 25 steamer routes connected ports and people both major and minor. Through the years over 2,500 steamers served Puget Sound as part of the mosquito fleet. By the turn of the century steel-hulled boats had become popular, and propeller-driven, steam-screw boats dominated the waters. Ships became faster and more luxurious as technology, population and competition increased. But by 1920 a competitor arrived in the Puget Sound area that no amount of steam power could beat. The increased use of automobiles following the end of World War I led to the construction of a road network that decreased the need for steamer transportation. Waterways gave way to highways as cars became faster and cheaper. In 1916 the first automobile-carrying ferry, the Vashon Island, forecast the decline of the passenger steamer era, although steamers continued to operate into the 1930s.

It is said that the wakes of the steamers as they darted about the Seattle harbor resembled the mosquitoes on the surface of a millpond. Today the mosquito fleet is a half-forgotten maritime memory. There is but one remnant of the mosquito fleet—the Virginia V. She was placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1973 and is now being rehabilitated. The Virginia V is the sole survivor of an exciting time when transit and commerce were carried out on water by vessels with at least as much character as the people who depended on them. From commute to community, the wild days and ways of the mosquito fleet helped tame the Northwest.
Kaiser's Navy Comments

I recently received the Spring 1999 issue of COLUMBIA. The article, "The Kaiser's Navy Surveys Puget Sound," was very interesting. Terrell D. Gottschall referred to the Schamhorst and Gneisenau as heavy cruisers; however, they were in fact armoured cruisers. They were commissioned in 1907 and 1908, respectively. This class probably represented the peak of the "armoured cruiser" concept. Each ship carried eight 21-cm guns.

The Puget Sound Naval Shipyard was actually established on September 16, 1891. The Wisconsin's (BB-9) last refit at the shipyard was in 1908, two years prior to the article written by Commander Wilfrid von Lowenfeld.

My references are: German Cruisers of World War II, by M. J. Whitley; Warships of World War I, by H. M. LeFleming; various Jane's Fighting Ships from 1905 to 1914, and the Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships, published by the Naval Historical Center.

—Louis H. Parker, Steilacoom

Additional Reading

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

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These rates take effect July 1, 1999.
Kenworth
The First 75 Years
by Doug Siefkes and Wayne Johnson

Reviewed by John Lyons.

Everyone in the Pacific Northwest is used to seeing a wide variety of 18-wheel trucks carrying everything from logs to manufactured goods, but few people outside the trucking industry are aware that many of these vehicles are produced in the Pacific Northwest. The Kenworth Truck Company has been an integral part of the industrial development of the Pacific Northwest, as well as a world leader in the manufacture of heavy-duty trucks, for three quarters of a century.

Kenworth, the history of arguably the most important truck producer in the United States, is written by Doug Siefkes, a writer from western Washington who has been chronicling the history of trucks for the past decade. The Kenworth recognized around the world today began its corporate life as the humble Gersix truck, produced by the Gerlinger Motor Car Company of Portland. The Gersix quickly earned a reputation for being tough enough to withstand the rugged, steep terrain of the Pacific Northwest. After some financial difficulties the Gerlinger Company moved to Seattle and was eventually bought out by local entrepreneurs Harry Kent and Edgar Worthington. They formed the Kenworth Motor Truck Corporation in 1923 and have continued to manufacture custom-built trucks in the Pacific Northwest ever since. In time the company also produced custom-engineered buses and fire engines.

Some of the pioneering work done by Kenworth includes factory-installing the first diesel truck engine, leading the industry in the design of weight-saving aluminum components, forming the first fiberglass hood—which became an industry standard—and introducing both the cab-over-engine truck and the tilt cab. In fact, Kenworth is the first truck manufacturer to make a completely aerodynamic heavy-duty truck.

The legendary toughness of Kenworth trucks allowed the company to enter the international market in 1947 by selling trucks to the Middle East. Incredibly, most of these trucks have been rebuilt and are still in service today. Production has also expanded and Kenworth now has facilities in Mexico and Australia, as well as joint venture assembly agreements with China, Malaysia, Zimbabwe and Russia.

Siefkes offers a very readable account of how Kenworth trucks became an industry standard along with a broader history of the trucking industry. The book is a welcome addition to anyone who is interested in Pacific Northwest transportation history or just fascinated by trucks in general.

Reviewed by John Lyons.

John Lyons is an executive with the Principal Financial Group. Reared and educated in the Centralia area, he now makes his home in eastern Washington.

Kenworth, The First 75 Years
Reviewed by John Lyons.

Kenworth, The First 75 Years

Organized Womanhood
Cultural Politics in the Pacific Northwest, 1840-1920

This work begins with the “organized womanhood” movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries and ends by showing recurring issues in our own times. Sandra Haarsager traces the movement’s roots to self-improvement and study clubs that soon expanded their focus. She shows how women’s “cultural politics” influenced local, state and federal governments, which gradually assumed responsibility for programs that women introduced, including public libraries, worker and consumer protection, welfare, and support for the arts. While emphasizing the power of group dynamics, Haarsager also highlights leadership with biographical sketches of 17 prominent women, including missionaries, suffragists, physicians and community activists.

“One of the problems in writing about a movement’s cultural history is the inevitable gaps in available records; another is not having enough pages to chronicle in detail all that happened in a large-scale social movement like this one,” writes the author. Another problem is Haarsager’s tendency to belabor a point, such as repeatedly recounting how women’s organizations in different communities founded libraries as an alternative to saloons. In her treatment of the Women’s Christian Temperance Union, she provides a 30-page introduction and then repeats much of the information in discussing the organization’s grassroots social service and reform crusades in Oregon and Idaho. In a book about “cultural politics,” I am surprised that she omitted the dramatic saga of Washington women who won the franchise in 1883, only to lose it in 1887. In communities throughout the territory, members of the well-organized WCTU voted for local prohibition. A powerful saloon lobby influenced the Territorial Supreme Court, which rendered two decisions ruling the women’s vote unconstitutional.

Haarsager argues that women’s activism was particularly influential in the shaping of the Pacific Northwest where settlement coincided with the growing national movement. Her examples reflect the region’s immense geographic diversity. Her evidence includes previously unpublished primary sources from remote rural areas, making a strong case for the pervasiveness of the movement. Unfortunately, her efforts to present a comprehensive regional history fall short, since she limits her focus to predominantly WASPish women’s organizations with a few examples from Jewish and African-American groups. Some discussion of the missions of women’s groups excluded from the mainstream organizations would have yielded a more comprehensive and more accurate interpretation of Northwest heritage. However, the book is well indexed, with a comprehensive bibliography, and should prove valuable as a resource for students of Northwest and women’s history.

Mildred Andrews is author of six books and numerous articles on Northwest social history. She has a doctorate from the University of Washington and lives in Seattle where she specializes in historical research, writing and education.

Organized Womanhood
Reviewed by Mildred Tanner Andrews.
Local historians face the challenge of making their work of interest to both the community they document and to scholars who question how a place can illuminate larger themes and sources in history. Resident Irene Martin writes a loving history of Wahkiakum County that provides details that will resonate with local readers and offers insights to “outsiders” as well.

Martin writes that “it is water more than any other influence” that has shaped this southwestern Washington area. One hundred inches of rain a year supported the massive trees that attracted loggers and frustrated those who tried to farm, and the bordering Columbia River supplied plentiful salmon to Indian and non-Indian residents. The author focuses on the rise and fall of the resource industries since the 1870s attracted immigrants to this “beach of heaven.” In addition to rich descriptions of logging, farming and fishing operations, the book details how work shaped cultural as well as economic life.

Martin observes the paradoxical consequences of economic development. Dams created cheap hydropower and irrigation projects but collapsed salmon runs and Wahkiakum farming. Better roads provided easier travel for waterfront residents but undermined local enterprises. The author sensitively explores residents’ emotional attachments to their work and sympathizes with their views that environmental regulations impeded their ability to earn a living from the land. This common sentiment reveals how few Northwesterners are willing to recognize that larger economic forces, such as capital mobility and consolidation, have doomed resource industries.

The author thoroughly explores available written accounts, if at times uncritically, and creatively interprets nontraditional sources, such as buildings, material culture, and photographs. For example, imagery reveals the significance of logging to residents, often featuring humans next to giant trees and stumps to underscore their scale. Fewer images document fishing and farming in the area.

Martin’s thoughtful final chapter mourns the changes that have come to this water world, yet she recognizes the seductive sense “that things today aren’t quite as good as they were.” She wonders if a way of life has ended or if Wahkiakum County’s attraction to urban migrants signifies that it remains a beach of heaven. Just as logging and fishing once threatened the area’s abundance, however, a recent building boom has reshaped the local landscape.

Beach of Heaven will become the standard reference for Wahkiakum County history. Others may later expand such topics as the once-prominent ethnic communities. Martin advances the study of community history by revealing the importance of place to people who struggle to understand waterscape, landscape and economic changes with a determination to remain close to their memories.

Laurie Mercier is assistant professor of history at Washington State University Vancouver and associate director of the Center for Columbia River History.
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Connie Russell
Tom Ryan
James Saclot
Safeco Corporation
San Francisco Mortgage Bank
San Juan Island National Historic Park
Jane Sanders
Thomas H. Sanders
Lionel Sawyer Family
Mary Schultz
Rick & Vickie Scott
Seafirst Foundation
Seattle Academy of Arts & Sciences
Seattle City Light
Seattle Foundation
Jo Ann M. Shockhart
Shoreline Historical Museum
Sidney Arts Museum
Mr. & Mrs. Phil Simon
Skamania County Historical Society
D. J. Smith
Steffen's Catering
Susan Spranger
Kelly Stafford
Sterling Antiques & Collectibles
Thomas R. Stenger
Mary Stedman
Tacoma Country Club & Golf Club
Tacoma Landmarks Preservation Commission
Tacoma Public Utilities
The Baker Foundation
The Boeing Company
The News Tribune
The Portico Group
The Vail
Thorsen & Smuts Charitable Trust
South Sound Maritime Heritage Society
Thomas W. & Florence B. Kilworth Foundation
Warren W. Wing

AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS

Apancoes Museum Foundation
Bainbridge Island Historical Society
Ballard Historical Society
Bigelow House Preservation Association
Central Washington Agricultural Museum
Clallam County Historical Society
Commission for the Humanities Cowlitz County Historical Society
East Benton County Historical Society
Edmonds-South Snohomish County Historical Society
Emancipation Plateau Historical Society
Era Meezer Historical Society
Finest Civic and Heritage Association
Fort Nisqually Association
Fort Vancouver Historical Society
Clark County Fox Island Historical Society
Franklin County Historical Society
Friends of Fort Lewis Military Museum
Friends of the Everett Public Library
Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society
Grant House Folk Art Center
Highline School District Museum
Homer Glen Historical Society
Huron Historical Society
Key Peninsula Historical Society
Kitsap County Historical Society
League of Snohomish County Heritage Organizations
Lewis County Historical Society
Lynden Pioneer Museum
Maple Valley Historical Society
Maryhill Museum of Art
Mukilteo Historical Society
North Central Washington Museum Association
Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trail Association
Okanogan County Historical Society
Pacific Northwest Historical Society
Paulus Historical Society
Renton Historical Society
Roy Historical Society
South Pierce County Historical Society
South Sound Maritime Heritage Association
Spanaway Historical Society
Stelacoom Tribal Museum Association
Summer Historical Society
Tecumseh Historical Society
Tumwater Historical Association
Walla Walla Valley Pioneer & Historical Society
Washington Trust for Historic Preservation
Whidbey Island Museum of History and Art
Whitman County Historical Society
Wooden Boat Foundation
Yakima Valley Museum & Historical Association
Washington State History Museum
1911 Pacific Avenue • Downtown Tacoma

“Sunrise to Paradise: The Story of Mount Rainier National Park”
Temporary Exhibit: Through Jan 9, 2000
Celebrating the Park’s 100th anniversary by exploring its natural and cultural significance. Watch for feature programs.
Major Support from TCI.

“Woods of Rainier”
Temporary Exhibit: Jun 15, 1999 - Sep 6, 1999
View over 40 lathe-turned objects crafted from woods found within the Mount Rainier watershed, both recently and in early timber expeditions.
In cooperation with the South Puget Sound Woodturners.

“Across Oceans of Dreams: Filipino Pioneers in Washington”
Temporary Exhibit: Aug 1, 1999 - April 23, 2000
Hear the stories of the many Filipinos who worked in the fields and factories of Washington, and stayed to establish businesses and raise families.
Developed with the Filipino American Historical Society.

“Jacob Lawrence’s George Washington Bush Series”
Temporary Exhibit: Through - Sep 12, 1999
Historical storytelling paintings featuring Bush, co-leader of the party which founded Tumwater in 1845.
From the Washington State Historical Society’s permanent collection.

Memorial Day - Labor Day
Mon - Sat 10 am - 6 pm
Open Thu until 8 pm
Sun 11 am - 6 pm

1-888-BE THERE
(1-888-238-4373)

Washington State Capital Museum
211 West 21st Avenue • Olympia

“Remembering Medicine Creek”
Temporary Exhibit
Learn about the treaty that shaped U.S. / Indian relations.

“Her Present Proud Position”
Permanent Exhibit
Journey Olympia’s humble beginnings, through the struggle to maintain its status as a seat of government to its present position.

“Delbert McBride Ethnobotanical Garden”
Permanent Garden Exhibit
Through this living exhibition, learn about the food, medicine and tool uses of plants by western Washington Indians.

Tue - Fri 10 am - 4 pm
Sat - Sun Noon - 4 pm
Closed Mondays

1-360-753-2580