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Foreword by William Cronon

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COVER: From the original painting, "Tide of Empire; Friendly Cove, Nootka Sound, 22nd of September, 1792," by Hewitt Jackson, a contemporary Northwest mariner-historical painter whose renderings are as accurate and detailed as in-depth research can make them. From left to right, the sailing vessels pictured here include: HM Sloop-of-War Discovery; Peñas and St. Joseph, traders; Jackall, English trader; HM Armed Tender Chatham; HM Storeship Daedalus; in the distance, Activa, Spanish armed brig. See related story beginning on page 40. (Courtesy Oregon Historical Society, with permission of the artist.)
Over the past few years I have been asked, "What is the Historical Society doing for the millennium?" My responses have typically been dismissive because to me the change of millennia is an accidental or inevitable calendrical occasion, not a historical one in the traditional sense. I usually change the subject to a "true commemoration" of interest, the Lewis and Clark bicentennial, which is now a mere four years away.

And besides, with Y2K, is the millennial occasion really one to celebrate?

This comes to mind because, although the Society was not called to observe the new millennium, I was asked to reflect on the one just closing by Nick Geranios, a reporter for the Associated Press. He asked me and two other historians—John Findlay of the University of Washington and Paul Hirt of Washington State University—for our sense of the great events of the last thousand years in what is now the state of Washington.

Nick's feature first appeared in the Seattle Times and Post-Intelligencer on August 29th, and the consensus view, as interpreted by Nick, was the following ten developments, in chronological order:

1) The decimation of Indian tribes by diseases introduced by whites
2) The introduction of the horse to Northwest Indian tribes
3) The Lewis & Clark expedition of 1804-06
4) The Oregon Treaty of 1846, establishing the 49th parallel border with Great Britain
5) Isaac Stevens's Indian treaty tour of 1854-55
6) The arrival of the transcontinental railroads
7) The rise of industrial unions
8) Depression-related public works
9) World War II's changing Washington's economy from extractive to industrial
10) The dawn of environmentalism

It's hard to argue with any of these; in fact, four of them were on my original list—items 1, 2, 3 and 6 above. My list had the arrival of the horse on the plateau preceding the onset of the biological encounter (a more chronologically correct ordering in my view), and I also added Captain Cook's third Pacific voyage and Robert Gray's "discovery" of the Columbia River in advance of Lewis and Clark, since the full context and consequence of the Corps of Discovery can only then be appreciated.

I am of the view that the Oregon Treaty and Stevens's treaty tour (4 and 5 above) were functions of a larger phenomenon, the onset of widespread Euro-American settlement in the Oregon Country beginning in the early 1840s, which was number six on my list. All three of us agreed that the arrival of the Northern Pacific and Great Northern railroads deserved to be on the list, and I am of the view that the transcontinental rail connection brought about late in the 19th century is THE pivotal development in the history of Washington.

I also listed the Klondike Gold Rush, which established Seattle's economic and cultural hegemony in the region, and the Manhattan Project works at Hanford. The latter, because of its environmental consequences, is sure to figure prominently in the life of this state for hundreds of years to come. I concluded my list with the Boldt Indian fishing rights case. By that inclusion I meant to achieve the equivalent of consensus item number 10 above—the dawn of environmentalism—by tying the phenomenon to a specific incident and time, 1974, with the attendant realization evident since then that all of the easy, "no cost" days of growth and development in the region have come to an end.

So we approach the new millennium. One of the good things about history is that there's always more of it.

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Editor
There was, in the Seneca Falls I grew up in, a general cognizance that workaday world—a focus that comes all too easily to a blue collar, an important event, at that time worthy of a single line in the text—core value is moral in nature and not scientific, is far from immutable.

Washington Street. I lived around the corner on Bayard Street; and not static, how it becomes revealed over time; history, because its somehow. However, since not everyone who grows up in Seneca Falls including my four grandparents and my mother.

Because I am a historian, it is frequently imputed that growing up in the environs of such a historical town must have influenced me somehow. However, since not everyone who grows up in Seneca Falls becomes a historian, there must be other variables. It is nonetheless true that I have witnessed firsthand how the importance of a site is not static, how it becomes revealed over time; history, because its core value is moral in nature and not scientific, is far from immutable. There was, in the Seneca Falls I grew up in, a general cognizance that an important event, at that time worthy of a single line in the textbooks, had happened there. But the community focus was on the workaday world—a focus that comes all too easily to a blue collar, industrial town populated by a fair number of Italian immigrants, including my four grandparents and my mother.

In Seneca Falls' post-industrial age, history and cultural tourism—particularly related to the Women's rights movement—are the focus of the community and Seneca Falls' core identity as a place (notwithstanding the local conversation about whether the town was the inspiration for Frank Capra's It's A Wonderful Life). Not that Seneca Falls is now a better place—it's just different. The textbooks are different, too. There is more than one line about women's history in them now. What I find of interest in the so-called culture wars that overlaid the Enola Gay textbook standards conflicts is how scholars in fields like biology, physics, medicine—even economics—are expected to routinely revise and upgrade their knowledge, but historians are expected to stick to the first, or conventional, interpretation. I liken the past to a block of granite; it is what it is; but perspective and evidence direct the chisel and what is revealed by way of the final sculpture reflects the needs of the historian's context. And with these needs lies "the moral of the story."

One story for our time, it seems to me, is that of Lewis and Clark and the Corps of Discovery. The bicentennial of this great event is just around the corner (in terms of planning) and truly, with the success of Stephen Ambrose's Undaunted Courage and the Ken Burns/Dayton Duncan PBS documentary, it can be said to have already started.

I'm not a Lewis and Clark scholar, and I came to the office of president of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council quite by accident. My involvement at the outset was purely a function of occupational necessity since Washington is a trail state. As director of the Washington State Historical Society I had to become active in the study of the expedition and the movement that would memorialize its bicentennial. Actually, my first love, speaking of historic trails, is the Oregon Trail. That interest came to me, in part, because my current hometown of Tumwater bills itself as the end of the Oregon Trail in Washington. The first party of American settlers on Puget Sound arrived in 1845 (three years before the Women's Rights Convention in Seneca Falls).

In any event, I always found the Oregon Trail story appealing as a historian; it was an epoch that I could identify with personally (unlike Lewis and Clark, initially) and again, unlike Lewis and Clark, it was a story for which I developed some actual scholarly expertise. I lectured on the topic frequently and, over time, I had traveled its entire length and photographed it extensively—on occasion, too much time and too extensively. Back in 1993, having exhausted the list of western parks to visit with my family, I took them on a car tour of the overland trail segment in Wyoming. I was particularly interested in seeing the famed ruts near Guernsey, Wyoming, which for years had
fascinated me because of their shoulder-level depth. After I had been photographing the ruts extensively over several hour’s time, my wife suggested that we move on. When I demurred at that point, saying I needed more time at the site, she suggested I roll in the dust and that way I could take it with me.

I learned much in my Oregon Trail peregrinations. For example, the beauty of plains in Kansas and Nebraska, and the truth of Francis Parkman, the great narrative historian of the mid 19th century. Parkman was one of the first chroniclers of the Oregon Trail; he was actually out on the trail in the 1840s as the phenomenon of the great migration was taking place. In the foreword to his book on the trail, Parkman noted for his readers something that every historian needs to learn—that armchair and archival familiarity with a subject is not enough. You have to get out in the field to truly appreciate a site and a story. For example, in my Oregon Trail lectures I used to talk about how the first half of the trip was essentially uneventful, at least in respect to topographical difficulties of a vertical nature. Then, during one of my tours, I had the occasion to see and climb, with some exertion (via a paved path no less), to the top of “California Hill,” the summit of the traverse from the South Platte to the North Platte Valley emigrant road. This I did in heat above 90 degrees, having driven to the site in an air-conditioned car. I then learned the truth of Parkman’s axiom that to see the true depth of the historical story you have to visit the historical site.

This truism, of course, is what undergirds and motivates the cultural tourism market. There is no substitute for being where history happened. I still marvel, having now been there twice, how small and confined is Dallas’s Dealey Plaza, compared to the encyclopedia of Washington state history and one of the Society’s greatest assets. One of Curtis’s signature slides is a distant view of Dawson City, including a scoop-like scar on the landscape that I presumed, again in my distant ignorance, was some form of legacy from the gold rush diggings.

In truth, what I had never seen in the archives but did see in person are the tailings from the dredging of Bonanza Creek and the Klondike River; that devastation, in its thoroughness, has to represent the pinnacle of industrial-scale devastation of the American landscape west and north of Butte, Montana. The scoop mark in Dawson, I learned from a local guide, is actually a natural formation—Moosehide Slide—and I now better appreciate the manner and meaning behind the way Curtis framed that feature in his photographs. Again, witness the value of what a good friend of mine once called “history on the hoof,” as opposed to parlor room history or even classroom-style history.

The great lesson to me, of both the Oregon Trail and Klondike observances, is the importance of what I call interpretive infrastructure. In Oregon, for that trail’s sesquicentennial, they had the great wisdom to create a sequence of high-caliber and equitably distanced visitor and interpretive centers. They even have a brochure and common signage that links them together. I could argue that Oregon’s productive work in popularizing the state’s trail segments has been too successful, at least in terms of planning Washington’s part in observing the Lewis and Clark bicentennial. USA Today ran a special feature on the Lewis and Clark trail the weekend before the previously mentioned PBS documentary was scheduled to air. Upon close inspection, I noticed that the cartographer, when he or she got to the confluence of the Snake and Columbia rivers, ran the “trail” (which, like the Missouri, was a river passage) on the Oregon side of the river.

As I have since learned, most of the major Lewis and Clark camp sites along the Columbia, with the exception of the winter headquarters at what is now Astoria, were on the Washington side of the river. Clearly, then, the cartographer’s association of the trail with Oregon is, in part, a function of the “brand name” association to “trails” that Oregon has established. It is so powerful a brand that it can and will run counter to historical accuracy unless we here in Washington build an interpretive infrastructure that has equally powerful stories to tell.

And the stories are there—at the beginning, middle, and end of the Lewis and Clark passage. The best-known of these stories, traditionally, is the help that Lewis and Clark secured from the Nez Perce Indians; and Washington’s eastern gateway—Clarkston—is within the traditional homelands of the Nez Perce. I recently visited Weippe Prairie in Idaho, just at the foot of the Bitterroot Mountains of northern Idaho, with Allen Pinkham, a fellow member of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council. Describing the scene from the roadside marker, with just a wry bit of irony his voice, Allen said: “Here is where the Nez Perce discovered Lewis and Clark.” And indeed, the aid that the Corps of Discovery received from the Nez Perce when they struggled out of the mountains is fully emblematic of a series of continuously helpful encounters that native peoples provided to these American heroes. To use a metaphor that our commercial age makes quite understandable, the Corps of Discovery was a true “joint venture” between Lewis and Clark and a host of Indian partners. And
what is all the more tragically profound is that few tribes of the many who have grievances against the federal government were less rewarded for their succor of Lewis and Clark than the Nez Perce, a tribe the explorers truly loved. And when the circumstances were reversed, when the settlers and the American government had the physical advantage over the Nez Perce, they pressed it every time.

The other end of the trail, in Pacific County, Washington, is now also better known because of the so-called election site. By November 1805 the party had finally made it to the presumed end of the trail—to within view of the Pacific Ocean. In late November a fierce storm blew in from the southwest, endangering the party. The wave action smashed the canoes; their leathers rotted; game was scarce. The expedition was at another critical juncture.

We know from Ambrose and others that Lewis and Clark had an ample supply of leadership skills that probably would have served the Corps well at this point. But instead of simply determining what to do, the captains did a remarkable thing: they polled each member of the party for the purpose of assessing their recommendations as to where and how to pass the winter. The options were to stay, cross over to what is now the Oregon side, or return upstream to the more protected regions near present-day Vancouver or Wishram. Every member of the party participated in this tally or election, including York (Clark’s slave), who voted 60 years before manumission, and Sacagawea, who voted 150 years before Indians or women could participate in elections. Actually, the fact that anyone other than the captains could “vote” in such a circumstance was remarkable because at that time electors had to own property, and it is likely that only Clark and Lewis fit in that category.

This election site is now a nondescript, underdeveloped, unpaved wayside turnout about one mile west of the Astoria-to-Megler bridge landing. It is not merely an important Lewis and Clark site, it is one of the most important sites of any kind in the nation since its history embodies our greatest cultural tradition: the principle of self-government. For that reason, I have developed a fondness for referring to this site at McGowan, Washington, as the “Independence Hall of the American West.” (Maybe I should begin calling it the “Seneca Falls of the West.”)

But the part of the trail in Washington that has been on my mind of late is the middle passage, the quick downstream traverse of the Columbia River rapids. During my Lewis and Clark travels I have had occasion to see many stretches of the Missouri River. It is a very appealing river, my favorite section being the bluffs near Atchison, Kansas, the hometown of Amelia Earhart. But what has mystified me since the first airing of the Burns/Duncan documentary is why in their treatment of the story the Columbia River fared so poorly in comparison with the Missouri. Why, for example, did the Great Falls of the Missouri loom so large in the expedition’s imagination when the Great Falls of the Columbia (at Celilo)—arguably a more imposing cascade and rapids—barely made mention by comparison?

The answer hit me in a conversation with the consultants who are working with the Society, State Tourism, Department of Transportation, and other agencies to develop an interpretive plan for the trail in Washington. While trying to assess what was unique to our state in the Lewis and Clark story, I mentioned what I thought was a distinguishing characteristic: because it was a downstream leg, Lewis and Clark took comparatively little time to make the passage. Thus, in writing their journals, Lewis and Clark, struggling upstream on the Missouri as little as a few miles a day, had plenty of time to study and absorb the landscape into their consciousness. While they spent the better part of two years on the Missouri, they spent four weeks on the Columbia. They were at Great Falls for a month; they were at Celilo Falls for two days.

Earlier this decade the Washington State Historical Society created a public history unit known as the Center for Columbia River History (CCRH) in Vancouver, Washington. CCRH was formed largely in recognition of the fact that the Columbia River is the least well-known great river in America. Far lesser rivers loom larger in the public’s mind: the Hudson or the Colorado, to say nothing of the Potomac. The reason for this, I have now concluded, is that, unlike the Missouri which was imprinted on the nation’s imagination by Lewis and Clark, the Columbia labored to the sea in comparative anonymity until Woody Guthrie discovered it; but by then it was too late. Which is why, in my view, when it came time for the development of the Missouri and Columbia in this century, at least a game attempt was made to preserve the Great Falls in Montana, whereas the falls at Celilo were buried seemingly without anyone other than the tribes giving it a second thought.

Stephen Ambrose, when asked about the popular reaction to his book, Undaunted Courage, says that the most commonly expressed desire of his readers is the wish that they could see the West the way Lewis and Clark saw it. I hold no brief on the question raging in this region about whether the Snake River dams should be breached, but if I could have a dream fulfilled for the bicentennial it would be that the waters behind The Dalles dam be drawn down for the bicentennial so that the cultural and aesthetic memory of Celilo could be rekindled. Not only for Indian people’s sake, but for everyone’s.

David Nicandri is director of the Washington State Historical Society. This commentary is adapted from remarks given at the Western States Tourism Council’s Conference in Tacoma in the fall of 1998.
FOURTH DAY of February, Saturday night. The old Indian fighter, more recently a celebrated novelist, was in the saddle again. In the half-light of a cloud-masked moon he trotted eastward in the warm darkness to inspect one of his outposts. General Charles King's command included no regulars like himself, only volunteers. Rumors of imminent attack still darted from camp to sentry post, but "all had been so quiet" that most of his troops were in quarters. How might these eager clerks and tradesmen and farm boys fare—so far from home, so far from where they thought they'd be—when Mauser rounds started flying?

King had led troops before, but this was different. This was no desert, but a tropical rice swamp. These were no Apache warriors but Filipino nationalists on their own soil. This wasn't the veteran Fifth Cavalry Regiment, but a whole brigade of green volunteers from West Coast states. This was 1899, not 1874.

Abruptly out of the night a rider appeared. "Sir, division headquarters directs you to move your regiments to their lines." King barked orders to rouse his troops, then spurred back toward his command post. Already soldiers were gliding to their stations. As directed, the First Washington Regiment flanked Blockhouse II, the exposed point of a sharply angled salient.

Told to sleep in fighting kit out on the line, they threw ponchos on the swampy ground at river's edge. But sleep was elusive. Their anxious gaze straining into the night, the young soldiers heard nothing except "lively firing" from far away on their left. The staccato ceased at 10:45, resumed at 11:30. King scrawled a note to headquarters: "May I attack anything in my front at dawn?"
The distant fusillade and the general’s request announced a bizarre set of historical intersections simultaneously global, national, regional and personal. Half a world distant, Senate ratification of a treaty would within hours end an odd, brief war with Spain. The war had been fought over Cuba, a Spanish colony. The American victory signaled the arrival of the United States on the stage of world power politics. Meanwhile, as a side effect of the Spanish-American War and its treaty, another war began. It was fought over the Philippines, another Spanish colony. The treaty gave Cuba nominal independence and transferred possession of the Philippines to the world’s newest imperial power, the United States. But Philippine nationalists had other plans. They proclaimed a provisional government and arrayed troops in a formidable perimeter, encircling the American forces that garrisoned the outskirts of Manila.

More than a thousand of those Americans came from the state of Washington. And so the impending clash resonated with regional as well as national import. Along with the earlier Klondike gold rush and ensuing decade of unparalleled growth, the episode that sent Washington volunteers to the Philippines would dramatically enlarge the horizons of the Pacific Northwest.

It was a personal turning point as well. Charles King—as well-known a novelist in his day as is Stephen King in ours—was soon to earn one more battle honor and then quickly sink into literary and historical obscurity. In contrast, the conflict launched careers for others, including a future Seattle Post-Intelligencer columnist, regimental Sergeant-Major Joe Smith. For most of the soldiers it was a welcome rite of passage in their quest for manhood.

It was, in short, a portentous night.

Midnight passed. At about two in the morning distant gunfire erupted anew, rousing the dozing few. Suddenly a half-dozen shots blazed nearby. Then from the blackness across Concordia Creek came volleys of fire. Instinctively the Washington boys, stuck out on that angle, ducked lower, squatting at the “incessant flash” of rifle fire that now lit up the night. Strangely, the rounds mostly screamed high overhead; only later did they learn that two Idaho soldiers far behind the line had fallen to the errant bullets.

King systematically rode his line, observing artillery rolling into position, sizing up the risks of continuing to huddle in place, calculating a ground maneuver scheme across his whole brigade front. Back to headquarters went another urgent request for authority to counterattack at first light. No approval came. The hours wore on. “Insurgent fire still spattered into both East and West Paco,” the general noted.

The gunfire that pinned King’s soldiers in their trenches came from the Mauser rifles of Filipino insurgents loyal to the nationalist Emilio Aguinaldo, the consequence of a convoluted but logical chain of events. Following the American declaration of war against Spain, orders cabled to Hong Kong on April 24, 1898, had directed Commodore George Dewey, now that “war has commenced,” to steam to the Philippines and commence operations at once, particularly against the Spanish fleet.” A forenoon’s work one week later left the Spanish fleet at the bottom of Manila Bay.

The city of Manila sits at the east shore of the bay (see map on page 8), flanking the mouth of the Pasig River. That short serpentine waterway, with its many meandering estuaries, drains a large internal lake about ten miles to the southeast, the Laguna de Bay. By August 13 sufficient ground forces had arrived to defeat the Spanish garrison and occupy the city. Meanwhile, insurgent forces awaited unhappily in the countryside, frustrated at being prevented from inflicting reprisals against the Spaniards and their property.

Initially, Aguinaldo and his insurgent army, having so long resisted Spanish rule, welcomed the Americans as presumed liberators. But through the fall months additional troops arrived—mostly volunteer regiments augmented by a few regular formations. Tension increasingly gripped Luzon after the first of the year as it began to look as though the Americans might simply replace the Spanish as colonial overlords.

The newly arrived American commanding general, Ewell Otis, placed...
ACROSS OCEANS OF DREAMS

The exhibit, Across Oceans of Dreams: Filipino Pioneers in Washington, runs through April 23, 2000, at the Washington State History Museum. The 1,800-square-foot exhibit explores the history of Filipino migration to Washington through photographs, music, artifacts and oral histories. Rare abaca cloth, indigenous costumes and Islamic carvings from the Philippines introduce the complicated history of the island nation.

Filipino migration to the United States first began as a result of the Spanish-American War. American occupation of the island during that war is explored through military uniforms, maps, weaponry and photographs, many now on display for the first time. Filipino-Americans have a long history in Washington and will be the largest Asian-Pacific American community in the United States by the year 2000.

The exhibit was produced in collaboration with the Filipino American National Historical Society of Seattle.

After the initial battle the First Washington’s positions stretched from Paco and Blockhouse 11 to Santa Ana and on upriver to San Pedro Macati.

his units in a thin perimeter around the city, organizing forces south of the river as his First Division and north of the river as his Second Division. General Thomas Anderson’s First Division included King’s Brigade, anchored in the outlying village of Paco. The insurgents dug trenches and threw up earthworks and artillery emplacements within shouting distance of the Americans. The fuse was lit; when the explosion came, it had the feel of inevitability.

SHE Cowered in the tropical darkness, 20-year-old Bob Britton was a long way from his Tyler, Texas, roots or his more recent Washington home. His line of infantry members of Company A, First Washington Volunteer Regiment, stretched along one of those Pasig estuaries. In that confrontation a century ago, February 5, 1899, the United States met its future as an interventionist power, the Pacific Northwest awakened to its connections to Asia, and a young student tested his private mettle.

In short, the story of the Washington National Guard in the Philippines offers multiple levels of narrative and meaning. Under close scrutiny many stereotypes about American imperialism collapse: from their diaries and letters the Washington volunteers seem to be engaged less in jingoistic, ethnocentric assertion of American power, prestige or paternalistic enterprise than in a very personal quest for self-vindication. Somewhat unwillingly, they also became schooled in the peoples and possibilities of the exotic East, a curriculum they carried back to their communities.
Thus their individual attitudes offer the best clue to understanding the collective mind of the nation as it embarked on its imperial journey—a journey that would make the 20th century America's first Pacific Century.

The Washington regiment comprised 12 companies of infantry—over a thousand strong when healthy (which was rarely the case). Although regular United States Army soldiers would eventually do most of the campaigning, which dragged on until 1902, volunteers from National Guard units out of western states bore the brunt of the first year's fighting. Indeed, that first clash of arms pitted well-armed, creditably disciplined insurgents against National Guard troops with obsolete arms and minimal training in the fiercest sector of the battle, precisely at the salient manned by the First Washington Regiment of King's Brigade.

The “Washingtons” anchored the division's left from the Pasig to the hinge of the line at Blockhouse 11, an old Spanish wooden structure guarding the key road from Paco to the town of Santa Ana, nestled in a preposterous double-loop of the river. A stone arch carried the roadway across Concordia Creek, the stream dividing American from insurgent lines. As Private Britton's own sketch map reveals, insurgent cannon on a redoubt at river's edge commanded a clear field of fire down the Washington line to the right of the bridge—what soldiers call, in tones of dread, enfilading fire.

At the bridge itself, in fact, insurgent sentries defiantly paced atop the arch while Washington soldiers standing guard duty sullenly watched from their end. This arrangement had been negotiated as part of a larger agreement between Aguinaldo and Otis to separate their respective forces and deny Americans access to the countryside.

Thus the months of December and January had passed amid growing tension and provocation. Rumors of imminent attack regularly flared, then vanished. While many a boring day was passed marching guard for 24 hours, then reading and fitfully sleeping for the next 24, often the whole company was scrambled to its firing posts for a sleepless but uneventful night or two. When the attack finally erupted on February 5, the men—weakened by illness and interminable false alarms—were eager to fight.

HALF-PAST EIGHT. Full light now. General Anderson himself—the division commander—galloped up to King with “the long prayed-for order.” But push no farther than Santa Ana, cautioned Anderson.

The generals parted, Anderson to Battery Knoll to oversee the advance of several of Colonel James Smith's California companies, King to Paco to marshal his Idaho companies into line. The Californians on the right swept easily across the fields to their front—for them “it was comparatively plain sailing,” in King's words. Not so for his left; his Washington volunteers, with the Idaho companies on their heels, ran into “hard pounding indeed.” Yet, on them depended the success or failure of the great wheel to the left that he envisioned.

Though Company A had sustained heavy losses (“pretty badly cut to pieces, two killed and twenty wounded”), Captain Albert Otis—minus “much of one of his ears, but none of his nerve”—regrouped and rejoined the regiment as General King finally issued orders to counterattack.

Several companies of Washington soldiers, now unleashed, leapt from their
trenches and vaulted "with eager impetuosity" into "boggy" Concordia Creek, then scrambled up from the waist-deep waters onto the opposite bank. "Fierce fire" rained down, not only from the insurgent line ahead but also, alarmingly, from those promontories on the near bank of the Pasig.

***

Despite the deadly flanking fire that raked the Washington line, the experience of the battle was transporting for soldier and officer alike. This is how General King described it:

I have seen the hounds loosed from their leash, and the racers of the best States given the drum tap and the word "go," but in all my life I have seen no moment, known no exhilaration like that that came when, launching the Washington State Volunteers across the stream and letting the Idaho troopers follow close, I rode into the attack.

The old Indian fighter was a practiced narrator of such engagements, slipping easily into drum-and-bugle cadences attuned to racial difference:

To the right and left of the old bridge that had so long been the one medium of communication between the Filipino land and Yankeeedom on the eastward front of the city, the Washingtons took the plunge into the narrow little estuary and scrambled up the opposite bank, mud up to their middles, but in an instant their Springfields were blazing across the fields; Johnny-Filipino streaked it for his entrenchments, dived into them like so many prairie dogs, and then, turning, let drive with Mauser and Remington on the steadily advancing [American] lines.

But the relentless rush swept unchecked across the open fields. The Washington troops, aided by Idaho reinforcements on their left and a methodical sweep of Californians wheeling in from their right, overran the insurgents, forcing them from their trenches, scattering them as they tried to improvise a defense behind each little rice field dike, trapping several companies against the river while driving the rest from their Santa Ana base. King himself had galloped to the front line to direct the great pivot, and by ten o'clock he was in Santa Ana, his brigade in possession not only of the town but also (in his words) of "the guns, reserve ammunition and supplies" of the routed insurgents. In victory the veteran trooper was ungrudging in crediting his foe: "They fought," he conceded, "with no little skill... The Filipinos can, indeed, fight... They are brave and skillful warriors."

In victory the compliment came easily, of course. By noon he could report that his Californians "had driven the enemy through San Pedro [Macati], and... the church and cathedral at Guadeloupe, which is situated four miles up the Pasig, were in our possession."

Then the forgivable gloat: "There is now nothing else on our side of the river worth the taking."

As a retired cavalryman, decorated by battle scars as well as medals, and more recently as a senior advisor to the Wisconsin National Guard, Charles King had special reason to exult at the end of the day. Earlier he had deliberately traded regiments with his Second Brigade counterpart, giving up all his regulars, confident he could deploy and lead a raw, all-Guard force. Not only had his brigade prevailed in the hottest sector of the battle, he could gleefully boast to his fellow regular officers that "this is the only exclusively Volunteer Brigade in the Corps and that it fought with all the steadiness, dash, and discipline of their comrades the regulars."

Much of the general's enthusiasm stemmed from one of the most impres-
sive episodes of that day. Although the Filipino line crumbled along most of the front, there was one pocket of fierce resistance: those two redoubts on the knolls by the river bend that rose above the surrounding rice fields. As General King later explained:

Something had to be done to at least partially quell that infernal fire from the left front, and looking about me for available infantry, I could for an instant see nothing but the dead and wounded of the Washington [volunteers] still lying on the original battle line, where so long we had been held in check by orders from the rear.

Captain George H. Fortson was then in command of elements on the Washington left. An English officer on the scene recounted that "Fortson, with six-shooter in hand and pointing to the knoll directly across the stream, said: 'We must now take that fort. Will you make the charge with me?' The answer was a yell." Six companies plunged into the creek, then dashed across the open rice field. Let King finish the tale:

I think I never knew a sensation quite as thrilling as when from just behind the slowly advancing firing line at the center on the Santa Ana Road, I heard the crash of McConville's (Idaho) and Fortson's (Washington) volleys at the left rear, and saw them leap out of their cover on its left and, obedient to the chief, swing upon the enemy and head for the Pasig... the center sharing in the glory of the left in the capture of the Krupps and carrying the redoubts. I can still hear the glorious bursts of cheers with which the center went over to the enemy's works, and the echoing hurrahs where, just a fourth of a mile away, Fortson with his Washington Battalion and McConville, with two Idaho Battalions, were making mince meat of the west redoubt.

It is not too far-fetched to suggest that—with the Washington and Idaho troops shouting amid those corpse-strewn mounds, watching in fascinated horror as the Filipino remnants plunged into the river, not to reappear on the far bank—this was where and when America's Pacific Century began.

To grasp why this was so, the context must be understood. Decisive changes had marked the 1890s. These were hard times: an era of discontent with the progress of industrialization, especially with the changing nature of work and the resulting contraction of economic opportunity. More specifically, this was a time of depression after the devastating Panic of 1893. And these tough times bred, secondly, turbulent times. Demographic shifts caused by massive movement to the West and a flood of immigrants to the East were creating a new national landscape. Social upheaval, especially violent strikes, rent the fabric of communities. Politically, a radical third party challenge that nearly toppled the existing two-party system crested in 1896.

A palpable mood of apocalypse gripped Americans as the new century loomed—a mood of great hopes and fierce fears. Thousands felt stripped of all control over their own destinies. Historian Frederick Jackson Turner electrified the nation by suggesting that, with the end of the frontier, America would never be the same. Conversely, others more optimistically imagined they were at the threshold of a "Christian Century," which would witness the "Evangelization of the World in This Generation," perhaps hastening the "Return of Christ" or at least the "Dawn of a Good Society."

The troubles and turbulence pointed to deeper changes. Above all, these were times of wrenching social transition. America was uneasily maturing into a more organized and technological society—much more closely knit together by rail lines and steamships, telegraph and telephone networks, and by urban electrical power systems. Although life and work were becoming much more systematic and hierarchically organized, they were increasingly driven by spectacle and entertainment—from amusement parks and competitive sports to the new sensationally penny press.

Accompanying these structural changes was an emerging new vision for the future—at home and abroad. Specifically, a vision for a new and better urban life was shown in the "City Beautiful" movement after Chicago's 1893 World's Fair. Meanwhile, some began to dream that America could join among the European nations as a global imperial power. But most intriguing of all, and perhaps least studied by historians, was a new vision for the character of men and women. It comprised a new ideal for the body, demonstrated in calls for the "strenuous life" and "physical culture," and new definitions of femininity and manliness, as a frontier agricultural people grew into an urban industrial society.

One must not, therefore, underestimate how different the world of the Washington volunteers was from that of their parents. From youth these young men had heard the tales spun by their fathers and grandfathers about conquering the continent, subduing the Indians, crushing the southern rebellion. They looked in from the outside at the rituals and festivals of veterans' groups, lodges and pioneer societies. It was no coincidence that early in the decade the young Stephen Crane, who never knew battle, penned The Red Badge of Courage.

As their fathers remembered that of which they could not know, as women took on new fashions and new feistiness to go along with new roles in the work place, these boys needed proof that they could still be men. And so they jumped at the chance to test themselves in combat. Denied the experience of winning the West or saving the Union, they rallied to the flag and the fight overseas.

Now blooded, the Washington soldiers took stock of their behavior in combat. The terror of the night had yielded to the triumph of the day. They had survived. They had heard the whistling of Mauser bullets—and held. They had huddled in the soggy trenches—and stayed. Unflagging, they had waited for their orders. When released, they had jumped to the attack, taken the fight to the enemy,
advanced into a murderous fusillade—and won. Their officers, from the great novelist King on down, had lauded them. Their comrades had cheered them. Now it was time to spin the yarns, to tell each other—and their diaries and their wives and mothers, and, yes, their fathers—that they had stood the test.

“...fittest,” he gloated, that “the seven Washington companies became the protectors of the lives and property of the entire Brigade.”

The official narrative of the regiment, prepared by Adjutant William Luhn, projects a similar tone. Recounting an assault at Taguig, near where the Laguna drains into the Pasig, Luhn noted, “The line was perfect, the men erect, expecting at any time to receive fire from the insurgents.” Their charge resulted in the surrender of the Filipinos, prompting Luhn to boast that they yielded when “our men showed themselves so daring.” Another report took pains to record that on one occasion Washington riflemen “swam the Pasig river to establish communication, thus setting the example” of boldness for the rest of the American forces.

The deep-rooted compulsion to prove themselves men extended to non-combat activities. In the weeks after the initial battle, Robert Britton often pulled guard duty. At his post near a bridge one day, “some English ladies came across and asked me questions” about the ruins of Paco Church. He explained how during the first battle snipers had taken roost in the tower, firing down on ambulance carts behind the lines until blasted out by artillery. Their response to Britton’s account galled him: “I heard the same old story as they drove on, ‘A mere boy!’” But some weeks later came the reassurance. Introducing him to a newly arrived lieutenant, Captain Otis lauded Britton: he lay “on the hot end like a man.” Yes, Britton proved worthy of his manly forebears.

For example, Walla Walla lawyer John Boyer, commander of Company M, wrote at length about the courage and initiative of support troops like cooks and bandsmen. “These men do not know what fear is,” he claimed. When the company ran low on ammunition during that first day’s battle, his own cook voluntarily ran back and forth from stockpile to front. He “cooly filled” haversacks with ammo, “standing up in the open field, with the bullets zipping all around him...with as much nonchalance as if he were safe in quarters.” And the Washington boys volunteered for a raid when the regulars hesitated. “Thus you see it was by the law of the ‘survival of the fittest,’ ” he gloated, that “the seven
president doubted anyone could find on a map, fought the first of America's counterinsurgency wars in the emerging Third World.

The Spanish-American War—in particular, its Philippine phase—stands as the first real episode of America's projection of military power abroad. To be sure, the naval services had engaged foreign adversaries from the Barbary Coast to Valparaiso, and General Winfield Scott's invasion of Mexico in 1847 required a significant seaborne deployment. But never before had the United States dispatched a sizable ground force to secure a military objective beyond the North American mainland.

That experience of war shaped future national security strategy in many ways. It introduced reformist interventionism as an ideology, a national commitment to seeing the world as our laboratory for human improvement. Secondly, that war impelled continuous modernization as a trajectory, a pattern of unendingly upgrading national defenses to cope with any conceivable foe. Additionally, it proved a decisive precedent for force integration as a strategy, deliberately combining professional with citizen soldiers—National Guard, reserve and draft—to balance economy and effectiveness. Lastly, it pointed to personal and national reassurance as a psychology. Since Americans characteristically suffer from anxieties on both levels, longing for “security,” each generation strives to prove it can live up to (or make up for) its predecessors, while looking to its leaders to meet any possible external threat with confidence and decisiveness.

These national tendencies followed from the Philippine experience, so did a regional awakening. Another soldier's tale illustrates this. Carl Thygesen, of Danish birth and parentage, came out from Minnesota to join the Klondike stampede. He drifted back to Seattle, clerked for awhile, then joined the National Guard and shipped out to the Philippines. Felled by a Filipino bullet in one of the regiment's forays into the countryside, he never came back. But Thygesen participated in the two episodes that reshaped the thinking of many in the state of Washington: the Gold Rush and the Philippine War. Within a decade Seattle would host the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition. And for years the Fortson-Thygesen Post of Seattle’s Philippine veterans organization would memorialize the lad who never saw his 23rd birthday.

Thygesen's sad story reminds us that, ultimately, the Philippine War, like all wars, is a personal affair. Combat in the tropical lowlands of Luzon, the accident of an unsought war against Spain in Cuba, became a surrogate rite of passage for young men coming of age at the dawn of a new century. As such, it set both precedent and prototype for successive American interventions throughout that new century.

In sum, individual experiences paved the way for the national experience. The venture to the Philippines served as the prelude to a Pacific Century for the Northwest and the nation—it thrust boys into an exotic Asian setting and welcomed them home as men. But the century proved to be anything but “pacific.” Hence, to advance its perceived interests and ideals, America has continued—from that hour until this—to dispatch its young men and women across the Pacific and around the world. And for those soldiers and sailors, marines and airmen, as for their predecessors in the First Washington Volunteer Regiment, war remains a deeply personal, deeply transforming experience.

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The LAST of the
SEA OTTER
HUNTERS

By Victor B. Scheffer

Gone are Those Who Brought Washington's Native Sea Otters to Extinction

The sea otter is a strange and fascinating animal. It lives only in the cold inshore waters of the northern Pacific Ocean and adjacent seas where it feeds mainly on shellfish, including sea urchins. It gives birth to a single precocious pup in any month of the year, either on floating kelp or on the beach between tides.

"The fur of this animal is extremely valuable," wrote William T. Hornaday in 1910 when he was director of the New York Zoological Society. In March 1900 the finest skin in the London market sold for $1,344.

In 1910, when Almon Church was digging clams in Willapa Bay, Washington, near the mouth of the Naselle River, he shot what he thought was a harbor seal. It proved to be a sea otter, and for its pelt he later received $600—a year's wages for a laboring man. He told me that Charlie Wade had killed several other sea otters in the bay the same year. To the sound of gunfire the curtain was falling on the last of Washington's native sea otters.

And eventually the last of the otter hunters died, although not before I had interviewed seven of them. In 1938 and 1939, when I was a junior biologist in the United States Bureau of Biological Survey, I talked with five elderly Indians living along the ocean between Neah Bay and Taholah. One was Lans Kalappa, who used the Makah dialect and spoke to me through an interpreter. (I did understand the term 'government man' when he pointed to me.) I was told by Lans and other informants that the Indians hunted from cedar

LEFT: Billy Garfield, Native American, holds the Sharps rifle he formerly used to hunt sea otters along the Olympic Peninsula. Taholah Reservation, December 17, 1938.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Sea-going dugout canoe used by Indians at La Push for hunting fur seals, March 26, 1930. A smaller model was used for hunting sea otters.
dugout canoes, two men in each craft, in a flotilla of three to five or more canoes. At times they may have ventured far from land, for an otter skull in the National Museum, collected in 1898, carries the label “Pt. Granville [sic] 6 m. S and 4 m. to sea.” Moving quietly upwind toward a sleeping otter, the hunters would strike it by arrow or spear. I saw their traditional 10-foot spears at LaPush, where the men were still using them to take Alaskan fur seals. The spearhead was about six inches long, crafted from the steel of an old file, and bound to the shaft by elk antler strips and dried elk sinew.

However, Johnny Shale, at Queets, said that rifles were already replacing primitive weapons when he began to hunt otters in 1892. He also told me that in 1909, as he was traveling by horse and wagon on the sands of Copalis Beach—heading for Seattle’s-Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition—he spied two otters diving and rising in the surf; he ran to the water’s edge and shot them both. Clearly, then, otters still resided near the place now known as Ocean Shores as recently as 1909.

I learned from one Indian hunter that “the mother otter loves her baby and will hold even a dead one on her chest.” This endearing habit could prove fatal when a hunted mother dived deeply with her pup and resurfaced, for the little one might scream in distress and betray the location of the pair.

The last Euro-American to hunt otters may have been Charlie McIntyre, who died in 1933 before I began to record the history of otter hunting. I did, however, talk with a half-dozen coastal residents—men and women—who remembered the hunting days. Clara L. Minard (1870-1957) told me that her father, A. O. Damon, established a trading post at Oyhut. He bought sea otter pelts from the natives and sold them to fur dealers, receiving at first $50 to $100 apiece, and later up to $700. To my surprise and delight, Clara had been an amateur photographer in the 1890s and had kept a box of photoprints. She let me copy a print showing otter pelts hanging on a wall.

Her son, Ralph, recalled having seen as many as ten derricks (shooting stands) along the beach between Copalis and Browns Point. C. B. Horn, who settled in Copalis in 1888, told me that he used to haul logs to build them. “The largest,” he said, “were made of four poles a foot thick and sixty feet long, bolted together with a platform on top about six feet square. One had a roofed house and a catwalk running 300 feet to the upper beach. The stands weren’t anchored; they just stood on the sand until the first winter storm took them down.”

The hunters worked in pairs, one man on lookout and the other “running the beach” to recover dead or wounded animals. When the lookout spied an otter within range, he fired at it with a heavy Sharps rifle, model 1848, the “buffalo gun” of the plainsmen. I weighed one at 16 pounds; it hurled a .45 caliber, 500-grain bullet. To establish ownership of an otter found dead, each hunter identified his bullets with a private mark. Bitter disputes would arise between hunters over the possession of a stranded, freshly wounded animal not carrying a bullet. And the Indians who loitered around the shooting stands occasionally carried off a dead otter before the runner had found it (with justification, I suggest, for the Indians surely resented the killing of “their” otters by non-native hunters).

In the 1870s two men built a shooting stand on Copalis Rock; six years later Charlie McIntyre bolted the stand to the rock with iron bars. The remains could still be seen through binoculars in 1938. Samson John, with whom I spoke at Taholah, often took Charlie out to the rock by canoe and left him there for days at a time, where his only contact with the shore was by signal flag. Charlie later rigged a cable and pulley arrangement on which he could move a
ABOVE: A sea otter hunter perches with rifle at ready somewhere on the Washington coast in the late 19th century. His partner would have been patrolling the beach to recover shot animals. The stand is temporary, built of wooden poles dragged into place by a team of horses. Insert shows a more permanent hunting shack atop Copalis Rock, where famed hunter Charlie McIntyre stayed for days at a time.

BELOW: Seven dried and "cased" sea otter pelts displayed on a wall by trader A. O. Damon at Oyhut, Washington, in the late 1800s.

In 1964, and again in 1970, growing public interest prompted the Washington Department of Game (now the Department of Fish and Wildlife) to "re-seed" the Olympic coast with otters. Field crews released 59 individuals, flown in from Alaska, on the beach at Point Grenville and LaPush. Their population had grown by 1999 to a healthy total of 605, including 50 pups.

But the restored colony is imperiled by human activities. Will it survive the hazards of an oil spill, or entanglement in fishing gear, or target shooting? A lively market for sea urchin spawn (egg clusters) is heating up the competition between human epicures and sea otters for this rich and tasty food. The possibility can't be dismissed that unscrupulous urchin divers may take direct action against their perceived rivals. The many present threats to the Washington sea otters could in the end be as devastating as were the booming rifles of the early 1900s.

This 1899 lobby card is part of a recent donation of late 19th- and early 20th-century lobby cards and handbills promoting dramatic, comic and vaudeville performances at the Tacoma Theatre and early movies at the Searchlight Theatre. The Society has been actively collecting material documenting stage and moving picture performances throughout Washington. We are interested in posters and lobby cards advertising movies made in the state or having other Washington connections. The collections, spanning more than a century, include programs from 1880s performances to a poster for *Sleepless in Seattle.*
Ruby City was as wild and woolly a town as ever existed on the western frontier. Cheap whiskey, prostitution and frequent gun play were common elements of life. "The biggest liars and thieves I [have met elsewhere]," confirmed one bewildered traveler in 1889, "are honorable, high-minded citizens compared to the beauts who abound here."

Another visitor to Ruby City reported a typical example of lawlessness. A drunken customer had been denied entrance into the town’s chief bawdy house early one morning. The inebriated man thereupon took a swing at the outraged proprietress; she reacted by coolly producing a revolver and blowing a hole through her assailant’s chest. At this point the lady suddenly remembered some urgent business in Spokane Falls and quickly boarded the next stage out of town. The murderous madam returned in a week or two, but by then the entire incident had been forgotten, and she once again resumed her bustling trade.

This violent community flourished because of the many silver mines that pocked the hillsides surrounding the town. The Ruby Miner of June 1892 proudly crowed, “Nature has endowed Ruby with the elements of a city. Man has supplied the adjuncts to make a metropolis.” The paper likened the district to the Comstock Lode and Ruby to Virginia City. A more realistic visitor compared the town to a far more ancient city; he called it “the Babylon of the West.”

Despite being one of the roughest towns in Washington Territory, Ruby City was also the legal seat of Okanogan County. The story of how this political coup was accomplished is every bit as interesting and colorful as the inhabitants of the rough-and-ready mining town. Ironically, that story begins with a cattleman, not a miner.

Thirty-three-year-old Cullen Bryant Bash came from a politically active Indiana family, and he was used to dealing with elected officials. As a rancher and customs agent, Bash was tired of having to make the 200-mile trek to Colville every time he had business to transact. He was not the only one who felt this way—the miners, merchants, and farmers who were moving into the region also wanted a closer source of governance.

Bash and a partner devised a bill that would separate a huge tract of land comprising all of present Okanogan and Chelan Counties from Stevens. Since Bash was one of the few men in the area who could afford to pay an overseer to look after his cattle, he volunteered to push the bill through the territorial legislature. The rancher accordingly left for Olympia in December 1887, determined to have his way.

Unfortunately, there were several bills that year designed to move county borders. This was making legislators very nervous, and there was a coalition of county representatives who were deter-
mined to beat back any measures of the sort that might come up. The lawmakers from Colville were naturally the most reluctant to see a division since they stood to lose a great deal of their tax base.

The new county had one indefatigable champion in Olympia, and that was Representative W. J. Thompson of Tacoma. It was rumored that the politician had invested heavily in the Ruby City mines and for that reason supported the division. Whatever his motives, Thompson rescued Bash’s bill from certain defeat and lobbied for it vigorously. Thanks to the Tacoma man’s arm-twisting, the bill was eventually passed by a paper-thin majority. On February 2, 1888, the governor signed the highly contested act that created Okanogan County.

The first order of business for the infant county was to determine a county seat and appoint temporary county officials. A trio of new commissioners had been named in the division bill, and they represented a good cross section of Okanogan’s elite. William Granger was one of the new county’s chief cattlemen and George Hurley was proprietor of Ruby City’s biggest emporium, but by far the most remarkable commissioner was Guy Waring.

Waring was easily the best educated and most sophisticated resident of north central Washington in the late 1880s. He came from a prosperous New York family, had been educated at Harvard, and counted Theodore Roosevelt and novelist Owen Wister as personal friends. Having come west seeking wealth and adventure, Waring bought a cattle ranch near Oroville. From there he was able to observe and later record the actions of his neighbors in a wry and amusing work called My Pioneer Past, published in 1936.

Soon after arriving in the area, the Ivy League rancher was appointed justice of the peace and soon began moving in the most exalted circles of Okanogan society. It was probably inevitable that Waring would be one of the new county’s first commissioners, although according to his humorous ac-

The only two towns of any importance in the region were Ruby City and Salmon City, and when it came to deciding on the seat of the new county, partisans from both communities were very vocal in their support. Before the commissioners were to meet, the maneuvering and politicking had been intense. Both of the contending towns had produced “liberally signed petitions” listing backers from each district, but there were other inducements, too. The citizens of Ruby offered to provide offices for the county officials at no cost to the taxpayers, while Salmon City offered five acres of land. On March 6, 1888, the commissioners met to decide this issue in an extremely rustic log cabin on the John Perkins ranch at the head of Johnson Creek.

There was never any doubt about how Guy Waring would vote. He despised Ruby City, with its gin mills, fleabag hotels and dens of iniquity. So when the first meeting of the Okanogan County Commissioners took place in the little cabin, he was ready to plead his case. Unfortunately, Waring had not anticipated the raucous crowd that assembled outside.
The rustic courthouse that sat on a hillside above Conconully could boast of few comforts. The floor of the courtroom was strewn with sawdust to absorb the tobacco juice spat liberally by spectators. This drawing shows the building as it appeared around 1905.

Late 19th-century view of Conconully. The community, nestled in a remote mountain valley, served the miners in the nearby hills. Never an elegant town, Conconully was nonetheless more respectable than its soiled sister, Ruby City.

Somehow, news of the meeting had circulated through the streets of Ruby City, and a motley group of citizens had come out to the Perkins Ranch in order to hold a celebration in honor of the new commissioners. "Whores, thieves, and drunkards, and other notorious citizens of the mining town were on hand," recalled the Harvard man. "They were of course agreeably drunk, and serenaded us so loudly that it was difficult for anybody inside the ranch house to hear himself speak."

The three men did their best to discuss the relative merits of Ruby and Salmon City, but when they had failed to make a decision by late afternoon, the crowd began to grow restive. Loud cries of "Good old Ruby" and "Ruby for county seat" made concentration difficult for the men inside. Then the people outside formed a large circle, and the drunken harlots and their putative customers danced around the house in a bacchanalia fueled by excitement and bootleg whiskey.

Hanging failed to reach a decision, the exhausted commissioners were forced to adjourn until the next day. Waring was in for an unpleasant surprise the next morning. One of his colleagues had experienced a mysterious change of heart overnight. Hurley, the mining town merchant, had always been in favor of Ruby, but Waring strongly suspected Granger of having been bribed. Despite Waring's best efforts, Ruby City—this suburb of Hell—was to be the new county seat.

After the townspeople had participated in a drunken spree of rejoicing, the commissioners could settle down to running the county. The men decided that they needed a few offices. Accordingly, they found a rickety structure measuring 20 feet square for the auditor and another smaller one for the sheriff. They next decided to erect a rather flimsy jail made of spiked wooden scantlings for the county's many rambunctious inhabitants. The officials then leased a building on Ruby's dusty main street to house the various other county offices. The treasurer obviously knew the reputation of Ruby City only too well, for rather than leaving the money in town, he put the county funds in a baking powder can and buried it on his farm.

By the time the next election came around in November 1888, the rest of the county had become fed up with the shenanigans in Ruby City. While the mining town reeled on in its usual tipsy way, Salmon City made its move. Townspeople quietly began lining up support for a county seat coup in the outlying areas, and by November they were ready. The town decided about this time to change its name as well as its losing image. Henceforth it would be known as Conconully [Konk-a-nelly].

Though residents of Ruby voted for their hometown 92 to 5 in the countywide election, Conconully won overwhelmingly, 357 to 157. A few months after the citizens of Okanogan had voiced their decision, wagons pulled up to the rough-hewn county buildings to haul furniture, law books and a large safe to the new county seat. Ruby City's brief fling with respectability was over.

When the Panic of 1893 struck Ruby, it finished off many businesses, and when the price of silver fell in 1899 it spelled the end for the wild boom town. Eventually people moved away and the town became deserted. Vandals stripped the houses of anything they could steal, and the ramshackle buildings fell into decay. Finally a fire roared through the gulch and destroyed the remains. Today there is nothing but a plaque and a wooded valley to mark what was once the state's wildest town.

While Ruby City went into decline, Conconully shot to prominence. Having nabbed the county's seat of government, citizens of the town were determined to give it a good home. The first courthouse was a wood frame building that the county rented for $25 a month, and during the winter of 1889-90 the commissioners authorized construction of a new, sturdier wooden jail. After the lease on the first courthouse expired in 1890 there was considerable controversy over where the court would move next, so Okanogan's government moved from one temporary location to another. Finally, in 1892, the county built a new, permanent courthouse.

Local builder Steve Herrick was paid
$2,495 to construct a simple, two-story wooden building on a hillside overlooking Conconully. Rectangular in shape, measuring 30 by 60 feet, it featured a false front and wide steps leading up to a generous porch covered by a balcony that opened from the second floor. The lumber for the new courthouse had been supplied by a water-powered mill on the south fork of nearby Salmon Creek.

Although the county now had a courthouse better than anything they had possessed before, it was still not exactly a gilded palace. O. H. Woody described the structure in an article he published in the Okanogan Independent in 1943. He recalled that spectators had to sit on uncomfortable backless benches if they wanted to witness the court’s proceedings. The floor of the rustic building was strewn with sawdust in order to absorb the tobacco juice that was spat liberally by visiting citizens. “No need for cuspidors in that court room,” he remarked truthfully. In order to expand with new growth, the county kept adding inelegant side rooms to the original structure until at last the building was a hodgepodge of additions and auxiliary sheds. Still, it served the county well for many years.

Conconully had the courthouse, but that crown did not rest easily or securely on her head. The town’s location deep within a remote mountain valley was fine while the mining boom was in full swing, but when the metals played out Conconully suddenly seemed remote and inconvenient. In addition, farmers and orchardists were coming into the county and settling along the river valleys where the land was more fertile. When depression hit the mining camps in 1893 and the resultant depopulation had taken its toll, there could be little doubt that Conconully’s days as county seat were numbered. This unsettled period caused one historian to remark, “Had the Okanogan County courthouse been built on wheels, there could not have been more repeated and inflamed efforts to drag it from one community to another.”

The first challenge to Conconully’s primacy occurred in 1892 when Chelan circulated a petition asking to be considered for the county seat. This was thrown out on a very questionable technicality, but the first shot had been fired in a war that would last for another two decades. When Chelan’s aspirations were denied a second time, in 1898, the lakeside town chafed under Okanogan’s sway, and in the early years of the 20th century the entire region broke away to form Chelan County.

No sooner had Chelan been disposed of than another claimant arose. This time it was the freight and distribution center of Riverside, situated on the banks of the Okanogan River. The town argued that it was ridiculous for the seat of government to be housed in such a backwater as Conconully. By 1908 Riverside was ready to mount a full-fledged campaign, complete with petition, $10,000 in assurances, and plans for a new courthouse.

The Okanogan Record of Conconully made a vehement and predictable attack on Riverside. They lambasted the financial arrangements, the motives, and even the proposed courthouse building, claiming “Specifications a Botch” in large headlines. The campaigning and the name-calling became increasingly shrill as the two towns battered each other in the press.
Okanogan County's courthouse basks in the sunlight shortly after its completion in 1916. The architect designed a stucco edifice in the somewhat incongruous Southwest style. Along with a few additions and annexes, the structure still serves the county today.

During the campaign, Riverside had so much confidence in its victory that the town fathers actually built the proposed three-story courthouse. Unfortunately, when the votes had all been tallied, Riverside failed to rack up the 60 percent necessary to move the seat. The vacant courthouse building continued to stand in Riverside as a tangible mockery of its aspirations until it eventually burned down in the 1920s.

Another near miss came in 1911 when the areas around Twisp and Oroville both petitioned the legislature to become separate counties. Nothing much came of these proposals, but they indicated the level of dissatisfaction with Conconully's hold on the seat of power in Okanogan County. The only thing keeping the court in the remote mountain town was the jealous rivalry of other communities in the region, and of all the towns in the county, none could compare in enmity with Omak versus Okanogan.

The town of Okanogan was actually an amalgam of two earlier villages, Alma and its younger sister, Pogue. These communities had been built in the fertile agricultural land along the Okanogan River, and although both towns were rich in potential, there was no pretense of elegance in their appearance. When future politician and banker Harry Kerr first saw Alma in May 1906, he was clearly not impressed. "I was disappointed in the looks of the town and the surrounding country," he wrote in 1931. "The thing I noticed first was the entire absence of paint or finished lumber. Most of the buildings I could see were of the box type and made of rough lumber. The streets were but trails in the sagebrush and rocks."

When the towns decided to join together and rename themselves, Dr. J. I. Pogue, the eponymous founder, became so disgusted that in 1907 he went a few miles up the valley and started another town that he hoped would rival ungrateful Okanogan. He named the new community Omak. By 1913 Pogue's new town was ready to take on any comers in a fight for the county seat. Not surprisingly, Omak's chief adversary turned out to be Okanogan.

It did not take long for the savvy citizens of Okanogan to enter the county seat fray. This came in the form of a heavily-armed convoy of automobiles that noisily escorted $12,000 in gold to the county treasurer in Conconully. These were the funds with which the townspeople promised to build a modern courthouse should they get the nod from the voters. A check would have been just as good, but the publicity Okanogan received was worth more than the shining specie.

After this opening salvo, the powers in Omak suggested that rather than slitting each other's throats and emptying both their purses, it would be better to hold an unofficial by-election to determine who had greater support. The loser would then withdraw all offers and support the winner in the campaign against Conconully.

With this uneasy arrangement, the two towns tore into one another with unrestrained gusto. Omak organized a
team of two automobiles that would go around the county drumming up support for their cause. Okanogan countered with a 16-car armada that covered the same ground as the Omak cars. Okanogan even had a campaign song that was sung to a jaunty ragtime melody. It was titled, "Everything Rolls Down Hill to Okanogan," and it promised grandly:

We give pure cash and Court House lands.
We'll reduce the county taxes, and increase peoples' values,
And fill the boxes plenty with Okanogan fruit.
We'll buy the hogs and cattle and ship them to Seattle
With train loads of ore the miners we will suit.

The results of the song are difficult to gauge, but the town's rivals came up with nothing better. In fact, no matter what Omak attempted, it seemed that Okanogan responded with something bigger and grander. It soon became apparent that Okanogan would win. After all, the older town was nearly twice the size of Omak: it had more money and more brain power backing it.

When the elimination election was held in September 1914, it was really no contest at all. Okanogan swept 30 of the 34 precincts, and in the official election two months later it was much the same. The county would finally move its capital. Even so, there were plenty of hard feelings around the county. Omak people harbored a great deal of resentment for many years to come, and when the results were conveyed to the Conconully people, officials there sent this terse message to the victors: "Come and get your damned county seat!"

And get it they did. By Christmas Day 1914 all the records and furniture had been moved to a temporary courthouse in a storefront office on Okanogan's main street, and regular county government began functioning a few days later. The county seat would remain in the commercial building for another ten months while a grander, permanent structure was being prepared. With this action, the venerable courthouse in Conconully had at last become redundant. It was finally torn down in May 1937, and the thrifty citizens used the lumber to construct a new town hall.

Working with great speed, the new county seat moved to consolidate its victory by having a beautiful courthouse structure built on one of the choicest lots in town. They chose as architect George H. Keith, a man who had recently come to town from Spokane, perhaps lured by the prospect of new county building projects. He began work almost at once, and by April 1915 the cornerstone could be laid amid much celebration and Masonic pomp. The speaker, J. W. Faulkner, spoke about the swiftness of progress in the county and the advances in technology that bind a region together. "All of us who have struggled, toiled, and waited for the development of the country now feel that the coming of transportation and the establishment of our courthouse at a permanent location mark the beginning of a brighter era for Okanogan County."

It took the rest of 1915 for the massive building to be completed. The three-story courthouse was built in the California Mission Revival style that had been so popular in the first two decades of the 20th century. The entire structure is of gray, unpainted stucco; highlights are colored vibrant red. A tall central tower rises up five stories and is crowned with a Spanish-style belfry. Two prominent gables echo the flowing lines of the tower, as do the ornamental ends on the structure that stick up over the roofline. A row of large, arched windows runs around the top floor, and an ornamental entryway leads into the gracious edifice.

As lovely as it all is, the Spanish structure is still somewhat unexpected in Washington's Okanogan River valley. It was said that the architect had designed the edifice in close consultation with the eminent local judge, William C. Brown. Since the judge was fascinated with Mexico and the Southwest, he requested that the courthouse reflect the flowing style and warm feelings of that sunny quarter.

Warmth and Latin American architecture were most definitely out of place at the building's dedication. This was set for January 11, 1916, but because of sub-zero temperatures and blowing snow, very few participants were able to attend. Not even the Great Northern trains could get through. But the people of Okanogan had been looking forward to the celebration, so they decided, as the Independent later reported, "to drown their disappointment with the banquet that had been prepared for the visitors." They must have had an exceedingly jolly time since they also consumed the last of the town's wine supply. (The county voted to go dry in the coming year.)

Somehow Charles Lovejoy, the mayor of Conconully, had managed to attend the festivities. He made a mock-heroic oration on the topic, "Grape Juice is a 1916 Beverage," and observed, "If grape juice had been used exclusively as a beverage in the recent county seat campaign, Conconully would still be the county capital." Perhaps he realized that prosperity and good feelings had indeed rolled downhill to Okanogan after all.

So while the winter storm raged outside, the hearty conclave celebrated the construction of an incongruous courthouse built for a Mediterranean climate. At least the county had a beautiful structure and a permanent home, and everyone was intent on toasting its completion that snowy evening. The ghosts at Ruby City would probably have approved of the hijinks.

David Chapman became fascinated with Washington's county courthouses about a decade ago. He has written histories of each of the towns and the structures which crown them. In addition to Washington's past, he has written several books and a great many articles on the history of bodybuilding and weight training. Chapman teaches in the Kent School District in suburban Seattle.
Coming FULL CIRCLE

The Development of Mount Rainier's Wonderland Trail, 1907-1939

There is a trail that encircles the mountain. It is a trail that leads through primeval forests, close to the mighty glaciers, past waterfalls and dashing torrents, up over ridges, and down into canyons; it leads through a veritable wonderland of beauty and grandeur.

—Roger Toll, 1920
Every summer backpackers from around the country, including thousands of Washington hikers, travel along Mount Rainier’s Wonderland Trail, seeking the same scenic splendors and thrilling adventures that Superintendent Roger Toll described 80 years ago. The 93-mile footpath encircling the mountain is one of the principal recreational attractions inside Mount Rainier National Park. Yet the trail was not initially intended to be a magnet for outdoor enthusiasts. When work crews completed the original around-the-mountain circuit in 1915, its primary purpose was to provide protection, rather than recreation. The new trail gave patrol rangers a way to cover more terrain as they searched for fires, tracked down poachers, and kept watch for vandals.

Not until the 1920s, when the park’s visitation rate skyrocketed, did the trail become a popular destination and gain its Wonderland moniker. During the 20 years that followed, the park significantly altered the route and the length of the Wonderland Trail, making it more accessible to the general public. During that time the function of the trail changed as well—the rugged path that began as a park management tool and resource protection device was transformed into the prized recreational resource and cultural landmark that it remains today.

A variety of trails wound along the slopes of the mountain well before Congress established Mount Rainier National Park in 1899. Indian trails of local tribes once led from Puget Sound up and around the lower slopes of Mount Rainier and over the Cascade Mountains to the east. Faint game traces, rough mining tracks, and, beginning in the 1880s, crude wagon roads and tourist trails also snaked across the mountain’s flanks. Among the latter were the trails that Bailey Willis and George Driver blazed in the Carbon River/Spray Park region, and the paths and wagon road James Longmire built along the banks of the Nisqually River. But when Grenville F. Allen took charge of the new park as acting superintendent in 1903, he found the existing trails inadequate for his purposes. Allen’s chief duties involved protecting the park’s rich natural resources and unparalleled scenic beauty from “injury or spoliation,” as Congress had mandated in Mount Rainier’s founding legislation. Accordingly, he assigned rangers to begin patrolling the park and, in 1906, initiated the construction of new trails to make those patrols more effective.

Allen wanted to establish a trail system that would reach around the mountain and make “a complete patrol of the park practicable.” Since the “first object should be to facilitate patrol,” he ordered the paths laid out at the lowest possible elevation. The routes would be less scenic than would a traverse of the subalpine zone but would be free of mud and snow for much longer each year. Rangers began the task of constructing a trail system by relocating and improving a four-mile section of the old Carbon River Trail in 1907. They subsequently extended that trail across the northern reaches of the park to the White River drainage. The ten-mile-long addition was finished in 1910, giving patrols access to the remote White River district.

The following year Ranger O’Farrell rebuilt the old passage from the Carbon River to Spray Park, making it “safe to horse travel throughout. . . . rather than dreaded as was the case formerly.” The new trails were essential to the work of Rainier’s patrol rangers, who covered miles of the park on foot or horseback to search for fires and prevent poaching, trespassing and acts of vandalism such as tree-felling. The latter violations were an ongoing problem because of the number of prospectors and miners who still held claims in the park.

Other new trails built prior to 1920 were likewise meant for fire and game protection. In his 1911 annual report, Superintendent Edward Hall expressed his concern that if a fire broke out in the remote forested sections of the park, it would be extremely difficult to get a fire-fighting crew into those areas. The solution to this problem, he said, was a trail constructed “around the mountain at the lowest practicable elevation,” from which spur trails could be built to reach all parts of the park. Hall made trail construction his highest priority among the many improvement projects needed in the park.

Between 1913 and 1915 Congress approved several new trail projects that brought Hall’s objective closer to becoming a reality. The first of these appropriations went toward building a 16-mile section of trail along the southeast side of Mount Rainier, between Reflection Lakes and the Ohanapecosh patrol cabin. Congress allotted an additional $2,770 to further extend the trail across the north side of the park. The Sundry Civil Act of August 1, 1914, gave the final funding boost needed to connect...
the existing routes and complete the mountain circuit. Late that summer Superintendent Ethan Allen put several large crews to work on what he called a "trunk line of trail...around the park territory." Fall snows soon halted the task, but the trail crews resumed work in May 1915.

Stephen Mather, then assistant to the secretary of the interior, and Mark Daniels, general superintendent of the national parks, both pushed to get the new trail finished by August so that members of The Mountaineers Club of Seattle could make their planned trip around the mountain for the club's 1915 annual outing. Three work teams of 15 men each toiled for three months—at an average cost of $300 per mile—to complete the encircling trail by August 1, 1915. The Forest Service also contributed to the effort in those places where steep terrain pushed the route beyond the national park boundary.

The nascent version of the Wonderland Trail was finished, but the route was quite different from the one hikers travel today. Across the northern portion of the park the trail went from the Carbon River Valley up Chenuis Mountain, through Grand Park and Huckleberry Basin, then over Burroughs Mountain and St. Elmo's Pass to Glacier Basin. On the west side of the mountain the new trail ran close to the park boundary, far lower than the current route through St. Andrews and Klapatche Parks. Mount Rainier Supervisor DeWitt Reaburn reported that the trip around the mountain could be made in about seven days at an average "march" of 20 miles per day. His estimate suggests that the original route was somewhere between 130 and 140 miles long. Reaburn believed that the trail, with proper advertising, would become a "very popular feature of the park."

The Mountaineers Club of Seattle became the first group to travel the length of the newly completed trail, making the circuit in August 1915. During the preceding years The Mountaineers, an organization of Seattle and Tacoma outdoor enthusiasts established in 1906, also had a hand in scouting and building some sections of the round-the-mountain route. Following their 1915 trek around Mount Rainier, the club repeated the trip for their 1919, 1924, 1930, and 1936 summer outings. The news and publicity generated by those excursions, and the lobbying by club members to make the route a more scenic one, helped establish the recreational potential of the new trail.

The club had begun planning a trip around Mount Rainier as early as 1908 but postponed any such outing when G. F. Allen told them it was not possible to make their way around the mountain via the route they had indicated to him. Since the park did not yet have the trail for a circle trip, The Mountaineers pitched in to build one. In 1910 the club spent $67.50—and their labor—to build a temporary trail across the moraine of the Carbon Glacier. Two members of The Mountaineers, C. A. Barns and J. B. Flett, made a 1911 "knapsack trip" around Mount Rainier as a scouting mission for the coming club outing. Barns and Flett (who later became the park's first "information officer") followed their own bearings around the peak, having found the established trails to be "worse than no trails at all." They repeated the trip with two other club members in 1912.

That summer another, much larger, contingent of The Mountaineers made a group outing across the northern tier of the park. During that trip the members built a trail from Fryingpan Creek to the subalpine meadow called Summer Land, laying the groundwork for a later Wonderland route that would run from there to Stevens Canyon. A year later Calvin Phillips, Jr., and J. H. Weer made an extensive scouting trip around the mountain, exploring a high-elevation route and investigating future campsites in the "timber line parks." Whether the encircling trail was ready or not, club members were prepared to make a circuit of Rainier.

When The Mountaineers finally
accomplished their inaugural trip around the mountain (from July 31 to August 21, 1915), they actually followed two routes. Each day one portion of their 90-plus member troupe followed a "sky-line" (or "high-line") route that crossed many of Rainier's glaciers, while a second group took the low-line route of the just-completed trail, descending below the snouts of the larger glaciers and then climbing back to their nightly camps in the subalpine meadows. Those in the high-line party were required to hike with military precision and discipline, keeping specifically-assigned places in the line behind their leader and responding to blasts from the signal whistle. The members of the low-line group traveled at their own pace, pausing at times to take photographs, botanize, or enjoy a tranquil resting place. On the occasion when dense fog obscured the high-line passage over the ice fields, the entire party tramped along the forest trail. By contrast, all members of the party crossed the party when they came to the long expanse of the Carbon Glacier, while the packers took the horses along the lower-lying trail. The rubble-covered ice made for a hazardous crossing, as did the descent from the rock cliffs onto the glacier.

Designated scouts went ahead of the main party and marked each campsite by nailing a triangular aluminum plate (inscribed with the club name and the camp number) to a conspicuous-looking tree. They chose sites in the wildflower-strewn subalpine parks that ring the mountain near the 5,000-foot level and offer superb views of the summit. When the hikers reached camp at the end of their day, separate quarters were set up for men and women, often on either side of an intervening ridge. Members made "individual reservations" by jabbing their alpenstocks into the ground when they located an appealing spot. The kitchen detail built a large bonfire and set up the commissary for serving meals. When "the shrill whistle" announced that dinner was ready, there followed a "grand rush of the hungry hordes to get into line."

The trip afforded the participants three weeks of adventure, physical fitness, and the chance to revel in the mountain scenery. They witnessed the changing face of Mount Rainier, which presented dramatically different profiles to the company as they circled the peak. Sometimes the mountain looked "so near and looked so inviting in its beautiful white mantle, one felt tempted to run up to the summit before breakfast just to work up an appetite." Outing chronicler Philip Rogers noted that the changing visages and the "titanic proportions" of the summit dome made one "gasp and gaze in silent awe and wonder." Fine weather enhanced their experience; clouds obscured the spectacle of Rainier for but a few of their days on the trail.

The club completed its inaugural round-the-mountain trip on schedule, without accidents or mishaps, and with "everybody in better condition at the end of the journey than at its beginning." Although the trail was "but faintly marked" in some places, the new encircling path had served them well. They estimated the distance of the journey, not including side trips, to be 120 miles. Fifty-seven members, both men and women, also climbed to the summit for the first time by any considerable party,... and a trail has been opened up—partly by the work of The Mountaineers themselves—which, it is to be hoped, many similar parties will follow in the future." That wish would be realized a decade later, but in the years immediately following their 1915 trip, The Mountaineers themselves were among the very few park visitors to tackle the full length of the new trail.

With the round-the-mountain circuit completed, park officials sought a way to make ranger patrols along it more effective. Several years earlier the park had constructed its first three ranger patrol cabins, simple log structures where staff could "spend a night or a season without the usual annoyances...""

OPPOSITE PAGE: Members of The Mountaineers Club crossing Fryingpan Creek, August 1915. Although trail crews rushed to complete Mount Rainier's encircling trail by August 1, crossing the many unbridged streams and rivers remained a challenge.

BELOW: Loading packhorses for The Mountaineers Club's inaugural circumnavigation of the mountain. The designated packers led supply horses along the lower-elevation trail to preselected campsites, while other club members took the "high-line" route across Mount Rainier's glaciers.
THE WONDERLAND TRAIL WAS AN ESSENTIAL PIECE OF THE PARK'S FIRE PATROL SYSTEM, REACHING INTO THE MOST REMOTE AND HEAVILY-FORESTED AREAS OF THE PARK.

When Roger Toll took over as park superintendent in 1919, he developed a plan to build a network of cabins along the encircling trail that could provide overnight shelter to rangers and visitors alike. He wanted the cabins located 10 to 15 miles apart and supplied with the necessary fire tools and equipment. Toll was superintendent for only two years, but his successors carried out his patrol cabin proposal in the decade that followed. Park staff built four new cabins along the western leg of the trail in 1921-22. Constructed with native logs and cedar shake roofs, they were supplied with small cook stoves, dining tables, and sleeping accommodations for two rangers. These remote ranger cabins served as summer residences and work stations for staff in isolated areas, emergency overnight shelters for rangers on winter patrol, storehouses for firefighting and trail maintenance equipment, and as temporary shelters for hikers. When completed, there totaled a string of eight patrol cabins on or near the trail, linked by telephone lines that ran adjacent to the trail corridor.

The Wonderland Trail, as it came to be called, was an essential piece of the park's fire patrol system, reaching as it did into the most remote and heavily-forested areas of the park. Prior to the construction of Mount Rainier's fire lookouts in 1932-34, patrol staff would head out onto the trail after thunderstorms or in periods of dry weather, climbing to the top of the nearest ridge or peak and spotting for smoke. If a ranger saw fire, he returned to a patrol cabin, telephoned his report to headquarters, and then returned to fight the fire—by himself or with a detail drawn from nearby road crews or work camps. Patrol staff stocked each cabin with enough tools, food rations, first-aid kits, and bedrolls to maintain a firefighting crew. Owen Tomlinson, Mount Rainier's superintendent from 1923 to 1941, directed construction of nine more back-country patrol cabins to enhance the system of fire spotters and "fire chasers" already in place. He observed that "the ranger who must carry bedding and shelter, as well as his food, or else sleep in the open in stormy weather, cannot cover much territory."

Mount Rainier's rangers were among the few who traveled the distant reaches of the Wonderland Trail in wintertime. They skied or snowshoed through the backcountry while on the watch for poachers or inspecting the telephone lines. The cabins were supplied with firewood and food rations, "as it might be necessary to stop for several days at one place if caught in an extremely vicious blizzard." Upon reaching one of the remote cabins, they shoveled down through deep snowdrifts to reach the doorway and cleared snow from the chimney before starting a fire in the stove. Rangers frequently found that a pine marten or pack rat had already taken up winter residence in the cabin, and they occasionally encountered the ruins left by a black bear who

LEFT: A map of the Wonderland Trail included in a 1921 Rainier National Park Company publicity brochure. The map shows the location of campsites for the company's saddle and pack horse outings around the mountain. Note that the indicated route crosses directly over the Winthrop Glacier.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Cover of a 1929 Rainier National Park Company brochure, "Wonderland Camp for boys." The concessionaire-operated camp included a two-week trip along the full length of the Wonderland Trail.
had raided their winter larder.

To a lesser extent than their function for winter patrols and firefighting, the cabins were also a place of rest and emergency shelter for visitors, particularly during inclement weather. Tomlinson recommended the cabins as shelter for visitors "when caught in stormy weather," and also as "a means for encouraging trail travel." Rangers posted the following notice on the door of the Alta Vista cabin during the 1929-30 winter season:

>This cabin and the equipment and supplies are furnished for the comfort and convenience of ALL hikers to and from Paradise Valley. Leave the cabin and everything in it cleaner than you found them—like a true outdoor man. Don't forget some dry wood and kindling for the next tired hiker.

As the snow melted in late spring and early summer, patrol rangers used the Wonderland Trail for a multitude of other tasks. They rode or hiked the muddy track in order to restring telephone lines, clear downed trees and debris from the path, repair footbridges and stone cairns, and post trail signs. They led pack trains loaded with barrels of fingerling trout to stock the park's lakes and streams along the Wonderland route. As more and more people traveled to the park, rangers spent proportionately more of their time dispensing visitor assistance and information. By the mid 1920s a small but gradually increasing number of park visitors made their way into the backcountry for short hikes—or for the long trek around the Wonderland Trail.

In 1907 army engineers Hiram Chittenden and Eugene Ricksecker recommended the construction of a bridle trail suitable for tourist travel around the slopes of Mount Rainier. Ricksecker described his idea in a letter to the secretary of the interior in October of that year:

>A trip around the mountain in the vicinity of the snow line, traveling thru gorgeous hued flowery parks, and touching each of the mighty glaciers, would be fraught with exhilarating pleasure absolutely unique in its entirety, and it is suggested that a bridle trail with easy grades be built along the West side first in order to join the two routes, Nisqually and Carbon.

Chittenden believed such a trail was "absolutely essential to the proper policing of the park and very necessary for the convenience of tourists if they are really to have access to the attractions of the park." Both engineers agreed that the trail should be built with "a view to widening it into a wagon road at some future time."

Despite these early designs for tourist use of the trail, mountaineering groups and patrol rangers were virtually the only travelers on the as-yet-unnamed encircling path prior to 1920. The national park did not promote the trail as a recreation resource, and the route was not in sufficient condition to serve as one. Some portions of the passage were merely remnants of old mining tracks. One section of trail running between the Carbon Glacier and Moraine Park was so steep and rough that it was dubbed the "devil's ladder." A park official noted that the encircling trail was "not suitable for tourist travel" and suggested that the administration spend
more money on trail improvements in order to establish a "tourist pony service" around the mountain.

Over the next several decades the park initiated various structural and administrative changes to make the trail more attractive for recreation to everyday visitors. The first steps involved shortening its overall length and repairing its roughest sections. In 1916-17 work crews constructed a cut-off trail from Mowich River to Crater Lake (now known as Mowich Lake), which reduced the length of the encircling trail by 15 miles. Because funding for the project fell short of what was needed, the district ranger in charge decided to skimp a bit on the food rations for his crew. When Superintendent Reaburn heard of this, he warned the project head that the desired quality of work could not be achieved on such "cheap grub." In 1918 Congress made $15,000 available for trail improvements throughout the park; several sections of trail were relocated and reconstructed at a maximum grade of 15 percent.

Stephen Mather, director of the newly-established National Park Service, reported that by 1918 the encircling trail was in excellent condition for travel but was rarely used because very few visitors took the sort of vacations necessary “to make this wonderful tour comfortably and satisfactorily.” “The circuit,” as park officials called it, was still too long and required too much time to complete.” Mather wanted the park to promote round-the-mountain trips so as to “stimulate a demand for this kind of travel.” Work crews accomplished additional trail repairs in 1919, and several parties, including another contingent from The Mountaineers, made the journey around the mountain that summer.

The name "Wonderland" was first attached to the trail in 1920, at a time when Superintendent Toll and the park concessionaire began a concerted effort to promote it as a tourist destination. The Rainier National Park Company issued a publicity bulletin in June 1920 that advertised the “new Wonderland Trail” as one of the highlights of any trip to Mount Rainier. The company offered a guided saddle and packhorse trip along the western and northern sections of the trail. The following year the Rainier National Park Company put out a separate brochure devoted to its Wonderland Trail outings, calling them the “most glorious trip[s] in the world.” The excursions around the mountain took 12 days and 11 nights; guides prepared the campsites ahead of time in the scenic subalpine parks. The trips catered to the inexperienced mountain traveler: the company supplied all of the necessary camping gear, food, and other equipment, and mounted their guests upon “well-fed, sure-footed” horses that "the novice may ride with comfort and security." The entire cost of the trip was $123.50 per person, with discounted rates available for larger groups.

Toll, an avid hiker and climber, endorsed and aided the concessionaire’s attempts to develop the Wonderland Trail for visitor use. He gave a romantic account of the trail in his unpublished “Wonderland Trail of Mount Rainier National Park,” and described the merits of the 93-mile-long passage in his 1920 annual report. More importantly, Toll initiated a number of concrete measures that made it easier for visitors to follow and enjoy the trail. He ordered signs placed at the beginning of each trail segment and at trail junctions to
guide hikers and riders as they traveled. The signs also gave the direction, distance and elevation of nearby peaks and other geologic features in the park. Toll directed the placement of small metal trail markers every tenth of a mile along the trail, with the exact distance from the trailhead inscribed on them. These new components made the path more accessible to the general public, not just the domain of rangers and experienced mountaineers.

The National Park Service took several other steps to accommodate Wonderland Trail travelers in the early 1920s: the park published maps showing the location of trailside shelters, obtained more accurate distance measurements, cleared downed trees and brush from the trail, erected boulder cairns on the glacier and snowfield crossings, and built footbridges over marshes, creeks and rivers. Rangers cut a “distinctive official blaze” into trees, so that visitors would not be misled by the old trail markings carved by miners, sheep herdsmen and surveyors. Fortunately, the park service decided that the latter practice disfigured the trees too much, and discontinued it after a short time.

W. H. Peters, Toll’s successor as superintendent, sought to do even more to make the trail more appealing to tourists. Peters wanted to relocate large segments of the trail so that hikers and riders could avoid traveling through the densely-forested areas of the park, as they did on the current route:

This trail, to be a scenic trail, should be relocated and reconstructed at an elevation . . . of approximately 2,000 feet higher. Such a location would take the traveler around the snouts of the various glaciers and through the wonderful subalpine flower zone, and would enable him to command wonderful views from almost every foot of the trail.

To make the trail even more accessible to those who did not wish to be bothered with the upkeep of pack animals, he suggested that the Rainier National Park Company build four or five “tent hotels” along the Wonderland corridor, which could provide foot travelers with food and lodging. The notion of building permanent camps in the backcountry, complete with wood-frame tent structures and dining halls, might strike today’s hikers as a tremendous intrusion. But then, carrying all of one’s gear in a 1920s backpack was, at best, a spine- and shoulder-wrenching endeavor. Peters viewed all of these changes as logical ways to make the Wonderland circuit a popular hiking trip.

The backcountry tent hotels never did materialize, but the popularity of the Wonderland Trail continued to increase during the 1920s. The Department of the Interior published annual information circulars about Mount Rainier that included a map and several pages of detailed trail descriptions. Hikers and riders could use the circulars to determine the exact distance between campsites, the elevation of passes and ridge tops, the location of streams and other water sources, and the best spots to obtain views of glaciers, waterfalls and flower meadows. Visitors could learn more about the Wonderland Trail in Floyd Schmoe’s Our Greatest Mountain: A Handbook for Mount Rainier National Park. Schmoe, the park’s naturalist, presented a straightforward route narrative as well as his own grand depiction of the trail experience:

Every hour it opens to the fortunate visitor vistas and distant views, intimate glimpses of growing things, and sketches of wild animal life that to anyone mean hours in Wonderland—a natural God-made Wonderland of forest and snow, wildflower, field, and mighty cascade.

When Tomlinson made many more changes and improvements to the trail during his tenure as superintendent (1923-1941), though at times a lack of funding made it impossible to keep the trail in first-class condition. After a detailed inspection of the trail in 1924 he reported that many sections of the circuit had become badly eroded and that many of the bridges and puncheon crossings (log slats laid down over muddy ground) required repair or replacement. Tomlinson emphasized both the recreational and the administrative functions of the trail, and believed that the Wonderland’s “great scenic value” would lead to its development as a popular hiking and saddle trip.

Tomlinson gave increased attention to proper engineering of the trail. Because a good deal of the earlier trail maintenance had been conducted in “an amateur sort of way,” he ordered the district rangers to closely supervise all future trail work. He also established specific trail standards: widths of three to four feet, grades not to exceed 15 percent, trails canted to the inside edge (to channel water into drainage diversions), etc. This emphasis on standardization eventually drew criticism from some observers who suggested that hikers found the variations in the width and grade of the path more interesting. After seeing the Wonderland Trail in the 1930s, a former park superintendent remarked: “There is nothing more monotonous to man and beast than a long constant grade.”

The park’s maintenance department followed these standards as they built new sections or realigned the old ones. Major construction work in 1930, including expensive blasting through solid rock cliffs, rerouted the Wonderland around the snouts of the Carbon and Winthrop Glaciers. Travelers would no longer have to cross the unstable and difficult-to-maintain trails over glacial ice and moraines. During the 1930s the Wonderland route was relocated away from the new auto corridors of the Westside road and the Stevens Canyon road. On the west side of the mountain engineers placed the new trail segment at a higher elevation than the original path, closer to its current location and more to the liking of The Mountaineers Club and other hiking groups.
CCC camps built bridges and hiker shelters, constructed new sections of trail, graded and resurfaced damaged sections, performed erosion and drainage control, and “oiled” portions of the path to reduce dust. With the help of the CCC, the park expanded the system of trail shelters along the Wonderland route. The three-sided log structures, situated at numerous sites around the mountain, gave hikers a place to sleep out of the weather. They were usually furnished with bunks, tables and, in some cases, a wood stove. The CCC also erected stone shelters at Summer Land and Indian Bar, both of which still exist today. The construction of these shelters demonstrated the park’s intent to make the trail more accessible and enjoyable to the American public.

In the long run, nothing did more to enhance the trail’s status as a recreational destination than did Tomlinson’s 1928 decision to designate large portions of the park as permanent “roadless areas.” Both The Mountaineers Club and park service director Mather had recommended taking this step, which banned roads, hotels, pay camps and other commercial developments from nearly three-quarters of the park’s total area. The decision kept virtually the entire length of the trail corridor free from future road building, thereby open only to hikers or horse travel. The park had created a de facto wilderness area some 35 years prior to the passage of the 1964 Wilderness Act. The decision ensured that the experience of traveling the Wonderland Trail would remain—and eventually gain renown as—a wild-land adventure.

The trail improvements, hiker shelters, guidebooks and promotional materials attracted a growing number of people to undertake the rigors of a round-the-mountain journey. During the 1920s and 1930s individual hikers and private parties began to tramp the full length of the Wonderland. Some supplied themselves with store-bought Trapper Nelson packs and hiking boots while others tied makeshift bundles to ancient packboards and donned surplus army shoes. By utilizing the trailside shelters and arranging for food caches at the Carbon River, Sunrise, or White River ranger stations, travelers could lighten their packs and increase their pace as they circled the mountain. Hikers still had to carry their own sleeping gear, food, and cooksets, and they endured rain, aching muscles and sore feet in order to reap the bounties of a back-country trip: stunning views, surprise encounters with seldom-seen wildlife, and the satisfaction of accomplishing an exceptional physical feat.

For those unwilling or unable to tackle the trail on their own, the Rainier National Park Company continued to run guided trips around the Wonderland circuit. In 1928, 25 dollars a day covered meals, sleeping accommodations, guides, pack service and the use of a saddle horse. The outings took 12 days to cover 145 miles (including side trips), and offered “endlessly changing panoramas of mountain and glacier, canyon and forest, lakes and rivers,” along with “comfortable camps, good food, and cozy sleeping bags.” Trail-goers need bring only their own clothing and toilet articles.

The Mountaineers Club returned to hike the Wonderland loop again and again. The trail rewarded club members with stunning views, heart-pounding climbs, and the “haunting presence of the Mountain.” For many, the three weeks away from civilization, trusting to their own resourcefulness, provided something more: the chance to live “the life of our pioneer forebears.” The idea that a wilderness sojourn could re-create the simpler American past of the pioneers became, for organizations like the Boy Scouts, a prime motivation in undertaking a Wonderland pilgrimage.

Aside from The Mountaineers, the Boy Scouts of America was the other organization most closely associated with the early recreational use of the Wonderland Trail. Puget Sound-area Scout troops began taking Wonderland trips in the early 1920s, usually spending two weeks in the park traversing some or all of the trail. The hundred-mile circuit...
around majestic Mount Rainier was the ideal place for local Scouts to obtain their hiking and camping skills, to live out their Scouting ethos. Life on the trail, according to the Boy Scout Handbook, gave Scouts the chance to see their “knightly qualities thrive and grow” and to find “the strength that springs from the good brown earth.” The winding course and arduous nature of a mountain trail mirrored the path of youthful development, along which Scouts traveled “straight to Manhood’s splendid and high estate.” In setting up camp and practicing woodcraft skills, Scouts could also imagine themselves to be like the pioneers, explorers and prospectors of America’s youth.

Since the Scouts were also a service-oriented organization, their hiking trips often included trail projects. In preparation for a 1926 excursion around the mountain, one Scout leader wrote to Tomlinson and suggested that the boys could place weather-tight emergency cylinders—with matches, candles, first-aid supplies, etc.—at designated caims along the Wonderland route. The Scouts also took on small trail-building projects. In August 1925 a group of Eagle Scouts from Seattle and Tacoma constructed a mile-long section of trail that ran from Longmire to Indian Henry’s Trail. Five years later a Seattle troop constructed one-and-a-half miles of trail from Klapatche Park to St. Andrews Park. Thereafter, visiting Scout troops regularly engaged in small-scale improvement projects to go with their Wonderland trips.

The National Park Service and the park concessionaire picked up on the idea that the fresh air, adventure and rigors of a Wonderland Trail trip were just the thing for young boys. In the late 1920s the Rainier National Park Company introduced a “Wonderland Camp for Boys.” The commercially run hiking and camping trips enabled boys (Scouts or otherwise) to test themselves on a round-the-mountain journey. The 1929 Wonderland Camp brochure described a “glorious four weeks saddle-horse outing in the Nation’s most beautiful playground.” The first week of the camp was devoted to preparation and training, the next two weeks were spent riding and hiking the Wonderland circuit, and the last week was reserved for a possible climb to the summit of Mount Rainier. But the Wonderland Trail trip was clearly the centerpiece of the camp. The promotional brochure explained that the experiences of the trail—building fires in the open, cooking over a campfire, sleeping outdoors, washing in clear, cold mountain streams, close association with other boys—contributed to the “building of tomorrow’s men” and constituted “a requisite of every true American.”

This notion conveyed in the Wonderland Camp literature—that the challenges of a trail outing built character, self-reliance, and patriotism—echoed the emphasis of the Boy Scout trips over the Wonderland. For decades these attitudes remained an underlying motivation for youth outings around Mount Rainier, whether they were undertaken by Boy Scouts or Girl Scouts, school groups or church groups. The young boys and girls involved in these trips may not have attained these goals, or even enjoyed their time in the park. But it is clear that the Wonderland Trail became, for many people, more than a recreational site; it became a cultural landmark that signified physical challenge, a personal rite of passage, and an idealized re-creation of America’s pioneer heritage. The trail was now a cultural construct, as well as a tangible construction of dirt, gravel and rock.

The Wonderland Trail represents several different facets of Mount Rainier National Park’s history. The trail was a key piece of the earliest administrative efforts to preserve the park’s natural beauty. During its more than 80 years of use, the trail also served as the central mechanism of the old fire patrol system, displayed changes and continuities in National Park Service construction and architecture, and played a part in the emergence of Mount Rainier as an icon for Pacific Northwest outdoor enthusiasts. Accordingly, the Wonderland Trail corridor was named one of the significant contributing elements when Mount Rainier National Park received National Historic Landmark status in 1997. Like the many dedicated hikers who have completed the entire circuit, the Wonderland Trail has come full circle. The rugged path that began as an administrative tool to protect the park’s natural resources is now a significant resource itself, worthy of historical recognition and long-term protection.

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The Tacoma Eastern Railroad—
Linking Puget Sound and
Mount Rainier National Park

By Michael Sullivan

The city of Tacoma was born, plain and simple, with the coming of the railroad. When the Northern Pacific railroad, chartered by Abraham Lincoln in 1864, selected an ending point on Pacific Coast saltwater, the city that flowered was Tacoma. Some 125 years ago the decision to bring a second transcontinental rail line to the Pacific Coast affected a relatively few people: a resident population of unsuspecting Native Americans, a handful of settlers and adventurers, and a few eager land speculators and opportunists living along Commencement Bay, perhaps 200 in all. The arrival of the railroad, along with its accompanying telegraph, completely redrew the landscape around the Puyallup River delta in less than a decade. Two hundred inhabitants became 5,000 city builders, and a few cedar log cabins along the shore became several rows of boom town façades and red brick buildings facing on wide graded streets. There were sidewalks, streetlights and a fledgling telephone system. The waterside camps and considerate culture of the Puyallup and Nisqually indians were overshadowed by civilized activities of stumps being dynamited and crowds of people gathering for the daily arrival of steam locomotives pulling cars full of newcomers.

From 1883—the first year passengers could ride the train uninterrupted from Chicago to Tacoma—to 1890, the population of Tacoma grew from about 5,000 to more than 30,000. The titanic Tacoma Hotel overlooked the harbor, and from its porch travelers and writers like Mark Twain and Rudyard Kipling marveled at the speed with which a city under a volcano could be born. For all its explosive growth and buzzing activity, no observer (either traveling through or putting down roots) could overlook Tacoma’s most distinguishing presence—the mountain.

The city, the railroad and the mountain summarized what most 19th-century visitors found at the south end of Puget Sound on Commencement Bay. Arriving by train or boat, Euro-American immigrants largely ignored the spiritual importance the native people attached to the dormant volcano, seeing instead the material opportunities of a modern city. But always there was the looming presence of the mountain and the intangible connection it had with the people who lived under it.

A century earlier, in May 1792, the first documented European mapmaker to visit the harbor, George Vancouver, marveled at the mountain on a crystal clear day and named it after a British naval colleague, Rear Admiral Peter Rainier. Locally the name never seemed as potent as the perpetually snowcapped peak, and from the earliest days of cityhood Tacomans tended to refer directly to “the Mountain” rather than use its given cartographic name, Mount Rainier.

As the Northern Pacific railroad pumped people and vitality into the newborn city, talk of extending the rails to the mountain began almost immediately. The Northern Pacific was also an early advocate for creating a park that included Mount Rainier, and by 1890 an organized effort to do so was under way in both the new state of Washington and the nation’s capital. In 1893 President Benjamin Harrison figuratively drew the first lines on a map, creating a Pacific Forest Reserve around the mountain. That same year Washington’s Senator Watson Squire introduced the first proposal for a formal national park. Before the decade was out, in March 1899, the forest reserve was elevated to the status of Mount Rainier National Park.
Soon after completing the transcontinental tracks in 1883, the Northern Pacific built rail lines to the coalfields around Wilkeson and Carbonado. These served as both a source of needed fuel for the locomotives and a first step toward the densely forested foothills. The NP was already eyeing Mount Rainier as a tourist destination. Concurrent with the building of the Tacoma Hotel, the Northern Pacific began selling the dramatic, looming mountain as a "must see" feature for passengers going west. Beginning in 1884 they offered passenger service from Tacoma to Wilkeson. Interested parties could continue on by horseback to Paradise Valley and by hiking trails to the glaciers and snowfields on the mountain's flanks. Rail service was seasonal and limited, but it foretold what everyone could see in the future—a true train to the mountain.

The Train to Paradise

Five years before the dedication of Mount Rainier National Park, Charles B. Wright, the man who more than any other selected and shaped the terminal city of the northern transcontinental railroad, held out one last tantalizing gift to the city of Tacoma. Nearly blind, weakened by advanced age, and speaking from Philadelphia like a distant oracle, Wright proposed building a railroad from the city to the high shoulder of Mount Rainier. In 1887 mill operators John Hart and his brother had built a small narrow-gauge line about three miles from the bay up the future Tacoma Eastern Gulch to their operation at 46th Street. They merged their interests with a local group of would-be railroad builders who added another six miles to the line and formally named it the Tacoma Eastern Railroad. The depression of 1893 crushed their under capitalized effort.

It took the words and force of Charles Wright to breathe real life into the enterprise of pushing railroad tracks and steam locomotives all the way from saltwater to the mountain. Wright assembled a veteran corps of railroad men who had worked for him when he was president of the Northern Pacific, including the legendary timberland engineer Virgil Bogue. It was Bogue who graded the NP over Stampede Pass in 1887 and then a year later outdid the tortuous route by punching the second longest tunnel in the Western Hemisphere two miles under and through the Cascades. Bogue had already been surveying the best route for the Tacoma Eastern line, together with Isaac Anderson and Edmund Rice.

The group effectively designed the Tacoma Eastern as it would eventually be built, but before their plans could be realized, the relentless effect of the national depression, plus petty political bickering over the related sale and operation of Tacoma's light and water systems stalled the project. Then in 1897, before he could see the rail line completed or the national park created, Charles Wright died. But his iron vision was not abandoned.

Just months after the park was dedicated in 1899, a 350-pound giant of a railroad man named John Bagley and a group of partners took over control of the Tacoma Eastern Railroad. The known partners, Edward Cookingham, William M. Ladd and A. Tilton, all were connected to the timber industry, and their strategy for financing the line had a decidedly commercial bent.

Freight contracts in hand and with operating lumber mills and considerable property of their own along the route, the partners pushed new trackage as far as Clover Creek (near Fredrickson) during the railroad's first year under their control. The Tacoma Eastern reached a huge mill at Kapowsin Lake the next year, and by 1902 it was five miles farther up the Ohop valley to the new brick kilns at Clay City. The track crews and famous Bagley blade graders passed LaGrande in mid 1903, and on the fourth of July the first train pulled into Eatonville.

Here the giant Young Cole Lumber mill produced 150,000 board feet a day and the Success Paint Company produced tons of earthy red paint. Eatonville was also the site of the first major bridges built along the Tacoma Eastern. In 1903
two 68-foot Howe truss spans were put in place just outside the town, one over Lynch Creek and a towering high bridge over the Big Mashel River. Two years later the bridge builders working on these spans would construct a monumental 120-foot through truss trestle over the Nisqually River at Park Junction. Even Virgil Bogue marveled.

Perhaps the toughest part to build was the stretch between Eatonville and Elbe, but on Independence Day 1904 the first steam locomotive passed through Alder and into the little town along the upper Nisqually. By the end of that year, the Tacoma Eastern had reached Ashford, the terminal gateway to the mountain. An extension from Park Junction South to Mineral Lake was finished in 1905, and the following year it was stretched 6.5 miles farther to a station named Tilton. In 1906 a spur track reached the coalfields at Ladd, another new station, giving two of Bagley’s partners place-names in their honor.

The Golden Era

In 1907 the road construction years for the Tacoma Eastern were about over and the operation was proving as successful as Bagley had anticipated. The partners took out great profits while still extending the line almost three miles from Tilton to Glenavon and 15 miles from Fredrickson to McKenna, whose name boded a heretofore silent but growing interest in the line’s future. E. W. McKenna, vice president of the Chicago, Milwaukee, & Saint Paul Railway, was an important but shadowy backer of the Tacoma Eastern.

In four years, punching the line from one mill site to the next like a string of beads, the logging road reached Ashford.

“The Trail of the Olympian,” route map from a Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul promotional piece. Flowery, evocative language and colorful brochures proved an irresistible lure to more than 100,000 passengers visiting Mount Rainier by train each year in the 1920s.

By 1905 the Tacoma Eastern had built an impressive collection of rolling stock, with 13 steam engines, hundreds of flatcars, boxcars and stockcars all marked with the distinctive Tacoma Eastern moniker—T.E.R.R. Several of the engines and many of the flatcars were traceable to the prior inventory of the Chicago, Milwaukee & Saint Paul Railway.

In 1904 the Tacoma Eastern Railroad explored the possibilities of passenger service for the first time. It partnered with the Ferry Museum, which later merged into the Washington State Historical Society, to arrange summer excursions to the new national park via locomotive and stage.

The next year the Tacoma Eastern put regular passenger service into operation using three coaches, a parlor car and an Alta Vista observation car. More than 32,000 passengers bought tickets to the mountain that year. In the years that followed, the railroad built the rustic Longmire Lodge and for a time was the only practical way to reach the park, short of walking or riding a pack animal. A Tacoma Eastern timetable from 1905 shows the train departing from Tacoma at nine in the morning and reaching Ashford before noon. Six dollars took you to Paradise and back.

The rail line reached into ancient forests for the primary purpose of harvest. Dense Douglas fir and fragrant western red cedar stands created a barrier around the mountain. Natives approaching the peak took the darkness of the forests as a palpable warning. As awesome as the mountain itself, the
tangled deep mazes and soaring canopies of the ancient forests offered no encouragement to would-be mountaineers. Only the rivers led reluctantly through the thick growth to the mountain itself, and even their life-giving force seemed to wane as they reached the rock shoulders of the mountain. High in the creeks and rivers, salmon carcasses and gnarled plants marked a point beyond which life seemed foreign. It was the clear line mythology finds in nature and notes with stories of caution and mystery. The forests around Mount Rainier were an elite guard, protecting it since the last ice age. The plan for the Tacoma Eastern Railroad was not simply to cut a line through but to clear broad swaths where mills could be built and an organized harvest could begin.

Freight Service remained the primary source of profit throughout the line's years of operation as the Tacoma Eastern. From 513,294 freight tons carried in 1905, the Tacoma Eastern carried almost 1.3 million tons in 1913. In the early days of 1905 freight was 78 percent raw logs, 11.3 percent cut lumber, 7 percent shingles and less than .4 percent coal. In 1913 raw logs were down to 70 percent, cut lumber up to 20 percent, coal up to 2.5 percent, and clay city bricks almost 2 percent.

The most remarkable growth figures for the railroad were in passenger service. In 1911 the Tacoma Eastern carried more than 100,000 people and by 1913 the number reached 120,065. Passenger revenue went from $30,886 in 1905 to $130,918 in 1913. Advertising and the connection with the four transcontinental lines that served Tacoma after 1909 helped establish the excursion/tourism value of the railroad. As the forests were cut and the mills began to drift farther from the rail line, the Tacoma Eastern continued to thrive. John Bagley's iron dream seemed as if it would run on forever, even as the pioneer railroader began to plan his retirement from the operation. The Bagley name was to stay with the Tacoma Eastern as the senior John paved the way for his son to become general manager. In 1914 John Bagley stepped down, and the golden age of the Tacoma Eastern came to an end.

Milwaukee Road

As early as 1901 it was speculated that John Bagley had been working financially with the renamed Chicago, Milwaukee, Saint Paul & Pacific Railroad, later the Milwaukee Road. In 1909 this latecomer transcontinental line reached Puget Sound at Tacoma and leased the entire Tacoma Eastern operation. The bigger railroad began promoting the Paradise Valley Route with lavish brochures and posters distributed all over the world. Though the little railroad operated under its own banner until it was marshaled into the United States Railroad Administration during World War I, its blood was mixed irrevocably with that of the Milwaukee Road.

In 1910 with financial backing from the bigger partner, the Tacoma Eastern built the Cowlitz Valley Extension eight miles on to Morton in Lewis County. The last track laid for the line under the Tacoma Eastern banner was just over two miles from Tanwax Junction to Western Junction, completed in 1912 to connect with the Tidewater Lumber Company. During these years the railroad also improved its rolling stock and station facilities to fully accommodate passenger service. A new passenger depot was built at Kapowsin in 1910. A classic two-story depot was also built at Morton, and today it stands as the only Tacoma Eastern depot still on its original site. Yard facilities and a change of alignment at Salsich Junction were undertaken in 1912 to handle the Milwaukee Road's "Grays Harbor Line" over the McKenna branch. That same year the two Howe truss bridges at Eatonville were replaced with high timber trestles.

The Tacoma Eastern's main shops were situated at Bismark on the outskirts of the city, but in 1910 the Milwaukee Road merged these employees and operations with their
own on the Tacoma tide flats. The handsome Arts and Crafts style Tacoma Eastern passenger depot at 26th and A streets was sold to the Milwaukee Road, and thereafter the Tacoma Eastern paid rent in the building it shared with the larger transcontinental line. The Milwaukee Road train dispatchers and offices were installed in the upper floors of the old Tacoma Eastern depot until they moved to the Freighthouse building at 25th and D streets during World War II. The wood frame depot continued to serve passengers until it was replaced with a brick building near the Milwaukee Road roundhouse and tide flats yards in 1957.

The Tacoma Eastern Railroad lost its identity when it was mustered out of federal control on January 1, 1919, as a fully owned part of the Milwaukee Road. Although the colorfulmustered out of federal control on January 1, 1919, as a fully owned part of the Milwaukee Road. Although the colorful

name of the Paradise Valley Route was a casualty of the war, the new National Park Limited, which ran from Seattle's Union Station to Ashford over the same tracks, became a legend in its own right.

With elegant new passenger cars, linen and silver service, and a romantic destination that loomed in the distance during virtually the entire journey, the National Park Limited carried more than 100,000 people a year during the 1920s. The round-trip fare stayed at about ten dollars throughout the 1920s, with a steam train to Ashford and a motor coach from there to Longmire, Nisqually Glacier, Narada Falls and finally Paradise Valley. In 1924 the Limited left Seattle at 7:30 in the morning scheduled to reach Ashford at 10:45. It returned to Seattle at 7:30 in the evening.

In 1931, with the Great Depression deepening, the Milwaukee Road still offered service from Seattle and Tacoma to Ashford. But with fewer visitors to the national park overall and increased competition from automobiles and buses, rail service was fading. For many it was still the only way to visit the mountain, but they were a discerning minority of the thousands of visitors to the park. The Milwaukee Road timetable stopped showing passenger service to Ashford and the mountain beyond in 1932. One day in 1935 the last of the original 13 steam engines to carry the markings of the Tacoma Eastern Railroad was cut into scrap iron. The cars were scattered and the depots closed.

Days turned into weeks between the freight and logging trains along the line as trucks and roads took over most of the timberland hauling. Rust and rot began to work on the rails and trestles. By World War II, the nation was concentrating on keeping the main rail routes maintained and operating. The tourist roads were neglected, and by 1964 the Milwaukee Road was bankrupt.

The old Tacoma Eastern line reverted back to its origins as a logging road, used by its new owner, the Weyerhaeuser Company, for hauling logs and lumber from the forests and managed tree farms around the west side of the mountain. By

LEFT: The 1905 Tacoma Eastern train schedule showed a travel time of just under three hours from Tacoma to Ashford.

OPPOSITE PAGE: At the Ashford station visitors to Mount Rainier National Park switched to buses or pack animals, c. 1912.
the mid 1980s even that use was supplanted by trucks, and
the line faced obsolescence once again. This time the City of
Tacoma stepped in to acquire the line in 1989, partly by
donation and partly by purchase, intending to revisit the
possibility of a passenger train to the mountain.

Efforts to establish passenger train service from Tacoma to
Mount Rainier National Park were sidetracked by the unex­
pected industrial growth at the Port of Tacoma's property at
Fredrickson. Until very recently, the active sections of the
Tacoma Eastern Railroad have been run as freight lines. The
Mount Rainier Scenic Railway Company now runs steam
locomotives in the area around Elbe, and regular passenger
service between Tacoma and Mount Rainier remains am­
biguously in the planning phase.

A Legacy Waiting
THE IRON RAILS and furtive corridor of the century-old
Tacoma Eastern railroad still wind their way, unbroken from
tidewater on Puget Sound to Ashford and the entrance to
Mount Rainier National Park. Though passenger service has
long since faded from the times in the early 1920s when
125,000 people would ride the National Park Limited from Se­
teel and Tacoma each year, more than memories and ghosts
are connected with the rail line and its re-emerging promise.

Today, both freight and passengers pass over short sections
of the Tacoma Eastern line and an array of interests seem to be
converging in an effort to reestablish regular passenger service
to Mount Rainier. As many of the large national parks in
America struggle with creating alternative transportation sys­
tems to relieve the threatening pressures of motorized vehicles
and overpopulation, Mount Rainier National Park reaches its
100th year with a potential solution in place.

The Tacoma Eastern Railroad right-of-way is entirely
publicly owned by the City of Tacoma. Within the last sev­
eral years $1.7 million has been spent on rehabilitation of
the line, and along the section between Elbe and the park
gateway a priceless collection of steam locomotives and vin­
tage rolling stock carry hundreds of passenger each year. At

a slow pace, trains can pass over the entire route, and for
those who have taken the trip, it is simply the best way to
approach the mountain.

The sections farthest from the national park, connecting
Fredrickson with Tacoma and Chehalis, are routinely used
for freight service by customers like Boeing. Above
Fredrickson the Tacoma Eastern cuts directly and dramati­
cally toward the mountain. It rolls along the shores of
Kapowsin, Ohop and Alder lakes, crossing the Mashel River
on a high radius trestle that simply takes your breath away. At
passenger rail altitude, the visual experience is marked by the
continual appearances of Mount Rainier, which seems to
double in size after each obstructing ridge or timber grove.

CONNECTED WITH THE Puget Sound area's new
commuter rail system, the Tacoma Eastern links
the state's greatest concentration of people in
Seattle with the state's greatest visitor attraction,
Mount Rainier. As the other large national parks are discov­
ering, managing transportation is becoming an important
conservation tool as more and more vehicles blemish the park
experience for everyone. Sport utility vehicles, RVs, four­
wheel drive trucks and single occupant on-and off-road ma­
chines need to be balanced with a means of reaching the park
and traveling within it that leave a softer touch on the land.

It may soon be possible to begin the Mount Rainier experi­
ence at a station in Seattle or Tacoma. A traveler could spend
the morning learning about the science, nature and history of
the region along a dedicated natural corridor with it own
perspectives of the mountain and its own rich history and
story. Though grass grows up through the tracks in places, the
iron ribbon of the Tacoma Eastern Railroad waits to be opened
like a forgotten gift, an heirloom handed down purposefully
from one generation to the next until it is needed again.

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Washington Tacoma. He is also a partner in Artifacts, an architectural
conservation consulting firm in Tacoma.
In 1789 at Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island, Captain Esteban José Martínez, a Spanish commandant, seized merchant ships and a parcel of land from Captain John Meares, a former officer of the British Royal Navy. War fever soon gripped the British nation as it roared defiance over the Spanish action in the wilds of the Pacific Northwest. Meares, as the aggrieved British ship owner, presented a memorial to Parliament asking compensation for his loss. Reaction was immediate.

In the small hours of May 5, 1790, British impressment squads descended upon pubs, rooming houses and brothels to secure able-bodied men to crew ships for the Royal Navy. Sixty warships were mobilized to face the Spanish armament. Spain had already mobilized its fleet.
Thirty-year-old Prime Minister William Pitt supported Meares's claim. He sent a message to Parliament demanding action against Spain. Pitt sought to drive a wedge and weaken Spain's claim to the entire Pacific Ocean—a claim based on the Roman Catholic papal bull of 1493 which divided the West Indies between Spain and Portugal. Spain considered the Pacific Ocean its private lake and tried forcefully to exclude ships of all nations.

Both Britain and Spain tried to line up allies for naval action. The Netherlands sent its fleet for joint maneuvers with the Royal Navy. Prussia approved the British stand and pondered its role. Spain was less fortunate. Under the terms of the Bourbon “family compact,” Spain asked France to join ranks. Both fleets had worked together in fighting the British during the recent American Revolutionary War. But circumstances were different now. King Louis XVI’s throne was on extremely shaky ground, and France’s new National Assembly voted against war. Britain’s superior military position now clearly established, Spain resorted to diplomacy. Ultimately, Britain and Spain executed three Nootka Sound settlements between 1790 and 1795. Britain’s ambassador, Lord Alleyne Fitzherbert Saint Helens, dealt from a position of strength. Spain’s Count José Moñino Floridablanca tried valiantly but failed to retain Carlos IV’s exclusive possession in the vast Pacific Ocean. The year 1790 marked Spain’s flood tide of empire. After the third settlement agreement of 1795, ebb tide set in for Spain.

Just how did Nootka Sound, in the “terra incognita” of North America, cause a British/Spanish confrontation in the first place? In 1778 the Royal Navy’s Captain James Cook, while searching for the fabled Northwest Passage, had entered Nootka Sound and stayed there for a month to repair his ships. Britain’s finest explorer found the Nootka natives friendly. This had not always been the case during his three worldwide explorations, and so Cook named his anchorage Friendly Cove. Cook’s sailors bartered for sea otter pelts with some of the trinkets in their possession, acquiring about 1,500 pelts in all. On the homeward voyage the ships stopped in China where the sailors learned the high value of these pelts and sold them for enormous sums.

The news of the valuable sea otter pelts at Nootka Sound spread rapidly. Both British and American merchant sea captains started outfitting their ships to participate in the fur trade. Captain Meares was one of those who wanted to cash in. For mercantile purposes his ships flew Portuguese “flags of convenience” and listed Macau, the Portuguese toehold in China, as their home port. When Meares visited Friendly Cove in April 1788, he found the anchorage deserted. From the local chief Meares purchased a parcel of land on the waterfront where he could build a small schooner and erect a building. The purchase price was two flintlock pistols. Meares put half his crew to work building the schooner North West America, the first ship built in the Pacific Northwest. The rest of the crew manned his ships to seek sea otter pelts.

Captain Robert Gray, in command of the Lady Washington out of Boston, was the first American merchantman to arrive at Nootka in search of pelts. He arrived in time to watch the launching of North West America. Both Lady Washington and its command ship Columbia were the first United States vessels to engage in the Pacific sea otter trade. Captain Gray later took command of the Columbia. The following year, both ships were at anchor in Friendly Cove when the Nootka incident took place.

The Spanish feared intrusion not only by the British but also by the Russians who, reportedly, were heading south along the Alaska coast in their search for pelts and had listed Nootka as their next goal. Now threatened by both Britain and Russia, Spanish authorities decided to move their northern defense...
perimeter from San Francisco Bay to Nootka Sound. To accomplish this they sent Esteban José Martinez with enough troops to form a garrison. When the commandant discovered false and insulting instructions carried by the captains Meares sent to Nootka in 1789, he ordered the merchantman's ships seized and sent to Mexico along with their crews. Meares's version of this episode was reported in his memorial to Parliament. With Britain seemingly eager to fight a war over Nootka, Spain recognized its weakened bargaining position and sent Floridablanca to meet with Saint Helens and hammer out the 1790 Nootka Convention. It stated that Meares would be compensated for the loss of his ships, including the North West America, and have his men and property returned. Both Spain and Britain were to send commissioners to Nootka Sound to work out the details.

Great Britain sent Captain George Vancouver, in command of Discovery and Chatham, as its commissioner. Vancouver had gone to sea at the age of 14 and served under Captain Cook on his last two voyages to the Pacific. On these extensive voyages he learned Cook's methods and first saw Nootka Sound in 1778. Thirteen years later the 100-foot sloop Discovery, with a crew of 100, and its escort tender Chatham, with a crew of 25, were sent out on a four-year voyage of exploration in search of the ever-elusive Northwest Passage. Also on the itinerary was the diplomatic stop at Nootka. Vancouver's orders read: "Carry out a survey of the coastal region of North America from 30 degrees northward, look for Juan de Fuca's mythical 'Inland Sea,' and take possession for the British Crown of the land designated 'Nootka' from the Spanish representative."

Spain sent Juan Francisco de la Bodega y Quadra as its emissary. A young naval officer in 1775, Bodega y Quadra had commanded the small, tubby 38-foot schooner Sonora. He sailed as far north as present-day Sitka in search of the Northwest Passage and any evidence of Russian activity in defiance of Spanish claims. Sonora was then the tender for Captain Bruno de Hezeta's Santiago. Both ships had been anchored at the Quinault River outlet on the Washington coast. While Hezeta went ashore to claim the territory for Spain, Bodega y Quadra sent six of his most capable men ashore in a longboat for wood and water. Natives ambushed the boat and killed the men in view of Bodega y Quadra and his helpless crew. Sonora was barely able to get out of the small cove, sailing in very little wind. Low tide and native canoes harassed her. Bodega y Quadra reported the incident to his commander and requested a force with which to retaliate. He was overruled by Hezeta who gave him replacements for his lost seamen instead. The ships sailed north past the mouth of the still undiscovered Strait of Juan de Fuca.

By 1792, after a distinguished naval career, Bodega y Quadra commanded both the San Blas naval base in Mexico and the Nootka Sound outpost. At Nootka, because of his generosity, he was honored by both native inhabitants and visiting ships. He provided ships' crews with fresh bread from the garrison's bakery, fresh produce from the extensive gardens, and milk from his herd. A genial host, Bodega y Quadra entertained lavishly. The Nootka chief, Maquinna, dined at the fort almost daily, sitting on Bodega y Quadra's right as an honored guest. Maquinna slept at the commandant's home, quickly learned European ways and manners, and dined in honored style aboard visiting ships. The commandant, in turn, often visited Maquinna in his village.

Vancouver's voyage to Nootka Sound took his ships around the Cape of Good Hope, to New Zealand, Tahiti, Hawaii, the northern coast of California, and then past the still uncharted mouth of the Columbia River. Off the Washington coast the crew sighted a sail on the horizon—the first sail they had observed since leaving Africa. Vancouver maneuvered to rendezvous with Captain Gray and the Columbia in the lee of Destruction Island.

Peter Puget was sent from the Discovery to parley with Gray and obtain local knowledge. Gray told Puget that he was heading south in search of the entrance to the "Great River of the
West." Puget replied that they had just sailed up the coast and no river was observed. He related Vancouver's mission to Nootka Sound and continuing search for the Strait of Juan de Fuca and the Northwest Passage. When Puget mentioned that both Cook and Vancouver believed neither existed, Gray replied that he had just been in the strait trading with the natives for furs. He offered to lead the British ships to the entrance at Cape Flattery, which he did before heading south and crossing the treacherous bar of the "Great River" in Columbia.

Having surveyed and mapped the mighty river's entrance, Gray sent a copy of the chart to his friend Bodega y Quadra at Nootka for delivery to Vancouver when he should arrive there. The captain used this chart in the fall of 1792 to guide the tender Chatham across the roaring entrance into the calm waters inside the bar. Then, in longboats, the crew rowed 100 miles upriver to east of present-day Vancouver, Washington. Mount Hood and Mount Saint Helens were named during this survey.

During the previous spring and summer, Vancouver and his crew, in their search for the Northwest Passage, accomplished the incredible survey and tracing of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Puget Sound, and the Inland Passage east of Vancouver Island. In the process they rowed over 10,000 miles and bestowed more than 300 names on today's familiar landmarks, including Mount Baker, Deception Pass, Mount Rainier and Fort Townsend.

On August 28, 1792, the two ships arrived at Friendly Cove and were greeted by an honorary exchange of gun salutes from the British ships and the Spanish fort. Bodega y Quadra had long anticipated Vancouver's arrival. Captain Vancouver told the commandant of his extensive explorations, including the discovery that Nootka was on an island, not the mainland. The two sea captains exchanged charts and survey information. They hosted each other at formal dinners, toured the Nootka garrison, and discussed terms for the settlement.

Bodega y Quadra had been kept current on his Spanish government policies. Having no other orders than his original ones, Vancouver hoped that the supply ship sent to meet him at Nootka would have more instructions from the British Foreign Office. It did not.

Vancouver's position was that Sir Francis Drake in 1579 had landed on the California coast about 30 miles north of San Francisco Bay, claiming New Albion for Britain, and stayed there about a month while preparing the Golden Hinde for completion of his historic circumnavigation. Therefore, the British had prior claim to the land northward. Bodega y Quadra could not agree, except to concede Meares's small parcel of land to Vancouver, which he refused to accept. No settlement was reached. However, cool, competent diplomacy prevailed. Differences in opinion had no effect on their hospitality or friendship.

At this point Chief Maquinna invited both Bodega y Quadra and Vancouver, along with their officers and men, to his inland village for a feast, dancing and entertainment. This was a highlight of the British stay. Sailors danced reels for their amazed hosts who in turn performed native dances. On route back to Friendly Cove, a proposal was voiced to name the newly discovered island Quadra y Vancouver Island. This was the designation on nautical charts for many years thereafter.

In the fall of 1792 the captains parted as cordially as they had first met and sent the Nootka problem back to their governments for an ambassadorial solution. Lord Saint Helens and Count Florida-blanca now faced bigger problems. The French Revolution raised concern of possible rebellion in other European nations, limiting the perceived importance of Nootka Sound. The final Nootka agreement called for both countries to completely evacuate Nootka. On March 16, 1795, British Lieutenant Thomas Pierce arrived at Nootka aboard a Spanish warship in the company of General José Manuel de Alava. They each signed declarations, raised and lowered their national flags, and then departed. The flags were given to Chief Maquinna.

The warships were barely out of sight when the natives arrived to strip the village of everything that had been left behind—they were particularly interested in finding nails they could use to make fishhooks. Soon there was little evidence of European civilization at Friendly Cove. This site, which had almost sparked a global conflict, faded back into the global obscurity from which it had emerged. Prime Minister Pitt had won the spoils of war—the right to sail and trade in the Pacific Ocean—without a shot being fired.

Thornton Thomas served on the Washington State Centennial Maritime Committee and was a member of the International Maritime Bicentennial Commission. He presented this paper at the 1998 annual meeting of the Society for the History of Discoveries in Vancouver, British Columbia.
Many remarkable women have contributed to the success and prosperity of Washington. Their charitable hearts, mental and physical toughness, and sheer determination helped them triumph over treacherous travel conditions, countless hardships, lack of "civilized" surroundings, and discrimination. Lynn E. Bragg has done an admirable job of highlighting the lives of 16 women whose extraordinary accomplishments helped pave the way for the cultural landscape Pacific Northwesters now take for granted.

Bragg uses short stories to describe the lives of these women, focusing about half the time on lesser-known persons. Reah Mary Whitehead, the first woman judge in Washington, for example, achieved great respect during her years on the bench with a judicial philosophy that can be summed up in this quote: "A woman's viewpoint plus a man's viewpoint equals the human viewpoint. And that is what our courts need." The career of Dr. Mary Archer Latham is another worthy subject as she was one of the first female physicians in Washington and assisted the citizens of Spokane in their efforts to establish a women's hospital, a children's home and a public library. Dr. Nettie Craig Asberry, a well-known music teacher, found new outlets for her abundant talents when she helped establish the Tacoma branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. Lizzie Ordway started Seattle's first public school in 1870 and was one of the first women voted into public office in Washington Territory.

Some of the women in this volume have been the subject of full-length biographies—Narcissa Prentiss Whitman, Mother Joseph and Bertha Knight Landes. Even so, Bragg makes them interesting all over again. Two in particular come to mind. Thea Christiansen Foss had a vision of what the purchase of a single rowboat could foster. Not only was she the inspiration for the movie Tugboat Annie, but in 1989 Tacoma renamed its City Waterway in her honor. And who would have thought that the Mazy Labyrinth, which has become a chapter title, although at times strange, was the work of a single rowboat? Fuller, at age 19, reached the summit of Mount Rainier, especially without the Gore-Tex™ climbing boots, miracle-metal crampons, shatterproof plastic helmets and gourmet food that climbers take for granted these days? With just three days' worth of provisions rolled inside two blankets, and charcoal on her face for sunburn protection, Fuller, at age 19, reached the summit on August 10, 1890, marking the return route with hairpins.

The pioneering women featured in this book are truly inspiring.

Jacqueline Tusa spends her days in the employ of Microsoft and her evenings reading about Pacific Northwest history.
is business. Lang’s meticulous research presented in careful prose reveals the complexities of life for a man trying to keep his footing in an ever-shifting combination of personalities and parties on a frontier dominated by events occurring in Washington, D.C.

Asher’s work on Washington’s Indian population and the law is revised from a University of Chicago dissertation. Like Lang, his research is thorough and his writing clear and focused. Unlike Lang, whose topic has been almost untouched by historians, Indian-white relations in the territory have been the topic of many works. However, though some have dealt with certain of the best-known instances of Indians caught in the territorial justice system—the trial and execution of Leschi being the leading example—none have explored the complexities of this legal relationship as has Asher.

Reservation policy and territorial law, the definition of “Indian,” and interracial and intraracial crime are examined topically from the perspectives of both cultures. Each chapter uses a specific case as a focal point, a technique that personalizes what could easily become a statistical compilation. (Statistics are used, but at times the paucity of numbers calls their value into question.) Adding to the complexity are changing attitudes over time. For example, a man who in 1885 killed two Indians at Wallula for refusing to leave his home apparently took that draconian action at least in part because he was confident of acquittal. At an earlier date he probably would have been correct, but the judge’s instructions and the jury’s decision proved this defendant wrong.

Asher does not argue that Indians always received justice in territorial courts; it is no surprise that they often did not. What will be surprising to many, however, is how convoluted the search for justice became. For one thing, Indians increasingly turned to the court system rather than relying upon the reservation agent or traditional Indian customs. In this, Asher argues, the Indians acted pragmatically, turning to the venue in which they believed they would have the best chance of success.

These fine books take their place among a small number of predecessors that probe the territorial period, particularly Washington’s “Dark Ages” of 1865 to 1885. Despite the authors’ astute handling of complex political, economic and legal questions, they do not, as they likely would admit, have all the answers. However, Asher and Lang have raised the right questions.

Kent D. Richards, professor emeritus of history at Central Washington University, has written extensively on the history of Washington Territory.

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

Two recent publishing efforts by the University of Washington Press can only help to reinforce the already prevalent wisdom that they do a terrific job satisfying the interests of both the casual reader of Pacific Northwest history and the academician. I refer to Sunrise to Paradise: The Story of Mount Rainier National Park (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999; 152 pp.; $40 cloth and $22.50 paper) by Ruth Kirk and Kirtland Cutter: Architect in the Land of Promise (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1999; 448 pp.; $60) by Henry C. Matthews.

Ruth Kirk, who once spent five years living in Mount Rainier National Park, knows how to write and she knows what is important in a subject. Sunrise to Paradise is part of a three-way celebration of the centennial year of Washington’s first national park. The other two legs are a KCTS-9 television documentary and the spectacular exhibition at the Washington State History Museum. Each one complements the others, and while the exhibition will be dismantled and the video will be shown only on an infrequent basis, Kirk’s book will endure well past the halfway mark of the next century. Part one measures the substance of the volcano known variously as Tahoma, Tacoma and Rainier; part two defines the national park; and the final section centers on the people who make the mountain and the park a living monument. Seventeen persons with knowledge of the mountain, including explorer Dee Molenaar and photographer Ira Spring, contribute sidebars, adding additional depth to Kirk’s paced and rhythmic text. Some 280 illustrations, 200 in color, make this a visually pleasing book. All the certified history is there, but packaged in a most pleasant manner. In the final sentence of her preface, Ruth Kirk tells readers the secret behind this marvelous book when she writes, “If love could shine through ink, these pages would glow.”

When it comes to the life and works of architect Kirtland Cutter, clearly Henry Matthews shares Ruth Kirk’s sentiments about love and ink. For 14 years Matthews, a faculty member of the Washington State University School of Architecture, researched Cutter’s often sparse office accounts and letters, examined 290 sets of his drawings, and sought out his extant buildings in Seattle, Spokane, Tacoma, Bellingham, Walla Walla and Portland. Cutter made a name for himself with his creative architecture and a reputation for beautifying the Washington cities in which he worked between 1889 and 1923. Thus, writes Matthews, Cutter has left us a visual record of Pacific Northwest society at two major turning points in American history, the Gilded Age and the pre-Depression Roaring Twenties. Because Matthews made a commitment to look at the entire body of Cutter’s work, including his post-1923 work in California, his biography is comprehensive and detailed. The book is organized thematically into interpretive chapters—“Variations on an Old English Theme,” for example—and is spiced together by 265 illustrations. Richly documented with nearly 600 footnotes, the book also contains a remarkably useful bibliography and an appendix that lists all of Cutter’s buildings and projects. This is truly the kind of scholarly work for which the University of Washington has justly earned its sterling reputation.

Address all review copies and related communications to:
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