Seeking El Dorado
African Americans in California

Edited by Lawrence B. de Graaf, Kevin Mulroy, and Quintard Taylor

From the 18th century, African Americans, like many others, have migrated to California to seek their fortunes or, often, for the more modest goals of being able to find work, own a home, and raise a family relatively free of discrimination. Whether they settled in major cities or smaller towns, they created institutions and organizations that embodied the legacy of their past and the values they shared. Throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, African American leadership in the state consistently focused on achieving racial justice. Not only their search but also its outcome is covered in *Seeking El Dorado*. The essays here speak of triumph and hardship, success, discrimination, and disappointment.

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COLUMBIA

THE MAGAZINE OF NORTHWEST HISTORY • FALL 2001

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FROM THE EDITOR

Reflecting on the array of articles in this issue, I see the not-entirely-coincidental orientation toward Columbia River topics. In this regard I refer principally to Dorothea Nordstrand’s reminiscence about Celilo Falls and an excerpt from Kerry Irish’s excellent biography of a now almost forgotten figure relative to Columbia River development—Senator Clarence C. Dill. For a magazine named COLUMBIA, perhaps this is fitting.

Nevertheless, we are happy to welcome back to our pages Kurt Armbruster, writing on another of our topical staples—railroad history; and David Chapman with a second colorful account of one of Washington’s county courthouses—this time Grays Harbor County.

We are also pleased to offer the third installment of “Doc” Wesselius’s series on Lewis and Clark place names. Topographically speaking, the Spokane area does not figure directly in the Lewis and Clark story, but recent and unexpected seismic events in eastern Washington have gotten me to wondering about that. I refer to the relatively minor earthquakes that were reported earlier this year in Spokane. What captivated me about those press accounts were the many residents who reported “hearing booms... that might have accompanied earthquakes too small to be recorded by monitoring equipment outside the city.”

One of the great mysteries that has fascinated Lewis and Clark scholars and buffs alike is the series of the strange and inexplicable noises that Lewis and Clark heard resonating across the northern plains during the Corps of Discovery’s portage around the Great Falls of the Missouri. The captains’ journals first contain reference to this phenomenon in Clark’s entry of June 20, 1805, wherein he describes

a noise...as loud and resembling precisely the discharge of a piece of ordnance.... I was informed of it by the men J. Fields particularly before I paid any attention to it, thinking it was thunder most probably which they had mistaken. [At length yesterday...I heard this noise very distinctly, it was perfectly calm clear and not a Cloud to be Seen....

Ensuing speculations by Lewis, Clark, and the others attributed this mysterious noise to wind blowing through caverns in the nearby mountains, or more spectacularly, “the bursting of rich mines of silver which these mountains contain.” The estimable editor of the Journals of Lewis and Clark, Gary Moulton, wrote that “the captains never did find an explanation for this phenomenon, which is still heard today in the region.”

Is Spokane hearing the same sound of the Rocky Mountains booming that the Corps of Discovery heard? Did Lewis & Clark hear earthquakes in the making or their aftermath?

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Editor
The Celilo Falls That Used to Be

By Dorothea Nordstrand

JUST EAST OF The Dalles, Oregon, in the towering grandeur of the Columbia River Gorge, stands a small roadside sign bearing the single word, “Celilo,” a sadly inadequate marker for the rugged beauty that once dominated this place. Before The Dalles Dam was built in 1957, Celilo Falls was a spectacular series of cataracts that disrupted the swift, strong flow of the mighty Columbia River. For me, the Celilo Falls of the late 1930s became a scene of great drama every autumn during the annual “run” of homecoming salmon. It has been almost 65 years since I visited there, but my heart still beats faster at the memory of that incredible experience.

Let me take you back to that exciting day in 1936.

CELILO FALLS IS a jumble of huge rock piles and sheer drops over which the untamed Columbia hurls itself in thundering abandon. Below the falls, boiling whirlpools hiss and roar, whipping and splashing high into the air. Into this cauldron swim the homecoming salmon in instinct-driven desperation to reach their historic spawning grounds many miles upstream. Thousands of silver fish fling themselves against the tumbling cascades. The roar of the rushing water and the violent motion of the salmon fill one’s senses.

Since ancient times Celilo Falls has been an important fishing ground for the native tribes who dwell along the big river: the Umatilla, Yakama, Nez Perce, Warm Springs, Wasco-Wishram, and many others. In the autumn of the year, when the salmon come home to spawn, the People of the River gather here to perform the act that is, for them, both spiritual and practical; to accept what they believe to be their annual gift from the river, and to ensure themselves of food for the long winter months ahead. Several tribes are presently encamped nearby for the yearly ritual.

Rickety platforms hang in midair above the turbulent water, flimsy structures of wood attached to the rocks in seemingly makeshift fashion. On these frail-looking perches, men of the tribes take turns fishing. Each uses a net with a 20-foot handle, thrusting it upstream as far as he can reach and allowing the current to carry it downstream with its open end facing the fish that are swimming up. Salmon are so plentiful that there’s not a break in the action, but a constant rhythm of thrust, drift, and capture.

Each netted fish is herded toward the riverbank where another fisherman removes it, clubs it, and tosses it into a large basket,
then turns to wrestle with the next one. On other platforms, too far out over the water to allow for help from shore, the fisherman pulls his laden net up hand-over-hand on the long handle to secure his catch. These are mature salmon, four or five years old and weighing 20 to 50 pounds or more apiece, a real test of strength for their captors. Near the shore, in the shallow rapids where fish are clearly visible, tribesmen spear or harpoon the huge creatures and haul them ashore while the mighty river thunders by within a few feet.

Nor are the women of the tribes idle. Several wooden smoke-houses stand on the bank with long poles propped lengthwise for drying racks. Sheltering shake roofs force the rising smoke from a series of smoldering fires back down through the rows of split fish hanging from the racks.

Women move from rack to rack, changing the position of the salmon to best take advantage of the acrid smoke which stings our eyes and twitches our noses while we watch in fascination. The quality of their work will make the difference between starvation and plenty in the months ahead. It is a scene charged with great purpose and excitement.

Many fish are taken, but many more win their way to the base of the falls, from where they fling themselves free of the water to fly in great silver arcs; some to land above the falls and some to fall back, and, after resting in an eddy, try again. Some, with a mighty effort, swim up the vertical curtains of water to join the ranks of home-going salmon above. Here the river is almost as alive with fish as are the pools below. Though some are taken by the nets and spears, thousands will complete their journey to fulfill their destiny.

TODAY, THIS STRETCH of the Columbia is part of the placid lake formed by The Dalles Dam, one of a chain of hydroelectric power plants that tames the once unfeathered and free-flowing river. It is still a lovely place, with its smooth-running expanse of water flowing silently along between the towering basalt cliffs of the gorge, but I cannot view it without mourning the loss of the wild turbulence of Celilo Falls. I sympathize strongly with the River People, who lost an irreplaceable part of their heritage, and I grieve for the rest of us who will never again experience the spellbinding drama of the Celilo Falls that used to be.

Dorothea Nordstrand has lived in Seattle's Green Lake district practically all her life. In 1986, at age 70, she received a personal computer for Christmas and began a successful career as a free-lance writer.
After the inauguration of Franklin Delano Roosevelt in March 1933, the nation's capital entered a period of frenzy known as the Hundred Days. Washington senator Clarence Dill's primary role in the New Deal came in regard to the Communications Act of 1934 and in the battle for Grand Coulee in 1933. In his battle for the great dam, Dill had to contend with those who were opposed to the dam, both in his own state of Washington and in Washington, D.C.; with those who were zealous for the dam but knew little of how things were accomplished in the nation's capital; and with a president who had far greater concerns than Grand Coulee. In 1933 Clarence Dill helped outflank the dam's opponents, guided its supporters toward what was possible, and was the leading member of Washington's congressional delegation in gaining FDR's approval of the great dam.

Dill's initial plan to secure the dam in March 1933 included incorporating it into an unemployment bill, but there were a number of possible ways to proceed. However, he recognized that the banking crisis paralyzed the nation and he must exercise patience in relation to Grand Coulee. This prudence and sense of priorities has been inaccurately cited as evidence that the dam meant little to Dill. He wanted the dam for many
reasons: jobs, future development, long-term reclamation projects, and perhaps most importantly, as a lasting monument to his own political career. It is also likely that he hoped to gain financially from the project; and there is some evidence that he used unethical means to profit from Grand Coulee.

On April 1 Dill wrote to James O'Sullivan congratulating him on his appointment as executive secretary of the Columbia Basin Commission (CBC). The CBC was created by the Washington state legislature to guide development of the Columbia Basin and negotiate with the federal government toward that end. Dill cautioned the energetic and headstrong O'Sullivan that the nation's agricultural surplus meant that Grand Coulee could never win approval as a land reclamation program. Only pursuing Grand Coulee as a public power project offered any chance of success.

In April Washington's congressional delegation remained uncertain about how to gain approval for the dam. Dill and Representative Sam B. Hill favored procuring Reconstruction Finance Corporation funds, thus avoiding the need for congressional endorsement. Both Dill and Hill told Albert Goss, master of the Washington State Grange and CBC member, that pressuring Columbia Basin development as a reclamation project was sheer folly. Goss agreed, having come to that conclusion himself sometime earlier. Dill and Hill also informed Goss that the project would not become reality without the president's support. Goss was amazed at the degree to which everything in the nation's capital awaited the president's personal approval.

Fortunately for the dam's supporters, FDR had long been interested in hydroelectric power development, rural electrification, and developing efficient agriculture. Indeed, as governor of New York, FDR had led that state's fight for public power. In the course of the battle, he had come to believe that a well-developed public power system must become a reality to be a "yardstick" by which private power companies might be regulated. Moreover, the president saw much of the West as a vast wasteland that, given cheap electrical power, irrigation, and transportation, might be used as an experiment in social and economic planning. It was with these things in mind that FDR, as the Democratic Party's nominee for president in 1932, gave a speech in Portland in which he said that "the next great hydroelectric development to be undertaken by the Federal government must be that on the Columbia River." The president favored Columbia Basin development in some form; it was now up to Washington's congressional delegation and the CBC to move that interest from the abstract to the concrete.

Around April 14 Dill saw the president briefly to provide some information on the Grand Coulee project. The material Dill presented estimated the cost of the proposal at $450 million. Said Roosevelt: "I didn't realize this dam was so big."

On April 17 Roosevelt's secretary called Dill and asked him to come to the White House to discuss the dam with the president. Albert Goss accompanied Dill; Sam Hill would have been there, but traffic delayed him. Upon entering the president's office, Dill shook hands with Roosevelt and noticed his unusually friendly manner. The senator sensed bad news. The president began to extol the virtues of the project but then slipped into reiterating all the arguments against the dam. Dill decided to risk reminding the president of his many promises to build Grand Coulee. In his memoirs, this reminder becomes a verbal beating. Dill wrote, "I was like Joe Louis raining punch after punch on his opponent." In reading Dill's memoirs, one cannot help but gain the impression that he embellished his argument with FDR. In a letter to Rufus Woods, Dill mentions his disagreement with FDR but makes much less of it than he did in his memoirs. Dill's account to Woods is probably fairly accurate: there was a brief disagreement; Dill probably worried that he had gone too far; then, to his relief, the president proposed a low dam that might cost only $40 million.

Albert Goss argued that a low dam would not control floods and would make the eventual cost of electricity too high. The president stated that he knew very little about the project but had the impression it was too large to finance under the present circumstances. Congress would never authorize the money. Goss suggested pursuing the RFC alternative; FDR thought such a course might be wise, and he agreed to assist in securing RFC funds in increments if the project could be approached in that way. The president's help was very much conditional: While Dill and Goss explored the RFC alternative, FDR wanted to see cost estimates of building the project in two phases—first a low dam, followed by a high dam. The president then mentioned his desire to do something for unemployment relief in the Pacific Northwest, remarking that Grand Coulee might help. The meeting ended on that note. Dill left some information on Grand Coulee with the president but recognized that FDR would commit to nothing until he had hard figures to study.

Goss described Dill's response to the meeting as elation but was himself a bit nonplussed at the president's reticence. Goss and Dill reacted differently to their meeting with the president. Dill had little problem beginning Grand Coulee as a low dam. Thus, the meeting encouraged him because it demonstrated Roosevelt's sincerity about the low dam. Goss discovered the president's antipathy to the high dam only during the meeting. Dill apparently had not informed Goss of his previous conversation with FDR, perhaps because he considered Goss's presence unnecessary and bothersome. The two men had little use for one another.

Dill later suspected that FDR had wanted to begin Grand Coulee as a low dam all along and thus had sought a working compromise at the April 17 meeting. This was probably true. Though FDR felt great pressure to cut government expenses in 1933, several factors compelled him to build the dam. First, he had repeated his promise to build Grand Coulee Dam on numerous occasions, and not just to Dill. Ceremonies at Muscle Shoals in February were just the most recent occasion upon which he had mentioned damming the Columbia at
Grand Coulee. Second, the public power issue was directly tied to Grand Coulee, and the president had campaigned as a public power man. Roosevelt's detailed vision for regional development of the United States was largely based on a systematic use of the nation's great waterways; public power formed the cornerstone of that usage. Third, the Pacific Northwest badly needed jobs; Grand Coulee would help a great deal. Finally, Dill's relationship with Roosevelt gave the senator access to the president and made FDR amenable to helping him.

After the meeting, Goss advised Governor Clarence Martin that telegrams supporting the project were a waste of time; he needed hard figures. In response to Goss's request, O'Sullivan wrote on April 20,

"I have made tentative figures based on the knowledge of the cost, and believe we can put in the foundations of the dam and go as high as probably sixty feet above low water, for about sixty million... it is my opinion that we could put in the power plant also for this cost, and that we could utilize the turbines that would be required for the high dam.

O'Sullivan further assured Goss that the CBC was not asking for federal government funds for power construction without having a market for the new power. The power would be sold, he asserted. O'Sullivan now made plans to travel to Washington, D.C., to present the Grand Coulee project to the president in detail. O'Sullivan, who possessed an encyclopedic knowledge of Grand Coulee, was the best man for this job.

After a meeting with the president on May 2, Dill announced the government's tentative plan to develop the Columbia Basin. He explained that the plan as it stood would not require congressional action and would cost only about $60 million, exactly O'Sullivan's figure on the cost of the low dam. The RFC and Washington unemployment relief fund were to supply the necessary financing.

Dill, Goss, and O'Sullivan worked on the details of the Columbia Basin plan. It is important to note that at this time the project did not have the approval of the president. FDR had merely encouraged Dill and the CBC to work on the project, assuming it would be financed largely through the RFC. The Washingtonians were to bring him a proposal in line with a multistage development of Grand Coulee at substantially lower cost than originally projected. The key to developing Grand Coulee as an RFC project centered on the formation of a power district in Washington that would contract for the sale of power and thus establish the necessary collateral for an RFC loan.

Hope for the president's approval of Grand Coulee Dam now rested on the financial attractiveness of the project and, some believed, Clarence Dill. O'Sullivan expressed the latter in a letter to his secretary: "Dill can get us the dam if he really wants to, because of his influence with the President...."

O'Sullivan's estimate of Dill's power was too strong. If FDR decided against the dam, as Hoover had, there was nothing Dill could do. However, the letter does accurately indicate that Dill was the lead man in the effort to gain the president's approval.

Interestingly, O'Sullivan did not at that time care who got credit for the dam, as long as it was built: "I am not giving out any publicity letting Senator Dill do it. We cannot forewarn opposition of our moves and the more Senator Dill 'fathers' the dam, the more certain we will get it. He is powerful with Roosevelt. I would give him the whole state if he puts it over, as I think he will and soon at that." Dill believed he would as well, not so much because he was "powerful with Roosevelt" but because he knew the president wanted to build Grand Coulee. For his part, O'Sullivan continued to urge his colleagues in Washington to create a power district that could handle Grand Coulee's electricity. Though O'Sullivan was willing to give Dill credit for gaining Roosevelt's approval of the dam—at least in 1933—he did not particularly like Dill.

Dill now discovered that if the project were to use RFC funds, Washington would have to come up with one-third of the total, or $20 million. He informed the president that his state simply could not raise that much money. Apparently undisturbed, FDR promptly responded that it might be possible to finance the project through the $3.3 billion Public Works Administration package then working its way through Congress. After discussing the possibility of using PWA funds, Dill and FDR decided the senator had better make sure that PWA funds could be used for power projects. To this end, Dill went to see Democratic Senator Robert Wagner of New York, chairman of the Senate committee responsible for the National Industrial Recovery Act, which included the PWA. Wagner referred Dill to Senator Carl Hayden, Democrat of Arizona, chairman of the Senate portion of the conference committee handling the bill. Hayden objected to including a vague reference authorizing dams; he feared opposition from those who did not want any more reclamation dams. But when Dill explained that all he wanted was a power dam, Hayden agreed to insert the words "development of water power" into the paragraph describing acceptable projects for PWA funds. These four words would eventually provide FDR the legal basis for beginning Grand Coulee.

In mid May work on Grand Coulee proceeded on several fronts. Dill filed an application with the Federal Power Commission (FPC) to build Grand Coulee Dam. More importantly, the Public Works bill passed Congress. The Columbia Basin Commission and the rest of Washington, even many former Grand Coulee opponents from Spokane, now waited to see what Dill and FDR could come up with. James E. Ford, managing secretary of the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, who was in Washington, D.C., advancing the cause of the dam, told the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, "The fight for the Columbia Basin Project virtually has simmered down to a one-man proposition. Senator C. C. Dill has undertaken the task of putting the project across, they say, and is doing excellent
work.” Ford’s pursuit of the dam in the nation’s capital is indicative of how the project had won over many in Spokane who had preferred a competing proposal—the gravity plan. Even Dill’s longtime enemy, William Cowles, publisher of the Spokane Spokesman-Review, now supported the dam.

In late May it appeared that Grand Coulee had the president’s confidential approval and would be built through PWA funds. But concern remained that FDR might change his mind. The CBC relied on Dill to avoid that pitfall. Although the president had not provided public support, O’Sullivan was ecstatic and even had warm thoughts for Dill. O’Sullivan predicted that upon their return home, he and Dill would “show those guys up who are trying to block this project.”

Those opposed to Grand Coulee were a mixture of Washington’s private power interests and public power supporters from west of the Cascades. Ralph D. Nichols, a Seattle city councilman, and James D. Ross, head of Seattle City Light (a publicly owned utility), were both advocates of public power but opposed to Grand Coulee. Times were tough for both the city and the utility. The Depression had reached its nadir and budgets shrank with each passing month. They were afraid the massive Grand Coulee project would either provide cheap power to private utilities or allow the federal government to compete directly with public utilities to sell electricity. Moreover, Seattle had its own plans for more power production on the Skagit River. To Ross and Nichols, Grand Coulee seemed ill-timed at best and perhaps completely unnecessary.

Of course, private power interests opposed Grand Coulee in an effort to protect their investments and profit margins. Roosevelt and Dill had specifically in mind the idea that public power projects would provide a “yardstick” by which private power rates could be judged and possibly controlled. Private power advocates, often led by Spokane’s Washington Water Power Company, argued that the Pacific Northwest already had an abundance of power, that Grand Coulee’s power would be enormously expensive, and that the project’s reclamation aspects would seriously undermine the administration’s effort to take excess farmland out of production. In the summer of 1933 several newspapers advanced the private power argument, and Pacific Power and Light Company president Paul McKee declared that Grand Coulee would only add to an existing power surplus.

Dill now faced a crisis of his own. Ralph Nichols, in a Spokane speech, accused the senator of pushing Grand Coulee for personal gain. Nichols said Dill owned large amounts of land in the Columbia Basin. Dill responded to the accusation:

*Whether you said it, I do not know, and if you did say it, I have no knowledge of where you secured your information. I am sure you do not want to do me an injustice or tell anything that isn’t true about me. For that reason I am writing you to say I do not own a foot of land in the Columbia Basin Project, that I haven’t any real property in the world with the exception of my home in Spokane, some lots in Spokane and an interest in some property just south of Seattle. I never owned any Columbia Basin land but with one exception. A number of years ago someone induced me to buy a half interest in a 640-acre tract there with a view to raising wheat on it. We didn’t raise wheat, we sold it, and I think I made a few hundred dollars out of the transaction.*

Nichols wrote back to Dill, apologizing for inaccurately claiming that Dill had anything to do with land speculation in the Columbia Basin. He did not, however, correct his erroneous belief that the entire Grand Coulee project was the dream of avaricious land speculators. Later in July Nichols also wrote a letter to former Governor Marion E. Hay. It was passed on to the CBC and read before that group. In the letter Nichols apologized for inaccurately associating Dill’s name with land speculation. However, shortly after his apology to Dill, Nichols wrote a letter to the widow of A. Scott Bullitt (Bullitt had died suddenly while serving as FDR’s campaign manager in the Northwest) in which he again associated Dill with land speculators. J. D. Ross also repeated this charge and ordered aides to look into the land records of the Columbia Basin to find proof of a scandal. Dill had no part in land speculation. Of course, charges that Grand Coulee’s supporters were a pack of land speculators were added to the arsenal of weapons that private power interests brought against the dam.

In mid June FDR informed Dill that Washington would have to come up with $377,000 for preliminary engineering work if the project were to go forward. Once the state raised the engineering money, which Dill believed could be taken from its $10 million relief fund, he felt certain that FDR would “put his stamp of approval” on the project publicly. Grand Coulee plans at the time anticipated that 30 percent of the project would be paid for with PWA funds while the rest would be borrowed from the PWA on a bond issued by the proposed Grand Coulee Power District. Contracts between Washington and the United States Bureau of Reclamation for the necessary engineering work were in preparation.

Opposition quickly arose to spending $377,000 in state funds on Grand Coulee, as did opposition to placing “the entire burden” of the project on Washingtonians. But that opposition again came from private power interests and the uninformed: even under the plan outlined above, the state did not carry the “entire burden.”

On June 16 Dill conferred with the president concerning Grand Coulee and informed him of the progress being made in the state’s effort to raise the engineering money and create a power district. Dill also announced that the FPC had decided to waive the 60-day waiting period on the state’s request to build the dam.

There were certain members of the CBC and other dam supporters who wanted the state to retain control of the
project while borrowing federal money to pay for it. Albert Goss was one of those who preferred state control—even to the point of abandoning the project should the federal government take it over. However, Goss left the CBC in the middle of the battle and became federal land bank commissioner. Though leaving the fight, Goss advised Rufus Woods to resist letting the federal government run the project. O'Sullivan and Dill thought this attitude foolish and shortsighted. Woods, however, agreed with Goss.

Dill returned home in late June to conciliate the project's friends and face its critics:

I was amazed to learn that there are those who are trying to delay and prevent the building of this dam through insidious propaganda. They say we cannot sell the power. We need sell only 250,000 kilowatts.

Some say there is more power being produced now than we can sell. Of course there is, and why? Because of the profiteering prices charged by the power trust subsidiaries that are paying dividends on watered stocks. Bring down the prices of power to what Tacoma pays with municipal ownership and we will increase power used in Washington by 100 percent.

The senator also explained the details of the Columbia Basin project as it then stood. He emphasized that there was no plan to make Washingtonians responsible for a huge bonded debt. Rather, the federal government would provide the state's share of the money, using future power revenues as collateral while providing 30 percent of the necessary funds itself.

The editors of the Spokesman-Review, having taken the time to study the plan, liked it much better. But W. E. Southard and Rufus Woods still wanted Grand Coulee to be a state-controlled project and pressured O'Sullivan accordingly. The Spokesman-Review editorialists, however, would have no part of any plan, such as that of Southard and Woods, which placed the state's taxpayers on the line. The paper much preferred the plan Dill had explained to the press: outright federal building of the project such as was occurring in the Tennessee Valley.

On July 16, 1933, a ground-breaking ceremony took place at the dam site, with Senator Dill (center) turning the first shovel of dirt.

Dill sat down with Governor Clarence Martin to map a strategy for procuring the $377,000 needed for preliminary engineering work. Dill told the people of Washington that the president's final approval rested on securing the $377,000 in engineering funds. After a meeting of the CBC, the governor, Senator Dill, and the State Emergency Unemployment Relief Commission, Dill announced that the necessary money would be forthcoming, taken from a $10 million state bond issue. That accomplished, the CBC signed a contract with the Bureau of Reclamation to do the necessary engineering work. Dill now proceeded to secure a contract between the federal government and an as-yet-unnamed state agency to build the entire project. He informed Washingtonians that the president had given his verbal assurance and would make his formal approval soon.

Nevertheless, influential people in the state remained opposed to Grand Coulee. Ralph Nichols wrote a lengthy letter to Dill detailing his opposition to any Grand Coulee project that meant the state's taxpayers had to carry part of the financial burden. Dill must have laughed to himself, as Nichols's objections bore no relation to reality—the sale of Grand Coulee's power was the only collateral being offered the federal government. J. D. Ross also remained firmly opposed to the dam.

Supporters of the project were ecstatic that work on Grand Coulee was actually going to begin. They decided to hold a ground-breaking ceremony at the site, featuring all of the state's dignitaries. Dill turned the first shovel full of dirt to
the applause of more than 5,000 people and spoke briefly, saying the credit for building Grand Coulee belonged to the people of Washington who elected him to the Senate and to those who had worked so long on the project. But Governor Martin, O'Sullivan, and Judge Charles Levy said of Dill, “He has been the force that has put it over when the time came for it to be put over.” Even Rufus Woods, who had opposed Dill in every election and called him a “near traitor” in 1918, said, “And now here I find myself following and supporting Senator Dill today, and ready to be a good bird-dog when he wants anything done. You’ve got to hand it to Dill, our Democratic senator.” Again, the accolades for Dill were a bit too strong. He was not a “force” that put anything over on the president. He was a team player, a compromiser, as he had been his entire career. His access to the White House allowed him to keep Grand Coulee in front of a president already disposed to work with Westerners and build the dam.

Governor Martin also correctly cited the cooperative spirit, the spirit that had built the West, as the key ingredient that had gotten the project under way: “Without a doubt, the dam would now be built, because the President of the United States, Washington’s Congressional delegation, the Columbia Basin Commission, and the Governor of Washington were all working together, harmoniously and determinedly, to put it over.” He praised the work of Senator Dill as indispensable to the success of the project. Publicly, Dill was a hero though privately Nichols continued his campaign against the dam and Washington’s senior senator.

Though ground-breaking ceremonies had taken place, the preliminary engineering contracts had been signed, and a good amount of back-slapping had gone on, the project had not received the essential final approval from the president. Dill himself was “confident President Roosevelt will provide funds to entirely complete the Columbia Basin Project as rapidly as possible,” and he was personally so dedicated to the project that he would “resign from the Senate or do anything else possible to further this great project.” Dill returned to Washington, D.C., in late July to meet with federal officials concerning Grand Coulee. He met with Harold Ickes, secretary of the interior and head of the PWA, Colonel A. W. Waite of the PWA, Dr. Elwood Mead, head of the Bureau of Reclamation, and Daniel C. Roper, secretary of commerce. Later he met with Budget Director Lewis Douglas. Dill expected to meet with the president after all of the preliminary conferences were completed to seek final approval.

While Dill was in Washington, Congressman Charles Martin of Oregon caused a wave of concern when he claimed that Bonneville Dam had been approved and thus Grand Coulee was “off the books.” Martin asserted that Bonneville would supply the region’s power needs, leaving Grand Coulee as a reclamation project with no need for reclamation in sight. Moreover, consternation among Grand Coulee dam supporters increased when Harold Ickes appointed Marshall Dana, editor of the Oregon Journal, to be one of the regional advisors to the PWA with authority over the Pacific Northwest. Martin’s proclamation, combined with Dana’s appointment, made it appear that Oregon was besting Washington for federal projects.

News from Washington, D.C., made spirits sag even more. The PWA board, assigned to pass judgment on Grand Coulee, became concerned that there would be no market for the dam’s power. Dill suspected private power interests had prejudiced the board; he wired O’Sullivan in Spokane to request rebuttal information as soon as possible.

Though Grand Coulee’s enemies were legion, Dill had a few friends himself. The senator beseeched the president to encourage the Public Works board to give Grand Coulee immediate attention. The president agreed. In addition, O’Sullivan came through for Dill with data on the prospective market for the dam’s power; then, as Roosevelt requested, Dill met with the PWA board on July 26. The next day, Dill advised O’Sullivan that the meetings had gone well and not to worry about Congressman Martin’s “propaganda ... the President is behind us now.”
While Dill did not have time to be concerned with Martin and McNary, the Spokesman-Review used its sharpest pen on them: "In future dealings with these Portland interests and their bragging congressman, Senators Dill and Bone and Governor Martin will be justified in taking off gloves and speaking bluntly... the people must get behind Senator Dill and Governor Martin in their insistence that the Grand Coulee Dam be started as soon as plans are completed." The Spokesman-Review need not have worried. Dill had managed things in Washington, D.C., nicely, despite the fact that Harold Ickes had been opposed to the project, as had Secretary of Agriculture Henry Wallace. Wallace objected to Grand Coulee because of its long-term reclamation aspects. Nevertheless, after Dill met with the president on July 26, FDR instructed Ickes and the PWA Board to approve the project.

The Spokesman-Review's headline on July 28 ran, "Money Ordered Advanced After Dill Confers With President." The story went on to say in part: "This action was taken under specific instructions given by President Roosevelt after his conference yesterday with Senator Dill, which left the Board (headed by Ickes) no discretion but to follow orders." After his meeting with the president, reporters asked Dill for a comment. He remarked that he was "delighted" but "never had any doubt the project would be approved." He added that Grand Coulee was just the beginning of a vast development of the Pacific Northwest, the "President has big plans for this development." Meanwhile, newspapers that had claimed "Dill couldn't deliver" were being ridiculed by papers with more faith (a Rufus Woods editorial in the Wenatchee Daily World blasted the Yakima Republic).

Though Dill worked hard to see Grand Coulee built, and the newspapers were flattering, it is too much to say that he "delivered" or in some way convinced a reluctant FDR to approve Grand Coulee for the simple reason that FDR wanted to build Grand Coulee all along. Dill's role was to present information, provided by O'Sullivan, to the various agencies, jump through the bureaucratic hoops, and keep an already supportive FDR informed. Convinced of FDR's support, Dill was generally sanguine about the dam in the spring and summer of 1933. As he said, he "never really doubted the dam's approval. He would be equally confident, while others were frantic, about the high dam. In 1933 if the president wanted something done, it was usually done.

With the dam approved, Dill encouraged the Northern Pacific Railroad to build a spur line to the dam site so as to expedite construction. A few days later Dill headed west to Ohio to spend some time with his mother and then moved on to his home in Spokane. Upon returning to Washington, Dill toured the countryside, explaining what Grand Coulee would mean to the Pacific Northwest and listening to pleas for help with smaller dam and reclamation projects. Some of these (i.e., the Roza project in Yakima and the Skagit project for Seattle) he had been working on for some time and would continue to pursue.

In mid September Dill returned to Washington, D.C., and met with the president to discuss Grand Coulee. The senator informed FDR that the state had taken steps to halt land speculation in the Columbia Basin. Roosevelt was very pleased, perhaps remembering that such speculation deeply concerned Ickes. After the meeting, Dill assured reporters that funds for a town and a bridge at the dam site would soon be released. Two days later Ickes authorized the funds.

Back in Washington, members of the CBC worried that "flank attacks" might derail Grand Coulee. Indeed, the Washington Water Power Company argued in October 1933 that Grand Coulee should not be the cause of its losing the Kettle Falls site and that federal construction amounted to an unfair subsidy. Frank Post, president of WWP, called for the power sold from Grand Coulee to be priced at the true cost of production and requested that the agency selling the power be required to return equitable taxes to the state. If WWP retained its rights to Kettle Falls, the high dam at Grand Coulee could not be built because a high dam would flood the falls. Thus Grand Coulee's power production would be held in check. In light of such attacks, Ellsworth French urged Dill to push for authorization of five or six million dollars before Congress reconvened so as to put the dam on solid ground. This kind of concern plagued Grand Coulee until Congress formally approved the high dam in 1935.

Dill announced late in October that PWA hoped to make Grand Coulee an entirely federal project. The federal government possessed powers the CBC and Washington lacked. For example, it had superior powers of eminent domain. These powers enabled it to begin condemnation proceedings against lands to be used for dams and then begin construction without waiting for final adjudication of the suit. Yet, there was serious opposition to making Grand Coulee a federal project. A. S. Goss and Rufus Woods remained staunchly opposed. They saw federal control as a disaster that would make Washington subservient to the federal government. However, members of the CBC, including Woods, and Governor Martin eventually concluded that Grand Coulee could be built in no other way.

In early November the CBC met with Senator Dill and Governor Martin to sign contracts with the federal government that made Grand Coulee Dam a completely federal project. The dam would be financed entirely through PWA with the Bureau of Reclamation in charge of construction. Moreover, the federal government intended to maintain ownership of the dam. Dill immediately called for a comprehensive authority along the lines of TVA to administer the Columbia River Basin. However, Ickes persuaded FDR that a regional authority for the Columbia River Valley was not necessary.

Though Dill lost that fight with Ickes, he won another one about the same time. A number of Washington's cities had proposed projects that depended on funding from Ickes's Public Works Administration. But Ickes hesitated to approve such projects for fear Washington was getting more than its share of the federal purse because of massive outlays for Grand Coulee.
On November 16, 1933, Dill protested such treatment to FDR. The president directed Ickes to transfer the municipal projects in question to Harry Hopkins's Civil Works Administration. Dill's efforts meant that those smaller projects would be built and that 10,000 more Washingtonians would get jobs.

Clarence Dill kept his eye on Grand Coulee as the last year of his second term came to a close—as did some members of the CBC. James O'Sullivan and others pestered Dill with letters claiming the plans for the low dam were not adequate to allow the later superimposing of the high dam, even though the plans for the dam had just been changed to ensure that a high dam could be erected on the low dam at some future date. What O'Sullivan was really after, however, was initial construction of the high dam, or at least its foundation, rather than the low dam. In January Dill responded to O'Sullivan's entreaties:

I do wish you would try to put a stop to this agitation about the foundation of the low dam not being satisfactory for superimposing the high dam. Dr. Mead stated when he was in Spokane that the plans are being changed to make the low dam entirely satisfactory. I have just talked with him and he tells me the entire plans are being revised on that basis. Neither he nor I can understand why this agitation should have been started again. It causes a lot of mail for me to answer and only tends to arouse dissatisfaction out there regarding the work we are doing.

O'Sullivan answered Dill with a letter in which he asked the senator if it were not possible to get more money for the dam to make the low dam more compatible with the high dam. O'Sullivan was no politician and Dill attempted to explain the realities of Washington, D.C., to him:

My reason for being so insistent that we avoid too much public discussion about the high dam now is that another public works appropriation is coming up in Congress and I am anxious to avoid any possibility of a limitation against the Grand Coulee. If those who are opposed to it could make it appear that this dam is to irrigate more land [the low dam was only a power dam] now or in the immediate future, they might use that as an excuse to prevent expenditure of even the $63 million.

I am sure we can get satisfactory plans for the foundations of the low dam but we must build the power plant and the dam for $60 million. It is unthinkable to reopen this question for more money at this time. Once we get the low dam actually started and have the foundation actually worked upon, you will find me just as aggressive for the high dam as you have ever been. I am simply trying to avoid pitfalls by keeping away from discussion now and I must depend upon you and other friends of the project to help me. It is extremely important that we get the contract let early this summer so we can have a big force of men working when the President visits the dam site.

O'Sullivan paid no attention. His love for the high dam combined with his concern for the details of the project blinded him to the realities of politics. He responded to Dill's letter with assurances that he was not "striking for the high dam now," then proceeded to do just that. He had the support of another engineer who claimed the low dam, as planned, would not be adequate to serve as a base for the high dam. O'Sullivan advocated using the $60 million to construct a firm base for the high dam, effectively abandoning Roosevelt's low dam idea.

Dill probably telephoned S. O. Harper, acting chief engineer of the project, because O'Sullivan soon received a letter from Harper explaining that the low dam was entirely adequate to serve as a base for the high dam. Harper explained to O'Sullivan: "practically all the investment made at this time can be utilized to full advantage in the construction of the high dam."

FDR waves good-bye as his train leaves Ephrata after his first visit to the Grand Coulee dam site on August 7, 1934. His two sons, John and James, flank him, with Senator Dill at far left.
In addition to Harper's letter, Dill wrote to O'Sullivan in another attempt to make him understand the political dynamics of the project. However, this time his frayed patience showed.

I have read the letters of Mr. Morse and Mr. Darland [associates of O'Sullivan], and all I can say is that we simply must not attempt to change the $63 million allocation and we must build the dam to whatever height it is possible to build it with a power plant also for the $63 million. If there isn't enough money to build it to a height of 1,085 feet [elevation], then make it to 1,060 feet; if not enough for that, then make it 1,040 feet, if not enough for that, make it 1,000 feet. In other words, we must have a dam and power plant for this money, and then get additional money for a higher dam at a later date.

We want to get just as much foundation for the high dam in as possible, but once the specifications are made up for this low dam, we must go through with it and then if there is some loss when the high dam is built, that must be absorbed in the future.

Dill had problems in the nation's capital as well. Some minor hold-ups in calling for bids on the project required his time, but Mead and Ickes cooperated in solving the problems. O'Sullivan, however, had become agitated at the delays and sent a telegram to Dill advising that he ask the CBC to send a "resolution" to Ickes. Dill's calm response no doubt caused O'Sullivan's suspicions that Dill was "not on the board for the high dam."

O'Sullivan's long-term mistrust and dislike for Dill, exacerbated by their disagreement over the low dam specifications, now developed into hatred. In a letter to Ray Clark on July 5, 1934, O'Sullivan asserted that there was a graft-laden effort to throw the main contract for dam construction to the Six Companies, one of the main contenders for the job of building Grand Coulee. Moreover, O'Sullivan associated his stand for the high dam with honesty, implying those favoring the low dam specifications, now developed into a "resolution" to Ickes. Dill's calm response no doubt caused an increase in O'Sullivan's suspicions that Dill was "not on board for the high dam."

The political climate was charged by the time O'Sullivan wrote to Ickes. Dill's calm response no doubt caused O'Sullivan's suspicions that Dill was "not on board for the high dam." O'Sullivan asserted that there was a graft-laden effort to throw the main contract for dam construction to the Six Companies, one of the main contenders for the job of building Grand Coulee. Moreover, O'Sullivan associated his stand for the high dam with honesty, implying those favoring the low dam specifications, now developed into a "resolution" to Ickes. Dill's calm response no doubt caused an increase in O'Sullivan's suspicions that Dill was "not on board for the high dam."

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My job here is a hot spot. Lots of gravy mixed up in the Six Company's bid. Politicians, grafters, etc., are trying to horn in on Mason [a company competing with Six Companies for the main contract]. The issue between the high dam and the low dam is acute. My stand for the high dam and for honest bids has made things pretty warm for me lately.

W. R. Jarrell, Secret Service Agent, Pacific Northwest, Seattle, Washington, seems to be the one who can tell the most about the President's trip. I wrote you about getting the different communities down there organized, and keeping Spokane from running the show. The same old game which was played for years is intended.

Two days later O'Sullivan wrote to Rufus Woods, making more explicit accusations. He claimed that Dill arranged for his longtime associate and Spokane attorney Frank Funkhouser to meet with Sam Mason, head of the Mason Company. Funkhouser suggested to Mason that he could act as Mason's attorney in securing the dam contract, for which service he wanted $100,000. Mason wanted nothing to do with Funkhouser's scheme. O'Sullivan went on to claim that Dr. Elwood Mead, head of the Bureau of Reclamation, was trying to "throw the job" to the Six Companies. O'Sullivan also asserted that James E. McGovern, a member of the CBC from Spokane, was attempting to unethically profit from Grand Coulee.

Most of the charges O'Sullivan made were untrue or completely unsubstantiated. However, Harold Ickes, whose reputation for honesty was well earned, ordered an investigation of the Grand Coulee project in the summer of 1934. Agents Oscar Brinkman, C. E. Grier, and Roy Young submitted reports. Mead, Mason, McGovern, and the Six Companies were cleared of any wrongdoing; but Frank Funkhouser, a longtime Dill associate and Spokane attorney, was guilty of unethical conduct with regard to Grand Coulee. Moreover, it seemed that Dill was a party to Funkhouser's schemes.

According to the investigations, Funkhouser signed a contract with W. E. Southard, an Ephrata attorney and the representative of a number of landowners in the Columbia Basin who hoped to sell their land to the federal government as part of the Grand Coulee development. The contract stated that Funkhouser was to receive 25 percent of Southard's 20 percent of the money obtained for the landowners. Why would Southard sign such a contract? Funkhouser had led him to believe that Dill could influence how much the government paid for Grand Coulee land. When it became apparent that government appraisers were not going to allow bloated land appraisals to stand, Southard wanted out of his contract with Funkhouser. However, Funkhouser had another scheme to profit from Grand Coulee. O'Sullivan appears to have been right about Funkhouser approaching Mason with the proposition that he would use his influence with Dill to guide the contract for the dam to Mason for a fee of $100,000. Mason would have nothing to do with Funkhouser. O'Sullivan's assertion regarding Funkhouser's schemes came from an architect named Hargrove who worked for Mason. Hargrove, however, refused to make his testimony public.

Nevertheless, the investigators concluded that Frank Funkhouser was engaged in unethical and probably illegal conduct, but gaining a conviction was unlikely. There was no evidence that Dill was a party to Funkhouser's activities. Thus, when Elwood Mead wrote a summary of the investigation to Ickes, he could write that Dill was innocent of any wrongdoing. However, historians are not limited to what can be proven in a court of law; what may be insufficient to send a man to prison may well point to probabilities. Such is the case regarding Clarence Dill and Grand Coulee.

It seems probable that the financial possibilities inherent
in Grand Coulee development were too great a temptation for Dill to overcome. He and Funkhouser had been friends for years. Funkhouser used Dill's name repeatedly over a long period of time. Word of such activity could have easily returned to Dill. Therefore, it does not seem likely that Funkhouser could use Dill's name in his Grand Coulee schemes without the latter's permission. What does seem likely is that Dill and Funkhouser had an unwritten understanding that Dill would receive some of the money Funkhouser managed to make off the senator's name. Ironically, Dill had little power to affect contracts or land sales. If the deals Funkhouser had tried to create had gone through, his clients would have been paying him for nothing.

So Dill probably engaged in unethical conduct in a failed attempt to make money. It would be easy, and simplistic, to cast the senator in a villain's role and make his accuser, O'Sullivan, something of a hero. But history is not so simple. Though O'Sullivan had many positive qualities—perseverance, single-mindedness, and a willingness to sacrifice himself for the sake of the project—he was also overly suspicious of anyone who did not agree with him. For this reason, Mead wrote Ickes: "Reading these reports shows the wisdom of the department in divorcing Mr. James O'Sullivan from all the operations at Grand Coulee. It is not that he is dishonest, but he is unbalanced and apparently thinks he is the only righteous man connected with this development." Dill occasionally allowed self-interest to overrule his better judgment, but he was a shrewd judge of political realities and men. O'Sullivan and Dill continued to clash over Grand Coulee.

In the summer of 1934 O'Sullivan turned to selling "the president for the high dam on his visit." O'Sullivan's enemies, as he perceived them, were Dill and McGovern, Spokane men who favored FDR's plan for the low dam to precede the high dam:

There are an amazing number of rumors regarding what the president will do concerning the high dam. Some of these indicate that he is on the verge of authorizing the high dam. However, the activity of Senator Dill and J. E. McGovern in securing control of all invitations would indicate an effort to keep the President from learning of the need of the high dam. It is particularly important that President Roosevelt should understand that the power trust is still working hard to defeat the high dam and that he should personally direct the Federal Power Commission and the Bureau of Reclamation to protect the power and water rights necessary for the completed structure.

O'Sullivan's errors and concerns in this letter reveal a startlingly misinformed and suspicious mind. He assumed the president was uninformed about the high dam when in fact both Dill and Goss had explained it to him, Dill on more than one occasion. He apparently had no understanding of how cost, not private power interests, dictated a low dam. Moreover, he associated Dill with those interests and believed the senator had no desire to build the high dam. Finally, he saw malevolence in Washington's senior senator organizing a presidential visit to the state.

In early August 1934 FDR visited Grand Coulee. The ceremony featured all of the standard trappings and speeches. Clarence Dill and FDR were the men of the hour. In his speech Dill mentioned how he had brought the dam to FDR's attention, how the president favored a low dam, and how the project came to life. Then Dill graciously, and appropriately, gave FDR credit for building the dam. Indeed, throughout his long life, in both public and private, Clarence Dill would often give FDR the lion's share of credit for Grand Coulee. In Dill's mind existed two versions of how Grand Coulee came about. In one, Dill was the man who won the dam from a reluctant president who owed him a favor. In the other, FDR's leadership and vision made Grand Coulee a reality. Which story one got from Dill probably depended upon how the question was asked. That he could hold seemingly contradictory ideas about the dam's origin is not surprising, for he had a number of apparently conflicting ideas, values, and dreams.

Just after the celebration, O'Sullivan wrote to Ray Clark:

I think you are right in saying that a showdown is very near at hand. The gang here have been framing me. McGovern, assisted by Funkhouser and Dill, grabbed control of the President's reception. This gang here secured the publicity from Washington, D.C., stating that the commission was through and that I was offensive. They tried to keep any information about the high dam or reclamation from getting to the President. They have suppressed all publicity about the Soap Lake meeting, which was the biggest event of all. I showed the President all of the exhibits of Columbia Basin products and then introduced myself. He said, "You do not have to introduce yourself, O'Sullivan, I know all about you. You have done wonderful work for this project and you will have my support in carrying on your work." He said that loudly in the presence of Senators Bone and Dill and a number in the audience. Senator Ronald writes me that he has learned disquieting things in Olympia. The plan was to oust me at the next meeting of the commission.

McGovern, Dill and Funkhouser plan to shut me out entirely. I forced them to have the President's car stop at the exhibit at Soap Lake. All the boys cooperated fine in getting out banners, ribbons, etc., on the high dam. We actually sold Roosevelt on the high dam and on reclamation in spite of them. . . . The administration knows of the efforts of the gang to keep any information regarding reclamation and the high dam from him [Roosevelt]. I can say that I stand ace high with Ickes and the President.

It is ironic that O'Sullivan would claim to stand "ace high" with Ickes, who would have never built the dam had it been up to him. This letter also mentions the complete fiction, so often repeated, that banners on the roadside combined with O'Sullivan's efforts on the day of the celebration, convinced FDR to build the high dam. The truth is that Clarence Dill and
James O'Sullivan at Coulee City, October 1931. He worked strenuously for many years to see Grand Coulee Dam built, but he disliked and mistrusted Clarence Dill.

FDR always intended to build the high dam; only O'Sullivan's imagination concocted a different scenario. Moreover, if FDR had not been inclined to build the high dam, roadside banners would not have convinced him to build it. However, Ickes, who accompanied FDR on this trip and had long held reservations about the whole project, admitted that the sheer grandeur of the landscape and potential of the project caused him to become a supporter of the high dam.

In the 1930s there was no doubt as to who had led the Washington congressional delegation in gaining federal approval of the dam. Clarence Dill was a hero in the eyes of most people and easily the most popular political figure in the state. Even W. H. Cowles sought to make his peace with the senator. Hearing he was considering retirement in 1934, Cowles visited Dill in Washington, D.C., and expressed his intention to publicly support the Democrat's return to the Senate so that he could watch over the dam. Dill rejected Cowles's offer.

Though Dill was a hero in the 1930s, history has not been kind to him with regard to his role in building Grand Coulee Dam. George Sundborg's *Hail Columbia* gives most of the credit to James O'Sullivan, from whose papers Sundborg's book is almost exclusively drawn. Sundborg's disparaging view of Dill is essentially O'Sullivan's. Rumors of Dill's attempts to make money on Grand Coulee would not go away, and they hurt him when writers like Sundborg assessed his work for the dam. Later accounts of how the dam gained approval unfortunately followed Sundborg's lead and de-emphasized Dill's role. The primary problem with works that focus on the lengthy local battle for Grand Coulee is that they do not explain adequately how this local campaign turned into a federal project. The obvious link between the local interests and the federal government—Washington's senior senator—was ethically distasteful both to the principles of the time and later historians. Correspondence between the dam's major backers contains references to Dill's unethical activities and also makes clear political animosities. Historians could not reconcile the rumors of Dill's avarice and his unpopularity amongst Grand Coulee supporters with an important role in securing the dam. Unfortunately, the United States has had no shortage of politicians who have performed vital public service while attempting to enrich themselves. History is seldom clean and neat.

Dill was Washington's key figure in the Grand Coulee Dam effort in 1933 and 1934. Dill's access to the president allowed the senator to present him with information that helped maintain his commitment to the project. But Dill would have had little with which to impress the president had it not been for the countless hours of work devoted to the project over the previous 15 years. Even the fight between the pumpers (Grand Coulee) and gravity plan supporters (water from Idaho) had not been entirely in vain, as it allowed a consensus to form for the dam, even in Spokane.

There were several men without whom the project would have been difficult to achieve; four were essential: James O'Sullivan—who sacrificed himself for years to see the dam built and who provided Dill with the facts he needed to convince FDR that the dam could be built at a reasonable cost; Rufus Woods—who consistently publicized and supported the project to keep the dream alive; Clarence Dill—who possessed the political office and personal relationship necessary to bring the project to FDR's attention; and most importantly, Franklin Roosevelt, who had the vision and authority to order the dam built. The efforts of these men, and those of their supporting cast contrast the myth of the West's individualist base to reality: despite their differences, they cooperated to help build the West. Moreover, the building of Grand Coulee Dam is one of the key developments in the region's history: Grand Coulee and the dams that followed provide the power for the modern Pacific Northwest.

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It's the Water...

With a population of 850 in 1890, and recovering from a recent fire that destroyed the business portion of the community, Pullman, Washington, hoped to attract new residents with this promotional card, issued by its board of trade. The pictured artesian well, flowing at 1,000 gallons per minute, was only 78 feet deep, and there was no need to drill deeper than 100 feet for a steady water supply. Agricultural land, available nearby for $20 to $30 per acre, would "pay for itself in one or two years." The board offered to all, "a hearty welcome, good society, pure water in abundance, a healthful climate, excellent school and church facilities, happiness and prosperity."

The Washington State Historical Society's Special Collections division holds a large number of "boomer" promotional pieces from throughout the state, and continually seeks additions to the collections.
ON A MAP, Grays Harbor looks like a pair of cavernous jaws biting into the Pacific Ocean, and it was into this yawning maw that Captain Robert Gray first sailed his brig, Columbia Rediviva, in 1792. He thus gave the body of water a name and a place in history. Instead of falling down some monstrous gullet, however, Gray found one of the finest harbors in the Northwest. Flowing into Gray's newly discovered port was the river that had created his watery haven in the first place: the Chehalis. Those two natural bodies—the river and the harbor—will control the destiny of the region for as long as the sea laps the shores of the Pacific Coast.

The Chehalis River drains a large portion of central Washington, and it is navigable for a goodly distance inland. The bottom land around the flow was fertile and the hills above it were covered in thick forests, so it was only a matter of time before settlers invaded the area. One of the first pioneers to reach the vicinity was Isaiah Scammon, who arrived at the confluence of the Chehalis, Wynooche, and Satsop rivers in 1852. He staked his land claim, cleared a patch of forest, and began to work the soil. Scammon must have made a fairly comfortable living, for a few years after his
arrival in the region, he sold part of his property and with the proceeds traveled to his native Maine to bring back his wife and children. Shortly after this they built the first frame house in the area.

Scammon was a quiet man who was known for his stern morality and honesty in business dealings. He was, as one historian put it, "a tall tree in a wilderness of trees and one of the most respected men ever to come down the Chehalis."

But as rare a character as he was, it was Scammon's wife who made the biggest impression on guests and neighbors.

Lorinda Scammon was only five feet tall, but her iron will and quick temper made her something of a giant in the Chehalis valley. Because of the Scammons' strategically placed homestead, Lorinda and her husband often played host to parties of travelers going to and from the harbor. Thanks partly to this geographical advantage and partly to Lorinda's cooking, the family eventually turned their home into a public inn.

If visitors to Scammon's establishment were expecting a stay filled with riotous hilarity and alcoholic excess, however, they were disappointed. True to her stern Puritan ancestors, Lorinda was a believer in a strict and straitlaced form of Christianity. She would brook no foolishness when guests stopped for the night at Scammon's Landing.

Once a group of boisterous boatmen tied up their skiff and marched up the steep bank, bringing with them a keg of whiskey and hoping to spend the evening in the delightful company of Mr. John Barleycorn. They had not counted on Lorinda Scammon. As soon as the scrappy little woman caught sight of the liquor, she promptly took action. Brushing past the astonished guests, Lorinda commandeered the keg, rolled it back out the door, down to the river bank, and into the stream where it floated away. Wiping her hands on her apron, the indignant woman then wheeled around and went back into the house without so much as a word or a side glance.

Gradually, the Scammons' home became a gathering place for settlers from all over the river valley, a convenient place between the inland farmers and the sailors of Grays Harbor. It was a haven where the visitor could expect plain, filling meals and uncompromising Protestant theology. It was understandable then, when Lorinda decided that their homestead needed a lofty name like the estates of Europe, she chose "Mount Zion." This was later changed to "Montesano," meaning "Mountain of Health," because the latter sounded better, and some amateur linguist had convinced the woman that the words had the same meaning as the Biblical name. No one ever dared tell her that the translation was faulty.

As strong-willed as she was, even Lorinda Scammon could not stop the tide of settlers coming into the Grays Harbor country. By 1854 there were enough people in the region to break away from Pacific County and form their own. On April 14 of that year, Chehalis County was established, and the seat was designated as the home of Captain David K. Welden at the mouth of the North River on Willapa Bay. But there was one little problem: the territorial legislature had drawn the boundaries so that the north shore of Willapa Bay was in two counties at once. Ironically, the new seat was not even in Chehalis County.

Strangely, no one seems to have been in any particular rush to straighten out this difficulty, and it was not until 1860, a full six years later, that the seat was moved. In July of that year there was an election. Not surprisingly, the seat was placed at the Scammon home, so for the next 26 years the legal and administrative business of Chehalis County was carried on in Lorinda's parlor.

As comfortable as it might have been, the Scammon homestead could not house the county's courtroom forever. The region's population was growing, and the facilities at Montesano were not really the best. Chehalis County was becoming too big for Isaiah and Lorinda Scammon to take care of by themselves, and soon the couple began selling off parcels of their land to friends and neighbors. One of these men, Charles N. Byles, purchased a large tract north of the original homestead in 1870. There he laid out a town he wished to found, and he called it Montesano.

Byles subdivided his property and sold lots to prospective settlers. The
The town’s happy placement was one of its principal attractions; the soil was fertile, and it was along the easiest route from Puget Sound to the Pacific. By 1881 there were stores, hotels, homes, and other buildings dotting the Hill of Health. In February of 1883 the Chehalis Valley Vidette published its first issue, stating in an editorial that the journal’s special object would be to proclaim to the world the many merits of Chehalis Valley. Encouraged by all this progress, the citizens of Montesano decided to incorporate the town in the same year.

Three years later the county government was ready to move out of the Scammons’ front parlor, but there was considerable controversy about where it should go. The front runner was the new town of Montesano, but it had stiff opposition from Cosmopolis on the harbor. As might be expected, the Vidette came down squarely on the side of Montesano, though it also published the appeal of its rival.

Soon there was talk of dividing the county into eastern and western sections, though nothing much had yet come of the idea. Meanwhile, Montesano attempted to woo the voters with promises of a courthouse that would be “even better than the more populous county of Thurston provides for her officers.” The Vidette played upon the fears of its already overtaxed readers. Chehalis County, it warned, “cannot afford to listen to the siren voices of the divisionists.”

Undaunted by these admonitions, Cosmopolis also dangled a courthouse in front of the county electorate—theirs would be worth $10,000 and would sit on one of the most desirable blocks in the city. The harbor town vowed that its men would produce “the best courthouse in Washington Territory.” Despite all the claims and counterclaims, when the election finally came one month later, it proved less disturbing than it might have been.

There were neither threats nor shotguns, noted a satisfied Vidette editorial in March 1886. Rather, it was “a quiet, orderly election in which nearly every voter in the county participated and cast his ballot for the place of his choice without fear or hindrance.” Better still, Montesano had racked up an impressive victory. The “Maid of Wynoochee,” as one flowery tribute called the victorious town, would be the new seat of government. Thanks to the lubricating effects of “plenty of wine and Irish whisky,” even the Cosmopolis supporters gave in gracefully to the public’s will. After all those years, it looked as if Lorinda Scammon would finally have the living room to herself.

Charles Byles, the man who donated the land for the county’s first real courthouse, became a guiding force behind Montesano’s rise. In fact, he virtually gave his life for the new county. At one time or another he had been a large landowner, founder of the town’s first bank, councilman and mayor of Montesano, as well as Chehalis County auditor and treasurer. It was while he occupied this latter office that the county seat was moved and it fell to Byles to move the county’s treasury.

In those days the county’s assets consisted mainly of gold and silver coins. Lacking any proper receptacle, Byles filled a brand new pair of boots with the coins, tied the boots together, and swung them over his shoulder. Unfortunately, the treasure was so heavy that Byles was forced to stagger and stumble through the mud to the new county seat. The task ruined not only his boots but his health. The trip provoked a latent asthmatic condition that afflicted Byles for the rest of his life. He often repeated that carrying the gold and silver “broke his wind.” Byles died in 1897, a martyr to the cause at the age of 52, and was ever after regarded as the father of Montesano.

With the county seat firmly in its grasp, Montesano was certainly destined for great things. Until suitable quarters could be provided, court was held in a variety of temporary locations, and it was not until 1889 that construction of a new county home began. In May of that year sealed bids were advertised for construction of a courthouse at a cost of about $14,000. When the proposals were analyzed, George H. Vail was given the construction contract for the new edifice.

A new county building was not the only thing being constructed in the town. For years the citizens of the little town had lived in constant hope that a railroad would eventually pass through the community, but nothing certain had been settled. In 1889 the hopes were realized when articles of incorporation were filed for the “Tacoma, Olympia and Pacific Railroad Company.” The object of this endeavor was to lay tracks from a convenient point on the line of the Northern Pacific Railroad to the most convenient point on Grays Harbor. Fortunately, this meant that Montesano was directly on the route.

With even the mere hint of approaching rails, business was destined to boom, but here was a dead certainty. Montesano began to feel the heady effects of prosperity almost at once. Soon, railway officials visited Montesano regularly. Instead of two daily stages from Olympia, suddenly there were six, all filled to capacity. Property values shot up. During just one week early in

columbia 19 fall 2001
1889, $30,000 worth of real estate was sold in the town. Things suddenly looked rosy for the Hill of Health.

BEFITTING THE TOWN'S status as commercial hub of the entire region, a large and elegant wooden courthouse was finally completed in 1890. It featured spacious courtrooms and offices, and a fireproof vault constructed of 40,000 bricks shipped from Victoria, British Columbia, aboard the Dolphin. However, the structure's most striking design element was a prominent tower with a domed and shingled roof. It was, as the Seattle Post-Intelligencer reported coolly, "rather a sightly structure," and it served the bustling, successful community well.

Despite the county seat's pleasing public buildings and its veneer of civilization, many remembered a time when there was little but forest where it stood. One anonymous Hoquiam school marm from this time was not blinded by the holes in the mud. "But, she quickly added, "if you want to find a first class lot of mud and dust, you go to Montesano."

The teacher's quickness to defend the cities of Grays Harbor was all the more telling since Montesano was beginning to be overshadowed by other newly prominent towns. By the early 20th century, 80 percent of the population resided in Aberdeen and Hoquiam. Montesano might be at the railroad junction, but the towns of the lower harbor were on the sea, and that meant that their destinies were tied to the larger world beyond Chehalis County.

Starting in 1905, the rival towns of Aberdeen and Hoquiam joined uneasily in a campaign to move the county seat to the harbor. When this failed, the two towns made a bolder move. In January 1907 they revived the idea of splitting the county in two, with Aberdeen the seat of the new Grays Harbor County and Montesano the seat of a pared-down Chehalis County. Ultimately, it was Aberdeen, the larger and more dynamic of the two cities, that took the lead in what proved to be a vigorous campaign.

There were several powerful opponents to the deal, however. Naturally, the Montesanoans were not enthusiastic about Aberdeen's secessionist plans. The Vidette called it "the most roaring farce that has ever been played by any cast of lawmakers in the state." The outraged paper assured its readers that "the scheme was conceived by political iniquity, born of a spirit of revenge, nourished on personal animosity and attained its consummation by a specious system of legislative hoodwinking." But there were other even more powerful opponents.

The Weyerhaeuser timber syndicate owned vast tracts of forest land in the proposed county, and it feared the impending division as much as the citizens of Montesano. Property tax increases were a dead certainty as the new county scrambled to provide its citizens with the infrastructure that any political entity would need.

As Aberdeen soon learned, Weyerhaeuser was skilled both at dirty fights and at getting its own way. The company produced a petition listing names of hundreds of citizens who were against division. On closer inspection, it was discovered that Weyerhaeuser employees were coerced into signing petitions all across the proposed county; those who refused were threatened with dismissal. An outraged Aberdeen Daily Bulletin announced that "the trust is putting the screws to the local manufacturing concerns," and thus bringing the long-awaited division into doubt. It had suddenly turned into a heated and vicious campaign.

In March 1907 the legislature bravely ignored all the pressure applied by the various parties and approved Aberdeen's plans. At long last it seemed that Grays Harbor County was a reality. But almost before the ink had dried on the bill, Montesano, with solid backing from Weyerhaeuser, began a challenge in the Washington State Supreme Court. "If the advocates of county division think the fight is over and that they can rest assured of an ill-gotten victory," a feisty editorial in the Vidette reported, "they are very much mistaken, as they will find to their cost in the near future."

This proved to be no idle threat, and for the next two years the case dragged through the legal system. Despite being passed by both houses and signed by the governor, the bill creating the new county was rejected by the attorney general who ruled that the bill must be accompanied by a petition signed by at least three quarters of the voters. Next, the county commissioners further muddied the already turbid waters by voting to appropriate $5,000 to fight against the required petition. Despite this obstruction, the petition was completed and sent to the governor who again passed the matter on, this time to a Lewis County judge. The judge referred the situation
back to Washington's Supreme Court which finally ruled that the division was unconstitutional. At long last it appeared that the legal nightmare was at an end.

In an attempt to smooth Aberdeen's ruffled feathers, the county commissioners voted in April 1909 to authorize a "sub-courthouse building" in Aberdeen. This was a substantial but unspectacular brick building on West Simpson that was occupied for a few years and then abandoned by the county. A group of doctors later leased it for use as a hospital.

In the same commissioners' meeting the men voted unanimously to advertise for plans and specifications for a modern, fireproof courthouse to be erected in Montesano. Perhaps as a further concession, the plans of an Aberdeen architect, Watson Vernon, were chosen as the winning entry. The monumental structure that he proposed must surely have taken away the breath of all those who first saw the renderings. Vernon planned a huge stone building with massive classical columns, arched windows, pediments, and a beautiful dome rising over it all.

The architect had designed several smaller buildings in the area, but nothing that came close to rivaling the new courthouse. This was to be his masterpiece. The county commissioners apparently hoped that such a huge, ornate building would make taxpayers reluctant ever to remove the county seat. They consequently spared no expense in building and decorating the new structure.

By October 1909 contractors Syllias and Sando of Seattle were ready to break ground on the courthouse. Throughout the next year construction and foundation work continued at a steady pace and the building's basement and footings began to take shape next to the old, outgrown wooden courthouse.

FINALLY, in April 1910 the cornerstone of the new courthouse was laid amid much pomp and ceremony. Masons from lodges all over the county participated, as did the high school band. A solemn procession wound its way up the hill and to the new building on Courthouse Square off Main Street. Ceremonies were led by supreme court judge Stephen J. Chadwick. As the band softly played "Rock of Ages," the stone was set in place, and oil, corn, and wine were sprinkled atop the stone to symbolize prosperity, nourishment, and joy. Inside the cornerstone was a copper box containing documents and photographs related to the county. It was a joyful ceremony, and it served well to heal some of the ill feelings that had rent the two parts of the region.

Late in 1910 the building received its most distinctive interior decoration. Associated Artists of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, won the commission to paint a series of murals in the dome. German-born artists Franz Rohrbach and F. Biberstein completed the four allegorical tableaux.

By the time construction drew to a close in 1911, the massive structure had consumed around six million pounds of warm-colored Tenino sandstone as well as huge quantities of gravel, sand, cement, and brick. The building's crowning glory was the graceful tower with its E. Howard tower clock and a roof of solid copper plating. After all the costs had been computed, the massive building set the county back over $193,000, but in exchange they had one of the finest courthouses in the state.

One of the men who had worked tirelessly in the campaign to avoid county division was a colorful attorney named William H. Abel. Motivated by a possible loss of prestige, he had played a big part in keeping Montesano as the county's capital. The lawyer had often boasted that one of the main reasons the county commissioners had chosen the inland town as county seat was that he offered the officials free use of his extensive law library. This was typical of his braggadocio, and perhaps it is even true, for Bill Abel always seemed to get his way in Chehalis County.

W. H. Abel had come to Montesano as a young man. He made a good living representing loggers and other workers who had been injured on the job. He was so good at this that the bosses thought it best to retain the young man...
for their own purposes. From then on, Abel switched allegiance and usually came down on the side of money and power in a legal dispute. He gradually acquired the exaggerated importance and respect that often falls to legal or political bullies in a small town. His rivals used to say that in the Chehalis County Courthouse, when the black-robed judge came in and took his place, everyone in the courtroom stood up; but when William Abel arrived before the bench, the judge himself stood up.

When a number of "Wobblies," radical labor unionists, were arrested in 1916 after the Centralia Massacre, they were brought to Montesano where it was hoped they would receive a fair trial. Feelings ran high on both sides, and as soon as W. H. Abel was chosen to prosecute the prisoners, the union press could not conceal its contempt for the man who was a hero to just as many others. The labor journalists branded him "Oily Abel" and claimed that he was "suave and slimy as a snake; without any of the kindlier traits of nature." W. H. Abel, the writer declared, "sounded the gamut of rottenness in his efforts to convict the accused men without the semblance of a fair trial."

Less well-known, though hardly less slimy, was Abel's role in a trial from 1929. The case is also remarkable since it graphically demonstrated his methods of operation. On the surface, the process should have been a simple one. Abel was retained by the city of Hoquiam in a bid to acquire and transform a private water company into a public utility.

The private company hired an up-and-coming barrister by the name of Theodore B. Bruener. The younger man had quickly established a name for himself in the county as a person from whom great things were expected. He was quick-thinking and decisive and soon found himself in opposition to Abel on a number of occasions. Since Abel would brook no rivals in his little bailiwick, it was almost inevitable that the two men would come into conflict. When the case was finally tried in July 1929, Abel decided to stop at nothing to win the judgment and, if he could, discredit Bruener forever. He succeeded on both counts.

The trial began ordinarily enough, but by some means or other, Abel came into possession of some shocking intelligence. It concerned a pretty juror with the ironic name of Katherine Law. The older attorney had Mrs. Law shadowed by a private detective during the trial. According to the detective's report, Mrs. Law and Bruener arranged to meet after court on Saturday, July 20, for a picnic along the brushy banks of the Satsop.

The two guilty parties were observed talking and laughing, eating a light lunch, and consuming quantities of bootleg hooch. They were also seen sporting and frolicking in a highly charged, erotic way. The eavesdropping detective realized at once that this was a most unlawyerlike way to interview a juror, and he quickly telephoned Abel, asking him to come out and have a look for himself. This he did, and after observing the intimate scene long enough to have a few pictures snapped and determine the nature of the tryst, Abel took action. Like an avenging angel, the old lawyer strode into the midst of the love nest. In a loud voice, dripping with moral outrage, "Oily Abel" demanded to know what they were doing. The shocked Bruener could do little but jump up in amazement while Mrs. Law became hysterical and pulled a blanket over her face. Abel brutally ripped it away, exposing her shame to the world.

In the weeks that followed, Abel achieved two of his fondest goals: a highly favorable ruling for his client and a disbarment for his chief rival. Bruener paid the ultimate professional penalty for his foolish dalliance, and Abel no longer had to worry about upset challengers who might rival his prestige.

Abel continued to lord it over the county for many years. Eventually, he retired to a lovely home just a few steps from the courthouse where he had spent so much time. Watson Vernon, the architect of the domed and frescoed palace of justice, also designed Abel's residence. In 1915, a few years after the house was completed, Chehalis County made one final concession to the cities on the harbor by officially rechristening itself "Grays Harbor County."

A magnitude 5.9 earthquake struck Montesano on July 2, 1999, causing serious damage to the venerable courthouse. The worst problems occurred near the clock tower, which actually shifted on its foundations. The entire structure was evacuated for a time, but the county decided to restore the building to its original glory. Two years and $7.5 million dollars later, the courthouse was officially rededicated on July 28, 2001.

Today the old rivalries are forgotten. Montesano, the "Maid of the Wynooche," possesses one of the most beautiful courthouses in the state. Lorinda Scammon's Hill of Health is crowned by a structure worthy of the Heavenly City itself.
BY ALLEN "Doc" WESSELIUS

A Lasting Legacy

The Lewis and Clark Place Names of the Pacific Northwest—Part III

This is the third in a four-part series detailing Meriwether Lewis and William Clark’s use of place names on their journey through the Pacific Northwest, and how those names have fared through the years.

SANDY RIVER

"Quicksand River" on the south side of the Columbia River was named by the Corps of Discovery because of the sand at its mouth that diverted the course of the Columbia to the northern shore. Erosion of mud flows from volcanic activity, which occurred shortly before the expedition’s journey, washed from the slopes of Mount Hood and deposited the volcanic ash and pebbles into the Columbia.

In 1792 Lieutenant William Broughton had named this southern tributary "Barings River," probably after the English family of bankers and financiers. "Quicksand River" was used for nearly 50 years after the Lewis and Clark expedition, but it was shortened by early pioneers during the mid 19th century to its present form.

WASHOUGAL RIVER

"Seal River" on the route map ("Sea Calf River" on the draft map of the expedition) was named for the harbor seal populations that congregated about the mouth of the river, feed-
ing on salmon. This north bank flow into the Columbia was the site of an extended encampment the corps used while hunting the nearby open plains when the party returned upstream in 1806.

The present name is an Anglicized version of the native word for "rushing water." The Washougal river's confluence with the Columbia became an important steamboat stop—Parker's Landing—before the introduction of railroads along the river.

**Lady Island**

"White Brant Isld" on the route map and "Fowls I" on the draft map provide another example of the process by which the captains assigned names to geographical features. Names were suggested and sometimes a more appropriate name was selected for the final designation. Lewis, in 1806, decided that "white brant" was more appropriate, identifying the island with the lesser snow goose.

In 1792 Broughton had named the island "Johnstone Island," but the captains did not have this information. The present name is for Joseph Lady, who in 1853 had a land claim on the island.

**Government Island**

"Diamond Island" was named by the corps because of its shape. The physiography of the islands in this section of the Columbia has changed considerably in the past 200 years, making it difficult to correlate Clark's maps with modern topography. Island drift and flooding have changed the shape and alignment of the islands in the river.

Broughton spent the nights of October 29 and 30, 1792, in this section of the river on the final leg of his exploration of the Columbia. In 1850 the federal government reserved "Miller's Island" for a military instillation, giving rise to the present place name.

The section of the expedition trail encompassed by the inset box below is covered in this third part of the Lewis and Clark place names series. See the blow-up maps on this page and page 30.

**Lemon Island**

"White Goose Island" on the route map and "Twin Island" on the draft map were two low islands west of "Diamond Island." These descriptive names were given to the islands, but no apparent final decision was made on a single place name due to the relative insignificance of these features. The islands have now consolidated with Government Island, the channels between the islands filling with silt. Various spellings of Lemon have been applied to the island's name, since an early pioneer, Peter Lemon, was unable to sign his name.

**Hayden Island**

"Image Canoe Island" was named by the captains because of the ornamented native canoes that they observed on its shore. The many islands in this stretch of the river taxed the cartographer, Clark, to name and chart the river. What would be later named the Willamette River, coming in behind the islands, would elude the captains until their return upriver in 1806.

Broughton had named this island, close to the southern shore, after Vancouver's botanist, Archibald Menzies. Guy Hayden, an early Oregon pioneer, owned the island and it has had his name ever since.

**Tomahawk Island**

A small island between "Image Canoe Island" and the north shore of the river was given the name "Tomahawk Island," after an incident during which Clark's tomahawk pipe was stolen. Clark visited a village on the mainland but was unable to determine the location of a river that geographic intuition indicated must be present in the area.

The island was eventually washed away, but in 1927 the United States Board of Geographic Names (USBGN) was petitioned to assign the name to a new island that formed on the east end of Hayden Island. The Lewis and Clark name was perpetuated by naming a new island after one
that has washed away. Tomahawk and Hayden islands have now almost been consolidated by river silting and road construction.

**Mount St. Helens**
This peak was confused for a time with another dormant volcano east of it but in the same latitude (Mount Adams). The captains finally identified Mount St. Helens when they were west of the mountain range, but they then confused the peak with Mount Rainier. They eventually corrected their identification and used the British name for the peak but recorded several different spellings in their descriptions of the mountain.

Sailing off the Pacific Coast, Vancouver observed a dormant volcanic peak of classic symmetry and named it to honor the British ambassador to Spain and his personal friend, Baron Saint Helens. In 1980 the picturesque peak lived up to its Indian name, "Lawala Clough," meaning "smoking mountain." The volcanic peak erupted and took 1,300 feet off the top, blunting the perfect snow capped cone.

**Mount Rainier**
The captains first identified Mount St. Helens as "Mount Ranier" but corrected their error later when both volcanic peaks were visible from farther down the river. They used the British name for the peak but never got the spelling correct, using several variations.

In the spring of 1792 Vancouver sighted the Pacific Northwest's highest mountain and named it for Admiral Peter Rainier of the Royal Navy. The British admiral gained fame for his defeat of American colonists in the Revolutionary War. Pronunciation of his French name was Anglicized to "Rainy-er" by the British and has now been Americanized to "Ray-neer."

The mountain has been subject to many suggested name changes by patriotic Americans, but it still retains the place name bestowed by the British. Each Indian tribe had a slightly different title for the peak; most were variations of "Tah-ho-ma," meaning simply "The Mountain." In 1917 the USGS approved Mount Rainier as the official title for Washington's highest mountain, which is cloaked in the most extensive glacier system in the contiguous United States.

**Sauvie Island**
The largest island in the Columbia River was called "Wappato Island" by Lewis and Clark. The Indian word "wappato" for arrowhead root, which grew abundantly in the marshes, was used to name the island. The captains used several different spellings for the word "wappato" in their attempts to record the Indian pronunciation of the word.

Broughton visited the island in 1792 and named the western end of the island "Warrior Point" and the upstream point "Belle Vue Point." Nathaniel Wyeth built Fort Williams on the island in 1834-35, and some early maps used the name "Wyeth Island." The fort was named for one of Wyeth's fur trade partners, which was an American commercial rival to
the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC). The present name derived from a French Canadian employee of the HBC, Lourent Sauve, who settled on the island after the failure of the Wyeth enterprise. Although the spelling has been standardized, there are several different pronunciations of the name: Soh-vee, Sow-vee, Saw-vee and Saw-vay.

WILLAMETTE VALLEY
First called “Wap-pa-too Valley” by Clark, then changed to “Columbia Valley” by Lewis on the return trip in 1806. Nicholas Biddle changed the name to “Columbian Valley” when he edited the journals for the captains.

Billed as “The Garden of the World” by promoters of westward expansion, the Willamette Valley was the final destination for many western pioneers who followed the Oregon Trail. The present name derived from “Wal-lamt,” an Indian name for a place on the river near the present site of Oregon City, Oregon.

BACHELOR ISLAND
Lewis and Clark first called the island “Green Bryor Isdl,” when they traveled downriver in 1805 but changed the name to “Quathlahpotle Island” in 1806. They honored the large village of 14 wooden houses and 900 inhabitants on the mainland, naming the island for the native village. The mild climate and abundant wildlife of the flood plain wetlands made this area attractive to native occupation.

THOUGH Lewis and Clark called this Sea Otter Island, Lieutenant William Broughton had already named the island in 1792 for another of Captain George Vancouver’s lieutenants—Peter Puget—the same person honored by the naming of Puget Sound.

In 1841 Wilkes charted the island as “Pasauks Island.” The present name is of local origin, in honor of an unmarried man who took a donation claim on the island. Bachelor Island is now part of the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. The mild, rainy winter climate of the lower Columbia River is an ideal environment for migrating and wintering waterfowl. Cathlapotle is an important archaeological excavation of the ancient Indian village on the mainland across from the island.

DEER ISLAND
This island has retained the name given by Lewis and Clark, “E-lal lar or Deer Island.” The Anglicized version of the Upper Chinookan word “E-lal las,” meaning “deer,” was used by the captains to identify the island. The corps hunted the Columbian white-tailed deer on the island when they returned upriver and needed to resupply their provisions.

MOUNT COFFIN
Marked as “Knob,” a descriptive notation, on the route map, the large rock was observed by the corps as they hurried toward the Pacific Ocean. The “remarkable knob” was used...
by the natives for interment of their dead and was noted by other earlier travelers on the river. The 240-foot basalt landmark was leveled for its gravel during port construction at Longview, Washington.

**WALLACE ISLAND**

Named "Sturgeon Island" by the expedition, there appears to have been an error in transferring information from the draft map to the route map. The position of modern islands is not consistent with Clark's drawings; therefore, the exact identification of the island is subjective. The island is now named after an early settler, Wallace Slang.

**PUGET ISLAND**

Probably named "Sea Otter Island" on the route map; the map is damaged, leaving "Sea" to be surmised. There also appears to be an error in transferring information from the draft map to the route map, but it is assumed that this is the island named for the important fur-bearing mammal.

Broughton, in 1792, named the island for one of Vancouver's lieutenants, Peter Puget. The present place name retains the British identification for the island, named for the same person honored by the naming of Puget Sound.

**TENASILLAHE ISLAND**

Clark used a descriptive term rather than an applied place name to identify this large island and nearby smaller island as "Marshy Islands." The island's present name is composed of two Chinook-jargon words, "tenas," meaning small, and "illahe," meaning land. The island was diked and farmed before becoming part of the Lewis and Clark Wildlife Refuge.

**PILLAR ROCK**

Simply marked "Rock" on Clark's route map, the basalt rock rose 75 to 100 feet above water level, depending on the tide. Clark recorded in the course and distance log, "Oceân in view! O! the joy," mistaking the wide Columbia River mouth estuary for the ocean. The landmark was given its present place name by Wilkes in 1841.

**LEWIS AND CLARK WILDLIFE REFUGE**

Traveling through the maze of islands both westbound and eastbound, the captains named them the "Seal Islands." Today the river estuarine refuge contains 35,000 acres of islands, sandbars, mud flats and tidal marshes. Woody, Horseshoe, Karlson, and Marsh islands are the main islands in the wildlife refuge on Oregon's side of the Columbia.

**GRAYS BAY**

This bay was given a descriptive name, "Shallow Bay," by the explorers as they coasted the shore, striving to reach the Pacific Ocean.

Vancouver had named the bay to honor Gray, a pointed reminder that the American had only explored the mouth of the river. The five months' difference
between Gray's discovery and Vancouver's exploration resulted in contested territorial claims to the Pacific Northwest at the end of the 18th century and thereafter. Wilkes, in 1841, charted the bay as "Kutzule Bay," but the British name has been retained as the place name for the large, shallow bay on the north shore of the Columbia River.

PORTUGUESE POINT

The corps was pinned down on the west side of "Shallow Bay" on "Cape Swells" for two days as they waited out a storm while trying to reach the mouth of the Columbia. Their descriptive name derived from the waves that battered the coastline where they spent miserable nights waiting out the storm.

The present place name for the point is from early Columbia River navigators, with some evidence that the name has ties to a shipwreck.

POINT ELLICE

During a seasonal storm that raged inward from the coast, the corps was forced to stay for a week on the east side of a large promontory that projected into the river. Wind lacerated, waves lashed, and the roaring sea attacked them from every quarter. Gale-force winds threatened to thrust the party into the seething water. "Point Distress," "Stormy Point," and "Blustering Point" were names used to describe the site of the corps' plight during their attempt to reach the mouth of the Columbia.

The large mountainous projection into the river was named by fur traders of the North West Company to honor Edward Ellice, a London agent of the company. The present place name represents the British influence during the fur-trading period on the Columbia.

CLIFF POINT AND GRAYS POINT

The exact location of "Harbor Point" on the draft map of the Columbia River's mouth cannot be determined. The present Cliff Point and Grays Point are on the west side of "Shallow Bay," between the camp on "Point Swells" and the three campsites on "Point Distress." The geography of the shoreline is not consistent with Clark's "nitches," which he exaggerated on his maps.

Cliff Point is a descriptive name for a group of cliffs on the western shore of Grays Bay. The British named the other predominant point on the western shore of the bay for William Broughton, who in 1792 explored the Columbia River for Vancouver. The present place name was charted by Wilkes in 1841 and named Grays Point to honor the American explorer who first explored the Columbia River.

MCGOWAN

"Station Camp," also called "Camp Point," was the final campsite for the corps on the northern shore of the river. The captains used it as a base from which to explore the mouth of the Columbia. The camp was situated near what the captains thought was an abandoned Indian village, close to a small creek for a potable water supply in the wind-driven salt spray. The captains did not comprehend the biseasonal settlement pattern of the natives. Their summer fishing village on the river was not abandoned, but rather the population had moved to winter quarters. Clark constructed an important map for the corps' record of their northern shore exploration of the Columbia River's mouth. The map recorded the precise location of "Station Camp," but there is no indication in the journals of
why that name was chosen. Using a surveyor's term, the name was probably selected to represent a specific point; station on a horizontal plane is the equivalent of benchmark on a vertical plane. The object of the corps' mission was to reach the mouth of the Columbia River by transcontinental exploration. Clark's survey of landmarks and stations helped him document their success for future reference.

In 1848 Father Louis Linnet claimed 320 acres for a Roman Catholic mission on the windward side of Point Ellice, southeast of Chinook Point. Patrick McGowan purchased the claim in 1852 and started a salmon saltery, later building a cannery at the town already named in his honor.

McGowan's heirs donated the land for a small Washington State park, commemorating the Lewis and Clark campsite, "Station Camp."

CHINOOK POINT
"Point open Slope" was used by the corps to describe a promontory below their main camp at the mouth of the Columbia, on the northern shore. The open slope had to be crossed, first by Lewis and later by Clark, when they explored the mouth of the river and Cape Disappointment.

In 1792 Broughton had named the point "Village Point" for a large Indian village situated near the projection into the river. In 1811 British fur traders named the promontory "Point Komikomi" to honor the Chinook chief of the village. Captain Edward Belcher, a British merchant in 1839, named the point for the important Indian traders on the Columbia, "Chenoke Point." Early explorers often made no attempt to determine the native designation for geographical features, which in this instance was known as "Nose-to-Ilse." The point derived its name from the Chinook Indians who occupied the lower northern banks of the Columbia. Early settlers distorted the original Indian name, "cinuk," to the modern form, Chinook.

United States Army construction of Fort Columbia on the point began in 1898, complementing Fort Canby on Cape Disappointment and Fort Stevens on Point Adams. The triangular defense of the Columbia River mouth remained active until the close of World War II. Remnants of the defensive fortifications can still be found in Fort Columbia State Park.

BAKER BAY
"Haley's Bay" was named for the Indians' favorite trader, as reported to the captains, who had anchored in the protected inlet behind Cape Disappointment. Trade with the local inhabitants for sea otter skins led to commerce on the Columbia; however, the secretive merchants did not record their trade routes, so the captains did not have this important information until they questioned the natives.
The territorial sovereignty of the Pacific Northwest was left to other explorers with vested nationalistic endeavors. William Broughton named the bay, "Baker's Bay," to give credit to a British merchant, Captain James Baker, whose ship was anchored inside the Columbia's mouth when Broughton crossed the bar to explore the river for Vancouver in 1792.

"Deception Bay" and "Rougue's Harbor" were used by later merchants to describe the bay. The present place name, Baker Bay, retains the British name without using the possessive form.

CAPE DISAPPOINTMENT
To describe the headlands at the mouth of the Columbia, Lewis and Clark used the British geographical place names given by Captain John Meares, a British trading merchant, in 1788. Meares was disappointed at not finding "The River of the West"; when he saw the mouth of the river, he thought it was only an entrance to a bay; thus the name Cape Disappointment.

Captain Bruno de Hezeta claimed to have detected the fabled Northwest Passage while sailing off the Pacific Coast in 1775. Lewis and Clark had a chance to use the Spanish name for the cape, "Cabo de San Rougue," but they chose not to.

Gray's name for the northern headlands, "Cape Hancock," and the Indian name, "Kah-cese," would not replace the original British name after its continued use by British fur traders. Cape Disappointment is one of the oldest British geographical place names in Washington.

PACIFIC OCEAN
Clark used two 16th-century terms to identify the ocean that the corps had traveled across the continent to reach: the "Sea of the South," as Balboa referred to the new ocean he sailed into in 1513; and the "Pacific Ocean," so called by Magellan in 1520, when he sailed around the world.

POINT ADAMS
Lewis and Clark used Robert Gray's name for the low, sandy southern peninsula at the mouth of the Columbia River. "Point Adams" and "Columbia River" are names given by Gray that have continued in use to the present time. In 1792 he named the north cape on the mouth of the river "Cape Hancock" and the southern peninsula after John Adams, in an attempt to identify his "Columbia's River" with the United States. The Spanish had charted and named the peninsula "Cape Frondosa" (leafy cape), for its numerous trees.

CHINOOK RIVER
There is an inconsistency between the maps and journals when trying to determine the names Lewis and Clark applied to two rivers that drained into "Haley's Bay," "White Brant Creek" and "Chinook River" are labeled differently on Clark's maps of the Columbia's mouth. He also misidentified the rivers when he went on a sojourn to the
coast with 11 men. He probably intended the “Chinook River” to be applied to the drainage close to the village of that native nation.

The Chinook Indians controlled trade on the Columbia from their village on the great river’s north shore; during the winter they migrated to Willapa Bay, protected from southwesterly storms. The name “Chinook” came from the Chehalis Indian name for the Chinook summer village, “cinuk.” A hybrid version of the Chinook language came to be known as the Chinook jargon, the language of maritime and river traders.

WALLACUT RIVER

Errors created in transferring information from the journals to maps become apparent when studying the names the captains applied to this drainage. “White Brant Creek” was intended to be applied to the most westerly drainage into “Haley’s Bay.” “Chinook River” is charted for the watershed on one of Clark’s maps, and he called the river by the same name when he camped near it while returning from the coast. Conjecture and second-hand information may have confused the captains. This drainage was used by the Chinook Indians to reach their winter village, but Clark intended the drainage near the Indians’ summer village to be named after its inhabitants.

“Knights River” was used by HBC employees to identify the drainage. The present place name for the river came from the Chinook Indian word, “Walihut,” meaning “place of stones.” Near the mouth of the river, the north bank has many small, smooth boulders.

LEADBETTER POINT

“Point Lewis” was not seen by Clark when he conducted a reconnaissance of the seacoast north of the Columbia River. After gaining information from the local Indians on the supposed high point of land, he named it “after my particular friend Lewis.” The captains did not engage in speculative creation of geography; however, sometimes they misunderstood the information they obtained. The exact geographical feature that Clark named has been identified as Leadbetter Point, North Head, and Cape Shoalwater by various authors. Clark crossed North Head and probably was describing a feature farther north on the seacoast. Cape Shoalwater, a high point—unlike the low Leadbetter Point—is farther north, on the northern side of the entrance to Willapa Bay.

Meares, in 1788, described the peninsula more correctly as “Low Point” and named Cape Shoalwater. The present name for the peninsula honors Lieutenant Danville Leadbetter, a member of the United States Coast Survey in 1852.
THE Run FROM Farm TO Farm

As Fort Steilacoom becomes Western State Hospital

WHERE WOOLLY SHEEP once grazed across Puget Sound prairies, Western State Hospital now stands. The hospital today, serving the mentally ill in western Washington, stands amid native firs and flowering ornamentals, looking like a college campus. This transformation has its roots in the days of the first white settlements in the Northwest.

In 1844, during the days of the Joint Occupancy Agreement between Great Britain and the United States, Joseph Thomas Heath arrived from England at Fort Nisqually, a Hudson’s Bay Company trading post. He settled on Steilacoom Farm, an area now divided amongst Western State Hospital, a county golf course, Fort Steilacoom County Park, and Pierce College.

By 1847 Heath’s livestock included 206 sheep, 18 horses, and 78 cattle, 10 of which were husky oxen used for pulling loaded farm wagons. Oxen also drew the plows that broke the virgin sod in preparation for planting.

Heath grew about 100 acres of such crops as wheat, peas, and potatoes. His cows produced enough butter for export. The rolling hills of his 640 acres served as acreage for crops and pasture land for animals. Timberland supplied lumber needed in farm buildings, threshing floors, fence posts, and butter casks.

Nearby Indians of the Steilacoom, Snoqualmie, and Skokomish tribes provided needed labor for the farm. Heath also bartered with the Indians. For deer, duck, salmon, and trout he offered blankets, shirts, needles, and medical help. Barter included payment for labor.

Heath died in March 1849. In August of that year Captain Bennett Hill and his army artillery company arrived in the area to establish a military post to protect settlers in what had by then become Oregon Territory. In late August 1849 the
American army agreed to rent the buildings and 373.75 acres of the farm for $50 a month. Fort Steilacoom served as a supply depot and refuge from 1849 to 1868. During the Indian wars of 1855-56, the garrison served as headquarters for the Ninth Infantry.

Local settlers, when they feared Indian attacks, packed their belongings, hitched up their oxen-drawn wagons, and sought refuge at the fort. Ezra Meeker, prominent Puget Sound pioneer, recounted one such gathering: "A sorry mess... women and children crying, cows bellowing, sheep bleating, dogs howling... utmost disorder." During this period Washington became a territory (in 1853) and Oregon a state (in 1859).

April 22, 1868: On the parade ground in front of the commanding officer's home, probably accompanied by a cannon salute and drum roll, the lowering of the last flag at Fort Steilacoom took place.

Legislation introduced in Congress in 1868 to give Fort Steilacoom to Washington Territory did not pass. Dorothea Dix, a 19th-century social reformer, arrived in Portland in 1869. After investigating treatment of the mentally ill in Washington Territory, she wrote to Governor Alvin Flanders, that "provision and care are both inadequate and unsuitable." She urged, "in the interest of humanity," that the governor remove patients from their Monticello (modern-day Longview) location and take them to Portland. Dix also wrote to Elwood Evans and to the Daily Pacific Tribune of Olympia. She described housing as barren as a barn, cell-like rooms, sanitation that left "sinks never washed" and "very dirty bedding." In November 1869 a legislator presented the letters to the House Select Committee. He declared "the present system for the government and care of the insane wholly inadequate... and as an expensive failure." He feared that this "will detract seriously from the rising reputation of our Territory."

On January 15, 1870, Washington's territorial legislature bought the garrison buildings for use as an "Insane Asylum for Washington Territory." Construction of the fort cost $200,000; the territorial legislature paid $850.

On August 19, 1871, 21 patients (15 men and 6 women) transferred from Monticello where they had been cared for by James Huntington and W. W. Hays for one dollar per patient per day.

Three years later, on April 15, 1874, Congress approved the donation of 373.75 acres of Fort Steilacoom to Washington Territory for "an asylum for the insane and for no other purpose." Over the years, the institution's acreage increased, mainly by purchase, eventually to equal, and even exceed, the size of Steilacoom Farm. In 1921 the total was 670 acres; by the 1940s the total had become 860 acres.
In 1875 the legislature renamed the institution the “Hospital for the Insane in Washington Territory.” During the first days of the hospital’s operation patients occupied old barracks. As the hospital grew, Officers Row, on the north side of the parade ground, housed doctors and staff. The commanding officer’s quarters became the superintendent’s residence. In time, trellised vines enclosed the veranda, flowers graced the front lawn, and a picket fence added to a homelike atmosphere.

Of the original 25 buildings acquired from the fort, four structures still remain. Three officers’ quarters and the chaplaincy have been placed on the National Register of Historic Places and serve today as the center of operations for the Historic Fort Steilacoom Association.

Two early structures built by the hospital also remain: a bakery, built in 1901, and the old morgue, built in 1907. They stand together, surrounded by newer structures, looking like shriveled grandparents encircled by recent generations. (Both buildings are also on the National Register of Historic Places.)

The arrival in 1880 of Dr. John W. Waughop as hospital superintendent signaled a new era for the institution. Waughop remained at his post for 17 years. His influence is still in evidence even today.

The territorial legislature, in 1886, passed a bill to establish a permanent territorial hospital for the mentally ill, appropriating $100,000 for its operation.

Formal opening, “one of the most brilliant events in the territory,” took place December 15, 1887. Governor Eugene Semple, along with legislative representatives and members of the press, arrived from Olympia by boat. One hundred Tacomas also came by water. Four hundred people joined the governor for dinner. A concert opened with the hospital’s band playing the “Grand March” from Tannhäuser.

A number of solos, duets, and quartets—vocal and instrumental—were followed by a “laughable farce.” “The music of bewitching waltzes” resounded through the halls, and some celebrants remained until dawn.

In 1888, possibly in anticipation of statehood, the territorial legislature officially named the institution “Western Washington Hospital for the Insane.”

Dr. Waughop instituted a building program, adding wings to older structures for new wards and erecting a central kitchen and powerhouse. New landscaping beautified the grounds. A Chinese empress tree, its purple bloom spread across its crown, continues to blossom every spring.

Dr. Waughop’s attention to patients, while concentrating on custodial care, convinced him they needed occupation. Some farming took place from early days of the institution. Waughop expanded agricultural pursuits, building new barns and adding a dairy herd to supply milk as well as patient activity. Meat came from hogs and chickens, the latter also providing eggs. At the turn of the century, farm produce “provided one-third the cost of subsistence” at the hospital, according to Clara Cooley, author of a Western State Hospital history. Patients also assisted in the carpenter, tin, and blacksmith shops, and in the laundry and the kitchen. Work became therapeutic occupation for patients.

In recent years a hospital employee, poking around in dark corners of the hospital commissary, discovered a dusty plaque honoring Waughop. Signed in 1906 by Governor Albert Mead, it reads:
In memory of Dr. John W. Waughop, Superintendent of this hospital from 1880 to 1897. He was the practical creator of the institution as it now exists. Through his professional attainments, his executive ability, and his intelligence as a man, the institution was built up and took high position among those of the country.

Dr. William Keller, a vigorous leader known for his tendency to support the underdog, became the hospital's next notable superintendent in October 1914. He supported more humane patient treatment, eight-hour workdays for hospital attendants, and legislation to allow voluntary admission for people with psychiatric problems. Chairs replaced benches for patients in halls and day rooms. China, rather than earthenware, appeared on ward dining tables. Cut flowers from the greenhouse graced tables in lounges, reception areas, and dining rooms.

In 1915 the Washington State Legislature changed the institution's name to the one it still holds, Western State Hospital. Dr. Keller extended farm operations and developed a top-notch dairy herd. Sadly, when Washington's Department of Agriculture began to require that all milk cows in the state be tested for tuberculosis, all but five cows in the hospital herd tested positive. Farm herds in the entire state were hit. In some quarters rumor ran that authorities, arriving on farms to destroy tubercular livestock, came face to face with farmers wielding pitchforks and shotguns.

Keller huddled with state officials to devise a plan. Rather than slaughter the state's dairy cattle, the hospital would accept some of the diseased animals, isolate them, and give special attention to newborn calves. Immediately after birth, before nursing, a calf would be removed from its mother. All milk was to be boiled before use.

In this manner, newborn calves were tuberculosis-free. The state's best farm herds were saved. Among those saved, a future wonder cow among the hospital herd appeared.

A registered purebred Holstein cow named Steilacoom Prilly Ormsby Blossom achieved a world record. In her lifetime, 1921-38, she produced 258,210 pounds of milk containing 9,558 pounds of butterfat. The hospital dairy herd, "famous over the nation," produced cows that brought home blue and red ribbons from the Western Washington Fair. The hospital farm exhibit—its flowers, fruits, and vegetables—also snatched their share of prizes at the fair.

Joseph Heath's cows produced casks of butter for export; hospital herds won prizes and fed all the patients. Just like the old Heath farm, the hospital farm—until its closure in 1965—took its place as a productive agricultural enterprise.

Hilda Skott was a Pierce College instructor who lived in Steilacoom for over 30 years. In retirement she became a freelance journalist and an active member of several local historical organizations. She died in April 2000.
First Horseless Carriage Comes to Bridgeport

Alfred Witter snapped this photo of a Native American family as they tried out what is said to have been the first automobile on the main street in Bridgeport, Washington, around 1910. The auto reportedly belonged to Joseph Bouska, proprietor of a general merchandise store that also handled furniture and undertaking supplies. Situated above the confluence of the Okanogan and Columbia rivers, Bridgeport was founded by businessmen from Bridgeport, Connecticut, who completed a railroad survey and platted the town in the early 1890s. Although the railroad never came through the town, Bridgeport became a hub for grain transport from the Big Bend on its way downriver by steamboat to Wenatchee. Bridgeport’s population in 1910 was 450.
You have opened to us the doors of new life, and new liberty!
—Dr. Thomas T. Minor

One Tacoma newspaper editor branded him a villain and a fraud. A Seattle editor praised him as the “Moses of the Northwest.” Like him or loathe him, Henry Villard was the first to bring major eastern capital to Puget Sound, and the man who gave the region its long-awaited railroad connection to the outside world. To Puget Sounders chafing under isolation, limited economic circumstances, and poor communications, Henry Villard was the embodiment of big money, eastern cosmopolitanism, and inclusion. He was and remains a controversial figure, and the changes he wrought elicited a wide range of responses in the Pacific Northwest.

Henry Villard's well-documented rise to prominence is one of the 19th century's classic rags-to-riches tales. Born on April 10, 1835, in Speyer, Bavaria, he was christened Ferdinand Heinrich Gustavus Hilgard. After an indifferent youth and later finding himself at a dead end in his native land, he changed his name to Henry Villard (after a former schoolmate), possibly to avoid military service, and at the age of 18 emigrated to America, landing in New York with a bare handful of Prussian coins in his pocket. After years of scuffling from one profession to another, he at last attained success and national recognition as a journalist during the Civil War. In the 1870s Villard served as agent for German bankers holding Oregon railroad and steamboat securities, and by the end of the decade he stood at the head of one of the West's largest transportation enterprises, the Oregon Railway & Navigation Company. Villard stocks soared, and he became the darling of Wall Street.

Villard's Oregon activities did not go unnoticed on Puget Sound. Since the advent of white settlers in the region in the late 1840s, railroads had been a Puget Sound obsession; Seattle and Tacoma were both founded explicitly on the assumption of future rail connection; Olympia and Port Townsend held like aspirations. As late as 1880, however, Tacoma was a struggling town of 1,200 and end of track on an isolated, 110-mile stub of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Seattle, by that time the trade and population center of the sound with 3,500 residents, had no railroad at all save for a 20-mile narrow gauge line to a coal mine at Newcastle—the Seattle & Walla Walla. Both towns

Above: A city transformed. In the summer of 1881 construction is under way on the Oregon Improvement Company's Seattle wharves. Absence of activity suggests the photograph was made on a Sunday or holiday.
were experiencing only very modest growth, and ready cash remained in short supply. Memory of the last great national depression of 1873 was still sharp. Other key Puget Sound cities—the territorial capital, Olympia, and the port of entry, Port Townsend—were languishing towns of approximately 1,000 people each with no significant home industry.

Considerable excitement was therefore generated in the summer of 1880 by news that Henry Villard was conducting negotiations with Seattle & Walla Walla trustees Watson Squire and Arthur Denny over acquiring the little Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad and Newcastle coal mine. Squire had initiated the contact early in the year, visiting Villard at his New York office in hopes of selling him S&WW bonds. In his customarily expansive mood, Villard evinced tentative interest—not in buying bonds but in purchasing the property outright. During the ensuing months he sent several experts to ascertain whether or not Newcastle coal and the resources of the surrounding countryside indeed offered a good prospect. In company with Squire, Villard first cruised Puget Sound that April, and in October the deal was closed at a price of $750,000. The Seattle & Walla Walla was reborn as the Columbia & Puget Sound, and Villard created the Oregon Improvement Company to manage the properties. He electrified Seattle with a promise to furnish some $5 million to complete the old S&WW over Snoqualmie Pass to eastern Washington and to put on a new fleet of steam colliers between Seattle and San Francisco. “Seattle’s Future Assured!” blared the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Over the next two years Villard captured control of the Northern Pacific, brought the West Coast’s largest shipping firm—the Pacific Coast Steamship Company—under Oregon Improvement Company control, and formed what was perhaps America’s first holding company—the Oregon & Transcontinental Company—to “harmonize” the NP’s affairs with his other holdings and build branch lines to feed the NP. The Oregon Improvement Company and Oregon & Transcontinental Company were the archetype of Villard’s “broad-gauged,” all-encompassing vision, with wide charters to build and operate railroads, telegraphs, steamship lines, docks, flumes, mines—virtually all infrastructure necessary to harvest and transport the resources of the Pacific Northwest—and shut out all would-be rivals. The Portland Oregonian echoed the nation’s press in hailing the Villard developments as “the most stupendous scheme yet undertaken on the American continent,” and anticipated eagerly “the enormous development of the country which... will produce changes of a most wonderful kind.”

At town meetings in October 1881 and April 1883, Villard presented his vision to the people of Puget Sound. Seattle, Tacoma, and Olympia heard a new doctrine of equanimity and inclusion as he urged the contentious cities to lay aside old rivalries and work together as equals in a regional transportation network. Seattle would be connected to the national railroad system, Tacoma would get enhanced terminal facilities, and Puget Sound as a whole would become the primary outlet for eastern Washington wheat. Villard described his enterprises—“part seriously, part humorously”—as nothing less than a “benevolent monopoly,” one that would make the region’s long-sought prosperity a reality. He and Puget Sound would be partners in a grand enterprise. It was a fresh new concept in a nation used to the rapacious ilk of Jim Fisk, Jay Gould, and Collis Huntington.

News of the great scheme spurred a fresh wave of Puget Sound migration. This movement was ably abetted by Villard’s own very efficient immigration agencies, which since the mid 1870s had been drawing increasing numbers of American and northern-European settlers into the Palouse grain country, the Willamette Valley, and Puget Sound. The epicenter of the Villard boom was Seattle, where hundreds of new homes and scores of brick business blocks sprouted, along with the telephone lines, electric lighting, street improvements, waterworks, and an opera house. Pioneer Seattle historian Clarence By the time Henry Villard purchased the Seattle & Walla Walla Railroad and Transportation Company in 1880, the little home­ grown railroad had fallen far short of its designated eastern terminus but had found profitability hauling coal between Newcastle and Seattle.
Bagley called the early 1880s a time of “tremendous gains” for the city, noting 1883’s 59 new town additions, 600 new houses, and 2,570 real estate transfers.

Tacoma saw her population soar between 1880 and 1883 from 1,200 to 4,000; a record 1,114 real estate transfers were transacted, along with 28 new town additions, many new industrial starts, $4 million in bank deposits, and 249 cars built under Villard’s orders at the Northern Pacific shops on Pacific Avenue. In the fertile White and Puylup river valleys, railroad grubbers dug drainage ditches, opening thousands of acres of prime bottomland to cultivation. Two hundred men were at work extending the Columbia & Puget Sound east of Renton, and business on the NP’s Pacific Division between Kalama and Tacoma was heavy, bringing another hundred settlers to Puget Sound each day. Oregon Railway & Navigation Company and Pacific Coast steamers hustled up and down Puget Sound, and the “mosquito fleet” came into its own during the Villard boom. Excitement increased in April 1883 as Villard announced in Tacoma that the Northern Pacific would soon begin construction of its Cascade Division over Stampede Pass. Real and lasting prosperity seemed to have finally come to Puget Sound.

Not everyone was elated at the new dispensation. When Villard asked for a right of way along the Seattle waterfront early in 1882, property owners and some civic leaders balked. Oregon Improvement Company manager John Howard made the pointed threat that Villard could “crush the aspirations” of Seattle if it refused to go along. The city gave in, but some remained wary of “Prince Henry.” Among them was Judge Thomas Burke, leading Seattle barrister and railroad booster, who protested his neighbors’ apparent willingness to “fold our arms and wait for Mr. Villard to do everything for us....” To ensure that Seattle retained its “sturdy, manly disposition” and control of its own destiny, Burke helped spearhead a new railroad scheme, the Seattle, Walla Walla & Baker City. Villard effectively scotched the incipient rebellion by making good on his promise to give Seattle rail connection and putting the Tacoma-Seattle branch under construction late in 1882.

The boom climaxed in September 1883, as Villard drove the last spike of the Northern Pacific in Montana. Tacoma and Seattle laid on extravagant and tumultuous receptions for the man of the day. “Sir, we have waited long for this day,” rejoiced Seattle’s Dr. Thomas T. Minor; “For years we have waited! Isolation is the severest of prison discipline.... You have opened to us the doors of new life, and new liberty!”

What followed, however, was not more boom but bust as Villard’s overbuilt financial house of cards collapsed on Wall Street. In January 1884 he relinquished control of the NP and went into seclusion at his Hudson River estate. Seattle mourned the fall of the man who had ended its isolation: “Rising above petty local strifes and subordinate aims...Henry Villard has done more for the people of the Northwest than any other man,” lamented the Post-Intelligencer. “To us he has been a friend, not partial, but just; not a narrow-minded, selfish advocate, but a broad-spirited officer and honorable man.”

Others were less flattering. Villard’s bitterest Puget Sound critic was the editor and publisher of the Tacoma Ledger, Randolph Radebaugh. Since Villard’s 1880 pact with Seattle, Radebaugh had sounded alarms that, under the “Villard dictatorship,” Tacoma—lawful terminus of the Northern Pacific—stood in danger of being sidetracked to the interests of Seattle and Portland. The branch railroad to Seattle was especially galling. “Villard’s folly!” Radebaugh scoffed, and charged that by wasting the NP’s money on this and other fripperies instead of hastening the construction of the cross-Cascades mainline, Villard had actually retarded Puget Sound’s growth. When Villard was safely out of office, Radebaugh let loose the full flood of vitriol: “For high-handedness, audacity, fraud, and widespread injury to the people, the financial exploits of no other man, living or dead, can furnish a parallel to those of Villard.”

Two years of doldrums settled drearly over Puget Sound, with attendant layoffs, unemployment, slack construction, and business failure. Recovery followed—slow at first, then explosive. In September 1887 Henry Villard himself staged a dramatic comeback on the NP board. In Seattle hundreds took to the streets in riotous celebration, and even Radebaugh now saluted the “brain and most admirable pluck” of his old nemesis.

Arm-in-arm, Henry Villard and Puget Sound entered a second and greater boom era. The opening of the Northern Pacific’s Cascade Division in July 1887 and the inauguration of all-rail service to California fueled a five-year period of unprecedented growth and prosperity. As board chairman Villard instituted a major NP expansion program in western Washington, in the process acquiring and building new branch lines and contributing substantially to the regional payroll. By 1890 Seattle’s population hit 42,837 and her 1880...
exports of $361,449 multiplied by a factor of ten during the same period. Tacoma kept pace, and Olympia, too, rode the late-1880s boom, tripling her 1880 population to 4,500 residents. Port Townsend likewise boomed, attaining an 1890 population of 7,000.

Two years later, however, the tempo was again faltering. Villard refused to give in to demands of Puget Sound mill owners for lower freight rates, and his outspoken opposition to the silver standard then being debated by the federal government, along with his equally vocal protestations at the incursions of competitor Great Northern—whose president, James J. Hill, promised radically low freight rates—elicited surprise and scorn in both the Seattle and Tacoma press. Under the cloud of world recession, the Northern Pacific entered receivership in August 1893, followed in November by the once-proud Oregon Improvement Company. That summer, and under yet another cloud of controversy, Henry Villard retired from active business affairs.

Six years later, Villard paid his final visit to Puget Sound. "I have always had a fatherly feeling toward Seattle," he told reporters, "and have watched its rapid growth with pride. . . . It is, without doubt, the most prosperous and promising city in the Northwest." Tacoma, he felt, had been "from the start an artificial creation rather than a natural outgrowth of favorable local circumstances," a city that had depended too much on the favors of one corporation, the Northern Pacific, for its well-being. Villard attributed Seattle's growth to a more diversified economy and to an unusually militant and cohesive civic element—"to their resolute spirit, enthusiastic self-confidence and untiring energy they owe their extraordinary success in creating out of nothing a flourishing city."

When Henry Villard died on November 12, 1900, Seattle paid tribute to her old friend. "Henry Villard was the first man who . . . made an impress on the Pacific Northwest as a transportation magnate and brilliant financial exploiter," eulogized the Post-Intelligencer. "He was broad-gauged, which most of the coast people were not, and he created hopes and aspirations among the people of this new country such as had never been experienced before. . . . He gave to the Pacific Northwest an energy the effects of which are still felt."

Henry Villard had brought to an isolated and cash-poor region capital, railroads, steamships, growth, and material advancement. He also brought new social stresses. The boom of 1880-83 created large transient populations in Seattle and Tacoma, a circumstance not celebrated by the more sober, often temperance-minded establishments of those communities. Antagonism between the "respectable" and the transient elements—loggers, railroaders, seafarers—and the service industries—saloons and bawdy houses—that catered to them, would be a continuing Seattle-Tacoma civic debate until well into the 20th century.

If Villard was indirectly responsible for dumping transients upon the streets of Puget Sound cities, he was directly responsible for importing a group that found itself very much at odds with the dominant white culture: the Chinese. Chinese settlement in Seattle predated Villard but remained small until he brought in shiploads of Chinese laborers; at the
height of Northern Pacific construction Villard boasted that he had an army of 15,000 Chinese in the field. With the cessation of construction in 1883–84, these men were released to pursue their fortunes as best they might. White society in Seattle and Tacoma protested this “alien and unwholesome” presence, unwelcome both as culturally different and as a threat to white laborers facing unemployment in the post-Villard recession. The incipient conflict erupted in the virulent anti-Chinese agitations of 1885–86, with violence and wholesale expulsions of Chinese in Seattle and Tacoma.

Villard's demand for a waterfront right-of-way in 1882 set the stage for Seattle’s first major city planning controversy. Seven years later, in the aftermath of the great fire of June 1889, a much larger Seattle faced the consequences of granting that franchise, as the city and railroads jostled in seemingly endless battle for hegemony on the waterfront. The twisting Villard right of way—the notorious “ram’s horn”—became a key focal point in the debate between forces agitating for public control of the waterfront and defenders of private property rights. John Howard’s 1882 threat that Villard could “crush the aspirations” of the city by moving his activities elsewhere was a foretaste of the railroad blackmail that would be dealt in bigger doses during the 1890s by the Great Northern’s James J. Hill.

Pioneer Tacoma historian Herbert Hunt considered Villard a “blight” on his city and was adamantine in his assertions that the progress Tacoma had made from the “stupification” of 1880 to the prosperity of 1883 was no thanks to Villard but to other forces—the patronage of NP director Charles Wright and the boosting of the Ledger, to name two. Like Radebaugh, Hunt named Villard's refusal to push the Cascade branch—“that which the community most desired”—as the direct cause of “paralysis” and stagnation during 1884–86. Tacoma’s ambivalence toward Villard is reflected in Hunt’s comment that, during the last spike events on September 13, 1883, “the community celebrated another visit by Henry Villard, much as it disliked him.”

Nineteenth-century America was also strongly ambivalent toward booms. During the tempestuous 1880s, Puget Sound editors regularly paid prim lip service to the concept of “slow and steady” growth and made pretenses of deploring booms—usually when such booms were being enjoyed by rival cities. “No great city was ever built up permanently on the strength of a real estate boom,” lectured Radebaugh’s Ledger after the Villard collapse. Such words may ring hollow, however, and in that exuberant era the very word “boom” was enough to fire the popular imagination, precipitate mass migrations, and influence regional economies. And when booms ended, they were sorely missed. “I have been dying by inches for the past twelve years here under this steady growth process,” complained Tacoma realtor W. J. Fife as late as 1887. “Steady growth in a new town means three generations before it comes to anything worth plotting on a map... and if we ever expect to do anything, we must make a spurt—in short, we must boom!”

Absentee capital was similarly problematic. As early as 1891 Seattle historian Frederick James Grant echoed Thomas Burke’s scorn for those who would “fold our arms and wait,” and offered a critical assessment of outside investment: “Seattle had... to learn... that her prosperity did not depend upon the favor of any one patron, even though that man represented a great railroad interest.... The Villard era proved to be but an episode in the contest... it would have been a misfortune to have had the favor of Villard determine the question of Seattle’s municipal position. Such an out-
come would have been no test of her inherent strength. Left to fight it out by herself, Seattle proved that it was its own native force and advantage that made it the imperial place. Ironically, this sentiment was echoed by Villard's own evaluation in 1899.

More recently, Roger Sale has taken this expression further, condemning railroad "economic imperialism" in spotlighting what he claims was the demoralizing effect of outside capital on local initiative. Seattle's own innate "push" assured the city's prosperity, with or without the cooperation of Villard or Jim Hill, Sale declares, and "Whenever [Seattle] has looked elsewhere—to the east or to the government or to San Francisco—for its capital, its ideas, its essential definitions of its destiny, it has floundered."

Others found the changes wrought by Villard difficult to digest. Seattle founder Arthur Denny had, like most Seattleites, welcomed the appearance of eastern capital in 1880 and had been instrumental in Villard's absorption of the Seattle & Walla Walla. By 1888, however, Denny had become disenchanted with rail-borne developments and the new breed of boom-seeking settler who seemed to want something for nothing—"degenerate scrubs too cowardly to face the same dangers that our pioneer men and women did, and too lazy to perform an honest day's work." Denny and his pioneer neighbors watched in dismay as the old urban dream of the 1850s began spinning further and further beyond comprehension. Strangers from "back East" brought with them a new and sometimes unsettling cosmopolitanism, different attitudes, religions, and expectations. Women seemed to be growing more independent, and along with boom and bust came vice, violent crime, "tramps," anti-Chinese riots, labor strife at the Oregon Improvement Company mines, even horse-drawn traffic congestion.

Nonetheless, the cosmopolitanism that Villard represented made him a figure of glamour, bringing excitement to

Henry Villard took "benevolent monopoly" seriously in striving to create ever-larger corporate vehicles capable of maximizing social benefits. He favored railroad consolidation and applauded the later efforts of James J. Hill to bring the Great Northern and Northern Pacific together. Hill, though no great Villard admirer, nonetheless offered solid praise: "If it had not been for your father," he told Oswald Garrison Villard, "the opening of the Northwest would have been postponed for twenty-five years." He strongly believed in the partnership of enterprise with the regions and people it served. "Probably no railway promoter in the Pacific Northwest ever strove so earnestly for the good of all as did Villard," asserted James Blaine Hedges. Granted, Oregon Improvement Company coal miners, steamship stokers, and locomotive crews fared no better in wages and working conditions than their counterparts elsewhere. Granted, too, that Henry Villard remained very much the autocratic and paternal Victorian captain of industry, unwilling to heed expert counsel and often blinded by his own star. His aspirations stretched far beyond the limits of his time, and he remains a seminal figure in Puget Sound history.

Kurt E. Armbruster, Seattle writer and historian, has authored two previous COLUMBIA articles as well as a recent book, Orphan Road: The Railroad Comes to Seattle, 1853-1911 (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1999).
Steam to Diesel
Jim Fredrickson's Railroading Journal
Jim Fredrickson's career with the Northern Pacific spanned a period of far-reaching technological changes in railroading—from steam to diesel, from parcel freight to containers, from semaphore to radio. Being a life-long photographer, Jim got it all down on film. He also photographed the Milwaukee and Great Northern—and the successors, Burlington Northern and Amtrak. Jim crossed the border into Canada to photograph the Canadian Pacific, BC Electric, and Canadian National as well. Steam to Diesel presents some of Jim's best photos with accompanying informative essays.

In Volume II, Martin Plamondon presents a cartographic reconstruction of the Corps of Discovery's trek across the northwestern U.S. in 1805-6. Beginning near Fort Mandan, 183 maps depict the explorers' route on the Missouri River in North Dakota and Montana, over the continental divide to Idaho, and down westward-flowing waters to the Snake-Columbia confluence in central Washington. Plamondon has utilized the actual traverse measurements recorded by William Clark. The maps contrast modern riverbeds to their courses at the time of exploration and include excerpts from Corps members' journals.

The Dynamics of Change
A History of the Washington State Library
Maryan E. Reynolds with Joel Davis
This is a unique and valuable history of the Washington State Library, from its territorial beginnings in 1853 to the late 1990s. Maryan Reynolds breathes life into this historical narrative with her firsthand account of the library's expansion since the 1940s, when she joined the staff.

Desert Wings
Controversy in the Idaho Desert
Niels Sparre Nokkenved
Desert Wings tells the contentious story of how the U.S. military and high-ranking politicians attempted to secure a bombing range in the fragile canyons of southwest Idaho. In 1989 it was revealed that the U.S. Air Force planned to take over 1.5 million acres in southwest Idaho. An unlikely coalition of environmentalists, ranchers, and Native Americans thwarted—though not entirely—the bombing range proponents. Reporter Niels Nokkenved reveals surprising connections and behind-the-scenes machinations, as well as providing context for the Air Force's effort to round up as much western space as possible.
Twenty years ago M. Gidley wrote Kopez: A Documentary Narrative of Chief Joseph's Last Years (1981). Even so, most Washingtonians are oblivious to the fact that the most famous of Nez Perce tribal leaders, a man made internationally famous by his poignant surrender speech ("Hear me, my chiefs. I am tired; my heart is sick and sad. From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever..."), died in 1904 in Nespelem, Washington, the Oregon homeland. Jerome Greene's hefty volume on the Nez Perce crisis of 1877 explains all.

Greene, a research historian for the National Park Service (NPS), originally wrote Nez Perce Summer 1877 in 1996 as an NPS report about historic sites connected with the Nez Perce War. Greene spent the next several years upgrading his knowledge of the Nez Perce and expanding his coverage of the Indian retreat. Greene's work has resulted in the most exhaustive history ever told about the 19th-century American frontier. Consider that 800 Nez Perce men, women, and children traveled nearly 1,700 miles in an escape route from Idaho to Canada, yet they fell 40 miles short, surrendering their freedom on a windswept prairie in north central Montana. Along the way more than 100 Indians and a similar number of United States Army soldiers died during 17 military engagements. William Tecumseh Sherman grudgingly praised the Nez Perce leaders, saying they fought with "almost scientific skill, using advance and rear guards, skirmish lines, and field fortifications."

The 125 pages of footnotes and 35 pages of bibliography attest to the depth of the author's research. Some of the most revealing information uncovered by Greene involves the Nez Perce side of events, material that came principally from manuscripts gathered by Lucullus V. McWhorter and now administered by Washington State University. Do not be deterred by the price of this book; it is a highly reliable, well-written volume and worth every penny.

Robert C. Carriker is the author of three books dealing with Indian wars and military history. He is a professor of history at Gonzaga University.

Since 1899 Ye Olde Curiosity Shop has been, well, pretty much for anyone who lives in or visits Seattle. Shrunken heads and tiny fleas in dresses definitely make this an odd place. Still, from another point of view, the shop is a museum of sorts. Thousands of visitors each year stroll through the store aisles, reading signs yet never making a purchase. They look, however, and learn. For scholars, the shop is a surprisingly rich academic resource about Northwest American Indian and Alaska Native artifacts.

Beginning in 1910, shop owner "Daddy" Standley began publishing catalogs of items for sale. Today these documents are an invaluable ethnographic resource that links names, dates, and artists to hundreds of thousands of Pacific Northwest art objects. In addition, company records list prices and quantities of items sold, thus making this remarkably complete archive an essential tool for art historians. To maintain inventory for the first three decades of the 20th century, Ye Olde Curiosity Shop recruited Native Americans to carve totem poles and weave baskets, thereby helping to keep traditional tribal craftsmen active just a little longer. So the store is more of a historical treasure than a mere curiosity. Scholars join tourists in agreeing that, really, there is nothing like this shop anywhere else in the world.

Kate Duncan, an art history professor at Arizona State University, has written this book to help the rest of us understand how deep run the roots of this often misunderstood curio shop. Duncan had available to her all of the store's catalogs, photographs, and records. She also had the notes Standley wrote to himself in preparation for the book he did not live to write. Duncan discovered the store as a tourist. Then, in 1993, while on a visit to the Royal Ontario Museum in Toronto, she learned from a curator that much of their Northwest Coast collection had come from Ye Olde Curiosity Shop. She later learned that collections at the Smithsonian's National Museum of the American Indian, New York's American Museum of Natural History, and numerous other institutions have also benefited from purchases made at Ye Olde Curiosity Shop early in the 20th century.

This is a wonderful, well-written story. In its day, Ye Olde Curiosity Shop was the equivalent of Seattle's Experience Music Project—garish on the outside, substantive on the inside, and often underestimated.

Jackie Tusa works for Microsoft, Inc. She is voracious reader on Pacific Northwest history and an indefatigable pedestrian of Seattle streets.
Lewis and Clark-related historic sites fall into three categories, writes James Fazio, a past president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation (1992-93) and a University of Idaho professor of resource recreation and tourism. The largest group, he laments, has been drowned by dams, paved over by highways, or farmed under. These places are lost to history and exist only in the mind’s eye of scholars who read the original journals. The next group consists of well-defined physical features attached to modern public facilities—Beacon Rock State Park on the Columbia River, for example.

The premier sites, says Fazio, are those special places described in the journals that exist today virtually unaltered since 1805 and 1806. The book under review is shaped in such a way as to lead the curious to that part of the Lewis and Clark journey where the largest number of the latter group of sites yet remain: the area between Lemhi Pass (Montana/Idaho) and the confluence of the Clearwater and Snake rivers (Idaho/Washington).

Even as the passage of the Corps of Discovery across the Bitterroot Mountains was a cooperative effort, so too is this book. Meriwether Lewis, William Clark, Patrick Gass, John Ordway, Nathan Pryor, and Joseph Whitehouse, all members of the expedition, provide quotes from their original journals. Simultaneously, Fazio offers a running daily commentary that interprets the progress of the expedition from August 12 to October 10, 1805, and then again from May 5 to July 2, 1806. Thirteen side bars add information on topics of special interest.

Mike Venso, a newspaper photographer who has actually followed the Lewis and Clark trail by canoe, horseback, and on foot, provides 93 color images for the book that are so vivid the scenes seem to leap off the pages. In fact, no publication known to this reviewer has more dramatic photographs of sites noted by Lewis and Clark. An added plus is that most of the photographs are large format and cover either full pages or one and a half pages. Finally, Steve Russell, an electrical engineering professor at Iowa State University, contributes eight maps to this book. Russell developed his cartography by measuring actual trail treads of the expedition and matching that information with high tech computer and Global Positioning System tools that apply mathematical analysis to the courses and distances given in the journals. This is a virtual “Dream Team” of contributors, and one can only hope that each state across which Lewis and Clark “proceeded on” will do as well in telling their story.

Across the Snowy Ranges is, despite its subtitle, mainly about the Corps of Discovery in Idaho. It supersedes all previous work on the topic done by Ralph Space, John Peebles, and Merle Wells, a triumvirate of distinguished Idaho historians who pioneered original research on the trail of Lewis and Clark in the Gem State during the 1960s and 1970s. Fazio is to be congratulated for his perceptive comments about the explorers and their trail. Over the course of many years he has retraced the route of the expedition on the Lolo Trail, usually hiking the same distances that the captains reported in their journals. Still, his bibliography of sources is noticeably weak.

Neither Space’s history of the Lolo Trail (1970) nor his Lewis and Clark Through Idaho (1964) is listed. Absent also is Peebles’s Lewis and Clark in Idaho (1966). Similarly, United States Forest Service reports from the mid 1980s seem not to have influenced Fazio’s commentary, though that seems quite unlikely inasmuch as Fazio is well-known as an advocate for greater historical awareness by both the USFS and private timber companies in the Clearwater National Forest. Nor does Fazio acknowledge the pioneering research of Reuben Gold Thwaites, Olin Wheeler, or Elliott Coues. It is a mistake, I think, to entice readers with a good story about Lewis and Clark and then fail to properly lead them to appropriate additional sources.

The Lolo Trail can be navigated in Idaho today on USFS Road 500. It remains rugged but not impassible. Patrick Gass called the Bitterroots the “most terrible mountains I ever beheld” (September 16, 1805). William Clark, upon completing his second journey across the Lolo Trail, could not disguise his joy at “leaving those tremendous mountains behind us” (June 30, 1806). Fazio’s text, Venso’s photographs, and Russell’s maps will definitely guide modern travelers no matter whether they choose to cross the mountains in an armchair or a sport utility vehicle. This is an essential book for the Lewis and Clark bicentennial traveler.

“Dream Team” of contributors, and one can only hope that each state across which Lewis and Clark “proceeded on” will do as well in telling their story.

Robert M. Carriker is co-director of a National Endowment for the Humanities summer field trip for teachers that retraces the route of Lewis and Clark in Idaho. He holds an academic appointment as director of the public history program at the University of Louisiana, Lafayette.

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Still “On the Creek”

Recently a friend sent me a copy of an article from the Summer 2000 COLUMBIA, “The Summer of ‘47: Stripping the Muck on Fairbanks Creek,” by Tyre Newton. I found the article very interesting because I was a resident of Fairbanks Creek at that time and have lived there during the summer continuously since. In 1947 my husband and his Alder Creek Mining Company were mining near Discovery claim, approximately three miles from where Mr. Newton was working. We were an independent placer operation. The tall, robust Swede the author referred to as “Andy” was no doubt Jens Weltzin, who owned the store at that time, and I’m sure that he could carry one length of sluice pipe on his shoulder unassisted.

About 1952 my husband, Martin Sather, and I bought the store from Jens and, along with our three little boys, operated the store for the next eight years or so, until the Fairbanks Exploration Company (FEC) dredging operations shut down. My husband worked days at his own operation while I ran the store in the daytime, and then he would put in a shift at the store in the evening. During those years the dredge was running continuously throughout the mining season, with three shifts of men, so the store was a very busy place. We had installed a pool table and juke box, which provided some diversion for the crews.

I especially enjoyed the article because it was quite factual and truthful. Mr. Newton must have kept excellent notes on his summer there and/or have an excellent memory. So often we come across similar stories of Alaskan experiences that are far from the truth.

There has been some placer gold mining continuously on Fairbanks Creek all these years, even after the FEC dredge shut down. Martin died some years ago, but my family still owns claims there and continues to spend the summer months “on the creek.”

—Pat Sather Franklin, Fairbanks, Alaska

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Members are invited to donate their back issues of COLUMBIA to our “recycle” program. The magazines you return to WSHS will be made available to schools and libraries free of charge, except for the cost of shipping. We accept donations of any COLUMBIA as in good condition, but especially valued are earlier issues, 1987 through 1991. Please contact the Education Department to arrange for your donation: 253/798-5878.

COLUMBIA 48 FALL 2001
Our Museum Store stocks a large selection of books on Washington. In our “READ WASHINGTON” department you will find books for children and adults on Native American culture, cooking, history, travel, gardening, nostalgia, ecology, literature, ethnic heritage, Chihuly, art and Mt. Rainier. If you’re ‘in need of a good read’, Brenda, Kate, Melissa, and Bill are here to serve and help you find the perfect book. Don’t forget that WSHS members receive a 10% discount.
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