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With this issue we conclude our experimental serial article on Lewis and Clark place names, written by Doc Wesselius. Based on popular reaction, this venture has been a success. We have received requests that we publish the entire series as a small booklet—something we intend to do in association with a traveling exhibit on Lewis and Clark in Washington, which is currently in the planning phase.

Several observers along the bicentennial trail have noted that most generations “rediscover” Lewis and Clark. Those who were alive at major commemorative benchmarks, like the Lewis and Clark centennial 100 years ago, certainly seem to have been caught up in the Lewis and Clark story. All types of Americans catch this bug—not just historians—such as the railroad engineers who laid out the alignments for the SP&S on the north bank of the Columbia, or the so-called “Natron cutoff” through Oregon’s southern Cascades early in the 20th century. I deduce this from the curious fact that a number of place names on both of these corridors are derived from the Lewis and Clark expedition.

For example, several years ago during a track-side ramble with my son Dominic along the southbound approach to the Cascade Summit in Oregon, I noticed a succession of railroad sidings with names like “Pryor,” “Frazier,” “Fields,” and most distinctively, “Cruzatte” (photo above)—all junior members of the Corps of Discovery. None of these places are towns or even “places” in the conventional sense; they can only be found on signs within railroad rights-of-way and in timetables created for the benefit of train crews. Similarly, the old SP&S alignment, now a part of the Burlington Northern Santa Fe system, once had a siding also named “Cruzatte,” just west of Beacon Rock, and even more curiously, still carries a siding named “Moonax,” east of Roosevelt in Klickitat County. On their return journey up the Columbia in 1805, Lewis noted in this vicinity that the Indian name for the yellow-bellied marmot was “Moonax” and that the Indians had made pets of them!

Clearly, this bit of Lewis and Clark arcanum had come to the knowledge of someone laying out that track. Yet more proof, if any is needed, of the rich detail found in the captains’ journals and the use to which later generations have put it.

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Editor
Species Extinction & Cultural Arrogance: The Perils of Ignoring History

By William G. Robbins

For more than a century, politicians, newspaper editors, state and federal fisheries managers, and their various constituencies with an interest in salmon have complained, lobbied, and petitioned, sought legislative relief, and studied to near extinction the declining runs of Pacific Northwest salmon. All to no avail. Management efforts have failed; the attempt to establish reliable, predictive models have failed; massive federal expenditures to rescue crashing stocks have failed; and endeavors to achieve consensus about future policy-making have failed. And today one can add to the now-familiar story of extinct and endangered salmon similar tales about ocean groundfish, newly impoverished fishing communities, reductions in fleet size, and more federal bailouts. What is fascinating in the unveiling of this most recent story is the sense of history repeating itself as commercial fishers shift from one species to the next.

The sources of these problems, indeed of difficulties with other phenomena that we refer to as "natural resources," are deeply embedded in the meanings we attach to the words defining human relationships with nature—the increasingly popular idea that human destiny was firmly linked with the ability to reorder natural systems. By the early years of the 20th century—in the midst of explosive industrial growth in the eastern United States—influential Americans were developing an almost transcendental faith in the human capacity to manipulate the natural world. That practical and instrumentalist view of nature was centered in a belief that orderly, scientific, and engineering approaches would bring an endless bounty of riches; a conviction that human technical genius would combine with a rich and abundant landscape to improve the quality of life for future generations. This scenario, played out at an accelerating pace following World War II, raised few questions about unseen and unintended consequences.

To make matters more complicated in our relations with nature, for most of the 20th century our economic system has fused much of modern science to its purposes, especially in its tendency to give privileged status to the needs of production. In fisheries this has meant heavy industrial support for hatchery programs and other management directives that have abdicated biological responsibility and avoided tough decisions. In his study of Forest Service policy since World War II, historian Paul Hirt argued that the agency viewed its responsibility as "overcoming limits, not establishing them." Those attitudes were an expression of the postwar enthusiasm for unending economic growth, a faith in technological solutions, and the existence of what Hirt calls a "can-do technocratic optimism." In that sense, the world of fisheries was similar to that of forestry, with its emphasis on production science.

One also must not lose sight of the cornucopian dreams that followed in the aftermath of American success in World War II. It is important to look closely at this critical juncture in our history: (1) 1945 marked the end of a period of more than 15 years of deferred buying, (2) the American people had accumulated incredible savings during the war years, and (3) citizens were optimistic that the postwar period would usher in an era of unending prosperity. The focus of this essay, however, is the widely held view in the United States that the free-enterprise system and science, technology, and the proper modeling of those techniques would lead to endless prosperity, to the promised land. What contemporaries referred to as "science" may have been vague, but policy makers conveyed to the public an overweening sense of optimism, a conviction that there were technical solutions to all human problems. Among those conceits was the belief that scientific modeling and econometric principles would usher in the brave new world of sustainable resource extraction in fisheries, agriculture, and forestry, and that with carefully crafted predictive models societies could reach for the stars.

The benefits of science and planning in the postwar era promised to bring ancient millennial dreams into reality, to bring forth an Eden on earth, to finally make humans ascendent in the physical world. The war itself served as a great divide of sorts, a historical transition separating the evolution of basic science that preceded the 1940s with the technological explosion that followed. Prewar advances in science, especially in physics and chemistry, created the conditions for the massive reordering and manipulation of nature. And then, under the
pressure of urgent military requirements and with huge infusions of federal monies, those revolutionary advances in basic scientific knowledge were put to the task of developing new technologies and more productive enterprises. The great outburst of technological innovation that followed the war included the production of a vast array of synthetics, DDT among them, and the further development of nuclear energy, which would eventually pose serious threats to all forms of life.

The tremendous productivity of the American economy contributed to widely held assumptions that the country could engineer into existence ever-increasing wealth, security, and financial well-being, that the American people could expect a future without limits in which all things were possible. In The Good Life and Its Discontents, economist Robert Samuelson observed: "We didn't merely expect things to get better. We expected all social problems to be solved. We expected business cycles, economic insecurity, poverty, and racism to end." The American Dream, he concluded, became "the American fantasy." Truman Moore, who grew up in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina, during the 1940s, believed that new inventions and unending discoveries would "bring perfection to humankind," that the further into the future one could conjecture, "the better things would be." Synthetics would replace natural resources, thereby providing "an artificial cornucopia to pour forth abundant substitutes for any shortages." Moore understood part of the postwar promise to mean a world free from flies and mosquitoes, because of the availability of DDT for civilian use. "I liked the smell of it," he remarked.

We know today that those were unwarranted assumptions, that they were based on false notions about abundance, a skewed vision about the function of science, and that they harbored frightening consequences for the natural world. What I would like to suggest is the importance of history to these discussions. This is, after all, a story about false optimism, about predictive illusions and failed expectations; it is an account that places expediency and profits rather than prudence in the forefront of policy formulation. But, most significant in my view, it is a chronicle that has privileged the logic and directives of the marketplace as the key operating strategy. For much of the postwar period there has been an absence of social, political, and ecological courage in the exercise of stewardship. Historically, Arthur McEvoy argues in The Fisherman's Problem, market mechanisms have failed to be sufficiently inclusive to embrace changes to ecosystems. And, one might add, they are equally ineffective regulatory tools for protecting natural resources.

Understanding the natural world in that reductive and simplified way—and then behaving according to those cultural precepts—has had profound and systemic ecological consequences. It is important to understand that what we call the "development of natural resources" is an intensely social enterprise, with much of the effort centered on "the transformation and improvement of nature." For the Pacific Northwest those cultural ambitions included the imposition of management schemes on both land and waterborne environments: draining wetlands; channeling streams; building fish hatcheries; establishing tree farms; reclaiming arid lands; and in the last 50 years, infinitely more aggressive and ambitious designs that included huge dam-building projects and the widespread use of chemicals in an effort to perfect the world around us.

Despite our overweening self-confidence, we have not been oblivious to the changes taking place about us. We have not been lacking in concern, nor have we neglected measures to mitigate the consequences of our behavior. With the best of intentions, biologist Daniel Botkin points out, our management of fisheries has been "purposeful [and] well-meaning," although at the same time it has been "generally a failure, producing crashes in populations of the fish under management." Indeed, for the once-huge salmon runs in the Pacific Northwest, it can be truthfully said that our knowledge about the dangers that human activities pose is more than a century old. That awareness, however, has had little effect in stopping the catastrophic decline in salmon populations or in altering our cultural behavior. "The end result," Richard White points out, "is that what was once abundant has become scarce."

The story of Pacific Northwest salmon provides a classic study in which technology and the quest for profits always raced ahead of management schemes. Because salmon inhabit ecologically and politically volatile environments, much else has gone wrong as well. There was the great "hatchery pana-
were federal Washington bank releasing over along the Columbia County.

OPPOSITE PAGE: The Dalles Dam on the Columbia River, with a Native American fishing platform in the foreground, c. 1988.


ce, pursued with the objective of Making Salmon, to use the title to Jay Taylor's excellent history of the Northwest salmon crisis. Similar to the Forest Service's effort to grow super trees through genetic selection and the generous application of herbicides, hatchery programs represented an aggressive commitment to fisheries production science. The further development of computer models in the early 1980s, according to Gary Morishima and Kenneth Henry, gave fishery scientists "an essential tool for managing ocean salmon fisheries."

Although "new technology has allowed management of Pacific Northwest ocean salmon fisheries to become information-intensive," Morishima and Henry argue that those advances do not appear to have mattered because escapements and catches continued to plummet. Between them, Canada and the United States possess the most sophisticated, science-based fishery knowledge in the world, and yet salmon and groundfish stocks in both nations are imperiled. In that sense, our talents and skills with computers, with economic modeling and statistical abstraction have not stemmed the tide of endangered and extinct fish. Those attempts to model nature, to model ecology, have largely failed, but not from lack of effort. Obviously, something has been missing in formulating those assessments.

As a culture, we have only a shadowy grasp of our historical behavior. We live in a present shaped by historical ideologies of improvement and progress, a host of values that has driven the transformation of fields, forests, and rivers until those settings were mirror scenes of efficiency and industrial production. Academic units studying natural resources—mining, agriculture, forestry, and fisheries and wildlife—emerged in Northwestern land-grant universities, all of them proudly boasting of the scientific and technological benefits they contributed to the region's development. Collectively, those schools, departments, and their affiliated professional societies published scientific and technical findings to further promote resource development.

Let me cite one obvious example of what I call production science. As the 20th century advanced, first steam-powered machines, and then their gasoline and diesel-powered successors, were used to haul logs to a central landing. Over time loggers began to harvest all the merchantable trees within yarding distance of the engines. As cutting strategies were adapted to the requirements of technology, clear-cut harvesting became the norm in logging practices. When the ever-expanding cut-over districts began to raise social and ecological questions, industry leaders collaborated with the Forest Service and the still new colleges of forestry to develop silvicultural justifications for clear-cutting. In his recent book, Clear-cutting the Pacific Rain Forest, historian Richard Rajala points out that silviculturists saw "the traditional technique a mechanism equivalent to fire—nature's way of clearing the land for a new Douglas-fir forest." To explain those practices, Forest Service and university researchers developed an elaborate "science" based on the notion that clear-cuts replicated natural processes. In reality, of course, those silvicultural justifications had little to do with an understanding of the biology of the forest. Put simply, clear-cutting was efficient and cost effective. It was an exercise in mono-cropping, a plantation model of forest management.

As many critics have indicated, rather than disinterested scientific inquiry, these were sciences of production, commodity-driven fields of inquiry. Whether it was the work of professionals in silviculture, the agricultural sciences, or those engaged in fisheries research, those groups shared common objectives—that is, to bring their respective spheres of activity under maximum commercial production. In effect, those scientific endeavors reflected a firm belief in the ideology of progress, the notion that human technical genius could bring the natural world to higher degrees of perfection.

Salmon are a special case, however, because even in decline, historian Richard White argues, they "remain culturally as powerful as when they passed upriver in a flood of abundant life." Everywhere along the North Pacific Slope they continue to hold great meaning as symbols of nature's former abundance. Fishery biologist Peter Larkin pointed out nearly 30 years ago that "for cultural reasons alone" enhancing salmon runs would be a popular undertaking and that such activity would be "natural," politically. Today we can say that Larkin was right about the question of enhancement. Governments have spent billions of dollars, the number of fishery biologists has quadrupled, and federal and international commissions have been convened to resolve the problem of declining salmon runs.
Saving salmon has been immensely popular; that is, at least until the recent “brownouts” rolling through California. And yet, as the volume of literature on salmon has mounted, policy makers seem increasingly uncertain about the proper course of action to take. The question of removing the four Snake River dams is only one such discussion. Agency officials have attempted to muddle through with fuzzy “adaptive-management” schemes; the state of Oregon has pioneered still another approach, “collaboration,” hoping upon hope that ranchers will fence streams, that urban dwellers will use organic fertilizers on their lawns and stop washing vehicles in their driveways.

But for salmon, an equally important question is the association between the sustainability of fisheries and commercial exploitation. Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist (and novelist) Bill Dietrich cautioned a few months ago that “there has never been a commercial fishery in the world—ever, at any time—that has been successfully managed for long-term stability. They all collapse.” Dietrich’s statement flies in the face of a number of ideas floating about today, computer-based models and scientific information promoting sustainable development and sustainable resource use. A few years ago, when he was still a Macalester College undergraduate, my son Kelly remarked that the world was “too random” for most computer-driven, predictive models of ecosystems to work. Indeed, to act otherwise, to assume that predictive models would usher in a new wonder world of stable-state environmental conditions is to substitute unsubstantiated theory for wisdom and courage. As Peter Larkin put it in his famous essay on maximum sustained yield, “hypothetical animal populations can produce hypothetical maximum sustained yields, but the same cannot be said of real animal populations.”

And yet we cling to notions of sustainable development, believing that we can continue with biological/technological fixes, avoiding high-yield fertilizer, using smaller-is-better strategies, and a variety of other maneuvers to help us live more benignly amidst our surroundings. Boise State University historian Todd Shallat put the argument for sustainable development this way:

"Restraint and long-term planning can sustain the next generation. Good farming. Good science. Respect for community. Respect for the earth. It sounds like progressive thinking, but the concept is hard to pin down. Do we sustain potatoes at the expense of salmon? Do we allot loggers a sustained yield by planting seedlings in place of old growth?"

In an important policy forum appearing in a 1993 issue of Science, Donald Ludwig, Ray Hilborn, and Carl Walters urged readers to be cautious about buying into sustainability schemes, because “future events cannot be predicted.” The history of resource exploitation, they argued, is one of inevitable over-exploitation, “often to the point of exhaustion or extinction.” They further indicate that the real problem is managing humans rather than the reverse. The authors then list several suggestions for effective management: (1) include human motivation and values in regulatory schemes; (2) act before scientific consensus is achieved; (3) distrust claims of sustainability lest they lead to a false sense of complacency; and (4) be tolerant of ambiguity and stand free of the “illusion that science or technology can provide” solutions. Finally, Ludwig and his colleagues conclude that resource problems are really human rather than environmental problems.

What I am leading to is the systemic quality of our problems with nature—and most of them are cultural. In some respects we have a better understanding of the complexities of the natural world than we do the cultural. The shortcomings of what I call our technological triumphalism and the celebration of the free market are reflected in climate change, increasing numbers of extinct and endangered species, and equally important, our inability to concede equal space and standards of living to members of our own society. Historian William Sullivan has called those developments “the dream turned nightmare from which we must sooner rather than later awake.” Oregon writer Kim Stafford said recently that “the problems of our time are political, economic, and environmental, but their solutions are cultural.” He went on to say that the resolution to the contemporary environmental predicament was more than scientific; it involved arriving at some sort of common ground about our many differences; it involved becoming native to this place.

History, again, is critical to these discussions. In their recent pastoral letter, the Catholic Bishops of the Pacific Northwest pointed to problems and injustices in the Columbia River watershed: “pollution of the air, land, and water”; extinct, endangered, and threatened salmon; violation of native peoples’ rights; and poverty-level wages for many working people. The bishops’ statement then comes directly to the point: “Greed, ignorance, irresponsibility, and abuse of economic and political power cause these problems and injustices.” As a longtime agnostic, I may be inclined to reconsider my spiritual priorities!

William G. Robbins is distinguished professor of history at Oregon State University.
By Howard D. Bingham

Lynching Double Leads to a "Vigilante Law"

Elmendorf's Secret of Justice

Courtesy Washington State Archives, Ellensburg
It was a time of intimidation, silence, and conspiracy, when the law was crudely shoved aside and a mob mentality ruled the night. It was a time of lynch law. In the black of night the Vinsons—father and son—were hanged. Sam, the father, cast an agonizing glance at the mob and exclaimed: “My God, haven’t I a friend in this town? I never harmed any of you!”

Asked for any final words, son Charles responded: “Gentlemen, you will be sorry for this. I ask no pity for myself, but pity my mother. Give my love to my mother.” Whereupon the father was pulled up. Then the son was hoisted as someone shouted, “Your Pa’s up there—go up and see him!”

Thus ended the lives of two accused murderers by a surly crowd that feared there would be no justice in the established legal system. The “tree of justice,” as a spectator named it, has long been gone, but the vigilante deed lives on. Perhaps the tree could better have been called the “tree of injustice.”

We are all familiar with the typical Western movie in which gunfights and hangings proliferate. The early West is often characterized by its perceived lawlessness, a view—whether right or wrong—fostered by the film industry. And, indeed, there were pockets of violent crime. But the conflict between the “good guy” with a white hat and a white horse and the “bad guy” in black, riding a dark horse, was always more fiction than fact. Good does not always triumph over evil. In fact, sometimes it’s difficult to distinguish the difference. Such is the case in the story that follows.

Whether violence was more rampant in 19th-century Washington than it is today is debatable. By the 1890s Ellensburg had an established system of law and order. It no longer lived up to its former name of “Robbers Roost.” The Vinson Lynchings were probably the last spasm of “Old West” lawlessness in what had once been a frontier community.

Picture a time before automobiles: streets were primitive trains, horses, buggies, and feet were the only means of transportation. This was Ellensburg in 1895; the backdrop for the Old West drama that began on a hot Sunday in August.

All afternoon the Vinsons had been drinking and attempting to beg, borrow, and cajole sums of money from passersby, not unusual behavior for them. A carpenter by trade, the elder Vinson, Sam, was said to be a hard worker but prone to alcoholic binges and domestic abuse. Born in 1841 in New Brunswick, Canada, he married a girl named Martha. The family immigrated to Minnesota in the 1860s and to Washington Territory in the 1880s, living in Tacoma and Allyn prior to making their home in Ellensburg in 1894.

Wherever son Charles went, trouble followed. Serious incidents occurred at Seattle, Hillhurst, Allyn, and Lester. By 1895 he had a sizable criminal record, including acts of violence, and had served two years in the territorial penitentiary at Walla Walla for armed robbery. He was mean-spirited, with seemingly no redeeming qualities. Always armed and frequently drunk, the father and son were not a welcome sight.

Around six o’clock a Mr. Wolverton, who worked in Butcher’s lumberyard, stopped in at the Teutonia Saloon in Ellensburg. Sam met Wolverton and requested in a rough tone that he set up the drinks, saying: “You have money—I saw you get a $20 gold piece changed here last night; and two men were going to follow and rob you, but I told them you were a good fellow, so they didn’t do it. You ought to treat.” Wolverton told Vinson that the money was Butcher’s and attempted to leave. Sam caught hold of him, and it was only after a struggle that Wolverton was able to escape. “I can do you up too easy and won’t have to use my fist either,” Sam Vinson threatened as he followed Wolverton out the door.

“A man who won’t treat when he has money is no good."

At this point, John Buerglin, known as “Dutch John,” went into the saloon. Sam left Wolverton alone and followed Buerglin. Upon entering the Teutonia, Buerglin asked several friends to join him for beer. The elder Vinson walked up and said, “Am I in it?” Buerglin replied in his German accent, “No, you ain’t in it; I lend you two dollars, and you not pay it.”

A quarrel commenced. Sam snatched a knife from the “free lunch table” and plunged it into Dutch John’s right front side, just below the ribs. After pounding Vinson over the head with a whisky bottle until the old man sagged to the floor, the injured man, holding his protruding intestines in place, walked alone to the office of Dr. Thomas J. Newland, in the Kleinberg Building around the corner on Pearl Street. Meanwhile, Charles Vinson had been in the Maison Dorée restaurant, giving the manager, Frank Mow, a hard time. Despite the customary pistol Vinson wore in his belt, Mow managed to usher him to the door without incident.

During the melee between Sam Vinson and Dutch John, the younger Vinson had come into the saloon. Frank Uebelacker, one of the proprietors, who was tending bar, walked around in front of the bar with a bung starter (a wooden mallet or stave used to pound a bung into the bunghole of a beer keg) to break up the fight. Young Vinson thrust his gun in Uebelacker’s face, forcing him to retreat. Frank’s partner, Michael Kohlhepp, upon hearing the commotion, hastened in from the back office. Grabbing a pool cue from the wall, he attempted to drive Charles Vinson out. When Kohlhepp got within a few feet, the young desperado started for the door, then turned suddenly and shot him through the right lung.

The wounded man had strength enough to disarm Charles, wrestle him to the floor and, with the help of patrons, hold him until deputy city marshals Emil Becker and Charles Frazier arrived. Others had constrained Sam. The father and son were handcuffed together and marched off to the nearby county jail, as no city jail existed at the time.

Excitement reigned in the streets that Sunday night, and there was talk of lynching. As a precaution, City Marshal Archie O. Wishard requested that all saloons close for business (which some contended should not have been open.

OVERLEAF: Samuel and Charles Vinson, father and son, lynched by an Ellensburg mob on August 14, 1895.
anyway, in compliance with the Sunday blue law) and station­
ed extra guards at the jail. No immediate attempt to seek
vengeance was made, however, and by half past ten the
streets were comparatively clear and quiet.

Kohlhepp was carried upstairs to his room where Dr. Pas­
chal P. Gray attended him. Gray found that a .44-caliber
bullet had entered Kohlhepp's chest about two inches above
and to the left of his right nipple, exiting near the shoulder
blade, about three inches from the spine. He died less than
two hours after sustaining his mortal wound. Ironically,
the round fired by the son, upon leaving Kohlhepp's body, lodged
in the father's wrist.

Buerglin, it was thought, would survive his stab wound.
Dr. Newland, finding the entrails not cut, dressed the wound
and expected him to recover. He was made comfortable in
the doctor's office and provided with a nurse.

One of the sad footnotes to this story is that Martha
Vinson, a good but reportedly abused woman, had not heard
of the events of Sunday evening until she sat in church that
night. The minister spoke of the awful crimes committed by
a father and son. Though he did not mention any names, he
had said enough—Mrs. Vinson realized the truth and fainted.

Coroner Theron Stafford, who lived in Cle Elum, some
25 miles west, was hastily summoned but failed to catch the
night train. Monday morning, August 12, Justice James G.
Boyle impaneled a six-man coroner's jury. Their conclu­
sion, after hearing testimony, was that Michael Kohlhepp
met his death from a gunshot wound inflicted upon him by
Charles Vinson.

At four in the afternoon a preliminary examination of
Charles Vinson, accused of murdering Kohlhepp, was held in
Superior Court. After hearing the testimony of five wit­
tnesses, Justice Boyle had the younger Vinson held for trial on
a charge of first degree murder.

By Tuesday morning, August 13, Buerglin's condition had
worsened and he executed his will. That afternoon, before
surgery could be performed, infection took his life. Buerglin's death prompted another inquest.

Sheriff William M. Stinson, concerned about the
safety of his prisoners, took the precaution of assign­
ing six deputized armed guards and himself to stand
watch over them. In a statement made more than a
year later, Stinson claimed that information he had received
indicated that no mob action would be attempted. Still, he
gave the cell keys to his office deputy, Frederick D. Schnebly,
and sent him away. The cell housing the Vinsons was consid­
ered impregnable. Stinson firmly believed that, lacking keys,
a lynch mob could not get into the jail.

Promptly at midnight two groups of men, some masked—
perhaps 50 to 100 in all—converged on the county jail. City
marshals, unable to disperse the mob, ran to the city hall to

Late 19th-century
Ellensburg, at the corner
of Third and Pearl. The
attacks that led to the
lynchings occurred at
the Teutonia Saloon, in
the middle of this block
(fifth awning from
the near corner).
OPPOSITE PAGE: Detail of an 1897 Ellensburg map showing the location of the county courthouse and jail, the route of the lynch mob, and the site of the hangings.

ring the fire bell. The electric whistle at the Northern Pacific roundhouse took up the refrain.

An entry in the official record of alarms for the Ellensburg Fire Department reads as follows:

**FALSE ALARUM** [sic], 1895 - August 13 [14]. An alarm was sounded at 12:15 A.M. by bell and Northern Pacific Railroad Roundhouse whistle. On turning out, found it to be a false alarm. The alarm was sounded a/c of a mob breaking into the County Jail, taking out and lynching two prisoners.

—E. [Edward] C. Ferguson, Fire Chief

A pproaching the courthouse quietly before the alarm had been sounded, the mob was not to be denied. Sheriff Stinson and guards Emmett Barton, William Carter, William Freyburger, Augustus G. Smith, Will F. Wallace, and Levi C. Wynegar were in the corridor when a gun barrel was thrust through the front door after entry had been refused. Swarmed by the mob, the seven guardians were powerless.

Armed with guns and tools, the mob demanded that the sheriff hand over the keys. Upon learning that Schnebly had the keys to the prisoners' cage, two armed men were dispatched with Sheriff Stinson to search for him. After a brief and futile search, the mob decided to break in.

Reminiscing in the *Yakima Republic* 42 years later, John M. Potts, who as a boy stole away from home to witness the lynching, added a different twist to the tale:

Not wishing to carry rifles while standing guard around the courthouse, the officers had placed them on a bed in the sheriff's bedroom in the jail and planned to run in and get them if the mob threatened to overpower them. When the mob arrived . . . the leaders ordered the prisoners' release. The officers refused and ordered the excited men to leave, but instead the men surged forward and the officers ran to get their rifles, only to find that the night latch on the bedroom door had snapped on, locking them out so they could not get the rifles.

I believe the fact that door had accidentally locked averted bloodshed.

By whatever means it could, the mob took firm control of the jail. Sheriff Stinson, covered by an unnamed 16-year-old boy with a double-barrel shotgun, narrowly escaped having his head blown off. The first floor north-end door leading out of the sheriff's office toward the jail was smashed instantly. The jail proper was easily accessed by twisting off the padlock on the iron door. Once the mob gained entry to the jail, however, their tools proved inadequate to smash the cell door lock, protected as it was by a heavy case-hardened steel box. More tools were sent for. Wielding chisels, sledgehammers, and large pieces of railroad track, they set to work. Potts, who also witnessed this event, said later:

The mob tried to cut bars on the prisoners' cell with chisels and when they failed, attempted to batter down the bars with a railroad rail, but that did not succeed. After numerous attempts to break into the cell the men decided to give up the lynching, put on their coats, and started to leave.

Several accounts report that, during the effort to break into the cell, young Vinson delighted in harassing his antagonists. Using his hat, he repeatedly fanned out the flickering candle flame by which the mob was working. Vicious threats and profanity flowed from his mouth at his "blood hunters," as he called them, which probably only added incentive to their work. Periodically he spat tobacco juice at those closest to him.

"One man struck a light so as to see how to shoot the young man [Charles Vinson,]" it was reported in the *Ellensburg Dawn,* "but he would snugly fit himself into the corner of the cage and with his hat fan out the light. Two shots were fired at him, neither of which took effect."

His father, by now very sober, took the matter seriously and maintained a sullen silence.

Potts went on to say in his account that "a blacksmith in the crowd had taken a chisel and started cutting the hinges on the cell doors, and finding that the hinges were giving way to the blows, he told the men to wait and they could get the accused murderers out of the jail inside of 20 minutes."

Meanwhile, several prominent people made repeated efforts to disperse the mob. Carrol B. Graves, a respected superior court judge since territorial days, came from his home to remonstrate with the vigilantes. His efforts proved futile, and he was unceremoniously shut up and hustled away. Similarly, the mob rebuffed the protests of several clergymen.

With renewed vigor, the intruders worked in turns until, after nearly two hours, they gained entrance to the jail cell. Bursting into the cell, the mob placed ropes around the necks of the Vinsons who put up a brief struggle. In the process, the elder Vinson's head was injured. Then the angry crowd led the Vinsons to Clarence S. Palmer's livery stable at Sixth and Main, but the telephone pole there did not suit the leaders.

They made another pause in front of Dr. Gray's house at 606 Main Street. But it, too, was unsatisfactory, so the mob continued on to find a better gallows. A third stop was made at Seventh and Pearl streets. There, in front of George "Ed" Dickson's home at 703 Pearl Street, they intended to hang the killers from the cross-arm of an electric light pole. At this point a former sheriff, Joseph L. Brown, asked the leaders of the mob to stop the lynching, but he was roughly pushed aside and covered with guns. Deputy Marshal Smith was equally unsuccessful in trying to quell the mob and rescue the prisoners.

Dickson came out to tell the mob that "Lizzie," his wife, was sick and very upset, begging that the alleged murderers not be strung up in the vicinity of his house. This, and the fact they were having difficulty scaling the light pole,
Kittitas County Courthouse (c. 1900), where the Vinsons were being held pending their court trial when a group of angry vigilantes decided to take the law into their own hands.

prompted the lynching party to move a block farther east. At the northeast corner of Seventh and Pine they selected a sturdy eight-inch-diameter cottonwood with adequate limbs. The tree was by the street near the home of attorney John B. Davidson, the only house on the block at the time.

No one was home at the Davidsons' to protest. Driven by the senseless murder of their friends, the mob set to work without further ceremony. Hands were quickly tied and nooses secured around the hapless men's necks. First they pulled Sam up until his feet were about a foot off the ground and fastened the rope to the tree trunk. They then pulled up the son until his bootless feet were but a few inches from the ground. It is alleged that the Vinsons, amazingly, did not struggle. "They presented a horrible sight," said a witness, dangling less than a foot apart.

Unlike most lynchings of that era, the crowd fired no shots into the deceased men. One vigilante, however, reportedly slapped young Vinson in the face as he hung dead.

The street was dark except for a few lighted torches borne by members of the mob, which numbered about 50 men. In addition, a crowd estimated as high as 150 had massed to witness the summary execution. Although these witnesses were unsympathetic toward the prisoners, some were critical of the lynching but probably feared to intervene.

All but the mob leaders were unmasked, yet "it was not possible to recognize any of them," according to one account. Only vague outlines of the crowd could be distinguished and only a part of the city was aware of what was going on.

It is said that John Kangley, superintendent of the Northern Pacific Coal Company of Roslyn, who happened to be in Ellensburg at the time, tried to intervene at this point for law and order, but was roughly pushed away.

Mary (Davidson) Kern, writing many years later, claimed:

A flashlight [an early type flashbulb] picture was taken of the hanging and in the front row was Tod[d] Wilson, a twelve-year-old boy who lived in our neighborhood and who had attended the lynching without his parents' knowledge. The picture taken at the lynching was a help in identifying the ringleaders of the mob and those who were responsible for the lynching.1

Mary, who was six at the time, went on to say:

Our family was camping in the Nanum at that time and didn't learn of the hanging until late the next day. My father left early the next morning and kept some of the people from cutting down the tree, which he thought should be kept to remind the people what mob violence could result in, if not checked. After we sold our home place, the people who bought it cut the tree down.2

The Yakima Republic reported in an uncorroborated story:

The man who pulled the ropes by which the men were hanged was offered $1,000 as provided by the stabbed man [Buerglin] on his death bed for the man who hanged his slayer. The

1 The only picture this author could locate is the one in this article depicting the hanged Vinsons. It was in the possession of, if not taken by, Eli E. James, a well-known Roslyn photographer during the 1890s. If a photograph of the mob ever existed, it is not mentioned in any contemporary stories about the lynching and is probably not extant.

2 The site was acquired by the Catholic Church in 1904 and by the end of 1908 housed the relocated St. Andrew's Church, a new rectory and Lourdes Academy. Today that entire site is occupied by an Albertson's store.
volunteer hangman refused the money and asked that it be turned over to some charity. It was given to the wife and mother of the lynched men.

This is a very unlikely story. It is never mentioned elsewhere. Moreover, it is highly improbable that a single man did the deed, given the circumstances. A thousand dollars was a great sum of money at that time. When Buerglin died his funds assets in that amount. It is more credible that many hands were involved and there was no such reward, regardless of what Buerglin may have said or not said on his deathbed.

Marshall Wishard, Deputy A. G. Smith and John L. Brown took the two bodies down about a quarter past seven Wednesday morning, August 14, and laid them on the sidewalk under the shade of the tree in which they had hung for five hours. At about eight o'clock the bodies were placed in a wagon and taken to the Cox undertaking parlor two blocks away, near Fifth and Pine, where they were washed, dressed, and prepared for burial. The family did not want possession of the bodies for burial. Because they were poor and unable to pay the burial expenses, Kittitas County covered the cost.

The few attending the funeral service for the two Vinson men were Mrs. Samuel (Martha) Vinson, her 15-year-old son Fred, Mrs. Minnie Dessieux (Martha's married daughter), and three local clergymen: Reverend Nathan Evans, Methodist; Reverend Bernard H. Moore, Baptist; and Reverend J. Francis B. Stevenson, Presbyterian. One or more of the three ministers probably conducted the Thursday morning service, which was followed by the burial.

The bodies were laid to rest in unmarked pauper graves at the county cemetery, known unofficially as "Potter's Field," adjoining the Holy Cross Catholic cemetery. A "good collection" is said to have been "taken up" in town to assist Mrs. Vinson.

More than the usual number of men occupied the streets of the city Wednesday. All of Ellensburg was abuzz with discussion of the sordid affair. While sentiment prevailed that the murderers got what they deserved, it was a matter of general regret that the law was not allowed to take its course.

An inquest was held Thursday morning, August 15, regarding the Vinson corpses. The jury returned a verdict that the Vinsons—Samuel, aged 54, and Charles, 29—met their deaths by hanging the 14th of August, at the hands of a mob made up of people whose names were unknown. In the aftermath of so much unlawfulness it was inevitable that a community seeking to restore its tarnished reputation would attempt to bring the miscreants to justice. But this was no easy task.

Three years earlier the trial of some purported Roslyn bank robbers became a fiasco. The first trial resulted in a conviction, but it was subsequently proven that the convicted men could not be guilty and they were set free. Then the genuine criminals were arrested, but the jury could not

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A Brief History of Lynching

BY MICHAEL HONEY

The practice of lynching refers to hangings, shootings, and other methods of killing by mobs or groups acting without legal process. It was often associated with rough frontier settings that lacked effective legal institutions. Colonel Charles Lynch and others in Virginia made his name famous when they repeatedly took the law into their own hands to hang alleged Tories opposing the American Revolution. In some cases, lynching mobs sought revenge against someone they disliked, sought to take their property, or tried to impose a form of justice on horse thieves, alleged murderers, adulterers, or others who violated community standards.

The practice became heavily racialized in the 1880s and 1890s when whites in the American South used lynching to frighten black voters, black Populists, labor organizers, or others who in one way or another threatened the emerging American regime of white supremacy. More than 150 people died at the hands of lynching every year in that era, and by the 1920s blacks composed 90 percent of lynching victims. Burnings, shootings, cuttings, castrations, and huge crowds often accompanied these festivals of gruesome violence. One estimate records 4,742 deaths by lynching between 1882 and 1968, the large majority of these victims being black, and probably including Native American Indians in the West.

In the state of Washington, lynchings are harder to categorize. Here, statistics show 25 whites and one African American lynched between 1882 and 1951. The difficulty of reporting on such cases means they are almost certainly undercounted. The famous hanging of Chief Leschi in an earlier period came not at the hands of a mob but through the instrument of the state. Still, some consider his death to be a lynching. The practice of lynching seems to have been associated mainly with Washington's unsettled frontier character, but even this generalization does not hold up. The 1895 Ellensburg lynching, for example, shows no lack of jail, judge, and jury. Rather, many felt that the courts endangered swift retribution against the apparently reprehensible father and son, Sam and Charles Vinson, who wantonly murdered respected members of the community. No one would condemn the lyncher for such a deed.

The Vinson story suggests the ways that murderous deeds inflamed passions and more murderous deeds. The full meaning of Washington's lynching statistics remains to be ferreted out by some enterprising historian with a strong stomach. Although lynching nearly died out in the second half of the 20th century, the racially motivated lynching of African American James Byrd in Texas and the homophobic murder of gay student Matthew Sheppard in Wyoming in the 1990s suggest that this grim extralegal practice remains a part of our history and culture.

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agree on their guilt. By this time Kittitas County was nearly bankrupt. There being no money to hold yet another trial, the judge gave the prisoners their freedom.

This incident served to remind Ellensburg's citizens that there was no certainty the Vinsons would have been found guilty of a capital offense, in some manner justifying the unlawful actions of the vigilante leaders.

Some citizens even made threats against the prosecuting attorney for issuing warrants for the arrest of the accused mob leaders. Then there was the problem of identifying those responsible for the lynching and gathering evidence sufficient for a conviction. Some had been masked. It had been dark. Some of the leaders were prominent in the community. Few were willing to admit they were witnesses and testify in court.

Finally, there was the question of whether an impartial jury could even be assembled in Ellensburg where so many citizens had witnessed or were implicated in the jailbreaking and subsequent lynching. An attempt was made, nonetheless, to identify and punish the parties responsible for the mob violence.

On Sunday, August 18, all the saloons were closed down. Ellensburg was peaceful and quiet. On Monday morning it was reported that the sheriff was swearing in some extra deputies. Soon after noon rumor that the militia company had been ordered to report to the armory was confirmed by the appearance of 37 "blue-coats," called out by Governor John H. McGraw. They were soon established in their quarters, awaiting orders from their leader, Captain Armstrong. A guard of the armed militiamen was posted at the jail each night.

During the afternoon and evening warrants were served on Frank Uebelacker, Kohlhepp's partner in the Teutonia saloon; Michael Linder, former deputy county treasurer; William Kennedy, blacksmith; John Bush, wagon maker; Frank Fiegle, brewer; Robert Linke, farmer; Patrick Desmond, farmer; and Frank Groger, brewer. All arrests were made without resistance, and no demonstration of any kind was directed against the arresting officers.

Examination of the arrested men took place before Justice Boyle in his courtroom on Tuesday afternoon. They were arraigned as a group on the charge of murder in the first degree, committed August 14, 1895, when, in the words of Chief Prosecutor Eugene E. Wager, "they did purposely and of their deliberate and premeditated malice kill Samuel and Charles Vinson, father and son, by means of ropes placed and tightly drawn around the necks of said Samuel and Charles Vinson."

Will G. Graves appeared for the prosecution and Edward Pruyn and William J. Welsh acted for the defense. The courtroom was crowded with interested citizens.

A large number of witnesses were called and the court adjourned until Wednesday morning before all the men had been examined. Prior to adjourning, however, Groger, Bush, and Desmond were dismissed, evidence lacking against them.

Examination of the five remaining prisoners resumed Wednesday morning, August 21, and at noon the prosecution rested. Upon reconvening in the afternoon, the attorneys made their summations. Justice Boyle held Uebelacker, Fiegle and Kennedy without bail, remanding them to jail. Pruyn made a motion for the discharge of Linder and Linke. The justice took the matter under advisement until Thursday morning, continuing to hold the men in jail.

The next morning, as promised, Justice Boyle rendered his decision on the motion to discharge. He overruled the motion and held both men without bail, to await trial in superior court at its next term. During the interim, more arrests were made. Shortly after noon on Monday, August 26, Lambert Raskins, who at one time had been a molder in the foundry and later a bartender for the Teutonia, was brought into the city by Byron A. Chisholm, in a semicomatose condition, charged with being an accessory in the Vinson lynchings.

He was turned over to Dr. Newland, who dressed his head and facial lacerations. Deputies William H. Hoskins and William H. McKee guarded the injured prisoner as he rested in Dr. Newland's office until he was well enough to be confined under guard in the Cadwell block for further convalescence before going to jail.

Raskins was rumored to have bragged that he was one of the lynchers and the one who slapped the younger Vinson as he hung. These accusations he denied when he was arrested at Chisholm's Mill near the German settlement, about ten miles.
up the Nanum Canyon. Deputy S. W. Greene, the arresting officer, for some unexplained reason deputized Chisholm and turned the prisoner over to him to be brought into town.

Chisholm and his prisoner set off for Ellensburg in a buggy. When they had gone several miles Raskins attempted to escape. In the struggle for Chisholm's pistol, both men fell out of the buggy. Chisholm picked up a rock and struck Raskins on the head, hurting him badly. Dazed and bleeding, he arrived at Newland's office. One report says Greene had no authority to arrest Raskins, much less deputize Chisholm to deliver his prisoner. Therefore, after the fact, a warrant for Raskins' arrest was issued.

The remaining arrests were less dramatic. Martin Holmes and Nicholas Mueller were taken into custody without incident. Mueller, a farmer, was arrested Saturday, August 31, and Holmes the following Monday. A fourth man, Chris Bachman, was captured and imprisoned in Tacoma. He received permission of his jailer to visit the “water closet,” but it is reported that “in a transitory fit of forgetfulness failed to return.” In other words, in his rush of going to the rest room, he made good his escape and never stood trial in the lynching of the Vinsons.

Monday morning, September 2, the five foremost defendants were arraigned in superior court, charged with the murder of Samuel Vinson. Once again they pleaded “not guilty.”

On Monday, September 16, distinguished Judge Thomas J. Humes, a King County Superior Court judge in Seattle, exchanged benches with Judge Graves. The latter man disqualified himself from the trial of the accused Vinson Lynchers because he had witnessed a part of the affair. Court was called into session promptly at 9:30 that morning. The state was represented by Prosecutor Wager, assisted by Will G. Graves. The defendants' counsel included Henry J. Snively, Edward Fruyn, John B. Davidson, Austin Mires, Clyde V. Warner, and William J. Welsh.

Linder, Uebelacker, Kennedy, Fiegle and Linke were to go on trial for first degree murder in the death of Samuel Vinson. Three others—Mueller, Raskins, Holmes—were held in the murder of Charles Vinson. All continued to plead “not guilty.”

Selection of an impartial jury for the group of five defendants proved to be a long and arduous task. Juror summonses totaling more than 80 names were used. Examination and selection of 12 male jurors (women did not sit on juries at the time) took three days. Both sides exhausted their preemptory challenges. Not until 7:45 Wednesday evening, September 18, was the final juror seated.

The trial itself took less time than the jury selection. Prosecutors called 13 witnesses (a 14th could not be found)—predominantly deputies. The defense presented 26 witnesses, including the 5 defendants themselves and 17 character witnesses. Testimony concluded at 3:35 on Friday afternoon, September 20. Closing arguments lasted until almost 11 o'clock that night.

Judge Humes then gave detailed instructions to the jury. By the time the jurors retired to deliberate, the hour was approaching midnight. Some say the jury reached a decision before midnight, but others more reasonably said it took almost two hours. Regardless, it was a secret verdict until court convened at half past nine Saturday morning.

News that the jury had reached a verdict packed the courthouse. At 9:45 the jury was brought in and the sealed verdict passed to Judge Humes. He examined it and then handed it to the clerk of the court, who in a very solemn voice said, “Not guilty.” The five accused of lynching Samuel were thus exonerated and set free. But the three accused of Charles’ death continued to be held, though they were never brought to trial. After dismissing the five, the judge ruled that Mueller, Raskins and Holmes were being improperly held, having failed to receive a preliminary examination.

The court instructed that the remaining prisoners be held until a complaint could be properly filed by the prosecuting attorney's office. Moreover, a hearing had to be held before a magistrate by five o'clock Monday, otherwise the prisoners must be released. Prosecutor Wager deemed it useless to give them a preliminary examination in view of the outcome of the Samuel Vinson case. At five o'clock they, too, were given their freedom.

Two men had their lives taken without due process of law—without a trial. And those who were responsible for this gross injustice escaped any consequences for their collective deed. The three men charged with killing Charles were never brought to trial because it was “deemed useless.” The other five were acquitted of having taken Samuel's life by a jury of their peers—in essence, absolving them of any crime. The three others, against whom there was insufficient evidence to warrant a trial, brought to eleven the total of men arrested in connection with the lynching.

Whether any of them possessed a sense of shame or remorse for what he had done that dark August night is unknown. Also unknown is how many others may have been guilty of participating in the crime. Today this event, little known four generations later outside the older families, creates scarcely a ripple in the life of modern Ellensburg.

Howard D. Baumgart is an ordained clergyman, having served churches in Oregon and Washington. His last service was at Rainier School in Buckley, where he was chaplain for five years and director of Residential Services the remainder of his 31 years at that state institution. Following retirement in 1993, he published Over Fifty Years of Caring, a history of Rainier School and treatment of mental retardation in Washington.

AUTHOR'S NOTE
My wife, Loree Linder (Webster) Baumgart, is a granddaughter of one of the mob leaders, Michael Linder. Another leader, Frank Joseph Uebelacker, was married to Anna, a sister of Loree's grandmother Katie (Michels) Linder. On Tuesday, September 24, 1895—three days after Michael was acquitted of murder—he married Katie.
This broadside, printed on cloth, was posted in and around Puyallup, c. 1892, to promote the Puyallup Commerce. The weekly newspaper began publication around 1885 and ceased in 1903 when it merged with the Puyallup Valley Tribune. The publisher and editor, J. "Watermelon" Redington, had published newspapers in Salem and Heppner, Oregon, before coming to Puyallup. Although his real name was John Wesley Redington, legend has it that he once extinguished a fire in Tacoma by throwing watermelons on it, thereby acquiring his nickname.

For some reason, printing broadsides and posters with glaring typographical errors and corny plays on words was a popular way to promote newspapers and job printing in the late 19th century. This broadside is a fine local example of the genre. Interestingly, only 13 individual issues of the Puyallup Commerce are known to exist today.
The Lewis and Clark Place Names of the Pacific Northwest—Part IV

This is the fourth and final installment of our series on the place name designations used by co-cap­tains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark as the Corps of Discovery made its way through the vast and varied landscape of the Pacific Northwest. Many names have Native American origins, while numerous others appear to be descriptive of physical features in the landscape, and still others commemorate expedition members; there also exists a small group of names for which the source or inspiration is now a mystery. Most of Lewis and Clark’s designations have fallen out of use. Of those that remain, many have been altered in some way. Even so, the monumental achievements of the expedition, especially the maps and journals wherein the multitude of place names was faithfully recorded, provide a lasting legacy for generations to come.

Cathlamet Head
There is no indication in the journals regarding the derivation of “Point Samuel” in naming a large projection of landmass that diverted the course of the Columbia. One supposes that the captains named the point to honor Samuel Lewis, a relative of Lewis’s who was also the copyist for Clark’s 1814 map.

The corps avoided the wide Columbia River estuary and crossed the river in their dugout canoes after proceeding upstream along the northern shore. After the commanding officers consulted the members of the party, they decided to seek winter quarters on the southern shore near the river’s mouth.

Captain Vancouver had proclaimed that American merchant Robert Gray had only entered the Columbia River estuary, and after consulting with Lieutenant Broughton, Vancouver decided that the river’s mouth was at the narrow channel created by the projecting landmass. Vancouver did not recognize Gray’s claim of American rights to the territory, believing only military officers could make claims of sovereignty. The disputed sovereignty of the Pacific Northwest continued for over 50 years.

Astoria, established in 1811, was the first commercial settlement of Americans on the Pacific Coast. The Lewis and Clark expedition influenced Pacific Northwest settlement with reports encouraging fur trade.
The current name for Oregon's most northern point is an anglicized version of "Kala amat," the name local Chinook-speaking natives called themselves. "Calamet," the local natives' word for "stone," may have been used to describe a particular place on the river. It subsequently became the village's name and the name its people called themselves. The tribe was the westernmost village of the Upper Chinook-speaking Indians. Culturally, they were oriented to the river and to the salmon fishing traditions of the Lower Chinook.

At the time of Lewis and Clark's contact with them, the "Calt-har-mar" had their village on the southern shore of the Columbia. Later they moved to a village on the north bank. Both tribal names used by Lewis and Clark, "Calt-har-mar" and "War-ci-a cum," were spelled and pronounced in a variety of ways by early explorers and pioneers. Today, Cathlamet and Wahkiakum, are the standardized spellings for place names, preserving the etymology of the words first recorded by Lewis and Clark.

**John Day River (in western Oregon)**

"Ke-ke mar que Creek" was an analogue the captains used for a word obtained from the local natives. They did not comprehend that Pacific Northwest Indians did not name geographical features such as rivers and creeks; instead, they identified sites on the drainage basins. This concept was also foreign to later cartographers. Their translations of native languages led to many misconceptions of actual Indian meanings and names.

This western Oregon river, like the one in eastern Oregon, was named for John Day of Wilson Price Hunt's Astorian overland expedition, 1811-12.

**Tongue Point**

Clark used his Christian name to identify "a very remarkable point which projects into the river..., Point William." He formed a camp on the windward side of the point for ten days while Lewis, with five men, conducted a reconnaissance of the area and sought a secure location for winter quarters. Clark's name for the point did not supplant the anatomical name used by Broughton in 1792 to describe the 350-yard-wide projection into the river's estuary from the southern shore. The point's present place name retains the British identification.

**Smith Point**

"Point Meriwether," after Lewis's first name, was used by Clark to identify the eastern point of a large bay on the south side of the Columbia River estuary. The point has had many names, an indication of the long-disputed sovereignty over the Pacific Northwest.

In 1792, after exploring the Columbia River, Broughton named the strategic site "Point George," honoring the king of England and emphasizing Great Britain's territorial claims. The first commercial settlement of Americans on the Pacific Coast was founded on the point by the Pacific Fur Company in 1811. Point Astoria, the western extremity of Astoria, was named for John Jacob Astor, one of America's richest businessmen and owner of the American Fur Company, parent company of the Pacific Fur Company.

The settlement was not called a fort until the Americans surrendered it to the British in 1813, a result of the British-American War of 1812. The British rechristened the trading post, built Fort George, and used the "Point George" name again. The name Astoria was gradually restored after Americans reclaimed the settlement five years later, but the point's name changes continued. The Wilkes expedition charted the point as "Youngs Point." The present name is derived from early American settler Samuel Smith, who took up a donation land claim on the point.

**Youngs River**

Lewis and Clark attempted to use native words to identify geographical features, but their names were a corruption of the native language, and often several attempts at different native words were used in the journals. "Kill a näh Me" and "Wohump ked" were both used on draft maps to identify this drainage; there is no indication in the journals of the source of the aboriginal words. Broughton named the waterway "Young's River" in 1792, after Sir George Young of the Royal Navy. The bay's present place name comes from that river.

**Fort Clatsop**

The first American military establishment to be built in the Pacific Northwest was the winter quarters for the Corps of Discovery. The fort was built around seven cabins and occupied by the main party of the corps from December 7, 1805, to March 23, 1806. The company spent the cool, damp winter sustaining its provisions by hunting while the captains worked on their journals and maps. Fort Clatsop was named to honor the friendly Indian tribe that occupied the southern bank at the mouth of the Columbia and the adjoining Pacific Coast. Their name derived from the Chinook language, meaning "those who have pounded salmon."

Today the site of the Corps of Discovery's fort is honored as Fort...
Clatsop National Memorial, maintained by the National Park Service. A reproduction of the fort was built in 1955 by citizens and organizations of Clatsop County to mark the 150-year celebration of the expedition.

**Saltworks-Fort Clatsop National Memorial**

Not all of the corps' members were detailed to hunting and fort duties; a saltmaker's cairn was built on the Pacific Coast. A rotating crew of three maintained the "Salt Works." In 1900 the historic site was located in present-day Seaside by a committee of the Oregon Historical Society. The Saltworks-Fort Clatsop National Memorial is maintained by the National Park Service.

**Skipanon River**

The day after establishing the site for Fort Clatsop, Clark conducted a reconnaissance of Point Adams and the ocean shore to locate a campsite for the salt-makers, then blazed a trail back to the fort from the coast. An aboriginal word, "Skip a nor win," was used by Clark to identify the "creek" that drained into the Columbia River estuary near the mouth of the river. The river was used by the Indians to conduct commerce between the river and coastal villages. Clark first recorded the aboriginal word that is the origin of the present place name, but the meaning is not known. The river's place name had several different spellings before it was standardized.

**Necanicum River**

Clark first used the native word "Kil a mox" on his map to identify a "butifull river" that drained into the Pacific, but crossed it out and added "Clatsop River." He renamed the drainage to correspond with the tribal affiliation of the inhabitants of a nearby village. Local Indians had informed the captains of a beached whale, and Clark, with 12 corpsmen, traveled to the coast to obtain whale meat and oil. Sacagawea with her baby boy, Jean Baptiste Charbonneau, accompanied the detachment; she wanted to see the ocean, having traveled with the corps since Fort Mandan. The party stayed a night at the salt-makers' camp, then proceeded along an Indian trail to reach the next village. The prefix, "Ne," of the present name for river indicates "place" in native language; however the rest of the meaning for Necanicum has been lost.

**Tillamook Head**

Lewis named the large promontory that projects into the ocean after Clark, who first saw the "high point of a Mountn" from Cape Disappointment. Later, Clark climbed the mountain when he took a contingent of the corps to view a beached whale south of the headlands. While on Tillamook Head he hiked out on a point (Bird Point) and described the view; hence the name "Clark's Point of View" was first applied to the mountain.

The present name is derived from the Tillamook Indians who lived along the coast on both sides of the headland. The name is from the Chinook language but has been anglicized for modern convenience. Once spelled "Killa-muck," the spelling was changed to Tillamook about the time Tillamook County was created by Oregon's territorial legislature in 1853.

**BACKGROUND: Cannon Beach viewed from Tillamook Head on the Oregon coast. Captain Clark and a contingent from the Corps of Discovery saw this spectacular Pacific Ocean beach from "Clarks Mountain."**
Ecola Creek

"Eculah or Whale Creek" was used by Clark not only to designate the native word "ikoli, meaning "whale," but also to indicate the English meaning. The creek entered the ocean not far from the beached whale that had intrigued the explorers. An Indian village was situated on the creek, and an incident with one of the corpsmen brought out one of the few recorded instances of Clark's humor. Sergeant John Ordway reported in his journal that Clark had first named the creek "McNeals folly" because Private Hugh McNeal had used poor judgment, crossed the creek and entered the village with an Indian. The Indian had lured him away from the detachment and intended to rob him but was foiled when a native girl raised an alarm.

The creek, in the present-day town of Cannon Beach, Oregon, was named "Elk Creek" by early pioneer settlers. A recent name change was enacted to reinstate Clark's place name, "Eculah" on draft map and "E cu-la" in a journal entry. A perverse form of the native word and Clark's eccentric spelling was used for today's place name, Ecola Creek.

Tillamook Bay

Clark did not see the bay he named "Kilamox Bay," though he drew a map and named several drainages that entered the bay. The local natives supplied him with their topographical understanding of the southern geography. The map is remarkably accurate in many aspects when compared to modern topographical maps. However, there are some obvious representations of the region's actual geographical features. The "Kilamox" were the Tillamook Indians, a Salishan language tribe, and the difference in geographical linguistics created a problem in interpretations for Clark.

The present place, Tillamook, is a corruption of the name for the Indian tribe that resided on the bay. The Chinook language meaning of the word cannot be interpreted accurately.

Crims Island

In the spring of 1806, during the eastbound journey home, some new geographical discoveries were made and the captains were able to fill in some blank spots on their maps, applying names to features that had been noted but not named on the westbound journey. "Fanny's Island" was one such feature, named for Clark's younger sister, Frances.

William Broughton, in 1792, named this "Baker's Island" for a Second Lieutenant in Captain Vancouver's command. Charles Wilkes, in 1841, named the island "Gull," which with the lapse of time has been transferred to a small island north of the west end of this island. Today it retains the surname, as do many islands in the river, of a pioneer homesteader on the island.

Clastkanie Valley

Lewis and Clark named the "elegant and extensive bottom on the South side" for its association with the island complimented with Clark's younger sister's nickname. "Fanny's Bottom" remained on the route map but Clark must have had second thoughts, changing his journal entry to "Fanny's Valley."

Native Americans in the area used the word "Tlasts-kani," which did not name a place on the river but rather a place in the mountains. Early pioneers applied their anglicized version of the name to the valley and river that drained into the Columbia. After many varied spellings, the valley’s place name has been standardized to Clastkanie.

Map depicting the end of the westward journey, the corps' winter camp, and the beginning of the eastward return journey. Also see maps on opposite page and pages 22-23.
The distant snow-capped volcanic peak was named by the Corps of Discovery, honoring the designer of the expedition—President Thomas Jefferson.

Cowlitz River

"Cow-e-lis-kee River" was noted on the westbound exploration but actually named on the homeward journey. Descending the river, Clark marked the drainage on his route map "not known." Returning upstream, the captains tried to use a native term to identify the river, spelling the word phonetically.

The etymology of Cowlitz is interesting; there have been many spelling attempts to approximate the Indian pronunciation. The Lower Chinook word "qawlick-i," meaning "where the Salish people are," derived from the Salish language word "kawlicq," meaning "Salish-speaking people of the river." The Anglicized version of the native word, and the captains' figurative form, has now been applied to the river that has its origin on the glaciers of Mount Rainier.

Kalama River

"Cath la haws Creek" was named on the return trip to identify the drainage on the north bank of the Columbia. Their name was a perversion of geographical linguistics, an attempt to identify the tribe that resided on the "creek." The best clue to the origin of today's place name is Private Joseph Whitehouse; his journal has the natives calling the drainage "Calanus."

Early fur traders Anglicized the Indian word to "Kalama" to identify the river. Today several versions of the name's origin exist, shrouding the meaning of the original origin. One version has that John Kalama, a Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) agent of Hawaiian descent, established a fur trading post at the mouth of the river. Another version has the railroad town on the river being named in 1871 for the Indian word meaning "pretty maiden." Such is often the case when a community promotes the origin of its name.

Lewis River

The captains used "Chah wah na hoo k River" to identify a "Small river" that entered the Columbia on the north shore. Their name was a figurative form of the Chinookan term for "enemies." Later another river would be identified with the same aboriginal term; however, their spelling of the word for "enemies" was different. Translation was difficult for the captains on the lower Columbia River because nobody in the party spoke the difficult aboriginal languages.

In 1853 a railroad surveyor charted the river as "Catlapoolle," a distortion of a common name for the river used by early explorers, fur traders, and settlers. Today the river is named for Adolphus Lee Lewis, a descendent of an HBC employee who homesteaded near the river's mouth, not for Captain Meriwether Lewis of the Corps of Discovery.

Willamette River

Clark misunderstood Indian information when he named the "Mult no mah River" and drew his maps showing the origin of the river about where the Great Salt Lake is located. This misinformation helped establish the 42nd parallel as the boundary between the Pacific Northwest territory and the Spanish holdings in California. Clark named the river after the local tribe that resided on the river, their name in the Chinook language meaning "those at/toward the body of water." Geographical intuition indicated that the large southern valley they had named "Wappato" and later renamed "Columbia" must have a drainage, but the captains missed the tributary on both their westbound and eastbound exploration. Clark was later able to explore the river with the help of an Indian guide; the confluence was multiple and hidden by several islands close to the southern shore of the Columbia.

Broughton first recorded the river's existence on October 29, 1792, naming it "River Manning's," after a member of Vancouver's expedition. Controversy over the river's name and its spelling continued until 1841 when Wilkes standardized the present name and its spell-
ing in his atlas. "Wal-lamt" was an Indian name for a place on the river near present-day Oregon City, Oregon.

**Mount Jefferson**

Clark observed a distant snow-capped peak south of the Columbia River on March 30, 1806, when he was at the mouth of the "Multonomah River." His focus on the river courses is apparent with the absence of Mount Jefferson—a peak he had named—on his 1814 map.

In an attempt to emphasize British claims to the Pacific Northwest, the peak was called "Mount Vancouver" by the early employees of the British fur trading companies. A "Map of Oregon Territory, 1838," designated the mountain peak as "Mount Vancouver." By 1859, Mount Jefferson, the original designation given by Lewis and Clark, was restored on the "Map of the State of Oregon and Washington Territory." The second highest mountain peak in Oregon has retained the place name given by Lewis and Clark to honor their president, designer of the Corps of Discovery.

**Umatilla River**

"You ma lolam River" had been missed by the outbound expedition but was added to the route map on the return trip in 1806. A Nez Perce term was used to designate the name for this southern drainage into the Columbia. Like several other Lewis and Clark names, the present place name is recognizable from the captains’ designation for the geographical feature, despite the spellings.

The river’s name was standardized when Wilkes charted it in 1841. Umatilla Landing was established at the mouth of the river in 1863, an important steamboat landing on the Columbia for mines in Oregon and Idaho.

**White River**

Using horses to complete the homeward journey to their dugouts on the Missouri River, the captains had the advantage of getting off the river courses and viewing the distant terrain from a higher vantage point. In the vicinity of today’s Maryhill Museum they observed two drainages flowing into "Towahna-hiooks [Deschutes] River" and named them "Skimhoox" and "Kies-how-e."

The first tributary of the Deschutes River is the White River, a descriptive name derived from the color of the river’s water when glacial silt is present. The second watercourse is difficult to identify from Clark’s map; Wapintia Creek is too small for Clark’s "Kies-how-e River." Larger drainages into the Deschutes River are further away and cannot be viewed because of mountains. Perhaps Clark was charting the drainage from misunderstood Indian information.

**Yellepit**

"Yel-lep-pets Village" sat on the Columbia’s western shore, opposite the mouth of the "Wallah Wallah River." It was named for a tribal chief who was hospitable to the corps, leading their cavalcade across the Horse Heaven Hills to his camp and helping them cross the Columbia. His name, from the Nez Perce, means "friend, blood brother," and "trading partner."

The present railroad siding of Yellepit is the only place name recognition today for the Indian chief who befriended the corps. The Indian village site where the corps camped for two nights, in present Benton County, Washington, was inundated by Wallula Reservoir, created by McNary Dam in 1954.

**Touchet River**

The river was unmarked on the route map and was first referred to as "a branch of the Wallahwallah river" in the journals. The course of the river was followed by the corps on their cross-country shortcut to the "Kooskooski River"; they named it "Wh(ite) Stallion River" when they reached a fork in the drainage. The captains intended their river names to be attached to the entire watercourse, from the head of the drainage to its mouth. The river was probably named for the white stallion given to Chief Yel-lep-pet helped the Corps of Discovery cross the Columbia River above today’s Wallula Gap (pictured below), opposite the mouth of the Walla Walla River.
Clark by Chief Yel-lepet. There is no indication in the journals of the captains' derivation for the name. The overland "Route to Kooskooke" was not marked on Clark's map of 1814, but is represented by a dotted line on their route map. Again, an indication of their focus on water courses for future transportation needs.

The course the expedition followed was an ancient Indian trail known as the Nez Perce Trail to Celilo Falls. The route was called the Overland Trail by fur traders, miners, military, stockman, settlers, and other frontiersmen. The present place name derived from the Nez Perce word "Tu-se," meaning "roasting." Legend had Coyote roasting salmon on the river after he broke the fish dam guarded by the five Swallow Sisters at Celilo. Touchet has been anglicized [too-shet] to its present form, leading to confusion for its supposed French Canadian fur trader connection.

Coppie Creek
On the overland shortcut, the captains often did not pay particular attention to naming geographical features and exact locations of their encampments; the mission was complete and they were going home. At a fork in the drainage they followed, they named one branch "Gambler's River" and the main branch "Wh(ite) Stallion River." No indication in the journals is given for using the manufactured name, "Gambler's River," for the small creek.

In addition to the names Lewis and Clark assigned to geographical features, there are several aboriginal tribal names introduced in the journals that are used today for place names. Some names are easily recognizable, like Chinook, Clatsop and Walla Walla, despite Clark's eccentric spellings and today's anglicized versions. Some present-day place names, like Cowlitz and Umatilla, can be associated with Indian tribal names, and the captains tried to translate and convert the words to English spellings. Other tribal names, like Wahkiakum and Cathlamet, were not used by the captains for their names of geographical features but preserve the etymology for present place names. Modern spellings of these places are different from the native words and quite different from Lewis and Clark's phonetic spellings of tribal names; however, the association can be made.

Metathesis, transposition of letters, has often occurred with the metamorphosis of aboriginal words to today's place name spellings. Okanogan was spelled "Otchennukane" by Clark, but the present place name derived from the same tribal territory recorded in the journals for the tribe's location. "Quathlah pah tie" has been changed to Cathlapotle to identify an archaeological site, the same village the captains described at the confluence of the present Lewis and Lake rivers with the Columbia. The "Kil-la-mucks" Indians first recorded by Clark are now identified as Tillamooks, and their name is used in several Oregon place names. A possible error in transferring handwritten journal notes and present day transcription of letters gives another Oregon place name that can be associated with the corps' records: Clark's spelling for the name of the Clakamas tribe was "Clark-a-mus."

Some modern place names derived from Indian tribal names recorded by Lewis and Clark are more difficult to make the etiological association. The "Met-cow-wes" Indians were recorded by the captains as residents of the Columbia but may have been relatives of the Methows, an inland tribe associated with the Upper Columbia and Okanogan rivers that were fishing on the Columbia at the time of the corps' passage. This aboriginal term is now a place name used for several geographical features and places in Okanogan County. The Chehalis tribe was identified as the "Chiltz," an indication of the difficulty of translating Indian names into English. The captains properly identified the Chehalis tribal territory but anglicized the pronunciation and spelling of their name, used in several Washington place names today.

The Lewis and Clark expedition has gone down in American history as an epic journey of exploration that left its historical legacy not only in the Pacific Northwest but across the nation. When they crossed the Continental Divide on their return journey, the captains completed the greatest exploration of the new republic, and their discoveries would eventually help define the boundaries of the United States. Despite these achievements, the captains' nomenclature for geographical features was ill-served by historians and cartographers.

Most of their place names have not been retained for modern usage and were replaced by new ones that have no pertinence to the original designation or commemoration of the Corps of Discovery. Just as historical events refuse to remain fixed, so too a living language will not permit itself to be immutable. In the mutations of time, nearly all of the Lewis and Clark place names have changed, as the nation "proceeded on."

Centralia veterinarian Allen "Doc" Wesselius is a member of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, a board member of the foundation's Washington chapter, and a longtime enthusiast of the Corps of Discovery and Pacific Northwest history.
The Columbia River Gorge and Early Emigrant Travel

Through the "Magnificent Gateway"

Mid-19th century overlanders encountered numerous odd and frequently challenging geologic settings on their arduous journey to the Northwest. Following along the strangely braided Platte River, they passed the fascinating monoliths of Courthouse Rock, Chimney Rock, and Scotts Bluff, then struggled up the Sweetwater Valley past the curious granitic features of Independence Rock and Devils Gate. After conquering the Continental Divide at South Pass, their journey continued over deserts and mountains, some attaining heights of over 8,000 feet. Withstanding

By Weldon W. Rau
the midsummer heat on the desolate Snake River plateau, they followed the elusive river entrenched deep within the black basalt of ancient lava flows. Once through the Burnt River Valley, surrounded by towering mountains and the rugged Blue Mountains, they eventually arrived at The Dalles on the Columbia River. None of these experiences, however, exceeded the unique geologic setting and physical challenge that the emigrants experienced during their final effort, traversing the Columbia River Gorge.

For those who chose to continue from The Dalles down the Columbia River, the next 50 miles or so would be through one of the most scenic and geologically fascinating sections of their journey. Geologist John Eliot Allen appropriately referred to the Columbia River Gorge as “The Magnificent Gateway.” It has long served man as a passageway through the formidable Cascade range. For thousands of years Native Americans used it as a trade route between coastal and eastern tribes. The Lewis and Clark expedition, the first Euro-Americans to use this waterway, were soon followed by fur traders and trappers, then thousands of emigrants.

Today this important passageway is not only a major water route for commerce but is traversed by two railroads and several highways.

Geologic History

Geologically, this gap through the Cascades is the result of a series of amazing and dynamic natural processes. Between 17 and 10 million years ago, long before the Cascade range was uplifted to its present height, lava flows of the Columbia River basalt group poured westward to the sea, spreading as far south as today’s Newport, Oregon, and north to Grays Harbor in Washington.

Beginning some 10 million years ago, the area of today’s Cascade Mountains began to gradually arch upward and the Columbia River slowly shifted its course northwestward, finally establishing its present channel about 5 million years ago. There it continued to scour itself deeper and deeper into the basalt pile and drain more than a quarter million square miles of the Pacific Northwest.

During the Ice Age this passageway was involved in yet another series of geologic events. Each time a continental ice sheet advanced from the north, a large tongue of ice repeatedly extended across the Clark Fork of the Columbia River, forming a 2,500-foot-high ice dam behind which Lake Missoula impounded some 500 cubic miles of water. When the water became deep enough, the ice dam began to float. With the sudden failure of the dam, a huge surge of ice and water swept forward at a rate of 30 to 50 miles per hour over the Columbia River plateau, bringing with it anything loose in its path including much of the thick, windblown silt and sand (loess) that at one time covered the channeled scablands of eastern Washington. Geologists now believe that such a cataclysmic event took place at least 40 times between 15,000 and 12,000 years ago. Needless to say, the present-day appearance of the Columbia River Gorge is largely the result of erosion caused by the massive volumes of water, laden with silt, sand, and boulders of all sizes, along with boulder-studded icebergs that poured through this gorge. During some of these floods, water backed up in the Willamette Valley, depositing much of the rich silt and sand that had been removed from eastern Washington. Thus, the fertile soil the emigrants were coming to claim and cultivate had been transported there some 10,000 years before their arrival.

The most recent geological catastrophic event to shape the gorge occurred some 300 to 500 years ago when millions of tons of rock debris slid southward off the side of 3,400-foot, basalt capped Table Mountain, creating a huge debris dam across the valley. Eventually the river cut a notch through the top of the slide and formed a boulder-strewn channel approximately one and a half miles south of its original course. This section of the river became known as the Cascades of the Columbia River. Because it was unnavigable, early travelers were compelled to portage about four miles along its north (Washington) bank. With the debris dam in place, water became impounded nearly to The Dalles, forming a body of water, as the emigrants would later discover, with virtually no current. Furthermore, the flooding of the valley inundated low forestlands along the river. Many tree stumps were still standing above the water surface when early travelers passed through the area. Captain Meriwether Lewis entered in his journal on April 14, 1806, “We find the trunks of many large pine trees standing erect as they grew, at present [in] 30 feet [of] water....” Today, the Cascades rapids as well as the drowned forest are completely submerged beneath the even higher water level created by Bonneville Dam.

Emigrant Travel

After a long, arduous journey of some six months’ duration, mid-19th-century westward travelers were nearly exhausted by the time they reached The Dalles, Oregon Territory. During peak years, especially in 1852, travel was particularly trying. Crowded conditions took their toll. Poor sanitation created much sickness, especially cholera and other related diseases. Forage became scarce for the cattle, and many either died or were greatly weakened. Food supplies dwindled, and many travelers could not afford to restock at way stations where prices were usually exorbitant. Therefore, upon arrival at The Dalles, emigrants were in need of rest or time to recuperate from their ills. Furthermore, if they were to continue their journey down the river, they either had to construct some sort of conveyance or wait for available passage.

Until 1846, when Samuel Barlow built his toll road around the south side of Mount Hood and through the Cascade...
Mountains, emigrants had no choice but to follow the Columbia River through its steep-walled gorge cut into numerous layers of volcanic rock. Even after 1845, those who arrived late in the season frequently chose to continue on the Columbia waterway rather than battle the early snowfall up in the Cascade range.

Travel down the river from The Dalles to the upper Cascades, a distance of about 40 miles, was aboard almost anything that would float. Many built rafts. On October 6, 1852, James Akin, Jr., recorded: “Preparing to raft down the river. Have got some pine logs to the river.” That same day, Alvah Davis “took passage in an Indian canoe.” The Adams and Blank families arrived at The Dalles on October 24 of that year and boarded “an open kiel boat rowed by three men.” The following day John Spencer “made a bargain with a flat boat owner to take [his] wagon... and family down to the Cascades and with Valentine [they] took...[their] cattle...down the pack trail.” Willis and Mary Ann Boatman together with Willis’s brother John, arrived at The Dalles sometime late that September. All were in poor health. Mary Ann was suffering with scurvy, Willis was weak with a fever, and John was seriously ill with mountain fever. After resting at The Dalles for several weeks, Willis and others met “...a man who had an old bateau [a flat bottom boat]....[They] made a contract with him to take [them] down to the Cascade Falls.”

It would seem that river travel should have been reasonably easy compared to the myriad problems the emigrants had experienced on the plains and through mountains. Nevertheless, they did encounter difficulties. Probably the major problem was wind. In the Columbia River Gorge strong upstream winds, which today provide desirable conditions for wind surfing, created major problems for such low-powered craft as were used by the emigrants. Furthermore, the river was virtually a lake, with practically no downstream current between The Dalles and the Cascades rapids. Cecelia Adams wrote: “The river here changes from being a rapid, shallow, and narrow stream...[to] a wide deep and still one in places more than a mile wide.... Such difficulties as were encountered in the Columbia River Gorge were recorded by many emigrants. Willis Boatman’s following story of their journey down the river exemplifies some of these problems.

I hired a man to help drive my cattle down the river by the trail. Myself and wife and brother got aboard the boat, then everything being ready, we pushed out from the shore and started down the river. But had only gotten a few miles til the wind commenced to blow a perfect gale and blew us up against a rocky bluff where the rocks were probably thirty or forty feet high and almost perpendicular.

Fortunately we all had our tent poles on board, so the men all gathered a pole apiece and stood on the edge of the boat next to the rocks, the women all getting on the opposite side to trim the craft so that when she came up to the rocks we were all ready with our poles to keep her from hitting the rocks. We had to stand there about four hours and hold her off those rocks before the wind lulled enough so that we could drop down to a place where we could land and get ashore. We finally landed and lay there the rest of that day and night. About ten o’clock the next day it calmed down and we again loaded up and started out.

That evening we pass the boys with the cattle. They called aboard and told me that my man had left and that I would have to come and tend to my cattle myself or they would have to leave them. That was bad news for me, for I was so weak I could hardly walk. So I went ashore and started on with the cattle, getting along better than I expected.

The Adamses and Blanks, in their keelboat, “had a very favorable run for the weather was calm.” Although it rained
hard much of the time, they managed to reach within six miles of the Cascades the first day. The following day they reached the Cascades, which Parthenia Blank described as "consisting of an immense pile of loose rock across the stream over which water runs with great rapidity for 6 miles."

The Akin family, on a raft, was not as lucky. For three days they battled upstream winds. Having floated 17 miles, all but two men gave up the raft and employed an Indian with a canoe to take them the remainder of the distance, arriving at the rapids about two in the afternoon on October 15.

The Pack Trail

The pack or packer's trail, used primarily for moving cattle, was a very difficult route, demanding nearly all the strength and stamina tired emigrants could muster. Because along much of the way mountains extended to the water's edge, rarely was there a passageway along the river. It was therefore necessary to ascend and descend numerous, steep ridges between tributary streams. Furthermore, to add to the misery, by September the rainy season had begun. Together with the wind and mud generated by constant cattle use, the pack trail was an unpleasant route.

The first half of the way to Hood River, then called Dog River, was almost entirely up and down over mountain ridges. John McAllister, who on October 12, 1852, reached this river by way of the cattle trail, wrote that prior to reaching "Dog River" they ascended and descended several mountains, one of which "possessed a surface [of] loose gravel, which slips under foot, making it almost insurmountable for weak stock." The following day, in the vicinity of what McAllister referred to as "Upper Ferry," he recorded: "Here the mountain joins the river & is most awful place I suppose that ever stock were driven over the surface being huge rocks which lays loose & mavible [movable]...many cattle and horses killed here."

Upper Ferry probably was situated near today's small community of Wyeth, Oregon, some seven or eight miles upstream from the Cascades. John Spencer, upon reaching this ferry on October 31, also referred to "unmercifully bad road" just beyond the ferry. He further noted that, although they lost no cattle, they "saw numbers, which had tumbled over and perished.... It was a horrible place." In addition to the bad road, he wrote, "The rain increased so as to pour down." That evening, after finding a tolerable place to camp, he reported that they were "wet to the skin and cold we hunted up stuff for fire got supper laid down tired limbs and weary frame in wet clothes, and wrapped ourselves in wet covering."

"Lower Ferry," according to John McAllister, who crossed there on October 15, was "4 miles by land through the timber and about 2 and a half miles by water..." from the Cascades. That would place the ferry just upstream from the present-day town of Stevenson, Washington.

The highlight of Willis Boatman's pack trail experience took place at one of these ferries, probably the upper one.

We drove on down to where we had to ferry our cattle across the Columbia river, about five miles above the Cascade falls. The boat landed about one hundred yards from the bank of the river and we had to drive our cattle over a rocky flat. Some of the rocks two feet high in the trail we had to drive over, and water some times was two feet deep. I mention this to show the disposition that some acquire in crossing the plains.

When I got to the ferry there was one man ahead of me, but his cattle had got away and when the boat came I drove my cattle through this narrow and rugged trail which was hard work to do. Before I got my cattle aboard this man came and demanded his turn and wanted me to drive my cattle out so he could get in with his. I told him that it would be almost impossible for me to get my cattle back.

He swore that he would thrash h---out of me if I didn't drive them out and let him in. I was sitting on a big rock when he was talking, hardly able to stand. I raised up told him to get at it as soon as he felt like it; that I would not try to get them back nor he would not either. I finally told him that if he could get his around mine he could do so. He did this. I got across and when I got down to the cascades, there I found the folks camped.

The Cascades

Even though travel by water was frequently hampered by wind, it usually required less time to make the journey to the Cascades rapids than it did for those using the pack trail. Thus, families often had to wait a few days at the Cascades...
for those bringing the cattle along the trail. In fact, at no other place on the long journey did families endure such a long separation. By late fall, camping conditions were usually miserable in the cold rain and mud. Furthermore, much sickness prevailed and, with inadequate facilities to care for the ill, there was much suffering. John Spencer, who arrived at the Cascades with his cattle the evening of November 5, wrote the following gloomy report about conditions upon his arrival:

All stuff...had been lying in the wet...for near two weeks...all was wet in the tent.... All were sick. I was fatigued almost to death.... Wet clothes, wet beds, rain, mud, cold, bad wood, and poor fire, with little to eat, and to crowded all sick myself and family, all work hard up on me.

 Upon arrival at the Cascades, Willis Boatman was saddened to learn that his brother's condition had worsened:

When I got down to the cascades, there I found the folks camped. My brother was not expected to live. I went to him and found him in a dying condition. He lived until next morning when about two a. m. on the sixteenth day of October he died. This was another hard duty to perform but we had to make the best of it. So Mr. Scott and myself went down to an old mill and got some lumber and made a box.

We buried him at the graveyard at the Cascade Falls on the Columbia...digging that grave and laying him away so near the end of the long trail pretty nearly took all the strength we had. But we couldn't give up. It was strange how lonely we were, never out of sight of hundreds of other emigrant wagons all the way across, and yet we ourselves, just absolutely alone in our two wagons, and now, my wife and I had no one but each other.

With his family, William Scott, who had helped bury John Boatman, accompanied the Boatmans during much of the journey. The graveyard where Willis buried his brother is on a wooded knoll overlooking the Columbia River. Today very little remains to indicate that the area was once a cemetery. The trace of the old wagon trail leading up the ravine from the head of the rapids lies just below this site.

By 1852 a considerable community had developed on the north side of the Columbia River, just a mile or so west of what is now the town of Stevenson. Its existence came about largely because of its proximity to the upper end of unnavigable water at the Cascades rapids. At this point, all travel continued by portage for some four miles around the Cascades on the north (Washington) side of the river, either by a tramway that had been recently constructed or, more commonly, by wagon road. According to Origen Thomson, in 1852 the community consisted of three houses, in which are two stores and one dwelling; one of the houses is two stories high. In the upper story is a boarding house, and below a store.” Daniel and Putnam Bradford (brothers) owned the general store. The mill where Willis obtained lumber for his brother’s coffin, also owned by the Bradfords, stood a short distance down the wagon road from the graveyard. None of these structures exists today.

The Portage

After assembling their wagons and loading them, the Boatmans and the William Scott family traveled about six miles on the old wagon road around the Cascades to what Willis described as “the steamboat landing at the lower end of the falls.” On September 22, Origen Thomson declared this road “a very bad road; hilly, rocky, and stumpy—in fact, the worst I have met with.”

The first of several railroad transport systems was constructed in 1852. The Adams-Blank party, upon arrival at the Cascades rapids in the rain on October 25 of that year, made use of this tramway for conveying their belongings and walked to the lower Cascades. Parthenia Blank described the contraption as,

a railroad 3 miles long made of scantling [timber frame] and plank without iron. On this runs a small car propelled by a mule attached by a long rope for an engine and a pair of thrills [shafts on each side of the mule] between which the engine stations himself and walks and guides the car. On this the charge is 75 cts. per cwt. but takes no passengers. At the end of the railroad the goods have to be let down perpendicularly some 150 feet [others estimate 50 feet] to the river from whence they are

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The Adams and Blank families completed their 65-mile journey to Portland in relative comfort aboard the steamer Multnomah. John Spencer and his family also made use of the tramway and completed their journey by steamer.

When the Boatmans reached the steamboat landing by way of the trail, they were understandably in poor spirits and nearly out of food. Willis recalled:

"Our supplies were about gone... and our appetites were not good after the fever. It was hard to eat the little stale and moldy food we had left. We were in this plight, hardly able to move, wondering what to do, how best to get down the Columbia to Portland, when a kindhearted settler, a James Stevens, came up to meet the train with a whole scow load of fresh vegetables. I arranged with him, after the treasures he had brought us was divided up among us all, to take my wife and household goods back with him.

We again unloaded our stuff, took our wagons apart, loaded them on the boat and started again by water to Portland. I with some others started on the trail with the remains of our teams.

The Final Effort

The TRAIL CONTINUED on the north side of the Columbia River and followed a route similar to today's Washington State Highway 14, soon passing Beacon Rock. John McAllister, who passed this landmark on October 21, referred to it as "Big Rock" and gave the following description: "about 1000 ft [tall] nearly all the way perpendicular is probably a half mile in circumference has timber growing on top...."

From Beacon Rock the trail ascended and descended several mountainous areas until finally the valley widened and mountains disappeared, just a few miles east of today's Washougal.

According to John McAllister, in 1852 a ferry crossed the Columbia River in the vicinity of the "mouth of the Sandy River on the other side of here." He further stated that the "ferry of the Columbia...is just above [an] Island." This island, nearly two miles in length, is known today as Lady Island. Its east end lies north of the mouth of the Sandy River and south of the town of Camas.

The water route that Mary Ann Boatman and others used from the mouth of the Sandy River would have been about 20 miles westward down the Columbia River to the mouth of the Willamette, then up that river southeastward for some eight or ten miles to the thriving community of Portland. Although the pack trail route is not fully known, it likely led overland from the mouth of the Sandy River westward to Portland on the Willamette, a distance of at least 13 miles.

The scow with Mary Ann and the couple's possessions reached the east bank of the Willamette River, present site of East Portland, on October 22, 1852. Willis recalled, "I'll never forget the sorry picture my young wife made sitting on the banks of the river, keeping guard over her pitiful household goods, crying when I drove up."

They camped on the river bank that night, and the next day Willis went to the community of Portland to look for a house:

"I looked all over the place (and by the way, that did not take long for there were not more than twenty houses in the place), but I could find nothing but an old shed which had an old dirt fireplace in it and one side out to the commons. I secured it and moved over that night. We carried what little stuff we had on our backs, made our beds down on the dirt floor without sweeping. This was the first roof we had been under for seven long months.... I presume you think we had a good night's sleep, but far from it! We got to our journey's end, but we then just began to realize our situation. Here we were three thousand miles from our homes and relatives, without money and without home, among strangers and in a strange land. So you may imagine that there was not much sleep that night. There were more tears shed than sleeping done that night.

During those long months on the road, Willis and Mary Ann, like many others, had concentrated on surviving the seemingly never-ending journey. Now that they had reached the end of the Oregon Trail, they suddenly realized that their struggle for survival was far from over.

Great-grandson of Mary Ann and Willis Boatman, Weldon W. Rass is a retired research geologist who had careers with both the United States Geological Survey and the State of Washington. This article was excerpted, with permission of the publisher, from Surviving the Oregon Trail, 1852 (Washington State University Press, 2001).
The Herculean city engineer who reshaped Seattle's landscape and formed its modern infrastructure—that is the mythic figure of Reginald H. Thomson. The not-always-flattering portrait of the tall, bearded, keen-eyed builder is of Thomson the driven, imperious mastermind of the regrades and the major organizer of the first contemporary water, sewer, and lighting systems from 1892 to 1911. He is credited with guiding James J. Hill's Great Northern Railroad into town, and of playing a role, while city engineer, in shaping port and waterway developments.

This portrait, even in its less complimentary elements, is accurate as far as it goes, which is far from the full distance. Absent from almost all published accounts of Thomson's life and work are his activities as a park superintendent, city councilman, consultant on hundreds of large and small engineering projects, and city engineer again in 1930 and 1931. Through it all he remained a staunch Presbyterian, a rock-ribbed Republican, and a devoted family man.

Any assessment of his life must examine both the mythic Thomson and the virtually unknown Thomson. Therefore, this paper will consider how the myth was established and reveal some of the little known Thomson.

The foundation work of the Thomson myth is his autobiography, That Man Thomson, published in 1950, the year after his death. The opening chapters are teleological, describing their subject's inexorable intellectual and professional maturation, first in Indiana, then in California, and, after 1881, in Seattle. According to Thomson, Seattle developed in a manner to vindicate his faith in its potential, while his engineering work justified his appointment as city engineer. Then, following a chapter on the organizing principles of his activity, are chapters on sewers, railroad franchises, water systems, the regrades, and port and waterway issues during his time as city engineer. A final chapter is titled after a question some people asked Thomson, "Did You Get Everything Done?" The answer was, of course, "No," but the chapter serves as a vehicle for the exposition of the aged engineer's hopes for the future Seattle.

As he acknowledged, Thomson's tenure was controversial. The circumstances produced unflattering assessments of Thomson, contemporary, popular, and historical. These evaluations portray a powerful colossus astride the developing Seattle. But Thomson was a deeply flawed manipulator whose lust for power sprang from crude ambition and utilitarianism, and whose legacy included needless expense, wanton destruction, and aesthetic blight.

One contemporary account comes from Harry A. Chadwick, the opinionated editor of his lively weekly, The Argus. Writing in November 1913 about what he perceived to be an effort to return Thomson to the city government in some capacity, he declared:

"Thomson was city engineer for a number of years. He is one of the shrewdest politicians the West has ever raised. As city engineer he..."
had control of everything excepting the police and fire departments. If there was an improvement or a big bond issue during the time that he was city engineer that he was not the author of, The Argus does not know what it was....

Reginald H. Thomson is a dreamer. He built for the future. The troubles of individuals were nothing to him. Millions of dollars were spent for public improvements which we did not need at the time they were made, do not need now, and will not need for twenty years. He was well named Czar Thomson. He was for years the autocrat of city hall.

Whether Thomson was as powerful as Chadwick affirms is less important than the belief in it, less important than the assertion of his far-reaching authority.

Turning to the popular, we have J. A. Jance, the acclaimed murder mystery writer, who works into her books much of Seattle's look and feel. Writing in the 1986 thriller Injustice for All, through her protagonist P. J. Beaumont she discusses the fate of Denny Hill, now the Denny Regrade, or simply, the Regrade:

The Regrade used to be as hilly as the rest of Seattle, but sometime during the last century, a city engineer named R. H. Thompson got the work of depositing Denny Hill into Puget Sound. He wanted flat, and he got it; only the Depression stopped him before he got started on Queen Anne Hill. That kind of nonsense wouldn't get past environmentalists today, but it did then. Now the Denny Regrade is as flat as a pancake.

It would be easy to dismiss Jance with the remark that she is a better mystery writer than she is a historian. Thomson never had designs on Queen Anne Hill. Yet Jance raises an issue important to anyone with environmental concerns, the systematic destruction of a monumental natural feature in the name of buildable lots and better traffic circulation. This is not the place to settle the issue, but its existence lends credence to the myth of Thomson as a sort of slide-rule Paul Bunyan who ruthlessly remade Seattle in a failed quest for a charmless urban landscape.

The effort to create a utilitarian ogre does not end with a popular writer, and neither do the misstatements. After faulting his egoism and retelling charges against Thomson of favoritism and inattention to duty, historian Richard C. Berner, takes up the city engineer's aesthetic failings. The context for this criticism was Thomson's successful maneuvering in 1910 to secure the job of chief designer of the Municipal Plans Commission for his friend Virgil Bogue. Berner's argument is that Thomson and Bogue were prisoners of a point-to-point engineering mentality that regarded nature with disdain. Wrote Berner:

In the fight over municipal ownership of the city's Cedar River water supply in 1895, Thomson disclosed his unadorned utilitarian bias: "I have always opposed contracting debts for municipal luxuries such as Boulevards and Parks and other wild and vicious speculations."

In this one quotation Berner commits three errors that historians should avoid. The first is chronological discontinuity, attributing to the Thomson of 1910 a sentiment supposedly written in 1895. The second is his failure to document the quotation, so that it cannot easily be verified. The third is a major error of transposition, for Thomson never wrote the words attributed to him. They were written to Thomson by the Seattle patriarch John J. McGilvra, who endorsed the Cedar River water program as a civic necessity. McGilvra's opinions in any case do not represent Thomson's views.

We have, then, the mythic Thomson as he has come down to us from his time to ours. One aspect of this fabulous, slightly sinister creature is the Thomson who was powerful and ruthless in his role of city engineer. The other aspect concerns the twenty-something engineer who comes to Seattle, and builds on his previous career sufficiently to qualify himself to be city engineer. Then, at the end of his tenure in that post, or perhaps at the end of his immediately-following, short-term job as chief engineer of the
Port of Seattle, he disappears from view, to emerge at the end of his life to offer his sage autobiographical advice on the subject of “whither Seattle.” To his credit, Richard Berner offers a few glimpses of the later Thomson, but they are brief and scattered, and scarcely rescue him from his curious obscurity.

Having looked at the Thomson of myth, let’s turn now to a selective examination of that virtually unknown Thomson. This necessarily has to be an exercise in post-holing, and it will include his superintendency of Strathcona Park, his work as city councilman, his sewer design for wealthy meat-packer Charles Frye, his return to the city engineer’s job, and finally, something of Thomson the Presbyterian, the Republican, and the family man.

The Strathcona Park experience took Thomson north of town, but it was closely related to some of his Seattle work. Provincial legislation of 1911 established Strathcona, originally about 429,000 acres in the middle of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. That same year Thomson left his city engineer’s post and received two job offers. One was to become chief engineer of the newly-created Port of Seattle, the job he accepted. The other was to become the superintendent of Strathcona Park and the provincial consulting engineer, the post he rejected, although he was tempted. But events at the Port Commission soon disillusioned him. The three commissioners fell to squabbling; the most prestigious of them, General Hiram M. Chittenden, opposed Thomson’s plan for an advertising campaign; and he longed to exchange “the nerve strain of the office” for “the physical exercise of the field.” He took up his British Columbia duties on March 1, 1912.

In Strathcona Thomson attempted to carry out the doctrine of the “middle landscape,” that is, a park landscape of nature tamed and made accessible by road, trail, and waterway, yet a nature not entirely subdued. His enthusiasm for a modified nature fit into a Canadian park program that regarded national and provincial parks to be part and parcel of national resource development. The difference was that in the case of the parks one major resource to be exploited was the tourist. Certainly, parks were to be in part the locales of a saved or preserved nature. More importantly, they were to be sites for planning and development designed to accommodate the tourist seeking an alternative to the hectic, unnatural pace of contemporary urban life.

Therefore, the tourist seeking new landscapes, wildlife, and outdoor experiences, the more exotic and remote from cities the better, was the person to please. Or, as Thomson wrote to a California friend, “after a while, when California shall have palled on the appetite of the tourist, we shall have [the] greatest restoration park on earth. We will restore health and beauty and keep only your good will and your money.” In other words, if tourists wanted boat rides, tea houses, observation towers, golf links, children’s play places, comfy hotels, and lots of varied wildlife to view, then they should have them.

At the same time, Strathcona would appear as nature made it, Thomson wrote, “...a sample of virgin country,” while also serving “as a zoo, an arboretum, and a botanical garden.” Obviously, not all of these goals could be realized on the same piece of ground, so the “virgin country” would be relegated to the steep defiles, plunging valleys, scrubby uplands, and forbidding mountains, while nature would be revised in more accessible places for the less venturesome tourist. As Thomson wrote regarding attracting wildlife: “Small burnings will have to be made in innumerable places and seeded with suitable grasses and grains, and in the swampy places, cuttings of a better variety of willow…to furnish abundant winter browse and cover.”

Thomson made a beginning toward creating the middle landscape in Strathcona and attracting tourists, but only a beginning. His superiors forced him to spend the bulk of his appropriations on approach roads to the park. Before the end of 1914 the demands of World War I had absorbed his appropriations, pack animals, and crews. In 1915 he returned to Seattle, finished his
Strathcona reports, completed most of his pending engineering studies for British Columbia, and founded his own consulting firm. In later years he did more consulting work in British Columbia.

Soon after his return to Seattle Thomson ran for city council and was elected. His council service spanned two three-year terms, from the spring of 1916 through the spring of 1922. During his tenure he voted for two controversial measures. The first was to build a major hydroelectric power complex on the Skagit River, voted in May 1918. Following the vote he wrote an independent consulting report favoring the Skagit site on the grounds that it alone among the possible locations provided an adequate water supply. A subcommittee of the federal government's wartime Capital Issues Committee approved his report later in 1918. It was a welcome endorsement of his council vote, even if the Armistice rendered it moot. The other and by far more controversial measure, was to buy the streetcar lines of the Puget Sound Traction, Power and Light Company, a subsidiary of the Boston firm of Stone and Webster. The act was popular at the time of the 1918 bond issue, but public enthusiasm soon faded. The difficulties of competing with the private automobile, setting an increased but much disliked fare, improving the equipment and service, and paying the bonded debt with inadequate revenues, not to mention charges of gross overpayment and bribery swirling around the transaction, bedeviled Seattle politics for years. Thomson was personally untouched by the scandalous aspects of the sale, a fact that did not lessen his enthusiasm for municipal ownership.

Beyond those and many other votes, council meetings and especially council committee meetings, proved to be a sink of time. Thomson was a member of the utilities, street, and finance committees. For example, during the 12 days between and including Thursday, January 16, and Monday, January 27, 1919, he attended two meetings for each of the three committees, as well as two council meetings. At that he was better off financially drawing the council pay of $3,000 a year—about the average household income of the era—than the mayor's $7,500, for the mayorality, if conducted responsibly, was a full-time job. In that same 12-day period Thomson attended to three consulting jobs, twice examined street construction sites in West Seattle, attended a variety of conferences and social gatherings, worked on the grounds of his Bainbridge Island hideaway, went to church, and spoke to the Engineer's Club.

After retiring from the council in 1922 Thomson devoted most of the rest of his working life to consulting. One of his most frustrating if ultimately rewarding jobs was designing and supervising the construction of a sewer for Charles H. Frye, the president of Frye & Company meat packers, and of the Union Stockyards. Anyone who believes that sewer construction is a simple matter of applying technical competence to a specific problem not too far removed from a generic situation, would be disabused of that notion by a study of this job. In 1923 Frye realized the need to improve drainage south from the stockyards and his packing plant, which sat opposite one another on Sixth Avenue South and South Walker Street [the location is in the tidelands area south of downtown and east of Harbor Island]. Frye asked Thomson to design a sewer from Holgate, one block north of Walker, past the stockyards, then south one additional block to tie into a trunk sewer underneath South Lander Street.

Thomson designed the sewer, submitted a request for a city council ordinance, obtained the ordinance, negotiated approval from the Board of Public Works, secured agreements from the other abutting property owners—principally the Great Northern Railroad—to pay their proportionate share of the cost, and received bids on the work in September 1925. The delay stemmed in part from the need to remove a construction trestle from Sixth Avenue.

After the work began late in 1925 the office of the city engineer raised a fresh objection—a portion of the sewer was liable to settlement and required a special foundation not provided for in the original contract. In addition, the engineering department demanded a $20,000 bond from Frye and the Great Northern to repair the suspect portion of the sewer in case it settled, a $20,000 bond on a small section costing in total less than $10,000. Thomson thought that the repeated demands for the bond were
“silly” and “as being in the nature of practical jokes....” The Great Northern ignored the demands, and Frye angrily guaranteed to repair the sewer if it failed, a guarantee, he wrote, “that...is good as any bond.” If all that were not enough, the city engineering department decided that the sewer should be extended north from Holgate three blocks to Connecticut Street. A new agreement, another ordinance, and another contract were necessary before the work could proceed. Finally, on November 8, 1926, the city accepted the entire sewer.

Thomson returned to the city engineer's post in 1930 following the incumbent's death in an automobile accident. His new tasks involved work that was no more simple or easy than his consulting. It was his fate to preside over the loss of his department's design and construction control of the lighting department's projects to a new engineering office of the lighting department, which was by then known as City Light, or as it called itself in its public relations brochures, “Your City Light and Power.”

The matter is complex, but the nub of the issue for us is the relationship between Thomson and James D. Ross, the powerful and popular head of City Light, as it was influenced by events beyond the control of either. Although 16 years separated the two—Thomson was the older—both were engineers, both favored municipal ownership, and both were tough, seasoned bureaucratic infighters who were colleagues of long standing. They and their families visited one another, and Thomson once deeded Ross some Bainbridge Island property in return for an interest in an invention of Ross's. Their friendship did not survive the dispute between Thomson's department and City Light.

When Thomson returned to the city engineer's post, the seeds of his break with Ross were already sown. In 1929 the council authorized the large accounting firm of Lybrand, Ross Brothers and Montgomery to investigate the departments, beginning with City Light. The accountant’s report appeared in January 1930. It was not flattering to the dynamic superintendent of lighting. It suggested, indirectly, that some of Ross’s time and energy spent in debating, speech-making, cultivating his allies in the Friends of City Light lobbying group, and other public relations activities might better be focused on the closer supervision of City Light. Among many other deficiencies—excluding those beyond Ross’s control—the report cited a guarantee, he wrote, “that...is good as any bond.” If all that were not enough, the city's projects to a new engineering office of the lighting department, which was by then known as City Light, or as it called itself in its public relations brochures, “Your City Light and Power.”

The second was that Ross tried to persuade the council to give City Light the authority to do its own engineering work. The council refused. It was after the council's rejection that a group supporting Ross, plus the Friends of City Light, bullied the council into including a referendum charter amendment on the March 1931 local election ballot. Thomson got the best of the ensuing contest over the control of City Light's engineering. His charge that Ross's proposal would duplicate staff and add to the payroll carried weight with an electorate sliding deeper into the Great Depression. In desperation, Ross declared that the Lybrand, Ross Brothers and Montgomery report advocated City Light's assumption of its own engineering work. Ross's statement was untrue. Thomson rebutted the claim with the report's criticisms of Ross's management. Ross, who was more than a little paranoid about the
machinations of private power, asserted that Thomson's engineering staff was crawling with refugees from private power companies. That claim also was false. Thomson easily rebutted it.

Ross's charter amendment faced nearly certain defeat, when, on election eve, Mayor Frank Edwards fired Ross. Just why Edwards did so at that juncture is uncertain, but he surely added to his reputation for eccentricity, egotism, and imprudence. The voters reacted with a heavy turnout, approving the charter amendment by fewer than 2,000 votes of 53,804 cast. The momentum of the charter amendment approval precipitated a recall campaign against Edwards, who was removed from office in July. His successor reinstated Ross and demanded the resignation of all other department heads, Thomson included. In 1931, at the age of 75, Reginald Thomson retired to consulting.

These diverse activities of Thomson's found their unifying purpose in his Presbyterian faith, his family, and his devotion to the Republican Party. His devout Presbyterianism shaped his character and controlled his actions to a remarkable degree. He was a lay leader in the church. One of his earliest surviving diary entries, written in 1888 when he was 31, reads "lead Prayer meeting." A 1926 entry—he turned 70 that year—reads: "Church A.M. & P.M. . . . I lead service at night." Almost nine years later he noted: "Church A.M. speak on Benevolence." His active role in church affairs did not translate into slavish devotion to the men of the cloth. When he was 82 years old he wrote in his diary about his minister who "preaches a loud sermon in re Missions. Says he hates the name Fundamentalist and the name Modernist. I am persuaded that regardless of his talk he is only an opportunist."

Thomson's God was not merely a God of formulaic worship but an omnipresent and immanent God who received fervent prayers whenever and wherever they were offered. An example of his fervor dates from 1917 when his son Reginald, Jr., whom the family called "Rex," enlisted in the navy shortly after the United States declared war on Germany. The navy assigned Rex to the cruiser Saratoga, berthed at Bremerton. The Saratoga left Bremerton on July 29, and while it was in sight of Thomson's property on Bainbridge Island, Thomson, his wife, and his other son "stood" for more than an hour and a half and "poured out our prayers."

As the incident suggests, Thomson was a devoted family man. He deeply loved his wife, their four children, and the one granddaughter he knew well. He filled his diary with references to all of them, but especially to his wife, Addie. In 1929 he noted their 46th wedding anniversary, "46 years sweet companionship with sweet, patient Addie." Their 50th anniversary celebration took place on Bainbridge Island. After noting those present and some gifts, he wrote: "To tease Addie I wear a pair of pumps with extreme high heels." He doted on his granddaughter Sarah, whom the family called "Sally," noting her birth and occasionally some of their time together. At eleven months "Sally laughs heartily when she pulls a handkerchief off of my head and I boo at her."

Thomson's childhood experiences during the Civil War annealed his Republicanism. Years later, in an autobiographical fragment, he wrote: "My childhood was during the war of the rebellion. We looked right across to Kentucky." (This was from Southeastern Indiana.) "Kentucky did not secede from the Union, but many Kentuckians were bitter rebels and doing all they could to aid the secession." In the same narrative he recalled: "During those days I attended the Village school. There was of course some learning, but with it much fighting. There were some Democrats whom we called copperheads, whom we felt should be disciplined." Republican discipline was a lifelong project with Thomson. In 1932, with unemployment approaching 25 percent, the economy sinking, an enforcement of prohibition collapsing, the country abandoned the Republican Party and voted Democratic. Thomson's comment was: "Election day. U.S. goes crazy and votes in Democrats and whiskey." Nor did subsequent events reconcile him politically. In 1934 he wrote: "State election. The Demo-Communistic party wins."

Thomson's Presbyterian faith, his devotion to his family, and his Republicanism served him well because they were fixed points of reference in a corrupt and chaotic world. Because of these transcendent concerns he could live in that world but not be of it. He survived as city engineer in "wide open town" administrations having a relaxed view of vice. He served in "closed town" administrations. He worked closely with Charles Frye although Frye was, according to his grand niece and biographer, a compulsive womanizer. His fast friendship with Samuel Hill persisted despite Hill's unhappiness and marriage and a succession of mistresses by whom he sired three children.

Thomson could be ruthless in pursuit of a goal, but his position in each instance was clearly and forcefully stated. His reputation as city engineer seems to have suffered partly because he was so hard-working and determined. Whether the task at hand in his later life was building a park, serving on the city council, designing a sewer, or trying to prevent a raid on his engineering department, he operated above the board. These developments and Thomson's shaping of them help bring to life the "virtually" unknown Reginald Thomson.

William H. Wilson, a professor of history, retired, of the University of North Texas, is currently working on a biography of Reginald H. Thomson.
The Nippon Kan (Japanese Hall) in Seattle's International District opened in 1909. For over 30 years it served as a community center and performance space for Japanese American residents in the area. It was forced to close in 1942 when the Japanese were sent to internment camps during World War II. The hall on South Washington Street hosted a diversity of cultural and community events and activities: plays, movies, concerts, school assemblies, and community meetings as well as judo, kendo, and sumo tournaments. The traditional arts of kabuki, odori (dance), and shigin (poetry singing) were also performed.

The actors on stage in this photograph taken at the Nippon Kan about 1928 could have been from the first Japanese drama club, Geijitsukyokai, organized in 1920. Or, they could be a group from the Seattle Buddhist Church or one of the other amateur performance groups active at the time. The amateur performances were also social occasions where children ran up and down the aisles and people visited with one another and brought food to eat picnic-style at intermission.

After its renovation and reopening in 1978, the Nippon Kan serves the same functions today as in earlier years, but for a broader audience.
MIGRATION of a Cultural Landscape Pattern

Leavenworth & Pacific Northwest Fabricated Communities

By R. Jake Sudderth

PASSING THROUGH LEAVENWORTH, Washington, can be deceiving, if not confusing. The merging of Native American, European, and American identity on this Pacific Northwest landscape (an evolving process over the last 200 years) has resulted in a small, unique community that appears to be a great crossroads. These differing images supply historians with endless sources of information about how individuals shaped the human-created landscape of Leavenworth and tell a story of local development much different from that of other local communities. The town of Leavenworth is a composite—a historical encounter zone—of nature and human action. The process has imparted dramatic landscape alterations and architectural preferences shared by residents. Appearances suggest that a new type of community has emerged—a unique cultural landscape.

Every community experiences these processes, and cyclical change can easily be monitored. But some national and local cultural patterns have such a great impact that they influence multiple cities and areas across a region. For example, the strong Scandinavian heritage in the Pacific Northwest has shaped the style of regional architecture in several communities. Another example would be the similarities in design and layout of small Columbia River fishing villages or logging towns across the Pacific Northwest. Once a style of community life is proven to be economically viable and draws additional people to the area, it tends to be imitated in other places featuring similar assets. Leavenworth is a modern example of a new style of community—the fabricated theme town, a community designed to promote tourism through a false sense of communal heritage, similar to the intent of an amusement park. Appealing to mass identities and perceptions, theme towns usually ignore uniqueness and local tradition and instead promote names like “Old Town,” “Western,” or “Bavarian,” and define unauthentic placeless landscapes in older retail districts. They usually sprout in areas featuring open, inexpensive, land on the fringes of metropolitan areas or in small communities where citizens seek new ways to attract investment and visitors to a shrinking town. In Washington, the latter pattern has been the most prevalent.

Leavenworth is a city ostensibly linked with European heritage relying on altered local buildings to create the look of an authentic ethnic landscape (Bavarian), although there is no historical link between the city and migration from Bavaria. Leavenworth’s great architectural change instead showcases a cultural
encounter that appears to have been primarily shaped by economic factors. Since the recent past in the Pacific Northwest is so predominantly American in terms of landscape development, the adaptation of European historical identity in Leavenworth is a major change, one that defies historical patterns in central Washington in the 20th century.

This Leavenworth encounter began in the early 1960s and was fostered by a local women’s club and a University of Washington study. The town’s citizens made a conscious effort to create an alpine village around a Bavarian theme after studying several tourist theme options. For over 30 years, members of the community have continuously increased the number of “Bavarian” landmarks within the boundaries of the town. Although the historical development of theme towns like Leavenworth and their contrived landscapes is often chronicled as an event by historians, the cultural impact that these communities have on other places in their region has been largely ignored. The impact of the cultural encounter that established Leavenworth as a Bavarian theme town in the early 1960s is an important development in the recent history of the Pacific Northwest and is a movement that continues to perpetrate similar encounters across the region.

Common Early History

Leavenworth was founded primarily by second- and third-generation immigrants who had long established their American citizenship. There are some individuals in Leavenworth who descend from German heritage, but no more than come from Scandinavian or other central European backgrounds. So the perception that the city was founded by German immigrants is false. Most of the people now living in the Leavenworth area trace their families to the southeastern and midwestern United States. Many migrated from Iowa, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, Kansas, Alabama, Kentucky, and Tennessee. Pioneer recollections suggest that the state responsible for the most settlers is Missouri. Local heritage is not mentioned in interviews, promotional material, or committee reports as being a factor in landscape and tourism decisions. There is only one definitive historic landmark in the town—a small pictorial kiosk placed in City Park in 1996.

The development of Leavenworth prior to the 1960s was typical of the Pacific Northwest. In March 1891, F. A. Losekamp made his way north through the Wenatchee valley. He ended his journey on the south shore of the Wenatchee River in a spot well suited for viewing the Cascade Mountains. Losekamp established a trading post that served local Indians who enjoyed the cold fishing waters. After men and women joined him (bringing critical merchandise and supplies) at the new township, he became postmaster of the new town of Icicle. By June the Great Northern Railway laid tracks up the Wenatchee valley near the mouth of Tumwater Canyon, next to Icicle, and the first railway construction crews brought the promise of commerce. Icicle’s early days were founded on the southern side of the Wenatchee River.

In October 1892 the Great Northern acquired a one-mile strip of land with 400-foot easements on the north side of the river, which was to be a new division point. Word spread that this 800-foot-wide parcel would become the heart of a new town. Soon the railway depot, the roundhouse, and the coal merchants of Icicle moved across the river and railway crews and loggers set up camp, encouraging speculation in the form of

ABOVE: In the early 1950s Leavenworth’s Front Street was architecturally similar to main streets across the Pacific Northwest. But economic stagnation led local residents and Chelan County officials to question the town’s future.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Leavenworth’s Losekamp Building symbolized the town’s transformation from an Indian trading post called Icicle, founded by F. A. Losekamp on the southern side of the Wenatchee River, to a retail establishment on the north side serving 20th-century migrants.
the Okanogan Investment Company, headed by Captain Charles Leavenworth. An official townsite was formed next to this promising railway development, and the community was named after the company’s major investor, a cousin to the man for whom Leavenworth, Kansas, was named.

By February 1893 about 700 people lived in Leavenworth, and the next 50 years were defined economically by a local marketplace driven by the Great Northern and local logging companies. Since Leavenworth served as one of the railroad’s primary division points, this transportation corridor spawned additional service industries and lumber mills. Discriminating visitors can still view traces of this railroad landscape. For example, the city has a central main street that parallels U.S. Highway 2 and serves as the linear pathway of commerce for merchants and visitors alike. Since this street once faced the railway and was designed to serve all necessary functions of cargo delivery and community distribution, and because Highway 2 was built in the same narrow valley, Leavenworth’s town layout has not been altered dramatically in its 108-year history—even as automobiles and trucks replaced rail cars in the 20th century.

Another reason this retail landscape has not changed over the years relates to economic stagnation. In 1922, the Great Northern moved its division point to Wenatchee, and by the late 1930s there were 24 empty storefronts on the two-block stretch of Front Street. The abrupt decision by railroad executives to reduce services in Leavenworth made it difficult for local citizens to draw visitors to their community for over 40 years. Following World War II, Leavenworth was a small eastern Washington town with a dwindling economic base. The United States Forest Service and National Fish Hatchery, a few orchards and a handful of gyppo logging companies were the chief employers. (“Gyppo logging began as a system of working by the piece, an alternative to the newly established eight-hour day.” Since the logger could work as an independent contractor, this process was viewed as an advantage to both employer and employee.) Many of the city’s residents qualified for welfare in the early 1960s, and the cost of living was so low that the county sent other welfare recipients to live there. Improvements to Highway 2, which followed the path of the Great Northern, cut driving time to Wenatchee to only 25 minutes. The former hour-long drive had discouraged residents from making the trip, and many Leavenworth residents began to consider their community a colony of nearby Wenatchee, a town of nearly 30,000, which lies due east. People chose to drive to Wenatchee to do their shopping; the retail infrastructure of Leavenworth was dying. An existence as a struggling logging town engendered economic frustration for many; jobs featuring living wages for local loggers and farmers were hard to find.

Tourism and retail development have been among the instigators of cultural encounters in the West since the mid 19th century. For example, continental railroad journeys for gentlemen were promoted heavily in the late 1860s and early 1870s, and the concept of “dude ranching,” or taking paying guests to areas like Colorado and Wyoming for recreation, began soon afterward. Early in 1869 Atlantic Monthly began promoting trips to the West that would validate the popular perceptions of which writers such as Horace Greeley, Samuel Bowles, and Albert Dean Richardson spoke. Soon $500-a-month visits to the Wild West were available, where tourists would witness a “friendly Indian Village,” among other sites. The unique landscape variations of the West were consistently cited as reasons for travel to the region. Colorado was touted for its “natural history.” Promoters claimed the geological age of their “ruins” made them far older than the man-made ruins of Europe. One Union Pacific pamphlet promised a Colorado visitor would be satisfied because “he has seen nature face to face, he has learned more of the world’s ancient history and the lives of ancient peoples than a whole library of books could ever teach him.”

American Indians were key components of this historical advertising. The discovery of the first cliff houses in southern Colorado and New Mexico proved the presence of ancient cultures in North America. This glorification of Indians did not undermine the bigotry expressed about “uncivilized” Indians found by white settlers.
in the American West. Tourism guides taught that Indian “savages” were becoming tamer. One author of a guidebook exposing the ancient beauty of Colorado wrote, “Beyond a doubt the people who possessed the country and built the improvements are of a much more civilized race than those found inhabiting it when visited by our earliest explorers.”

World famous resorts like the Hotel Del Monte in Monterey, the Hotel Raymond in Pasadena, and the Hotel Del Coronado in San Diego quickly followed these developments by promising the comforts of eastern living on the other side of the country. One promoter for the Hotel Raymond bragged in 1889 that visitors would experience, “all the appliances of eastern cities of a century’s growth—a refined and cultured community, with a vestige of the rude elements that have formed an integral part of the western towns.”

Focused presentation of tourist sites in the West has continued to evolve in the 20th century. The transformation of mining towns into ski resorts has been a popular movement in the region. In its heyday as a mining town, Aspen rivaled the camps of the California gold rush, Virginia City in Nevada’s Comstock Lode, and Leadville in its own state of Colorado. Between 1887 and 1893 Aspen was the richest silver-mining center in America. At one point the city held some 12,000 inhabitants and offered services that included six newspapers, two banks, an opera house, electricity, telephones, a streetcar system, a waterworks, schools, and numerous churches. In July 1893 the price of silver dropped sharply, and after a week all the mines in the town closed. By 1930 the city was a shadow of its former self, with a population of only 705. Soon another group of investors from the east realized that Aspen had much to offer visitors in terms of skiing. Now snow has replaced silver as the essential commodity. Other communities like Park City, Utah, and Breckenridge, Colorado, have followed parallel patterns of growth.

The influence of Solvang, California, the “Danish Village,” has been enormous among 20th-century theme towns in the West, especially Leavenworth. Situated in the Santa Ynez Valley of southern California, the town was founded over 80 years ago by midwestern migrants with Danish heritage who sought to establish a colony complete with a Danish folk school and a Lutheran Church. Danes in America had established colonies on the East Coast and in Wisconsin and Michigan in the late 1880s, but the West was then considered new territory. The centerpiece of the colony idea was the school, designed to provide Danish Americans with training and education in the Danish way of life. The institution was to be patterned after folk schools in Denmark. The group searched California thoroughly before 9,000 acres were found for sale in Santa Barbara County that featured a good climate, fertile soil, and adequate water. The name of the venture was the Danish-American Colony Company, incorporated on October 1, 1910. This persuaded several Danish families to make their way to Solvang via the narrow-gauge railroad, which stopped at nearby Los Olivos. The railroad companies advertised in Danish and promoted the concept of a Danish culture town. By the end of the year the company had raised the necessary capital and on January 23, 1911, and purchased the parcel from the Santa Ynez Valley Development Company for $360,000, or $40 dollars an acre. Members of the group immediately named their new settlement Solvang, which translated to “Sunny Field.”

Solvang has been affected by multiple types of migration patterns, effectively altering the cultural landscape of the community. The Danish-American Colony Company was only the latest group interested in the gentle hills of the Santa Ynez Valley. When the Colony Company agreed to purchase a large portion of the land grant Rancho San Carlos de Jonata, they joined Chumash Indians, Mexican citizens, and Spanish explorers and migrants, whose ancestors came to Solvang long before it became the “Danish Village.” Members of these previous groups sustained a more natural connection with the climate...
and the surrounding land and signs of their impact on the local landscape are still evident in places. Anyone visiting from Santa Barbara will immediately notice the exquisite Mission Santa Ines as they reach the Solvang city limits. The mission was founded in 1804 (over 100 years before the Danes arrived) and is a prime example of Catholic and Spanish cultural influence. While this beautiful building sits on the bluff of a hill with a wonderful view of the valley, it is a landmark now ignored by many who come to Solvang to view Danish architecture. Adding to this misunderstanding is the fact that most visitors to the city are not familiar with the local diversity of the population. The current population of Solvang is approximately 5,000, three times as large as Leavenworth, and the local Latino population is responsible for about 20 percent of this total, although the main streets of Solvang do not provide any examples of Spanish and Mexican-American influences on nearby architecture. The town's modern emphasis on tourism is only 40 years old. Local residents developed a provincial Danish appearance after World War II to draw attention and visitors to the community, and their successful promotion of this Danish veneer and theme has resulted in prodigious visitation. Tourism is responsible for about two million visitors per year, and the success has led to interest in similar programs by other communities.

Leavenworth leaders copied many of the ideas, the architecture, and the strategies Solvang's citizens developed in order to cater to tourists with similar interests. Multiple 20th-century theme towns have also followed the lead of communities like Solvang to promote popular vacations centered on auto tourism to enhance their local economies. The theory is that bringing plenty of visitors to a city will draw subsequent visits and lead to growth in the community's retail business corridor. This philosophy of growth tourism has additional origins in theme parks, amusement parks, outdoor historical museums, and Hollywood, which helped, in turn, to model Solvang. Among the first theme sites were trade shows and world fairs such as the World's Columbian Exposition at Chicago in 1893 and the 1939 New York World's Fair. These government and industry-sponsored environments featured futuristic theme displays promoting ideal homes, new communications systems, and other modern technology. In the 1920s, staged settings of the past began surfacing as outdoor museums, which led directly to the creation of Colonial Williamsburg, a city replicating life in pre-industrial America, by preserving an entire village. Old Sturbridge Village, Massachusetts, and Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan, followed Williamsburg's changes, serving as the creations of elite businessmen and collectors who erected them as monuments to Americanism. The tradition has been further refined through the successful introduction of amusement theme parks like Knotts Berry Farm and the Disney properties. These encounters continue to influence theme towns like Leavenworth through the advent of new methods of developing kitsch historical presentation.

The Action

Leavenworth's Citizens took a direct approach into solving their economic difficulties through thematic tourism. The Leavenworth Women's Club provided instant rejuvenation with their tireless efforts. The group had only 12 members but had persevered to launch formidable community projects in the past. The Leavenworth fire station now stands because of their efforts, and the club successfully campaigned for a bond issue to build a new high school after the measure had failed eight times in the past. In 1962 the club was determined to pursue an even larger project and came up with an idea for community development they titled LIFE, Leavenworth Improvement For Everyone. In late 1962 club members contacted the University of Washington's Bureau of Community Development. Soon afterward, a few University of Washington staff members visited Leavenworth and held a preliminary meeting to discuss community needs and interests, seeking to determine how Leavenworth's residents could study their own situation and find solutions to some of the town's major economic problems. The women's efforts did not go unnoticed. In June 1964 the club won a $10,000 national prize from the General Federation of Women's Clubs and the Sears Roebuck Foundation for its community improvement project.

"LIFE" truly began for Leavenworth in September 1962 when a citizen's committee of about a dozen people held several meetings to discuss ideas for community development. Dirk Anderson, of the University of Washington, had been guest speaker at a chamber of commerce meeting early in September and had discussed the topic of community self-study. Interest peaked and Anderson was invited to a well-publicised meeting late in October. He outlined how committees covering various phases of community life could be formed from volunteers in the city and how these groups could create reports full of statistics gathered to present to the public. A few more meetings were held during which additional residents were constantly introduced to Anderson's ideas. Eventually, a hierarchy of participants developed and several of Leavenworth's most prominent citizens and business owners accepted responsibility for the proposed project.

Fifteen committees were established for LIFE. These groups studied education, churches, youth, agriculture, trades and services, beautification, and labor and industry. The university agreed to set up a committee to study tourism, which recommended remodeling the town in order to draw visitors. Community involvement was impressive. Of the original 15 committees, 13 completed their respective reports. Two of the groups had difficulties—the Agriculture Committee collapsed after several changes in the group's administration (fortunately much of the research required of the committee was included in the Labor and Industry Report) and the History Committee was also inactive, which may lend credence to the assumption that Leavenworth's citizens have
ignored the past while following a path of tourism. The high number of Leavenworth residents involved in the study suggests that citizens saw an opportunity for economic revitalization and took the LIFE project seriously. More than 200 people from the community and its surrounding areas became involved. Each committee was open to everyone, developed mimeographed surveys, and produced extensive typewritten reports. The LIFE project received an economic boost when the Vesta Women's Club began distributing their $10,000 prize. The money accompanied planning within the business community by paying for the construction of a bandstand in City Park. Soon afterward, a local media blitz began. The local newspaper (The Leavenworth Echo) published its first “Sonnenschein Edition” (a yearly production that focuses on advertising and promoting travel to the Bavarian Village) in 1964. This date coincided with the occasion of Leavenworth’s first Washington State Autumn Leaf Festival. Leavenworth citizens began to sense that they could establish economic autonomy.

For maximum use of tourism, the university’s Bureau of Community Development recommended a “Gay Nineties” theme. Two other themes were suggested during the LIFE study: Western and Alpine. The residents of Leavenworth voted, and the Alpine motif won. After the theme was selected, the specifics of the architecture were discussed. A coffee-table book about Bavaria, belonging to Leavenworth citizen Pauline Watson, inspired the tourism committee to narrow its architectural taste to that section of Europe. Switzerland and Austria were also considered by local pundits, but LIFE participants did not spend much time pondering options—they moved ahead with intense local promotion. Lederhosen-clad residents staffed a booth at Seattle Center in 1966, telling potential visitors about the Autumn Leaf Festival and exhibiting scale models of Leavenworth buildings. Later that year several people began driving from Seattle and Spokane to view this changing marketable community. One visitor from California, Earl Peterson, even had a tremendous impact on future design ideas.

Peterson came to town to discuss buying the Leavenworth Echo, and while talking to Leavenworth citizen Russell Lee he learned that the city was in the process of creating a Bavarian theme. Peterson had been the designer and architect for much of Solvang, California’s Danish Village. He offered his services, and starting in 1966 he met with the Leavenworth Chamber of Commerce on several occasions to provide design help and consulting. Although Bavarian and Danish architecture are similar, they are not identical. But Peterson knew that development of the theme and fabricated motif were key when promoting Leavenworth, not historical accuracy. He urged the Leavenworth designers to use gabled roofs on buildings to make them look authentic. Peterson’s advice was respected during construction and throughout the design stages of the town by Leavenworth citizens and business owners because of his experience with Solvang. Peterson showed multiple slides and pictures of past work, and his patterns were copied effectively.

**Leavenworth as a Regional Example**

Social diffusion within landscapes is an endless process. Changes in Leavenworth have initiated similar economic movements toward tourism in other towns in the region and across the country, preserving a permanent connection among these faraway places. The city’s community development program received considerable attention in places as distant as Atlanta, Georgia, where the *Atlanta Constitution* and the Atlanta Chamber of Commerce researched the community development taking place out West. The LIFE project, with its emphasis on group committees and individuals within the city, had numerous admirers. In recent years community leaders in Sundance, Wyoming, have toured Leavenworth to learn how local citizens sell their Bavarian theme to visitors.

Locally, several cities have followed thematic initiatives seen in Leavenworth. In early 1994 members of the Kellogg, Idaho, Chamber of Commerce toured Leavenworth to keep abreast of new architectural and retail developments. To their surprise, several business owners in Leavenworth refused to speak with them, contending that Kellogg was “stealing their ideas.” It is ironic that Leavenworth’s business representatives would make such a claim, considering their penchant for emulating Solvang’s success. This brewing contentious relationship verifies the effects of migrating ideas due to cultural encounters. In 1972 local leaders in Winthrop, a small community in Washington’s Methow Valley, northeast of Leavenworth along Highway 20, determined that it would also like to create a theme-town atmosphere—and Leavenworth was the community they sought to emulate. After residents decided they wanted to create Western imagery, they established a contractual relationship with the designers of Leavenworth, who developed a visually pleasing Western-style motif.

Even the small town of George, Washington, is slowly evolving into a modern theme community. Dedicated on July 4, 1957, and incorporated in 1961 as a fourth class city, George was created to solve a geographic distribution problem in Washington’s Grant County. Nearby farming necessitated supply sites within striking distance of county residents. After determining that the towns of Quincy and Moses Lake were too distant for these purposes, leaders of the Bureau of Reclamation offered a 339-acre parcel for bidding, hoping local investors would launch a planned city. Their desires were realized after Quincy pharmacist Charlie Brown and two co-investors were awarded the bid and retained the services of Myer Wolfe, the city planning instructor at the University of Washington, who planned a road, power, and water system. Bureau of Reclamation officials recommended that the city be named in honor of the nation’s first president, and George was born.

Present-day George sits approximately 170 miles east of
Seattle and 130 miles west of Spokane, adjacent to Interstate 90. The town is less than an hour's drive from Leavenworth, which lies north and a little west of George. In 1994 Bellevue developer Louis Leclasio announced that he would bring a colonial Virginia landscape to George to take advantage of the town's natural connection with George Washington. Announcement of the plan drew a half page of coverage in the December 18, 1994, New York Times. Leclasio conceived the idea after watching the success of modern theme towns, including Leavenworth, and stopping by the community for gas on the way to visit his children who were attending Gonzaga University in Spokane. To understand the development of tourism in these towns, Leclasio met with the regents of Mount Vernon, Virginia, and architects from Disneyland. The transfer of ideas about how to sell history is very much intact. The curators at Mount Vernon wanted Leclasio to focus on the western aspects of George Washington's life that are not covered in detail at President Washington's fabled home. The first president's background in scouting and surveying was suggested as potential subject matter. Leclasio also met with Ray Wallace, an 80-year-old veteran of Disney and founder of fabricated landscapes in Long Beach, San Diego, and Disneyland itself. Modern cultural encounters in places like George prove that cultural diffusion continues to impact landscape patterns in the Pacific Northwest.

**New Identity**

The infrastructure of a city is the most definitive aspect of its landscape. Buildings and streets set boundaries and parameters, signs and murals lend description and direction. These human devices create the angles and outline of what we interpret as a community. The current Leavenworth landscape features large eaves with scrolled support beams, windows framed with decorative painting, and low-angled roof lines. To enhance and continue this spread of the city's artificial landscape, Leavenworth leaders established a design review board in 1995 which works with architects and builders to maintain acceptable adherence to the adapted Bavarian style. The group encourages the use of low-pitched roofs with overhangs, balconies with scrolled slats and flower boxes, arched doorways, windows with shutters or decorative trim, exterior murals, scrolled woodwork, and specialized coloring. The design board must approve a building's design for commercial development, and their decisions can be appealed to the City Council.

When local architecture and natural community design boundaries are altered dramatically, it is as if a new town is created within the confines of an older place. Once someone ventures behind the shops on Front Street in Leavenworth they see residential dwellings that look like turn-of-the-century box houses with sloped tin roofs, and American designed gable houses with large front porches. These houses remind people of the community landscape in numerous logging and mining towns in the Pacific Northwest. The old style homes of Leavenworth look very much like homes in the mining towns of Roslyn and Ronald (which are situated approximately 50 miles southwest of Leavenworth), or homes found within the boundaries of fellow Highway 2 logging towns Sultan and Gold Bar. Surrounding both the old and the new of Leavenworth are the jagged snow-capped peaks of the Cascade Range, which only enhance the newfound alpine identity in tourist Leavenworth.

When viewing any local landscape, we witness basic differences among neighborhoods and cities. These individual patterns showcase how community encounters impact the cultural landscape. For example, in many coal towns of Pennsylvania, onion domes topped by three-barred crosses decorate the towers of Greek Orthodox and Byzantine Rite churches, illuminating traditional community symbolism merging with modern extractive industry. In New Orleans, narrow one-room-wide and three- or four-room-deep rectangular buildings, measuring 13 by 65 feet, with a gable front and small porch extension, are examples of the basic shotgun houses that grace several streets throughout the South. Although built in frame construction, the style has been traced back to half-timbered antecedents in Haiti, an architectural
Building by building, block by block, the Bavarian motif is slowly overtaking the architecture of Leavenworth's past.

tradition brought by free black migrants in the 18th century. There is evidence that wattle and daub versions in Africa were emulated in Haiti, making the architecture of New Orleans a venerable cultural graveyard. Unlike these examples, Leavenworth's local architecture is misleading. Local buildings offer a glimpse of Bavarian design that is simply a façade placed over the top of an older, standard 20th-century American concrete or brick building. Further, much of the design was influenced by experts from a community that is not even Bavarian in respect to theme—Solvang, California, the "Danish Village."

Leavenworth's cultural alteration in the mid 1960s has established the community as a unique locale in the Pacific Northwest and a national tourist site. In addition, the town has become a symbol of change and ingenuity for many small communities in the Far West, even though local heritage is virtually ignored. Communities that feature residents who eschew their recent cultural development and instead revert to heritage and theme identity from their distant past, or borrow ideas from places with no historical connection to their city illustrate how powerful images derived from specific encounters can be. Current iconography of Leavenworth alters perceptions about the town's recent past but helps explain similar patterns in other local communities. The migration pattern continues.

R. Jake Sudderth received a master's degree in history at the University of Idaho in 1996 after studying the history of fabricated communities in the Far West. He is currently studying American history at Columbia University and recently coauthored a modern memoir about post-World War II Seattle with John Mitsules, The St. Ann's Kid.

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Where’s the Indian Perspective?

I was troubled by the unproblematic way that Hilda Skott presented the early history of the prairies that became the location of Western State Hospital. I’m a real fan of COLUMBIA and its often very fine articles, but “The Run from Farm to Farm” piece needed some work. Simply saying that “Nearby Indians of the Steilacoom, Snoqualmie, and Skokomish tribes provided needed labor for the farm” ignores the complexity of the power, cultural, and economic relationships between Joseph Heath, the Hudson’s Bay Company and Indian peoples. Heath’s own papers and journal reveal the darker side of these bartering/labor relationships.

Skott’s first paragraph is also troubling. “Where woolly sheep once grazed” is a nice image. But the sheep and the hogs and other early activities of “first white settlements” wreaked havoc on the prairies, long utilized by Indian people of the area. Skott’s writing remains firmly centered in a Euro-perspective when she writes, “Local settlers, when they feared Indian attacks, packed their belongings…etc.” War is presented in this short paragraph as an inconvenience to whites. There is nothing about the Indians’ relationship to Fort Steilacoom and the inconvenience to their lives. For example, Chief Leschi was held there during the war, and his captivity launched protests from Indian people. During the war, an “alternative” newspaper was published there that sought to provide another perspective on Leschi’s purported crime. Supplies were sent to Fox Island from the area while Indians, also in a “sorry mess” and no doubt crying as well, were incarcerated during the war.

I’m sorry I don’t have the research time to locate the details and sources for you in original materials. But be assured that this article could have been enriched with a few additional details that better represent the complexity of the situation.

I rarely find COLUMBIA articles to be so centered in a European/American historical perspective as this one. I urge the editorial staff to continue to be conscious of slights and omissions that can perpetuate an ethnocentric representation of our history. The COLUMBIA does and must represent an Indian perspective in all its articles, not just those specifically about Indian people.

—Lyn De Danaan, Shelton

Additional Reading

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

The Ellensburg Tree of Justice

Through the “Magnificent Gateway”

A Lasting Legacy, Part IV

Reginald H. Thomson

Migration of a Cultural Landscape Pattern
A Sto:lo Coast Salish Historical Atlas
Reviewed by Jack Nisbet.

Anyone who delves into Pacific Northwest history via the ship’s logs and field journals of early visitors to the region soon becomes frustrated by the narrowness of the newcomers’ scope. To men who seldom left the decks of their sailing vessels or ventured far from their fur-trading post stockades, barriers of geography and culture created an unavoidable gap between the written record and any clear vision of the local landscape and native peoples. Two centuries later that gulf remains painfully apparent in many dealings between local tribes and Canadian or American authorities.

The collective Coast Salish tribes of the lower Fraser River—the Sto:lo people—have made an ambitious attempt to fill in some of this empty space. Drawing on the intimacy that grows from a common landscape and their closely held Halq’emeylem language, they have made the decision to reveal a part of themselves to the written culture in order that understanding might grow. The result is A Sto:lo Coast Salish Historical Atlas, a benchmark of real history that is both beautiful and provocative.

The atlas takes the form of 46 large-format plates, every one of them suffused with new perspectives and probing questions. A series called “The Numbers Game” uses oral histories, extrapolation from fur trade censuses, and modern statistics to present a surprising range of precontact native population estimates. A 16-page chart bursting with several hundred Coast Salish place names and stories recreates the landmarks of the lower Fraser drainage. A pair of remarkable “topologic” maps drawn by a Coast Salish man called Thuisoloc and his father for the British-American Boundary Commission of 1859 demonstrates one family’s intimate knowledge of the Chilliwak, Skagit, Nooksack, and upper Fraser river systems.

Whether dealing with archival photographs, statistical spreadsheets, or delicate watercolors, the design and production values of the atlas are impeccable. The range of contributors, led by editor Keith Thor Carlson and cultural advisor Sonny McHaslie, confront contentious issues such as salmon, forest practices, mining, and land preservation with clear and concise prose that compliments the visual impact of each double spread. One appendix surveys the long timeline of regional history from the people’s perspective; a second unscrolls 150 years worth of Sto:lo legal petitions that maintain a consistent, respectful awareness of who they are and what is happening around them.

For all of its merits, this atlas does not pretend to present the authoritative story of a region. As Carlson writes in his introduction, “There has never been a single definitive voice in either Aboriginal or non-Native historical discourse... we echo and endorse the sentiments of the Sto:lo Nation managers, elders, and political leaders in encouraging others to publish new information and interpretations to challenge or build upon the material presented here.” The Sto:lo Historical Atlas represents a starting point that can and should be added to by every tribe, scholar, student, and storyteller in the greater Northwest.


Westward Expansion
A History of the American Frontier
Reviewed by Michael Allen.

Looking for a Western history textbook for your university, community college, or high school advanced placement course? If so, for the first time in nearly two decades, you have some options. In the mid 1980s, after nearly 40 years in publication, Ray Allen Billington and Martin Ridge’s classic text Westward Expansion: A History of the American Frontier went out of print. The “new western historians,” criticizing Westward Expansion’s “triumphalist” narrative, replaced it with Richard White’s text, “It’s Your Misfortune and None of My Own”: A New History of the American West (1990). Yet many teachers soon found White’s dark, neo-Marxist polemic unsuitable and turned to a (relatively) more moderate text, Robert Hine and John Mack Faragher’s The American West: A New Interpretive History (1999).

Now the Turnerians are back. The University of New Mexico Press has just published a revised and abridged sixth edition of Billington and Ridge’s Westward Expansion. Teachers of American frontier history can now choose from these three widely diverse textbooks. Ridge’s revision (Billington is deceased) retains the narrative power and optimistic tone of the old text while wisely incorporating moderate doses of newer scholarship. The original introductory chapter on Frederick Jackson Turner's
“Frontier Hypothesis” still stands, as does the conclusion, “America’s Frontier Heritage.” But the old chapters on the colonial and trans-Appalachian frontiers have been combined into one long introductory chapter, making this abridgment a focused, trans-Mississippi West textbook. Ridge’s narrative expands on the race, class, gender, and environmental issues Billington introduced in the fourth edition. The old chapter organization that concentrated on extractive industries—fur, mining, cattle, and agriculture—remains, as does Billington’s vivid prose and Turnerian analysis. Westward Expansion thus tells the story of authentic Western Americans, a people flawed yet simultaneously courageous, adaptive, and democratic. “The heroes and heroines of this book, whites and non-whites alike, are plain people,” Ridge notes. “It is too often forgotten that western history was the first social history written by American scholars....”

Pacific Northwest historians will find ample coverage of our own region: Indian culture, Lewis and Clark, the Oregon question, territorial government, Indian wars, and Populism. The reappearance of Westward Expansion, less than two decades after it was pronounced irrelevant by the “new western historians” is a very important historiographic event. In scholarship, as in physics, “for every action there is an equal but opposite reaction.” Once again, teachers have a solidly researched and powerfully written textbook to use in their frontier history courses.

Michael Allen is professor of history at University of Washington Tacoma and author of three books—Western Rivermen, 1763-1861 (1990), Rodeo Cowboys in the North American Imagination (1998), and Frontiers of Western History (1999).

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

Boston television station WGBH is the leading producer of programming for PBS-TV. Their Nova series has been on the air for a quarter century and is only slightly better known than another of their popular series, The American Experience. On February 15, 2000, Nova aired “Mystery of the First Americans,” documenting the 1996 discovery and current controversy surrounding Kennewick Man. Now the video of that program is available (WGBH Boston Video, 2000, 60 minutes, $19.95), and it should be of interest to every educator in Washington. The video is balanced, accurate, and incisive, and will be more than enough to inspire classroom interaction at any junior high or high school grade level. Teachers, however, will wish to also review the myriad materials present on the Nova web site (http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/nova/first/) to learn more about the man that forensic investigators have identified as a 9,300-year-old Caucasoid. Several Indian tribes on the Columbia Plateau, led by the Umatilla, have sued to rebury the skeleton, which they consider an ancestor, by invoking the Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act. This discovery could rewrite the prehistory of not only the Pacific Northwest but of all America. Currently the courts have Kennewick Man locked up under tight security in the Burke Museum at the University of Washington.

One section of the Nova web site features a debate between two anthropologists about whether race exists at all in mankind. Another section explains the science of carbon-14 dating that is used to determine the age of organic remains. Eight scientists then explain why they have filed suit in federal court for the right to study the well-preserved remains. Tri-Cities forensic anthropologist James C. Chatters also has space on the WGBH Nova web site. He is the first scientist allowed access to the bones and, working with sculptor Thomas McClelland, he has created a model of Kennewick Man’s facial approximation.

Chatter’s appraisal of the whole business is the subject of his recent book, Ancient Encounters: Kennewick Man and the First Americans (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2001; 303 pp., $26). How could it be, he wonders, that a skull bearing European characteristics could have, lodged in its pelvis, a deadly spear point that was common to Native Americans? The book is his explanation; read it to learn the grisly details.

But do not wait long to digest Chatter’s arguments. Almost daily, it seems, there is a new development in the case. To keep current, log on to the web site for the Tri-City Herald where they have archived all their stories since 1996 in the Kennewick Man Virtual Interpretive Center. The site includes a timeline, recent stories, photographs, the text of pertinent legal documents, even biographies of the major personalities. Some of the developments in the case that have taken place since the “Mystery of the First Americans” first aired on public television are: DNA samples have been taken, a set of leg bones—once thought lost—has now been found, and a Polynesian tribe has made the latest claim that Kennewick Man is their ancestor. Oh yes, did I mention that there are also three novels currently on the market featuring Kennewick Man?

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