Indian Trade Blankets in the Pacific Northwest: A Unique American Tradition

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Driven Wild
How the Fight against Automobiles Launched the Modern Wilderness Movement
Paul S. Sutter
Foreword by William Cronon
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Ann M. Tweedie
Foreword by Janine Bowechop
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Lawney L. Reyes
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COVER CAPTION: Watercolor portrait of Kiasux (Hear on the Left), a Pigeon Blackfeet, painted by Swiss artist Karl Bodmer in 1833 near Fort Clark in present-day North Dakota. Kiasux is wearing a southwestern blanket, proof of a far-reaching blanket trade that extended between St. Joseph, Missouri, Santa Fe, New Mexico, and Chilacahua, Mexico. See related article beginning on page 24. Courtesy Joslyn Art Museum, Omaha, Nebraska; gift of Enron Art Foundation.
One of the articles in this summer's issue of COLUMBIA got me to thinking about an admittedly elusive concept—something that might be termed "self-consciously historic episodes or eras." I am referring to the article by Ron Grim and Paul McDermott on an aspect of the career of soldier-artist-scientist Gustav Sohon. Sohon's series of Isaac Stevens treaty scenes and sketches of native leaders from that era is one of the most valued in the Society's collection, and the Grim-McDermott article brings to our pages the work of two eastern scholars who share an interest in this western artist.

Stevens first met Sohon during his westward exploration for a northern railroad route in 1853. When the governor turned to his next enterprise, creating a formal American title to the lands occupied by the tribes within his newly created Washington Territory, he knew that having someone illustrate his "treaty tour" would create an important documentary record. Stevens was, of course, correct in this, and his decision in this regard is representative of a "self-consciously historic episode."

Are there other notable instances of this foreshadowing process? Soldiers on both sides of the Civil War were quite conscious of the fact that they were involved in something of transcendent significance, which is why diaries from that great national contest came to exist in such profusion. Closer to the Northwest, a very significant percentage of the overlanders trekking the Oregon Trail and the adventurers to the Klondike had a sense that they were involved in something very much bigger than themselves. This is why those phenomena were so well recorded in letters and diaries.

Conversely, there are some eras that are obviously of great historical significance but whose "quotient of self-consciousness" (if there were such a things) is less than we might think. The Great Depression of the 1930s is one, and maybe the World War II experience as well. It is interesting to me that authors Stephen Ambrose and Tom Brokaw have had to go back and create an oral tradition through interviews, after the fact, to write these highly popular books.

Another productive contrast is the assassination of John F. Kennedy and the terrorist events of September 11, 2001. Both were shocking episodes in the extreme. What distinguishes them, preliminarily at least in my view, is the volume of contemporary personal reporting and reflections that are being created, relative to the latter, which has been abetted in considerable degree by the ubiquity of the Internet.

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Editor
Our State Capitol: Tales and Dreams

BY LEAVITT S. WHITE

Close to a century ago, on both coasts of America, the curtain of history was about to go up on a transcontinental drama still being played out today. In the West the setting could be found on a bluff above the muddy, tidal Deschutes River in Olympia. In the East the setting was the midtown-Manhattan office of two young architects with a dream and an ambition that propelled them to a historic achievement.

That dream and achievement involved the design and construction of Washington's classical and monumental state capitol, otherwise known as the Legislative Building. Today the dome of this great building is a unique landmark for traffic humming past Olympia on Interstate 5.

Of special interest in this Washington drama is the initial, exciting frame of mind of the New York architects, Walter Robb Wilder and Harry Keith White. They had started out together on big projects at the New York City firm known as McKim, Mead and White (no relation to Harry). Now in their mid thirties and entering a new partnership, Wilder and White were about to begin their stunning 18 years of service to Washington, one of the youngest states in the Union.

In the spring of 1911 these young partners entered a national competition for the selection of architects to develop a plan for Washington's proposed capitol. In May, Harry White's overnight note to his bride-to-be, Blossom Randolph in nearby Plainfield, New Jersey, confirmed the spark of this memorable moment:

Have just finished our entry.... We think it's good....very good....classic, eye-catching, a very sound plan. Worked two nights till 1:30, then 3 A.M. Wednesday to get things just right.... Had extra time today, before Western mails closed at six.... Got to the counter on time with our best effort yet.... Now, some rest!

By August the judges had selected Wilder and White's proposal as the winning concept for Washington's new state capitol in Olympia. The New York architects not only captured the crown with their group building plan but also the separate commission to design the first building in the set—the Temple of Justice.

A bevy of family stories in my boyhood years revealed the glory of this start-up planning period for the Temple of Justice and later for the Legislative Building. I learned how the architects' inspiration had evolved from prior competitions for other major public buildings. I realized how the creative juices of one partner played directly into the mind of the other, as they leaned over a drafting table together. I saw how Harry White used his pocket envelopes to sketch ideas about features of the Legislative Building.

Later on, through the family grapevine, I heard how the 1911 state competition decision had been followed by my parents' magical garden wedding the next spring, then by the significant ground-breaking in Olympia for the Temple of Justice. I was entranced by the tales of Walter Wilder taking astonishing five-day, cross-country rail trips to the partners' new, very special "Far Western Project."

In January 1913 Wilder touched on his own initial thoughts in a short article for Pacific Coast Architect. Said Wilder, in part:

In any state capitol, there is more at issue than is at once obvious. Far above excellence of detail, of plan and evaluation is the expression of the dignity of the state...it should be characteristic of that particular state.... Fortunately, Olympia is wonderfully expressive of the State of Washington. Its location at the head of Puget Sound, with water and mountains in every direction, make it distinctive beyond most capital cities. What is true of the city is particularly
LEFT: New York architect Walter Robb Wilder in an informal photo sitting at the base of a Temple of Justice sandstone column in 1918, as the Temple, begun in 1912, finally receives its exterior finish of sandstone.

BELOW: New York architect Harry Keith White in 1911, when he and Wilder won the Washington Capitol competition and began their 18-year association with the state, which climaxed with the design and construction of the Legislative Building in 1922-28.

true of the site elected for the capital buildings themselves.

The problem is to preserve (and enhance) this expression... Olympia being the state capitol, the people of the whole state are vitaly concerned... public opinion should be aroused to protect the new monumental structures.

The architects' dedication to their Washington project was certainly challenged in the next decade. The initial decision was to build the first unit—the Temple of Justice—"in brick," leaving its sandstone exterior facing till the end. World War I and economic problems intervened. Half a dozen years passed before the classical judicial building was finished. In this period, the source of quality sandstone was established at the Walker Cut Stone Company in nearby Tacoma. Walker's key quarry was in Wilkeson, a coal-mining town near Mount Rainier.

The enterprising proprietor of this sandstone firm, Robert Walker, had been a stonemason apprentice in England at age 14. Arriving in America in 1882, he had reached Tacoma in 1907. By 1914 Walker was in charge of the Wilkeson quarry. He brought in new machinery, including the largest derrick in any Washington quarry. He built a new processing and finishing plant in Tacoma. In his 50s in 1917, Walker now understood what his first $245,000 sandstone contract for the Temple of Justice would mean to his business and to the Wilkeson community. Added contracts followed for the Insurance Building and the Legislative Building.

Robert Walker had become one of the leading stone men in the United States, a pioneering 20th-century businessman dedicated to the creation of a very special state capitol. Meetings with architect Walter Wilder during Wilder's multiple trips to the West and architect Harry White on his single Washington visit in the late 1910s were the occasions when Walker hosted the New Yorkers at the Wilkeson quarry. These sessions established the routine for Walker's men to use the patterns, prints, and plaster models created by the architects' own consultant sculptor in New York City. The architects and stone men were "rubbing elbows on the same page," as the Walker craftsmen worked with the finest stone in the land. Industrialist Robert Walker had truly embraced the personal inspiration of the capitol's New York architects. If he were alive today he would be a champion to insist the state match the standards of the capitol's original construction when tackling any project on the building.

Like other vendors, Walker and his 125 to 140 employees were a proud, united group when filling orders for the new capitol. Somehow there was "magic in the air." A dozen quarry workers stood on temporary platforms on the sandstone face to drill holes for explosives. Then they set the charges that brought 30-ton blocks of sandstone to the quarry floor. After a blast, huge derricks lifted the blocks to quarry machines for initial cutting and then hoisted them to nearby rail cars. Everyone knew these massive blocks were headed straight from the 250-foot-high and 175-foot-long Wilkeson quarry face to the new Tacoma stonemasonry plant for dressing and finishing, and then on to the capitol site in Olympia. That's where most of the decorative cutting occurred.

For a full decade, daily trainloads of Wilkeson sandstone helped spur a boom for the coal and quarry town. Though 80 miles distant, Walker's quarrymen seemed joined in a figurative spirit of inspiration. They "had captured" the state capitol, and especially the Legislative Building, the great structure with the immense dome. It was their very own!

In the 1920s one of Walker's senior craftsmen was a stone carver named Alexander McKenzie Munro. He had been born in Scotland. At 13 he grabbed the chance to become an apprentice...
stonecutter on the Scottish Castle in Beauly. Then, as a new journeyman at 19, he bonded with a group of young Scots coming to America “to build a better life.” The Scots were recruited to work on the new Texas capitol, but they backed off when labor problems developed. So after stone jobs in Kansas and Denver, they headed for Seattle. Here in 1889 the catastrophic “Big Fire” spelled opportunity.

Alex Munro wrote back to Scotland for the girl he left behind. When she arrived they married and settled on Bainbridge Island. For the next quarter century Munro helped build and decorate the wondrous new stone buildings of the Northwest, including “Old Main” at Western Washington University, towering offices in Seattle, the huge Parliament Building and Empress Hotel in Victoria, British Columbia, plus the “old” Seattle post office.

When in his 50s Alex Munro joined the Walker Cut Stone Company to work on the capitol project, his stone carving kits included a remarkable 600 chisels, mallets, and various specialty tools. His most important assets, however, were his know-how and his leadership—gathered from long years in the trade. Alex was at the apex of his career as a stone carver, superbly ready for the grandest, most honorable and most distinctive project he had ever seen. He would be capping his active years by working on the Washington state capitol.

In the 1920s a dramatic variety of carvings was specified for the structure. Every day, as Munro worked on the ornate stone petals and figures—90 feet or more above ground—he knew what a unique “margin of excellence” was going into this classical structure. So it was this craftsman and his colleagues who produced the fine decorative carvings and helped stamp the Legislative Building with a unique mark. For generations of Washingtonians that mark—that “margin of excellence”—has reinforced the capitol’s character and quality while also helping to define the state’s ever-evolving democracy.

There’s more to the Alexander McKenzie Munro story. On Bainbridge Island he and his Scottish wife raised ten children. In due course came grandchildren, including a grandson named Ralph. He had arrived in 1943, seven years after Alexander Munro died; but Ralph grew up hearing a good deal about his special grandfather. The stories came from Grandma Munro, who was family matriarch until Ralph was 15.

That’s how the fire and inspiration in the stone carver’s heart was transferred to his own grandson, without direct contact! Intrigued by his grandfather’s achievements and inspired especially by how his grandfather contributed the finishing touches in stone to the state’s capitol, Ralph Munro grew to focus his own career on government service. He, too, added luster to the Munro name.

After his college years, Ralph Munro reached out to serve first in local Republican Party and county government posts. By 1980 he was soundly established with extended experience in government. In that year, at age 37, he filed for his first statewide position—secretary of state—and won that election. He held the office for the next 20 years. For two full decades Secretary Munro wore many hats, serving on key state committees and numerous commissions. In 1999, for example, he was one of 21 commissioners who affirmed an initial plan for the renovation of the historic state capitol.

Ralph Munro knew all about this classical structure. At close range he measured the unfortunate impact of postponed routine maintenance during periods of tight budgets. Through the years his working hours were centered on the second floor of the capitol in stately quarters adjacent to the governor’s own offices. Near his desk was a keepsake family display. It featured several of his grandfather’s stone chisels, his father’s early Kodak camera, and 1926 snapshots of stone carver Alexander McKenzie Munro working on the decorative stone atop a capitol column. There it was, for the world to see—how one Scottish immigrant had helped build the monumental
capitol and influenced a succeeding family member to build a career in government service with 20 years of leadership in that same capitol.

Ralph Munro retired from government service in January 2001. But he's as dedicated as ever to the capitol building. Consider his recent thoughts:

Grandpa's experience always inspired me. Now looking back, we see how the private sector has sparked vital state development. With the quake hitting the capitol and a rehabilitation finally getting an okay from the legislature, it's also clear how the private sector can make a big difference in getting this capitol renovated. The "margin of excellence" that Grandpa Munro worked on as a stone carver is challenging us again. Surely there's room for a public/private partnership to help preserve our great capitol buildings. It seems like leadership support of the renovation by the private sector can be a real key to the capitol's future.

Through the years, the state capitol has built its own constituency. Countless generations of legislators, their staffs, plus a flood of temporary student pages have been gripped by the thrill of working in this classical structure. "This is one cool building!" exclaims almost every new young page walking the corridors. Statewide officials and their staffs have come under the same spell. They revere the marble halls, the towering dome, the feeling of grandeur. It's a feeling shared by the Olympia community, even the news media, and certainly by the guides who host tourists.

Also in the limelight in recent decades: the dramatic increase in student visitors who have found new opportunities to learn about government from hometown legislators, often with an informal bag lunch on the indoor capitol steps. It's an educational experience etched in the minds of young people all across Washington.

In the 1950s, 30 years after Wilder and White finished their project, architect Harry White took up his own vacation tours of the capitol. He joined his close friend and former associate, Jay Johnston, who had represented the New York architects in Olympia during construction days. Revisiting the legislative chambers and chatting with current government leaders, they saw the fulfillment of the early State Capitol Commission's dreams. In the 1920s these leaders had reached with hope, daring to build a dynamic monument to state democracy. Now Harry White and Jay Johnston delighted in the pride they observed everywhere. The "magic" was still in the air!

Another 30 years later Jay Johnston's son, Professor Norman J. Johnston, was a leading educator in architecture at the University of Washington when he decided to research and tell the capitol's story. It was in his 1988 authoritative history, Washington's Audacious State Capitol and Its Builders, that Professor Johnston captured the flavor and reality of how the state came to build its remarkable capitol.

Johnston's penetrating study developed fascinating facts. On one point he was very direct: "In contrast to similar efforts in other states, the history of the Legislative Building project was free of scandal...." In prior years, as Johnston knew, this taint of corruption had been part and parcel of state capitol construction in Pennsylvania. In the 1930s, it was rampant also in state road projects such as those in Massachusetts.

Construction of the Legislative Building progressed remarkably smoothly... from phase to phase... on schedule and within budgets... at a total cost of $7,385,768.21. The 1980s equivalent of that sum would be $55 million—for less than such a project would cost today, even if technically possible.

In 1911, when the bold project had first been approved, the population of the entire state barely exceeded 800,000. The Legislative Building and other core campus structures in Olympia were funded by timber revenues from the original 1889 federal land grants to the state. No state taxpayer dollars!

Today, there's a new act opening in Olympia. The 75-year-old capitol took more than a cosmetic hit during the 6.2-magnitude Nisqually Earthquake of February 2001. Substantial exterior and interior repairs have been essential. Emergency crews have been
patching and planning. Repairs have stretched to renovation.

Originally, this building was designed for 155 people. Recently it has housed as many as 450 state employees in overcrowded spaces, some never intended for human occupancy. This flood of occupants, related to the state’s population growth to over 8 million residents, has helped trigger overloads and breakdowns on the capitol infrastructure.

Scientific studies of the exterior architecture have focused on the fragility of the decorative sandstone, prompting worries about falling pieces, denuded carving, and the availability of replacement material. In 1999 one Boston consultant urged the state to seek a private endowment to protect the source of this stone.

With approval of the 2001 capital budget, the state legislature finally authorized $90 million for a revised plan to rehabilitate the capitol. Again, no direct taxpayer funding! The bulk of the cost would be handled by the sale of bonds to be repaid by land grant timber revenues.

There’s both joy and uncertainty surrounding this critical project. First, the joy: Washington’s state leaders have made the crucial decision to preserve and protect their capitol. Next, the uncertainty: Are the plans big enough, bold enough? Will this rehabilitation restore yesterday’s glory? What about the “margin of excellence” so carefully nurtured for so long? What’s being done to confirm the feeling that within the state capitol is the fountainhead of excellence for our democratic system of government?

Dan Evans, former governor of Washington, has remarked: “I always felt the grand look of the legislative chambers encouraged an important attitude, a sense of honor and achievement among the legislators. It raised everyone’s sights! A great situation when you’re concerned with the people’s business!”

In 1999-2000 the idea of a public/private partnership to help preserve the capitol first appeared during deliberations of a 21-member commission on the renovation of the Legislative Building. The conclusion: private sector leadership and private funds would be very useful, especially in dealing with a “margin of excellence” in the renovation and in supplementing normal action by the legislature to rehabilitate this special building.

The legislature has spurred continuing study of private funding. That leads to a full partnership with the private sector to raise the level of care on the capitol to a needed new plateau. Just recently an added dynamic has emerged: the engagement of the history community as a primary educational partner in the capitol renovation. It’s the practical educational experience at the Washington State History Museum in Tacoma that promises to be so relevant in Olympia.

No one wants or plans to disturb the basic charter to retain our capitol as the seat of our working government. There’s excitement, however, in what can be done to build on that circumstance for the benefit of the entire state. Education of young people is like a magnet, attracting special consideration. The capitol stands as an unmatched teaching resource, as proved by the popularity of student tours. Hence, the unfolding promise of new partners—the Washington State Historical Society and a dedicated private foundation—joining the public sector in the long-term care and preservation of the state capitol. Seeds for the supporting private foundation are in the air. What’s very desirable is a clear decision and legislative statement to unite the State Capitol Committee and Department of General Administration, the Washington State Historical Society, and the private foundation as partners in this endeavor.

The torch for tomorrow at the capitol is now passing to the hands of engineering and construction crews who were called to deal with the 2001 quake. One of the leaders is Marvin Doster, senior project manager for the M. A. Mortenson Company of Seattle, who will oversee the capitol rehabilitation that’s getting started this spring.

Doster happens to have the capitol “already in the family.” Back in the 1920s his wife’s great-grandfather, Archibald Damitio, owned a sawmill in Elma. The family rumor is that lumberman Damitio had a subcontract on the capitol to furnish the “false-work”—the platforms, scaffolding, and shoring needed by masons, carpenters, and other workers, including stonemasons.

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Now Marvin Doster has a very large responsibility on this same building. He talks with enthusiasm about the spirit surrounding last year’s emergency quake repairs:

There was a common feeling everywhere—a determination “to do this job right!” The craft people—those repairing stone, those putting in support steel—just everyone shared in the inspiration coming from the building itself! All about, our crews were picking up the quality in the building—the quality of its basic construction.

Right now on the capitol we have a rehabilitation task—not a restoration. But we could be looking at the nation’s crown jewel in state capitols in Olympia if we had the resources—the dollars—to put this building into the shape it was in during the early years.

That’s an exciting concept, and this is a golden moment, historically. The Washington State Capitol has been in ailing health. What’s needed is dramatic leadership, a dramatic new partnership of the public and the private sector with appropriate new resources tied in with vision and dedication. The state’s commitment of $90 million is a worthy beginning. It will rehabilitate a tired capitol. But to provide the desired “margin of excellence,” this capitol needs special added support now. It’s my conviction that this support can and must be generated within the private sector via a private foundation that’s dedicated to the stewardship of our statewide democratic symbol—the Washington State Capitol!

Leavitt White, son of Harry White, one of the two architectural partners who designed the Washington State Capitol, has been involved in efforts to secure funding for the preservation and renovation of the Legislative Building since his move to Olympia in 1998.
The **King County Poor Farm**

**Origin of Providence and Harborview Medical Centers**

By **Terri Mitchell**

As King County grew and the pioneer economy moved through dramatic cycles of boom and bust, the commissioners were faced with an increasing number of paupers: immigrant families, injured loggers, stranded sailors, orphans, the chronically ill, and the elderly. The county appears to have accepted its responsibility for those who were impoverished through no fault of their own. The question was always what to do with the able-bodied men who could not find work to support their families and those who chose not to work even when jobs were available.

King County Poor Farm, 1909. Expanded and improved over the years, the main house on the King County Poor Farm was surrounded by gardens and fruit trees.

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One of the earliest entries in the proceedings of the board of commissioners of King County, Washington Territory, dated March 5, 1855, reads: "Dr. J. Williams paid for services to Mr. Nurve, a pauper." So began the county's long struggle to find an effective and cost-efficient way of caring for its poor and sick citizens. A year later, the minutes show one method that was popular with local taxpayers: "June 3, 1856: Pauper Edward Moore ordered sold at auction." King County, like many local governments across the country, engaged in the practice for a time. The lowest bidder agreed to provide shelter and food for the person in need, in exchange for payment from the county and use of the person's labor if he or she was able to work.

Each pauper brought to the attention of the commissioners required action at a formal meeting. The commissioners "farmed out" the maintenance of the able-bodied to local families and assigned reimbursement to doctors who had cared for the sick. The August 5, 1872, minutes record another case: "Ordered that the bill of Joseph Tabeau for the care of John Small, county pauper, be paid, $39.00 ...and ordered that the bill of [Doctor] G. A. Weed for attendance on John Small, county pauper, be paid, $78.25." In these early years, the county also paid for the transportation of paupers to other parts of the country, including San Francisco and even the Hawaiian Islands.

In 1873 the commissioners appointed one of their own members, M. R. Maddocks, as King County's first official overseer of the poor. Maddocks was given the authority to make limited contracts with physicians for medical care. Dr. T. T. Minor, one of Seattle's first physicians, agreed to provide care for the indigent sick for the sum of one dollar per day. Later, a contract was made with Dr. Weed, whose small, private hospital was the only medical facility in Seattle at the time.

Columbia 8 Summer 2002
Many in the community felt they had found the answer in 1877 when the decision was made to open a county poor farm.

A few years earlier King County had come into ownership of 160 acres of land in a bend of the Duwamish River about five miles south of Seattle. This property was part of the Luther M. Collins donation land claim, first staked in 1851, a few months before the Denny party arrived at Alki. Collins had settled his family on the farm and planted a large orchard of apple, peach, and cherry trees. The land was fertile, and his farm produced successful crops of turnips, potatoes, and onions.

On February 9, 1877, the commissioners visited the property on the Duwamish to assess its suitability for a poor farm. The *Daily Intelligencer* newspaper reported:

[The farm] contains over one hundred and sixty acres of land of a black alluvial character, twenty acres of which are in a fine state of cultivation.... The portion under cultivation was formerly the site of an extensive old Indian lodge, and the soil is covered with decomposed clam and oyster shells, which were deposited there in great amount years ago by the Indians and which now render the land exceedingly fertile.

The newspaper voiced support for the commissioners’ plan:

The county needs a poor-farm, and this should be converted into one. There are indigent persons dependent upon the county for support who, if put upon a farm, under proper management, could earn their own living....

However, the editors cautioned:

As a home for the indigent sick... we do not consider the county farm a proper place for the reason that patients there could not receive proper medical treatment from the fact that it would be a difficult and an expensive matter to procure for them the necessary medical attendance.

Rather, the newspaper argued, the sick should continue to be treated at Dr. Weed’s hospital in town.

Poor farms were not a new development. They were common throughout Colonial America but by the mid 19th century had been fairly well discredited as a social welfare tool on the East Coast. In theory, poor farms not only reduced the cost of caring for county charges but also provided a positive atmosphere for able-bodied men where they might learn new skills or at least have the moral benefit of working for their keep. A compulsory system also relieved officials of the responsibility of making case-by-case decisions relating to support of the poor.

In reality, the difficulty of assuring a stable labor force through all seasons and in all economic conditions made it almost impossible for a poor farm to operate successfully, especially without professional management. During the growing season able-bodied men who were inclined to work could easily find employment on local farms. During the winter there was little for them to do. Most people desperate enough to endure the
restrictive conditions of the typical poor farm were elderly, chronically ill, or physically unable to work.

Despite these inherent problems, three factors converged to make the poor farm an attractive proposition to the King County Commissioners in 1877: the number of poor people was increasing, taxpayers were becoming more concerned about expense, and the county found itself owner of a fertile farm that, because of problems related to the land title, it could not sell.

At the request of the commissioners, the county auditor immediately advertised for bids for lease of the farm and for board, nursing, and care of the county poor, with the bidder to have the benefit of the residents' labor when, in the opinion of the attending physician, they were able to work. Separate bids were requested for medical and surgical attendance and for construction of a suitable dwelling for the poor.

At their March 1877 meeting the commissioners reviewed the submitted bids: from Thomas Shafer, lease of the farm at $300 a year and care of the poor for 50 cents per person per day; from George Edwards, a bid of $200 a year and 50 cents per person per day; and from the Reverend Emil Kauten, $300 a year and 75 cents per person per day. The latter bid had been personally solicited by several members of the Board of Commissioners. Perhaps out of humanitarian concern, the commissioners rejected the lower bids in favor of the one submitted by Father Kauten, assistant pastor of Seattle's Our Lady of Good Help Catholic Church.

Prior to signing the contract, Father Kauten arranged for the Sisters of Providence in Vancouver, Washington, to operate the farm. In 1856 five Sisters of Providence from Montreal, Quebec, had arrived at Fort Vancouver to serve the orphans, sick, and elderly of Washington Territory. Led by Mother Joseph of the Sacred Heart, the sisters had already established hospitals in Vancouver and Portland as well as schools in Steilacoom and Tulalip. They felt that a presence in Seattle would considerably extend their ability to serve the people of the growing Puget Sound region.

Although the sisters were used to manual labor and had operated farms in conjunction with their other establishments, their expertise was nursing and spiritual care of the poor. Despite concerns about the county's terms and the suitability of the farm as a setting for a hospital, the superior in Vancouver accepted Father Kauten's invitation to operate the poor farm.

Announcing acceptance of the bids, the Daily Intelligencer again expressed qualified support for the project. Now, however, the editors questioned whether able-bodied workers would agree to live on the farm:

With but very few exceptions, those who ask for help from the county belong to that dissolute and degraded class of men who never work when they can help it, and who spend all their earnings when they do work about the brothels and grog-shops that have for years been a reproach to our country. These are the men who, when they begin to reap the fruits of their iniquity in the diseases consequent upon dissipation, or when there is a slack time in the labor market, call upon the county for support.

On May 8 the commissioners again visited the farm and found everything in satisfactory order and the new poor house ready for occupancy. On May 11 three Sisters of Providence—Sisters Peter Claver, Blandine of the Holy Angels, and Mary Aegidius—took possession of the farm. They, too, were satisfied with the small but clean wood structure, comprised of a parlor, dining room, kitchen, and a large ward for patients. In order to make room for a chapel and to accommodate visits from the priest, the sisters slept in an adjacent outbuilding.

Father Kauten recorded the equipment he purchased for the farm:

**Horses** $175; harness $72.25; wagon (buggy) $250; wagon cushions $9; lumber wagon $125; plow $11.50; potatoes and seeds $49.60; clock $5.50; two tables $10.50; chairs for sisters $9. The rest of the furniture,
beds and bedding, cooking utensils, and
dining room furnished by King Co.

In their 14-month tenure on the
farm, the Sisters of Providence cared
for 31 people, mostly county charges
but also six private patients. Their led­
gers record residents ranging in age
from 2 months to 71 years; most were
immigrants, with a few African Ameri­
cans and Native Americans. All but
two were men: a laborer, gas worker,
farmer, cook, student, mechanic, engi­
neer, miner, fireman, and fisherman.
They suffered from various chronic or
acute illnesses or injuries and were at­
tended by two physicians who had won
the county’s medical contract. The sis­
ters were naturally concerned about the
spiritual and moral state of their
charges as well as their physical health,
and recorded with satisfaction several
baptisms and the marriage of one
couple who had been living together.

Life was not easy at the farm, and in
their chronicles the sisters admit to
feeling great isolation and loneliness.
There were other problems as well:

At our arrival the people were so preju­
diced that they prevented the sick from
coming to us. Three whom we had
promised to admit preferred to leave for
California. The name “Poor House”
prevented some from coming, as they
regarded poverty a disgrace. In spite of
these difficulties we always had from
five to eight, or even ten patients at a
time. Several remained from five to
eleven months. The officials and the
doctors have given us all praise; but
there are those who, under the pretext
of saving the county money, or to make
a name for themselves and be elected to
an office, have no use for us. So we
must trust in Providence.

It is not clear how actively the
farm was worked during this first
year, but the sisters almost cer­
tainly grew a garden to supple­
ment groceries purchased in town and
enjoyed the fruits of the original
Collins orchard. In addition to the pa­
tients listed in the ledgers, the sisters
mention having three or four borders
who were, perhaps, able to help with
the work. They also relied on their few
neighbors for support, including Julius
Horton, who had settled the other half
of the Collins land claim and later plat­
ted the community of Georgetown.

In November 1877 Father Kauten
convinced the commissioners to ex­
tend the contract through 1883, with
an additional clause giving the sisters
freedom to care for the county charges
at a location other than the poor farm.
The commissioners cautioned Kauten
they would pay only for those patients
who had written authorization from
the overseer of the poor, and asked that
the county be notified of the death or
discharge of any county patient.

The original one-story Poor House
included a parlor, ten-bed dormitory,
chapel, kitchen, and sleeping annex
for the sisters. A barn and stable
completed the small complex on the
Duwamish. Watercolor drawing by
Sister Anatolie, 1919.
considerable political capital to achieve the new contract. He wrote to the sisters' superior in Vancouver: "My action by which I signed this contract must be the last I will make publicly for your community in Seattle. Prudence dictates it, as I expect only great difficulties by my deed."

In July 1878, with the approval of the county, the sisters moved their patients from the poor farm to a house they had purchased and renovated at Fifth Avenue and Madison Street in Seattle. The larger facility allowed them to serve not only the county poor but also to accept private patients and to establish Seattle's first permanent hospital. For a while the institution continued to be called the poor house, until the sisters settled on the name Providence Hospital. The farm was subleased to John Siegel for the four years remaining on the sisters' contract with the county. He also bought the horses and implements with which Father Kauten had outfitted the farm. The sisters' financial ledgers indicate periodic expenses for cattle, feed, repairs to the barn, and a new stable, as well as occasional income from the sale of farm goods, but there is no evidence that they ever again used the farm to house or care for the poor.

When the sisters' contract expired in February 1883, the board of commissioners once again called for bids for the keeping of the county poor, either on the county farm or in Seattle for the term of two years. Bids to be for proper support, nursing, beds and bedding for said poor. The board agreeing to allow the use of the county farm and buildings and any bedding belonging to the county to the party receiving the contract, providing said party agrees to keep the poor on said farm.

Although the commissioners wished to encourage use of the farm and received at least one bid from a doctor willing to take it over, the contract was once again awarded to the sisters at Providence Hospital. This same year, the sisters moved their patients into a large, well-equipped hospital designed by Mother Joseph.

For the next nine years, each time the sisters' contract expired, the commissioners entertained competitive bids and debated how and where care of the poor should be provided. Some argued for a return to the farm; others noted that the sisters were providing excellent care and that since the majority of the poor were in need of medical attention they were best served at the hospital in town. In 1884 the poor house on the farm was enlarged and the land improved by dikes, fencing, and additional clearing.

In November 1886 the commissioners finally decided to transfer the care of the county poor from Providence Hospital back to the farm. The Post-Intelligencer noted:

For many years, the sisters have been awarded the contract of caring for the poor, and there is no fault found with the manner in which they have been looked after, but the number of county charges is constantly increasing and the burden of the taxpayers becoming heavier and heavier.
In their chronicles, the sisters refer to anti-Catholic prejudice as an additional force behind the county's decision:

For quite some time, a thundercloud soared over our heads; we could hear its rumbling, when all of a sudden, it hit as a thunderbolt. People hostile to our Catholic faith and envious of our progress used all sorts of schemes to take over our County patients away from us and jeopardize our work. A fairly large building on the County farm was made ready for the County patients and they decided that as of February 1, all County patients would be moved to the new establishment in units especially prepared for them. We deplored this decision because our poor and elderly patients would have to leave us and once more be taken care of by Protestants.

The timing was especially difficult as the sisters faced competition from the new Grace Hospital, which was being built almost directly across the street from Providence. On February 1, the 28 county patients were transported from the hospital to the farm. According to the sisters' notes, one elderly resident, James Berry, much disturbed at having to leave, suffered a stroke and died within a few minutes:

James knew it was now time for him to go [to the farm]. After looking at the car for a while, he rushed to his room to pick up his belongings. As he was bending over his bed he suffered a severe cerebral hemorrhage. He lived long enough to receive the Sacrament of the Sick but never recovered consciousness. How sad for all our house! His funeral was held in the little chapel he loved so much.

Dr. Charles H. Merrick, a former Union Army doctor and past president of the Oregon State Medical Society, was chosen from among 25 bidders to manage the poor farm and provide medical care for $900 per year. His contract included a clause requiring him to cultivate and improve the farm to make it profitable, or "as nearly self-supporting as may be."

At the same time, the commissioners recognized that the poor residents would not be a sufficient work force, for they authorized Merrick to hire whatever assistance he would need to work the farm. In selecting a physician to operate the farm, the commissioners also acknowledged that the farm would have to provide medical care as well as a home for the indigent residents.

Like the sisters before him, Dr. Merrick faced a difficult challenge in making the farm into a paying operation while at the same time caring for the poor and the sick. The county funded many improvements, hired six employees, and authorized purchase of a horse, oats, a cow with calf, sheep, and fruit jars for canning produce. But at the end of the first year the auditor reported the cost of maintaining the poor on the farm was 77 cents per resident per day, or about the same as the county had paid for their care at Providence Hospital.

Over the next several years the mission of the poor farm continued to evolve. The county built a house to quarantine patients with communicable diseases, and Dr. Merrick hired trained nurses to assist him in the development of modern medical services. In 1890 Merrick's contract was renewed, but the commissioners assumed direct responsibility for contracting for supplies, labor, and assistance for the farm. When Merrick died later that year his responsibilities were divided between a new managing physician, Dr. F. Coe, and a farm overseer, George Ross. For the first time, the management of the farm was separated from the medical operation.

In 1894, at the request of the farm's third managing physician, Dr. Fenton B. Whiting, a large, modern King County Hospital was built a few blocks northeast of the original poor house. The staff and residents of the farm—both well and sick—moved to the new brick building on Corson Avenue. The farm became a professionally operated adjunct to the county hospital, with the goal of providing food for the patients and, if possible, turning a profit for the county. Within a year it was providing as much as half of the required food for the hospital, at least during harvest months. On March 4, 1895, Dr. Whiting reported that the "farm very materially lessens the expense of maintaining the institution."

In June 1895, the Post-Intelligencer reported: "The county farm now almost supports itself: a wild waste made fertile—abundant crops and increasing herds furnish food to the county's wards...." Under the direction of Arthur Parkhurst, the land within the Duwamish River flood plain was diked and cleared and planted in oats and pasture for the cattle. Mrs. Parkhurst, an assistant farmer, a milkman, and two unpaid boarders provided the bulk of the labor. They received sporadic assistance from the ambulatory patients at the hospital, who were required to contribute their labor when able.

Sixteen acres of potatoes provided enough for the hospital plus some to sell for seed. Other crops included berries, the old orchard of apples, pears, plums, and peaches, plus peas, beans, potatoes,
Designed by architect Willis Ritchie, the first King County Hospital was built in 1894 a few blocks north of the poor farm. corn, lettuce, radishes, spinach, beets, and onions. Dairy cows provided butter and milk for the institution as well as to sell on the market, and hogs were raised, dressed, and cured on the premises. Chickens furnished eggs and additional meat. A stand of timber at the north end of the property not only furnished fuel for the buildings but provided work for unemployed men. The Post-Intelligencer boasted: "The King County farm and hospital are the most complete and best equipped on the Pacific coast."

Some 25 years after its establishment, the county farm finally seemed to be fulfilling its potential—not the way it was originally envisioned, as a home and training ground for the poor, but certainly as a way of supporting other county institutions and thereby limiting costs to taxpayers. However, the success was to be short-lived. At the turn of the century it was already clear that the fertile farmlands of the Duwamish Valley were destined to be swallowed up by Seattle's development as a major port and industrial center.

By 1909 the old poor house had been reopened as a home for the impoverished elderly, but much of the farm was leased to dairymen, with only some produce and hogs raised for the home and hospital. A year later the area was annexed to the City of Seattle, and the demand for reasonably priced industrial sites outpaced supply. "Industry vs. Indigents" was the headline on the December 9, 1911, Town Crier article reporting the county's decision to cut up the farm into five-acre tracts. One commissioner told the Post-Intelligencer that it was "only a matter of time before we are obliged to move our institution for care for the aged poor to make room for growth of Seattle's manufacturing industry [but] we have other sites that will serve as well" for the poor.

Still, the county farm operated for at least another decade in a limited capacity. In 1913 a plan to dredge and straighten the Duwamish River further increased the land's industrial and port value. Damaged by fire in 1922, the old alms house was renovated and continued to operate under the jurisdiction of the King County Department of Public Welfare. In the winter of 1925 there were more than 200 residents at the home, but only 10 to 12 acres were being farmed to supplement food purchases.

In 1930 King County Hospital moved to its current site overlooking downtown Seattle and was renamed Harborview Hospital. The poor farm in Georgetown was abandoned and during World War II became the site of the temporary Duwamish Bend Housing Project for veterans and their families. The property is now occupied by the Washington State Department of Transportation, numerous small industries, the locally famous "Hat and Boots" gas station, and the Duwamish Industrial Training Center, a branch of South Seattle Community College.

The true legacies of the King County Poor Farm, however, stand several miles to the north, on First Hill above downtown Seattle. There, after more than 120 years, two regional medical centers, Providence (now owned and operated by Swedish Medical Center) and Harborview, continue to serve the residents of King County and, with the assistance of local, state, and federal taxpayers, provide millions of dollars in charity care to people in need.

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Eddie Hearne in No. 8, Earl Cooper in No. 5, and their mechanics get ready for the Liberty Sweepstakes race at Tacoma Speedway on July 4, 1918. It was wartime and the race was dedicated to the World War I Allies, with each driver in the race representing one of the nations in the Allied cause. Some 45,000 people from all over Puget Sound and Oregon cheered the drivers on. Speeds averaged well over 90 miles per hour for each of the three races of 25, 50, and 75 miles. Cliff Durant set the track record for one lap at 100 miles per hour, driving his blue and white Chevrolet in the 25-mile race. Hearne took the 75-mile race with an average of 92.3 mph.

The Tacoma Speedway opened in July 1912 with a rural five-mile dirt track south of the city where stray cows occasionally wandered onto the track. In 1914 a new two-mile board track was constructed of approximately 2 million feet of 2" x 4" fir timbers laid on edge running lengthwise. It was the first wooden track in the United States. Top drivers from across the nation, including Barney Oldfield, Eddie Rickenbacker, Dario Resta, Tommy Milton, Jimmy Murphy, Louis Chevrolet, Ralph DePalma, and Teddy Tetzlaff, raced the track in cars named Duesenberg, Stutz, Mercer, Frontenac, and Frantz during the Speedway's brief, glorious run. Public interest and support waned and the track closed in 1922.
Hostilities broke out in earnest between tribal groups on the Columbia Plateau and the United States Army in 1858. The primary contributing factor was the defeat of Colonel Edward Steptoe and his small force at a site that today lies on the outskirts of Rosalia, Washington. Most of the fighting took place on May 17th of that year. In that engagement nine soldiers were killed and 40 wounded when confronted by members of the Palouse, Walla Walla, Coeur d'Alene and Spokan tribes.

The United States government saw the engagement as a threat to American development of the region. In response, a force was created under the leadership of Colonel George Wright. Operations began in July and by mid August Wright was intent on reestablishing American hegemony in the region. Two key sites were the scene of confrontation between the army and the Indians—"Four Lakes" and, to the north, "Spokane Plain." Although competent narratives document the campaign in literature, only a few illustrations remain depicting events that occurred during Wright's offensive. These are in the collections of the Smithsonian Institution, the Washington State University Libraries, and the Library of Congress. Until recently, the latter collection, which is the most extensive, was still in private ownership.

These magnificent items show the campaign from a different perspective. All of these materials were drawn by Gustavus Sohon, whom Hazard Stevens referred to in the biography of his father Isaac Stevens as the "Clever Sketcher." Sohon created his images in three different formats. Some were watercolors, some were ink drawings, and the remainder were pencil sketches on either plain or tricolored paper. Together, these views show the landscapes through which the troops moved, the sites of several fights, a river crossing, and the sad location of "Horse Slaughter camp," near Liberty Lake, Washington.

Gustavus Sohon

The artist behind the scenes was a humble and talented man. Sohon was an immigrant from Tilsit, Germany who came to the United States in 1842. In the early 1850s he elected to join the army. Upon his enlistment he was ordered west and...
eventually was stationed at Fort Steilacoom. From 1853 on, Sohon witnessed and contributed to major events in the history of the region—especially in eastern Washington and the northern Rockies. Sometimes he worked as an explorer under the command of Isaac Stevens or John Mullan. On other occasions he worked as an interpreter or artist. His life in this role was enhanced by his association with Isaac Stevens during the famous treaty expedition of 1855. This service is well-documented by the 65 portraits he created, which are now among the Washington State Historical Society’s collections.

Sohon resumed his relationship with Lieutenant John Mullan in Colonel Wright’s campaign and later during construction of a military wagon road between Fort Walla Walla and Fort Benton, better known as the Mullan Road. In this latter instance, Sohon was a topographer. His map-making was complemented by assorted duties including reconnaissance and artwork. His Northwest tour of duty concluded in 1863, and the remaining portion of his life was, ironically, spent selling shoes. He died in Washington, D.C., in 1903 at age 78.

The Rosalia Engagement

On May 6, 1858, Steptoe began his expedition to investigate the killing of two men on their way to mining fields near Fort Colville. The expedition was poorly equipped. Compounding this problem was inadequate training either in equipment or military tactics. Little danger was anticipated. By May 16 Steptoe’s small force had reached a site just south-southeast of today’s Rosalia. Here he encountered 800 to 1,000 angry Native Americans who were better equipped and trained than Steptoe’s men. A brief conference was held between the chiefs and Steptoe in the evening hours. Steptoe advised the chiefs than his intent was to move to Fort Colville. By morning Steptoe had elected to retreat to Fort Walla Walla as it was obvious that tribal authorities
were unconvinced of his peaceful intent. Attacks began at eight o’clock in the morning. Several officers were killed in short order. By noon the engagement focused on a hill and its western slope, which descended to the bottom created by Ingossman Creek. Steptoe is generally criticized for not managing the engagement well. “He arranged his men in a circle around the supplies and remaining animals. His dragoons were not performing well as skirmishers, and the howitzers were ineffectively handled,” according to Wright’s biographer, Carl Schlicke. When night fell Steptoe’s position was very weak. Left to his own way of thinking, he probably would have elected to fight again the next morning. Instead, he was convinced by his officers to retreat under the cover of darkness toward safety at Fort Walla Walla. This was accomplished successfully.

From the standpoint of history, Sohon’s image, which shows the engagement from the Indian’s position, is the only known presentation of the battle. Overall, the artwork displays intimate and accurate details of the fight and the surrounding landscape. In the foreground one sees Nez Perce people quietly engaged at the campsite, smoking a pipe. In the background, Colonel Steptoe’s position is surrounded by attacking men. The Rosalia area landscape rendered in the watercolor closely resembles that of the present day.

Yet, the image presents a mystery. Was it created while the engagement was in progress or at a later date? Usually Sohon drew what he observed when he was at a location, frequently dating his works. In this case, the authors are inclined to argue that it was a reconstruction, based on two considerations. First, John Mullan and his men were asked to visit the battle site as they accompanied the Wright expedition the following September. The battlefield was mapped and the bodies of the officers exhumed. It is very likely that Sohon, Mullan’s friend and military subordinate, accompanied him in this solemn task. Since Sohon was a qualified topographer, his surveys certainly yielded the data required to create a realistic landscape. Second, some Nez Perce were actually at the battle, and several were killed. Sohon was a friend of the Nez Perce, who greatly admired his artistic skills and integrity. Consequently, they may have provided additional details not available in a topographic site survey four months after the event. It is possible though unlikely that this was made by Sohon at the time of engagement. He was no longer a member of the military at that time, having been discharged in 1857. Since he frequently visited the Nez Perce, they may have invited him to accompany their group on a visit to the hostiles. Compounding the problem is the acknowledgment that the Nez Perce persuaded their colleagues to let Steptoe escape. In any event, if Sohon was actually there, he placed himself in a very
awkward position—not to fight with the army was an act akin to betrayal or treason—which could have jeopardized his life. Since Sohon left no diary, and other documentary material has not verified this explanation, there is no way to satisfactorily answer the question of personal observation except to conclude that the image was a reconstruction.

Snake River Crossing

The threat posed by an uprising motivated the army to send 2,200 regulars to the Pacific Northwest. About 20 percent of these were ultimately placed under the immediate command of Colonel Wright at Fort Walla Walla. Typical of the Columbia Plateau in mid August, the weather was hot and dry. With about 670 men and 800 animals, Wright began his expedition on August 7. By August 18 the entire force had reached the south bank of the Snake River at the mouth of Tucannon Creek. Here, an earlier contingent under the command of Captain Keys had built a small, basalt rock fort. They named this complex Fort Taylor in honor of the officer killed on the Steptoe battlefield.

The purpose of the fort was to guard the Snake River crossing. The river at this location was about 275 yards wide and its waters were deep and cold. Subsequently, Wright's men were obliged to build boats to ferry men and equipment across its depths. Most of the animals were forced to swim. Plans were made to ferry the contingent across on August 23. A large storm traversing the plateau curtailed the crossing of the Snake until the 25th. By the 27th the crossing was completed and the expedition moved northward across "the Palouse."

Sohon created a page-size pencil drawing on plain paper to document this episode in Wright's campaign. Horses, men, and boats are shown crossing the river while the livestock are swimming. In the background the outline of Fort Taylor is etched. Surrounding the fort on the banks of Tucannon Creek are the stark, bleak cliffs created from lava flows on the plateau. The Library of Congress has in its collection simple map sketches showing in greater detail the course of Tucannon Creek. Today the site has been flooded as a consequence of a dam on the Snake River. Where yesterday a simple river existed with its gallery vegetation, today there is a high railroad trestle, the steel girders of a highway bridge, and a large waterfront marina bounded by the grass and state park buildings on the Snake's northern bank.

The Battle of Four Lakes

Access to drinking water and grass for feeding animals was critical to the success of a military expedition. Anticipating these needs, hostile Indians carried out a scorched-earth policy. They set fire to the surrounding grasslands—not an unreasonable maneuver, but it failed to deter Wright and his force. The company reached the edge of the Spokane Plain in late August. Wright was attacked late in the afternoon on August 31 as he and his men were camped on the margins of Medicine Lake. On the morning of September 1, seeing a large force collecting on the hillside east of his position, he elected to attack shortly after nine in the morning. Even though he
was outnumbered, his greater firepower and thoughtful attack were responsible for eventual victory which was attained by two in the afternoon. In the process, about 50 Native Americans were killed and a greater number wounded. None of Wright's men were killed.

The authors have recently discovered a map showing both the Four Lakes and Spokane Plain engagements. The map itself is a printed product created after Wright's expedition. Using colored inks, Mullan or one of his staff superimposed on the map the positions of the Native American and expedition forces. Now we have both a visual and a cartographic display to document verbal accounts of the engagement.

While recuperating from the September 1 engagement, Native American leaders took the opportunity to regroup their forces. By now they had become aware of the army's improved weaponry. If they approached any closer than 600 yards, they were in great danger of being killed or injured by Minie balls and improved rifles, carbines, and muskets.

The Spokane Plain

On September 5, 1858, Wright again elected to move his force northward across the Spokane Plain. To their right, over 500 Indians gathered to attack the column from its front and right flank. Wright countered the move by creating a mile-long defensive position manned by infantry. The Indians set fires in hope of nudging the soldiers from their positions. This tactic almost worked, but Wright elected to attack before being frightened away from his defensive line. Artillery was employed, which greatly outmatched the simple weaponry of the Native Americans. They gradually retreated into the pine forests that covered the edge of the plain and its rapid descent onto the Spokane River basin and Latah Creek.

Sohon made several portrayals of the fight. The first study was drawn in pencil on plain paper, which is now part of the collection at the Smithsonian, having been donated by Elizabeth Sohon, one of the artist's daughters. A more finished drawing on tricolored paper was created later. In this colorful rendition, the military position dominates while in its midst the smoke created by the grass fires wafts across their position. The fact that Wright ordered the infantry into a linear formation is seen in each of Sohon's drawings illustrating the battle, thus confirming the narrative and cartographic record of the engagement.

After the battle on the Spokane Plain, no further combat took place during Wright's expedition. He and his men camped on a small plateau overlooking the western bank of the Spokane River, then headed along the southern shore of the river as they moved inland. Along the way they captured goods and livestock either poorly protected or abandoned by a people in flight. Near the place known today as Liberty Lake, Wright confiscated over 800 horses.

Spokane Falls and Horse Slaughter Camp

During Wright's brief stay on the placid banks of the Spokane, Gustavus
Sohon had the opportunity to scout around the region looking for sites of interest. He came upon the great falls of the Spokane River and made magnificent ink sketches of it. One of these is now in the collections of Washington State University. A simpler drawing was retained by Sohon's descendents and later donated to the Library of Congress. Raging torrents of water descend over basaltic rocks in Sohon's image. The authors recently visited this site at the same time of year that Sohon made his drawings. Instead of a roaring waterfall, we were presented with a few trickles of water moving over dark basaltic rock; drought combined with electrical power needs had removed the flow from the scene sketched by this talented artist.

The disposition of the 800 horses posed a problem for Wright's command. To the Native Americans, who highly prized these animals, they were a source of wealth. To the army they were a symbol of their adversaries' mobility and potential threat. Under these circumstances, the command elected to slaughter the horses, much to the chagrin of observers watching the process from hillside positions. Sohon drew the scene in ink as the process evolved. The image was drawn on a page-size piece of paper in pencil. He noted the place and the date: "Horse Slaughter Camp, Sept. 9th, 1858; 800-900 horses killed."

Cataldo Mission

One additional image was drawn by Sohon during the expedition. From Horse Slaughter Camp, Wright's force moved toward Lake Coeur d'Alene and over the pass that John Mullan later named "Fourth of July." Their destination was Cataldo Mission, southeast of the pass, which they reached on September 13. A council was held there that officially and effectively terminated the conflict between the army and Native Americans in this sector. A treaty was signed on September 17, 1858.

Here Sohon created a pencil sketch of the mission, which displays an architectural rendition of the mission as seen from the east-northeast. The lines are precise and drawn with great confidence. On the east side of the building Native Americans are shown carrying out assorted tasks. That place is now the site of a different building, which was used as housing for mission workers. Coeur d'Alene (or Cataldo) Mission is regarded as Idaho's oldest standing structure.
Cataldo Mission, also referred to as the Coeur d'Alene Mission, is Idaho's oldest standing structure. This very detailed, precise pencil drawing was sketched by Sohon from the northeast.

Western artists were fascinated by the spectacular Spokane Falls. Sohon made this drawing along with other renditions of Palouse Falls near the Spokane River.

Spokane Falls as it appeared in the late summer of 1999. Now harnessed for hydroelectric power, it has lost much of its former grandeur.

On September 24 Qualchin, a Yaka ma chief, not knowing that he had been summoned, innocently came into camp at nine o'clock in the morning, and by 9:20 he was hanged. Wright convicted him for crimes committed against whites in eastern and western Washington during a three-year period. The next day six more Native Americans were hanged out of a group of fifteen held accountable for their acts. For this reason, Latah Creek is known by some as "Hangman's Creek."

By October the command had reached the Snake River, across from Fort Taylor. On October 5 they entered the confines of Fort Walla Walla. By this time an additional trial had been held along the Palouse, resulting in the execution of four more Native Americans. At Fort Walla Walla, after a military funeral for officers and men killed on the "Steptoe" battlefield, an additional court martial was convened, resulting in another three hangings. Thus, the Wright expedition was, by its own definition, a success. In effect, it subdued the plateau peoples. Sohon's images provide graphic details of Wright's brutal campaign.

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This year marks the 40th anniversary of the Century 21 World's Fair in Seattle. The city's most recognizable icon, the Space Needle, is one of the legacies of the exposition, but the construction of a monorail running from Seattle Center to downtown also remains as an important functional legacy. Recently the Monorail has become the centerpiece of an ongoing movement aimed at developing an effective rapid transit system throughout Seattle and the Puget Sound area. Touted by Alweg in 1962 as "the first practical demonstration of monorail as mass rapid transit in an urban area," a monorail had already been proposed between Seattle and Tacoma as early as the first decade of the 20th century.

The booklet pictured above, published by Alweg as a promotional piece and distributed at the fair, is part of the Washington State Historical Society's extensive ephemera collection relating to transportation in Washington and to the 1962 Century 21 Exposition.
To lovers of the picturesque it is a source of keen regret that the Blanket Indian, the most striking and conspicuous figure this country has ever produced, is passing. And by this I mean the Indian who formerly wore a red blanket, a beaded buckskin shirt and leggins, a gorgeous war bonnet, and who painted his face, his hands and his horse in a manner wonderful to behold.

—G. O. Shields from Blanket Indians of the Northwest, 1921

A veteran of the Indian wars, Shields, like many of his contemporaries, was convinced that the American Indian was a "vanishing race," a victim of "progress" and the inevitable sweep of Western civilization over a once-proud people now reservation-bound and without the warrior heroes of yesteryear. Red Cloud, Sitting Bull, American Horse, Geronimo, and Chief Joseph—"The Noblest Roman of Them All"—were all gone, replaced by a generation of hunters-turned-farmers, and poor ones at that. Had Shields looked carefully he would have seen many "blanket Indians" at powwows, giveaways, potlatches, funerals, saints' days, parades, rodeos, and in more traditional households on and off reservations. Writing in 1933, Luther Standing Bear, a notable Sioux, reminisced in his autobiography, Land of the Spotted Eagle:

Many an Indian has accomplished his own personal salvation by "going back to the blanket." The Indian blanket or buffalo robe, a true American garment and worn with the significance of language; covered beneath it, is the prototype of the American Indian, one of the bravest attempts ever made by man on this continent to rise to the heights of true humanity.

Ironically, the same year Shields's book appeared, Pendleton Woolen Mills embarked on its third phase of Indian blanket production with an eye toward Anglo as well as Indian consumers, advertising, "The Indian's Choice and the White Man's, Too." The marketing succeeded, providing "extra quality" as well as "historic interest to every buyer," especially with the "Beaver State Robe" line of blankets, which were larger and heavier than other Pendletons. The 1926 catalog reads:

Beaver State quality "Pendletons" were originally conceived for the Indians' exclusive use, and from their home in the heart of the great Cayuse and Umatilla Indian country the fame and usage of these fine Blankets spread to the other Indian tribes throughout America.

But these picturesque and serviceable "Beaver States" were not destined to remain only among the Indians' prized possessions. They have captured the fancy of the red-blooded white man and woman who find in them equally as wide a range of utility in their homes and for their outdoor adventures.
There is no comprehensive history of the Indian trade blanket. Robert Kapoun, an Indian art dealer based in Santa Fe, has provided the best overview with his book, *Language of the Robe*, written with Charles J. Lohrmann in 1992. Contrary to claims of the publisher, the book is not “definitive,” but it is a good starting point and does live up to the claim that it is now a “classic reference for collectors and trade blanket enthusiasts.” Another very recent publication is *The Tradecloth Handbook* by Carolyn Corey, who with Preston Miller owns the Four Winds Trading Post on the Flathead Reservation in Montana. Corey and Miller possess museum-quality garments in their own collection and sell replicas and some older items as well. Four Winds has published this booklet in an effort to clarify terminology on cloth.

Wool is considered a material of worldwide importance for its insulating ability and for the prestige factor of ownership or beautification. It is, as *National Geographic Magazine* proclaimed in 1988, the “fabric of history,” dating back 12,000 years in use by people in the windswept mountains and plains of Asia. Wool’s unique properties of insulating against heat and cold while absorbing up to 30 percent of its weight in moisture without feeling “wet,” as well as its resiliency and durability, make it the fabric of choice in much of the world. Wool fibers have minute overlapping scales or plates, all pointing in one direction like tiles on a roof. These interlock into felt under pressure, heat, and moisture. As many as 2,000 overlapping plates may be found in a square inch of wool felt.

At the time of European overseas expansion into the Americas, Native Americans in Mesoamerica and in the Andes were quite familiar with the properties of animal wool, especially alpaca, llama, and vicuña. In North America mountain goats, bighorn sheep, musk-ox, and especially the American bison provided outer wool used for garments, robes, and blankets. These were labor-intensive to manufacture and their use was often restricted to special ranks within society or by gender. Europeans were a wool-clad folk when they established beachheads throughout the Americas. It did not take long for a blanket and cloth trade to develop as Native peoples saw many possible applications for the short-napped fiber material manufactured in all major European countries. By the 1830s blankets had replaced animal-wool robes and skins in much of North America. The following statement in 1836 by Ramsay Crooks, president of the American Fur Company, to a blanket manufacturer in England is a poignant reminder of the blanket’s importance to Indian people:

Permit me to remark that uniformity in our goods is of much importance. The Blankets of the different sizes should be of the same dimensions, weight, quality & finish, no one pair varying materially with another pair; and so with every thing else. Our Indians do not use many articles, but of the few they do require they are capital judges—the person who has no other possession against the rigors of a northern winter than a single Blanket becomes fully competent to decide whether the article does or does not impart the requisite degree of warmth.

Contrary to many popular images of this early blanket and robe trade, in the beginning it was not very colorful or
RIGHT: One corner of a c. 1830 commercial one-piece rose blanket showing a flower about 9½ inches in diameter worked in rose, yellow, and yellow-green yarn, narrow black stripe, plain weave.

FAR RIGHT: A pair of HBC three-point blankets. Blankets were shipped to North America from England as pairs, then cut down the center to make two blankets, or left uncut and used for both a bottom and top blanket.

BELOW: Hudson’s Bay blankets stacked for the potlatch (giveaway) ceremony, Kwakiutl, Fort Rupert, British Columbia.

BELOW, BOTTOM: Crow chiefs, Montana, 1887. Besides being wrapped in blankets, several men are wearing capotes, coats made from trade blankets.

OPPOSITE PAGE: John Clymer painting, “Traders at Pierre’s Hole Rendezvous, 1832.”

During the 16th and 17th centuries English and French “broadcloths,” finely napped and pressed for use in blankets and coats, were common trade items in eastern North America. Broadcloth was associated with towns or provinces or with specific tribes. White blankets from Normandy were among the more popular, and etoffe iroquoise (Iroquois cloth) was dyed purple, a color found frequently in Iroquois attire from the 17th century to the present.

The most popular of French blankets appears to have been a basic white with a blue stripe at each end and a blue lily embroidered in thread at each corner. Another type of cloth was called “Escarlatine,” which one expert has defined as a “strong woolen cloth of good quality particularly appreciated in America by the Indians.”

During the 18th century, with mechanization of the wool industry, England took full advantage of the expansive Indian trade market and built upon an established reputation of producing the finest woolens Europe had to offer. The towns of Witney in Oxfordshire, Stroud in Gloucestershire, Kersey in Suffolk, and much of Yorkshire—especially Halifax and Leeds—specialized in three types of woolens shipped overseas.

What we might find at a typical 18th-century fur trade post in New France or on the English frontier would be a medley of the type of blanket called “duffle” or “duffields.” Most were natural white blankets with red or purple stripes at each end; some duffles were dyed solid colors; and a few had stripes at intervals, but none had candy or rainbow colors until much later. The duffles were often manufactured in long “pieces” on the power looms and then sold as “doubles” or cut to order in the field. These “shags,” or “pieces” were nearly as interesting in design elements as it would become by the late 19th century. Very few examples of the earliest blankets traded directly to Indians survive, although blanket-cloth integrated into Indian costume is found in museums and private collections, especially as part of leggings or sashes or headgear. Other uses included elaborate embroidery for special social or ceremonial attire, such as Osage wedding blankets with ribbon work, and classic Plains embroidery on blanket cloth.
also tailored into capotes or outer garments of various styles, the most popular being the “mackinaw” coat. The striping, a hallmark of Indian trade blankets, originated in Gloucestershire in the 18th century for the East India Company’s trade with Asia, but it caught on and was quite popular with Indians, voyageurs, and colonial Anglo-Americans as well.

A second type of blanket found by the mid-18th century was the “point blanket,” also confusingly called “Kersey” or “Kersey cloth,” a common staple cloth of Yorkshire that was used for military uniforms and garments for the poorer classes. According to the late Charles Hanson, who researched the point blanket thoroughly, these blankets originated with the French for trade with their Indian allies, probably during the period of the Fox Wars. A 1715 French account book lists ten two-point blankets as expense for Indian service. In his independent research, Francis Back found references to the “point” system of sizing as early as 1694 in New France. The oldest surviving example of a “point” blanket dates to 1775 and is in the Museum of the Fur Trade in Chadron, Nebraska.

The meaning of the term “points” requires explanation. Using indigo or black dye, full and half bars were added to the blankets to indicate a standard of trade value in “made beaver” (one full size beaver for each full point or bar). The bars also indicated size and/or weight of blankets. The most famous purveyor of these “point” blankets historically was the London based Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC), which placed its first order for “500 pair of pointed blankets” in 1779, giving an exclusive contract to the manufacturers of Witney in 1805. The “search file” on point blankets at the Hudson’s Bay Company Archives in Winnipeg contains this interesting note:

From 1781 onwards there are references to striped blankets, their size and value, but very little indication of color. The sizes, weights and points were not standardized until some time after 1860. In 1826 Peter Skene Ogden wrote of “plain blankets,” and “Green blankets.” In 1830 John McLoughlin wrote regarding his supply of “Guns and Green blankets.” In 1844 George Simpson mentioned red blankets in a letter to the Committee advising that the quality of the dye should not be sacrificed.

An invoice for blankets shipped to Victoria for use by the Western Department of the HBC in 1864 gives some idea of scale and color variations. The order lists 35,500 individual blankets worth over £10,000. Of these, 16,500 are plain white with indigo blue bars (stripes); 7,000 are blue; 7,000 are green; and 5,000 are scarlet. No mention is made of multistripes in colors. Many of these were destined for potlatches along the Northwest Coast.

It is unclear when the famous candy-stripe HBC blanket first came into use in North America. One reference in the HBC Archives, in a letter from Thomas Hutchins in Albany to the governor and committee, establishes a firm link to striping of blankets as early as 1781. A 1798 letter places an order for “Thirty pair of 3 points to be striped with four Colors, Red, blue, Green, Yellow, according to your Judgment.” Beginning in the 1820s, the HBC experimented with three- and four-bar blankets, which came to be known as “chief’s blankets” among Indians and traders. An order to a Leeds woolen manufacturer from the St. Louis-based firm of Pierre Chouteau and Company, dated November 17, 1838, is thought to be one of the first references to the multistriped blanket that became the standard “Hudson’s Bay blanket.” Clearly, some candy-stripes were available, but American artists who have depicted the multicolored HBC blanket in widespread use prior to 1840 do not have good documentation on their side. Still, it makes for a very colorful image and is not anachronistic with production history. One
document in the HBC Archives, dated 1886, lists: “Plain blankets with black stripes, in indigo, scarlet, green, light blue; and a striped blanket of white with stripes of indigo, green, red, yellow.”

To this day the HBC carries a line of point blankets still manufactured in England for their department stores (now called “The Bay” in Canada). Other companies, such as the Montreal-based North West Company and the American Fur Company of John Jacob Astor, also ordered blankets by points, standardizing a system across North America acceptable to both Indian and white consumers. So successful was the point blanket that by the 19th century, the typical trade blanket was the three-point white with a single dark stripe at each end. Charles Hanson notes:

“This was a good wearing and sleeping blanket for the average person. The traders sold thousands of ready-made woolen capotes, but the Indians eventually began to make their own blankets in a crude, squarish style. They liked the white capotes to wear on winter war expeditions because they provided the best camouflage.

The third type of trade blanket was the “rose” or “rosed” blanket, made of superior, untwilled wool. Usually white in background, two roses in smaller blankets and four in larger ones were hand-sewn into the corners using red, green and yellow yarn. Manufactured primarily in Witney, these blankets adorned the beds of middle- and upper-class English households and were special presentation blankets in the Indian trade. Annuity goods given by the United States Office of Indian Trade in 1797 included 36 “rose blankets” to the Eel Rivers Tribe and 44 rose blankets to the Piankashaws.

Thus, from the East, we have three styles of Indian trade blankets that met yet a fourth tradition coming from the Southwest. In Spanish America, settlers on the northern frontier of New Spain developed their own blanket and rug industry out of necessity. Called “Rio Grande Blankets” and most frequently associated with the weaving town of Chimayo, these Spanish-American blankets followed two traditions: Pueblo Indian cotton weaving on the back-strap loom, which dates back to around 700 A.D.; and Spanish harness- or treadle-loom weaving, brought from Iberia into North America. When first contacted in the 16th century, Pueblo Indian men were found spinning and weaving rectangular pieces of cotton cloth, which were often colored with vegetable and mineral dyes prior to wearing as a wraparound garment or as a shawl.

Called mantas by the Spaniards, these all-purpose blankets were listed in many inventories in colonial New Mexico. Used to pay fines, taxes, and as a legal form of
currency, mantas (like “point” blankets) served as a material bridge between two cultures. But relations with the Pueblo Indians soured, turning to open rebellion in 1680. When Spaniards returned to reoccupy New Mexico in 1692, cotton weaving continued among the Pueblos, but wool from imported Spanish churro sheep became the fabric of choice among Spaniards and the adjacent Navajo, both of whom have made an art form of textile weaving from that time on.

This early blanket trade in the Southwest was primarily an internal institution. Unfortunately, not a single example from the period 1600-1800 has survived. Descriptions indicate manufacture of long frazadas or blankets, as well as carpeting (called jergo) and serapes (similar to course sackcloth). Anil (indigo), urine, brazilwood, and herbs were used to produce a limited number of colors. It is likely that the early Rio Grande blankets contained alternating stripes woven in indigo blue and natural undyed brown and white wools, a pattern replicated by the Navajos and one that continues to this day among Hispanic weavers north of Santa Fe.

With the opening of trade between Santa Fe and the United States in 1821, an expanded market brought new materials to New Mexican weavers: three-ply wool yarns dyed red and scarlet with cochineal, natural yellows, silk and cotton threads, and calico printed cotton cloth. The trade extended between St. Joseph, Missouri, down to Santa Fe, and beyond to Chihuahua. From St. Joseph traders carried the blankets north on the Missouri River to Plains tribes who by the 1830s used them for saddle blankets and general wraps. Graphic evidence of this trade is found in the watercolors of Swiss artist Karl Bodmer, who painted “Kiasax (Bear on the Left),” a Piegan Blackfeet married to a Hidatsa at a village near Fort Clark in present-day North Dakota during the winter of 1833. Kiasax is wearing a southwestern blanket which was described at the time as “Spanish” but could possibly be of Navajo origin. Mexican traders also carried American goods and homemade serapes, blankets, and shawls to California where they obtained horses, mules, and Chinese silk in exchange. In 1840, 20,000 Rio Grande blankets were sold in northern Mexico alone.

In an era of westward expansion and treaty-making, which placed high demand on blanket manufacturers to fulfill government annuities to Indian tribes, surprisingly few mills produced blankets. A survey of woolen manufacturers in the United States in 1845 lists eleven mills turning out blankets, and only one of those, the Buffalo Manufacturing Company, is categorized as specializing in “Indian blankets.”

Following the Mexican War, blanket production for trade increased, especially after 1856 when English chemist William Henry Perkins accidentally discovered how to make
LEFT: Chief Joseph John, Tofino, Vancouver Island, c. 1931. The feathers attached to this trade blanket have transformed it into a ceremonial robe.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Buell blankets, “Moqui” pattern with swastikas and “Shoshoni” pattern, both c. 1912. The swastika is an ancient mystic symbol found in both the Old World and the New. It was a not uncommon design element in this country until its use was corrupted by its adoption as the emblem for Nazi Germany.

WRAPPED IN TRADITION
The Chihuly Collection of American Indian Trade Blankets

The Washington State History Museum presents an exhibit of American Indian trade blankets from the collection of world-renowned glass artist Dale Chihuly. On view now through October 27, 2002, the exhibit contains over 75 commercially woven trade blankets dating from the 1880s to the 1930s, as well as 15 rarely seen glass sculptures from Chihuly’s “Navajo Blanket Cylinders” series.

Chihuly’s passion for Indian blankets reflects his decades-long interest in Native American arts, a passion acquired while growing up in Tacoma. He first put glass to artistic use as a design student at the University of Washington when he started weaving small pieces of glass into his tapestries. During that time he also came into contact with American Indian trade blankets, most particularly Pendleton blankets. These blankets, many rare, feature designs that hearken back to such woven mills as Pendleton, Oregon City, J. Capps, Buell, Racine, and even the Hudson’s Bay Company.

Chihuly started collecting Pendleton blankets in the late 1960s. They are called trade blankets because they were originally made especially for the Indian market. The Indians would go to trading posts near or on reservations and trade their own woven blankets, baskets, furs, and other goods for the machine-made blankets provided by the non-Indian manufacturers. Chihuly’s collection now contains 700 different designs.

The American Indian trade blankets sparked the beginning of Chihuly’s love for Native American design. He began his “Navajo Blanket Cylinders” series of glass sculptures in the 1970s, adding to them during the next two decades. Fifteen of those cylinders will be on display along with his collected trade blankets. The technique Chihuly developed for the renowned blanket cylinder series involves using glass threads to create the appearance of weaving on a flat surface, then rolling molten glass cylinders over them. The cylinders absorb the designs that float within the glass.

To support Wrapped in Tradition and celebrate its own many years of blanket manufacturing, Pendleton Woolen Mills has produced a limited-edition blanket reproducing a historic design created on a Jacquard loom around 1920. The 64-inch by 80-inch blanket is available exclusively through the Washington State Historical Society. Only 150 signed and numbered blankets have been woven, each selling for $215.

For more information on the exhibit or the special edition Pendleton blanket, please call 1-888-BE-THERE (1-888-238-4373), or visit our web site, www.wshs.org.
Farmer reported on October 22 of that year: "An old sewing machine which had been brought across the Isthmus of Panama with the Pratt family was used to hem the ribbons on the blankets which were exhibited in California."

Throughout the 1860s Willamette had contracts for blankets to the Oregon Indian Agency, producing 4,000 pairs of blankets in 1861. Blankets were often manufactured in pairs—i.e., doubles—and then cut later into singles. Doubles were more easily shipped than cut blankets. Furthermore, doubles served as a multipurpose over-and-under sleeping cover. Gray and white seem to be the only colors, ranging in price from $6.40 to $8.25. Other mills were soon in operation. Oregon City Mill produced a thousand blankets a month in 1868 and followed the HBC's example of assigning "points" in 1870. Large blankets remained available only in white, but a "plaid" 4-pointer and 21/2-point blankets in blue, green, sienna, scarlet, and gray were also sold. Clearly, by the end of the decade blankets "made in Oregon" were here to stay.

The next period of Indian blanket design, 1880 to 1930, is the most spectacular and was the inspiration for Dale Chihuly's early interest in collecting trade blankets. During this period, described by Kapoum and Lohrmann as the "golden age of the American Indian trade blanket," five companies competed for the Indian and non-Indian trade. The Illinois-based Capps Company turned its attention to a line of blankets with tribal association such as "Comanche," "Navajo," "Ponca," and "Moqui." Oregon City Woolen Mills, founded in 1864, followed Capps's lead, as did the Buell Manufacturing Company of St. Joseph, Missouri, and the Racine (Wisconsin) Woolen Mills, both started in 1877. During the 1880s all of these new companies benefited from the introduction of the double-shuttle Jacquard loom, developed in France in the 1840s. This innovation made possible the creation of textiles with a positive design on one side and a negative of the same image on the reverse. By the turn of the century these four mills were using power looms to churn out splendid blankets that appealed to Indians and whites alike. Buffalo Bill sported Capps blankets in his Wild West Show; housewives throughout the country could follow the lead of the Racine Woolen Mills' "Cozy Corner Girl"; and in Indian country every trading post and reservation general store was stocked with blankets to be worn, admired, exchanged, and given away.

But it was the final competitor, Pendleton Woolen Mills, that would eclipse all others in time. Inspired and directed by Clarence Morton Bishop, Pendleton began operations in 1864, followed Capps's lead, and was featured on the Pendleton catalog wearing the "Wild Indian's Overcoat," to the present, when many commemorative robes and special theme blankets are woven in limited numbers for special occasions or audiences. These include the "Circle of Life" robe, "White Buffalo Calf Woman" robe, and the "Oregon Heritage Collection" series, available in an edition of 500 during the mid 1990s. Most recently, Pendleton has issued a special blanket for the exhibition, Wrapped in Tradition: The Chihuly Collection of American Indian Trade Blankets, and has embarked on a series of special edition blankets as part of the Lewis and Clark bicentennial commemoration.

Since their introduction in 1915, "Beaver State" robes have outsold all others within the Pendleton line as a general category. Many Indian as well as non-Indian households, particularly in the Pacific Northwest, boast one or more. Among single designs the most successful in Pendleton production history is the "Chief Joseph" robe, first introduced in 1930 and produced in 4 colors up to 1952 but available in 16 colors today. This example of a "high prestige robe" is directly associated with a well-recognized figure to all Indians and most other Americans. Its long evolutionary development spans from 1901, when Joseph was featured on the Pendleton catalog wearing the "Wild Indian's Overcoat," to the present, when many commemorative robes and special theme blankets are woven in limited numbers for special occasions or audiences. These include the "Circle of Life" robe, "White Buffalo Calf Woman" robe, and the "Oregon Heritage Collection" series, available in an edition of 500 during the mid 1990s. Most recently, Pendleton has issued a special blanket for the exhibition, Wrapped in Tradition: The Chihuly Collection of American Indian Trade Blankets, and has embarked on a series of special edition blankets as part of the Lewis and Clark bicentennial commemoration.

Just visit any Pendleton store today and I think you will agree that the Indian robe business is alive and well. The robes may no longer wrap people and horses as frequently as they adorn beds and sofas, but they are still a part of the collective material culture of North America that has deep historical roots.

W. R. Swagerty is director of the John Muir Center for Environmental Studies at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California. He formerly taught at the University of Idaho and was associate director of the Center for the History of the American Indian, Newberry Library, Chicago.
Patrol Officer Gordon Swenson hadn't seen anything like it during his long career with the Tacoma Police Department. There he was on the beat in one of Tacoma's toughest neighborhoods on an evening in October and there wasn't a single soul on the street—and not one responder call for an hour. In downtown Tacoma the streets were deserted as well, with the exception of a boisterous crowd of people outside Rhodes Department Store watching a flickering black and white television screen in the window. It was 1958 and Tacoma's pride and joy, boxer "Irish Pat" McMurry, was stepping into the ring at Madison Square Garden to square off against Canadian heavyweight champion George Chuvalo. Everybody in town was tuned in to watch the fight on television. This was Pat's chance at the big time and the longed-for title shot against world heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson. It was Tacoma's chance at the big time as well because there had never been a local sports hero to compare with Pat McMurry. Pat was truly Tacoma's own—a blue-collar kid and former marine with looks, personality, and thunder in his fists. He was arguably one of the most talented amateur fighters to ever enter the squared circle, and after he turned professional his fans believed he was sure to go up against Patterson. No one—the president, Willie Mays, Clark Gable, Marilyn Monroe—got as much ink, local press, and media coverage as Pat. He was, of course, my hero, too.

Peter Bacho, an award-winning writer and author of the book, Boxing in Black and White, wrote the following account of Pat's fight with Chuvalo after viewing a videotape of the October 1958 Gillette Cavalcade of Sports broadcast. Peter is not only a noted writer, he boxed a little when he was younger—enough, he says, to get out of the ring.

—Bill Baarsma, mayor of Tacoma

Tacoma's "Irish Pat" McMurry in his fighting prime showed that he had what it takes to hold his own against top-ranked opponents and make a bid for the title of world heavyweight champion.
he old black and white fight tape doesn't lie. It shows Tacoma's "Irish Pat" McMurtry in his prime against top-ranked opponents. McMurtry had a full bag of boxing skills that he hoped would carry him to a world heavyweight championship. In holding that hope, he wasn't alone. Tacomans had been following the ring exploits of Pat McMurtry and his younger brother Mike for years. As an amateur, Pat posted a 103-2 record before turning pro in 1954. Mike's amateur record, which included an NCAA heavyweight title, was just as impressive. But there is a world of difference between amateur boxing, which puts far more emphasis on fighters' safety and scoring points, and the much rougher professional game.

In the latter, aggression and a heavy punch count—and the older McMurtry had a deeper supply of both. In fact, McMurtry's finely honed skills were such that he had a legitimate chance of winning the world heavyweight championship—the most coveted individual title in professional sports.

Much has been written about the unique, often fierce personal bond formed between championship fighters and their fans, who bask in the glory of these boxing idols. For example, Joe Louis, the great black heavyweight champion, gave symbolic hope to a generation of African Americans with his victories in the ring. In much the same way, McMurtry came to represent the hopes of Tacoma, his hometown. For decades Tacoma had suffered in a one-sided competition with Seattle, its larger, more prosperous neighbor to the north. In contrast to Tacoma, Seattle's confidence was such that by 1962 it would be hosting a world's fair, an event that would bring the city into even greater national and international prominence.

But in the 1950s Tacomans could boast of Pat McMurtry, a legitimate title contender and potential heavyweight champion. He was homegrown—one of Tacoma's own—starting with his hard-nosed, blue-collar roots on Tacoma's South Side. His fans had known him since his early amateur days in the 1940s, often watching his bouts in person or following his career through the sports pages of the Tacoma News Tribune and the region's other dailies. In an era before major league sports arrived in the Pacific Northwest, McMurtry was arguably the region's biggest sports star.

In July 1956, 10,729 fans flocked to Lincoln Bowl to watch McMurtry face Ezzard Charles, a great fighter and former heavyweight champion. McMurtry was brilliant that night, winning nine out of ten rounds on his way to a unanimous decision. The next month McMurtry returned to Lincoln Bowl to face Willie Pastrano, a promising heavyweight who would later win the world light-heavyweight championship. The bout drew 11,095 fans—a new Tacoma fight record—and generated so much pre-fight interest that the Seattle Post-Intelligencer ran a special edition on the morning of the fight. Although McMurtry lost a controversial ten-round decision, the fight tape shows him pressuring the slick-boxing Pastrano throughout the fight and staggering him on several occasions.

The loss to Pastrano was just a temporary setback. Campaigning on the West Coast, McMurtry reeled off five straight wins—including a convincing second-round knockout of former middleweight champion Carl "Bobo" Olson—and earned a legitimate shot at the world championship. But to get a shot at the world championship, McMurtry would need a bigger stage than the Lincoln Bowl or other West Coast arenas.

In October 1958 he got his chance before a national television audience on the Gillette Cavalcade of Sports. The venue was New York City's Madison Square Garden, once prizefighting's most hallowed shrine and a necessary stop on the way to a world championship bout. McMurtry's opponent was the tough Canadian champion, George Chuvalo, then at the start of a sterling 93-bout career against some of the best heavyweights in the world.

Although McMurtry and Chuvalo were the same height, 6'1", the similarities ended there. At 207 pounds, the barrel-chested Chuvalo outweighed McMurtry by sixteen pounds. As the two fighters met in center ring for the referee's instructions, it was clear to boxing observers that if McMurtry was to have any chance at all, he would have to keep his distance and outbox the powerful Canadian.

McMurtry's superior boxing skills were evident from the first round on, when the aggressive Chuvalo pressed forward, crowding McMurtry and digging left hooks to his body. That was Chuvalo's plan. He wanted to stay on top of McMurtry and wage a punch-for-

Even early in his career, promoters featured Pat in main events.
punch war of attrition—a type of fight he was sure to win. On those occasions, McMurtry coolly covered up and blocked many of Chuvalo's blows. For much of the round, though, McMurtry was able to stick to his plan of fighting at a distance and keeping the oncoming Chuvalo off-balance with an accurate left jab and deft footwork.

McMurtry's footwork was especially impressive—a sure sign of a “well-schooled” fighter. When McMurtry moved in the ring, he was always under control, balanced—whether he moved backward, forward, or to the side. More importantly, he tapped the full potential of footwork as both a defensive and offensive tool. McMurtry moved just enough to avoid many of Chuvalo's powerful punches, but not so much that he took himself out of punching or counterpunching range.

But the measure of a championship-caliber fighter isn't just his mastery of boxing’s technical skills. At its core, boxing is a brutal sport that calls on its participants to ignore often numbing pain and fear and somehow summon the will to win. Those who can do this have a chance of becoming world champions.

McMurtry put his will on display during the second round, when Chuvalo launched a hard left hook that landed flush on McMurtry's jaw. The blow staggered McMurtry, who then danced away until his sensory fog lifted. Chuvalo, confident the end was near, pursued McMurtry and launched more left hooks and other powerful blows, some of which found their mark. But by staying away McMurtry bought time to clear his head enough to begin throwing textbook-perfect left jabs that caught the aggressive Chuvalo by surprise. Near the end of the round McMurtry recovered enough to move forward and hit Chuvalo with a volley of heavier punches—sharp left hooks and punishing uppercuts.

By the third and fourth rounds, McMurtry, now fully recovered, established control of the fight. With his left jab and ring movement, he outboxed Chuvalo from a distance. When Chuvalo got close, McMurtry outslugged him with fast, multiple-punch combinations. By the fifth round, the fighters had changed roles. The confident McMurtry was the one moving forward and throwing punches, while Chuvalo was backing up. At this point, the fight had become a lopsided contest and the only question was whether McMurtry would win by a decision or a knockout.

In round six, Chuvalo—his face puffy and bloody—gave a telltale sign of his desperation: Gasping for air, he glanced up at the arena clock. McMurtry continued to methodically stalk...
Chuvalo, battering him at will while blocking or slipping most of the Canadian's counterpunches. At the end of the seventh round, the ring physician examined the battered Chuvalo and inexplicably allowed him to continue.

What happened next was predictable. Chuvalo endured more punishment through the remaining three rounds. In the ninth round, Chuvalo, his nose swollen and his face a puffy mess, was reduced to desperation. He threw a wild, sweeping left hook that missed its mark and threw him off-balance. It also left him open to a McMurtry counterpunch—a short chopping right—that McMurtry landed on Chuvalo's face as he twisted into the hook. As punches go, McMurtry's punch on this occasion wasn't especially powerful or spectacular. But the force of the well-timed blow and Chuvalo's imbalance were enough to send him sprawling to the canvas.

Chuvalo, though, got a break. The referee ruled the fall a slip, not a knockdown. That favorable and fortunate ruling was one of the few good things to happen to Chuvalo during the fight.

The outcome was a formality: a unanimous decision in McMurtry's favor. The win over Chuvalo should have been a stepping stone to a showdown with heavyweight champion Floyd Patterson. Although Patterson was a superb boxer with excellent hand speed, he was short (a shade under six feet) and light (about 190 pounds) for a heavyweight. Bigger, more powerful fighters could overpower Patterson, which is exactly what the formidable Sonny Liston did in two title fights in 1962 and 1963. Liston, who weighed 212 pounds, scored devastating first-round knockouts over the overmatched Patterson.

Although McMurtry wasn't as big as Liston, he had the edge in height and weight over Patterson. A 1957 photograph in the Oregonian shows McMurtry and Patterson standing together. The champion seems almost frail in comparison to the taller, robust McMurtry. While McMurtry's size would have given him an edge over Patterson, the fighting styles of the boxers often determine the winner of a given bout. And McMurtry had the right style to beat the champion. Patterson's famed trainer, Cus D'Amato, had taken great pains to develop the "peek-a-boo" style, which he designed to highlight Patterson's hand speed while protecting his jaw and head against the heavier punches of bigger men.

Patterson, his hands held high, fought out of a crouch and usually at long range. From this position, he would close the gap between himself and his opponent by leaping at him, often with a left hook that would be the first blow in a multiple-punch volley. The tactic, which opened Patterson up to a right hand counterpunch, posed an obvious risk, but the champion's hand speed was usually quick enough to escape the consequences.

In a McMurtry-Patterson bout, the shorter Patterson would have had to leap at McMurtry to hit him. But that tactic would have played into one of McMurtry's strengths. As shown in the Chuvalo fight, McMurtry's quick, pinpoint counterpunching punished fighters who came at him. The jaw or head of
McMurtry beats Chuvalo

A leaping, left-hooking Patterson would have been an open target for a McMurtry right hand counter. McMurtry, the heavier man, would also have had the advantage of moving forward and punching down as Patterson sprang forward—factors that would have increased the impact of the blow.

Unfortunately, a McMurtry-Patterson showdown never transpired. After the Chuvalo fight, sports writer Harry Grayson approached McMurtry and his father, Clarence, about a deal he had in mind. McMurtry would have move to Boston and have Sam Silverman promote him. Silverman had promoted many of the fights involving Rocky Marciano, the former heavyweight champion who retired undefeated. Grayson made a strong case that Silverman had the right connections within boxing circles to set up a McMurtry-Patterson title fight in the near future. It would have been an attractive, lucrative match. McMurtry was a talented, clean-living, highly photogenic white fighter in a division dominated by Patterson and other skilled African Americans.

In the end the deal—and McMurtry's best chance at a world championship—died because Clarence, who also served as his son's promoter, would have lost control of his son's career. The elder McMurtry rejected the deal and Pat, out of loyalty to his father, went along. It's a decision Pat McMurtry regrets to this day.

"I should have taken the deal," McMurtry said sadly in a 1990 News Tribune interview. Fighting in a world championship bout—every prizefighter's dream—is as much a matter of proper match-making as it is skill. On the road to the championship, tough bouts—which wear a fighter down and shorten his career—are necessary to establish a boxer's reputation and prove his skill and marketability. But once that reputation is established, caution should be used in guiding a boxer's career, especially if the fighter is close to a title bout.

Clarence McMurtry should have known which opponents to turn down. But instead of challenging the vulnerable Patterson for the title the next time he entered the ring, Clarence paired him with two opponents arguably more dangerous than the champion: Nino Valdes and Eddie Machen. Valdes knocked out McMurtry in the first round in a 1958 bout, a feat repeated by Machen the next year. The loss to Machen ended McMurtry's career.

For McMurtry, the losses were unexpected and certainly not the way he hoped to end his boxing career, which encompassed many more peaks than valleys. It galls McMurtry to believe he could have beaten Patterson to become heavyweight champion of the world. And that belief is not the exaggerated dream of an aging fighter.

For proof McMurtry has scrapbooks full of articles praising his skill and determination. He has memories of ring victories and dramatic knockout punches against quality opponents and glowing accounts of old-time fight fans who saw him box in person or on television. More importantly, McMurtry has the best testimony of all as to how good a prizefighter he really was: an old black and white fight tape that doesn't lie.

Peter Bacho is an editorial writer at The News Tribune and an adjunct instructor at the University of Washington Tacoma. He is author of several award-winning works in both fiction and nonfiction, including the children's book, Boxing in Black and White (1999).
FOLLOWING in THEIR FOOTSTEPS

Creating the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail

By Wallace G. Lewis

In May 1961 conservationist and celebrated political cartoonist for the Des Moines Register, J. N. "Ding" Darling, proposed that the Missouri River be incorporated into "a national outdoor recreation and natural resources ribbon along the historic trail of Lewis and Clark." Gravely ill, Darling knew he would not live to see such a project carried out, but he secured banker and fellow conservationist Sherry Fisher's promise to initiate a campaign for it. Darling, who had briefly served President Franklin D. Roosevelt as chief of the Biological Survey, was famous for his syndicated editorial cartoons promoting wildlife sanctuaries and opposing dam construction, particularly on his beloved Missouri River, and had been a major founder of the National Wildlife Federation. Following his friend's death in February 1962, Sherry Fisher helped form the J. N. "Ding" Darling Foundation, which he steered toward creation of a Lewis and Clark trail corridor that would also provide habitat for wildlife. Encouraged by Interior Secretary Stewart Udall, representatives of the foundation, federal agencies, and the states through which the Lewis and Clark trail passed met in Portland, Oregon, in the fall of 1962 to discuss the Darling proposal. Congress approved a trail plan in principle in 1963, and the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation began to study development along a ten-mile corridor for inclusion in a proposed nationwide system of scenic trails. On October 6, 1964, Public Law 88-630 was passed authorizing creation of a Lewis and Clark Trail Commission to promote public understanding of the expedition's historical significance and to review proposals for developing "desirable long-term conser-

The cover of this 1925 commemorative booklet put out by the John Hancock Life Insurance Company is suggestive of the standard silhouette logo selected by the national Lewis and Clark Commission 40 years later.
ABOVE: An impressive turnout for the 1927 dedication of a Lewis and Clark marker near Pasco.

INSET: The marker and plaque at Pasco near where the expedition’s dugouts, westbound in October 1805, emerged from the Snake River to encounter the Columbia. Sacajawea State Park lies just at the confluence.

Thus began an institutionalizing of the route taken by the Corps of Discovery between 1804 and 1806. Its official creation as a national trail reflects a mixture of public motives and attitudes toward history. Enthusiasts had never been satisfied with the degree to which the Lewis and Clark expedition was commemorated. Despite tribute paid Sacagawea and the explorers at the 1905 Portland Exposition and the numerous activities and ceremonies performed mostly in the Pacific Northwest during the sesquicentennial summer of 1955, the trail itself remained more alive as an imaginative construct based on the Reuben Thwaites edition of the Journals than it did as geographical reality. As a linearly extended historical site or series of sites linked by a single mission, the trail had great commercial potential for tourism, and numerous attempts were made to associate its historical significance with highways, towns, and cities in 11 states.

The idea of naming a particular highway or highways after a historical or scenic theme went back to the 1920s when boosters publicized such vacation pathways as the “Custer Battlefield Highway” and the “Yellowstone Trail.” The Lewis and Clark route appeared to be a natural for this treatment, and attempts were made, at least as far back as 1929, to establish a cross-country highway bearing their names. In 1948 the National Park Service proclaimed a “Lewis and Clark Tourway” along the Missouri River between St. Louis and Three Forks, Montana, and a 1956 campaign to create a Lewis and Clark “National Tourway” attempted to drum up public and congressional support for completing the final 30 miles of a highway along Idaho’s Lochsa River. A marked trail with identified sites, however, presented special problems. For one thing, time and progress had obliterated much of that trail. Most of the water route on the Missouri and Columbia Rivers had become long lakes behind dams. Deep public concern in the 1960s regarding the loss of natural wonders and historically significant locations helps explain the context of urgency within which the commission was launched. It was, after all, the decade of the Wilderness Act (1964), the Land and Water Conservation Act (1965), and the Historic Preservation Act...
The two greatest challenges would be providing access and interpretation for the general public.

The idea of following in the expedition’s footsteps was not new. Over the preceding half century historical enthusiasts had followed the route described in the Journals and locating campsites and other significant places. Between 1899 and 1902 Olin D. Wheeler had traveled the trails, photographed the countryside through which they passed, and noted the impact of settlement. His two-volume book, The Trail of Lewis and Clark, must have whetted the appetites of many who longed to stand where the members of the Corps of Discovery had stood and see something of what they had seen. For example, Lewis R. Freeman described his 1928 solo trip by water down the Yellowstone and Missouri Rivers in a National Geographic article and through description and photographs showed how the country had changed around the points of “historic interest.” Much effort has since been expended to research and accurately locate the expeditions campsites.

Clearwater National Forest Supervisor Ralph Space spent many years in the 1950s and 1960s searching out sites in the vicinity of the Lolo Trail in Idaho. John J. Feebles contributed detailed studies of campsites and routes of the expedition in western Montana and Idaho that included maps combining United States Geological Survey and state survey charts and showing modern towns and other features in relation to the sites. Interest in precisely calculating and ascertaining Lewis and Clark sites continues today with the work of Steve Russell, who has collected maps and used a computer and global positioning system (GPS) equipment to pinpoint locations. The published results of such searches would be increasingly directed to automobile tourists.

Not until the 1920s, when federal aid to highway funding had made it possible for western states to build long-distance highways through the high plains and intermontane regions, could most tourists gain access to the Lewis and Clark route. Even the Lolo Trail, that portion of the expedition’s route that passed through the rugged Bitterroot Mountains of northern Idaho, became open to automobile travel in 1932 when the Forest Service completed the Lolo Motorway, 90-some miles of rough, narrow, and very isolated forest road. In 1953 writer Ralph Gray braved the route with his family in their “Woody” station wagon as they traced the Lewis and Clark trail across the country from Missouri to Oregon. In the sesquicentennial summer of 1955 Ralph Space “piloted” a Northwest Conservation League automobile caravan over the Lolo Motorway—an excursion from Pasco, Washington, to Fort Benton, Montana.

As interest in signing, interpreting, and designating a commemorative trail developed, proponents had to face the problem of access. Secondary state and federal highways provided intermittent access, although sometimes only to the vicinity of the trail sites. Much of their potential traffic had been diverted to new interstate superhighways being constructed as a result of the National Defense Highway Act of 1956. So part of the challenge would be to induce motorists to break the spell of the high-speed environment and exit to older two-lane roadways. The access problem was particularly acute along the Missouri River segments. Reservoirs backed up by Fort Peck, Garrison, and other Pick-Sloan dams on the Missouri River in Montana and the Dakotas had inundated many of the expedition’s campsites.

One of several federal agencies helping to interpret the Lewis and Clark Trail, the Corps of Engineers also sought to promote recreation facilities near its Columbia and Snake River dams.
Beginning this year, the Washington State Historical Society is ramping up its programmatic commitment to the upcoming bicentennial of the Corps of Discovery. Already on view at the Washington State History Museum is Commemorating the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial in Washington, a work-in-progress exhibition identifying projects of significance around the state.

Opening November 15, 2002, is End of Our Voyage: Lewis and Clark in Washington, a traveling exhibition highlighting previously untold or underappreciated aspects of the expedition's sojourn in what is now Washington. Two sets of this exhibit will travel to local museums and community centers around the state; one will be on view at the national kickoff event for the bicentennial at Monticello and Charlottesville, Virginia, next January. Check the Society's web site (WWW.WSHS.ORG) for details on this exhibition's schedule of venues. November 15, 2002, is the 197th anniversary of the Corps of Discovery's arrival at the terminal destination for the expedition's westward journey: Station Camp.

About the same time Ding Darling was expressing his vision of a historical and recreational ribbon along the Missouri, the North Dakota State Highway Department was pondering a new reservoir perimeter road system. Little progress was made, however, until 1963 when the Lewis and Clark Trail Convention in Portland, Oregon, inspired the North Dakota delegation to press for combining the perimeter road and trail route projects. In January 1966 the North Dakota Outdoor Recreation Committee passed a resolution doing just that. Moreover, it would include an "environmental corridor" similar to what Ding Darling had envisioned, providing both wildlife habitat and recreational opportunities. In 1967 a plan reviewing the roles for numerous county, state, and federal agencies had been drawn up. Soon South Dakota followed suit by tying its 422-mile Oahe Reservoir perimeter road proposal to a Lewis and Clark Trail system, in cooperation with highway departments in North Dakota and Montana.

The national commission invested much discussion in the concept of a "continuous" Lewis and Clark Trail highway, and at its November 1968 meeting in Portland it called upon the secretary of transportation to seek congressional funds to...
expedite “the interstate planning and coordination” of such a highway. A few months later an article in the Wall Street Journal conveyed criticisms, such as those being levied by Congressman John Kyl of Iowa, that the commission had tried to “expand into the road building business” with “ambitions [that] were getting it off the track,” and that it had succumbed to “crassly commercial tourist promotion.” Sherry Fisher’s response had been that a continuous road was needed because many parts of the trail were far from existing highways. “How in the hell,” he is quoted in the article as asking, “is anybody going to enjoy these wilderness areas if you can’t get people there so they can look?…”

In any case, the commission resolved to designate newly paved reservoir perimeter roads in North and South Dakota as part of the trail. In 1969, responding to resolutions by both North Dakota and federal interagency groups, the North Dakota Highway Department numbered the new highways 1804 on the east bank and 1806 on the west to commemorate the years during which the expedition passed up the Missouri and back down. Eventually, South Dakota adopted the same numbering system.

Marking the highways that were to be official segments paralleling the trail was one of the earliest matters to concern the commission, as well as various state agencies and groups involved. For uniformity and continuity, a standard logo had to be agreed upon. In 1964 the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation announced a contest and a $500 prize for the best design, to be judged by the Darling Foundation. Although prizes were awarded, neither the winning insignia—depicting Sacagawea and her infant son—not the runner-up would be adopted. Instead, all designated roadways would bear signs showing Lewis and Clark in silhouette, one holding a rifle and the other pointing, above the words “Lewis and Clark Trail.”

Also to be worked out were means by which sites along the trail should be interpreted for travelers. South Dakota Historical Society Director Will Robinson pointed out that the minimal symbol markers would tell travelers that they were on part of the Lewis and Clark Trail, but they would not tell “what they did here and where did they do it…the real meat of the program.” Helping tourists visualize events associated with particular places, such as the meeting with the Teton Sioux at the mouth of the Bad River or the first encounter with the Nez Perces in Idaho, might be, one federal official thought, “the most important and perhaps the most difficult aspect of the entire trail concept.”

Interpretation in this case means establishing historical context and conveying portions of the narrative in as succinct and simple a manner as possible. It serves to authenticate locations—to zero in on fact and on the relation of fact to place. As Michael Kammen points out, the American public has come to suspect historical interpretation and to believe that “trustworthy history consists of true facts…accurately organized and presented. No more and no less.” Authenticity is the desired effect, one that appears to confer most of the educational value upon which the appeal of tourism is based.

Even duplicates or facsimiles, such as Forts Clatsop and Mandan, may please the public as much as if they had been the real thing, so long as they bear the imprimatur of authenticity. Of course, few traces of the Corps of Discovery remain upon the landscape, so replicas of lodging, salt cairns, and dugout canoes must fill the gap. Reconstructing the trail pretty much demands such an approach to history. That signs and other interpretive figurations alter the historical landscape and condition our perception of it, just as (in more subtle fashion) settlement and industry have, is beside the point if the entire trail is seen as a sort of imaginative replica.

By the time the commission issued its final report in October 1969, much had already been done at the federal, state, and local levels to interpret the trail and draw public attention to it through various activities, including canoeing and hiking expeditions. Four new national historic landmarks had been designated along the trail: Weippe Prairie, north of the Clearwater River in Idaho and the Great Falls Portage Route, Camp Disappointment, and Pompey’s Pillar in Montana. The Corps of Engineers, Bureau of Land Management, Bureau of Reclamation, and Forest Service developed camping and other visitor facilities and set out to install interpretive “devices,” while local volunteer organizations initiated projects for establishing and developing additional sites. Legislation would be introduced to designate a stretch of the upper Missouri as a “Wild and Scenic River,” and successful steps taken to rescue Beaverhead Rock in Montana from blasting, to name only a few initiatives.
In the waning months of its authorized existence, the commission became the focus of controversy over whether to extend that existence, since guidance and a high public profile were necessary to maintain momentum for the project. Members at a Portland meeting in early 1969 voted to recommend national legislation that would, in effect, make the commission permanent. But objections quickly followed from different quarters. Life magazine called on all federal commissions to hang it up. Representative John Kyl of Iowa, who had authored the bill creating the Lewis and Clark Commission, opposed on principle giving indefinite life to temporary commissions. Kyl's suggestion that it be replaced by a private organization was echoed by North Dakota Commissioner, John Greenslit, who also served as coordinator of the North Dakota State Outdoor Recreation Agency. He acknowledged that "a new organization is needed with state initiative," since Congress appeared unlikely to renew the commission. Congress rejected a bill to extend its life for five more years, and the Lewis and Clark Commission was disbanded in October 1969.

It now appeared that any additional work commemorating the route of the Corps of Discovery would be left up to organizations and commissions within the individual states or to initiatives within the Department of the Interior. In South Dakota, for example, the Great Lakes of South Dakota Association assumed responsibility for improvements in the early 1970s, sponsoring, among other things, a Lewis and Clark Historical Canoe Trail between Picktown, South Dakota, and Sioux City, Iowa. County committees had been established in Missouri and Iowa. In many other of the 11 states concerned, governors appointed state committees to pick up the slack, but some sort of umbrella organization that could continue to coordinate efforts and keep the idea of a national historic trail in the public eye was clearly needed.

One of the final recommendations made by the national commission had been that "one or more groups should be organized to further the broad program" it had developed. In 1970 a nonprofit organization, the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Inc., was formed to do just that. A mimeographed publication, The Lewis and Clark Journal, edited by G. Edward "Gus" Budde of the Lewis and Clark Trail Committee of Missouri, appeared quarterly during the early 1970s, reporting on meetings, legislative efforts, issues related to historic sites, trail development news, and projects being supported by the Heritage Foundation. Budde, who is described in a newspaper article as being "one of the last of the old-time publicity men," had "personally retraced" the trail from Wood River to Fort Clatsop eight times. In the winter of 1974-75 the first issue of We Proceeded On, the official publication of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, reported on the organization's sixth annual meeting held the preceding August at Seaside, Oregon, and noted that the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation was ready to submit legislation to Congress that would establish historic as well as scenic trails.

By 1975 the Pacific Crest Trail and the Appalachian Trail had been designated while numerous candidates besides the Lewis and Clark route were being studied, including the Mormon, Santa Fe, Continental Divide, Natchez Trace, Oregon, and Alaska Gold Rush trails. It was becoming apparent that large segments of the Lewis and Clark Trail did not qualify as "a land-based national and scenic trail," according the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation. Very little of it held potential for, say, bicycling or hiking. However, a "historic" trail alternative soon came into being that would permit a different concept of national trail.

The National Historic Trail and Travelway category provided for extended routes (hundreds of miles), parts of which would be intended for foot or non-motorized travel, travel along or on waterways, or motorized travel along marked public highways and roads. They would be sufficiently documented for their national historic interest and be marked by interpretive sites that would "provide the user with the intangible elements of historic feeling and association."

In a 1975 preliminary report, the Bureau of Outdoor Recreation recommended that, while the entire 3,700-mile route be designated, development be restricted to 135 miles of land and 2,010 miles of water within 21 "selected federally administered and complementing state and locally administered components." The effort was to be coordinated by the Department of the Interior and an advisory council made up of representatives from governing agencies as well as the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation and other private trail organizations.

The final study report was completed in April 1977, and the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail officially came into existence on November 10, 1978. For more than 20 years efforts have continued to carry out the general recommendations of the National Lewis and Clark Commission. The National Park Service holds overall responsibility for the historic trail, but development and management of sites have largely been carried out by other agencies and organizations. By the summer of 1998 there were four major interpretive centers along the route: in addition to the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial and Arch in St. Louis and the Fort Clatsop National Monument in Oregon, new facilities had opened near Washburn, North Dakota, and in Great Falls, Montana. Preparations for the 200th anniversary of the expedition are being spearheaded by a volunteer National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council, founded by the Trail Heritage Foundation. Just as the work of the commission in the 1960s both reflected and molded public attitudes toward this historical enterprise, so will the bicentennial commemoration, particularly as it is manifested in the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail.

Wallace G. Lewis is associate professor of history at Western State College in Gunnison, Colorado, and author of articles and book reviews on western exploration, the fur trade, and the trans-Mississippi West. He is currently writing a book on commemorations of the Lewis and Clark expedition over the last century.
Kudos for COLUMBIA

Your editorial on the final Pacific Coast ending of Lewis and Clark's historic journey of discovery in the Spring 2002 issue of COLUMBIA was outstanding. I visited this area last September. I hope that the National Park Service will preserve this historic area and am writing them in support of your letter.

I like COLUMBIA Magazine's wraparound covers and especially this month's depiction of Captain Cook's battle at the Big Island of Hawaii. I have snorkled in that bay and it doesn't seem much changed over the centuries as far as nature is concerned.

— Thorton Thomas

FREE LECTURE

On Thursday, October 10, 7 PM, at the Washington State History Museum, W. R. Swagerty presents, "Northwest Indian Trade Blankets: The History and Symbolism of a Unique North American Tradition," one in a series of free lectures offered in conjunction with the exhibition, Wrapped in Tradition: The Chihuly Collection of Native American Trade Blankets, on view now through October 27, 2002. Associate professor of history and director of the John Muir Center for Environmental Studies at the University of the Pacific in Stockton, California, Swagerty is also author of this issue's cover feature (page 24).

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Additional Reading

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

The King County Poor Farm

Beginnings, Progress, and Achievement in the Medical Work of King County, Washington, by M. A. Matthews. Seattle: Harborview Hospital, c. 1930.


The Artistic Views of Gustavus Sohon


Indian Trade Blankets in the Pacific Northwest


"Irish Pat" McMurtry


Following in Their Footsteps


In the 1880s silver mines that opened in the Wood River area of south central Idaho produced the settlements of Ketchum, Hailey, Bellevue, Bullion, Broadford, and Muldoon. Although several mines in the region, notably the Minnie Moore, produced significant amounts of silver and lead in the 1880s, most petered out by the 1890s, leaving the once-thriving settlements dormant until a tourist boom in the late 20th century rejuvenated the area. But while the silver lasted, the Wood River settlements prospered and enjoyed a rich cultural life.

Clark C. Spence, professor emeritus of history at the University of Illinois Champaign and a prominent mining historian, ably recounts this history in For Wood River or Bust. Using vivid and lively prose, Spence discusses not only the economic history of the towns but their social and cultural history as well. Indeed, the strength of the book lies in Spence's ability to capture the flavor of these camps. Relying heavily on newspaper accounts and personal papers, Spence provides portraits of several prominent citizens in Wood River, including Samson, a circus elephant who periodically visited Hailey and wreaked havoc on the town. Spence also discusses the ethnic makeup of Wood River settlements, the proselytizing efforts of religious leaders such as Daniel Turtlet, Episcopal bishop of Montana, and the various outlets for amusement in the region. By the conclusion of the book, the reader has an intimate portrait of Wood River in the 1880s.

At times the narrative degenerates into a series of lists, such as when Spence discusses the economic output of Wood River mines. In addition, the significance of the Wood River settlements is unclear. Spence argues throughout the book that Wood River towns and people were "typical of the mineral West," but he fails to demonstrate their economic and social importance. The book therefore seems to be more of an anecdotal history, geared more toward a popular audience than a scholarly one.

For Wood River or Bust is an interesting and colorful look into the early history of several Idaho towns. Because few historians have examined mining ventures in the Wood River area, it fills a significant gap in Idaho history.

Matthew C. Godfrey earned his doctorate in American and public history. He teaches at the University of Idaho and Washington State University on a part-time basis.
Despite growing calls for alternative means of transportation, Americans increasingly depend on automobiles. In cities both large and small, the vast majority of people commute to work in single-occupancy vehicles. Not all regions are so completely dependent on private cars, however. As historian Carolyn Neal and photographer Thomas Kilday Janus demonstrate in Puget Sound Ferries, an extensive network of ferries has long complemented the automobile as an important means of transportation in the Puget Sound region.

Neal and Janus make clear, in fact, that waterborne transportation in the area long predated the invention of the internal combustion engine. Well before whites settled the region, Indians plied the “natural highways” of Puget Sound in sleek cedar canoes. The arrival of white settlers in the 19th century created a growing demand for a fast, comprehensive system of water transportation that neither Indian canoes nor pioneer sailing vessels could satisfy. Entrepreneurs consequently began to establish competing ferry companies that employed swift, reliable steamships to connect Seattle and Tacoma to the myriad settlements that dotted the sound. By 1900 the heterogeneous collection of small ferries operated by these companies had become the mainstay of Puget Sound transit.

The growing popularity of the automobile, however, dramatically altered the regional ferry industry. The need for substantially larger ferries to transport cars spurred a period of consolidation that ended in 1936 when Puget Sound Navigation (PSN) emerged as a virtual monopoly. By 1951, in turn, rising costs and competition from new highways forced PSN to turn over its operations to the state. To this day, Neal and Janus conclude, the Washington State Ferry System remains the largest service of its kind in America and is an important regional transportation complement to the automobile.

Filled with interesting anecdotes, Puget Sound Ferries makes clear the pivotal part that ferries played in the development of the region. Its greatest strength lies not in its interpretation, however, but in its many photographs. A coffee-table book, Puget Sound Ferries offers several hundred pictures of ferries that have plied the sound, including several dramatic shots of the famous Kalakala. The book is not without its flaws, though. In particular, it cries out for more maps than the single one provided. This fault aside, it is a solid contribution that will prove useful to ferry hobbyists, scholars studying the development of Puget Sound, and even those seeking alternatives to our nation’s growing dependence on automobiles.

Surviving the Oregon Trail, 1852
As Told by Mary Ann and Willis Boatman and Augmented with Accounts by Other Overland Travelers
Reviewed by Carol Hammond.

Every traveler on the Oregon Trail had his or her own story to tell. Despite the common content of overland accounts, such as the landmarks they all passed and descriptions of fording rivers and other similar experiences, their observations and opinions can often be very unique and personal. So, although many diaries and accounts are already available, another telling of this story is still welcome. This book also offers more than just one traveler’s story. It includes so many additional resources, interspersed with the original account and documented in notes, that it is an excellent resource for the interested reader or historian of the Oregon Trail.

Rau presents the story as told by his great-grandparents, Puyallup pioneers Mary Ann and Willis Boatman, who left separate accounts of a trip from Illinois to Oregon written 53 years after the fact. The story thus reflects impressions tempered with a good deal of maturity. It also occasionally errs in its chronology and locations, and is sometimes vague about dates. This is noted, corrected, and amply compensated for by the meticulous research of the editor. Using other accounts from the same year of travel, 1852, his own travel and exploration of the route, and many other primary and secondary resources, Rau not only fills in the gaps but provides additional information on everything from the geology of rock formations to how a wagon is built.

Of the two Boatman accounts, Mary Ann’s was the more descriptive of the trip. Her reaction to and fear of the Indians, accounts of theft and the reality of the emigrant’s life and the hardships they faced are highly realistic. Her account is included in its entirety. The Boatmans, who eventually became quite prosperous, tell a story that contains elements both typical and unique.

The exploration and explanation of almost all the events, places, and topics mentioned and the framing of the original material with other accounts makes this retelling much more useful, interesting, and clear than if it stood alone. Rau’s careful research and citations can serve as a guide for exploring the Oregon Trail experience; this is especially true of the travelers’ firsthand accounts.

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