Lewis and Clark’s Provision Camp: Chance Encounters on the Columbia, p. 22
Drawn to Yellowstone
Artists in America’s First National Park
Peter H. Hassrick

Since its inception in 1872, Yellowstone National Park has been an inspiration to generations of artists, including Thomas Moran, Albert Bierstadt, Frederic Remington, and Louis Comfort Tiffany and dozens of other artists who braved difficult conditions to capture the splendor of Yellowstone. Peter Hassrick traces the artistic history of the Park from its earliest explorers to the present day, providing a richly illustrated account of the artists who traveled to and were inspired by Yellowstone.

Published with the Autry Museum of Western Heritage, Los Angeles
Clothbound, $50.00
Paperback, $35.00

Hard Drive to the Klondike
Promoting Seattle During the Gold Rush
Lisa Mighetto

In 1896, when gold was discovered in British Columbia on Rabbit Creek, a tributary of the Klondike River, newspapers trumpeted the discovery around the world. Business owners in Seattle and elsewhere hoped to profit from the discovery by supplying erstwhile miners with the myriad goods and services they would require. Lisa Mighetto captures the unique character of Seattle at the turn of the century and her engaging prose illuminates this in-depth study of the economics and culture of the time.

Published with the Northwest Interpretive Association
Paperback, $19.95

Alaska, an American Colony
Stephen Haycox

In contrast to the stereotype of Alaska as a place where rugged individualists triumph over the harsh environment, historian Stephen Haycox offers a less romantic, more complex history that emphasizes the broader national and international contexts of Alaska’s past. Focusing on Russian America and American Alaska, Haycox brings the story of Alaska up to the present and explores the continuing impact of Alaska Native claims settlements, the trans-Alaska pipeline and the Alaska Lands Act. Covering cultural, political, economic, and environmental history, the book also includes an overview of the region’s geography and the anthropology of Alaska’s Native peoples.

Clothbound, $29.95
Cover: Although this c. 1845 drawing by frontier artist Paul Kane is labeled "Chickamin Indians," it actually appears to be a composite of four different native groups from the lower Columbia region. For example, the "Neg PIECE" (French for pierced nose) is depicted in the upper right. The Lewis and Clark journals refer to a "handsome people" in the Columbia River Gorge region with features that look very European; the image on the bottom right reflects this description. Paul Kane also described in great detail how the Casawe Indians flattened the heads of their young, a practice that left permanent facial features: this can be seen in the bottom left image. Finally, William Clark described coming across natives from the Willamette River region with white paint across their foreheads, as seen in the figure in the drawing's upper left. The drawings clearly represent facial characteristics of Native American groups the Corps of Discovery encountered as they traveled through Oregon and Washington. See related article beginning on page 22. (Courtesy Stark Museum of Art, Orange, Texas.)
One of the greatest assets of the Washington State Historical Society is its membership base. We want to be good stewards of that relationship and, in fact, expand upon it. If it is not already immediately apparent, since last spring we have been attempting to create more and better opportunities for members to take part in the life of the organization, socially and intellectually. For example, our “Summer Evening on the Plaza” event July 12th, heralding the opening of the neighboring Chihuly Bridge of Glass, was the best attended member function since the History Museum’s grand opening in 1996.

Toward these same ends we recently launched “Explore It,” a program and event guide that we will send to members from time to time to economically communicate the highlights of our schedule, emphasizing the short-term horizon but providing a “save the date” function for programs a little further into the future.

We think this increasingly member-oriented emphasis will, over the long-term, benefit the Society as well as its members, allowing us to maintain and even increase the number of high-caliber exhibits, programs, and special events that our members deserve and expect. I would like to ask your help in growing the membership of the Society. Take advantage of the order card enclosed in this magazine to buy a gift membership for a friend or family member or a subscription to COLUMBIA for your neighborhood school or community library. If you enjoy your membership in the Washington State Historical Society there is a good chance that you know someone who would enjoy it too.

Thanks for your interest and support.

—David L. Nicandri, Director
Clarence Dill's West: Building Dams and Dreams

By Kerry E. Irish

Clarence C. Dill was one of Washington's more important, albeit largely forgotten politicians. He served the state and the nation as a United States congressman from 1915 to 1919, and as a United States senator from 1923 to 1935. The following essay summarizes Dill's career and attempts to answer some questions concerning his place in Washington state history, the history of the West, and the nation. In so doing, it assesses Dill's contributions to the modern West and takes a moment to address the ideas of some of the region's critics.

Clarence Dill retired too early from the Senate and lived too long afterward for his death to receive a great amount of attention. However, extended obituaries did appear in the state's major papers mentioning his work on radio legislation and Columbia Basin development. By the time of his death most Washingtonians were probably not impressed that he had been the Senate's driving force behind radio legislation in the 1920s and early 1930s. They simply could not relate to what radio had meant to the people of that era. The idea that listening to radio helped bring the nation closer together and began to unify East and West in a cultural and psychological manner would never have occurred to most of those who read his obituary in 1978.

Most Washingtonians reading Dill's obituary were probably surprised to learn of his role in bringing about Grand Coulee Dam's construction and Columbia River development. Many have seen the dam, and all of us benefit from the power and irrigation water it delivers. Nevertheless, we all more or less take for granted the benefits the Columbia River dams provide. Some of us do this even to the extent of arguing that they be dismantled. But for the vast majority of Pacific Northwesterners the benefits the dams provide—flood control, water storage and irrigation, electric power, soil erosion prevention, extended transportation, recreation, and market development—far outweigh their negative aspects, which, I hope, we will continue to work to mitigate. But we do see the dams differently from Dill's generation. Murray Morgan wrote of Grand Coulee in 1954:

There are parts of our culture that stink with phoniness. But we can do some wonderful things, too. That dam is one of them. If our generation has anything good to offer history, it is that dam. Why, the thing is going to be completely useful. It is going to be a working pyramid.

We no longer think of the dams in those terms. For us they are tools, not wonders—tools that require constant adjustments and maintenance. We do not share our forebears' enthusiasm because we are desensitized to amazing things in our culture due to their abundance; from medicine to entertainment, we are constantly confronted with the near miraculous. Another reason for our lack of amazement at the Columbia's dams is that they are not visually inspiring, not even Grand Coulee. Stewart Holbrook wrote of this paradox in The Columbia: "It is big, all right, but it has to contend with too much space to look big. Set in the midst of appalling distances, it appears like a play dam of children, lost in the terrifying wastes."

Just as the vast landscape diminishes our appreciation for Grand Coulee, the passage of time diminishes our appreciation for Dill and other Columbia River developers. I suppose this is as it should be; we need to make room to honor those who make new contributions to life in this region. But why did Dill's contemporaries deny him, except for a brief period in 1934, the credit due him for his work in bringing Grand Coulee to reality? One reason is that he occupied a unique and pioneering niche in state politics. As far as the western part of the state was concerned, he was an
Easterner—not one of them—thus he did not receive generous coverage from the large western papers. Moreover, he was something of an outcast in Spokane as well. As a Democrat he was not particularly welcome among the Republican powerbrokers of that city. William H. Cowles, publisher of the Inland Empire's dominant newspaper, was particularly venomous toward Dill. Finally, the grass-roots group centered in Ephrata and Wenatchee that had agitated for the dam since 1918 was leery of anything and anyone coming from Spokane—and with good reason, usually—so that even when the whole project rested on Dill's relationship with FDR, they were suspicious that he would betray the dam. One of the leaders of this group, Rufus Woods, was a diehard Republican and publisher of central Washington's most important newspaper, the Wenatchee Daily World. All things considered, it is remarkable that Dill's importance in relation to Grand Coulee can be discerned from extant sources.

Just as some denied Dill recognition for his work in developing the Columbia River, there are some today who criticize Dill and his generation for building dams in the first place. Donald Worster, one of these critics, advocates small community living, doing nothing more than the basics for survival. He writes:

Relieved of some of its [the West's] burdens of growing crops, earning foreign exchange, and supporting immense cities, it might encourage a new sequence of history, an incipient America of simplicity, discipline, and spiritual exploration, an America in which people are wont to sit long hours doing nothing, earning nothing, going nowhere, on the banks of some river running through a spare, lean land.

For Worster, the dams and the reclamation they made possible epitomize the evils of the capitalist system in the West. His solution requires nothing less than the complete transformation of human nature. When water is scarce, human beings as we know them, as history reveals them, respond quite differently from Worster's idyllic man. Stewart Holbrook described that response when he wrote, "Men fought, sued, and shot each other because of water. Communities warred and split because of water."

Contrary to Worster's ideal, in the real West, populated with real people, irrigation was a prerequisite for survival. One either irrigated land in the arid regions or moved away. The very first white settler in the arid region of eastern Washington, Marcus Whitman, possessed his share of idealism but was practical enough to see the necessity of irrigation. There was no other way the land could support significant numbers of people. The West's aridity, then, was a significant factor in molding the lives of Westerners and their society. Wallace Stegner wrote of the West's pioneers, "Most of the changes in people's lives—which I am quite sure in most of their lives were unintended—were forced upon them by the condition of aridity." In short, Worster and those who believe as he does have little concept of what life would really be like if they were to implement their philosophy and even less understanding of the human suffering that implementation would engender.

Aridity, then, dictated the nature of life in much of the West in Dill's early days and is even more powerful today given the scarcity of good farmland. The need for irrigation in the West, in Dill's Inland Empire, is a constant that ties the past to the present and makes us very much like our forebears. So too our dependence on electrical power. There are other continuities as well.

Despite assertions to the contrary, the West is still a place of open spaces and extended distances. The task of those who came here before us was to conquer that wilderness and overcome the distance to make a non-nomadic civilization possible. Our task may well be to preserve what wilderness remains to make temporary escape from the pressures of modern life possible. Thus, the problem before us concerning the wilderness is very different than the one our forebears faced. Let us not criticize our ancestors because they faced a different challenge.

The answer to our dilemma does not lie in disavowing the progress of the past, as Donald Worster would have us do. He argues that the West is trapped by its past. Because of its reliance on irrigation it is ruled by a concentrated power hierarchy based on the command of scarce water. The great evil for Worster—after the capitalist economy—is irrigation and how it is used to allow a small group to dominate others and the land. Surely, though, it was not the dams and irrigation canals that were the basis for this alleged power structure but the reality that water was scarce. Even without dams and irrigation, the fact would remain that whoever controlled the water possessed great power. It would only have meant concentrating a more limited resource in fewer hands, with the result of even fewer people living in arid areas. The problem is aridity, not man's ancient solution to it. Worster continues in error when he writes that the basic problem is "the apparatus and ideology of unrestrained environmental conquest which lies at the root of the Joads' affliction."

The people of Dill's generation, including the Joads of John Steinbeck's The Grapes of Wrath, would not have understood Worster's solution to their problem. In fact, they would have thought him crazy, for Worster has their affliction exactly backwards. Isn't the cause of the Joads' desperation the failure to control the Dust Bowl environment of Oklahoma? And didn't irrigation, far from being their nemesis in the West, offer them some hope that they might find a new home? Hasn't the West offered that new home to millions? And without irrigation where might those millions have gone? What would have become of them? Though it is true that only a small percentage of those who came west now live on an irrigated farm, all Westerners benefit from the cornucopia irrigation makes possible and from the power the Columbia River's dams generate. Stegner analyzed correctly the role of irrigation and the federal government in the West when he said, "I think the West would have been impossible without federal intervention [which brought vast irrigation projects]. What might have happened to the country had not the West absorbed so many displaced persons in the thirties?" Worster's "solutions" to society's problems do not address those problems: they eliminate the society. Though
Stegner was no admirer of the modern West—he identified too closely with the West of his youth for that—he understood what irrigation meant to the region. And in that recognition he leads us to another interesting question: How did the West come to be a region built, to a large extent, on irrigation?

The effort to irrigate extensive sections of western land was largely unsuccessful until the federal government passed the Newlands Act in 1902. Under this act money derived from selling public lands in the West was to be used to construct irrigation projects. Land reclaimed through these projects was then to be sold in 160-acre parcels or less, depending on the needs of family farmers. The Newlands Act was a significant milestone in the region's history in that it marked the intrusion of the federal government into two of the defining elements of western life: water supply and agriculture.

Out of the Newlands Act came the Bureau of Reclamation, which held the power to pass judgment on the hopes and dreams of Westerners. But even the federal government found conquering the vastness of the West a challenge. The Newlands Act failed to reclaim lands to the degree its proponents had envisioned. As a result, intense development of the West's reclaimable lands did not begin until Franklin Roosevelt became president. When FDR spoke to the 20,000 people assembled at Grand Coulee on August 4, 1934, he looked forward to vast development of the region, fully aware that New Deal dollars were coming west in disproportionate amounts. He pointed out to his Grand Coulee audience that he had allocated to the three states, Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, a "much larger share of the public works than the population justifies." There were many reasons for this, but surely one of them was reclamation's ability to provide homes and jobs for thousands of the nation's unemployed once agricultural commodities returned a fair profit. FDR shared Thomas Jefferson's romantic notions concerning farm life. If he could put people on farms as part of the solution to the Great Depression, he would do it.

Other reasons the West received New Deal dollars in disproportionate amounts were the extent of poverty and suffering in the region and many federal aid programs' favoritism for large, sparsely populated areas. Donald Reading has made a fascinating study of this issue in which he argues that the federal government tended to spend money in states where it owned a higher percentage of land and where real per capita personal income had declined the sharpest. Reading further argues that an important factor in determining whether New Deal funds would be spent in a state was the willingness of state and local units to set up machinery for disbursing such funds. Moreover, the vigor with which state officials lobbied for programs seems to have had a significant effect on the flow of funds. Reading is correct—funds for Grand Coulee came to the Pacific Northwest because the region, led by Clarence Dill, lobbied so effectively for them and because Dill had placed himself in a persuasive position with the president.

One question remains: Why were Westerners so determined to secure New Deal dollars? The answer has to do with the builder mentality so typical of the West in the first half of the 20th century. Recognizing that their region possessed vast resources but was underdeveloped, western congressmen and senators—Dill chief among them—went after New Deal dollars like Sooners after new land. The Washingtonian brought to his quest for Grand Coulee a long-term plan and a refusal to take no for an answer, plus an army of like-minded Westerners. There was little of the squabbling that beset other regions over whether the West wanted federal help. The peculiar western mind, then, had much to do with securing New Deal dollars, which in turn helped create the modern dam-based West.

Though the reclamation aspect of Grand Coulee did not become a reality until the 1950s, the Pacific Northwest benefited enormously from the other aspect of the project: cheap electricity. In the 1920s the Pacific Northwest was an economic and social hinterland, a colony. The region's failure to gain a significant tariff on wood products in the late 1920s suggests that it was a political colony as well. Dill understood how the rest of the country was using the Pacific Northwest and how the immense Grand Coulee project could help develop the region. He saw clearly that cheap power and reclamation could help bring prosperity to the region and that prosperity would help make Washington more powerful politically. Indeed, he fought for the project on the grounds that other parts of the nation were benefiting from large federal projects (Muscle Shoals on the Tennessee River and Boulder Dam on the Colorado River) while the Pacific Northwest was being rebuffed with regard to Grand Coulee. Thus it was no surprise to Clarence Dill when the development of the Columbia River, especially Grand Coulee Dam, began to change Washington's relationship to the rest of the country. The cheap and abundant electricity Grand Coulee provided made possible vast increases in manufacturing during World War II. Shipbuilding, aircraft...
construction, and aluminum production increased dramatically in the region as a result of the war. The latter two remain important aspects of the region’s economy.

Then there is Hanford. Because of the vast open spaces and the existence of cheap electricity, southeastern Washington was a logical site for nuclear experimentation. One might argue that Hanford was the price the Pacific Northwest paid to become an equal member of the Union. However we view Hanford, the nation’s defense needs and the region’s electrical power, combined with Boeing’s commercial aircraft industry, have formed the backbone of the Pacific Northwest postwar economy. It was no accident that in the third quarter of the 20th century another senator from Washington, Henry Jackson, rose to the top echelons of the Senate as an expert on defense.

Clarence Dill was extremely proud of his region’s importance during the war, due largely to Grand Coulee. He smiled when he heard people say the great dam may have won World War II because it supplied the energy that produced the aluminum for 60 percent of America’s planes. He was prouder still of the region’s increasing prosperity, made more evident with each passing decade. He accepted completely the idea that development was good, that prosperity defined as a rising standard of living was a worthy goal. He would have shaken his head in dismay at the trend in western literature that sees the present West as unworthy of the past, that the West of today has lost its allure, its romance.

We come, then, to Clarence Dill the man and his contribution to Pacific Northwest history. In his prime Dill was an accomplished politician, adept at presenting a carefully crafted image to the public. A historian, however, must not allow a politician’s image to obscure the man. As John Clive has written, history is “to a great extent a process of penetr­ ating disguises and uncovering what is hidden.”

Clarence Dill believed firmly in what Stegner calls “three of the American gospels: work, progress, and the inviolability of contract,” though perhaps it is fair to say he believed in them in inverse order. Dill was a lawyer and a politician; on more than one occasion he sued for failure to fulfill a contract. Moreover, the work of lawyers and politicians rests on the strength of the contracts they make. Nor did work scare the Methodist-raised Dill, though he learned early on that one hour with his nose behind the rear end of a mule was less enjoyable than two with his nose in a book.

Then there is progress; Dill believed in three kinds of progress and came to believe that they might be mutually exclusive. First, he believed in progressive political principles: the idea that government could and should make society better for the majority of people. Second, he believed in progress for individuals, the people of his district and state. He wanted to see those people do better for themselves and the government do better by them. Finally, he believed in progress for Clarence Dill; he did not want to spend his life in public service and have little to show for it. Wesley Jones’s defeat in 1932 and quick subsequent death profoundly affected Dill. From the time Dill chose to retire in 1934 (and probably much earlier) to the end of his lawsuit against Grant County PUD over his Canadian storage work, Dill wrestled with the conflict between making money and serving the public interest.

There are other aspects of Dill’s personality worth remembering, especially his attachment to the Pacific Northwest, his chosen home. He loved eastern Washington, with its azure sky, sparkling waters, and majestic landscape. Reminiscent of the first President Roosevelt, he loved to hunt and fish; the outdoors was his sanctuary from politics.

Dill was also a student of history, and though he studied it without great depth, he learned that change was a given in human society. Thus there was no sense in looking back to some mythical Golden Age as many of his progressive brethren did. He believed in taking from the past what was useful—the solid principles and wisdom of men like Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln—and moving forward, progressing. In that adaptability, Dill was unlike many people both past and present who, partly as a result of their lack of historical perspective, are reluctant or unable to adapt to new realities. Without a knowledge of history many people know only their own lives, thus they are prisoners of the present and afraid of what lies ahead. Dill was never afraid of the future.

Dill used history to provide a philosophical base for his politics and material for his oratorical performances. The spoken word was his lifelong love, but it was a blind romance. He did not notice when the oratorical style that had made William Jennings Bryan so popular, the style he had adopted as his own, lost its ability to impress most Americans. Dill’s persistence in speaking in the oratorical style that had helped send him to the Senate in 1922 caused many later observers to esteem him lightly and believe he had significantly exaggerated his accomplishments. Indeed, for many he became the living stereotype of the old-time machine politician: tainted with graft, a blowhard, and a has-been—not the complicated political maverick that he has been portrayed in my book. Those who remembered him as he had truly been regarded him differently from those who knew him only in his later years. The correspondence between Dill and Warren Magnuson is full of the latter’s respect for the old senator.
Nevertheless, Dill did feel the need to tell people of his accomplishments. Part of this need was rooted in his political personality: successful politicians must find a way to make their constituents aware of their accomplishments; but the greater cause of this self-promotion was his unique position in the history of Washington state politics. Dill was nothing less than a pioneer in his own right: a progressive Democrat in a state full of progressive Republicans and conservative Democrats. This circumstance forced him to distance himself from the state’s Democratic party so that he could appeal to enough progressive Republicans to get elected. The result was a state Democratic party that was always suspicious of its most prominent member in the 1920s and early 1930s. Seldom did the party credit Dill for his accomplishments.

Dill’s east side origins only added to his isolation. Washington’s major newspapers—along with most of the population—were situated in the Puget Sound region. These newspapers, almost always Republican in sympathy, tended to ignore the rest of the state. They especially ignored successful Democrats whenever possible. Nor were the two primary papers on the east side of the mountains, the Wenatchee Daily World and the Spokesman-Review, any more forthcoming in praise. Dill’s unique political position in the state thus contributed to his propensity for self-promotion. If he hadn’t promoted himself through his vast letter-writing and public appearances, his constituents would seldom have heard about his efforts on their behalf.

As his life continued into its post-political period this self-promotion, once so politically necessary, became a habit that resulted in some unfavorable impressions.

The epic length of Clarence Dill’s life presents other problems. He lived so long and was involved in so many different events that it is difficult to bring structure and balance to his biography. In that sense, he is very much like the region he made home—the West. In truth, Dill was the archetypal Westerner: he never stopped building, never questioned whether or not building was progress.

We might excuse this optimistic boosterism if we could say that Dill was an honest man, always guarding the public interest. But evidence suggests that he had moments of weakness, moments when his own enrichment became more important to him, moments when he violated the public trust.

Nevertheless, there was much good in Clarence Dill. His life is one of those that substantially contributed to the molding of the United States into one nation. Inasmuch as our national identity consists of both East and West—is a mingling of the two—Dill helped establish the mix. Dill’s life and work can be seen as strengthening the ties that bound the nation together, ties that have held in tough times. Energized by a dream of cheap power and reclaiming otherwise marginal frontier land, Dill sought and secured the aid of the federal government in developing the Columbia Basin. As a result, Westerners grew to look more often to Washington, D.C., for solutions to their problems than in the past.

Dill embodied the more robust western version of the American spirit of his time in another way as well: he rose from being dirt poor to entering the upper middle class by his own exertions. At the same time, he avoided developing contempt for those who failed to follow his example. He was always sympathetic to the less fortunate among his constituents, as his voting record on farm and labor issues attests. In his efforts on behalf of the less prosperous members of society, Dill was an advocate of change. He understood the changes that were coming and wanted to be a part of the inevitable transformation they would bring. Indeed, he wanted to lead in that transformation.

Dill’s life links East and West and demonstrates the mutability of American social classes. It also serves as a bridge between past and present. The West of today, in many ways, is still very much like the West of Clarence Dill’s youth: vast open spaces, wilderness, populations centered in cities, and, of course, the condition of aridity in most of the region. Consequently, life in the modern Pacific Northwest depends to a great extent on irrigation and hydroelectric power, two developments in which Dill played a leading role. Few of us would be willing to renounce these developments, which brings us to the question posed much earlier: is it more instructive for Pacific Northwesterners of today to view themselves as essentially similar to their antecedents of the first half of the 20th century or have we become so different that those differences define who we are? There can be no question that there are differences. But the overwhelming fact remains that we share an abiding faith in progress with those who came before us in this region; we still believe government can be a tool in that progress, and we feel that building and development are good if carefully managed. Careful management implies cooperation and compromise among competing interests; it has always been so. In the best western tradition, the tradition Clarence Dill embodied, cooperation will remain the path to progress.

Kerry E. Irish is a professor at George Fox University. This essay is the epilogue from his book, Clarence C. Dill, The Life of a Western Politician (Washington State University Press, 2000), excerpted here with permission of the publisher.
Beisboleros

Latin Americans and Baseball in the Northwest, 1914-1937

BY GILBERTO GARCIA

BEGINNING IN THE late 1870s baseball teams in the United States used the services of Latin Americans. Cuba provided the bulk of the early players, though there were a few individuals from South America and Mexico. Within the United States, segregationist practices affected the participation of minority players, and Latinos were not excluded from such effects. Participation in baseball required taking the color test. If you were white enough to pass the scrutiny of the fans, the players, and the owners, you were allowed to play baseball in the United States.

Two issues explain the treatment of Latin American ball players. First, the racial history of Latin America made it possible for some Latino baseball players to be accepted as "white" and for others to be rejected as too "dark." Second, players from Latin America were accepted more readily if they fulfilled a second requirement. This is what I call the "folkloric-esoteric" image. The newspapers utilized images of strange and colorful figures from sunny islands in the Caribbean and tropical places in Latin America, which brought images of bullfighters, Spanish grandees, "revolutionaries," and other folkloric fantasies. The images could be sold to the public in a nice, appealing wrapper, which in turn fulfilled the fantasies of white readers. Not surprisingly, this was the experience of Latin American baseball players in the Northwest.

Organized baseball in the Northwest began in the late 1890s with the establishment of several minor league circuits, including Latino players. The pioneers included three Cuban-born baseball players who were hired in the Northwestern League and the Pacific Coast League. Later, players of Mexican descent joined organized baseball in the region.

The Cuban Wonders

While historians are not certain when and how baseball was introduced to Cuba, the game became the national pastime. Crew members of American ships in Cuban ports probably taught the local population baseball. Some historians credit the introduction of baseball to the invading American armies, yet others argue that Cuban youth educated in American colleges and universities introduced the sport. Over the years, Cuban baseball produced a group of talented...
players, who attracted the attention of the major leagues in the United States. In exhibition games played in Cuba and the United States, Cuban players showcased their skills in the field and eventually they were introduced to professional baseball in America. As early as 1871 Cuban baseball players joined major and minor league teams in the United States. Cuban players eventually reached this region.

The arrival of Cuban players in such places as Seattle, Portland, and Victoria and Vancouver, B.C., attracted the attention of the local newspapers. Reporters referred to them as the “Cuban Wonders.” Between 1914 and 1922 three Cubans visited the baseball fields in the Northwest, playing for teams in the Northwestern and the Pacific Coast Leagues. The first was Jack Calvo who played in 1914 and 1916, respectively, for the Victoria and Vancouver teams in the Northwestern League. In 1916 José Acosta joined Calvo to play for the Vancouver team and returned in the 1917 season. Finally, the Seattle Indians acquired the contract of Manuel Cueto in 1922.

Jack Calvo was born in La Habana, Cuba, on June 11, 1894. Calvo’s baseball career began in Cuba in 1913 with the Almendares team where he played winter ball for many years. In the United States, Calvo played for the Washington Senators and in the New York-New Jersey League in 1913. Farmed out to the Los Angeles team in the Pacific Coast League in 1914, Calvo played in ten games as a pinch hitter. On June 8, 1914, newspapers announced the arrival of Calvo to the Victoria team of the Northwestern League. As with other early Latino players, local newspapers noted Calvo’s skin color and the fact that he encountered problems at the Canadian border. A local newspaper reported the following; “Calvo had some trouble with the immigration officers before he was allowed to land on account of his dark skin.” Journalists wrote about the strange appearance of these players from sunny Cuba.

According to reports of the era, Jack Calvo brought a major league wardrobe to the Northwestern League, including a Ty Cobb bat. Reportedly, it had been a gift from the major leaguer. Described as a “sawed-off Cuban,” “small hunk of Cuban,” Calvo measured 5'10" and weighed 156 pounds. He was a speedy outfielder who amazed the fans with his catching heroics. For example, the Spokane Daily Chronicle reported the following play in one of the Victoria team’s visits: “Calvo’s catch off Lewis’ fly in deep center field was next to miraculous. He sized up the ball as it left the bat, sprinted backward and took it one-handed as it came over his shoulder.” In the Spokesman Review the same play was recorded as follows, “In the sixth Jimmy Lewis lined one toward center, the ball traveling high, fast, and on a level, on what looked good for a triple at least. But Calvo sprinted at least 50 yards, leaped high into the air, and speared with his gloved hand the flying missile.”

The Seattle Post-Intelligencer recorded the hitting and fielding heroics of Calvo as well as his skin color: “Calvo, the Cuban center drew applause by pulling down a great catch in center field. The dark-skinned visitor ran bases wild and hit the ball hard, scoring three of his team’s [runs].” Throughout the season, Calvo was praised for his ability to catch and make game-winning plays. His performance on the field earned him the nickname “Jack the Catcher” from fans and teammates alike.

Participation in baseball required taking the color test. If you were white enough to pass the scrutiny of the fans, the players, and the owners, you were allowed to play baseball in the United States.
the season the Cuban continued to impress the journalists of the era, and they never tired of writing of his baseball skills. At the end of the season Calvo finished with a batting average of .288. In 100 games, he batted 110 hits and stole 20 bases for the Victoria team.

TWO YEARS LATER Jack Calvo returned to the Northwestern League and recommended José Acosta, a Cuban pitcher who had gained fame defeating major league teams in exhibition games. Concerned about the cost of transportation from Cuba, Manager Robert Brown balked at the idea. When Calvo proposed to pay half of the transportation expenses in case Acosta did not perform well for the team, Brown quickly agreed to the deal and told them to report as soon as possible.

Within a month of the agreement, Calvo and Acosta arrived in Seattle to board the boat for Vancouver. However, Canadian authorities refused to allow the Cubans on board. When Brown was notified of the problem, he attempted to convince the authorities to let them into Canada, but to no avail. The border guards needed authorization from Ottawa before the Cubans could enter Canada. The two men waited for a response in Seattle's Hotel Frye at the team's expense. Calvo and Acosta joined the team on its way to Spokane and tried out for Vancouver in a game against Anacortes in Mount Vernon.

On May 1, 1916, Acosta pitched his first Northwestern League game in Spokane, beating the local team by a score of 4 to 3, striking out 4 and giving 4 bases-on-balls. The newspaper reported, "His stock in trade consists of a spit ball, a curve ball and a fast ball. Added to this is an important delivery that differs somewhat from the by-product of this country."

Despite Acosta's success, sports editors commented on the size of the Cuban, "If he were five or six inches taller, possibly just large enough to get off the midget class, the member of that family who is pitching and sometimes playing the outer garden for Bob Brown's Vancouver club would be given a chance in the big circuit for a certainty. He is not only a good pitcher but a smart ball player." By the end of the season, Acosta won 16 games and lost 13, convincing the Vancouver team to invite him back for the 1917 season.

Jack Calvo continued to impress with his performance in hitting and fielding. In the first game of the season against the Spokane team, "he (Acosta) was saved by Calvo in the outfield. The Cuban came to the rescue of his pal and nipped two long hits off the boards that would have gone for triples." In a game against Seattle, Calvo threw from left, preventing a run to score: "Calvo got the ball near the left line and sent it home on a low line throw for the out." The Cuban outfielder was a speedster on the bases and scored for Vancouver with daring running. According to sports writers of the time, Calvo imitated Ty Cobb's running into bags, "Calvo has a wicked way of jumping into a bag with his spikes ahead of him. He gets this from Ty Cobb." For that year in the Northwestern League, Calvo batted .337 with 138 hits and 20 stolen bases. Towards the end of the season, he was sent to the San Francisco Seals of the Pacific Coast League.

Due to the effects of World War I, the 1917 season came to an early end and José Acosta left to play briefly in the Pacific Coast League. Acosta continued to play in the minor league circuits in the United States and eventually played for the Washington Senators from 1920 to 1921 and Chicago in the American League in 1922.

For Love of the Game

THE "CUBAN WONDERS" continued to arrive in the Northwest and in the 1922 season Seattle acquired the services of Manuel Cueto. Cueto was born on February 8, 1892, in Guanajay, Cuba and attended Sister's College in Havana. As with all of the Cuban major leaguers, Cueto began his career playing for teams in the Cuban winter league. In the United States, Cueto initiated his baseball career in the South Atlantic League in 1911, playing for the Jacksonville team. Newspaper accounts and box scores erroneously identified him as Cuesta. He remained a member of the team until July 1914 and later that year joined the St. Louis Federales. From 1917 to 1919 Cueto had the opportunity to play in the majors with the Cincinnati Reds. In 1920 Cueto was sold to Seattle as partial payment for a trade. Unhappy with the deal, he refused to report to the Seattle team.

The arrival of Cuban players in such places as Seattle, Portland, and Victoria and Vancouver, B.C., attracted the attention of the local newspapers. Reporters referred to them as the "Cuban Wonders."
Instead he played in the unaffiliated leagues in the Northeast.

In order to be readmitted into organized baseball, Cueto had to pay a fine of $200 to the Pacific Coast League. Cueto joined Seattle in 1922, bringing with him experience in every position of the game except that of pitcher. Newspaper accounts described him as, "small but husky, tanned by the Havana sun, the little Cuban is no bigger than Billy Lane, but he owns a brace of shoulders which suggests real batting power." The Post-Intelligencer wrote, "Cueto is at home in the infield, and he can roam the gardens with the best of them. The Cuban has plenty of speed and is a good hitter, which is proven by the fact that he batted .298 with Cincinnati in 1918." Of the three Cuban players there is little information on their treatment. However, an interview recorded in the Post-Intelligencer gives us a glimpse of their character as well as how they were treated by some journalists:

Cueto, he plays baseball because he loves the game. Ever since knee high Cueto plays American game. Come to this country and make good. Go to big leagues, hit well, field fine for Cincinnati. Break my shoulders go to minors. Play good again came back. Then Moran do me dirty trick. Take my World Series money away. Send me to Seattle. Bad man, Moran. President Klepper Seattle owner not give me fair deal. I play independent ball. Knock over off apple, field fine. Judge Landis put me back on eligible list. But I play baseball because I love game. If I don’t get a cent for play, would play baseball for nothing because I like game better than eat. And Cueto likes his groceries. When I get on field forget everything but to win, win, win.

Clearly, newspaper stories entertained the readers with the broken English of the players, a typical treatment of Latino baseball players in the United States. Still, the story reveals Cueto’s commitment to the game and his response to unfair treatment in organized baseball. To the journalist’s credit, the interview concluded on a positive note: “And the little Cuban went back to his cold coffee, leaving me with the impression that he meant every word he said.”

AFTER THE FIRST two games of the season, a San Francisco newspaper reported: “The hitting and fielding of little Manuel Cueto caught the eye of the crowd in both games. The Cuban played grand ball all week. When one of his admirers patted him on the shoulders and told him he was going pretty good, Cueto showed a row of white teeth and said, ‘No play good here too cold. Hot weather come, then Cueto, he show you some real baseball.’”

On August 10, 1922, the Seattle Post-Intelligencer announced the sale of Cueto to the Mobile team in the Southern League. Baseball creates interesting twists in the lives of players; the three Cubans met one more time in the Dixie
Melo Almada played in the majors for the Boston Red Sox, Washington Senators, St. Louis Cardinals, and Brooklyn Dodgers. He returned to the Pacific Coast League for one season with the Sacramento team in 1940.

The Almada Brothers

Fleeing the violence and political turmoil of the Mexican Revolution, the Almada family moved into the United States in the early 1910s. After failing to find housing in Tucson, Arizona, the family moved to Los Angeles. In contrast to the first Latin American players, Louie and Melo Almada followed a different path into professional baseball. Both were born in Mexico but raised and educated in Southern California. José Luis Almada was the eldest, born on September 7, 1907, in El Fuerte, Sinaloa; while Baldomero "Melo" Almada was born on February 7, 1913, in Huatabampo, Sonora.

Louie lived close to the University of Southern California, and the sports culture in the area affected him personally. The first time he saw a group of men playing softball he was intrigued by the game. Louie and Melo were naturals, excelling in every facet of sports. Louie favored football and baseball, though he tried other sports in high school. Melo joined the track team, but also excelled in baseball. While in high school, Louie helped his football and baseball teams win several city championships. Pitching for the Los Angeles High School team, Louie was unbeatable in 1925 and 1926. In his senior year Louie grew stronger, striking out 19 batters in two games and averaging 14 strikeouts in the other games.

Sam Crawford, scout for the New York Giants, discovered the star pitcher of the Los Angeles High School Romans and invited him to the New York Giants spring training in 1927. While Almada was not successful in earning a spot in the Giants' rotation, manager John McGraw saw the young pitcher's potential and sent him to the minors. However, Louie became frustrated and homesick, and returned to Southern California, missing the opportunity to be the first Mexican national in the majors.

The Seattle Indians picked up Almada in 1929, while he was playing for the San Clemente Dons, a semipro team in Southern California. According to reports, Louie was too wild as a pitcher but showed plenty of speed and intelligence in the field. As an outfielder, Ernie Johnson said of Almada, "He is as fast as any one in the club, chasing fly balls, and has a good arm. What is as important, he knows where to throw the baseball." Almada continued to impress the Seattle Indians in the outfield, "The little Mexican is far and away the best ground coverer in Seattle livery, and also packs an accurate and powerful arm."

From 1929 to 1932, Almada was the hero of many games with his timely hitting at the plate. In 1929 Seattle finished in last place, but Louie had a .305 batting average. Almada's heroics earned him the nickname "Ladies Day Louie." The impact of the Great Depression forced teams to open special nights for women and to charge less at the gates in order to increase the teams' revenues. A local sportscaster noted that Louie played great ball during the special ladies' day game. In a game between the Mission, B.C., Reds and Seattle Indians, the following occurred, "Kelly dropped Lawrence's high fly and the vocal chorus was even louder. Then, Fred Muller tripled to the scoreboard and eardrums popped right and left from the thunder of applause. No, I am wrong. That was only a whisper compared to the noise when Ladies Day Louie Almada lofted a homer over the right field fence for the fourth and fifth runs of the inning."

In 1930 and 1931 Almada finished the seasons with a batting average of .298 and .289, respectively. Louie Almada's career in Seattle came to end when his brother Melo Almada replaced him in the outfield in 1932. Louie was picked up by the Mission Reds who kept him as their regular outfielder until 1937. In 1934 the league organized an all-star game and with the participation of the fans the players were elected to the team. By the end of the balloting more than
20,000 fans had voted for Almada, testimony to his popularity in the league. Almada continued to play solid baseball for the Mission team, but in 1938, when the team moved to Los Angeles, Louie sent in his resignation.

While not as overpowering as his brother Louie, Melo Almada pitched the Los Angeles High Romans to two city championships in 1930 and 1931 and earned himself the position of team captain. In 1932 Louie paid all of Melo’s spring training expenses because the manager George Burns refused to take a chance on his brother. On April 15, 1932, the Post-Intelligencer reported the release of Louie Almada and the acquisition of his younger brother. The headlines in the sports section read, “Fate plays queer trick on Brothers.” Behind the scenes, another story unfolded between the team and the two brothers. The team’s ownership demanded from Louie a cut on his contract, which he flatly refused. This, according to Louie, was the real reason behind his release from the Seattle Indians.

With the two brothers on opposing teams, newspapers cashed in on the strange turn of events. The Post-Intelligencer reported, “It’s quite a battle the Almada brothers are putting on this week. Louie also hit a homer inside of the park Tuesday night. He hoisted a triple to right in the first frame last night to drive in two runs and picked up a double and a single.” In the same series the P-I recorded the meeting of the two brothers in the field, “It was a tough break for young Mel as he had robbed brother Louie of a base hit by a sparkling catch earlier in the game. Louie and Mel have featured in every game played this week.”

First in the Majors

As a regular player in the 1932 season, Mel continued to improve his hitting average from .164 on June 5 to .291 on July 24. By October he was batting a .308 average. In the 1933 season Melo Almada continued where he left off in 1932 by recording a batting average of .331 in the month of May. The newspapers reported, “The bright spot of last week’s disastrous series was the powerful hitting of Mel Almada and Art Bradbury. Mel batted .571 for the series, getting 16 hits in 28 times at bat. Mel has hit consecutively in the past 16 games.” Very soon major league teams began to pay attention to young Almada. The Brooklyn Dodgers approached the Seattle Indians for his services, but the Boston Red Sox acquired him at the end of the season. Melo Almada made history by becoming the first Mexican national in the majors. As a farewell to the Mexican ball player, on August 30, 1933, the fans honored him on “Mel Almada Night.” He left the Indians with a batting average of .325 and led the league in stolen bases. Melo Almada played in the majors for several years for the Boston Red Sox (1933-1937), Washington Senators (1937-1938), St. Louis Cardinals (1938-1939), and Brooklyn Dodgers (1939). He returned to the Pacific Coast League for one season with the Sacramento team in 1940. In 1972 Baldomero “Melo” Almada was inducted into Mexico’s Baseball Hall of Fame.

On July 15, 1999, the Mariners celebrated the opening of Safeco Field, and old-timers were invited to attend the first game. Among them, Louie Almada was invited to the celebration of the new stadium. The Times reported, “Lou Almada, known as “Ladies Day Lou” because he hit so well when thousands of women attended Seattle Indians games for a dime during the Depression, had the thrill of walking onto a field 66 years after playing professionally.” Few people knew he was the first Mexican national to play in the Pacific Coast League and the first Mexican to play professional ball in the Seattle area.

While at times the players suffered the discrimination typical of Latin Americans, in comparison to African American players, Latin Americans fared better on the baseball field. Even though newspaper accounts described them as dark-skinned, baseball teams allowed them to play alongside white players. Yet journalists, fans, and players ridiculed their language skills. Also, the stories of these ball players illustrate the experience of a different segment of the Latino population in the region. Most studies of the Northwest highlight the important contribution of Mexican agricultural workers in the formation of communities in the area. Nevertheless, in the history of Pacific Northwest baseball, these early pioneers opened the doors to the great wave of Latino ball players in the 1940s and 1950s.

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Author’s Note

Thanks to Dawn Hollanday, Larry Conboy, and Derek Hanson from Eastern Washington University’s graphics department for the images and Judith Lee from the university library’s interlibrary loan office. This article is dedicated to Louie Almada, a forgotten hero in the Pacific Coast League.
The "Map of the Arctic (Glacial) sea and the Eastern Ocean" was originally published by the Russian Naval Ministry in 1844. This copy is the corrected version, published in 1864, three years before the United States purchased Russia's North American territories. It includes the Washington coast as surveyed by the Hydrographic Department of the Russian Naval Ministry and contains manuscript markings indicating the location of all lighthouses in the North Pacific.

This rare map is part of a second donation of maps from the collection of the late Edward Allen documenting the cartographic history of the North Pacific Ocean and the northwest coast of North America. Allen systematically collected examples representing every era of exploration and mapping of the area from the 16th through mid 19th centuries. The addition of this fine collection enables the Society's Special Collections to offer another rich resource to serious researchers and historians.
Frederick Dent’s Route from Fort Dalles to Fort Simcoe

By Michael McKenzie

In my experience of three score years and ten, over half of which has been on the frontier of the Pacific Coast, it has been my fortune to encounter many hardships, and make many journeys involving hunger, fatigue, perils of travel, by snows in the mountains, by swollen streams, and days of weary travel over burning deserts, but I do not remember any journey involving more weariness of body, and anxiety of mind, than the one which, I am thankful to say, has just been successfully accomplished.

—United States Indian Agent James H. Wilbur from a letter to H. Price, commissioner of Indian Affairs, written July 18, 1881, after Wilbur’s return to Fort Simcoe from Malheur, Oregon.

James Harvey Wilbur was lucky to be alive—and knew it. He also should have known better. Wilbur had lived some 20 years in the desert climate of the Yakima Valley and understood the importance of dependable water sources and good roads for traveling on the frontier—especially in summer. The above letter, dated July 18, 1881, describes an ill-fated trip on a horrible road from Umatilla, Oregon, to Fort Simcoe, Washington Territory, made in the blistering

ABOVE: A wagon load of lumber from Cedar Valley heading down the Old Military Road to the Yakima Valley in 1898. Toppenish Creek is in the distance, and the flat area in the middle background is the Haller Battlefield. The long boards in the wagon are wheel drags used to slow the wagon’s descent on the steep portions of the road.
heat of July. The Malheur Indian Reservation in southeastern Oregon had been closed by the federal government, and Wilbur had been directed to proceed there and transfer all the government property (including a large cattle herd) back to Simcoe. Only able to carry two gallons of water for 40 men and 16 four-horse teams over a 50-mile trip across the dry sands of the Horseheaven Hills, Wilbur’s journey nearly turned into unmitigated disaster. There was little grass for cattle or teams; the road was “heavy with sand,” slowing their progress to a snail’s pace; nobody in the party had ever taken the road with loaded teams; and the route was entirely without water.

The route that Wilbur chose from Umatilla would appear to the uninitiated like a simple shortcut from the Columbia River to the Yakima Valley, heading northwest across the lower Horseheaven Hills and meeting the Yakima River near Prosser. This was no easy shortcut, however, and warning signs abounded for the prudent traveler. Old atlases show this road only once, ironically for the very same year that Wilbur made his trip (1881), so the route was evidently neither popular nor long-lasting. The reasons for the road’s unpopularity are not hard to decipher. On maps for the years 1878 and 1881, the region is labeled in simple yet prophetic terms: “Streams Dry in Summer,” and an earlier map labels the area as “Sage Barrens, Destitute of Timber.” In other words, “carry plenty of water, and cross at your own risk.” The eastern and lower Horseheaven Hills not only had no summer streams, but dependable springs were few and far between.

Wilbur’s choice of this road is even more incredible when one considers that he had a perfectly good and proven route to Fort Simcoe, and one with plenty of water: the road carved out by Frederick Dent 25 years earlier and employed routinely by freighters and travelers between The Dalles, Fort Simcoe, and the Yakima Valley. Although there were extensive Native American trails in the area and wagon trains had passed through the central part of Washington heading over Naches Pass, Dent’s military road represents the first graded road into the Yakima Valley and the longest-lasting wagon road in the region, being used even into the early 20th century. Dent’s road was certainly far superior to the Walla Walla to Steilacoom Road, which was begun in 1853 to aid emigrants coming to Puget Sound from the east. This road, which followed the Longmire Wagon Trail, suffered from a terrible route: some 68 crossings of the turbulent Naches River, and sheer cliffs near the summit of Naches Pass, making it necessary to lower the wagons by ropes. It also suffered a lack of commitment and leadership on the part of its chief engineer, Captain George McClellan. While on the job, McClellan wasted money and time, expended little effort on the project, and generally hindered rather than aided in the road’s construction. It is little wonder that this road was obsolete well before the close of the 19th century, and the main east-west route was moved north to Snoqualmie Pass, the present-day route of Interstate 90.

Dent’s route, on the other hand, usually called the Old Military Road, was a success from the beginning and became an essential lifeline to the fast-growing agricultural Meccas of both the Yakima and Kittitas valleys. As someone who grew up in the Yakima Valley and was familiar with the history of Fort Simcoe and the surrounding area, I became fascinated with this early road that had broken new ground into our valley. But I wanted a deeper knowledge of the road than books, old manuscripts, and letters alone could provide. I wanted to find the actual route blazed by Dent, to hike the roadbed and get a real sense of what he and his men faced nearly 150 years ago—and to get a feel for the rigors of early wagon travel into the Yakima Valley.

Although the road is indicated on many early maps and atlases of the region, their small scale makes it difficult to find the original route. In order to actually locate the road it was necessary to plot the route from old surveying maps of the General Land Office (now the Bureau of Land Management) onto modern topographical maps and then compare the route on paper with reality in the field. The roadbed’s tenacity was both surprising and gratifying. Except where farming, development, or forests had obliterated the road, it was still often possible to discern the road’s traces as it hugged canyon walls, traversed desert plateaus, or crossed streams.

When Colonel George Wright chose the location of what would be Fort Simcoe in 1856, construction of the military road began at almost the same time. The site of the fort was one of the traditional wintering grounds of the plateau peoples, named “Mool-Mool” for its many bubbling springs. The location also marks the intersection of Native American trails going

One of the blockhouses constructed around the perimeter of Fort Simcoe. One of these still stands, not far from the restored parade grounds.
south to Columbia River fisheries and west to the huckleberry fields at the base of Pah-to (Mount Adams).

Wright was well aware that relationships between Indians and settlers had deteriorated and were strained to the breaking point. Yakamas felt that their chiefs Kamiakin and Ow-hi had been forced to sign the Walla Walla Treaty in June of the previous year and were increasingly bitter toward white settlers and miners who were encroaching upon Reservation lands. Wright and his superior, General John Wool, envisioned the fort as a buffer between settlers and Indians as well as an outpost from which to conduct punitive military campaigns. The fort's proximity to Father Pandosy's Catholic Mission at Ahtanum Creek was also viewed as a plus, since the army had "profited" by the priest’s information in the past.

Thus, the fort’s isolation was viewed as an acceptable trade-off for its strategic location—but it was imperative that this new army outpost be linked to existing military commands as soon as possible. The fort's location also fit perfectly with the army's strategic goal to carve out a road system that connected California with Washington Territory. A new fort east of the Cascades, north of Fort Dalles, and connected to all points south and east was the next logical step.

On August 8, 1856, Wright detailed Captain Frederick Dent and Company B to begin construction of a wagon road to connect the new fort with Fort Dalles, the nearest military post. Dent wasted no time and actual construction began five days later, on August 13, from Fort Dalles. It took Dent and his men just slightly more than one full month to rough out the 67-mile road, permitting full wagons to travel the distance, with his road crew averaging better than two miles per day. Considering the extremely rugged topography of the area and the necessity of locating the road near dependable water sources, Dent's men made excellent progress. In fact, the reported speed of the road's construction caused Jack Splawn, a contemporary of the events, to doubt that such a feat was even possible.

Dent's route shows an ingenious use of the extreme topography of the country, making the land work for the road, and not forcing the route over impossible grades. And the route also demonstrates a good understanding of where dependable water was to be found—hardly a luxury in the dry climate. The credit for the road's speedy construction and wise location cannot go to Dent alone, however. The route roughly parallels the ancient "Ah-soon," the famous Eel Trail utilized by Native Americans for centuries, and the best route from Central Washington to the traditional fishing areas of the mid Columbia River, including Celilo Falls. Thus, Company B was spared the onerous and time-consuming chore of groping entirely in the dark regarding the location of dependable springs and easy grades. Dent was not slow to capitalize on this advantage, and it was reported on August 30 that he was "pushing on the wagon road."

There had no doubt been an incredible amount of foot and horse traffic on the Eel Trail over the centuries, wearing down the soil and retarding vegetative growth for years afterwards. As late as 1906 a government surveyor noted the presence of an "Indian Trail" quite distinct and separate from the "Government Wagon Road," but just a decade later, L. V. McWhorter noted that "many sections" of the Eel Trail "[were] no longer an Indian thoroughfare, and choked with a growth of young pine."
Not surprisingly, road engineers have little desire to "reinvent the wheel" when scouting the best routes for road construction, and such progressive layering of routes simply makes good sense. As long as animals (whether horses, oxen, or mules) were necessary to pull freight or carry people, roads had to utilize regular and consistent water sources as well as reasonable grades. This combination is even more critical in dry areas; and although not as arid as the country to the east, nearly half of Dent's route is through semidesert, with springs serving as the only sources of water.

Dent's route was not perfect, however, and one drawback of the route was soon apparent: due to the rigors of the winters at the road's high elevations, all supplies had to reach Fort Simcoe by the end of October. Such a limitation is hardly surprising, considering that the road twice crosses mountain passes over 4,000 feet and spends at least half its distance near 3,000 feet on forested plateaus between Toppenish Ridge and the southern summit of the Simcoe Mountains. Yakamas avoided winter travel there for just this reason, and the area's reputation for fierce blizzards prompted the belief that a "Chil-wit," or bad spirit, lay in ambush for anybody so foolish as to try crossing the Simcoes in winter.

The man chosen to build the road to Fort Simcoe—Frederick Tracy Dent—was both good and lucky. Born near St. Louis, Missouri, in 1820, Dent compiled a solid and consistent record of service in the army. Although graduating near the bottom of his class at West Point, Dent nevertheless demonstrated bravery during the Mexican War, for which he was awarded two brevets, and received a serious wound at Molino Del Rey.

After his road-building days at Fort Simcoe, Dent became even more familiar with the Pacific Northwest, serving with the Ninth Infantry at various locations on the central Oregon coast. Despite being accused of involvement in a plot to turn over Fort Hoskins (near modern-day Newport, Oregon) to "secessionists" in November 1861, Dent's career continued its ascendency. During the Civil War, Dent's rank rose from captain in 1861 to major in 1863 and finally to brigadier general of volunteers in 1865. In the particularly vicious and bloody campaign that culminated in the Battle of the Wilderness in 1864, Dent again displayed bravery, being promoted to lieutenant colonel for gallant and meritorious service. General Grant entrusted Dent with a sensitive and essential component in bringing up reinforcements at Cold Harbor, Virginia, and there can be little doubt that Dent earned his commendations.

Dent's bravery on behalf of the Union cause speaks strongly against the charge that he had been conspiring with secessionists in Oregon, but his personal connections didn't hurt his later career either. Dent's roommate during his last year at West Point was none other than Ulysses S. Grant, and the two men formed a bond that endured through the Civil War and beyond, with Grant even naming his eldest son Frederick Dent Grant. The builder of the Old Military Road became even more connected to Grant when the future president took a shine to Frederick's sister, Julia. As Grant puts it, "my visits [to the Dent home] became more frequent and enjoyable" and he and Julia were finally married in August 1848.

In hindsight, Wright's choice of Dent to oversee the road's construction was in all probability made on merit and not motivated by political considerations. Grant's own military career was anything but meteoric in 1856, and his connections to Dent were of little concern to Wright. Dent himself brought some excellent qualities to the table. Educated in engineering, tried and
The Old Military Road begins right at the Rockland ferry landing, climbing northeast out of the river bank up a well-defined cut in the basalt cliffs. Here, it is apparent that the road required significant pick work and grading, and the ascent is rather steep. Amazingly, along this grade there are still remnants of old signs addressed to early travelers, faded white letters painted on the rocks, with one sign clearly addressed to "BUGGIES."

The road angles northeast across The Dalles Municipal Airport and crosses Highway 14 about half a mile east of its junction with Highway 197. Here, its ruts and traces are clearly visible as it climbs up the slope along the dry streambed of Three-Mile Creek, and for the next several miles the road roughly parallels the Dalles Mountain Road as it makes its way over the Columbia Hills.

From the time the road crosses Five-Mile Creek, approximately a mile to the east, until it crests the summit, the road employs a series of ingenious flanking maneuvers to gain elevation. The Columbia Hills at this point are steep and rocky but contain numerous grassy steppes, parallel to the river far below. Dent's strategy is obvious: by utilizing these steppes when going east and climbing natural draws when it was necessary to go north, Dent's crews took the road northeasterly, traversing the steep slopes without a direct frontal assault up the hills. This strategy also kept the backbreaking and time-consuming pick work to a minimum. As a testimony to Dent's good judgment, the Dalles Mountain Road today follows Dent's basic route, and one can see the Old Military Road from many places along the modern road. At this point, the old route inspires awe, both at the spectacular views and at the skill of the road crews in carving the road onto the nearly vertical hillside.

In another confirmation of Dent's road-building skills, from Dallesport to the summit of the Columbia Hills, the Old Military Road passes an incredible 27 springs, most of which were running full when viewed in July 2001. In this area summer temperatures routinely exceed 100 degrees, and from May until October rainfall is virtually nonexistent. Even taking into account the fact that the flow and location of springs can change over time, it is certain that at least some of these springs would have been sure sources of water for both driver and team—an absolute necessity in this harsh desert environment.

From the summit (at approximately 2,300 feet), the road roughly parallels a gravel road as it descends into the Centerville Valley, proceeding generally north until it reaches the early settlement of Blockhouse. Now just a...
concentration of a few houses, Blockhouse was once an important station along the road, named for a two-story fort constructed there by soldiers. After Major Granville Haller's defeat along Toppenish Creek at the hands of Kamiakin in 1855, Haller's troops retreated back to The Dalles and constructed a log blockhouse on this site for protection against attack. Unfortunately, the blockhouse itself was never preserved, and after being moved to several sites in Goldendale over the years, it eventually found its way to nearby Brooks Memorial State Park, where it was destroyed in an inadvertent fire.

At Monument Road, about a mile north of the nearly deserted town of Firwood, the road meanders through the pines, up the grade toward the Simcoes, and in places the rutted roadbed is clearly visible amongst the growth of huckleberry and manzanita. As the road proceeds north, it generally parallels Monument Road, and the route passes just west of a small monument marking where A. J. Bolon, an early Indian agent, was killed by a small group of Yakamas in 1855. According to the only eyewitness account, related by a Yakama named Sul-lil who was present but not a participant in the murder, Bolon was killed in retaliation for previous hangings of Indians in Idaho.

The killing was a regrettable tragedy, spawning Haller's ill-fated expedition to the Yakima Valley and putting the spark to the already smoldering situation between Indians and settlers. After Haller's debacle on Toppenish Creek, the army responded by sending an ever-increasing tide of soldiers into the Northwest interior, culminating in Wright's victory over Kamiakin's forces near Spokane in 1858. The Simcoes' beauty at this point is in stark contrast to the sadness of the Bolon killing of long ago. The road soon enters the Yakama Indian Reservation and crosses the summit of the Simcoe Mountains (just over 4,300 feet) in a beautiful forest dominated by fir and hemlock, dotted with meadows of wildflowers.

The road proceeds north just to the west of Potato Butte, taking advantage of several springs flowing west from its summit. The road continues mostly north, slowly descending the flanks of the Simcoes, then past Poker Spring, Sheep Butte, and Graham Spring before passing about a mile and a half east of Vessey Springs. In this area the original road's traces are difficult to find since modern logging and jeep roads utilize nearly the same route as the wagon road. After passing yet another spring, the old road parallels Camas Patch Road, just west of Camas Patch itself, the site of traditional Yakama root gatherings. When the road crosses the North Fork of Dry Creek, it passes by an old sheep camp, with several large stands of aspen, many of which are nearly two feet in diameter. On several of the aspens herders have carved initials and dates—some dating from the early 1900s.

At this point the road begins to ascend Toppenish Ridge, climbing to approximately 4,000 feet and providing panoramic views of the Cascade Mountains and the Yakima Valley before following a draw down to Mill Creek. At several places the road's traces are clearly visible in the forest, with six to seven-inch oak saplings growing in the ruts. The Mill Creek crossing is discernible at the head of a brushy draw of oaks and pines, and from here until it reaches the modern Mill Creek Road, south of White Swan, the Old Military Road's path is clear and distinct, with rocks piled on both sides of the roadbed.
After crossing Mill Creek Road, the old road leaves the timber behind, and heads north down a dry ridge toward Toppenish Creek. Its traces are again easily discernible, with ruts worn in the basalt rocks and the roadbed reflecting obvious evidence of grading. At this point the road forks, with the east branch heading toward White Swan, Yakima, and the Yakima Valley, and the west toward Fort Simcoe.

Here, with the oak groves of Fort Simcoe visible in the distance, standing on the road brings to mind the fort’s lengthy tenure as agency headquarters for the Yakama Reservation (1859-1923), and the conspicuous presence there of James Wilbur as Indian agent from 1864 to 1882. At that time the wagon road served as the agency’s main pipeline to the outside world, not only for supplies and access to the telegraph station at The Dalles but for much needed socializing. As a Methodist minister, Wilbur would frequently employ the old road to take wagon loads of Yakamas south to the Klickitat Valley for revival meetings, and on one of these trips he assisted in the naming of Goldendale in 1872. It therefore isn’t surprising that Wilbur developed more friendships in the Klickitat Valley than in the nearby town of Yakima, and he moved to Goldendale briefly upon his retirement as agent in 1882, before settling in Walla Walla.

About half a mile before the Toppenish Creek crossing, the wagon road descends the ridge along the east side of the Haller Battlefield of 1855. It is easy to follow the road here: the larger rocks have been thrown to the sides of the roadbed, wagon wheels have worn the basalt rocks smooth, and grading is apparent when the road climbs out of Toppenish Creek. The situation was so dire that Colonel James Nesmith, after viewing the battleground with Haller shortly afterwards, exclaimed his amazement that “Haller had escaped with a single man.”

Survey maps show the old road skirting the base of the hills and curving toward the west, finally entering Fort Simcoe close to the southeast corner of the site. Although no clear traces can be found there today, there are discernible traces of a very old roadbed entering the fort grounds more directly from the east, with large rocks piled up on either side of the roadway. Considering that the old survey maps are ambiguous when depicting the exact boundaries of Fort Simcoe, this roadbed could well mark the entrance of Dent’s road to the grounds of the fort.

Like all pioneer roads, the Old Military Road serves as a “living” history lesson, a very tangible link to our past. Hiking Dent’s route, I found my appreciation for the road’s engineering surpassed by a growing awareness of just how much history had taken place precisely where I was walking. Families anticipating a good season of fishing on the Columbia; nervous armies and cavalry on the move; caravans of people eager to see friends and fellow believers; freighters and teamsters in a hurry, bringing necessary supplies and returning with the goods of frontier ranches and farms—the old road had seen all this and more. While walking the route, I could sense these intense histories—written accounts had become internalized in a profound way.

Much has been written recently on the “power of place,” the realization of this potent linkage between geography and history, and the very personal claims of place upon us. As I followed in the footsteps of Company B, I sensed the narratives of peoples and places. When given the assignment to build the road in 1856, Frederick Dent could not have known the impact his road would have on the lives of so many for so long. But the road’s imprint remains today, not only in its physical traces through sagebrush and lava rock, but upon those of us who continue to explore the power of our common history.

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AUTHOR’S NOTE
I am especially thankful to Elmer Ward, special prosecutor for the Yakama Nation, Jerald Spesser of the Spokane office of the Bureau of Land Management, Joanne Ward of the Wasco County Historical Museum, Terry Durgan of the Klickitat County Historical Society, and Fort Simcoe Park Manager Jim Mitchell.
At one o'clock in the afternoon on March 23, 1806, the Corps of Discovery departed their winter camp at Fort Clatsop near present-day Astoria, Oregon. It was a typical coastal day—cloudy and raining. Twenty-nine members of the original party from St. Louis had made it to the Pacific Coast, along with four more who had joined them at the Mandan Camp where they wintered the first year. Those who joined the party were a Shoshone Indian woman named Sacagawea, her newborn baby, Jean Baptiste, and her common-law husband, Toussant Charbonneau. They were hired to serve as interpreters. Another who was enlisted to serve as a military member of the expedition was Jean Baptiste LePage. Journal entries indicate that during their four months at Fort Clatsop there were only 12 days of sunshine. Before they left the safety of their winter camp, men carved their names into trees to both celebrate the success of their journey and leave a permanent record of their discovery—in the event they might perish during the dangerous homeward journey.

Eager to return home, the men rowed their dugout canoes with determination. The Columbia River was slightly higher in elevation than it had been the previous November when they descended the river, but it was not at flood stage, which typically occurred in late May and early June when a quick rise in temperature would melt winter snow and abruptly raise the volume of water that drained the region. So, as the journal entries once more stated, they “proceeded on.”

The Corps of Discovery typically rowed as far as they could each day. Near sunset the company would look for a comfortable beach by a small stream to bed down for the night. They made their biggest meal of the day in the evening and often cooked leftovers the next morning for breakfast. As they ascended the Columbia they observed and encountered many natives along the way. Some wanted to engage in conversation with them, but they were persistent about getting back to the Nez Perce, in present-day Idaho, who had been caring for their horses over the winter. As they moved against the current they recorded the estimated number of miles the men rowed each day: March 23, 16 miles; March 24, 15 miles; March 25, 15 miles; March 26, 18 miles; March 27, 20 miles. Since the day they left Fort Clatsop the skies had been overcast and it rained almost constantly. On March 28 it stopped raining and the clouds abated. The expedition members took advantage of the fair weather to dry their bedding, and they built a fire to dry out their canoes so that they could apply pitch to cracks in the wood. They spent the evening of March 28 on Deer Island (near present-day Rainier, Oregon) after having traveled only five miles that day.

On March 29 the corps pressed on again. They traveled close to 17 miles before they came upon a large native village called Cathlapotle (near present-day Ridgefield, Washington) at three in the afternoon. The village consisted of 14 large wooden houses. The natives were friendly and offered them anchovies (smelt) and wappato to eat. The villagers appeared eager to trade, so the company purchased a large quantity of wappato, 12 dogs, and 2 sea otter skins. Determined to continue on, they returned to their canoes two hours later and resumed their journey.

Since it was late in the afternoon, the group traveled only two miles and then set up camp in a prairie on the main shore near present-day Bachelor Island, west of Vancouver. They found it difficult to rest that night, however, due to loud calls from nesting swans, geese, and ducks in nearby ponds that lasted throughout the night. They got up early the next morning and rowed five miles until they reached the site where they had prepared a meal during their descent of the river on the previous November 4. They made breakfast and were visited by several canoes of natives from nearby villages. At about ten o’clock they set out again and continued another 18 miles, then set up camp in present-day Vancouver at Ryan Point. From their encampment they could clearly see Mount Hood and Mount St. Helens. Earlier in the day they had seen a taller mountain in the southeast, which they named Mount Jefferson to honor the president and sponsor of their journey. At this encampment Meriwether Lewis wrote in his journal: “This valley would be copetent to the
maintainance of 40 or 50 thousand souls if properly cultivated and is indeed the only desirable situation for a settlement which I have seen on the West side of the Rocky mountains." Lewis's words were prophetic—the area he described is now home to close to a million people in the metropolitan area of Portland/Vancouver.

When the corps awoke on the morning of March 31, they had traveled eight days and covered approximately 131 miles (a little over 100 nautical miles). It was raining again, and the current was noticeably stronger. They left early in the morning and traveled along the north side of the river, rowing between White Brandt Island (what we now know as Lady Island) and the Washington shore. They passed by where the Camas paper mill now stands and then came upon a small river (about 80 yards wide) entering the Columbia. They asked natives in the area what they called the river but could not discern its name, so they decided to call it Seal River after the number of seals they observed swimming in its mouth (it is now called the Washougal River). From Seal River they continued to row along the north bank for about two miles until they reached a "handsome prairie" directly across from the mouth of the upper Quicksand River.

The Sandy River once had two channels that emptied into the Columbia from opposite sides of a mudflow deposited at its mouth by an eruption of Mount Hood that occurred in the late 18th century (see Fire Mountains of the West: The Cascade and Mono Lake Volcanoes, by Stephen L. Harris, 1988). Lewis and Clark were amazed by the land formation at the mouth of Quicksand River, as they commented about it in both their outward and homeward bound journals. No vegetation was growing on the Quicksand delta and it must have looked similar to how the Toutle River appears today. Two decades after the eruption of Mount St. Helen's, the Toutle River still reveals a massive mud flow at its delta. The mud and sand deposit at the mouth of this river was very soft, and from its unstable condition Lewis and Clark dubbed the river "Quicksand." Up until c. 1950 when a permanent barrier dam was constructed, the upper channel emptied the greatest quantity of water. It was directly across from this channel that Lewis and Clark camped on the Washington side of the river. Historians and geologists agree that this area is very close to present-day Cottonwood Beach in Washougal. (The Army
Corps of Engineers built a dike around Steigerwald Lake in the 1960s to create an industrial park but fortunately did not enclose Cottonwood Beach. The company intended to spend one night and move on early in the morning, as they had done during their first nine days on the river. But they did not anticipate what they were about to encounter, which would make the Washougal encampment their second longest in present-day Washington and a strategic site in preparation for their return east.

As the corps settled down to eat dinner that evening, three Indians camped near them and visited their fire. William Clark engaged in conversation with them about the region and its rivers. They learned that Seal River headed into the mountains to the northeast and that Quicksand River's headwaters originated from the Cascade Mountains as well. The Indians also spoke of another river that drained the large valley to the south. This puzzled William Clark because they had not seen any large tributary entering the Columbia from the south during either their westward or return trips near Image Canoe or Wappato Islands (what we now know as Hayden and Sauvie Islands). Lewis and Clark both assumed that Quicksand River drained the large valley to the south (what we know as Willamette Valley). That evening William Clark wrote in his journal: "This information if true will render it necessary to examine the river below on the South Side... for some river which must water the Country west of the western mountains to the Waters of California." He also noted: "The Columbia is at present on a Stand [strong current] and we with difficulty made 25 miles today."

Meriwether Lewis and William Clark were men of compatible yet different interests. Lewis was intrigued with the indigenous animals and plants he observed throughout their expedition. Clark, on the other hand, was preoccupied with map-making and recording the dress and customs of the natives they encountered along the way. In fact, Clark's maps have been used by many Native Americans to provide proof of where their ancestors lived. He used a teepee symbol to identify where Indian villages were located and also made entries in his journals about the names of these Indian tribes. On March 31 Lewis wrote in his daily journal:

The summer or wood duck has returned. Butterflies and Several Species of insects appear. Musquitoes are troublesome this evening,... Encamp opposite Quick Sand River.... The waterfowls are much plentiier about the entrance of Quick Sand river than they were below. Observed a species of small wild onion growing among the moss of rocks, they resemble the Shives of our gardens and grow remarkably close together forming a perfect tuft; they are quite as agreeably flavoured as the Shives.

On the morning of Tuesday, April 1, Sergeant Pryor and two others were dispatched to take a small canoe up the
Quicksand River to investigate whether it did, in fact, turn to the east and drain Mount Hood. They also dispatched three men to hunt game at a large bottom of woodland and prairie above the entrance of Quicksand River. The rest of the hunters were sent out in different areas on the Washington side of the river to pursue deer and elk. The remaining men in camp were directed to make rope out of elk skin to be used for pulling their large canoes over the rapids once they entered the Columbia River Gorge. That evening Sergeant Pryor returned and reported that he had ascended the river six miles and found that it did turn to the northeast and that the main channel was only 50 yards wide and 6 feet deep. This confirmed what the Indians had told them the night before.

Another issue soon diverted their attention: the number of Indians who were descending the river from the Cascade region in search of food. Lewis's journal reported:

We were visited by several canoes of natives in the course of the day; most of whom were descending the river with their entire women and children. They informed us that they resided at the great rapids and that their relations at that place were much strengthened [starving] at that place for the want of food; that they had consumed their winter store of dried fish and that those of the present season [spring salmon] had not yet arrived.... They informed us that the nations above them were in the same situation & that they did not expect the Salmon to arrive until the full of the next moon which happens on the 2nd of May. We did not doubt the veracity of these people who seemed to be on their way with their families and effects [belongings] in search of subsistence which they find it easy to procure in this fertile valley.—This information gave us much uneasiness with respect to our future means of subsistence.

Lewis went on to comment about the lack of antelope and elk east of the mountains and even suggested that if the spring salmon had not returned, then the natives' dogs must also be starving, which was another food source the corps relied upon. Furthermore, the horses were probably underfed during this season as well. Lewis further wrote: "Under these circumstances there seems to be a gloomy prospect for subsistence on any terms; we therefore took it into serious consideration what measures we were to pursue on this occasion."

During the night of April 1, Lewis and Clark very likely discussed these recent developments. Lewis was certainly concerned about their means for subsistence once they made it beyond the great rapids in the Columbia River Gorge, and Clark was undoubtedly preoccupied with the possibility that they had missed a major tributary that drained the Willamette Valley. Both wanted to press on and to make it to the Nez Perce as soon as possible, but unforeseen circumstances were now preventing them from continuing their uninterrupted journey east.

The following morning Lewis and Clark informed the company that they had decided to remain at their present
encampment to hunt deer and elk and dry enough meat to last them as far as the Nez Perce. Lewis would later write in his journal about this decision:

The men who were sent in quest of the elk and deer that were killed yesterday returned at 8 A.M. this morning. We now enformed the party of our intention of laying in a store of meat at this place, and immediately dispatched two parties consisting of nine men to the opposite side of the river. Five of those we sent below the Quicksand river and 4 above. We also sent out three others on this side, and those who remained in camp were employed in collecting wood making a scaffold and cutting up the meat in order to dry it.

Shortly thereafter several canoes of Indians arrived at their camp and two of them were Cash-hooks who resided at a great falls at the river that drained the Willamette Valley—the same river that had eluded Lewis and Clark on both their outward and return voyages. Clark was eager to learn more about this mysterious river, so he gave the Indians a mat and piece of coal and motioned to them to draw a map. They drew a map that clearly marked where a river they called Multnomah (what we now know as the Willamette) entered the Columbia behind present Hayden Island, not far from where they had camped on March 30. Clark became curious with this revelation and offered one of the natives a magnifying glass in return for serving as a guide to lead a party to the Multnomah. An Indian who lived just downriver near Diamond Island on the south side of the Columbia agreed to perform the task.

The captain later drew a map of the area showing Diamond Island and two other islands close to where Government Island is now located. It is very possible that volcanic sand and ash from the Quicksand River delta washed downriver over time and filled in between these three islands to create the larger Government Island we know today.

Clark immediately assembled a group of seven men (Thompson, Potts, Cruzatte, Wiser, Howard, Whitehouse, and York), and they departed from their provision camp at half past 11, headed downstream. Shortly after departing the camp Clark looked back to see several more canoes rowing toward the encampment where only Lewis and ten corpsmen remained. For a moment Clark considered returning, but he felt that the Indians had been friendly and that Lewis had proven to be resourceful in similar situations during their journey, and so he proceeded on.

The Indian guide took Clark’s party down the inside of Diamond Island along the south shore of the Columbia (near present-day Government Island and Portland International Airport). The Indian lived in a lodge near the upper end of Diamond Island, close to a small lake (now known as Blue Lake). The company continued downstream past this village. At three in the afternoon Clark had his crew row to shore near a large double house of the Ne-er-cho-ki-oo tribe of the Shah-ha-la nation (a branch of the upper Chinook). Clark’s journals describe how he presented himself boldly to the natives, entered one of the rooms of their house and offered several articles in exchange for wappato roots. The natives appeared wary of his presence and were reluctant to sell any of their roots. But William Clark knew what amazed and frightened Indians about European inventions, so he removed a piece of
port fire (a flare used by ships when entering a port—ostensibly used by Lewis and Clark to ignite wet material), cut off an inch of it, and placed it in the fire. He also removed his compass and a small magnet, placed the compass on his ink stand, then sat down on a mat in front of the fire. He later described what followed:

The port caught and burned vehemently, which changed the Colour of the fire; with the Magnit I turned the Needle of the Compass about very briskly; which astonished and alarmed these nativs and they laid Several parcels of Wappato at my feet & begged of me to take out the bad fire; so I consented.

Clark's display of magic alarmed the natives. The children took shelter in their beds and the women hid behind the men. While this occurred a very old blind man prayed out loud for his spirits to remove the evil from their presence. Clark must have been a bit amused, but he did not want to leave on a negative note, so he lit his pipe and offered them some smoke and then returned the full amount of wappato that they had placed at his feet. At this point the Indians seemed "some what passified," and Clark left the village to continue his voyage downstream.

As Clark's party descended the river on the south side of Image Canoe Island they discovered that three small islands concealed the entrance to the Multnomah. Clark was impressed with what he saw:

Multnomah discharges itself in the Columbia on the S.E. and may be justly Said to be 1/4 the size of that noble river... from the enterance of this river, I can plainly See Mt. Jefferson which is high and Covered with snow... Mt. Hood East, Mt. St. Hellans a high humped Mountain... I also saw Mt. Ranier Nearly North.... The current of the Multnomah is as gentle as that of the Columbia glides Smoothly with an eavin surface, and appears to be Sufficiently deep for the largest Ship.
hunters only took the hides and left the lean meat behind. The deer hides were valuable not only for making clothes but also for trading with Indians who lived in the East. The men kept their fires burning hot under the scaffolds to dry the meat as well as they could in the misting rain.

Had the weather been drier they would have pounded the moisture from the meat to preserve its freshness. They did not use the salt they brought from the coast to cure the meat but preferred to season the meat with it when they ate it. Typically, the meat was boiled to soften it for consumption. Hides were also dried near the scaffolds. Several were used as wrappings to protect the meat from insects, birds, and rodents. The men knew that the meat might be their only source of sustenance (besides dogs and horses) between this fertile valley and the Nez Perce, so they worked hard to gather a substantial store of food.

Throughout the day Indians visited the provision camp where the corpsmen were drying meat and braiding rope. In fact, at one point Meriwether Lewis took out his air rifle and shot it into the air to alarm the natives and indicate to them that the Corps of Discovery was a powerful group. The Indians remained friendly and soon departed camp after satisfying their curiosity about these strange men. Besides, most were starving and eager to dig the wappato and camas roots that were abundant in the area. Lewis’s journal entries report that ten canoes of Indians descending the river visited them throughout the day. All of them gave the same account—that there was a “scarcity of provision above.” And Lewis, true to his inquisitive and scientific nature, made several entries in his journals about the habitat while camped at present-day Washougal.

On the morning of Thursday, April 3, William Clark awoke to find that it had rained heavily throughout the night. His party continued up the Multnomah River a short distance and he tried again to measure the depth of the river, but again his rope was not long enough. The mist was so thick that they could not see very far upstream, so they terminated their exploration of the Multnomah and began the return trip to the corps’ provision camp. Clark once again visited the natives of the Ne-er-cho-ki-oo, whom he had visited the day before, and sought to buy wappato, but his presence alarmed them once again—the children fled to their beds, the women hid behind the men, and the men even hung their heads. Observing their behavior, Clark decided to leave without any further conversation.

They encountered other natives descending the river who showed an interest in communicating with the group, but Clark’s guide said in a quiet tone that these were bad people, so the party pressed on. At midafternoon they reached the guide’s residence near the upper end of Diamond Island on
the Oregon side. This consisted of one long house that contained seven apartments. Clark described the house as being built of white cedar, with stiff poles resting on the ends of broad boards to form the rooms. Each apartment was about 30 feet square, and a long hallway about 4 feet wide extended down the length of the structure, providing a passage to each of the apartments.

What William Clark saw behind the building puzzled him. He observed the remains of five large houses in what appeared to be a very large village. The houses were built in the same form as his guide’s residence, and Clark wondered where the people were who once occupied these homes? His journal entry reveals a shocking answer:

I endeavored to obtain from those people of the Situation of their nation, if scattered or what had become of the nativs who must have peopled this great town. An old man who appeared of Some note among them and father to my guide brought forward a woman who was badly marked with the Small Pox and made Signs that they all died with the disorder which marked her face, and which She was verry near dieing with when a girl. From the age of this woman this Distructive disorder I judge must have been about 28 to 30 years past, and about the time the Clatsops inform us that this disorder raged in their towns and destroyed their nation.

Historical records do indicate that a smallpox epidemic raged through the lower Columbia River basin in the 1770s. Interestingly, this occurred before Captain Robert Gray discovered the mouth of the Columbia River in May 1792. It is entirely possible that the pathogen arrived overland from the southwest.

Clark continued to converse with members of his guide’s family for an hour. An old man drew him a map of the Multnomah River and provided him with the names of the Indian nations that inhabited its upper reaches. He observed that the people at this village spoke a different language from the natives at Cathlapotle and the women wore larger and longer robes made from deerskins. He also observed that they cared for their elderly and that several of the people in the village had lived to a great age. They appeared healthy, he noted, though several were nearly blind. The caring nature of these people must have impressed William Clark since he made a special note of it in his journals. At four in the afternoon Clark thanked his guide and gave him the magnifying glass as payment for his services; then he headed back to rejoin Lewis.

The small party returned to the camp by six o’clock and found Lewis nearing completion of his objective “to obtain as much dryed meat as necessary for our voyage to the Nez Perce.” That night Lewis took a compass reading from their campsite and identified Mount Hood as being “S. 85 degrees E.” at an estimated distance of 40 miles. Indians continued to visit the camp for the fifth consecutive day, all descending the river in search of food. Many of them were nearly starved, and they continued to report the “scarcity of provision among the natives above.”

Lewis and Clark surely must have felt their six-day encampment near present-day Cottonwood Beach was time well spent. They had obtained a substantial supply of meat for their trip through the Columbia River Gorge and east of the mountains. Meanwhile, Lewis had made several scientific observations about wildlife and indigenous vegetation, and he collected several plant specimens to take back east. Clark had led a special expedition to discover an important tributary to the Columbia River that they had twice missed. He gathered valuable information about Indian nations and with native help prepared an accurate map of the region. He also made notations on his map of their permanent villages and wrote descriptions in his journals about their dress, language, and customs. All this was made possible because of the unique circumstances that the Corps of Discovery encountered as they entered the entrance to the Columbia River Gorge on their return voyage.

On the eve of April 6 William Clark wrote in his journal:

This supply of Elk I think by using economey and in addition to roots and dogs which we may probably precure from (the Natives on Lewis’ river (Snake) will be Sufficient to last us to the Chopunnish where we Shall Meet with our horses—and near which place there is Some deer to be precured.

And they proceeded on....

Roger Daniels, a resident of southwest Washington for almost half a century, enjoys reading local history and has focused his research on early Columbia River explorers. An administrator at Clark College in Vancouver, Washington, for the last 25 years, Daniels has also been working with citizens in Camas and Washougal this past year to organize an East Clark County Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Planning Committee.
A Comparison of Two of Washington’s Most Historic Towns, Port Townsend and Walla Walla, 1850-1900

DREAMS & DEVELOPMENTS

ONLY A RARE visitor to Port Townsend (population 8,500 in 2000) and Walla Walla (population 29,000 in 2000), two of the state’s most historic and attractive towns, would compare their appearances and histories. But an investigation of their early years demonstrates that geography as well as early settlers shaped them. The cities are situated in dissimilar regions: one is a seaport and recreational center, the other is an agricultural and educational center. Port Townsend faces the ocean blue; Walla Walla fronts a sea of yellow wheat. The coastal city has a narrower economic base: it depends heavily upon tourism, maritime trade, and a paper mill. Walla Walla’s economy rests primarily upon agriculture (wheat, onions, and grapes), a state prison, a district office of the United States

ABOVE: Walla Walla farmers and millers in the late 1860s began exporting significant quantities of wheat and flour to West Coast markets. Flour mills have disappeared, but wheat production still contributes to the city’s economy.

LEFT: Taken about 1890, this photograph shows an electric streetcar on Water Street and barks and squareriggers in the busy harbor.
Army Corps of Engineers, and three colleges. Each city has a monument to an Indian chief, Chetzemoka at Port Townsend and Lawyer at Walla Walla—who, it is claimed, spared the lives of whites.

In the summer tourists in Port Townsend crowd Water Street’s sidewalks, explore shops and galleries, enjoy fine restaurants, and often stay in attractive bed and breakfasts; visitors arriving in motor homes park and play at nearby Fort Worden State Park.

In contrast, Walla Walla’s Main Street attracts few tourists, but farmers, business people, and students stroll its wide sidewalks. Walla Walla does not experience anything like Port Townsend’s seasonal traffic jams. The interior town lacks the variety of restaurants and bed and breakfasts enjoyed at the coastal resort, and few motorists occupy the nearby Fort Walla Walla campsites.

The major street names of the two towns are quite different. Port Townsend chose the names of politicians hailed in the 1850s, including Benton, Jackson, Calhoun, Clay, and Scott; Walla Walla, however, disregarded famous men, naming main streets after trees, including Pine, Oak, Alder, Poplar, Birch, and Chesnut.

Despite these and other differences, the two towns have certain similarities, including an unusual amount of government assistance in their formative decades, 17-inch annual precipitation, fine parks, lively cultural climates, proud residents emphasizing small-town life, and award-winning business districts. Port Townsend historian Peter Simpson noted that preservation of its “commercial core and supporting residential community presents a remarkable picture of life in the 1890s.” The same could be said for Walla Walla.

The builders of fine structures at the two corners were often dreamers. They, like the earliest pioneers, favored city growth. Obviously, dominant cities had to emerge on both sides of the Cascades. The communities of Port Townsend and Walla Walla understood this, and each aspired to dominate its region. One wished to be the major city on Puget Sound; the other hoped to be the same on the Great Columbia Plain. In both places leaders and promoters, especially newspaper editors, constantly identified their town’s advantages and potential as a powerful commercial city.

The history of dreams and developments at the corners fits nearly into both national and regional history. During the 1850s Americans often moved westward, developers founded many new towns. European immigrants arrived in record-breaking numbers, eastern commercial interests recognized the importance of Pacific Coast ports in establishing a lucrative trade with China, and the federal government surveyed a railroad route from Lake Superior to Puget Sound. Settlers in Washington Territory hailed these impressive and promising developments, anticipating that their particular town or region would benefit from national developments and dominate a vast hinterland. Across Washington Territory towns competed for immigrants, investments, and railroads. Port Townsend emerged in 1851; Walla Walla followed in 1858.

Speaking for many readers, Washington Territory’s editors dreamed of growth and profits. A Port Townsend editor in 1871 summarized local promotion: “If the capitalist comes here and spends his money, it helps the country; if the immigrant comes in and buys of him, it helps him and the country too. The speculator is the pioneer, who has confidence enough in the country to spend his money in it.” A Walla Walla editor posted: “To the man of money seeking new fields of investment where profit and safe returns are promised, the Walla Walla country offers opportunities unequalled.” Fellow townsmen insisted that “no portion of the Pacific Coast offers a better field for enterprising men.”

The First Settlers brought the traditional speculative spirit, and later arrivals to both sides of the Cascades sustained it, including their references to the urban prosperity of such rapidly growing places as San Francisco, a city that in 1870 counted a population of 100,000 only two decades after the Gold Rush. Eastern publications circulating on the frontier described and hailed national population growth and increased prosperity. Thus frontiersmen, like urbanites, suffered from speculative mania. Mark Twain, in writing The Gilded Age, a satire describing the raging fire of speculation, could have found kindling in Washington Territory. Promoters of Port Townsend seemed similar to those in Napoleon, Twain’s fictional town.

Citizens of Port Townsend and Walla Walla were among those hundreds of territorial residents who dreamed of great things while building their homes, businesses, farms, schools, churches, lodges, saloons, and roads. Like other pioneers, they sought to replicate the market economy they had experienced in the East. For decades fathers and sons in Washington improved farms and businesses, dreaming of handsome profits to be made by selling land, especially town lots, to newcomers. Everyone knew that on earlier frontiers increased land values had enriched owners. Promises of a bright future sustained hard-working families who fully realized that prosperity required immigration and investors. There was little reason for families to think small.

Port Townsend enjoyed an impressive boost in 1854 when the federal government established its customs headquarters in the town. Ships traveling Puget Sound anchored there, providing business opportunities (including supplies for revenue cutters) and employment of several collectors and clerks. In 1871 the customs collector’s salary of $3,000 equaled that of the territorial governor. Until the federal government constructed a customhouse late in the century, revenue collectors and clerks worked out of a downtown office. Peter Simpson emphasized the institution’s economic contribution: “Nearly every merchant, wholesaler, or manufacturer depended, in one way or another, on Port Townsend being Puget Sound’s port of entry.” Newspapers piqued readers’ interest by reporting the operations of revenue cutters,
including the Lincoln, which seized ships for violating revenue laws. The office of customs collector prompted heated controversy. These officials were appointed or dismissed owing to their political affiliation, and regional editors and politicians reported customhouse scandals—real or rumored. Walla Walla did not experience such divisive spoilsmanship in its federal Register Land Office.

While residents haggled over the appointments and policies of collectors, townspeople participated in seaport life. Captains from many destinations docked their vessels at the privately owned Union Wharf or similar locations, and the crews enjoyed the town. Sailors mingled with local farmers, mariners, and loggers, who produced lumber at local mills and shipped it through Port Townsend, often to San Francisco. Port Townsend's earliest settlers received undesirable reputations. One contemporary writer called them "beachcombers" of low character. A modern authority has called these first settlers the "worst class of population in the world."

Besides the customhouse, the federal government helped develop Port Townsend by signing Indian treaties in 1855, thus opening up lands for pioneers, and by building Fort Townsend in 1856 to protect the hamlet from Indian raids. The fort actually served no real purpose and was closed by Civil War officers. The army reestablished the installation in 1874 "to protect the settlers from Indian depredations and to guard the Indian reservations on the West Side of the sound from the encroachment of the settlers."

The federal government also played a significant role in Walla Walla's early history. In 1855 it made treaties with several tribes, removing them from the Walla Walla Valley. This significant action opened a rich region for white settlement. In 1856 the army constructed Fort Walla Walla to protect the Indians from the depredations of miners, but it soon served other purposes. Port Townsend appeared before the fort, but Walla Walla emerged after the establishment of a post.

In 1858 Fort Walla Walla's troops played a major role in the decisive Spokane Indian conflict and carried out various regional duties during the Civil War. Like Fort Townsend, Fort Walla Walla was abandoned but later reoccupied in 1873. In 1880, 100 troops served at the coastal fort while about three times that number were stationed at the interior installation. For years each city benefited from the quartermaster's purchase of supplies and services, and from the personal expenditures of troops. Enjoying this economic situation and the society of educated officers, residents of these two towns insisted that the garrisons remain despite the fact that they served little military purpose.

Miners, much more than soldiers, brought local benefits. The population of Port Townsend increased to more than 300 as a result of the rush to the Cariboo goldfields. But this growth paled in comparison to that of Walla Walla. In the
For decades military units, including these cavalrmen and bandsmen assembled on the parade grounds, contributed to Walla Walla's social and economic life.

1860s it became a major commercial center, serving as the port of entry into the interior mining camps of Washington, Idaho, Oregon, Montana, and British Columbia. Walla Walla benefited from the transportation on the Columbia and Snake Rivers, the Oregon Trail, and the Mullan Road. Funded by the federal government and built by the army, the Mullan Road in 1862 linked Walla Walla with Fort Benton on the Missouri River. The road's promoters predicted that immigrants would use this northern route to the Pacific Northwest. Although the federal government put far more money into this primitive road than the Oregon Trail, it failed to attract the anticipated number of westward moving families, but thousands of gold-seekers hurrying eastward traveled this convenient route. Walla Walla, the western terminus of the federal project, immediately benefited from this heavy mining traffic. The road was an example of the federal government's assistance to Westerners.

During much of the 1860s Walla Walla's businessmen, bankers, tradesmen, farmers, cattlemen, saloon keepers, and prostitutes profited from the gold-seekers. However, officers at Fort Walla Walla in the 1860s, like their counterparts at Fort Townsend in the 1850s, complained about mining excitements prompting many desertions.

In the 1860s Walla Walla was a mining center similar in many ways to Sacramento early in the California gold rush. Prospectors purchased goods and supplies in Walla Walla, and many of them, escaping the mountains, wintered in the town. As a result of the gold rush, the town's Main Street became the busiest one in Washington Territory, and shopkeepers boasted that their city had a larger population than any town on Puget Sound. Gold was the economic foundation, and Walla Walla residents—dreaming of great city growth and the maintenance of its huge hinterland—underscored a favorable geography. Settlers hailed the mild climate, fertile soil, trails and roads radiating in every direction, and the Columbia River, the great avenue of commerce.

From 1864 to 1869 Walla Walla aspired to become the capital of Washington Territory or of a territory created from the mining regions. Some residents argued that the capital should be moved from Olympia to their community because it had a larger population and greater potential. An editor complained that there were no connecting roads to towns west of the Cascades, thus Walla Wallans, who were linked to Portland by the Columbia, considered Puget Sound to be a foreign land; in fact, one editor asserted that events in the western seaports caused about as much concern as those in the "Chinese empire." Emphasizing that the timber-based economy of the West Side was dissimilar to the mining and agricultural based economy of the East Side, some Walla Wallans favored creating Columbia Territory, a new political division including much of the city's vast hinterland. The new capital, of course, would be located in their hometown.

But political schemes and dubious dreams about becoming a new capital were less important than economic
considerations. When mining played out the town hoped to become a great agricultural center. According to geographer D. W. Meinig, the wheat economy of the Walla Walla valley "was largely an imitation of that in the Sacramento valley." Walla Walla sought to attain the prominence of Sacramento, which prospered because it was a state capital, agricultural center, and railroad hub.

Walla Walla farmers had advantages: they did not have to expend enormous amounts of labor removing trees and they did not have to wait for agricultural markets to appear. In both the Sacramento and Walla Walla valleys commercial agriculture, aided by river transportation, developed more quickly than it had during the pioneer period of the lands above the Ohio River.

While Walla Wallans could dream of their town becoming similar to Sacramento, Port Townsend citizens, like residents of other hamlets around Puget Sound, dreamed of becoming the northern San Francisco. Insisting on the inevitability of a great city emerging on Puget Sound, they predicted that their town—the so-called "Key City"—was destined to become that metropolis. A government official, speaking like a local booster, glowingly described its harbor: "For depth of water, boldness of approach, freedom from hidden dangers, and the immeasurable sea of gigantic timber coming down to the very shores, these waters are unsurpassed." But its residents realized that without a transcontinental railroad its favorable geography could not lead to regional domination. An iron road was necessary for wooden wharves to prosper.

To the disappointment and disgust of Puget Sound residents, the Northern Pacific Railroad did not lay track in Washington Territory until 1871 when it established Kalama on the Columbia and started building northward toward Puget Sound. Speculators in towns all around the sound expected the Northern Pacific to do as much for their region as the Union Pacific had done for California. Port Townsend, like Seattle, Olympia, and other ports, sought to become the terminus and thus dominate a huge hinterland and become the gateway to the Orient. Everywhere excited boosters proclaimed that a terminus would mean a sharp population increase and the construction of wharves, warehouses, businesses, mills, factories, churches, and homes. A railroad assured the realization of marvelous dreams; thus speculators bought lots in locations that, they predicted, would become the Northern Pacific's terminus. Newspapermen charged that promoters and speculators in several Puget Sound towns suffered from "terminus disease," or, as one editor called it, "fevre du terminus."

Puget Sound visitors heard about and evaluated dreams of greatness. In 1871 a traveler from San Jose, California, concluded that Fort Townsend, a city of lumbermen and sailors, had the best harbor and townsite on Puget Sound. He predicted that the Northern Pacific would establish its terminus in this promising place, asserting that the hamlet would be "the largest city north of San Francisco" and would even
become its rival. But an Oregon editor disagreed, faulting the primitive townsite, ridiculing its dreams of regional domination, and asserting that Seattle enjoyed a superior location.

In the 1870s Port Townsend and Walla Walla each had a leading promoter. James G. Swan (1819-1900) led Port Townsend citizens in their efforts to attract the Northern Pacific Railway’s terminus. One of the most talented and versatile residents of western Washington, Swan had traveled to California in 1849 and then moved to Shoalwater Bay, becoming an oyster merchant while living among Indians. In 1857 he wrote *The Northwest Coast*, a description of his three years among the natives. In 1868 he moved to Port Townsend, a rough village that he hoped would become the New York City of the West. He became the town’s most famous citizen, serving as lawyer, justice of the peace, steamboat agent, collector of customs, and more. Determined to turn dreams into realities, Swan provided research for the Northern Pacific Railroad, hosted its officials, and pleaded with them to build into Port Townsend. To his great disappointment they chose rival Tacoma as the terminus in 1874. Discouraged but not defeated, Swan continually voiced great dreams for his adopted city to his fellow townsmen, assuring them that Port Townsend would attract a major railroad and attain regional domination. Like threadbare Colonel Beriah Sellers, a memorable character in Twain’s *Gilded Age*, Swan was the eternal optimist.

At about the same time that Port Townsend’s chief promoter expressed frustration with a rail-road project and sought solace in alcohol, Dr. Dorsey S. Baker (1823-1888), living at the territory’s other corner, was a sober and skilled entrepreneur working to develop Walla Walla. Baker, too, had joined the California gold rush, and, like Swan, moved to a remote place, Oakland, Oregon. Demonstrating some of Swan’s versatility, he worked as a physician, merchant, and farmer. In 1859 Baker cast his future with Walla Walla, the prospects of which then seemed no better than those of Port Townsend. But the economy soon changed dramatically and the newcomer prospered.

A shrewd individual, Baker benefited in the 1860s from the regional gold rush into Idaho and Montana. He became an important merchant and banker, invested wisely, and financed a narrow gauge railroad from Walla Walla to Wallula, the city’s river port. While Swan dreamed of a railroad, Baker actually built one. Walla Walla’s “thoughtful men” believed that this line promised a “brilliant era.” Completed in 1875, the line moved wheat and flour to the Columbia River. Thousands of wheat sacks went to Portland and many were transshipped to Liverpool, England, and other distant ports. The agricultural center, like the timber port, enjoyed a great waterborne commerce.

In the 1860s and 1870s Port Townsend and Walla Walla developed and maintained their dreams of domination. Thus in 1874 Port Townsend residents rejoiced when the steamboat inspector’s office was relocated from Seattle, their major competitor, to their town. Profitable frontier businesses were a steppingstone to a community’s greater prosperity. For example, in the 1850s a physician established a marine hospital.
in Port Townsend, the only such institution in the Pacific Northwest. For years physicians received payment from the Public Health Service. The hospital’s small buildings housed mainly seamen and a few local residents. In the 1870s the institution—now known widely as the United States Marine Hospital—could accommodate 100 patients. In 1877 the managing surgeon boasted that this well-equipped hospital was the largest north of San Francisco. According to historian James McCurdy, this federally subsidized facility became “one of the oldest and best-known government agencies upon the Pacific Coast.”

Ships docking at Port Townsend usually arrived in ballast and their captains had shipping orders for lumber or coal. Townspeople paid close attention to the harbor’s steamers and sailing vessels, pondered their passenger lists and cargoes, and noted their destinations. Strollers visiting the privately owned and often busy wharves observed workers loading lumber onto barks and square-riggers, and fishermen outfitting vessels, including a few bound for distant northern waters. The city streets did not carry the noisy wagon traffic heard in Walla Walla or other agricultural towns. Individuals coming from a distance of up to 50 miles to trade in Port Townsend’s well-stocked shops generally came by water; some even arrived in Indian canoes.

In the 1860s Walla Wallans observed a much different type of transportation. Radiating out of the agricultural center were Mexican muleskinners moving heavy cargo, express riders carrying dispatches, and stagecoaches transporting passengers. Most travelers headed eastward to distant mining camps, but some moved westward to Wallula’s docks. By 1870 Main Street businessmen rarely talked about earnings from outfitting miners going to Idaho and Montana; they now conversed about the profits from outfitting farmers and ranchers taking up new lands in eastern Washington. Townspeople paid considerable attention to immigrants who arrived by wagon and crowded around the federal land office. Boosters also discussed the teamsters driving heavy wagons transporting flour and wheat through the dusty valley to Wallula; these drivers replaced Mexican muleskinners. But in the mid 1870s the teamsters failed to compete with Dorsey Baker’s railroad. In a decade Walla Wallans had seen horses replace mules and an iron horse, in turn, replace horses.

Western mining communities sometimes failed to survive or failed to grow after mines played out; by contrast, Walla Walla in the late 1860s successfully changed from serving as a vast region’s mining center to becoming a smaller region’s profitable agricultural center. Residents knew that Sacramento and other prosperous places had made the same successful transition.

Both Port Townsend and Walla Walla had rough edges. Water Street housed the entire range of dives characteristic of a sailor’s town. Saloons, prostitution, and shanghaiing gave it a notorious reputation. To protect local women and children from the boisterous sailors, loggers, and painted women frequenting...
downtown locations, a retail district situated on a bluff above Water Street emerged in the 1870s. Residents assured would-be settlers that the city was free of violence, emphasizing at one point that the local marshal was idle.

Philip Ritz, in a speech published in the Walla Walla Statesman, October 4, 1867, takes on the problem of immigration, noting the need for people:

"What we want most here now is population, not that kind who came with bowie knife and revolver slung to them, no we have had enough of that class... We want those who bring civilization with them; those who recognize [in] the scream of the iron horse the music of progress; those who see [in] the little unpretentious schoolhouse by the roadside the springs by which our national greatness will be forever fed.

Walla Walla's miners behaved about the same as Port Townsend's sailors. Drunken and rowdy men from distant locations sought excitement on lower Main Street. During the mid 1860s vigilantes "cleaned out" cattle rustlers, but the town quieted after mining diminished. Farm laborers, teamsters, drifers, and soldiers were as disorderly and profane as loggers and sailors in Port Townsend. In 1880 Walla Walla's respectable inhabitants complained that the city had 26 saloons and only 7 churches. Citizens in the agricultural center as well as the seaport consistently denounced local prostitution. Describing prostitutes as brazen women who "were never seen to blush," an editor charged that they "blighted youth and streaked with gray the hairs of a worshipping mother." Thus in both cities women and children avoided blocks frequented by prostitutes and drunks.

While boosters of Port Townsend and Walla Walla joined those in other territorial towns in seeking investors, tradesmen, and farmers, they heatedly opposed the drifters. Such individuals received more attention from contemporaries than from historians. One territorial promoter, speaking for both corners, asserted, "Gentlemen of leisure are not wanted. The country is too young to support drones, hence they had better not visit it, for they will be compelled to return in a short time by the force of public opinion if not by dire necessity." The reaction to an unwanted character in Port Townsend supported this warning. Described as a "deadbeat," the visitor was suspected of seeking status as a pauper with eligibility for public assistance. But a gang "rubbed his head with molasses, covered him with flour, turned him over to the sheriff," who jailed him for a night and then shipped him off to Olympia. Walla Walla residents also denounced the shiftless; one of them described tramps as being "dissipated, dishonest, and averse to work of all kinds, preferring a nomadic life of hardship and social outlawry."

Editors at the corners, including Alfred Pettygrove at Port Townsend and William Newell at Walla Walla, consistently aided and abetted dreamers. Both towns were county seats (Jefferson and Walla Walla), the homes of United States Circuit Courts, and important enough to attract President Rutherford B. Hayes during his 1880 visit. Residents of both towns informed their distinguished visitor about their homes, lodges, churches, hotels, shops, stores, mills, restaurants, opera houses, and telephones. Late in the century celebrants in the two cities anticipated and enjoyed the Fourth of July, horse racing, baseball, football, and minstrels. Walla Wallans also held a popular agricultural fair.

Both communities sought to establish schools, and Walla Walla was far more successful. Frontier families pushed for education, especially for boys, and boasted about skilled teachers and schoolhouses. In 1871 a Port Townsend editor urged parents to send their children to school:

"Boat sailing, horse riding, fishing are all proper and right at the proper times, but they do not fit boys to become men, and if our boys have any ambition to excel in after life or to take their stand with the youth who will soon be crowding upon us from the Eastern States, they must study.

Six years later another editor complained that many local students in recent years had traveled to distant schools on the sound. Insisting that his town was the healthiest and best
located in the region, an editor urged educators to establish a well-managed academy because it would save local money and earn funds by attracting students from other counties. A normal school appeared in the 1880s but soon closed because port residents failed to support it. The town lacked an educator like Reverend Cushing Eells who, making great personal sacrifices at the other corner, established Whitman Seminary. In 1866 he and other Congregationalists opened this school in Walla Walla, but, like teachers throughout the territory, they struggled to keep its doors open. Founded in the mining era, Whitman Seminary sheltered its students from profane miners and begged for local support. Eells and succeeding educators complained that too few townspeople had received a formal education and were indifferent to private schooling; furthermore, too many private and religious schools competed for students and donations. Townspeople dismissed the seminary as "a castle in the air."

Despite setbacks, Whitman Seminary endured and was a forerunner to Whitman College, a Congregational school that opened in 1882. Under President Stephen B. L. Penrose’s devoted leadership it survived the depression of the 1890s and soon won national recognition. Walla Walla College, a Seventh Day Adventist institution, emerged in the 1890s, increasing local educational opportunities. Thus Walla Walla’s colleges gave the community a richer culture than did Port Townsend and most other emerging towns. While editors on both sides of the Cascades pushed schooling, they opposed women’s rights. In 1871 Susan B. Anthony campaigned for women’s suffrage in both places and was met with editorial rejection in each community. A Walla Walla editor joked, "Voting by ballot is the silent expression of the opinion of the citizens, and as no woman—save a deaf and dumb one—ever had a silent opinion upon any question she could not exercise the right of suffrage." A Port Townsend editor predicted that Anthony would explain how the avalanche of old maids about to be precipitated upon the latter half of the nineteenth century will serve a good purpose; how it will be their duty to prove that although a woman may have the misfortune to die unmarried, her life is not necessarily a failure.

Inspired by Susan B. Anthony’s teaching, Walla Walla women led by Helen Isaacs in 1886 created the territory’s second woman’s club and turned it into the Equal Suffrage League in 1889. Port Townsend had no such equivalent organization, a fact that probably pleased its male inhabitants. Both communities lacked women. According to Jefferson County’s 1870 census, females made up only 29 percent of the population, and in 1889 their numbers had risen to only 30 percent. Townspeople, especially young men, regretted the shortage of marriagable women. The 1870 census showed that 41 percent of Walla Wallans were female, a percentage that increased slightly by 1900. The sex ratio between the two towns was typical: agricultural counties had a better population balance than lumber counties. Yet, a visitor to Walla Walla in 1883 noted that a lack of women meant that men on Main Street dressed “with less taste” and that Chinese necessarily replaced women as cooks and launderers. The sexual imbalance was one reason why Chinese domestics played important roles at both corners.

PORT TOWNSEND AND Walla Walla had similar responses to their Chinese residents—their largest minority. The Chinese, nearly all of whom were male, made a significant economic contribution. A recent scholar concluded that the largest business in all of Port Townsend was the Zee Tai Company, selling Asian goods, toys, rice, tea, and opium. Ng Soon, the company’s leader, won the respect of whites. Other Chinese who lived in the colony operated laundries and truck farms and served as domestics and laborers. Thus their work and investments contributed to the town’s development, and they achieved, according to a scholar, “a level of respect” from residents who recognized their value. But neighborhood children and young toughs harassed the minority, abusing them verbally and physically. The anti-Chinese element insisted that the so-called “Celestials” took jobs from whites, lived “in filthy, disgusting crowds,” hoarded money, and took their earnings to China.

The Exclusion Act of 1882 fueled hatred of this minority. In Seattle and Tacoma mobs drove the Chinese out of town, but this did not happen in either Port Townsend or Walla Walla. Furthermore, an attempt in Port Townsend to impose an economic boycott of the Chinese and their employers failed. In 1890 an estimated 1,500 Chinese, about one-fifth of the total population, inhabited the city. While residents debated the value and treatment of this minority, the local customs officials sought to prevent the opium smuggling and the entry of illegal Chinese laborers from British Columbia.

Walla Walla’s Chinese had different origins but similar experiences to those in Port Townsend. They initially came as miners or track layers for Dorsey Baker. In both places they served as merchants, laborers, farmers, and domestics. Each city’s Chinatown attracted curiosity as well as hostility, including the charge that they made opium addicts of young, white males. In 1890 the Chinese numbered 800 or about 15 percent of Walla Walla’s population. At earlier periods residents estimated the percentage to be much higher. Walla Wallans patronized Chinese laundries, drug and grocery stores; hired Chinese as family cooks; and purchased vegetables from their truck farms on rented lands. An editor explained: “They are considered the equal of any of the various classes of people engaged in market gardening.” Employers hailed their work ethic; one compared the industrious Chinese with white laborers who, he charged, preferred “unloading a schooner of beer to legitimate toil.”

Walla Wallan Charles Tung, a successful merchant selling Chinese goods and serving as a spokesman for the Chinese
Two of Washington's most historic and attractive towns, Walla Walla and Port Townsend are situated in opposite corners of the state. Though they are far apart and many differences separate them, they have this in common: both towns have been shaped by their geography and by the people who settled in them.

community, was probably the equivalent of Port Townsend's Ng Soon. While some Walla Walla men and boys harassed the Chinese, employers, including housewives, hailed their labor and defended them against those advocating banishment.

Walla Wallans took a greater interest in politicians than in the controversial minority. Referring to itself as the Queen City, Walla Walla in 1878 hosted delegates attending a state constitutional convention. The fact that the meeting was held there demonstrated that the town's political significance was greater than any Puget Sound port. The delegates wrote a constitution, voters approved it, but Congress ignored it. The constitutional convention of 1889 that led to statehood was held in Olympia, not Walla Walla, an indication that the agricultural center had lost its prominence. But Walla Wallans expressed satisfaction that one of their neighbors, banker Miles C. Moore, received appointment as territorial governor—the last person to hold this office.

As the decade of the 1880s opened, however, it seemed that Walla Walla, a transportation hub, was fulfilling its dreams. It was the largest city in the territory—a claim that could be made until 1883. On Main Street several families operated successful businesses, including the Schwabacher merchant house and the founders of the Baker-Boyer Bank, established in 1869. Port Townsend would not have an equivalent institution until the early 1880s. But to retain their town's regional importance, Walla Wallans understood the need for outside investments, increased immigration, and a transcontinental railroad. Upset by the fact that their town imported so many basic commodities from Portland, boosters in the mid 1880s sought to attract manufacturers of foodstuffs, beer, candy, soap, and much more. These individuals also complained that their promising city attracted but few investors and immigrants, and, much worse, the Northern Pacific and Union Pacific did not build their mainlines through the Walla Walla Valley. Geography was no longer an ally.

Although Walla Walla failed to get a vital transcontinental railroad, competing major railroads built significant branch lines into southeastern Washington's wheat region, including the entrance of the Northern Pacific into the Walla Walla valley in 1889. D. W. Meinig asserted that high transportation rates, frustrating farmers nationwide, did not retard the expansion of southeastern Washington's wheat belt. Walla Wallans praised wheat growers, one writer asserting that "barbarous people could not cultivate this plant." Urban as well as rural families closely evaluated wheat prices and railroad rates, but in 1887 two significant local events also attracted considerable attention—Main Street's devastating fire and the construction of a new territorial penitentiary. In the late 19th century most cities in the Pacific Northwest suffered from a major fire. Port Townsend, however, did not experience as destructive a burning as Walla Walla, but in both places flames swept through their Chinatowns.

While the fire slowed Walla Walla's growth, the territorial penitentiary promoted it. Assuming that the institution would be economically beneficial, local politicians had convinced the territorial legislature to establish the penitentiary in their city. In 1899 a Walla Walla resident called the penitentiary "the most important... and most extensive. public institution of the state." It was the city's leading employer. Inmates provided cheap labor; in Port Townsend Indians had long played this vital role. In the late 1890s, 35 prisoners labored in the brickyard, annually producing about 1.5 million bricks; more
importantly, 200 inmates worked in the jute mill, producing 1.2 million burlap bags, which were used in shipping wheat. Farmers paid only five cents a bag, and builders purchased bricks at reasonable rates; plus, the state's appropriation paid for the institution's administration and guards. Thus, the city benefited from the penitentiary and from Fort Walla Walla, and it tried to get a third government institution. Townspeople made an unsuccessful bid for a new agricultural college, but politics, not geography, meant that in 1892 the school opened in Pullman. Despite this failure to attract another state institution, few if any Washington cities in the mid 1890s received more assistance from state and federal governments than did Walla Walla. Government expenditures, not those of distant capitalists, broadened its economic foundation.

The city's population increased from 3,600 in 1880 to 4,700 in 1890, a growth rate that disappointed dreamers. In 1880 President Hayes had assured Walla Walla citizens that Washington Territory would attract a large immigration and that their area would "undoubtedly have the lion's share." Hayes had correctly predicted a large population increase, but most newcomers, arriving by rail, settled west of the Cascades. In 1882 a Walla Walla booster predicted that unless rails linked the city with Seattle it had no chance "of becoming a commercial center." Another resident stressed that the city must become a manufacturing as well as an agricultural center. During the 1880s Walla Wallans realized that upstart Spokane, a rapidly growing railroad center dating from 1881, had dashed their dreams of continuing to dominate an interior that Spokane boosters were now calling "The Inland Empire." Recognizing that Spokane was the regional hub, some Walla Wallans moved there late in the century, seeking either the fulfillment of a dream or a chance for advancement. Republican Miles Poindexter, for example, practiced law in Walla Walla in the 1890s, recognized the city's limitations, and departed for Spokane. There he soon enjoyed political success, winning election to the United States House of Representatives and then to the United States Senate.

WALLA WALLA BOOSTERS, often referring to their hometown as "The Garden City of the Northwest," failed to be discouraged by departures, accepted the city's loss of eminence, and even found a positive interpretation of the depression of the 1890s. Wheat growers survived low prices, and very few businesses failed to weather the economic storm. In fact, the city's population grew much more in the troubled 1890s than it had in the prosperous 1880s, doubling to 10,000. There were several reasons for this growth, including a strong agricultural and commercial economy late in the 1890s, the movement of many wealthy farmers into town, and the arrival of refugees from the depressed Great Plains. Portland and other cities also received significant numbers of these immigrants; Port Townsend, however, did not attract farm families fleeing severe economic conditions, partly because of their unfamiliarity with a timber-based economy.

At the end of the century Walla Wallans recounted their economic history. One editor, for example, asserted that the only time the city "enjoyed a genuine boom was in the spring of 1862," and since then it grew "like a cherry tree, slow but sure, and it's still growing." Other writers reminded townspeople of the fact that the city and valley had never attracted outside investors the way Puget Sound had because its agriculture required less outside money. San Franciscans had developed Puget Sound's lumber industry at tidewater; by contrast, local men capitalized Walla Walla's flour mills on Mill Creek, erecting seven of them by 1866. Many boosters argued that their town, unlike the large cities in western Washington, had not "suffered from the evils of real estate booms and inflated values." In fact, it had never had an overinflated real estate boom. Having failed to attract investments as had Seattle and Tacoma, Walla Wallans in the late 1890s, emphasizing the depression's severe impact upon cities west of the Cascades, now proclaimed the advantages of being free from outside ownership. The insistence that distant capitalists would have played a harmful role in Walla Walla was more often heard at the turn of the century than earlier.

But some businessmen, fully aware that the days of regional domination of eastern Washington were but a memory, still hoped—and some-

The imposing Jefferson County Courthouse, made of four million bricks, was completed in 1892. Its clock remains the city's unofficial timekeeper.
Walla Walla County Courthouse, Washington Territory, was erected in 1881. This 1882 Alfred Burr lithograph from Historic Sketches of Walla Walla, Whitman, Columbia and Garfield Counties, W.T., by Frank T. Gilbert depicts the newly-built structure and grounds.

Times dreamed—of securing outside investments, especially for woolen mills and fruit canneries that would create hundreds of jobs. Some citizens never recovered from speculative fever; for example, in 1899 a Walla Walla resident voiced an optimistic message that sounded similar to those heard 30 years earlier:

To the man of money seeking new fields of investment where profit and safe returns are promised, the Walla Walla Country offers opportunities unequalled. Industry, energy, and ambition are all the capital a man need have; the valley will do the rest.

Another promoter, pointing to mansions, the Gilbert Hunt farm machinery company operating since the 1880s, and the increasingly popular annual fruit fairs of the 1890s, proclaimed that the Walla Walla valley “has yielded more wealth and made more rich men in proportion to its inhabitants than any parallel strip of agriculture country in America.” A visitor in 1898 praised enterprising Walla Wallans who sought a transcontinental railroad in an effort to build “a great city.” It would be difficult, however, for developers to attract outside money, especially for manufacturing, when their dubious townsmen pointed out the lack of timber, coal, and a mainline railroad. In 1901 historian William Lyman, speaking for those satisfied with present conditions, noted: “The beautiful city stands as a monument to the wealth that has been dug out of the ground by means of wheat; furthermore, the per capita wealth of Walla Walla was only surpassed by Hartford, Connecticut; Helena, Montana; and Portland, Oregon.”

In 1903 Walla Walla briefly basked in national recognition. One of its citizens, longtime Republican Levi Ankeny, was elected by the state legislature to the United States Senate. Because of the senator’s residence, President Theodore Roosevelt made a brief but well-publicized visit to the city. Senator Ankeny obtained appropriations to improve Fort Walla Walla and retained its cavalrymen; his failure to be reelected, however, meant that the army could in 1910 close the unneeded fort. The local economy suffered from this decision; for example, during one year in the 1890s the fort put $171,000 into the local economy, including payrolls for soldiers and civilians and payments to farmers for oats, meats, horses, and more. An editor explained that townsmen understood that the post was expensive, unnecessary, and only maintained “as a mark of respect for the city.” He added: “No taps will sound to warn the townsmen that it is time to seek their beds, no reveille will sound tomorrow morning to tell them it is time to awaken.” While Fort Walla Walla closed, Fort Wright in Spokane—a post of no more military value—remained active. This was another indication of Spokane’s regional domination.

Port Townsend’s history in the late 1880s was much different than that of Walla Walla. The port’s historian stated, “The decade between 1875 and 1885 witnessed no major event.... Instead, it was a period of consolidation and development.” As was the case in Walla Walla, a few manufacturers and retailers began small-scale operations in the thriving city. Like Seattle, but on a much-reduced scale, Port Townsend reclaimed land from the bay. A thoughtful observer in the 1880s described Port Townsend residents in flattering terms: they exhibited “a degree of mental cultivation quite remarkable in a frontier village;” furthermore, the place lacked “that brash, temporary appearance so common in Californian villages and so offensive to an Eastern man.”

In 1886 Territorial Governor Watson C. Squire appreciated the town’s growth and hailed its prospects. Sounding like a booster, the politician maintained that the beautiful bay had “room for the entire navy and merchant marine of the United States to ride in safety at one time,” that there was a
very large maritime business, that the customs office stimulated both local trade and the establishment of several foreign consulates, and "that the town’s "magnificent brick and stone buildings" reflected stability. With such favorable attributes, the governor predicted, the place would be "teeming with a hardy, industrious people, and buzzing with manufacturing industries." In summary, Squire was dreaming along with the Port Townsend community but not with Walla Walla. The leader paid scant attention to Walla Walla but emphasized booming Spokane’s regional domination.

Port Townsend’s dreamers took heart in the late 1880s because it seemed that the city would finally receive a long-delayed and much-deserved terminus. Stories about railroad building fueled the long-smoldering speculative fires. The great excitement of 1871 again swept Water Street. Historian Peter Simpson concluded: "Of all the real estate transactions that occurred in Jefferson County in the forty years after the town’s founding in 1851, the three years between 1889–1891 generated fully 65 percent of the total volume." Port Townsend was belatedly realizing its old dreams. The population grew to 7,000, carpenters and stone masons erected impressive commercial buildings and private homes, electric streetcar companies appeared—Walla Walla would employ horse-drawn cars until 1906—and there were many other signs, including a wagon road leading uptown. During this period of excitement the federal government was building an attractive customs house and post office building. This expensive structure, promoters asserted, proved Uncle Sam’s confidence in the city’s future.

Local and distant investors initiated a new wave of speculation in 1887 by incorporating the Port Townsend Southern Railroad, a line that would be built toward Portland. Two years later, at ground-breaking ceremonies, James Swan, the town’s most persistent dreamer, delivered the major address to enthusiastic townspeople. That same year the Union Pacific announced that it would link Port Townsend with Portland. Responding to this glorious news, a local editor boasted that the city "will be made the shipping point and supply station of a vast fleet.... Port Townsend will now get its share of the wealth and commerce of Europe that annually finds its way hither and has heretofore passed us by." Residents invested about $200,000 in the railroads that promised to transform their town and enrich them. Track layers hammered down about 20 miles of rails, and an enthusiastic editor exalted in 1890 that the "surroundings of Port Townsend look very much like Manhattan Island, and I cannot help comparing the Port Townsend of the future with New York of today." Equally enthusiastic residents investing in their hometown predicted that it would outstrip Seattle and that Walla Walla wheat would be shipped from local docks.

But several economic difficulties blasted dreams and ruined speculators. The Oregon Improvement Company, a Union Pacific subsidiary, went into receivership and could not build into Port Townsend; furthermore, the depression of 1893 shattered the regional economy. Port Townsend went into a tailspin; the population dropped to 3,400 in 1900, a decline of 1,200 from 1890. The bursting of the speculative bubble meant that properties were sold at a fraction of their cost, that all the streetcar companies folded, that banks shut their vaults, that ships remained at anchor, and that families moved from town, some seeking jobs in triumphant Seattle. Some struggling Port Townsend merchants tried to become outfitters for the Klondike gold rush of 1897, but Seattle, recognized universally as Puget Sound’s Queen City, dominated this profitable business.

The federal government provided a measure of relief for hard-pressed Port Townsend. In 1893 Congress appropriated money for a new marine hospital building and admitted patients three years later. Stories circulated that a congressional fortification bill would mean that barracks would be constructed near Port Townsend. Indeed, Fort Worden appeared around the turn of the century, but while its garrison, like old Fort Townsend, helped the economy, it and the marine hospital could not prevent the city’s long economic slumber. In fact, the federal government reduced the port’s status when it moved the customhouse to Seattle at about the same time Walla Walla lost its fort.

By 1900 dreamers at both corners were few; residents necessarily accepted their size. The coastal city had suffered much greater financial and emotional losses in attempting to realize impossible dreams than the interior town. Water Street suffered from wild and ruinous speculation, but Main Street escaped such devastation. Early in the new century Port Townsend boosters rarely boasted of prosperity, but advocates of growth remained active in Walla Walla. In 1906, for example, its boosters formed the 50,000 Club, hoping to increase the city’s population by 40,000 within four years. Improved transportation and manufacturing, including canneries and a paper mill, would help draw this desired population. Despite the club’s large membership, enthusiastic rallies, and booster buttons, its dreams of rapid development soon evaporated. Thereafter residents generally accepted slow growth and boasted that what had provided prosperity greater than the predictions of pioneer dreamers.

Today many residents of these two livable places enjoy their size—Walla Walla ranks 29th in state population and Port Townsend ranks 72nd—and criticize social conditions in metropolitan centers, including those two that had snuffed out their dreams. The large cities disrupt family ties by continuing to lure sons and daughters raised at the corners; yet, for today’s residents of both towns, failed dreams have had mostly positive consequences.

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Errors of Omission

It is always a pleasure to pick up my mail and find a copy of COLUMBIA. Without fail, I find articles of interest to me, particularly those essays concerning the Lewis and Clark expedition. One way or another, I have been involved with various agencies or organizations promoting these intrepid explorers for the past 37 years.

The Summer 2002 issue included “Following in Their Footsteps: Creating the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail,” by Wally Lewis. Though I found it concise and well-researched, there were a few statements with which I would take exception. These are more a matter of omission rather than commission. Lewis implies that the expedition achieved its principal goal at Fort Clatsop—not so. On November 16, while at Station Camp in Pacific County, Washington, Joseph Whitehouse wrote “We are at the end of our voyage to the Pacific Ocean....”

At the end of his narrative the author states, “By the summer of 1998 there were four major interpretive centers along the route,” citing the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial and Arch; Fort Clatsop; Washburn, North Dakota; and Great Falls, Montana. To say the least, it was disappointing that a publication of the Washington State Historical Society would omit the three interpretive centers in our state.

The Alpowai Interpretive Center in Chief Timothy State Park, just across the Washington/Idaho state line near Clarkston, is devoted entirely to telling the story of the expedition and its dealings with the Nez Perce Indians. It was dedicated in 1981.

At the mouth of the Snake River is the Sacajawea Interpretive Center within Sacajawea State Park. This facility was built in the early 1930s as a museum with numerous Indian artifacts. In 1977, however, it was remodeled to tell a more comprehensive story of the Corps of Discovery and its dealings among the Indians of that area.

In 1976 our Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center atop Cape Disappointment within Fort Canby State Park was dedicated. This is a major facility at the place where the party achieved its principal goal—the Pacific Ocean.

These three centers were state funded—no federal money was used.

—Ralph H. Rudeen, Executive Secretary, State of Washington Lewis and Clark Trail Committee

Additional Reading

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

Beisboleros


Lessons from an Old Road


Provision Camp


Dreams and Developments


Northwest Connections

Native River
The Columbia Remembered
William D. Layman

Native River satisfies our curiosity to know what the mighty Columbia River once looked like prior to the building of numerous major dams. Featuring many photographs never before published, this finely crafted book focuses on the 350-mile reach of the middle Columbia River—from Priest Rapids in south-central Washington to the U.S.-Canadian border. Compelling river stories include Native American legends and lore, the river's many petroglyphs and pictographs, accounts of white explorers and immigrants, and Layman's own insightful observations.

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A Pacific War Saga
Wayne C. MacGregor, Jr.

MacGregor helps us understand how WWII servicemen's values and attitudes were shaped by the Great Depression, as he graphically describes the dire years of 1930s America, when he grew up in Spokane, Washington. He then takes readers through the war years and the savage, face-to-face, small-unit actions in the Mariana Islands, The Philippines, and Okinawa from 1944 to 1945. MacGregor's memoir is truly an Army infantryman's account of war at its worst, and individual soldiers at their best.

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Adapting in Eden
Oregon's Catholic Minority, 1838–1986
Patricia Brandt and Lillian A. Pereyra

Adapting in Eden presents the history of the first 150 years of the Oregon archdiocese. Begun in 1838 by European and North American missionaries, the archdiocese once included the entire northwest from the Rockies to Alaska. The authors tell the story of how that vast and improbable archdiocese came to be, then gradually shrank in geographic size and increased in membership and complexity. By focusing on the personalities and administrative styles of Oregon's archbishops over time, the authors have delineated this important part of the Northwest tapestry.

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Williams presents history at a basic geographic level—the neighborhood as it is with landmark homes, churches, cemeteries, and parks. Williams has chosen to focus on the neighborhood from its earliest development period—the turn of the 20th century—to sweeping changes mid-century. The development of the Capitol Hill neighborhood echoes the major themes of Seattle history through its boom period from Doc Maynard to Bruce Lee, and it's elderly father, Dooley, the author learned to respect and honor a way of life totally alien to her own upbringing in Southern California. Her book, Standing Up to the Rock, is a beautifully written combination autobiography, biography, travel guide, social commentary, and brief history that contrasts the place, time, and family of the two women. She cleverly moves from her experiences growing up in California to Liz's youth of about the same time on the Snake River north of Hells Canyon. She compares the profound changes in her home region and the impact change has had upon her family to the constancy of the Snake River ranch and long ties to the land the Burns family has enjoyed.

Freeman-Toole often visited the Burns ranch with her young son. She was put to work helping with the numerous and diverse tasks ranch life demands and cultivated a deep affection for the people and place in the process. “I realized that I feel at home here because I am part of the picture... this place is bound up with human history.” Through hard work, close friendships, a binding intimacy with the canyon and its history, Freeman-Toole became “part of the picture.” The canyon changed her, gave her a stability she had not known in California or anywhere else, and cultivated an appreciation of rural living. She learned to stand up to the rock. The author captures the seduction of the canyon, but she does not do credit to its history. Most regrettable is her failure to use the real names of the Snake River ranchers, friends, family, even the derelict pieces of well-researched, well-written history with overgeneralizations that paint a misleading historical account. One example can be found in her ambiguous discussion of the dangers of Hells Canyon. In all other respects this book is a valuable contribution to a paucity of documentation on the region. Early in the book the author observes, “With each visit here, I lay down a sheet of memory, thin as onion skin. They add up over time, but I still have barely begun to know this place.” In telling her story, Freeman-Toole shows an appreciation of the landscape and an understanding of life in the canyon that has nearly passed from living memory. Her experiences, insight, and skillful narration make this book a delight to read.

Carole Simon-Smolinski lives outside Hells Canyon of the Snake River in Asotin, Washington. She recently retired from full-time teaching at Lewis-Clark State College in Lewiston, Idaho.

Standing Up to the Rock
Reviewed by Carole Simon-Smolinski.

All politics are local,” said former Speaker of the House of Representatives Tip O’Neil, and to a large extent so is history. This volume by noted food historian Jacqueline Williams presents history at a basic geographic level—the neighborhood. Capitol Hill in Seattle is a rich area for historical inquiry, blessed as it is with landmark homes, churches, cemeteries, and parks. Williams has chosen to focus on the neighborhood from its earliest development period—the turn of the 20th century—through the next 46 years, which leaves the reader thirsting a bit for the rest of the story. The development of the Capitol Hill neighborhood echoes the major themes of Seattle history through its boom period of the early 1900s to sweeping changes mid-century.

Williams uses well-honed research skills developed in her earlier popular volumes on the history of food and cooking in the Northwest to ferret out well-documented facts about the neighborhood she has lived in for the past 30 years. The text is liberally footnoted and indexed, although there is no bibliography.

After giving the origins of the neighborhood and its boundaries, Williams separates the book into several chapters that deal with discrete, well-illustrated facets of the community such as schools, churches, and businesses. She interviewed several longtime residents who add reminiscences and a personal touch to the narrative. These views of people and scenes enliven a text that is chock-full of detailed information. Her chapter, “Play and Stay,” which focuses on the neighborhood’s parks and cemeteries, is especially well done. Volunteer Park and the Seattle Asian Art Museum are situated in the Capitol Hill area, as is Lake View Cemetery where Seattle notables from Doc Maynard to Bruce Lee are interred. Although the treatment of separate community elements is a good organizational tool, the book could have benefited from a summary final chapter to tie together the entire work.

Williams has produced a valuable resource for those interested in the background of one of Seattle’s premier neighborhoods and has set a high standard of scholarship for similar works. In her preface she challenged herself to try to discover the “who, why, and when” of the Capitol Hill neighborhood, and she has succeeded.

Shanna Stevenson is a local historian and historic preservation professional who lives in Olympia.
R

ferred to variously as Jet City and "the world's largest company town," Seattle and the broader Puget Sound region have depended heavily on airplane manufacturer, The Boeing Company, for jobs and economic growth since World War II. Residents of the region were painfully reminded of this recently when Boeing announced the removal of its corporate headquarters to Chicago, followed by the layoff of tens of thousands of workers. In Wings of Power, T. M. Sell, son of a former Boeing employee and a teacher of journalism and political science at Highline Community College, provides a history of this relationship.

Through much of the Cold War era Boeing was the single largest and most powerful economic and political entity in the state. However, as Washington's economy became increasingly diverse, Boeing's economic and political role shrank. By the early 1990s, according to Sell, "Boeing's needs and wants seemed no more important than those of any other large firm" in the eyes of many local residents and politicians. This shrinking political power was most clearly evident, Sell points out, in the inability of Boeing and its corporate allies to stop the emergence of an "anti-growth" coalition in Washington politics. In the early 1990s the Puget Sound region experienced a backlash against the excesses of growth that mirrored the complaints of similar "quality-of-life" movements around the country. This "anti-growth" coalition sought slow or "sensible" growth in place of an unbridled pursuit of jobs and business at any cost. The result was the passage in 1991 of a Growth Management Act, over Boeing's opposition, that pushed corporations to defray some of the social costs of growth. Using these political battles as a model, Sell outlines a kind of cyclical pattern emerging in Washington and the nation at large. He calls this pattern the "paradox of growth": "We work like serfs to fatten the goose, and then when it gets too big, we try to wring its neck."

Wings of Power is a short, readable, and opinionated book. It provides an excellent introduction to the political economy of the Puget Sound region and raises some powerful questions about the complex and contradictory relationship between markets and democratic politics. At times, unfortunately, it reads like an apology for Boeing. Sell often takes the company's statements of goodwill, as well as its threats, at face value while tending to dismiss growth critics as self-interested and naive. Today's global marketplace gives multinational corporations extraordinary and unprecedented leverage. That being the case, complaints about the limits that democratic politics place on the "business climate" could easily stem from political power that is growing, not shrinking. Nevertheless, this is an important and thought-provoking book.

Mark Santow received his doctorate in American history from the University of Pennsylvania. His writings focus on social history and urban problems.

One of the deans of the study of Northwest history, G. Thomas Edwards penned this masterful volume as the sequel to his first volume of Whitman's history, The Triumph of Tradition (1992). College and university histories are commonplace, but only a few manage to keep an eye for detail while situating the college within the larger context of the academy. Whitman alumni and followers will appreciate Edwards's thoroughness as he traces the college's development from the perspectives of faculty, students, and administrators. I noted friends, former secondary schoolteachers, and colleagues amongst its pages. The index will doubtless prove a popular feature.

More globally and perhaps more importantly, Edwards has placed Whitman's history in the context of a liberal arts school isolated from any urban advantages, finding its way amongst state universities, teaching colleges, recalcitrant trustees, and various market-driven philosophies of education—all during the turbulence of the Great Depression, World War II, Vietnam, and the agitation of the 1960s. Maintaining a consistent academic vision is always difficult, even in the best of times, and Whitman's ability to stay the course during these times is nothing short of remarkable. Thus, Edwards's work becomes noteworthy for those of us in the academy who wrestle with the notion of the importance of a liberal arts education versus education aimed mainly at career advancement.

Tradition is framed within the triad of faculty, administration, and trustees, and Edwards makes clear that Whitman thrives today not because of the consistent leadership of all three of these elements but because of an almost uncanny knack of one component for taking charge when others faltered. When the Depression and other economic blights withered Whitman's agricultural base of support, only a dedicated faculty kept the flame alight. When the need for fundraising became acute, presidents arose who were adept at increasing the endowment—the key that allows a liberal arts college the freedom to pursue its true mission.

Edwards pulls no punches. Like any small college, and especially those that pride themselves on being a "family," Whitman has had its share of internecine friction and strife. As former Whitman President Robert Skotheim notes in the foreword, "Prior to 1975, two-thirds of Whitman's nine presidents resigned involuntarily or died," and Edwards makes clear that Whitman's current success has come at a great price. But even this candor serves broader ends. Demythologizing Whitman's success does not lessen its appeal. Rather, it suggests that if this small college can succeed, remote from population centers, no stranger to rancor, with no lavish founding endowments—then the liberal arts vision may not have perished after all.

Michael McKenzie is a professor of philosophy and religion at Keuka College in New York.
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