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COLUMBIA
The Magazine of Northwest History
A quarterly publication of the
WASHINGTON STATE
HISTORICAL SOCIETY

VOLUME SEVENTEEN, NUMBER THREE

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THE MAGAZINE OF NORTHWEST HISTORY • FALL 2003

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FRONT COVER: “Nespelem,” by J. Ruth Kelso (1941). The prominent grave marker is probably that of Chief Joseph, who is buried at Nespelem. Ruth Kelso spent three summers at the Nespelem art colony. Most of her paintings were portraits, so this scene of Nespelem is unusual. She combined several significant features of the town in this piece. Courtesy Museum Collections, Washington State Historical Society. (See related article beginning on page 23.)
FROM THE EDITOR

A New Identity for the History Museum

As a function of a broader study of how to increase the earned income capacity of the Historical Society—an element of the organization's long-range strategic plan—several staff and members of the board spent the last year studying our current brand identity package and potential. One of the principal outcomes of this study, which included a significant research component, was the conclusion that the Society had a confused "brand hierarchy." That is, there was little if any consistency in the design "look" presented by the various departments within the organization. Some programs had distinctive graphic styles (this magazine and the History Lab come to mind) that set them apart. But the Washington State History Museum—our flagship enterprise and the one aspect of our operation most in need of a distinguishing logo because of the competitive nature of the visitor attraction market—did not have one.

Thus in June, after many months of study, the Board of Trustees approved a new graphic symbol and tag line for the History Museum and commissioned further work on bringing coherency to our organizational brand hierarchy. This will entail an investigation, over time, of the brand correlations between the History Museum and the Research Center, the State Capital Museum, Columbia Magazine, and the History Lab. For example, we have already changed the URL for our web site from wshs.org to washingtonhistory.org in order to place primacy on what we do rather than how we are organized.

Of course, the larger corporate entity, Washington State Historical Society, remains in place, though the logo of the Historical Society will be retired in order for more light to shine on the museum's new symbol, which is shown below.

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Director
“So Vast an Enterprise”—Lewis & Clark Revisited

By James P. Ronda

We are a nation of storytellers. We tell stories about ourselves, our families, our friends, even our enemies. And when our lives are in bits and pieces we stitch the fragments together and make stories. Who we are is in our stories. And if we’ve forgotten how to tell them, then Ken Burns and Dayton Duncan can weave their magic to remind us.

So many American stories are about journeys. If we are a storytelling people, then we are also a nation of journey makers. Some of the earliest Native American stories are about journeys—and all of us have been making them and talking about them ever since. We are a people on the road, whether the road be the Trail of Tears, the Oregon Trail, or Route 66. We’re on the road with Jack Kerouac and “On the Road Again” with Willie Nelson. We talk about “Home, Sweet Home,” but it is the lure of the road and the promise of the journey that still holds us. Willa Cather once said that there are only two or three great human stories and we keep repeating them over and again. One of those is the journey story—the exodus, the odyssey, the long walk, the bitter trail.

Of all our journey stories, few have so fully captured our imagination as the one about Lewis and Clark. Lewis and Clark gave us our first national road story. That story, that journey began here, at Monticello, Virginia—in the spacious mind of Thomas Jefferson—because all journeys begin at home, in the country of the mind.

Books change lives. Henry David Thoreau once asked, “How many a man has dated a new era in his life from the reading of a book?” And that is exactly what happened here in the summer of 1802. Summer was a time for President Jefferson to escape Washington’s humid days and political heat. The summer of 1802 was no exception. Here at Monticello, in his beloved book room, there was time to rest, read, and reflect. One of the books he read that summer changed the course of American history. Jefferson already had a large library of travel and exploration books. To that collection he now added Alexander Mackenzie’s Voyages from Montreal. That book was Mackenzie’s account of his epic journey from Atlantic to Pacific in 1793—ten years before Lewis and Clark. But it wasn’t the daily details of Mackenzie’s transcontinental trek that stunned the president. What shocked him were the book’s final paragraphs. There, in a few hundred words, Mackenzie laid out a bold scheme for the British occupation of the West. This was the very West that Jefferson hoped would preserve American independence. This would be the West of free, self-reliant American farmers. Now it appeared as if the British lion might seize the country before the American eagle could make its nest. At that moment, in the book room at Monticello, reading Mackenzie, the Lewis and Clark expedition was born. Little wonder that William Clark called Jefferson “that great Character the Main Spring” of the expedition.

The journey that Jefferson envisioned was no ordinary one, no simple adventure, no great American vacation. Like his Enlightenment contemporaries, Jefferson understood exploration as a way to gain useful knowledge—useful for ordinary citizens and certainly useful for the expansion of the American empire in the West. And make no mistake about it, the Great Character had empire on his mind. Pause for a moment and look at the exploration instructions Jefferson wrote for Meriwether Lewis in June 1803. What he drafted for Lewis became the master plan, the charter for federal exploration for the rest of the century. Jefferson gave his travelers one central mission—finding the elusive Northwest Passage. This was his geography of hope, his geography of illusion. But he never intended for Lewis and Clark to head west wearing blinders. Exploration is all about inquiry, about asking questions. The instructions for Lewis and Clark were filled with questions—questions about native peoples and cultures, plants, animals, the weather, and of course questions about what Jefferson gracefully called “the face of the country.” Lewis and Clark questioned their way west. And their answers gave us the first volume in what became a great encyclopedia of the American West.

A journey with many aims and goals, a journey that began here—it soon became a journey that demanded many hands. Lots of us grew up thinking that the whole expedition really had just four actors—Lewis, Clark, Sacagawea, and the dog. Think again. Imagine the expedition as an infantry company on the move; better yet, think of it as a human community. Look closely at this community, at what Lewis once called “the best of families.” Look at its diversity and variety. Consider York, a slave who went west, shared in all the delights and dangers of the journey, and then lived to have a deeply troubled relationship with his master. Consider George Drouillard, hunter and scout without equal—part Shawnee, part French. Consider Pierre Cruzatte, the one-
John Ordway's New Hampshire twang, the German English of Private John Potts, and the first words and cries of a child raised in a linguistic Tower of Babel. What could be more American than this? This is the crazy quilt that was and is America. The Lewis and Clark story puts us on a journey with a distinctively American community. In a strange and mysterious way—even across the divide of two centuries and profound cultural differences—they are us, and we are them.

And more than that—this expedition community moved through the lands and lives of other communities. The West in 1803 was no empty place, no vast unknown. Everything that Lewis and Clark would come to see had already been seen and explored and mapped by native people. William Clark knew that. On the first day out from St. Louis he wrote that the expedition’s "road across the continent" would take the Corps of Discovery through "a multitude of Indians." Let me put this as plainly as I know how. To understand this journey story, to appreciate its complexity and variety, we ought to get off the boat and stand on the bank. We should change the angle of vision. We need to see this emblematic American journey story through fresh eyes, through native eyes. And not just eyes and seeing but voices and hearing. If the only voices we hear are those of Lewis or Sergeant Ordway or Private Whitehouse, then we will have only half the conversations. We will get monologues instead of dialogues.

Let’s ask: How did Jefferson’s travelers look to the Yankton Sioux man Yellow Bear or the Nez Perce woman Watkuweis? What stories would Hidatsa chief Black Moccasin tell about his friendship with William Clark? What stories did those Lemhi Shoshone women who carried expedition baggage over the Great Divide tell the next day? And what did it mean when Walula chief Yellept wanted to trade his songs for those sung and played by the strangers? The point here is a simple one—native people were at the center of the Lewis and Clark journey. They were not bystanders, mere extras playing bit parts. This was a journey that swept across a continental stage. The actors on that stage had names like Big Horse and Twisted Hair, Cameahwait and Coboway. Without their lines there really is no play. Without their voices we have no American conversation.

What began at Monticello in the summer of 1802 was a journey in search of knowledge. Now 200 years later we begin the journey again. What will we find along the trail? What will we learn about ourselves and our past—a past that keeps shoving its way into the present. We should look again at what Jefferson called “the names of the nations.” The names are constant reminders of the lasting presence and continued vitality of Native North America.

And as we march the Bicentennial trail, as we hear the many journey stories, we should not pretend that they are easy ones to tell, easy ones to hear. The Lewis and Clark stories do not always offer simple truths and comforting answers. If we want stories of comfort and triumph, we should go some other place. Their journey, our journey, takes us to moments of genuine friendship and openhanded cooperation but also to places of suspicion and violence. We need to get right with Lewis and Clark, and that means getting right with an often deeply troubled, troubling past. The best human stories, the most revealing ones, are the prickly ones, the ones that chew on us and won’t let us go.

The Bicentennial journey begins here. If we finish the journey in 2006 being the same people we are now, then what William Clark called “so Vast an Enterprise” will have failed. Journeys should change us. Whether we are natives or newcomers, this journey—these voices—these stories should expand and enrich us. All of this should enlarge us, bringing us face to face with wonder and strangeness.

Two centuries ago Thomas Jefferson compared Lewis and Clark to artists “filling up the canvas we begin.” The painting that is America is yet incomplete. The journey begun here is yet unfinished. The trail beckons; the voices from the past call out to us. Now is the time to begin.

James P. Ronda is Barnard Professor of Western American History at the University of Tulsa and author of Beyond Lewis and Clark: The Army Explores the West. Ronda presented this address as part of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial inaugural event at Monticello, Virginia, on January 18, 2003.
Denounced, defeated, disgraced: Oregon’s former governor, Charles Henry Martin, lashed out during the late 1930s to mortally wound his betrayer, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt. “I am a Democrat,” he said to an audience while stumping the state for Republican presidential candidate Wendell Wilkie, “but not a New Dealer.” FDR had abandoned democratic principles, Martin claimed, and substituted in their place Hitlerian “National Socialism sneaking in the back door as in Germany,...a form of national socialism which is the logical result of the trends developed in our national government in the past few years.” Beware the melodious voice of the “radio crooner,” Martin warned the Republican gathering, connecting Roosevelt not only to Hitler but broadening the attack to include Bolshevik Communism: that voice is malevolent, that voice emanates from a “Trojan Horse,” that voice soothes to deceive. “His voice,” the outraged ex-governor announced, “is that of a Stalin with a New York Accent.”

Certainly Martin had not always detested Roosevelt. In 1933, only seven years prior to these denunciations, as a second-term representative from Oregon’s Third Congressional District, Martin had had privileged access to the Oval Office, had been a guest on the president’s yacht. A year later Oregon voters elected Martin the state’s governor, an election that held an unparalleled opportunity to reshape Oregon politics by permanently wresting control of state government away from the dominant Republicans. On the campaign trail Martin proudly championed the New Deal and linked himself with the popular president. But by 1938, as the governor battled for reelection in the Democratic primaries, Roosevelt publicly repudiated Governor Martin, throwing his support to Martin’s primary opponent, Henry Hess. Martin’s actions as governor—battles with his own party over public power; his militaristic, uncompromising response to labor uprisings; his open hostility toward the New Deal and individual members of Roosevelt’s cabinet, most notably Frances Perkins and Harold Ickes—alienated all segments of his own party and a good many Republicans as well. Fractured in 1938, the Democrats could only look on enviously as Republican Charles Sprague...
solidified his support throughout all segments of Oregon society, building a Republican majority that kept Democrats out of power for a generation.

Charles Henry Martin led a remarkable career prior to taking office as Oregon's governor in 1935. After graduating from West Point and serving for ten years at Vancouver Barracks, he earned, deservedly, a warrior's reputation in China as part of the United States' invasion force sent to put down the Boxer Uprising. Rising through the ranks, he spent three years on special duty in Portland reorganizing a demoralized Oregon National Guard, protected General John Pershing's back while Pershing invaded Mexico prior to World War I, ran two training camps, then commanded three different divisions during the war, served for several years on the General Staff in Washington, D.C., occupied the top United States military post in Panama where he successfully put down a peasant rebellion, and retired a major general in 1927 after 40 years in the army. He returned to Portland, which he considered home, consolidated the vast real estate holdings inherited through his wife's family, and entered politics at the urging of his exclusive Arlington Club friends. After winning election in the Portland-centered Third Congressional District in November 1930, Martin spent two terms in Congress, often joining minority Republicans during his first term in opposing Democratic initiatives to blunt the effects of the Depression.

Franklin Roosevelt assumed the presidency on March 4, 1933; the marathon "Hundred Days" congressional special session opened on March 9. Inexplicably, Representative Martin did not cast a vote on many of the bills adopted during the legendary legislative session; he was absent during one of the most important periods in the long history of the United States Congress. There is no record of an illness keeping him away from his congressional duties. No mention is made of Congressman Martin's prolonged absence in the Oregonian. One is left with the distinct impression, speculative in the absence of any hard evidence, that despite his rhetorical support for Roosevelt's election and his declarations of loyalty, the general could not induce himself to ratify what he perceived as dangerously "socialistic" New Deal legislation. On June 16 the special session adjourned.

Five days later Martin initiated correspondence with the White House that resulted in his most lasting contribution to Oregon and the Pacific Northwest—Bonneville Dam—for which he has not been given due credit. "May I not ask," Martin began in his letter to FDR, "and in the most urgent terms at my command, that you exercise the needful authority under the national recovery administration to bring about at the earliest possible date the construction of a dam for navigation and power in the Columbia river between Oregon and Washington?" Congressman Martin intended to hold FDR to his pledge, made during a campaign stop at Portland in September 1932, "that the next great hydroelectric development to be undertaken by the Federal government must be that on the Columbia river."

Following Martin's letter to the president, and a similar letter from Oregon's Senator Charles McNary late in August, Martin and McNary spent months convincing the president to uphold his pledge. Often frustrated by a vacillating Roosevelt and the opposition of Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes, Martin began to see the negotiations as a poker game. Eventually, after both McNary and Martin had prematurely announced success to the Oregon press, endangering their political careers by creating potentially damaging expectations, the two men met the president to play what they viewed as their winning hand—a favorable report that Martin had secretly obtained from the Army Corps of Engineers. With Ickes absent, the two Oregonians pressed their advantage with the president. When FDR attempted to stall them again, Martin replied, employing...
his best poker face, "Why, Mr. President, all that work has been done and the army engineers have fixed the site." Roosevelt, who evidently had not read the engineers' most recent report, seemed surprised. Martin slowly pulled from his pocket his ace in the hole, his copy of the engineering report. The president explained that he had not seen the report, that the original "must have gone to Ike's office." When Martin finished reading, FDR laid his head back in his chair, raised his arms in the air, and roared with laughter. Then, "waving his long finger at us, he said, I'll go for $36,000,000" [or $31,000,000, depending on which of Martin's versions one reads]. Martin, caught off guard and totally surprised by Roosevelt's immediate response, rushed around the president's desk, shook his hand, and gushed that Roosevelt "was following in the footsteps of our great leader, Thomas Jefferson, and that by approving the Bonneville Dam he was sending a second Lewis and Clark expedition to rediscover the Oregon Country." McNary approached Roosevelt's capitulation more warily. "Mr. President," McNary urged, "can't you give us a little writing confirming this action?" Roosevelt swirled around in his chair, threw out his arms again and said to McNary, "Senator, I will notify you later today of my action, but there will be no note."

Elated at Martin's success, throughout the fall of 1933 conservative Democrats from around the state encouraged him to run for governor. Finally, Martin announced his candidacy the first week of February 1934. Newspapers throughout the state responded positively to Martin's announcement and conservative Republicans saw in Martin a chance to repudiate the current governor, Julius Meier, and their own party's public power wing.

Martin laid out a campaign in the general election that focused on the New Deal's popularity among Oregonians—he would become Oregon's FDR.

During the general election, one of the most tumultuous contests in state history that left national observers bewildered, the Republican factions took their battle public with charges and counter charges. While the Republicans fought each other, Martin stepped up his campaign to identify himself with Franklin Roosevelt. He insisted throughout the campaign that he was one of the president's staunchest supporters in Congress. Late in the campaign Martin plant a story countering earlier press reports crediting longtime Democratic operative Oswald West with convincing him to run. It now appeared that none other than the president himself had persuaded Martin to run for governor. Martin claimed Roosevelt had said to him, "I don't like to spare you from Congress but I wish you'd go back to Oregon and be governor. When the Columbia River is harnessed I must have the cooperation of that state to save the resulting benefits from the light and power companies that are lying in wait for them."

His feigned support for the New Deal and the reality of the Bonneville project played well with the voters. General Martin won the 1934 gubernatorial election with a plurality of 21,000 votes, 39 percent of the total vote cast for governor. He later admitted his indebtedness to Republicans who tilted the election in his favor when he said that "enough good Republicans came to my support to secure my election over a weak Republican candidate." Zimmerman finished second with 32 percent followed closely by Dunne at 29 percent. Democrats captured control of the lower house of the state legislature for the first time since 1878.

The issues surrounding public power continued to divide factions in both major political parties after Martin's election. The State Federation of Labor joined the Grange representing Oregon's farmers in supporting public power. Both groups believed that federal allocation of Bonneville power would principally benefit individuals and strip the private utilities of their stranglehold on Oregon ratepayers. Principally the Grange and the State Federation of Labor and other public power advocates stressed the need for the cost of electricity to be uniform throughout the state so that a farmer in eastern Oregon would pay the same rate as a manufacturing plant in Portland.

The Army Corps of Engineers began construction on Bonneville Dam in 1933, completing the massive project four years later. Throughout that period Governor Martin, the Corps of Engineers, the Bureau of Reclamation, and the supporters of private power interests waged a continual war of words with FDR's administration and the supporters of public power. Central to the combatants on both sides were questions concerning who would control the power generated by Bonneville Dam, how the power would be distributed, and who would benefit by the power generated—private utilities or public utility districts (PUDs). Congress took up Northwest electric power development decisively evasive as Martin's. With Martin on the Democratic ticket and Dunne on the Republican, both giving out the same ambiguous line on the public power issue, the advocates of public power development in both parties had no candidate for whom to vote. Into this void stepped progressive state senator Peter Zimmerman to run as an independent candidate for governor on a public power platform. In addition to supporting public development of Bonneville's power, Zimmerman sent shock waves through the ranks of mainline Republicans and Democrats when he called for an increase in inheritance and income taxes.

...
Private industry, aided by the governor, put up fierce resistance to what they considered Socialist destruction of private profit in the Oregon power industry.

marketing during 1935 when Idaho's Democratic Senator James P. Pope and Washington Congressman Knute Hill, both public power advocates, introduced legislation that would have created a Columbia Valley Authority, modeled on the Tennessee Valley Authority where the government-owned facility pioneered radically low rate structures for public power.

Over the next two years the proposal failed in Congress five times. Private industry, aided by the governor, put up fierce resistance to what they considered Socialist destruction of private profit in the Oregon power industry. When FDR made it plain that he intended to see public power come to fruition by creating two New Deal agencies—the National Power Policy Committee and the National Resources Committee—Martin wrote "confidentially" to a former colleague who still sat on Martin's old House committee, the Rivers and Harbors Committee, that he didn't want to be quoted in public opposing the president but he advised the Congressman "to throw all this crap into the ash can. What nonsense to talk about further harassing of business!"

With Nan Wood Honeyman, Phil Brady of the Central Labor Council in Portland, Willis Mahoney, and other Democrats, most of whom did not hold formal power positions within the party hierarchy, Walter Pierce led the Democratic Party public power faction supporting FDR's vision for a Columbia Valley Authority. Honeyman, Brady, and others won election to Oregon's state legislature in 1934 and 1936 where they carried on their unrelenting opposition to Governor Martin. The feuding erupted into open warfare between the Democratic majority in the lower house and the governor.

Martin, still the warrior-general, lashed out at his Democratic Party rivals. He saw his opponents as a danger to society. "Oregon is stirred from stem to stem," he wrote Paul R. Kelty, editor of the Oregonian, "and every subversive element is active in its efforts, desires, and hopes of overthrowing organized society." All the legislative leaders sought only self-aggrandizement, Martin lamented, "[They] have thumbed their way into the party car only to get out their knives to try to kill the chauffeur. For instance—my most virile enemies in the legislature are Democrats and most ardent supporters are Republicans... I have been bedeviled from morning to night by a lot of small, mean, contemptible people."

When the legislature passed a bill that would have required the state to build power lines from Bonneville to deliver electricity to consumers at cost while at the same time establishing a State Power Commission, the governor promptly vetoed the measure. "I secured Bonneville," Martin wrote, "and think I understand the best policy for the distribution of power for the benefit of all the people." Frustrated beyond patience, with conservatives in control of both major political parties denying them a voice in the debate, public power advocates in both parties turned their disgust to political activism in 1936, joining the unemployed, loggers, and farmers in the formation of the Oregon Commonwealth Federation (OCF). Opposition to Governor Martin provided the organizing impetus and the OCF urged "public ownership of all natural resources, utilities, banks, and monopolies."

Indeed, the dominant thrust of the OCF until its demise in 1942 centered around the battle for public power. Within the OCF public power advocates in both major political parties joined with Socialists and Communists in plans to defeat Martin in the 1938 Democratic gubernatorial primary.
After passing a convention resolution denouncing the “tyranny of the Martin regime,” the delegates satirized Martin in song. To the tune of “Fare Thee Well,” the convention sang:

There is a general in the town,  
in the town  
Oh how he's let the people down,  
let us down  
And we'll vote, vote until  
we've won the day  
And brought the New Deal  
here to stay!

The OCF’s founding came as no surprise to the governor. “I had two state policemen in plain clothes present at the organization,” Martin wrote. By August 1936 Martin wanted more information on what he termed “[that] gang…of young Jew[s]…communists, CIOs, and crackpots!” He ordered the Oregon State Police to keep a close eye on the OCF. In a memo to the chief of the state police, Martin ordered weekly reports on OCF activities.

Martin maintained his militant opposition to a Columbia Valley Authority right up to completion of Bonneville Dam in 1937. Supporting a Corps of Engineers’ analysis, he insisted at 1937 committee hearings in Washington, D.C., that “there was no power market among domestic consumers in the region” and “warned the House committee that the Bonneville investment could be repaid only by encouraging new industries which made heavy use of electricity to come into the area, and that this could be accomplished only through a system of preferred rates.” In August 1937, after numerous proposals, modifications, and counter proposals, Congress passed the Bonneville Power Act, a reconciliation of Senate and House versions. Bonneville would have a civilian administrator falling under the jurisdiction of Secretary of Interior Ickes, and the Corps of Engineers would actually run the dam. “The administrator would market the electricity and set the rates.” The act directed the Bonneville Power Administration to give preference and priority to public bodies and cooperatives in disposing of all electric power generated by Bonneville Dam. With few PUDs operating in Oregon, private power interests maintained their hold on the majority of residential customers through the remainder of the 20th century and were able to defeat most initiatives to establish new PUDs. During October 1937, over Governor Martin’s vociferous objections, FDR appointed Seattle City Lighting head, J. D. Ross, as Bonneville administrator. Ross, whom Martin and others labeled a “municipal socialist,” shared FDR’s belief “that cheap electric power would unlock the door to a higher living standard for all Americans.”

Where Martin sometimes softened his public rhetoric with regard to power issues at the insistence of his staff, he conducted, throughout his administration, an unrelenting attack on New Deal relief and welfare programs to aid the poor and support the needy. He never understood the hopes and aspirations of desperate people attempting to hold on in desperate times—unless they were related to him, for from time to time he did provide a modicum of empathy accompanied by $10 or $20 to destitute relatives. He viewed war as the normal state of mankind, so for him each day presented just another in a series of battles where only the fittest deserved to survive. Back in 1917, when a soldier under his command fell prostrate under a tree during training in Texas, Martin screamed at those who attempted to aid him, “Let him die, you get the hell out of here and become soldiers again.” As governor, with thousands of citizens lying prostrate, Martin viewed his task as providing order and discipline in his corner of a chaotic world. “I am attempting to teach our people to show the courage and fortitude of good soldiers,” he wrote not long after taking office. “Democratic nations,” he asserted, “have lost their moral force through pampering their people.”
When destitute refugees from the Dust Bowl and many more from the northern Great Plains region arrived in Oregon, Martin called them “alien paupers....”

Like Herbert Hoover—after all, Martin later described himself as a “Hoover Democrat”—Martin steadfastly maintained that counties and cities, not state or national governments, held the responsibility for public welfare and relief. Entitlement became a component of Martin’s mantra against those he perceived to be receiving relief unjustly. He didn’t mind taking care of “old folks,” he said, “but I’ll be damned if I’ll feed the young ones. Are we going to feed them for the rest of our lives? Hell,” he said, “Let them work!” When destitute refugees from the Dust Bowl and many more from the northern Great Plains region arrived in Oregon, Martin called them “alien paupers” and suggested that if they wanted to eat, selling their “rattletrap automobiles” should provide the necessary funds.

These Depression migrants sought economic opportunity in Oregon mainly in the agricultural sector. According to historian Gordon B. Dodds, “They were not seekers of adventure, rootless drifters...they were white, literate family members who accepted the American social and economic system.” Martin and other earlier immigrants, regarded by Northwesterners as economic and cultural assets to a developing region when they arrived, provided a chilling “unwelcome” for those who followed them during the Depression, labeling the new residents a threat, viewing them as “competitors for scarce jobs, as sources of increased taxation for relief, and as socially dangerous malcontents.” Attempting to discourage any more “Okies” from taking up residence in the state, Governor Martin ordered the so-called Roosevelt Transient Camp in Roseburg closed down. In reality, the governor said, the transient camps were “Tramp Camps,” and the aliens “should be kept moving out of our state the same as criminals.” Martin reviled able-bodied unemployed men, claiming that the state would provide no assistance to them because “the need for the necessities of life will force these people to get some kind of work and care for themselves.”

Martin prided himself on his egalitarianism, on what he called his “Jacksonian” qualities, his ability never to allow any man to interfere with the great truths which he advocated, his facility to see and treat all citizens equally. “One of the finest things in our form of government,” he told a crowd of young Democrats, “is that we have evolved a truly classless society. We recognize our fellow citizens and grant them preferment only on the basis of their ability to serve the common good.” In this truly classless society, with millions unemployed, where his accumulated wealth stood near $500,000, where his salary as governor coupled with his army retirement pension netted him an income over $1,100 per month, Martin declared that the physically and mentally disabled could adequately care for themselves on $10 per month. What of citizens who...
lacked the ability to serve the common good? Martin supported a plan to chloroform the “aged and feebleminded wards of the state.” To fulfill his promise to balance the budget, Martin suggested that the state could save $300,000 in the next biennium by putting 900 of the 969 inmates at the Fairview Home in Salem “out of their misery.”

As the 1938 primary election approached, the forces arrayed against the governor looked formidable. Organized labor, the Oregon Commonwealth Federation, public power advocates, the Grange, citizens seeking relief, veterans, pensioners, and the Pierce faction of the Democratic Party all sought to bring Martin down. As he campaigned, indeed throughout his term, the governor aided his opponents by consistently using reckless, inappropriate language usually reserved for raw recruits in basic training. His opponents, and many supporters, claimed that he “dug his political grave with his own tongue.” Some laid this propensity to the “petulance of old age,” but the State Federation of Labor probably came closer to the mark, claiming Martin “is intolerant of the views of opponents, domineering, and given to continuous explosions of profanity.” Recordings of Martin’s radio addresses do not survive, but if former Oregon Senator Mark Hatfield is correct, Martin rarely managed to conclude a broadcast. “They cut him off of any radio speech,” Hatfield recalled, “he never finished a radio speech, because he would start swearing.” Many voters simply rejected Martin because of his belligerent rhetoric, his repeated threats to use state violence or because he counseled violence by private citizens.

Martin found formidable opposition to a second term among all factions in the Democratic Party leadership, not only among the Pierce faction but from those who supported his first election. “We are all presumably united behind President Franklin D. Roosevelt,” one Democrat said, “and hence, should be united in removing a traitor from his path…. It is high time to repudiate Governor Martin who has repudiated Franklin Delano Roosevelt.” “By word and deed,” asserted Vernon Williams, editor of the Oregon Democrat, “Charles H. Martin has demonstrated that at heart he is not a Democrat, that he never was a Democrat, and that his endorsement of Democratic principles was a pretense and sham.”

Martin entrusted campaign leadership to Oswald West and campaign manager Edward W. Smith. West, still bedeviled by his past as a lobbyist for the utilities, and Smith, working with conservative Republican Martin-supporters, devised what they considered a foolproof plan to win the Democratic gubernatorial nomination. West helped organize Republican “Martin-for-Governor” clubs, urging Republicans to register as Democrats to vote for Martin in the closed primary. The strategy paid off with many Republicans. “I believe it behooves us Republicans to get behind a sound man,” Charles Evans wrote, “as both parties are badly contaminated with the radical element now days.” Smith outraged Democratic leaders by claiming publicly that Martin “would win the Republican as well as the Democratic nomination.”

In the primary campaign Martin threw off the liberal New Deal cloak he had employed in 1934 to emerge openly as a conservative Hoover Democrat. In dozens of speeches throughout the state he stressed law and order. He railed against labor “goons” and “racketeers” to such an extent that he became a caricature of himself, a buffoon, ridiculed by criticism “that he clowned around the state.”

Inevitably, perhaps, the primary battle reached environs far removed from the struggle among Oregon Democrats. Having early on shed his New Deal bona-fides, Martin attracted the enmity of many inside the Roosevelt administration, most prominently Tommy Corcoran, Harold Ickes, Frances Perkins, Harry Hopkins, and, it seems clear, FDR himself. Martin shared the enmity of the New Dealers with other prominent conservative Democrats targeted by the Roosevelt administration, including “Democratic governors like Albert Ritchie of Maryland, Joseph B. Ely of Massachusetts, and Eugene Talmadge of Georgia, and Democratic elder statesmen like Newton D. Baker.” Postmaster General James Farley attempted to head off the opposition to Martin within FDR’s immediate circle, counseling the president to stay out of the Oregon primary at the least or support Governor Martin if he did decide to intercede in the local election. But Farley, also chair of the Democratic National Committee, had already lost his standing with FDR’s advisors and the president.

Three days later, on May 18, two days prior to the primary election, Senator George Norris and Secretary Harold Ickes sent widely publicized letters to Oregon endorsing Martin’s opponent, Henry Hess. Senator Norris, whom FDR once called “the major prophet of America life,” lambasted Martin as a “reactionary,” and encouraged farmers to
vote for Hess. Ickes wrote that “Martin is at heart no New Dealer.” On the same day, Democratic activist Elton Watkins claimed in a telegram from Washington, D.C., sent right after a meeting with Roosevelt arranged by Ickes, that the president “denounced the flagrant attempt of Governor Martin to deceive the people into believing that the New Deal Administration was supporting him.” “I went to the White House today,” Watkins cabled, “and in the presence of Secretary Ickes shook hands with and talked to the president. It’s not proper to quote the president,” he added coyly, “but let me say to… the Democrats of Oregon that what I heard from the lips of that great Democrat and what I saw in his beaming countenance… I knew and now say to you—[Hess is] the man the Roosevelt Democrats of Oregon should nominate…”

Even with the advance warning, Martin’s campaign failed to mobilize. “I was astonished,” Martin later claimed, “that in the closing days of the campaign for the primaries in May, and before I could organize my followers against it, to find that the administration, including the president himself, had repudiated me.” When Martin did respond, in a hastily arranged radio broadcast, he lashed out at Ickes, Norris, and Watkins as his enemies. Later in the year, in a September meeting with Harry Hopkins, head of the Public Works Administration, Martin complained bitterly and rather piteously of his shabby treatment by FDR and the president’s minions. Repeating an old refrain, Martin told Hopkins that “I had never sought public office…I was drafted for Congress in 1930…I was again drafted this time for the governorship…in 1934… it was pointed out to me that I was the only candidate who could carry this state…” Almost like the penitent child, unwilling or unable to accept responsibility for his own actions, Martin pleaded his innocence.

I told Hopkins, I pursued the same policy of loyal, unswerving support, leaving no opportunity escape to express my admiration for the president and his progressive policies. I could not understand how the president could permit a man… that son-of-a-bitch Elton Watkins… to be brought into his presence, chaperoned by a member of his cabinet, because it seemed to me that the president should have inquired as to who Watkins was before permitting him to tell lies about a loyal supporter. His whole policy is to disrupt and disorganize and he is the worst type of a Southern hillbilly… [who] has so successfully… arrayed the administration against me.

Martin claimed to be beset by enemies, a Communist conspiracy bent on seizing control of state government:

Hess, Elton Watkins [and] Dave Beck of the International Teamsters… hatched their conspiracy… to buy off the candidates then running against me so as to concentrate the labor vote, both CIO and AF of L, and the subversive elements in the state headed by the so-called Commonwealth Federation, against me, and with liberal finances run all of these elements into the Democratic party… Hess is now in the position of being lined up with these destructive subversive elements… which have now seized control of the Democratic party….

Martin’s repudiation by the Roosevelt administration proved decisive as Hess emerged the winner in the primaries with a 7,000-vote plurality, beating Martin 59,620 to 52,640 while Independent candidate O. Henry Oleen garnered 8,220 votes. The intra-party warfare left the Democratic Party so weakened that Martin predicted Hess would be a “cooked Goose” in the general election. The governor exacted revenge on his enemies by stoking the fire that cooked Hess. He openly campaigned for the Republican candidate, Charles Sprague, against Hess. While denying that he had bolted the party or publicly supported Republicans, Martin told Harry Hopkins, “I was with the sound Democrats… but if it was expected of me that I could control the feeling and actions of the intelligent and sound Democrats… into supporting Hess, I did not have and would not have exercised [that power] even if I [had it].”

Martin must have swallowed hard to throw his support to Hess’s liberal Republican opponent, Charles Sprague, editor of the Salem, Oregon, Statesman. Sprague, who “encouraged the administration’s public power program and proved far more friendly to Roosevelt than had Martin,” led Republicans back into control of Oregon politics, a position they held for more than two decades.

Martin, off balance, searched in vain for vindication from members of the Roosevelt administration. Finally, on Friday, July 15, 1938, Postmaster General James A. Farley telephoned the governor with his condolences. “General, how are you?” Farley inquired.

“I’m fine,” the governor responded. “I can’t tell you how sorry I am… I love you devotedly.”

Farley interrupted:

“I understand the situation entirely. I know how you feel and I want you to know it is reciprocated. I hope to see you soon. I’m glad you are all right…. When I have a chance to chat with you I will explain the situation to you.”

Martin blurted out, pathetically, “I want you to understand I am a Democrat. You’re just fine, Jim. God bless you.”

“Goodbye, General,” Farley said as he rang off.

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A Frontier School Teacher gathers her barefoot students in front of their new schoolhouse in Burbank on the Columbia River in Walla Walla County, 1909. Rural teachers not only faced the challenge of teaching in remote areas, they were required to board with local families. While this arrangement often worked well, in some situations a farmer's wife could be resentful of the extra work of having a teacher boarder. The experience could be unpleasant for the hapless teacher who had to share a room with children, deal with a quarreling family, or eat poorly prepared meals. One teacher reported sleeping in a wheat bin for two weeks while the farmer built a lean-to for her. Another teacher fled the home where she boarded when a fist fight broke out at the breakfast table. A Walla Walla teacher faced the dilemma of no family willing to board her and no place to live. She created a temporary home in a leaky portable cook house that had been used in the wheat fields. The next September a neat little house awaited the teacher when she arrived for the new school year. It was the first of many teacher's cottages in Washington. By 1915 there were 105 cottages statewide and many teachers who were able to live a more comfortable life.
THE

ELWHA

DAM

Economic Gain
Wins Out Over Saving
Salmon Runs

By Jeff Crane

T

HE ELWHA RIVER dams have been the center of much discussion over the last several years and under the passage of the Elwha Restoration Act in 1992, removal of the two dams on the river located six miles west of Port Angeles on the Olympic Peninsula appears likely. The Elwha was the first dam built on the river in 1913. Situated five miles upriver from the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the dam destroyed the Elwha's prodigious salmon and steelhead runs—runs that once numbered close to 400,000 and now stand at about 3,000. When this dam was built, however, local community leaders envisioned it as the centerpiece of an evolving economy and expanding civilization. What was seen as key to the growth of the community in the early 20th century not only wreaked havoc on the river's salmon runs but triggered a conflict between the builder of the Elwha Dam, Thomas Aldwell, and the newly appointed conservationist state fisheries commissioner, Leslie Darwin. Within the contours of their debate over how nature was to be used and managed we can find the roots of the current divisive discussions regarding the value of salmon versus dams.

In 1890 a young Canadian emigrant, Thomas T. Aldwell, disembarked from the George E. Starr and cast his ambitious eyes upon the muddy but growing town of Port Angeles. In his autobiography, Conquering the Last Frontier, Aldwell retrospectively described his vision of the potential metropolis:

...That harbor rimmed with vital industry with payrolls expanding, houses being built, and streets being laid. The raw material was here; raw materials that called for the minds and hands of builders who would think of this as a home to make for their children and their grandchildren and their great grandchildren. I felt I had met a challenge to help build a happy and prosperous community and I decided to accept it. Whatever I would do in life was now tied to a ragged, sprawling, ambitious little town called Port Angeles.

Casting himself in the light of the heroic pioneer, Aldwell explained that he envisioned his own future irrevocably interwoven with that of a Port Angeles destined to grow and boom and move beyond its rustic beginnings; with this idea in mind he began to work his changes upon the landscape.

Aldwell chose a propitious year to move to Port Angeles. Due to recent population growth, a land boom starting in 1889, and speculation surrounding the anticipation of a railroad being built to Port Angeles, the town was brushed with a roseate bloom as the residents anticipated a bright future of industry, development, and prosperity. This anticipation and sense of impending growth and prosperity was furthered by another event occurring soon after Aldwell's arrival. Port Angeles residents embarked on a campaign to pry loose 3,100 acres from the federal preserve designated at the original townsite. Residents resented the land being controlled by the federal government and argued that the reserve was blocking the town's natural growth; a later booster pamphlet published in 1898 by the Clallam County Immigration Association, a local booster organization, referred to the reserve land as "locked up."
The campaign's strategy was a model in simplicity. Members of the community moved illegally into the preserve and began "proving up" on home sites. Following this step, the well-organized squatters flooded their congressman, John L. Wilson with letters and telegrams demanding he introduce a bill releasing the desired and squatted-upon federal land. He proved amenable, and with a few well-timed trips to Washington, D.C., the squatters were able to take title to the land in early 1894. Aldwell claimed and improved two lots, paid the appraisal fee, and thus gained title. He also bought several lots from squatters who could not afford the appraisal fee. This marks the beginning of Aldwell's career in land speculation, which not only allowed him to accrue capital but also to make the necessary connections for raising funds and generating support for the later construction of the Elwha Dam.

Aldwell perceived land as both place and commodity. "There is something about belonging to a place. You want to control more and more of it, directly or indirectly... land was something one could work with, change, develop." The principle of working with, changing, and developing the land resided firmly in Aldwell's attitude about land—it existed to serve human needs. He found himself increasingly drawn by the allure of land speculation and soon discovered a small claim on the Elwha River. "The view was magnificent from that hilltop claim... and it would have been my claim except that...I decided to go on down to [another] cabin." This claim was situated in a deep canyon, through which the Elwha roared, with vine maples surrounding the cabin and a spring running in front of it. "The scintillating rays of sun were coming through the branches and sparkling on the water... suddenly that spring embodied all of life and beauty I thought I'd ever want." Transcendental moments aside, it was here that Aldwell later built the Elwha Dam.

Aldwell was not alone in his desire for hydroelectricity in Port Angeles. A booster pamphlet published by the Clallam County Immigration Association titled, "Port Angeles, the Gate City of the Pacific Coast," identified hydroelectricity as the key to profitably harvesting nature's bounty:

The situation of Port Angeles from a commercial and from an industrial point of view is, indeed, most advantageous. Its shores are washed by one of the grandest commercial waterways of the world; the soil of its valleys and of its foot hills [sic] is very rich and very productive. For the utilization of these varied matchless resources, nature has provided Port Angeles with a magnificent water power, the possibilities of which are almost unlimited.

After discussing the potential power available through hydroelectricity, the authors of the pamphlet elucidated the various ways in which harnessed power could assist in extracting resources and converting nature's wealth to liquid capital:
Leslie Darwin was a prototypical progressive conservationist who, as the Washington State Fisheries commissioner, worked hard to protect the state’s salmon fisheries.

And what would be the possibilities of that power? It would turn the wheels of state; it would provide sufficient power for the manufacturers, the electric lighting, the street car service of a large city; it would furnish the power for the operation of an electric railway to the lakes, to Dungeness, an electric logging railway into the mountain regions, the power for the manufactures of the city and then not be entirely utilized.

Truly, a grand destiny is ours.

The booster literature did not limit the benefits of hydroelectricity merely to financial ones. The refrains of populist utopian rhetoric arose in one article extolling the need for and benefits of hydroelectricity:

Should any considerable portion of that enormous power ultimately be developed and utilized, who will attempt to foretell the innumerable benefits which will accrue therefrom to mankind? It would completely revolutionize economical industrial conditions. The cost of living would be greatly reduced. Not only the necessaries but the luxuries of life would be easily within the reach of the poor as well as of the rich. With the many electrical appliances already invented for the use, convenience, and benefit of mankind, and with the inventions an inventive age will produce for the betterment of humanity, Bellamy’s ideal commonwealth may not be as far in the future as the pessimist might imagine.

To the boosters and civic leaders of Port Angeles, hydroelectricity promised to be the tool through which they could not only amass wealth but also improve American society.

Aldwell began buying up land for building the dam and reservoir. With investment and assistance Aldwell purchased the necessary land over a period of 12 years. In 1910 Aldwell organized the Olympic Power and Development Company. Investment and support were garnered locally, much of it from lumber interests, and the capital stock for the company was set at $1 million. The company had one hurdle to clear before obtaining the franchise for a dam from the Port Angeles City Council. The Port Angeles mayor preferred a plan for a power plant on the Little River supported by Seattle investors. The council overrode the mayor’s veto. The council overrode the mayor’s veto, however, and awarded the franchise to Aldwell’s Olympic Power and Development Company.

In the franchise meeting Aldwell promised 50,000 kilowatts, as opposed to the mere 500 kilowatts that were to be generated by the proposed Little River Dam. Local boosters sought investment in their economy and likely concluded that an abundant power source would engender increased investment and, thus, growth. As one Port Angeles newspaper article stated, “Commercial bodies in all cities now recognize this and encourage in every way the development of large water powers, which have a capacity sufficient to supply cheap power to large manufacturing concerns...a large constant flow of water is essential to have sufficient power to develop economically.” The boosters sought power generation in order to supply electricity for the anticipated next generation of industrial manufacturing.

IT WAS NOT long before Aldwell began seeking additional investment for the dam project. For this he headed east because, as he wrote, “Power in the West had to be financed in the East.” On a trip to Chicago and New York Aldwell struck gold by convincing the investment firm of Peabody, Houghteling, and Company to sink substantial capital into the project.

The investment in the dam by this Chicago firm reflected their confidence in the growing Port Angeles economy. Development in the region grew apace during the years between 1910 and 1914. Logging boomed along the Strait of Juan de Fuca and in the foothills and river valleys of the Olympic Mountains as the easily accessible areas around Puget Sound were increasingly cut over. Mike Earles, a wealthy lumberman who worked his way up through the logging industry and eventually made Seattle his base of operations, built the first major mill in the Port Angeles area in 1914 to receive power from the Elwha Dam upon its completion. Earles also financed and managed the building of a railroad from Port Townsend, where boxcars were loaded on barges and shipped to Seattle. The railroad went into operation in 1915. These developments, along with construction of the dam, greatly increased Port Angeles’ ability to harvest, process, and ship lumber.

While these events helped stimulate steady growth for the
town after 1914, it is important to keep in mind that the extractive economy and the profits of the Olympic Peninsula were largely controlled by capitalists living outside the region. As historian William Robbins points out in his study of the logging industry in Coos Bay, Oregon, "For more than 150 years the lumber and forest products industry has provided a prime example of migrating capital, rapid liquidation of resources, and boom-and-bust cycles for towns dependent on the forest bounty." Robbins demonstrates that the migratory capital backing the exploitation of Northwest resources largely originated from outside the region. Outside investment certainly controlled the logging economy of the Port Angeles area. A 1908 listing of timberland owners with title to more that 10,000 acres revealed that only one, Mike Earles, lived in the region; and he resided in Seattle. The Port Angeles mill built by Earles in 1914 was sold to a California owner in 1915.

The spirit of capitalism, so strong and untrammeled in the American West during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, played a fundamental role in the building of the Elwha River Dam. As William Robbins writes, "It is essential to recognize that for the last thirty years of the nineteenth century and into the early years of the twentieth, the American West was the great natural-resource reservoir and the investment arena for eastern U.S. and western European capital." While boosters spoke of the social benefits of extracting resources for wealth and generating electricity, their fundamental interest was in generating capital and accumulating wealth.

In the case of Aldwell and his project, although he was able to create some local interest and investment, the construction of the Elwha Dam would never have been accomplished without substantial investment by the firm in Chicago. It was their capital, much less than their expertise, that resulted in the damming of the Elwha. And unlike Aldwell and the boosters of Port Angeles, the Chicago investors did not conceal their interests behind impressive speeches about improving "the commonweal" or creating a "glittering metropolis." In a letter to Aldwell the firm articulated its interests quite clearly after discovering that he had promised the city of Port Angeles it could defer payment for electricity generated by the dam. They unequivocally explained that they required immediate capital return from the dam and in the future Aldwell would make no more important decisions without first consulting them.

Local boosters aggressively pursued investment from outside the region. Port Angeles businessmen sought to entice emigrants and capital to their town while convincing themselves of the benefits to their community. Nature appeared abundantly benevolent in the bounty provided for extraction and sale, and local businessmen assured themselves and others that the wealth to be gained from harvesting resources such as lumber, salmon, and minerals, would contribute to Port Angeles' growth and success as well as to the pocketbooks of wise investors. Moreover, clever entrepreneurs were not limited to conventional means of extracting profit from nature. A Tacoma resident proposed a particularly bold idea to the Port Angeles Board of Trade, requesting their investment support. He suggested using heated electric wires to cut large pieces of ice from glaciers on the side of Mount Olympus, shooting them down a 30-mile wooden flume to Port Angeles, and then shipping the ice to San Francisco for use in cold storage houses. The board, maybe recognizing the limits of technology and capital or just stunned by such a grand vision, politely declined involvement in this particular scheme.

**Thomas Aldwell**

emigrated from Canada to Port Angeles and envisioned the small town blooming into a large, prosperous city. He invested in real estate, participated in local politics, and built the Elwha Dam.

**Wile businessmen** in the Port Angeles area pursued the wealth to be amassed from logging, mining, and fishing, certain limits arose that increasingly restrained their economic activities. The emergence of the Progressive Era conservation movement resulted in resource management initiatives that impinged on the laissez-faire economic environment within which American capitalists had long operated. The over-exploitation of resources that resulted in economic booms and busts and incredible environmental damage had engendered a movement that sought to rationally and efficiently manage resources for the long-term public good. However, in the hinterlands of the nation, such as the Pacific Northwest, restrictions on the use of resources were haltingly codified or were ignored for lack of enforcement. The apparent superabundance of resources made it difficult for conservationists to convince people of the need to regulate commercial activities and development. For many years entrepreneurs continued to extract from forest, hill, river, and ocean whatever promised suitable profit at whatever price the market would bear and regardless of the environmental and social consequences.

When Aldwell began building his dam he appeared untroubled by the impacts the dam would undoubtedly wreak on salmon fisheries. This lack of concern did not reflect disdain for nature. In his autobiography Aldwell spoke frequently of his love for nature, and for fishing in particular. But like most of his contemporaries, Aldwell favored quick, profitable development over cautious progress and conservation of resources. Wilderness was a barrier to progress and therefore
had to be tamed. He would have us believe he did not tremble at the risks inherent in the building of dams.

“The transformation of a wilderness into civilization was the reward for his sacrifices, the definition of his achievement, and the source of his pride. He applauded his successes in terms suggestive of the high stakes he attached to the conflict.” Roderick Nash wrote this of the American pioneer in general and Aldwell certainly fits this model. In his autobiography Aldwell expresses great pride in the Elwha Dam project. He was proud of his role in “conquering the wilderness.” While many rivers ran thick with salmon, encouraging a belief in the “unlimited” abundance of fisheries resources, electricity remained in short supply and the demand for it increased with the steady growth of population and commercial enterprises; therefore the choice was clear to Aldwell. Instead of worrying about the salmon that would be eradicated by the dam, he saw the potential for profit and the development of a civilized metropolis that hydroelectricity would bring.

As historian Richard White writes in The Organic Machine: “Emerson’s vision of the machine as a force of nature found its fullest expression as part of the old romance of energy in Western society, a dream of liberation from labor, an end to social conflict and environmental degradation through the harnessing of nature’s power to human purposes.” The perfecting of the Elwha as an engine of development, prosperity, and social progress was the ultimate goal of Aldwell and his fellow boosters.

The completion of the Elwha Dam closed off the river to spawning salmon and steelhead. Not only did it prevent spawning Chinook, coho, chum, and humpback from reaching the upper river and its tributaries, it also blocked the sockeye from passage to Lake Sutherland. Aldwell’s failure to build fishways across the dam violated an 1893 state law forbidding the construction of dams without fishways. In September 1911 Clallam County Game Warden J. W. Pike wrote a letter to State Fisheries Commissioner J. L. Riseland sounding the alarm on the dam’s impact on spawning salmon.

I have personally searched the Elwha River & Tributarys [sic], above the dam, & have been unable to find a single salmon. I have visited the Dam several times lately, was out there yesterday and there appears to be thousands of Salmon at the foot of the Dam, where they are jumping continually trying to get up the flume. I have watched them very close, and I’m satisfied now, that they cannot get above the dam.

The letter concluded by discussing the Elwha’s virtues as a salmon-producing river and the destruction the dam would wreak on the coho salmon run and the fishing industry. Riseland sent Superintendent of State Fish Hatcheries John Crawford to examine the dam. Crawford acknowledged that there were no fishways at the dam and no means by which the salmon could bypass it. Further, he stated that although it was impossible to add effective fishways at that time to the design of the dam, he was assured by the engineer in charge of construction that a fishway would be built as soon as the dam was in the final stages of construction. This never happened.

Riseland, after meeting with investing members of the Olympic Power Company, representatives of the commercial fishing interests of the Olympic Peninsula, representatives of the United States Bureau of Fisheries, Thomas Aldwell, and the dam engineer, proposed a plan for getting salmon past the dam. Many experts believed then that a functional fishway could not be built in a dam as high as the Elwha, which upon completion exceeded 100 feet. Accordingly, Riseland proposed that the Olympic Power Company build and maintain a fish trap at the base of the dam and, with an elevator, lift the fish above the dam and release them to continue their spawning run. The letter explicitly stated that this action would have to be taken or the Olympic Power Company would be required to build a functional fishway.

Aldwell ignored demands for fish passage renovations until the arrival of a new fish commissioner. Leslie Darwin was appointed State Fisheries commissioner in 1913, after the election of progressive Democrat Ernest Lister as governor. Darwin had moved to Bellingham from Texas as a young man and panned for gold on the slopes of Mount Baker. He later entered the field of journalism, becoming a reporter for the Seattle Times and managing the Bellingham newspapers, the Herald and the American-Revaille. Under Darwin’s leadership the latter eviscerated the strongly progressive tone, calling for a fairer distribution of wealth, greater taxes on rich corporations, and decrying
the corruption of big business. Upon winning the governor’s seat Ernest Lister sought out a fish commissioner who would strictly enforce fisheries laws. Darwin was the first fish commissioner to openly criticize the fishing industry’s wasteful practices, representing a significant break from the past when fish commissioners maintained ties to the fishing industry.

**Darwin was representative of an emerging body of scientific managers who assumed the role of regulating industry and managing resources during the Progressive Era.** The conservation movement had emerged in response to overexploitation of natural resources and environmental degradation. According to historian Richard Hofstadter, “in the Progressive Era, the life of business, and to some degree, even of government, was beginning to pass from an individualistic form toward one demanding industrial discipline and engendering a managerial and bureaucratic outlook.” Most progressive leaders were members of the professional classes, people of high education and status in American society. Doctors, editors, college professors, small businessmen, and lawyers were active in the Progressive movement, which gained momentum in a period of economic and political stability. Rather than seeking major change, the progressives sought to adjust the existing order to better adhere to the values of restraint, conservation, support of the community, and participatory democracy, which they had been raised in and still valued in the face of a changing society that, in their view, assigned undue power to those accruing massive capital. In their eyes the creation of a system of bureaucratic management through government would allow them not only to curb the excesses of industrial capitalism but also to ensure continuation of traditional preindustrial values in American society. The movement is most commonly understood as an effort to curb the worst excesses of capitalism. As activists they saw themselves as the conservators of democracy, bringing restraint over a new capitalist era that while running amok threatened not only natural resources but the freedom and opportunities of American citizens as well.

Darwin felt that the role of the conservationists was to intervene and manage natural resources where industry had overexploited and threatened the health of those resources and harmed the public good.

*It has always seemed to me that the responsibility for being the head of the Fisheries Department of this state is a very great one. Millions of dollars are invested in our fisheries; thousands are dependent upon it for employment; the demand has yearly increased, and the efforts to take our fish have multiplied to the extent that some of the salmon runs have shown a great decrease. The people of this state have an interest in perpetuating and maintaining our food and shell fishery, compared with which the right of any individual, no matter how great his investment therein, sinks into insignificance.*

Darwin’s goal was not the interruption or prevention of impacts to the ecosystem from industrial development. He strove to efficiently manage resources in order to sustain their productivity and gain the most use from them. “Many of those interested in catching and canning fish lose sight of the fact that the state’s interest in our fisheries is paramount to the interest of any individual who engages in their taking merely for profit.” Darwin’s views were similar to other conservationists.
of the period who, according to historian Samuel Hays, attempted to transform “a decentralized, nontechnical, loosely organized society, where waste and inefficiency ran rampant, into a highly organized, technical, and centrally planned and directed social organization which could meet a complex world with efficiency and purpose.” Theirs was not a radical position but rather a moderate one; they merely sought to restrain the worst excesses of laissez-faire capitalism:

It seems to me to be a crime against mankind—against those who are here and the generations yet to follow—to let the great salmon runs of the State of Washington be destroyed at the selfish behest of a few individuals, who, in order to enrich themselves, would impoverish the state and destroy a food supply of the people.

Unfortunately, every pressure is exerted in behalf of those selfishly interested. These selfish interests have gone to almost unbelievable extent in certain instances in order to silence any opposition in their course, and have slandered and vilified those who opposed their plans and methods. These persons do not want the people of the state to know the truth of the matter, believing that if they do they will act to protect and conserve.

It is my belief that had the people understood the situation, they would have acted long ere this, and would have prevented the practical destruction of some of our greatest salmon runs.

Upon taking office, Darwin quickly discovered that the Olympic Power Company had failed to perform the steps ordered by his predecessor. Darwin latched onto the issue of the Elwha Dam immediately and pursued it relentlessly. After exchanging a series of letters and telegrams with Aldwell, Darwin proposed construction of a fish hatchery below the dam, strongly asserting the state’s preeminence over the federal government regarding state fisheries. In response to a conversation between Aldwell and representatives of the Bureau of Fisheries, Darwin wrote:

The Federal Government has not the least thing in the world to say concerning any thing in the State of Washington relative to its food fish. We are highly pleased to have the Federal Government establish as many hatcheries as they can be prevailed upon to construct and we shall do everything in our power to help them secure sites, but you must appreciate that they have nothing whatever to say whether or not the State shall enforce its laws relative to the construction of fishways.

Having asserted the authority of the state over its own fisheries, Darwin then proceeded to offer a solution to the problem. Pointing out that “no officer of the State has any right to waive one of the state’s statutory requirements,” and that no one was “at liberty to say to you that you will not have to put a fishway over your dam,” Darwin proposed a clever, pragmatic, and illegal plan. He suggested that by selecting a hatchery site at the base of the dam and making the dam the obstruction for the purpose of collecting eggs for the hatchery, it would be possible to obviate strict enforcement of the fish passageway law and, therefore, maintain both salmon runs below the dam as well as hydroelectricity generation. In short, Darwin requested that Aldwell provide a site and funds for the building of a hatchery.

Aldwell failed to appreciate the solution offered to him and continued to resist compliance. As Aldwell delayed committing to the plan, the fish commissioner grew increasingly impatient. After an extended exchange of letters, and at the end of his rope due to Aldwell’s failure to implement the hatchery plan or respond to his missives, Darwin fired off a short, gruff letter on June 2, 1914. He made it clear that unless he received a response regarding Aldwell’s plans within five days, he would issue an official order to build a fishway across the dam: “It is out of the question for us to allow another fish run to beat its brains out against the dam.”

Aldwell responded in a letter the following day, dated June 3, 1914, that he was doing everything possible to meet Darwin’s requests to provide a hatchery site and $2,500 for construction of the hatchery. Before the end of June, they had reached agreement on these terms and began steps to have the hatchery built.
The building of the Elwha hatchery is significant in that it represented Darwin’s hopes of using hatcheries not only to ameliorate the impact of dams on salmon spawning runs but also to increase the numbers of fish overall.

Every major stream in the state… which salmon ascend and particularly those of Puget Sound should have hatcheries established thereon… In order to care for the growing fishing industry, it would seem hardly possible for the state to have too many.

Darwin believed that the salmon fisheries could be managed in such a way that fish stocks could not only be maintained in the face of heavy commercial fishing and development but could actually be increased in number. Nature could be managed, manipulated, and improved upon through the application of science and technology. The impacts of overfishing, dams, and logging on salmon runs might be ameliorated by an aggressive campaign of hatchery construction and salmon propagation. The construction of hatcheries and raising of hatchery fry constituted the primary mission of the fisheries agencies in the late part of the 19th century and the early 20th century. Hatcheries were the only solution available to fisheries managers in this early period of little authority and political and public support for resource extraction. From 1896 to 1915 the total salmon and steelhead fry production for Washington state increased from 4.5 million to over 1 billion.

Importantly, the deal Darwin struck with Aldwell was a continuing violation of the 1893 fish passageway law. Whereas Darwin had elsewhere willingly used dynamite to remove small earthen dams in an effort to enforce the law and restore salmon runs, he was more flexible with such a heavily capitalized project as the Elwha Dam; he struck a deal with a company that had been in violation of the law for five years during which the salmon runs were dealt serious harm. However, there were limitations inherent in the political and economic environment for Darwin.

Regardless of the letter of the law, it is reasonable to assume that Darwin did not command adequate authority as fish commissioner to remove a dam of such magnitude, commanding such popular and economic support. The power of the conservationists and state government was limited in this period and region. Darwin pushed hard to get what he could, believing that he had forged a feasible compromise.

Darwin later convinced the legislature to change the law so hatcheries could be built in lieu of fish passageways. In the first few years of his administration he accepted seven hatcheries in place of wild salmon runs annihilated by the construction of dams. Indeed, the construction of hatcheries marked the ambitiousness of his goals as fish commissioner and reflected the trust in scientific management of resources that was typical of the early breed of conservationists and resource managers and which introduced a long century of fisheries mismanagement.

In this vein, the first two years of his administration, from 1913 through 1915, marked a period of busy activity, with Darwin focused on increasing propagation throughout the state. Collection of eggs during the first year of Darwin’s tenure exceeded the greatest annual collections by over 50 percent. Five new hatcheries were built, and by 1917 he had constructed ten new hatcheries despite limited financial support. Other hatcheries were either enlarged or reclaimed after being abandoned. Darwin waxed rhapsodic on the potential of the Elwha Hatchery. “The indications are that it will be developed into one of the best hatcheries in the state by reason of the fact that the Elwha River seems to be used by a number of the varieties of salmon.” He attempted to increase the gathering of eggs to the greatest degree possible and advocated distributing eggs to hatcheries not gathering sufficient amounts for propagation—at that point a new development in hatchery practices; one that would prove problematic in later years.

By the time of his final report in 1921, the number of hatcheries in the state had been increased from 17 to 31 and the hatching capacity had tripled since 1913, when Darwin took office. But Darwin’s departure was laden with frustration and failure. He wrote, “To him who tries to stand between the greed of those to whose private interest it is to destroy a great natural resource and the state which owns that resource, there is reserved a most unpleasant portion.”

Despite his efforts, fish runs continued to plummet, especially on the Elwha and Columbia Rivers. Darwin attributed this to overfishing that occurred in 1917 and 1918, harvesting of immature fish, resistance to regulation by fishermen and cannery owners, pollution from industrial and urban development, and, of course, dams.

On the Elwha River things went badly for Aldwell and Darwin and the salmon. The dam, originally built on unstable riverbed, blew out after heavy rains in the fall of 1912. Beset by the burdensome costs of reconstruction, it was sold in 1919 to a subsidiary of Crown Zellerbach to provide electricity for a mill in Port Angeles. By 1921 few fish were returning to the dam on the Elwha, and in 1922, only a year after Darwin left office, the Elwha Hatchery was abandoned. The hatchery failed, and the electricity expected to power the growth of a metropolis in the end provided energy for one milling operation. Simultaneously, the returning salmon began their decline to a mere shadow of their historically prodigious runs. Above the Elwha Dam only memories remained of the flow of sleek red and silver bodies that had once surged through rapids to reach their spawning grounds and build their redds.

The passage of the Elwha Restoration Act in 1992, which calls for the restoration of the salmon and steelhead runs and removal of the dams, if necessary, indicates the extent to which early battles over economic development and preservation of salmon runs continue to haunt public policy and environmental management in the Pacific Northwest today.

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Stamp of Approval

Over the years the United States Postal Service has issued numerous stamps honoring Washington subjects. Some of these stamps are depicted here:

A. Fiftieth anniversary of statehood, 1939
B. Expo '74, Spokane, 1974
C. Sesquicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition, 1954
D. Fort Nisqually, 1978
E. Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, 1909
F. Fiftieth anniversary of reclamation, 1952
G. State flag, United States Bicentennial, 1976
H. Century 21 Exposition, Seattle, 1962
I. Statehood centennial, 1989
J. Territorial centennial, 1953
K. State bird and flower, 1982
L. Mount Rainier, 1934
BY J. J. CREIGHTON

The road from Grand Coulee Dam to Nespelem was a narrow gravel track in 1937. Situated 18 miles north of the monolithic dam that soon would furnish an unlimited supply of hydroelectric power to the Northwest, Nespelem was the perfect site for an art colony. The location pitted the past against the future; progress juxtaposed with what many perceived as a dying culture. These elements combined to create an ideal setting for the artist whose goal was to capture things memorable for future generations.

The Nespelem area had long been the home of numerous Indian tribes—tribes that were no doubt uneasy about the “progress” that was rapidly altering their sacred landscape. The region was, and still is, home to the Colville Confederated Tribes. Inhabited by a variety of local Indian bands from the San Poil, Methow, Okanogan, Lake, Kalispel, and other tribes, the reservation was created by executive order on April 3, 1872, and eventually also became home to the once-exiled Chief Joseph band of Nez Perce, the Snake River Palouse, the Moses Columbia, and the Wenatchee band. It was in this diverse setting that the Nespelem Art Colony began its work in 1937, recording Native American culture and the history of a group of significant individuals who defined American Indian involvement in events of the late 19th-century Northwest.

Painting for Time

The Art Colony at Nespelem

Nespelem fit the criteria for a colony whose work was to focus on a fascinating historical record and, better, a living past. Unlike the art movement in western Washington and Oregon, which emphasized Asian genres among others, the Nespelem experience focused on Native Americans. Never before had the tribes of the Inland Northwest been represented in this way. Tribal members posed for dozens of students and instructors. The colony’s founders, Worth Griffin and Clyfford Still, were excited about this opportunity to create the first extensive visual record of the Nespelem people and their history.

Griffin and Still decided to admit only 15 to 20 students, and Washington State College (WSC) began sending out invitations in early spring 1937. Griffin reported to President Holland that they had “published a folder and sent it to 600 or more prospective students in Washington, Idaho, California, Utah, Montana, and Oregon, and some of these folders were sent to teachers in Ohio and Indiana.” Still was emphatic about selecting “a more professional type of worker than is usually attracted to the summer session.” He felt that professional artists would do a better job of depicting the subject matter in their art, boost the prestige of WSC, and build a reputation for the colony. By acquiring strong talent, Still believed “such a project might form the nucleus of what could readily prove to be a vital, creative
Powwows have long been popular social events that draw people from a wide area for dancing and singing.

The colony attracted talented artists, but they were not the kind Still envisioned: Nespelem would start its first summer with a combination of well-traveled instructor-artists and some very enthusiastic students.

With recruiting already under way and newspapers throughout the region frequently reporting on the upcoming program, WSC's Department of Fine Arts turned its attention to finding suitable living and working accommodations for the artists' eight-week stay. Still and Griffin spent most of their spring vacation in Nespelem determining the nature and quality of available facilities. According to Still, the options were numerous:

- One hotel, room for 20 persons, electric lights, all new equipment, rooms small but clean. Entire top floor could be turned over to the group which would have exclusive access to quarters. Rate $10 per month, per person.
- Private homes—six to eight beds—assured at same rates.
- Clean wholesome meals will be served at reasonable rates at the local restaurant, or, if preferred, in a few cases in private homes. The total cost of living should not be more than $28 to $30 per month.
- A large loft above the drugstore on the main street can be secured for studio space. Skylight equipment would be installed for us at cost.
- Transportation from Coulee Dam is by local taxi over graveled state road.
- Recreational facilities include horseback riding, golf, lake swimming, hiking, moving pictures, and dancing.

The students ended up living wherever they could find space—above the local drugstore, in the old hotel, or in vacant cabins across the reservation. But it did not really matter where exactly they stayed; the excitement that pervaded the colony experience made up for any inconvenience. And with the painting schedule they kept, falling asleep at the easel was probably as good a place as any.

Students and instructors put in exhaustive hours each day. Their weekly schedule was rigorous: three days spent on portrait work, two on landscape, and weekends at Grand Coulee sketching with pencil and charcoal. Charter student Anne Harder completed roughly 25 pieces of artwork during the colony’s first summer and worked on many more that she never finished. Student Glenn West completed nearly 100 over the course of four summers, and Ruth Kelsey completed almost 50 paintings in her summers at the colony. Though sometimes finishing a portrait in just one day—and hurried possibly by the models to complete portraits in one sitting—the artists lost little clarity in the portraits they painted.

In a letter dated August 4, 1938, Griffin informed President Holland of the day-to-day activities during the colony’s second summer:
Ruth Kelsey initially had entered WSC as a home economics major, completing her degree in 1927. After graduation she taught home economics and art in Clarkston and Cle Elum, Washington, and Lewiston, Idaho. After a brief marriage and the demanding experience of owning her own restaurant in Tacoma, Kelsey realized that teaching was her greatest interest. Upon returning to WSC in 1937 to renew her Washington teaching certificate, Kelsey consulted her friend Worth Griffin about her curriculum. Griffin urged her to take his portrait class. With some hesitation, Kelsey joined the class, where she developed interest and skill in portrait painting. After completing a teaching certificate, Kelsey taught at Lewis and Clark High School in Spokane. It was there, in 1938, that she received Griffin’s invitation to join the colony’s second summer session.

Kelsey remembers loading up her Chevrolet coupe with enough supplies to last the eight-week stay in Nespelem. She recalls that the roads heading north were “pretty good up to Grand Coulee; from there to the reservation was like an old county road.” The country’s primitiveness did not seem to trouble Kelsey; her excitement about having the chance to work with the rest of the group overshadowed all other perceptions. Kelsey found the tribal members’ reception “quite pleasant”—probably because in the colony’s second summer the Indians had become more comfortable and trusting of the instructors and students.

According to Kelsey, Griffin made early morning trips into the surrounding countryside to recruit tribal members to pose for the students. The colony’s contract with the school district aided greatly in convincing many to participate; painting was done in the school’s old gymnasium, a comfortable atmosphere for most. Models sat for a full day for a reported sum of three to five dollars. Not everyone on the reservation was pleased about these activities and some, as expected, kept their distance. Generally, however, the response was good. Kelsey recalls the enthusiasm of one key individual in particular:

Our good relations with the tribal members [were] probably because of mutual admiration. Chief Red Star allowed us to paint his portrait several times. We would walk past his house on our way to class and often he or some members of his family were outdoors, so we had an opportunity to greet them or stop for a visit. He and his family became our good friends, although all of the Indians I met were friendly.

Kelsey did not get off to a good start during her first week at the colony. Descending the stairs from her room on the second floor of the old hotel, she hooked one of her heels in the opposite pant leg, sending her headlong to the bottom landing. Having fractured her right wrist, Kelsey learned to paint left-handed for a week during the eight-week session. Later, whenever students whined about being too tired to paint, Worth Griffin would relate this story, squelching any further complaints. Kelsey had nothing but praise for Griffin, Still, and Wessels, the primary instructors during her stay at the colony. She often credited them with convincing her to stick with painting. Kelsey describes Clyfford Still as patient, considerate, and tolerant, though aloof. She remembers that he often isolated himself from students and instructors when he was painting at the colony. Glenn Wessels also had a significant effect on Kelsey’s maturation with regard to painting. Wessels described Kelsey as a good student—one who showed innate ability:

The students are the most enthusiastic group I have ever taught. Many of them are painting at 5 o’clock in the morning, and they usually continue until 5:30 in the evening.... The daily routine consists of breakfast, sometimes between 5:30 and 8:30 in the morning; painting until 12:00; lunch, which is more often than not a meal worthy of a harvest hand; painting from the model or landscape until 5:30; dinner, and a swim in lake Owhi, or a shower at the Agency; the evenings are usually spent preparing canvases for the following day. With few exceptions this schedule is carried on seven days a week.
Ruth Kelsey came to painting by an admirable and logical process; she began as a student and teacher of the household arts, but quickly discovering her true inclination, moved from this general field to the more specific one of painting. Miss Kelsey's work displayed an innate awareness of color and the decorative values of form, but through study she amplified this intuitive equipment to a rational understanding of pictorial structure. Her knowledge of various contemporary styles is eclectic in the good sense—that is, many-sided but not derivative. She has made many contemporary means and methods her own.

Kelsey spent three summers at Nespelem, 1938-40. After the 1940 summer session ended she continued her creative efforts through a newly established Works Progress Administration (WPA) art project in Spokane. There she worked under project coordinator James Fitzgerald, gaining experience in drawing, ceramics, and sculpture. Kelsey continued a lifelong art career. Between 1943 and 1945 she attended the University of Oregon with the help of three Carnegie Foundation scholarships, and by 1946 she earned a master of fine arts degree from the University of California, Berkeley. Kelsey's work was exceptional, and as a result, she received two James Phelan fellowships.

The fellowships enabled Kelsey to spend six months in Mexico and another six months in Guatemala studying pre-Columbian and colonial art. The Mexico experience made a deep impression, and Kelsey established Mexico City as her summer home for several years. In the summer of 1950 Kelsey had the exalting experience of meeting Diego Rivera, one of her favorite artists, when she was invited to his birthday party by a gallery attendant she met at a museum. Kelsey crossed paths with the artist again the following year while touring the presidential palace, where Rivera happened to be composing another mural.

In 1948 Kelsey began a 24-year career as an art instructor at Western Washington University. She retired in 1972 as professor emerita. Her work since that time has appeared in juried and invitational exhibitions on the Pacific Coast. Kelsey has had solo exhibitions at the Seattle Art Museum, Henry Art Gallery, Santa Barbara Museum of Art, Berkeley Art Gallery, Pasadena Art Institute, Whatcom Museum of History and Art, Washington State Historical Society, and Western Washington University. She also was responsible for instituting a study-abroad program sponsored by the Fine Arts Department at Western Washington University—the first of its kind; students earned university credits for tours (developed and led by Kelsey) in Mexico, China, Japan, and the Philippines.

The finished works of the Nespelem colony artists have gone in various directions over the years. Kelsey's work remained for a time in her personal collection, although she bequeathed her remaining 18 paintings to the Washington State Historical Society upon her death in 2000.

In a sense, the art of the 1960s and 1970s progressed too far to suit many of the Nespelem students who had, for better or worse, cultivated a simple form of expression dedicated to the portrayal of living history. Their style of art has been called bland, expressionless, and unsophisticated, ignoring that the value of the work is mainly in its interpretation. Most of all, the work reveals how these students, many of whom had never before set eyes on an Indian, left Nespelem with a more positive view of Native American culture. And those who were painted seemed to have appreciated the work of these visitors. Today several persons who sat for the artists in the 1930s retain a genuine interest in the work, and two women in particular remember almost all of the students. For most concerned, the Nespelem experience was a successful endeavor.

Unidentified woman, by J. Ruth Kelsey. When compared to other of Kelsey's Nespelem paintings, this one appears to be unfinished.

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On March 2, 1853, President Millard Fillmore signed legislation creating the Territory of Washington. That event capped a remarkable 21-month campaign by a handful of Americans to bring home-rule governance to the land “north of the Columbia.”

Pioneer demands for separation from Oregon, led by settlers on Puget Sound, poured into the seething cauldron of sectional rivalry that described national politics in the 1850s. The future of especially the plans for building a transcontinental railroad.

Local political rivalries and personal ambitions also created roadblocks in the path toward separation for northern Oregon residents. And considering the small population of their proposed “Columbia Territory,” their request simply did not rank high among the nation’s priorities.

In fact, the conventions and public demonstrations organized by these pioneers in 1851-52 could be likened to a “tempest in a teapot,” as the old expression goes. While the leaders poured energy into the meetings, the participants fell silent afterwards. There seems to have been no private “buzz” about these activities. Original documents, diaries, and letters about what went on at the convention in the Cowlitz Corridor town of Monitcello are practically nonexistent. The identity of several delegates remains a mystery. And yet, a new territory was created. It has been left to historians to try to piece together the fascinating story of how Washington came into being. And with key pieces of evidence still missing, the story remains unfinished.

Of the 44 pioneers whose ambitions and dreams led to the signing of the Monticello Convention Memorial and the founding of the Territory of Washington 150 years ago, over half had been in Oregon Territory less than two years. At least 14 were under 35. Only four were over 50, and few had been settlers in Oregon longer than five years. It is fair to say that as a group they were in a hurry to achieve success.

Politically, 1851 proved to be a contentious year. As Americans populated the Puget Sound basin, Shoalwater Bay, and the Chehalis and Cowlitz valleys, pioneer discontent north of the Columbia rose on several fronts:

1) As immigration increased, the need for basic services, such as mail delivery, roads, troops to guard against possible Indian attacks, and swifter law enforcement also grew. In general, the lack of spending north of the Columbia by the Oregon Territorial Legislature was a frequent bone of contention.

2) Settlers were lodging ever more complaints against the Hudson’s Bay Company, which still held valuable agricultural lands—especially when HBC livestock were allowed to roam and trespass on neighboring farmers’ fenced acreage.

3) Former Supreme Judge of the Oregon Provisional Government (OPG), Columbia Lancaster, serving in 1851 as a member of the territorial legislature from Clark County, staged a protest by refusing to attend sessions in the new capital city of Salem, even further south than Oregon City, because of a constitutional dispute.

3) Because of political rivalries, a demand from the newly-appointed Whig federal judge, William Strong, for jurors to appear at the Jackson Prairie courthouse was energetically opposed by jurors who insisted that their courthouse was with locally-elected Judge Sidney S. Ford, across the rain-swollen Chehalis River.

5) The growing number of new settlements whose founders dreamed of fortunes coming their way with the arrival of the long-awaited transcontinental railroad increased the demand for federal appropriations to begin surveys identifying trans-Cascade routes.

These issues were seized upon by an ambitious attorney named John Butler Chapman, who won the distinction of becoming the first lawyer admitted to the bar from north of the Columbia when he was sworn in by Judge Strong at the Jackson Prairie courthouse. Chapman, whose brother had helped develop Portland, tried to create Chehalis City on Grays Harbor and, failing to attract any settlers, moved to Port Steilacoom, founded by Captain Lafayette Balch. He infuriated Balch by starting a rival settlement called “Steilacoom” literally across the street. (When Chapman left the territory in 1852 the word “Port” was dropped from the name of the remaining settlement.)

During Independence Day celebrations in Olympia in 1851, Hugh Goldsborough read the Declaration of Independence and Chapman followed with an inspirational address that vigorously referred to “the future state of Columbia.” His listeners held an impromptu and possibly alcohol-fueled meeting at

By Dennis P. Weber
which they called for an election of delegates from the northern precincts to attend a convention at Cowlitz Landing at the end of August. Together with Chapman and Balch, Olympia-area merchant Michael T. Simmons helped organize the August meeting.

Simmons was prospering from the sale of lumber, food, and other products to desperate California miners and envisioned himself a major regional leader. His regard for George Washington Bush, an African-American settler, no doubt influenced his desire to separate from the territorial government. Balch's motive, no doubt, was to help his rival, Chapman, win a political job at some distance from Steilacoom.

Noted historian Thomas Prosch describes the Cowlitz Landing Convention as an "astonishing" event:

There was a general lack of means of communication—steamboats, mails, roads, newspapers... It took a day then to go as far as one can now in an hour, and it meant travel in canoe, on foot, and occasionally by horse. It meant nights on the beach and nights in the woods; hunger, labor, exhaustion, and possibly sickness. The pecuniary expense was serious, too, as money was a scarce article, and the settlers were poor.

Twenty-six delegates were in attendance August 29-30, nine of whom later attended the conclusive Monticello Convention. They included:

Olympia area—Michael T. Simmons, Clarick Crosby, Joseph Broshears, Andrew J. Simmons, Joseph Bosart, David S. "Doc" Maynard; Cowlitz Prairie area—E. D. Warbass, John R. Jackson, Simon Ploomon; Chehalis area—Sidney S. Ford, Sr., S. S. Saunders, Alonso B. Dillenbaugh; Steilacoom area—John B. Chapman, Henry Wilson, Lafayette S. Balch; Monticello area—Seth Catlin, Jonathan Burbree, Frederick Huntress.

The elder statesman of the group was 62-year-old Seth Catlin, former Illinois legislator and a staunch Democrat. He was referred to by his admirers as the "Sage of Monticello" and was elected president of the convention. Chapman, Balch, and Simmons were appointed to write the formal memorial requesting a new territorial government be formed.

There is ample evidence to suggest that Chapman, Simmons, and Balch were in charge of the Cowlitz Landing Convention from the very beginning. They either sat on every committee or were represented by others: Henry Wilson represented Balch. Simmons's agent was his brother Andrew.

Historian Edmund S. Meany has written, "Too little attention has been given to the proceedings and the results of the convention." The bulk of his research is based on copies of the memorial and front-page coverage of the proceedings published by two Oregon newspapers, the Oregonian and Oregon Spectator, and forwarded to Oregon's recently elected delegate to Congress, Joseph Lane. The publicity was the result of efforts of convention secretary Lafayette Balch.

Chapman produced a 1,500-word Memorial to Congress, over five handwritten legal pages long, listing the problems facing settlers north of the Columbia. A lengthy resolution listing detailed descriptions of 12 proposed counties was also approved. Neither of these documents could have been produced during the short convention in such a rustic setting as Warbasport on the Cowlitz. A lot of the work had to be done beforehand. The memorial was actually finished afterwards before being sent to the newspapers and Lane.

Although later historians discounted their importance, the actions taken by the delegates were remarkably far-sighted. In several ways these men were years ahead of their time. For example, one committee recommended that universal manhood suffrage begin at age 18, almost 120 years before it became a reality.

The convention actually defeated a motion to exclude "Negroes and Indians" from voting by a two to one margin. Another committee proposed that the Oregon legislature establish new counties, provided boundary descriptions and suggested names (including Simmons and Steilacoom). Although the names did not survive, the boundaries, for the most part, were incorporated by later legislatures.

Economic development was also a high priority for the convention and its businessmen organizers. They passed resolutions calling for the construction of two major roads. One was to stretch from Olympia to the Columbia River, near Monticello, within the confines of the present-day city of Longview. The other route was to connect the Oregon Trail at Walla Walla to Steilacoom across the Cascades. Designed to divert travel-weary settlers to Puget Sound instead of the Willamette Valley, this road would cost an estimated $100,000. Both routes were eventually built.

After insisting that Congress name the new territory "Columbia," delegates ambitiously approved Doc Maynard's motion to meet again in May 1852 in order to approve a state constitution. Maynard was living in the Olympia area at the time, attempting to win the hand of Simmons's sister in marriage. He later played a major role in founding Seattle.

The delegates next demanded protection from foreign ships entering territorial waters and stealing timber "to the great detriment of future settlements." Finally, the group requested that the Oregon legislature appoint a grain inspector. All of these objectives were accomplished in time, save naming the new territory Columbia.

In the lengthy memorial, which he loosely modeled after the Declaration of Independence, Chapman listed numerous complaints about the Oregon territorial legislature, attacked Judge Strong for not being attentive to the needs of northern residents, cited the isolation of various settlements, and accused Oregonians south of the Columbia of neglect:

Inhabitants North of the Columbia River receive no benefits or conveniences whatever from the Territorial Government. . . .
[It] costs more for a citizen in the North of Oregon to travel to a clerk's office or to reach a District Judge than it does for a man to travel from S. Lewis, Missouri to Boston, Massachusetts and back; and, much longer. . . .

Judge Strong resides . . . in such a position and obscure situation . . . that he cannot be reached under any emergency under several days travel. . . .

No Indian agent has ever been known to be north of the River except Governor Lane while superintendent. [The] Territory North of the Columbia River has a face of good Sea Board Navigation exceeding one thousand miles, with not less than twenty five good Harbours & Bays . . . as fertile & productive as any in the United States, containing immense quantities of Timber of the first qualities for Ships, buildings or Domestic use. . . .

[No] wagon roads have yet been made from the Columbia or else where. . . .

[All] commerce of the North [is] being monopolized by the Hudson Bay Co. [There] are three thousands souls North of the Columbia. That they have raised a large amount of produce, Wheat, Oats, potatoes, onions, &c. . . . for exportation, but with the many abuses of their rights and neglected condition in their civil immunities as Citizens it is impossible for them to prosper in commerce. . . .

Despite all their scheming, the strategy of Chapman, Simmons, and Balch was not politically sophisticated. There were several errors and exaggerations in Chapman's memorial and one glaring truth that doomed quick action.

To be effective in politics, one needs to be aware of who the key decision-makers are and address their concerns. The key decision maker in 1851 was the head of the Democratic machine in Oregon Territory—Joseph Lane. An ally of expansionist President James K. Polk, Lane had been a Mexican War general and was appointed the first territorial governor of Oregon. Replaced after the Whigs swept into power in the 1848 election, Lane had carefully cultivated an effective political organization throughout Oregon and won election as Oregon's delegate to Congress following the untimely death of the territory's first delegate, Samuel Thurston, in 1851. The Cowlitz Convention trio had failed to discuss their proposal with Lane ahead of time. As former governor and newly elected delegate, he was very familiar with the issues and concerns of northern Oregonians. But as an experienced politician, he knew that as a freshman (and nonvoting) member of Congress, he would not be able to sell such a local proposal to his fellow lawmakers who at that time were more concerned about the issue of slavery.

To make matters worse, Lane was not impressed by the self-promotion Chapman had included in the memorial's language. In a first-person reference rarely, if ever, found in such a formal document, Chapman had explained that the drafting committee of the convention had "directed me to report the following petition to Congress."

In fact, Lane's political allies warned him of Chapman's own political ambitions and hinted at a potential rivalry for political power. To illustrate this warning, historian John McClelland, Jr., quotes from a January 1852 letter written to Lane by Colonel Isaac N. Eby: "There is a certain Gentleman, adventurer, from your native State John B. Chapman, who appears ambitious to be considered the head and front of the movement in favor of dividing the Territory. . . . He is one of a host of political adventurers who came up the rough and rugged Cowlitz River. . . . with a pack on there back, seedy fashionable dress, & delicate white hands, trudging their weary way on foot; Olympia gained, there toils ended, there comfortably.

Secretly financed by owners of the Oregonian, the Whig newspaper in Portland, the Columbian published speeches, like Bigelow's Independence Day oration, and editorialized about the importance of creating a new territory in northern Oregon.
Among Chapman’s errors and exaggerations was a reference to territorial officers being 300 miles away and seldom visiting up north. Words were misspelled in a way to make the writer appear either ignorant or unfamiliar with the local geography and culture. And then, of course, was the glaring truth Chapman has foolishly included—namely that the population north of the Columbia numbered only 3,000. Lane knew that the standard used for creating new territories was a minimum population of 10,000. Chapman’s accuracy was a poison pill. Lane pigeonholed the memorial in committee, never read it into the record of the House proceedings, nor did he ever introduce the bill as requested. Thus, Chapman was thwarted in his efforts to gain political success. Apparently discouraged, he conducted a survey in 1852 of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company for the very Hudson's Bay Company he had bitterly complained about in his memorial. He then left Oregon before the Monticello Convention.

The planned May 1852 meeting did not take place. But throughout the first nine months of the year, settlers continued to stream into northern Oregon. Filing land claims in the Chehalis area were Alonzo B. Dillenbaugh and Eugene L. Finch. A. George Cook, a friend of A. J. Simmons, arrived in August. Securing a mail delivery contract between Rainier, Oregon, and Cowlitz Landing was recently arrived Henry Windsor. Settling north of Vancouver was Jeremiah S. Hathaway, whose donation land claim was near former territorial officer and future delegate to Congress, Columbia Lancaster.

Although Doc Maynard had passed through many times in the previous three years, the lower Cowlitz valley received its first medical doctor in 1852 when Dr. Nathaniel J. Ostrander arrived. A New York native of Dutch descent, he had married Eliza Jane Yantis at age 19 in Missouri where he studied medicine at St. Louis University. He practiced medicine in Kansas City, Missouri for several years until he left for California in 1849. Once he returned home, he and his wife migrated to Oregon along with his widowed father and her brother, arriving on the lower Cowlitz where he and his father filed adjacent claims several miles north of Peter Crawford's. As the first medical doctor in the area he proved a valuable neighbor. His daughters told of their father "hurrying out, sometimes in the dead of night, saddling his faithful nag, filling his saddle bags with drugs, medicines, and frequently, surgical instruments, and starting on a trip of perhaps twenty or even fifty miles."

Ostrander was a Democrat and, as such, fit in quite well in the Jeffersonian community of Monticello. Thus, he became a signer of the Monticello Convention Memorial and lived in the area until 1872. He was the first probate judge in the county, appointed in 1853 by Governor Stevens, and later served several terms in the territorial legislature. In 1872 he moved his practice to Tumwater and opened a drug store. After 15 years he moved to Olympia, served in the territorial legislature again, was elected to the city council and served as mayor.

Controversial federal district judge William Strong recognized the rising tide of frustration among pioneers north of the Columbia in the spring of 1852, when it became evident that the efforts of the Chapman, Balch, and Simmons convention had not been productive. With Maynard’s May deadline fast approaching, Judge Strong issued a call for the election of delegates and suggested that Monticello be the location for the next convention. But there was not enough time to get the meeting organized.

Lawyer and noted orator Daniel B. Bigelow gave the 1852 Independence Day speech in Olympia. Bigelow picked up Chapman’s theme from the previous year and called for renewed efforts to secure separation from Oregon. His speech reignited interest in another convention. Bigelow had traveled to Puget Sound with the Denny party on
Simon Plamondon, formerly a Hudson's Bay Company employee, settled in the fertile Cowlitz valley in the 1820s and attended both the Cowlitz Landing and Monticello Conventions.

John R. Jackson, first American settler north of Fort Vancouver, was one of the few Whigs in the area and clerked for a controversial federal judge appointed by Whig President Zachary Taylor.

Olympia attorney Daniel B. Bigelow, a noted orator whose 1852 Independence Day speech inspired local leaders to create a newspaper to drum up participation at the Monticello Convention.

Captain Lafayette Balch was a major organizer of the 1851 Cowlitz Landing Convention. He aimed to secure construction of a road from Walla Walla to his Puget Sound settlement of Steilacoom.

Head of the first American wagon train to reach Puget Sound, Michael T. Simmons saw himself as a regional leader. He helped organize the Cowlitz Landing Convention and attended the Monticello Convention.

the Exact eight months earlier, so Arthur Denny had gone to Olympia to attend the Fourth of July festivities. He later described the disadvantages of being attached to Oregon:

We were like two sisters; Oregon was the big sister and, of course, must be served first and I will do her the justice to admit that she was always willing that we should have what was left after she was served and would try to help us get it. But we were thus, as it were, clad in cast-off clothes.

Groups began to meet in July, August, and September in order to elect delegates to meet on November 25 at Monticello, which the organizers considered a more central location for those living along the Columbia River and east of the mountains.

While inspired by Bigelow, Denny and others decided that they needed a local newspaper to stir up greater participation in the convention. John McClelland, Bill Speidel, and others have written about the role of the Columbian, Olympia's first newspaper, in publicizing the Monticello Convention. At the request of prominent Olympia businessmen, the owner of Portland's Weekly Oregonian provided most of the seed money for staff and a printing press. Its first edition listed the following pioneer leaders as its agents: Isaac N. Ebey, Henry C. Wilson, Lafayette Balch, E. D. Warbass, Sidney S. Ford, Sr. and C. C. Terry. Copies were also sent to Oregon City and Washington, D.C. Arthur Denny was added as an agent a short time later.

The Columbian began urging territorial independence from the very beginning when it listed its city of origin as "Olympia, Puget's Sound" rather than "Olympia, Oregon." Using the pen name Elis, Hugh A. Goldsborough wrote a page-one column in the September 25 issue and called for "united action and cooperation." He highlighted the grounds for separation:

- Oregon was too big—five times the size of New England; five times bigger than Missouri; six times Illinois, seven times New York; its government is "destructive to our own interests as citizens";
- Ample natural resources—"rich in fertile lands, in mineral resources, in fisheries and in noble forests";
- Underrepresentation—"We of the north, with sufficient number of legal voters to entitle us to four representatives, are allowed but two out of twenty-five."
- Neglect—"[Our] petitions for the improvement of our counties have invariably been disregarded;"
- Misappropriation of funds—proceeds from the sale of public lands go toward the "improvement of the Willamette river, but not a cent towards any river or other improvement in northern Oregon;"
- Defense from Indians—"The Superintendent of Indian Affairs can never find time or necessity, with four thousand Indians around and about us, to dole out to us any of his precisely VALUABLE time."

"Let us all with one heart and one will put our shoulders to the wheel, memorialize Congress in every precinct...."

Two weeks later the headline read, "What Northern Oregon Wants," and again came the familiar litany of complaints over appropriations and unfair treatment by the territorial legislature. The list of wants expanded: steamers on Puget Sound, steam mills, common schools, lighthouses, a dry-dock, postal service, and even a university! The Columbian issued another "call to arms":

"Citizens of northern Oregon! it behooves you to bestir yourselves, and proclaim your independence... Call meetings in your several precincts; memorialize congress to set us off; exhibit our grievances both in omission and commission under which we have suffered..."

There were three audiences for these newspaper exhortations: poten-
The Name "Washington"—Common Sense or Stroke of Genius?

Most Pacific Northwest historians, including Robert Ficken in his excellent 2002 work, Washington Territory, simply explain that the substitution of the name "Washington" for "Columbia" was due to George Washington's stature as a national hero and was a response to a perceived problem over confusion with the nation's capital.

But Kentucky Congressman Richard Stanton's proposed name change was far too convenient for it to be a spontaneous action on the floor of the House. And Oregon delegate Joseph Lane, an experienced politician in Indiana as well as Oregon, was so quick to agree to Stanton's suggestion that there had to be much more to this friendly amendment than meets the eye.

Why did Stanton pick February 1853 to honor George Washington? Surely there had been plenty of opportunities to name a territory for the "father of our country" in the 54 years since Washington's death. Even Stanton's argument for avoiding confusion over place names ignores the fact that many Americans already referred to the nation's capital city as Washington.

A careful study of the legislative history of Lane's House Bill 248 reveals that he faced significant roadblocks in the path of creating a new territory. Under its own guidelines, Congress required a much larger population to create a territory than existed in northern Oregon. Under the landmark Northwest Ordinance of 1787, the population standard for new territories was 5,000. The 1850 census pegged the population north of the Columbia at 1,049. A year later, boosters at the Cowlitz Landing Convention claimed only 3,000 souls.

No less an imposing adversary than the chairman of the House Rules Committee, George Washington Jones of Tennessee, rose to oppose Lane's bill, because "there not being, as I suppose, sufficient population for two Territories." Jones moved to table the question "with a recommendation that it do not pass." It was remarkable that Lane, a very junior, nonvoting member of Congress, would take on a powerful chairman in pushing for a bill affecting a relative handful of citizens in a remote corner of the country in the midst of the maelstrom over slavery then dominating the national debate.

Lane delivered an impassioned speech about the importance of creating Columbia Territory. But when New Jersey Democrat Charles Skelton asked about the population of the proposed territory, Lane dodged the issue: "The population of Columbia in that case will be quite as great as that of the whole of Oregon at the period of its organization into a Territory." Despite his rhetorical skills, Lane still faced the continuing opposition of Representative Jones, whose motion to table was still before the committee.

However, Lane was a skilled and ambitious political strategist. The previous summer he had made an impression on party leaders by offering to run for president as an ideal Democratic candidate, a Midwestern war hero with southern ties. In many ways, he could be considered a Southern Democrat himself. He was born in North Carolina and grew up on the southern shore of the Ohio River at Henderson, Kentucky. He moved across the Ohio as an adult and served in the Indiana state legislature from the Evansville area. During the Mexican War he fought alongside the many southern officers who rose to distinction in that conflict. (He later became the 1860 vice presidential nominee for the pro-slavery, anti-secession group of Southern Democrats.) But to stop Representative Jones from tabling the Columbia bill in 1853 he needed a diversion to divide Southern votes. And that is where the Stanton brothers came to the rescue.

For years Tennessee Democrats had been jockeying for position to become the political successor to "Old Hickory," President Andrew Jackson. But in 1849 the heir apparent, President James Knox Polk, a former Tennessee governor, retired from politics after an "exhausting" four-year term. By 1853 Richard Stanton's brother Frederick and Jones were rivals. Both had effective careers in the halls of Congress and were committee chairmen. Stanton was a highly trained attorney from Memphis, and Jones was a leader from Fayetteville, along the Alabama-Tennessee border. Richard Stanton was also a committee chairman.

Lane capitalized on his ties to Kentucky and the Ohio River valley to enlist the 40-year-old Kentucky Stanton to stop Jones and divide Southern opposition. Stanton moved to strike the word "Columbia" and insert "Washington," explaining that he wanted to honor the "father of our country." Some historians suggest that he made the motion because the Stantons' childhood home was near Mount Vernon, which was in an embarrassingly dilapidated condition in 1853.

But these were seasoned political masters. By appealing to Southern pride in George Washington, Stanton's motion was a brilliant diversion. The Oregon delegate quickly responded to Stanton's motion, "I shall never object to that name." A lame duck Whig from North Carolina, Edward Stanly, echoed his support of Stanton's amendment. And the stampede to pass the bill was on. After a few more parliamentary maneuvers, the House rejected Jones's motion and accepted the name change. Only a handful of mostly lame-duck Southerners voted against the new territory.

One can't help but imagine the smiles of self-congratulation the Stanton brothers wore as they savored a victory over Representative Jones who, ironically, was also named for the first president. —dpw
tial delegates amongst the pioneer communities north of the Columbia, legislators in Salem, and delegate Joseph Lane in Washington, D.C. In fact, in mid October, Lane had promised to introduce a bill asking for separation on December 6, the first day of the session of Congress. He recommended that the organizers provide him with a document he could introduce during the floor debate following committee hearings. And he cautioned against using precise population figures.

In yet another enthusiastic broadside boosting the importance of the November meeting, the Columbian again highlighted the frustrations of being part of Oregon: 1) The legislature authorized a university situated 100 miles from the nearest settlement; 2) money from the sale of public lands for common schools should benefit schools north of the Columbia; 3) Thurston County was created but no courts were authorized; and 4) all public buildings for the territory were built south of the Columbia.

Judge Strong continued to encourage the selection of delegates when he met with the large group of citizens, led by Goldsborough, who came to his fall court term at Jackson Courthouse near Cowlitz Landing. Official delegates chosen at a schoolhouse meeting in October to represent the Cowlitz valley were Seth Catlin, representing the lower Cowlitz, John R. Jackson, representing the upper Cowlitz, and Henry Miles, representing the area between.

The handful of settlements around Elliott Bay were combined into the "Duwamps Precinct," and they elected the following delegates: John Low and Charles Terry from New York (Alki); Luther Collins and R. J. White from Duwamish; and Arthur Denny, Nathaniel Bell, Doc Maynard, and his attorney, George McConaha, from Seattle. They took a two-week canoe and overland trail journey to attend the meeting.

In mid November Olympia-area voters elected the following delegates to travel to Monticello: Michael T. Simmons, Simpson P. Moses, Stephen D. Ruddell, Adam Wylie, H. A. Goldsborough, Quincy A. Brooks, William Plumb, and Calvin Hale. When they reached Cowlitz Landing, Brooks was surprised to meet Edward J. Allen, an acquaintance from Pittsburgh who was in the process of driving a herd of oxen to Puget Sound country. He was convinced to backtrack to Monticello and attend the convention.

Of their sleeping accommodations after their arrival, Allen afterward remembered:

Monticello did not offer much in the way of hotel accommodations and the delegates quartered themselves as best they could. As everyone brought his own blanket, going to bed meant simply finding a dry place big enough to spread it on. Some fifteen or more of us found happy lodging in an attic where we camped downmiscellaneously on the floor.

There was a general feeling that the more delegate signatures on the memorial the better. The Columbian repeated that notion in its November issues. The official proceedings do not include record of a credentials report, typical in conventions for verifying the official status of delegates. In fact, official certificates of election have yet to be discovered for half of the delegates.

"The Great Magoozle" is how Doc Maynard's biographer, Bill Speidel, described the Monticello Convention and pioneers' attempts to create a new territory north of the Columbia River. His contention was that politically ambitious leaders concocted the convention to pressure Oregon politicians to go along with their plans to gain lucrative government jobs and more federal funding.

"The memorial of the undersigned, delegates of the citizens of Northern
Oregon, in convention assembled..." gives the impression that there were local elections of delegates. Of course, not all of the delegates were elected.

In fact, in the record of convention proceedings there is no evidence of the precincts delegates represented. Many had been north of the Columbia less than 15 months. At least one delegate, possibly as many as three, had been in the territory less than one month. An appearance at the convention by several other "delegates" is the only evidence that they even existed.

Inspection of census records, population density maps, and hometowns of delegates indicates that the majority of northern Oregon residents did not even send delegates to Monticello (Shoalwater/Willapa Bay, Bellingham Bay, Fort Vancouver, the Columbia Gorge, and areas east of the Cascades).

Politically, the delegates were a bipartisan mixture. While most delegates claimed to be Jeffersonian Democrats, like Seth Catlin, Whig influence was considerable. Among the delegates who happened to be Whigs were John R. Jackson, who clerked for the Whig Judge Strong, and Arthur Denny of Seattle. In fact, the Columbian was secretly owned by the same people who owned the Oregonian, the Whig newspaper in Portland.

George McConaha, a former California legislator, gave the opening speech after he was chosen president of the convention, having defeated Seth Catlin, who had presided over the ill-fated Cowlitz Convention at Warbassport just 15 months earlier. R. J. White was elected secretary. The memorial was approved unanimously.

Gifted orator Daniel Bigelow, whose Independence Day speech rekindled interest in petitioning Congress, was working on territorial legal business in Salem and could not attend, but his law partner, Quincy A. Brooks, was an active participant. Brooks insisted on giving a prepared speech, which Secretary White noted was too long to write down in the minutes. Nevertheless, the speech was reprinted in toto in the December 11 issue of the Columbian. Circumstantial evidence would suggest that it was probably written by Bigelow.

The meeting lasted several days, November 25-28. A committee headed by Brooks put the finishing touches to the major ideas driving the delegates to demand their own territory. The nine points enumerated in the document were much more concise and readable than Chapman's effort the previous year:

1) Oregon was too large in area to become a state; 2) since Oregon would eventually have to be split, the area east of the Cascades should have access to the coast (consequently the division should not be along the crest of the Cascades); 3) the proposed Columbia Territory (from the Pacific to the Columbia River east of the Cascades) would be ideal for a medium-sized state; 4) Columbia Territory would have enough natural resources to support the population of similarly sized states; 5) those parts of Oregon lying north and south of the Columbia River would always be rivals; 6) because the southern part had more voters and controlled the territorial legislature, northern residents had not received any legislative appropriations; 7) the Oregon capital was 500 miles from a large portion of northern citizens; 8) since southern Oregonians controlled the legislature, northern Oregonians had no hope that adequate laws would ever be passed for them; and 9) experience showed that the government of a medium-sized state could better represent the needs of its citizens.

In the memorial, northern Oregon was described as having a "large population constantly and rapidly increasing," a misstatement of the facts that Denny referred to as "strong" language, justified because "we had so much room and were starting in building an empire." Nevertheless, it met the requirements of Lane who carefully avoided precise figures during the congressional debate.

One of the most intriguing problems in any study of the Monticello Convention is the utter lack of original source material from the delegates about their experiences. Most of these delegates were active citizens in their hometowns. Some had considerable experience in political office. But with the exception of Maynard, who went on to Salem, all of the delegates apparently returned home after unanimously approving and signing the memorial and had nothing more to say about it.

Their collective silence is curious. Was the convention anticlimactic after a summer and fall of contentious protest and organizing meetings? Did the dreary, rainy weather dampen people's impressions of Monticello? Was the convention so well-organized and its outcome so predictable that the event became a dull, insignificant experience? Even the divergent political loyalties of Democrat and Whig delegates failed to inspire lingering memories of the convention.

Nevertheless, congressional delegate Joseph Lane received the memorial in mid January, apparently from Quincy Brooks, and had it read into the Congressional Record during the February floor debate on the question. Deft political maneuvering by Lane and his political allies overcame opposition from Southerners opposed to the possibility of new non-slave territories in the north. Honoring the slave-owning first president, George Washington, was Lane's strategy, proposed by Kentucky Representative Richard Stanton, himself a Virginia native son.

Illinois Senator Stephen A. Douglas guided the bill quickly through the Senate, and on March 2, 1853, the bill creating the Territory of Washington was signed by lame-duck President Millard Fillmore.

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PIONEERS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Fort Walla Walla was the first sight to greet the Oblate missionaries at the end of their long journey from Marseilles. The end of the journey was merely the beginning of a challenging and dangerous mission.

Among the more mysterious and usually misunderstood chapters from the formative period of the Pacific Northwest is the story of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate. There are many reasons for this. The first is that they were of French origin, making them “outsiders” among the native peoples, Hudson’s Bay Company management, and the American settlers, all of whom fought for supremacy during the pioneering period. Thus, it was not easy to categorize their allegiance with any side. Worse still, they were Roman Catholics. For the natives, the “Black Robes” were uncomfortably classified with all the others who served the spiritual interests of the tribes. For the mainly Protestant settlers, they were “Jesuitical papists,” representing the encroachment of a foreign power in matters of national or local political concern.
The Oblates worked mainly with the native peoples of the Yakima Valley, the Cayuse Country, and around Puget Sound. Being French, they also offered their services to the French-speaking population of former Hudson’s Bay Company employees. This, too, did not serve to engender feelings of friendship among the English-speaking Americans. Thus, the Oblate mission to the Pacific Northwest was full of political and religious tensions that had nothing to do with the activities of the missionaries themselves. Accordingly, it was convenient to minimize the significance of the missionaries’ presence or in some cases, to erase it altogether from histories of this period. Nevertheless, if one is trying to find the initial Roman Catholic clergy to serve much of the state of Washington, it must be said that the Missionary Oblates were the first to have a broad impact.

Saint Eugène de Mazenod of Marseilles, France, founded the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in 1815. They were established to renew the Catholic faith after the French Revolution attempted to sweep France clean of its ancient belief. The Oblates were known as preachers of popular or parish missions. Toward this end, they would travel from place to place, preaching for a week or two, attempting to reconnect people with Christianity.

In 1841 the Oblate Congregation responded to a call to enter the foreign missions by going to Canada. Six years later they were invited by the newly consecrated Bishop Augustin-Magloire-Alexandre Blanchet to exercise their missionary zeal in the newly erected diocese of Walla Walla. The Oblate mission to the Oregon Territory was the third foreign mission of the young Congregation and the first Oblate foundation in the territory of the United States.

The original Missionary Oblates who traveled to the Pacific Northwest were Pascal Ricard, OMI; Charles Pandosy, OMI; Eugène-Casimir Chirouse, OMI; Georges Blanchet, OMI; and Celestin Verney, OMI. They were the first of a list that totaled 16 Oblate missionaries who traveled to work in the Pacific Northwest between 1847 and 1860. The first group consisted of only one priest, Pascal Ricard, the three seminarians (Pandosy, Chirouse and Blanchet) and Brother Verney. As a side note, it should be said that Brother Blanchet was not related to the Blanchet brothers who were the archbishop of Oregon City and the bishop of Walla Walla.

The missionaries to Oregon left Marseilles on January 22, 1847, traveling to the port of Le Havre for their departure, having only enough money to carry them to New York City. They reached Le Havre on February 4 to board the Zürich, a three-masted, square-rigged ship belonging to the Union Line out of New York. As they prepared to depart, the realization of what they were about to undertake struck them full force. With cold snow biting into the warmth of their excitement, Ricard wrote:

Mary those who will read these lines not be astonished; if religion has its rights, nature also has hers. Religion does not quell man’s heart, and when Jesus Christ said all had to be renounced to follow Him, He did not mean to say that natural sentiments had to be dampened. God asks no more of us than to grant Him the first place. The state of our souls at the solemn moment when we were leaving homeland, parents, friends, all whatsoever we held dearest in the world should not surprise anyone.

They had prepared a joyful farewell song for their departure, but as they pulled away from harbor they could only sing a song of quiet tears.

It took the Zürich 57 days to cross the Atlantic. During the voyage, they encountered six or seven terrible storms, losing one of their masts in a mighty blow. The ship’s captain held to the sailors’ superstition that carrying holy men aboard was bad luck. Thus, the missionaries were to be held responsible for any mishaps along the journey. Thankfully, the skipper never acted upon this belief by throwing them overboard. An event of interest to the voyagers was the appearance of the aurora borealis. Ricard suffered very little from the journey, while the others of his flock did not fare quite so well. After a long and trying voyage, the missionaries arrived at New York Harbor on Good Friday, April 2, 1847.

Upon disembarking they made their way to St. Patrick’s Cathedral and remained with Bishop John Hughes for two days. They received two letters when they arrived at the bishop’s residence. The first was from Bishop A. M. A. Blanchet, directing them to go to Montreal. The second letter was from J. F. Allard, OMI, welcoming them to the United States and also directing them to go to Canada. However, due
to bad weather and the difficulty of communication, they waited until Easter Monday to begin their travels in any direction. This was providential because they were able to receive the news that the Bishop of Walla Walla had left Montreal and was making his way to St. Louis. They decided to follow the bishop and meet him there.

It is estimated that over the years of its use, approximately 80,000 people immigrated to the Pacific Northwest along the Oregon Trail. The Oblate missionaries may be counted among that number. The hardships of the Oregon Trail were immense, with one in ten not surviving the trip. However, the Oblates reported no mishaps during the journey. They even developed a sense of humor over the constant diet of hardtack and pork to which they were subjected. Ricard wrote,

A word concerning our nourishment during these long months, everything is of an uncultivated nature in the midst of where we live. For bread, we eat cookies similar to what sailors eat, but it is necessary to have perseverance and courage to nibble off some crumbs. One of the companions of the Bishop has already lost four of his molars. He risks arriving at our destination completely toothless. And our menu? Oh, extremely varied! Judge for yourselves! We begin with boiled pork fatback in the pot, then fatback fried on the skillet, then again with the boiled fatback and later fried fatback, and thus in succession indefinitely.

When Pascal Ricard and George Blanchet arrived at Fort Walla Walla, they immediately began to consider where the Oblates would establish themselves. At the request of Pio-Pio-Mox-Mox, a chief of the Walla Wallas, Bishop Blanchet invited Ricard to accept a first missionary establishment on September 8, 1847. Ricard ventured to inspect the area for a suitable location on the following day with the brother of Pio-Pio-Mox-Mox. He returned satisfied with the location, which was about a league above the junction of the Yakima and Columbia Rivers, on the south side of the Yakima River. He was also reassured by promises of assistance in locating wood and in construction offered by the Walla Wallas. Ricard named the mission and the place after Saint Rose of Lima in fulfillment of a promise he had made before leaving France.

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Anticipating the arrival of the other Oblates, Ricard sent Brother Blanchet to Fort Vancouver for supplies. Deacon Rousseau accompanied him, at the bishop's request, for the same purpose. In this way, all would be in readiness for the arrival of the other Oblates and a rapid establishment of the new mission. The wagon train arrived at Fort Walla Walla on October 5, with the other three Oblates and the precious supplies they brought with them.

Having been granted priestly faculties (permission to celebrate sacraments) within the Diocese of Walla Walla by the bishop, Ricard and the other three Oblates crossed the Columbia River around October 11 or 12 and began the work necessary to sustain themselves in their new location. Ricard was able to purchase a wagon with two pair of oxen to carry the small amount of provisions they had with them. They were happy to have arrived. "But," Ricard wrote, "when happiness has entered by the door, all the hardships enter by the window."

The local peoples came to welcome the new arrivals and, as custom dictated, joined them to eat their meager provisions in celebration of their welcome to the area. This forced the Oblates to use their last sack of wheat seeds for food and to exchange their small amount of gunpowder for dried salmon in order to survive. The weather had begun to turn bitterly cold and the wind had several times broken their tent pegs, leaving them without shelter. The promised wood arrived unchopped and unsplit, in a bulk form too big to carry from the river. Toward the end of October the dawning awareness that they lacked the basic survival skills necessary to endure their new home almost drove them to the shelter of Fort Walla Walla for the winter.

Ricard communicated with Bishop Blanchet concerning the infeasibility of the location of the mission due to a lack of wood for building, a lack of suitable land for farming, and a lack of natives to evangelize. Bishop Blanchet responded by sending Father J. B. A. Brouillet to inspect the area and ascertain the facts of the situation, accompanied by a worker and an interpreter. Father Brouillet, the vicar general or second-in-command in the diocese of Bishop Blanchet, reported that the mission should not be abandoned but used as a temporary facility. Although faced with these early difficulties, Pascal Ricard is recorded to have performed 16 baptisms at Walla Walla from November 9 to November 16. Assisted by two Canadian handymen, Lorty and Gervais, who arrived fortuitously, the work of building a dwelling at Saint Rose Mission commenced. However, by the end of November events occurred that rendered Ricard's complaints insignificant.

Memers of the Cayuse tribe killed Dr. Marcus Whitman, his wife, Narcissa Prentiss Whitman, and eight other Americans in the Presbyterian mission at Waiilatpu on November 29, 1847. Father Brouillet first came upon the scene when he went there to investigate the horrible reports of the event that he had heard. The reasons put forth for this massacre are many. Ricard believed that the doctor was killed because of his failed treatments of typhoid fever among the Cayuse. Further, Ricard proposed that while Dr. Whitman was giving the best treatment available, those struck with the fever were inadvertently harming themselves. Ricard observed, for example, that the natives would bathe in the river for relief from the burning fever they suffered due to their illness. This temporary remedy resulted in numerous cases of pneumonia, and finally death. Nevertheless, after watching the deaths of family members and friends, the Cayuse believed that the doctor had poisoned them and they killed the Whitman party in retribution.

The American Protestant missionaries had been none too happy about the new Catholic missions in the area. Before the massacre, on September 23, Dr. Whitman arrived at Fort Walla Walla, apparently in the mood for a confrontation with the new Catholic bishop. During his meeting with Blanchet, he openly stated that he did not like Catholics, that it was not necessary to be baptized to be Christian, and that he would do everything possible to dissuade the Indians from becoming Catholic. The latest insult to Whitman was the fact that the new Catholic missions of Saint Anne (Blanchet's diocesan establishment on the Umatilla River) and Saint Rose were relatively close neighbors of his own mission.
Saint Joseph Mission, founded in June 1852 by Father Louis D’herbomez, OMI. Situated on the edge of Chief Kamiakin’s vast garden, it was established as a rest stop for Father Pandosy after his missionary journeys.

On November 30 Ricard learned of the massacre while at Fort Walla Walla in the company of Factor McBean. A later report stated that the Cayuse were on their way to kill every person at the fort. Ricard, Pandosy, and their hired men prepared to defend themselves by locking the doors and loading the cannons. Luckily, the report of an imminent attack proved false and they simply chose to keep the doors of the fort locked.

Fearing for the safety of his missionaries, Ricard sent a letter to Bishop Blanchet at Saint Anne Mission that arrived on December 12. The most damaging rumor circulating proposed that the chiefs had planned the Whitman massacre at Fort Walla Walla while meeting with the Catholic bishop to discuss the location of the new mission—Saint Rose. Peter Skene Ogden, of the Hudson’s Bay Company, arrived on December 19 with 15 armed men. Their main concern was to gain the release of those who had been taken prisoner. Once the ransom was paid, all the captives were released by January 1. However, this was only the beginning of what would later be called the Cayuse War.

Pascal Ricard desired to travel to the Willamette Valley to meet Archbishop F. N. Blanchet. As the archbishop was the first Catholic missionary in the Oregon Country, first apostolic vicar or personal episcopal representative of the pope, and therefore the reigning Catholic authority in the Northwest, Ricard felt a certain obligation to pay his respects. Hopeful that more Oblates would be assigned to Oregon, Ricard began to anticipate a gradual expansion beyond the limits of Walla Walla. To expand he would be required to meet and negotiate with all the bishops of Oregon. With this goal in mind, Ricard had planned even before the Whitman massacre to attend the First Provincial Council of Oregon. After all, this momentous council would be the first meeting of all the bishops and superiors who had to work together in the new Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon.

In the midst of preparing to accompany the former Cayuse captives out of the area, Ricard felt that it would be impossible for him to leave Saint Rose Mission without a priest to celebrate the sacraments. Therefore, he requested Bishop Blanchet to ordain Brothers Pandosy and Chirouse before the bishop and Ricard departed for Willamette.

After a few days of retreat, on Sunday, December 26, 1847, Chirouse and Pandosy received the order of subdeacon (the fifth of seven orders leading to priesthood), assisted by Ricard and Deacon Rousseau. On New Year’s Day they were ordained to the diaconate. Finally, on January 2, they were ordained priests at Fort Walla Walla.

While attempting to maintain all the solemnity that the occasion required but lacking some of the vestments, Brother Chirouse had to use one of Factor McBean’s long nightshirts as an alb. As there had been no time to build any churches in the new diocese, they were ordained in the bishop's temporary residence. It was the same room that served as his chapel, refectory, recreation room, meeting hall, and dormitory. In the midst of a storm of war and confusion, Chirouse and Pandosy began their lives as priests. Theirs were the second and third priestly ordinations in the whole Oregon Territory and the first in what became Washington Territory.

Toward the end of December, Owhi, a Yakama chief, had come to Fort Walla Walla. After sharing news of the uproar over the Whitman massacre and the discontent among the Cayuse, he expressed his desire for missionaries to go to the Yakamas. On December 28 Ricard decided to send Brother Blanchet to examine the area for a possible mission site. When he returned around January 3, Brother Blanchet recounted that he found the Indians well disposed to having missionaries and returned with Brother Verney to begin building the mission on the banks of Mnasatas Creek. However, due to the severity of events, they were unable to complete the construction. Eventually, the mission would be named after the patroness of the Oblate Congregation—Immaculate...
Father Ricard, c. 1859, returned to France in 1857 because of ill health. It appears he suffered from tuberculosis throughout his time in the Pacific Northwest.

Conception of Mary Mission, more commonly known as Immaculate Conception.

After the ordinations Ricard felt free to accompany Bishop Blanchet and the former captives of the Cayuse to Fort Vancouver, where they arrived on January 8. On January 10 Ricard and Deacon Rousseau began to make their way to the residence of Archbishop Blanchet, at Oregon City. On their way they became lost and arrived very late. When the two arrived on January 16, the Jesuit Superior, Father Michele Accolti, rose to greet the latecomers at the door and Ricard, confusing him for the archbishop, immediately genuflected and asked for his blessing. Seeing the archbishop seated at the dining table just behind the door, Ricard then flushed with embarrassment to discover that he had honored the wrong person. This was cause for a good laugh by all present.

Although brought about by the tragedy of war, this reunion of bishops and superiors became the occasion of the First Provincial Council of Oregon. The council was not noteworthy for innovative legislation; rather, it was the first time that all of the Catholic bishops and superiors in Oregon had the opportunity to meet one another as a group. Thus, it was momentous in revealing the working relationships among the various leading Catholic parties involved in evangelizing Oregon at the time.

Back at Saint Rose Mission rumors of war were flying about the heads of Chirouse and Pandosy. Father Brouillet abandoned Saint Anne Mission and requested that the Oblates meet him at Fort Walla Walla to decide the best course of action. They determined that they should make their way to Fort Vancouver. Father Chirouse wrote to Brother Blanchet, recommending that he and Brother Verney remain out in the field among the Yakamas until it became possible for them to join the rest. Eventually, all of the Oblates were reunited, along with their neighbors, the diocesan priests Fathers Brouillet and Leclaire. They made a retreat at the Saint Francis Xavier Mission at Vancouver, which ran from April 1 to April 9, 1848, under the direction of Father Accolti. Saint Francis Xavier Mission was originally founded by the famed Father De Smet to be the motherhouse of the Jesuit presence in Oregon. This meeting between Fathers Ricard and Accolti and the subsequent retreat at Saint Francis Xavier Mission was the beginning of a friendly and supportive relationship between the Oblates and the Jesuits of the Oregon Country.

Unable to return to Saint Rose Mission for the foreseeable future, the Oblates were undaunted in their quest to establish a sure foothold in the region. Thus, while the Cayuse mission had closed, the Yakama missions were expanding and the missionaries put all of their energies into new directions. Among Ricard's chief concerns was the desire that the Oblates have their own administrative center of operations in Oregon. To this end, he began searching for a location suitable to his needs and his meager financial resources.

Fathers Chirouse and Pandosy, accompanied by Brothers Blanchet and Verney and two workmen, returned to complete construction of Immaculate Conception Mission on July 6, 1848. No sooner was the work under way than another Yakama chief, Kamiakin, approached them to petition for the establishment of a Catholic mission on his lands. Ricard responded to this new proposal by Chirouse that their present resources were insufficient to establish more missions. However, Chirouse enthusiastically argued his case. Ricard responded that he would grant his permission if Bishop Blanchet agreed to it.

Maintaining that it was still impossible for the Oblates to return to Saint Rose, Chirouse proposed in a letter of June 18 that the mission to Kamiakin's people be opened. With Bishop Blanchet's approval, Chirouse returned to begin yet another mission among the Yakamas. Situated between Saint Rose Mission and Immaculate Conception Mission, the site was on the Simcoe River, southwest of the Yakima. Named Saint Joseph of Simcoe and established at the place the natives called Aleshecas, this mission was noted for producing the first garden crops in the Yakima Valley.

Chirouse established yet another mission about one month after he built Saint Joseph of Simcoe. He followed the winter trail of Kamiakin's tribe and passed the cold season of 1848-49 there. Chirouse built Holy Cross Mission about a
day's journey from Saint Rose Mission. He named it Holy Cross because of the many "pains, miseries, and crosses" he experienced while carrying out his missionary endeavors. The lodging, 36 feet long and 18 feet wide, was divided into two rooms—a living area and a chapel area for conducting spiritual services with the natives. Chirouse describes his experience with these words:

You press me to indicate my temporal needs. I will say that I no longer suffer hunger, since I have a dog and two wolves in my pantry, but in fact I am not so well off in terms of furniture or clothing. Not having more than one cassock in shreds that does nothing to defend me against the cold, I manufactured one from a thick white wool blanket. I dyed it as dark as I could and voila, I was made a bishop because the material came out red, but the rain came, my cassock returned to its original color of white and all of a sudden I was pope, but a poor pope, having lost my only sewing needle. I cannot find another needle in all the rooms of my Quirinal Palace. Nevertheless, it became necessary to patch the holes in my old black cassock. I removed the head of a pin and fashioned a sewing needle from it. It worked! The needle is rough, but strong; it bends, but never breaks.

Chirouse could well have been describing himself as the needle that "bends, but never breaks," attempting to repair lives as a missionary.

One important decision regarding the Oblate mission to Oregon was made in the aftermath of the First Provincial Council, during the retreat at the Jesuit mission. Father Ricard determined to establish a superior’s residence, autonomous from the various missionary commitments they already had agreed to pursue.

Looking toward the future, Ricard could envision the growth of the Oblate missionary presence in F. N. Blanchet’s jurisdiction in lower Oregon and Modeste Demers’ in British Columbia. He desired a central location for a motherhouse among these jurisdictions as well as a location on saltwater that would facilitate easier mail communication by ship with his superiors in France. In consideration of recent events at Saint Rose Mission, it had to be a place where the various Oblates under his care could come in case of need during emergencies or for a place of rest. Very likely, he was also influenced by being at the Jesuit model at Fort Vancouver. Ricard regarded Accolti as his “counselor and guide” and could easily have measured his needs by the example of his fellow superior.

Ricard arrived at Fort Nisqually on May 30, 1848. William Fraiser Tolmie, factor of the fort, welcomed him cordially. After a canoe trip around Puget Sound, Ricard laid claim on June 14 to a site about four miles from New Market Falls for the new superior’s residence of the Oblates in Oregon. He was attracted to the area because he was aware that the Americans had built a new mill there. He contracted two Americans, Michael T. Simmons and Samuel B. Crockett, to assist him with building the new mission. He placed the newly constructed mission under the protection of Saint Joseph.

The new Oblate superior’s residence was located within F. N. Blanchet’s jurisdiction. However, Ricard had decided that it was unnecessary to seek the archbishop’s permission before homesteading the land since he was acting as a private citizen. Thus, Ricard established his superior’s residence without the explicit permission of Archbishop Blanchet. Nevertheless, the Oblates were officially admitted to work in the area of the Archdiocese of Oregon City on August 23, 1848, for the special care of the native peoples of the area.

Father François Jean Marie Joyal decided to enter the Oblate novitiate at Saint Joseph of New Market (Olympia). This was a difficult decision that created no small amount of tension between Archbishop Blanchet and the Oblates. He had been ordained a priest on September 19, 1847, by Archbishop Blanchet at Saint Paul Church, making him the first priest ordained in the whole Oregon Territory. His ordination was a matter of pride for the new archbishop, who assigned Joyal as parochial vicar or assistant to Father Langlois at Saint Francis Xavier Mission in Cowlitz on February 1, 1848. After Father Langlois’ transfer, Joyal was entrusted with the temporal administration of Saint Francis Xavier Mission at Cowlitz on February 20, 1848.

Walla Walla Chief Pio-Pio-Mox-Mox requested Oblate missionaries for his people in 1847, as did Yakama Chief Owhi (pictured below), also in 1847, and Yakama Chief Kamiakin, in 1848.
Archbishop Blanchet transferred him to Puget Sound on June 18, 1848. According to Ricard, Jayol asked to enter the Oblate novitiate at Saint Joseph at the end of August 1848. For Jayol, this meant that he would not be left alone without resources or company, to fend for himself in the wilderness. For Ricard, the joyous news of a new Oblate recruit for the fledgling Oregon mission was a sign of hopeful vitality that he readily accepted.

Another sign of growth was the arrival of Father Honoré Timothée Lempfrit from Canada. He left Canada for Oregon on March 19, 1848. After his journey along the Oregon Trail, he arrived at Saint Joseph of Olympia on October 14, 1848. In this way, Father Ricard found himself with two new priestly companions at Saint Joseph of Olympia. His mission was growing slowly, but steadily.

Ricard and the Oblates began their first 11 months single-heartedly concerned with a preliminary establishment and an ambitious expansion. By the end of this period, they had begun four missions and a superior’s residence with only three priests and two brothers. They were not deterred from their goals by the fact that they had no experience or skills at survival. Due to Ricard’s fragile health and his responsibilities as superior of the mission, Brother Blanchet and Father Chirouse were the ones who explored the sites of the missions themselves. However, it is also evident that Ricard’s view of his role changed after his attendance at the First Provincial Council of Oregon and his retreat at the Jesuit superior’s residence. He became aware of a larger future for Oblate concerns in the area. He anticipated this eventual growth by determining to live in Olympia, far away from the primary scene of Oblate missionary activity and away from direct control by the bishops.

Saint Rose, Immaculate Conception, Saint Joseph and Holy Cross in the Diocese of Walla Walla were little more than wilderness huts, sparse and uninviting. It would take time before they could be built up into anything resembling more than a one-man hovel. However, the locations were well chosen for encountering the native peoples of the area. Further, Father Chirouse showed great initiative by following Kamiakin’s people to their winter retreat and establishing another mission there in order to continue the evangelization he had begun. In this way he adapted the location of the mission to the life-style of those he was sent to serve.

It is noteworthy that each of the missions they established was begun only at the request of tribal leaders of the people they sought to evangelize. Pio-Pio-Mox-Mox of the Walla Wallas, and Owhi and Kamiakin of the Yakamas each requested the Catholic missionaries for their respective tribes. T. Ortolan, an early Oblate historian, interpreted this inviting attitude as a desire for the prosperity that a missionary could bring. He believed that the native peoples had gotten a bad impression regarding the giving of gifts from the Protestant missionaries. However, Ricard himself never claimed this. These tribes had had previous exposure to Catholic priests when Blanchet and Demers had made a passing visit through the Walla Walla area. Observing that the Catholic missionaries were not married, they would quite likely be considered less of a threat to the land holdings of the tribes. They would always be available to act as intermediaries with the incoming settlers, as none of these missionaries was American. Finally, from their previous exposure to Catholicism, it would not be beyond the bounds of reason to suppose that they might have had a genuine interest in understanding the Catholic faith. Thus, the inviting attitude of the tribal leaders of the area could have been based upon strategic and spiritual considerations of benefit to their people.

The financial situation of the Oregon mission at this time was grave. The Oblates were sent from France with only enough money to get them to New York. Due to the 1848 revolution in France, all monies from the Society for the Propagation of the Faith had ceased. This being the only source of income for the Oblate missionaries, they were in dire straits. Ricard wrote, “Our poverty was a veritable obstacle to the good that one hoped to do among the natives.” According to Ricard, James Douglas and Peter Skene Ogden received orders from HBC headquarters in London not to forward any further credit to the Oblates, making their economic situation worse. Out of mercy for their plight, Douglas allowed them a total credit of 500 Canadian piastres during the years 1847-49.

In all, 16 men of differing ages, experiences, and temperaments departed from their native France to serve in the mission of the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate to the Oregon Territory between 1847 and 1860. They shared a common faith in God. They shared the vows of poverty, chastity, obedience, and perseverance until death in the Oblate way of life they had chosen. It was their desire and that of their superiors, of course, that their pains, sacrifices, and struggles would find meaning in new life in Jesus Christ for the native peoples of the Pacific Northwest. Suffering from political naiveté, poverty, hunger, and war, the first year of the Oblates’ participation in the foundational history of the Pacific Northwest of the United States shows them to have been heroic in the pursuit of their missionary goals.

Ultimately, it was difficult for most of the population of the time to believe that anyone would travel halfway around the world for the love of God and people’s salvation. Nevertheless, what was true then is still true today. Missionaries have always been signs of contradiction in a world motivated by self-interest. Whatever their allegiances, the Oblates were firsthand witnesses to and participants in the events that formed the present states of Oregon and Washington.

Father Ronald Wayne Young, OMI, recently completed his doctoral thesis on the Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate in the early Oregon Territory. He is assistant professor of systematic theology and missiology and director of publications at the Oblate School of Theology in San Antonio, Texas.
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FALL IS HERE and once again the museum parking lots are filled with school busses and the galleries with children learning about Washington history. New exhibits have arrived at both museums, and it's time again for the annual, WSHS-sponsored Heritage Conference.

In Tacoma, the History Museum opens Grafton T. Brown: Visualizing California and the Pacific Northwest and Tribal Journeys: The Resurgence of the Canoe Nations. Our Voyage: Lewis & Clark: The Army Explores the West, October 10. Learning about Washington history. New time again for the annual, WSHS-sponsored Heritage Conference. Many of our members will be able to attend the opening receptions October 5 and 11, respectively. Look for your invitations in the next EXPLORE IT!

The State Capital Museum opens End of Our Voyage: Lewis & Clark in Washington on October 10. If you missed this exhibit while it was in Tacoma you can see it in Olympia through June 25, 2004. End of Our Voyage is the first of our five-exhibit series commemorating the bicentennial of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The next installation, Beyond Lewis & Clark: The Army Explores the West, opens in Tacoma next February.

The 16th Annual Heritage Conference, being held in Richland, is scheduled for October 22-24. The theme this year is “Lewis & Clark: Tools for Planning, Partnerships, and Opportunities.” If you are interested in Lewis and Clark and looking for ways to get involved in the bicentennial, this is a good place to start. For more information about the conference, contact Mark Vessey at 360/586-0219 or mvessey@wshs.wa.gov.

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If you like being a member of this organization, get out there and spread the word—our members are our best advocates. They are also our best critics—your comments and suggestions are always welcome.

—Brenda Hanan, Development Manager

TO OUR MEMBERS

Additional Reading

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

Democrats Disintegrate

The Elwha Dam

The Creation of Washington Territory

Painting for Time

Missionary Oblates of Mary Immaculate
Although useful to the researcher, A Majority of One is unlikely to be snatched up by the casual reader. Still, it should grace the shelves of political junkies and it belongs in every major library in the state. Finally, anyone who wants to understand the allure of a legislative life and “being in the arena” can learn from Senator Scott: “Politicians enjoy the diversity a world of specialists and our society lacks, and the privilege of affecting everyone’s future” and “it fascinates because it is literally larger than life as otherwise lived.”

W. Clinton Sterling is the reference librarian at the Chastek Library, Gonzaga University School of Law.

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

New books, many of them written by authors previously unassociated with accounts of the Corps of Discovery, are enriching the literature of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial. Guides to the trail, for example, are proliferating, no doubt in anticipation of the spike in tourists anticipated between 2003 and 2006. Sharon A. Ritter's Lewis and Clark's Mountain Wilds: A Site Guide to the Plants and Animals They Encountered in the Bitterroots (Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 2002; 315 pp., $19.95 paper) is at the head of the list as far as natural history in the Pacific Northwest is concerned. The book covers the corridor between Missoula, Montana, and Lewiston, Idaho, on two levels: along U.S. Highway 12, next to the Lochsa and Clearwater rivers, and along United States Forest Service Road 500—the Lolo Motorway—a one-track dirt road in the Bitterroot Mountains. Features that make this book outstanding are: expert commentary on more than 100 plants and animals described by Lewis and Clark, lists of species likely to be seen at Lewis and Clark sites, side-bars on species that are now gone and species that are here now but not 200 years ago, and an amazing cross-reference index chart. Supplement this book with Lewis and Clark's Green World: The Expedition and Its Plants, by A. Scott Earle and James L. Reveal (Helena, Montana: Farcountry Press, 2003; 288 pp., $34.95), a well-done photography-and-text botany book. Even better, put Ritter's book in one hand and in the other use the most recent offering by Steve Russell. Two years ago, civil engineer Russell coauthored Across the Snowy Ranges: The Lewis and Clark Expedition in Idaho and Western Montana [COLUMBIA, Fall 2001, p. 45.] His latest study, Hike Lewis and Clark's Idaho, coauthored with Sierra Club advocate Mary Aegerter (Moscow: University of Idaho Press, 2002; 223 pp., $14.95), gives directions and maps to 44 hikes accessible from U.S. Highway 12 and the Lolo Motorway. The title is somewhat misleading because the book says nothing about Lewis and Clark on Lemhi Pass or the expedition of Sergeant John Ordway to the Salmon River, both of which are notable Idaho explorations.

Plants of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, by H. Wayne Phillips (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 2003; 288 pp., $20 paper), takes a broad view, covering six ecological and geographical regions on the Lewis and Clark trail. The strengths of this volume are 315 full-color photographs, a summary of the specimens preserved, and an appendix giving each item’s post-expedition history. Less
comprehensive, but nevertheless useful, is Gail Wells and Dawn Anzinger, *Lewis and Clark Meet Oregon Forests* (Corvallis: Oregon State University’s College of Forestry, 2001; 223 pp., $14.95). Unique to this book are chapters on Pacific Northwest forests from the time of the Ice Age forward. Unfortunately, the minimalist chapter, "What Lewis and Clark Saw," is a mere 11 pages long and not very insightful. Couple these books with *Adventuring Along the Lewis and Clark Trail*, by Elizabeth Grossman (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 2003; 296 pp., $16.95 paper), who emphasizes state parks, wilderness areas, and nature preserves, and makes cogent comments about the status of wildlife along the trail today. The appendix, "Animal Species Status List," is especially significant.

Photographic studies of the Lewis and Clark Trail are increasingly popular. Greg MacGregor, professor of photography at California State University, Hayward, records the transformation of the trail over the past 200 years in *Lewis and Clark Revisited* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003; 224 pp.; $50 cloth, $29.95 paper). Culled from a collection ten years in the making, there are 97 duotone illustrations. MacGregor has scheduled an exhibition of his photographs into 15 cities during the Bicentennial, and this is, in a manner of speaking, the catalog. Look for the exhibition and the book at the Washington State History Museum.

Castle McLoughlin, associate curator of Native American ethnography at Harvard’s Peabody Museum, opens new doors with her examination of the calumets, buffalo robes, and basketry pieces that Lewis and Clark collected on their journey and which now reside in Cambridge, Massachusetts. An anthropologist, McLoughlin formed a team of art historians and material culture specialists to work with her and write essays in *Arts of Diplomacy: Lewis and Clark’s Indian Collection* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2003; 416 pp.; $60 cloth, $40 paper). Three-fourths of the 195 illustrations are in color. James Ronda, the highly respected scholar whose book, *Lewis and Clark among the Indians* (1984), set the standard for scholarship in the field of Indian-Corps of Discovery relations, offers a stimulating foreword.

Martin Plamondon’s first two volumes of a projected three-volume series of maps about the Lewis and Clark Trail are so detailed that they could start—rather than resolve—an argument. Editors of the Lewis and Clark journals traditionally give written directions, usually in speculative terms, of where Lewis and Clark camped on any given night, or where they made a notable discovery. Plamondon minces no words with his cartography and shows with exactitude where he believes events took place. Not everyone will agree. But that is the nature—and the attraction—of the Lewis and Clark story. In volume one of *Lewis and Clark Trail Maps* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2000; 206 pp.; $65 hardcover, $45 paper), Plamondon traced the expedition on the Missouri River as far as Fort Mandan, North Dakota, using 153 full-page maps. Volume two (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2002; 240 pp.; $75 cloth, $55 paper) continues the journey from Fort Mandan to the confluence of the Clearwater and Snake rivers at Clarkston, Washington, in 180 nine-by-twelve-inch black and white maps. Each map contains excerpts from the journals plus “Cartographer’s Notes.” All of the maps contrast modern riverbeds with their courses at the time of the Lewis and Clark exploration. This is important because today there are 24 major dams on watercourses of the Lewis and Clark trail that flood 1,200 miles of the journey. The most accurate, and the most modern, editor of the Lewis and Clark journals, Gary Moulton (13 volumes; 1983-2001), writes of Plamondon’s work: “William Clark would love these maps.” Volume three will cover the Columbia River and is expected to be available in early 2004.

Pacific Northwest’s premier collection of books, maps, manuscripts, illustrations, and ephemera relating to the Corps of Discovery resides in the libraries of Lewis & Clark College in Portland. The collection began, for all practical purposes, with the acquisition in 1981 of the Eldon Chuinard collection of 161 books on Lewis and Clark and has continued to grow at irregular spurts for more than 20 years. *The Literature of the Lewis and Clark Expedition: A Bibliography and Essays* (Portland: Lewis & Clark College, 2003; 315 pp., $75 cloth) is a coffee table-style book that showcases the college’s collection. Four chapters describe bibliographic items: the expedition’s traveling library, expedition-related publications, and apocryphal narratives. Other chapters review the editing of the expedition journals, general histories, and a modern publication checklist of books relating to the Corps of Discovery, year by year, from 1906 to 2001.

Not to be overlooked is another kind of Lewis and Clark book, personal letters from one of the captains. William Clark wrote at least 47 letters to his older brother between 1792 and 1811, including five during the expedition. Unknown to historians until 1988, the letters are now available in *Dear Brother: Letters of William Clark to Jonathan Clark* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002; 352 pp., $35), edited with an introduction by James J. Holmberg. The most compelling aspect of the letters sheds light on Clark’s deteriorating relationship with his manservant, York, in the post-expedition period.

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