Landscapes of Conflict

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William G. Robbins
Foreword by William Cronon

In his second volume of Oregon's environmental history, William Robbins addresses efforts by individuals and groups within and outside the state to resolve inevitable conflicts. The story of Oregon's accommodation to diverse, indeed divergent interests is a story that balances those most concerned for growth and perceived economic stability and those most concerned with preserving the quality of the state's natural resources and the environment in which its citizens live.

Montana Justice

Power, Punishment, and the Penitentiary
Keith Edgerton

Since the days of the Wild West, Montanans have struggled to be tough on crime with limited resources; this social history of the Montana penitentiary focuses on its early days under a corrupt warden. "Will be a welcome addition to western history, but also to the many disciplines that concern themselves with the human condition in modern America."

- Anne M. Butler, Utah State University

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Drawing on the lessons of early labor leaders, civil rights volunteers, and political activists, Jim Diers has developed his own models and successful strategies for community development. Neighbor Power chronicles his long and intense involvement with Seattle's communities. "Jim Diers was the Pied Piper for the Seattle neighborhood movement which built a national and international reputation for its new approach to planning, giving real meaning to the slogan 'Power to the People.'" — Paul Schell, former Mayor of Seattle

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Longfellow's Tattoos

Tourism, Collecting, and Japan
Christine M.E. Guth

Charles Longfellow, son of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, returned to Boston in 1873 after two years in Japan, laden with photographs, curios, art objects, and elaborate tattoos he had "collected" on his body; his experiences are the focus of this look at tourism, Japan, and America in the 19th century.

Paperback, $29.95

Montana Justice

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- Anne M. Butler, Utah State University

Paperback, $22.50

A Thriving Modernism

The Houses of Wendell Lovett and Arne Bystrom
Grant Hildebrand and T. William Booth

The careers of Wendell Lovett and Arne Bystrom, and their contributions to modernism and to the architectural legacy of the Pacific Northwest are celebrated in this lavishly illustrated book. Lovett's manipulation of space, light, and mechanistic detail yields a richness undreamed of in early modernism, while Bystrom's delight in wood as inspiration is comparable to that of Oriental crafts.

Clothbound, $40.00
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COVER: “Palouse Falls.” This drawing from which this engraving was made probably was made by Gustave Sohon in 1859. Lieutenant John Mullan, in his official report on the Military Road construction project, describes how Sohon, while the expedition was near the falls, would go off by himself in the evening to do his artwork. Sohon was captivated by the basalt flows, cathedral-like rock formations, and plunge pools. (Special Collections, Washington State Historical Society)
Best Wishes for the New Year

The staff of the Washington State Historical Society (pictured above), would like to wish you a Happy New Year. We look forward to bringing long-time members and new members alike another year of outstanding museum exhibits, engaging public programs, and fascinating articles in COLUMBIA Magazine. We hope to see you soon: visiting our two museums, attending a film or lecture, or sharing in the excitement of a new exhibit opening. We thank all of you for your support of the Society and its mission: To make the study of history in Washington illuminating and inspiring. Because of your support—which includes your membership dues, attendance at museum functions and exhibits, and donations to the History Fund—we can proudly proclaim 2004 a successful year. As we strive to make history inspiring, you are, in turn, the ones who inspire us. (See key on page 47 to match names with faces.)

—Brenda Hanan, Development Manager
Preservation Values, Education, and Literacy

By Lawrence Kreisman

Historic Seattle, the organization for which I work, is privileged to have a historic home in which to meet and entertain the community. Ours is the 1907 Henry H. Dearborn residence, a classical revival house built with Dearborn's real estate profits. The Dearborn House was converted to an ophthalmologist's office in 1953-54. These alterations and a 1984 remodel by the cosmetic surgeon who then acquired the house are some of the challenges Historic Seattle has to deal with as we try to bring integrity back to the interiors.

But we do have to credit these businesses, for if they hadn't bought and used the house, it probably would have been demolished in the 1980s to make way for a condominium tower. With national, state, and county support, we have been able to repair and restore the property. In 2002 we did extensive paint analysis on the exterior and repainted the Dearborn House in its original 1907 color scheme. Our project inspired the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation to do the same with the Stimson-Green mansion to our north.

In November 2003 I was asked to address a meeting of the Governor's Mansion Foundation, which also has respect for a historic home, understands the need to grow in order to continue to serve, and recognizes and responds to its character, both outside and inside. Unfortunately, these attitudes reflect values that are far from the norm. At that presentation, as well as at a Heritage Caucus meeting in March 2004, I chose to focus attention on contemporary life and its impact on heritage, preservation, and our visual understanding of the world.

We are fast becoming a nation of well-educated young people who are, by and large, visually illiterate. Although technological advances have put the "virtual" world at people's fingertips and made historical, architectural, and preservation-related information and communication easier and more accessible than ever, the trade-off has been disconnection with the extraordinary qualities of the "real" world. We are bringing up a generation weaned on instant images jumping on and off movie, computer, and television screens. They barely have time to take in the color and shape of a thing before it vanishes and is replaced by something different. In this split-second world, subtleties and refinements vanish. The roughness or smoothness of stone, the ornamental bas relief in terra-cotta, the shades and textures of woven fabric, the curve of a wooden chair leg, the glow of a gold leafed frame—these are things that require time for observation. They may even need the touch of a finger or the sniff of the nose to gain your full appreciation.

There is little in cyberspace to test senses or challenge perceptions. The same is true for most of the place definers of modern-day life—huge billboards, plastic backlit signage, and over-scaled concrete warehouses with no subtlety or finesse. As an architectural historian, a historic preservation advocate, and an educator, I worry about this. I am concerned that in the rush for the latest improvements in communication and information—now objectified as "data-sharing," we are losing the capacity to use our gifts of observation, the "visual thinking" that is at the root of aesthetics. Seattle has fallen into the trap of every world-class city "wannabe," which puts it in danger of becoming indistinguishable from countless other cities in America. It has cast its historic roots aside to accommodate the fad of the moment, which usually means bigger and more showy developments. Egocentric architectural statements completely ignore the traditional pattern of streetscapes and the scale of buildings already in place. Designers claim that the existing surroundings are "boring" and assume that they will be gone in a few years anyway. "Naming" opportunities turn any and every new civic enterprise into billboard.

Several years ago, I was asked by a journalist why I thought Seattle was such a conservative place architecturally. His question was motivated by the opening of Frank Gehry's Experience Music Project and the unveiling of plans for the new central library designed by Rem Koolhaas. I had to say that I did not see Seattle this way. In terms of its planning and design history, there have been some remarkably bold efforts. The plan by the Metropolitan Building Company for its Metropolitan Center in the first decade of the 20th century was years ahead of any similar comprehensive scheme for a
HISTORIC SEATTLE
Founded in 1974, Historic Seattle is the only nonprofit membership organization dedicated to the preservation of Seattle's architectural legacy. Historic Seattle is a major advocate for and participant in the thoughtful and meaningful preservation and rehabilitation of historic buildings.

For 30 years Historic Seattle has preserved and restored buildings, provided the community with educational programming focused on respect for built heritage, and encouraged people to get involved. A current development project is the Cadillac Hotel in Pioneer Square, Seattle's poster child of the Nisqually earthquake. Once restored, the building will provide an expanded home for the National Parks Service Klondike Gold Rush Historic Park.

Historic Seattle is committed to educating Seattle residents about the architecturally rich buildings in which they live and how important they are to the health and vitality of their community. For further information about membership and events, contact the organization at 206/622-6952 or visit www.historicseattle.org.

Back to the journalist’s take on the word “conservative”—I had to point out that the word is not, in itself, a negative one. The dictionary meaning of conserve is “to keep from being damaged, lost, or wasted.” To be conservative is to be moderate and prudent. It connotes a respect for the past and a cautious approach to accepting the new or the different. With a conservative approach, for example, Seattle would not have lost the White-Henry-Stuart Building, the Music Hall Theatre, or the Burke Building. Olympians by R. H. Thomson were radical approaches to accommodate future growth. L. C. Smith’s audacious attempt to bring Manhattan to Seattle resulted in 1914 in the town’s most significant downtown landmark, Smith Tower.

While the growing community resisted the move away from 19th-century traditions, a new generation of architects did just that. Albertson, Wilson, and Richardson exploited the regional metaphor of the monumental mountain in the Northern Life Tower in 1928. Inspired by his exposure to the work of Gropius, Mies van der Rohe, and Le Corbusier, Paul Thiry in 1936 designed radical white stucco residences in traditional neighborhoods. An inspirational symbol of progress for the Century 21 Exposition—the Space Needle—continues to define Seattle throughout the world. There are other examples, from the Magnolia branch library by Kirk, Wallace, and McKinley to the structural engineering marvel of the recently demolished Kingdome—countless buildings that moved Seattle’s cityscape successfully into the new millennium. If Seattle has an inferiority complex about its architectural accomplishments, it is because the city ignores and underappreciates the gems that are its residential neighborhoods, its magnificent park and boulevard system, and many architecturally and structurally distinctive—if not “world-class” buildings.

Why is it so important that Seattle, or any other city, be “world class”? “World class” appears to mean that the city loses most of the character-defining buildings that long-time residents appreciate—features that help form their collective memory of what makes the city unique. While our culture strives for world-class status, we are really settling for the lowest common denominator of taste and the loss of the quirky, idiosyncratic characteristics that distinguish the buildings, neighborhoods, and downtown districts of our cities.

Ironically, world-class also defines Seattle by some of its top tourist highlights, such as Pike Place Market and Pioneer Square—vestiges of the past that have largely survived because of city policies that protected them from ill-advised redevelopment. It seems that the very features that have drawn newcomers to the city in recent years—livability, close proximity to the natural environment, a colorful mix of interesting and different neighborhoods with attractive and affordable housing, and an accessible downtown—all are
being sacrificed to make Seattle a world-class city.

In my eight years on the Seattle Landmarks Preservation Board, I met homeowners with passion for their homes and businesses and a commitment to making changes without tampering with the defining features giving these properties integrity and harmony. I also frequently listened to the arguments of architects, school and library personnel, real estate developers, attorneys, and building managers who justified the replacement of wood windows with vinyl or wood shingles with composition roofing, and the gutting of historic interiors to meet educational requirements, seismic, fire, and zoning codes. I reviewed arrogant and inappropriate additions and alterations by architects who either didn’t know or blatantly ignored the many clues their building offered up regarding how to proceed.

At Historic Seattle I am frequently asked to provide homeowners with recommendations for interior designers and architects to help them out when upgrading an old house. Frankly, I can count on my fingers the number of firms with the knowledge base and, more importantly, the passion to work with historic buildings. I wish there were more. But most people in the design professions are looking to follow the latest trends and to make their own new ones—without looking back.

Preservation and good stewardship are important values that distinguish communities. In September 2003 the Seattle showroom of the prestigious textile design firm Scalamandre partnered with Historic Seattle to promote the values of preservation at the Seattle Design Center. Pat Kreeger, the showroom manager, is fond of saying that she wants to “raise the bar” in the design community to the merits of historic architecture and interior treatments. The staff came up with five key ideas that people should understand before undertaking a restoration project: 1) do no harm, 2) respect the period, 3) preserve good old work, 4) do it right the first time, and 5) do your homework.

The late Patsy Bullitt Collins understood this. Patsy had strong values. She was outspoken when others remained silent and had unwavering patience to follow a worthwhile cause to a positive conclusion, even when naysayers lined her route. She also acted on her beliefs in quiet, modest ways that often went unnoticed. Nevertheless, her actions have had important and lasting positive benefits for the community.

I first met Patsy in 1986 when she purchased the First Hill home of her grandfather, C. D. Stimson, to the dismay of friends and family members who dubbed it a “white elephant.” My friendship with her grew while we worked together to develop an architectural history of the Stimson family beginning in 1989. This effort was enriched by her encouragement of my work in public education as she became a friend and supporter of the preservation community. She gave so generously to Historic Seattle and the Washington Trust for Historic Preservation that both organizations now operate out of historic properties on First Hill. And she contributed substantially to the National Trust as have few others in this state.

In 1998, at a celebration marking the 25th anniversary of Seattle’s Landmarks Preservation Ordinance, Patsy said, “A community wants to and needs to remember the community’s childhood, in the same way as individuals have need and joy remembering and being reminded and given mementos of their childhood. Buildings lost are like a book with its pages torn out.” In her lifetime Patsy did more than her share to help us pass our “books” on intact to future generations. I encourage you, the reading public, to be the legislators, watchdogs, and civic leaders who are willing to take on the cause of preservation. I also challenge you in your personal and family lives to encourage young people to step away from the box—the computer, television, and movie screen—to experience, appreciate, and take on the stewardship of the landmark buildings we leave them.

Lawrence Kreisman is program director for Historic Seattle and author of a number of books and articles on historic architecture and preservation in the region. In 1997 he received the State Historic Preservation Office’s Career Achievement Award in Historic Preservation.
SEARCHING FOR POINT LEWIS

Piecing Together the Location of a Lost Landmark

By Allen "Doc" Wesselius

"This point I have taken the Liberty of Calling after my particular friend Lewis...."

—Captain William Clark
Tuesday, November 19, 1805

RARELY IN THE annals of military history has shared responsibility of leadership been successful. The Corps of Discovery under the command of Captains Meriwether Lewis and William Clark was an exception, resulting in the first great American exploration across the North American continent. Not only did the co-leadership accomplish an epic survey of the uncharted territory between the Mississippi and Columbia rivers, but the captains were determined to honor one another by naming geographical features to commemorate each other.

In addition to Clark's naming a coastal eminence in recognition of his friend, there are other examples of the two leaders' conferring honorifics upon one another. The two major drainage systems of the Columbia River were named for the explorers that first recorded their existence. In his journal dated August 21, 1805, Clark wrote "I shall in justice to Capt. Lewis who was the first white man ever on this fork of the Columbia call this Louis's river."

Only after further exploration and the gathering of Indian information did Clark begin to understand the extent of today's Snake River drainage basin. "Lewis's River" was eventually substituted on his charts to name the main southern tributary of the Columbia River. Lewis returned the honor on May 6, 1806, and renamed the main northern tributary of the Columbia River to commemorate his co-leader of the expedition. He recorded the change: "The river here called Clark's river is that which we have heretofore called the Flathead river, I have thus named it in honour of my worthy friend and fellow traveller Capt. Clark." Clark's 1810 map of the West records these names.

The captains also identified themselves with two coastal features near the mouth of the Columbia River—Clark's Mountain and Point Lewis. The expedition's central objective was to find a commercially practical water route across the North American continent. Reaching the mouth of the Columbia River was one of the goals for the mission. However, identifying themselves with geographical features on the coastline would help establish the extent of their exploration.

Prominent Pacific Northwest coastal geography had already been charted by maritime surveys of several foreign nations. Since the Corps of Discovery was a military expedition sent out by the federal government, Lewis had access to the most precise and up-to-date maps of the American Northwest then available. While employed as President Jefferson's private secretary, Lewis had used the president's extensive library and collected preliminary intelligence for the mission's topographical preparations. In Philadelphia he traced details of the coastal regions that he thought were the pertinent sections of Captain George Vancouver's 1792 surveys of the Pacific Coast. This information was transferred to a large inclusive map by War Department cartographer Nicholas King, which the explorers carried with them on their expedition.

The base map incorporated all the information that cartographers in the government judged to be valid, and it was therefore the clearest imaginable reflection of the character of extant images of the Northwest prior to the expedition. However, King's Map of 1803 did not contain all the information that Lewis had gathered pertaining to the geography at the mouth of the Columbia River. Other references to British topographical data are found in the corps' field journals. For example, the sketches of Vancouver's surveys are alluded to....
in Clark’s entry of November 14, 1805. The preliminary sketches traced in the incipient stages of the expedition have not survived; other sources must therefore be relied upon to determine where the captains obtained some of their place names for Pacific coastal features.

Cape Disappointment, the high volcanic extrusion that protrudes into the ocean north of the river, had been named by the British merchant John Meares in 1788. Opposite the rocky headlands of Cape Disappointment lies the low sandy southern peninsula of Point Adams, named in 1792 by the American merchant seaman Robert Gray, who also named the river after his ship, Columbia Rediviva. The captains scrupulously used existing place names instead of engaging in wholesale renaming of British topographical information for the sake of American interests. Unfortunately, their legacy was lost with the delayed publication and limited distribution of Nicholas Biddle’s narrative, History of the Expedition under the Command of Captains Lewis and Clark, in 1814.

Lewis settled the naming of “Clark’s Mountain” on January 10, 1806, stating in his journal, “this Mout. I have taken the liberty of naming Clark’s Mountain and point of view.” At Fort Clatsop Lewis bestowed the honor on Clark after he had explored the seacoast south of the Columbia River and had climbed the mountain. However, until recently the mountain’s relationship to the Lewis and Clark expedition was lost when other place names were used to identify the headlands known today as Tillamook Head. In 2002, through efforts by the Oregon Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, the United States Board of Geographic Names restored the historical name of the headland’s peak, naming it Clark’s Mountain. Clark had first observed these headlands from Cape Disappointment on November 18, 1805, but refrained from naming his discovery after himself. He later used variations of “Point of Clark’s view” to identify the mountain’s misty profile for his journal entries and on his maps.

“Point Lewis” lost its association with the expedition not only because of the delayed publication of the explorers’ journals but also because the exact location of the promontory could not be pinpointed. Early historians, unfamiliar with the Pacific Northwest, presumed that Clark was referring to either today’s North Head, Leadbetter Point, or Cape Shoalwater when he named a geographical feature on the seacoast for Lewis. In 1903, Reuben Gold Thwaites discovered Clark’s lost route maps. This additional information aided later scholars in the identification of geographical features noted by the explorers. When attempting to identify the topographical location of “Point Lewis,” the original expeditionary documentation must be compared with today’s topography. An understanding of late-18th-century maritime terminology also helps in determining the features named by the explorers.

Confusion occurs around the double meaning of the word “point,” used by the captains in reference to some geographical features. In some instances they used the word to describe a particular place or position on a mountain—e.g., “Point of Clark’s view.” They also used “point” to describe a tapering tract of land extending into the ocean—e.g., Point Adams. The term “cape” was also used to define an extension of land jutting into the ocean. The term could be used to denote the encroachment of highlands upon the seacoast—e.g., Cape Disappointment—as well as to describe extensions of large, low-lying lands into the ocean—e.g., Cape Shoalwater. Both terms—“point” and “cape”—were used to describe the coastline’s contour by maritime navigators. These terms become important when trying to identify “Point Lewis” by deciphering the captains’ journals and researching their naming of geographical features.

Clark wrote three journal entries for November 19, 1805, the day he explored the Pacific Ocean coastline north of the Columbia River. It was
customary for the captains to write field notes that were later transcribed and expounded upon in manuscript form in their notebook journals. Clark’s field notes do not include the naming of “Point Lewis” during his exploration, but his extended journal entries do refer to “a Point of high land distant near 20 miles.” During the winter of 1805-06 at Fort Clatsop, Clark also compiled an “Estimated Distances” chart that included information on “Point Lewis” and verified his sighting. In winter quarters he constructed a composite map of the corps’ exploration that included a section of the coastline north of the mouth of the Columbia River and “Point Lewis.” Conclusions drawn here on the identification of “Point Lewis” are based on the corps’ original expeditionary documentation and its comparison with today’s topographical maps and geographical features.

At Fort Clatsop, Clark had time to contemplate his exploration and return

Figure 1 (left). William Clark’s bearings for sighting the landmark he named after his co-captain—a “Point of high land distant near 20 Miles.”

Figure 2 (below). Clark’s vantage point as determined by aligning geographical features with his compass bearings.
Lewis's favor. Clark's journal entries for November 19, 1805, delineate the route of exploration from Cape Disappointment along a four-mile walk on the seacoast. There is no indication from which elevated vantage point the distant “Point of high land” was first sighted. Clark described his exploration route as, “5 miles on a Direct line to the Commencement of a Sandy Coast which extended N. 10 degrees W. from the top of the hill above the Sand Shore to a Point of high land distant near 20 Miles.” From the highlands above the beach he used the next distant eminence to take his compass bearings. Distant mountains can be seen from today's North Head if weather conditions cooperate. These mountains are the “Point of high land” Clark observed along the distant coastline.

Other journal keepers on the sojourn do not report any more insightful information pertaining to the location of “Point Lewis” but do corroborate the weather conditions: “cloudy a light Sprinkling of rain.” This is typical of November weather on the Pacific Northwest coast. Such weather limits visibility at sea level. In order for Clark to have observed the distant geographical features, weather conditions must have cleared—a common occurrence the morning following a storm on the coast.

Today, from an elevated position on North Head, the mountains, 35 miles in the distance, can be observed in the Northwest, weather permitting. Like Clark's observation, the extent of Willapa Bay is difficult to make out from this vantage point, below the tree line and only 100 feet above the ocean. Distant geography disappears from sight below the horizon; the curve of the earth's surface blocks the view of the distant sea level bay. Cape Shoalwater, 30 miles north of Willapa Bay and below the optical horizon, cannot be seen from the elevated vantage point. The National Geodetic Survey database records 18.87 feet elevation for the vertical control point (benchmark elevation) of Cape Shoalwater. The low coastline to Leadbetter Point is also hidden below the distant horizon; about 18 miles is the extent of visible sea level geography from this height. The optical horizon formula used was $D = h^2/(1+2r/h)$, where $D$ is distance to optical horizon, $h$ is height and $r$ is radius of the earth (8,600 miles). However, the mountains, with their 450-foot elevation, are visible 35 miles away.

Clark's map for the seacoast north of the Columbia River depicts what he observed and does not include a large bay on the seacoast; only a river discharging into the ocean. What is today known as Willapa Bay is described as “low pondy country, many places open with small ponds.” However, he does represent on his map two prominent coastline features extending into the ocean—“Point Lewis” and Cape Shoalwater.

The distant “Point of high land” that he observed and named “Point Lewis” is depicted on his map as highlands approaching the seashore. At this point the discrepancy between Clark's map and the actual geography begins, mostly the result of incomplete and inadequate intelligence gathering. Clark does not give an indication of his place name source for Cape Shoalwater, the second cape on his map. Obviously, he used British topographical information collected by Lewis for the expedition. John Meares had named the coastline feature in 1788 when he explored the coast and also named Cape Disappointment. He used “shoalwater,” a descriptive term identifying large deposits of sand that make the ocean shallow, to name the cape and its adjoining bay. Both underwent several name changes before being standardized to their present place names, Cape Shoalwater and Willapa Bay.

Clark's information for the depiction of Cape Shoalwater on his map was obtained from questioning Indians about geography he himself had not explored. His “Estimated Distances” chart ends with the clarification, “Note. 50 miles of the above from the information of Indians.” He recorded that Cape Shoalwater was 21 miles north of “Point Lewis” and that “Grays Bay” (today's Grays Harbor) was an additional 19 miles beyond that. Clark's map leaves a concise rendering of his misunderstanding of the coastal geography. The captains did not engage in speculative creation of geography, but they often misunderstood the information they obtained from the Indians.

The discrepancy between Clark's cartography and modern topographical maps resulted, in part, from a common problem for the explorers. The corps traveled in the Pacific Northwest without the aid of translators through areas where various American Indian linguistic groups spoke many different dialects. Their charts were relatively accurate when the captains themselves collected the information. However, there are several examples of incorrect geographical information derived from
Aerial photograph showing part of the coastline of Cape Disappointment, including North Head (left center).

the misinterpretation of information that Indians tried to convey. The absence of Willapa Bay and the inclusion of a second cape on Clark’s map of the seacoast are examples of this misinterpretation. His conjectural map represents the elevated geography he could see in the distance, later expounded upon with information obtained from local Indians.

Including Euro-American topographical information on the corps’ route map of the seacoast was also hindered by incomplete intelligence gathered before the expedition left the East Coast. King’s Map of 1803 did not contain topographical information on either Cape Shoalwater or Willapa Bay. Vancouver had used “Whidbey’s Harbor” to identify today’s Grays Harbor, ignoring names given by both John Meares and Robert Gray. Captain Gray had called the bay “Bulfinch’s Harbor.” Clark identified geographical features on his map of the coastline by using Cape Shoalwater, a British place name, and adding his American place name, “Point Lewis.”

When selecting a prominent geographical feature to name for his co-captain, Clark was faced with the dilemma of having a distant “Point of high land” as the only significant landmark at hand. From his elevated vantage point the panoramic view of the long, sandy beach included the descending foothills of the Coastal Range where it approached the seashore. The eminence, a natural elevation from sea level devoid of a well-defined summit, paled in comparison with the grandeur of either Cape Disappointment or Tillamook Head. He knew that Cape Disappointment was an elevated circular volcanic knob guarding the Columbia River entrance that rose boldly some 150 feet above the ocean. Tillamook Head was a double-peaked, massive volcanic extrusion into the ocean that rose over 1,000 feet above the breakers. “Point Lewis” could only be bestowed on low foothills that he supposed descended to the seashore, similar to other highlands he was familiar with on the Pacific coastline to the south.

The ambiguity of Clark’s exact location on the “top of the hill above the sand shore” where he sighted the distant “Point of high land” has led to speculation about the location of “Point Lewis.” One wonders why Clark did not bequeath his particular friend’s name to the headlands from where he viewed the sandy beach and distant mountains. The exact location of Clark’s vantage point can be determined by using his two compass bearings from magnetic north and their alignment with geographical features he described (Figure 2).

Geomorphically similar to Cape Disappointment and “Clark’s Mountain,” the headlands—today’s North Head—command a striking panoramic vista of the Pacific seacoast. Sighting over today’s Leadbetter Point and Cape Shoalwater, he chose the most distant high point of land to name for his co-captain.

On the northern cliff of North Head, 100 feet above the ocean, Clark’s panoramic view can be seen today. An unobstructed view of Long Beach and the distant coastal mountain range is limited to a northern location on the cliff of North Head below the tree line. His dead reckoning of 20 miles to the eminence he observed and used for his compass bearing was short by some 15 miles. Seastrand Ridge is 4 miles inland from Cape Shoalwater’s bay shoreline, 30 miles from North Head, and 2 miles from the ocean’s coastline. The 1,000-foot North River Divide can, on a clear day, also be seen from Clark’s vantage point on North Head.

Cape Shoalwater, as observed by 18th-century maritime navigators, was like a giant sand dune extending the seacoast shoreline into the ocean. The differentiation between the naming of the low-lying sandy cape and the inland mountain ranges was not readily self-evident on most topographical representations of the area. Over time the naming of the two different geographical areas became fused as one entity, known today as Cape Shoalwater. The present naming of the cape represents the survival of names established during the British dominance of the Pacific Northwest fur trading period. Many more geographical features with place names of American and Native American derivations have been included on modern maps of the cape. Unfortunately, there are no references on today’s maps to the “Point of high land” named for Captain Lewis of the Corps of Discovery.

Retired veterinarian Allen “Doc” Wesselius is a member of the Lewis and Clark Heritage Foundation, president of the foundation’s Washington chapter, and a longtime enthusiast of the Corps of Discovery and Pacific Northwest history.

COLUMBIA 10 WINTER 2004-05
THE FIRST DECADE of the 20th century witnessed two major world's fairs or "expositions" in the Pacific Northwest. In 1905 the Lewis & Clark Centennial Exposition was held in Portland June 1 to October 15, 1905, and the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition in Seattle from June 1 to October 16, 1909. These expositions provided the perfect opportunity for "boosters" to sing the praises of their city or county. Hundreds of pamphlets and brochures were printed in large quantities and distributed widely at the fairs. Silk ribbons, such as those illustrated here for three eastern Washington counties, were worn by representatives working in booths or county buildings.
An Unlikely Champion

Jefferson Davis and the Pacific Northwest

For most people the phrase, "Jefferson Davis and the Pacific Northwest," probably sounds like the ultimate historical paradox, yet throughout his long career of public service as congressman, senator, secretary of war, and closest advisor to President Franklin Pierce, matters concerning the Northwest commanded his close attention. Davis's role as president of the Confederate States of America has overshadowed his earlier efforts on behalf of the United States. His antebellum years have been addressed largely in terms of his views on constitutional authority and the issues leading to the Civil War, largely eclipsing his part in other events of historical consequence. Thus, few historians have fully researched Jefferson Davis's significant role in the American West and, particularly, the Pacific Northwest.

In 1818, Great Britain and the United States agreed to joint occupation of the Oregon Country, with "free and open" access to both countries for 10 years. In 1827 the treaty was renewed for an indefinite period with the provision that either side could terminate the agreement after a one-year notice. News of the Wilkes expedition in the influential Washington Globe in 1843 created interest in the remote Oregon Country and resulted in the formation of the "Friends of Oregon," a small group of Congressman devoted to securing the region for the United States. Increasing American emigration led to appeals for the acquisition of Oregon.

The primary issue in the presidential campaign of 1844 was the annexation of Texas. Abolitionist interests, led by John Quincy Adams, had twice blocked the annexation, claiming that the object of the South was "to add new weight to her end of the lever." Many northern Democrats were uneasy about the spread of slavery and possible war with Mexico, which had not yet recognized Texas' independence. The Democratic Party's platform committee believed that calling for the acquisition of Oregon would dilute the slavery issue and neutralize the admission of Texas. Linking Oregon to Texas made expansion a national rather than a sectional objective, thereby accommodating expansionist Democrats throughout the country. The Democratic platform of 1844 contained the following provision:

That our title to the whole of the Territory of Oregon is clear and unquestionable; that no portion of the same ought to be ceded to England or to any other power, and that the reoccupation of Oregon and the reannexation of Texas, at the earliest practicable period, are great American measures, which this convention recommends to the cordial support of the democracy of the Union."
The party's nominee, James K. Polk, was an enthusiastic expansionist, campaigning on the slogan, "The Reoccupation of Oregon and the Reannexation of Texas."

Both as a Democratic elector from Mississippi and a strong supporter of the party platform, Jefferson Davis canvassed the state on behalf of the Polk-Dallas ticket. As a Democrat and a Southerner, Davis had always equated the addition of territory with advancing the national interest, maintaining, "The annexation of the republic of Texas to our Union is another point of vital importance, and demanding, by every consideration, prompt action."

James K. Polk's election represented a victory for those with expansionist sentiments. Although the Oregon issue received far less attention than Texas during the campaign, asserting the American claim to Oregon was now the official policy of the new administration. President Polk, in his March 1845 inaugural speech, declared it his "...duty to assert and maintain by all constitutional means the right of the United States to that portion of our territory which lies beyond the Rocky Mountains. Our title to the country of the Oregon is 'clear and unquestionable...."

Fully embracing the doctrine of Manifest Destiny, Davis ran for Congress on an expansionist platform. He referred to Oregon in several campaign speeches, advocating the policy of "extending the jurisdiction of this government over the territory of Oregon and preventing England from obtaining a foothold in any portion of it."

Congressman Davis delivered his first major speech before the House of Representatives in February 1846, addressing in detail the "Oregon Question." Now supporting the compromise offer of the 49th parallel, he appealed for the extension of national laws over American citizens in the Northwest. "American hearts have gone over the mountains, and American laws should follow." While abolitionists saw Oregon as "the weight to balance Texas," Davis's interest was more national in scope. "The streams that rise in the West flow on and are accumulated into the rivers of the South; they bear the products of one to the other, and bind the interests of the whole indissolubly together." Believing the American claim to Oregon would be strengthened by further migration, he declared, "It is the onward progress of our people towards the Pacific,...and on the banks of which...the pioneer will sit down to weep that there are no more forests to subdue."

Shortly thereafter Davis, along with a House majority, voted to terminate joint occupation with Great Britain.

During the Oregon debate Congress turned to an issue Davis considered crucial—strengthening the United States' position in Oregon. President Polk had requested "that an adequate force of mounted riflemen be raised to guard and protect" the route to Oregon. Congressman Davis spoke on behalf of a House bill providing for two such regiments, as well as a Senate bill creating a single regiment of mounted riflemen and a line of fortifications. He urged regular mail service to Oregon as well, considering it "one of the great objects to be accomplished in connexion with that territory."

Shortly before Davis resigned from the House to serve as a volunteer officer in the Mexican War, a compromise treaty was signed in June 1846 dividing Oregon at the 49th parallel. Ultimately, the compromise position Davis supported prevailed, and "54-40 or Fight" became "49 and be grateful."

In July 1846, as he prepared for his departure to assume command of the First Mississippi Volunteer Regiment in Mexico, Davis discussed the resolution of the Oregon boundary dispute, "A few years will satisfy our people that we have obtained nearly all which would have been valuable to us." He also commented on his support for railroad construction, envisioning "...a chain like a system of nerves to couple our
Following victory at the Battle of Buena Vista, Colonel Davis returned home in 1847 a nationally famous war hero. Still suffering from a wound sustained in battle, he accepted a Senate appointment to fill a vacant seat and an assignment to the Military Affairs Committee, and was elected by the Mississippi legislature the following year. His appointment to the chairmanship of the Military Affairs Committee in December 1848—an exceptional honor for a junior senator—made him a national political figure.

A bill introduced in January 1849 called for aiding in the construction of a proposed railroad across the Isthmus of Panama. Chairman Davis observed that the allocation of resources would be better directed toward construction of a United States railroad, as “the connection with our remote possessions should be as direct as possible.” One of the first in government to realize the potential of Asian trade, he predicted “our citizens to find themselves on the shores of the Pacific a powerful people, having an extensive commerce with Asia.” The senator also spoke to the means necessary to create and sustain a continental nation. “If those on the Pacific coast are to be bound permanently to this Union, if it is to be made their interest, in all time to come, to remain a portion of the United States, then I say it is necessary that a ready and accessible means of communication should be afforded them.”

To aid in “recruitment and retention,” Davis offered an amendment to increase the pay of soldiers in Oregon, citing the “extravagantly high…price of every species of supplies” as well as the demand for labor in the sparsely populated Oregon Territory. A soldier “who is serving at $7 a month may desert his post, throw down his musket, and take up a shovel or a pick and earn $7 a day.”

A bill entitled, “An act to create the office of surveyor general of the public lands in Oregon, and to provide for the survey, and to make donations to settlers of the public lands,” was introduced in September 1850. Senator Davis offered an amendment authorizing the president to designate a portion of the public lands for “forts, magazines, arsenals, dock-yards, and other needful public uses.” Having studied recent surveys of the Pacific coastline that examined points of defense for future military sites, Davis stressed the need to fortify the mouth of the Columbia River, urging that land be reserved at Cape Disappointment on the north and Point Adams on the south. President Fillmore later signed an executive order reserving these sites for military use.

Calling for the “highest degree of accuracy,” Davis moved that all surveys, particularly those in Oregon, be made by the new geodetic method (taking into account the curvature of the earth). Due to its “mountainous and mineral character,” there “never was a country where it was more necessary than in Oregon and California.”

Davis campaigned for his close friend Franklin Pierce in the election of 1852 and only reluctantly agreed to accept a cabinet post as head of the War Department. On March 4, 1853, two days after the creation of Washington Territory, Franklin Pierce was sworn in as president. Secretary Davis named a Coast Survey officer, First Lieutenant Isaac Ingalls Stevens, incipient governor of Washington Territory, to be head of the northern route of the Pacific railroad reconnaissance. Shortly after his appointment, Stevens requested Brevet Captain George B. McClellan as “principal officer” on the survey team.

Secretary Davis’s April 8, 1853, orders to “His Excellency Isaac I. Stevens, Governor of the Territory of Washington,” are similar to those given others placed in command of each survey. They reveal the breadth and complexities of the railroad explorations as well as their considerable role in the “Great Reconnaissance”:

The Pacific railway surveying expeditions resulted in the first comprehensive map of the American West, produced by soldier-explorer Lieutenant G. K. Warren by order of Secretary of War Jefferson Davis. Shown below is the map’s title section.
Great attention will be given to the geography and meteorology, generally, of the whole intermediate region; the seasons and character of its freshets, the quantities and continuance of its rains and snows, especially in the mountain ranges; to its geology, in arid regions, keeping particularly in view the bringing of water to the surface by means of Artesian wells, its botany, natural history, agricultural and mineral resources, the location, numbers, history, traditions and customs of its Indian tribes, and such other facts as shall tend to develop the character of that portion of our national domain, and supply all the facts which enter into the solution of the particular problem of a railroad.

The wealth of natural history and scientific data produced by the railroad expeditions was added to the Smithsonian’s collections. Congressman Davis had been instrumental in the founding of that institution in 1846 as a member of the House Select Committee, which determined the disposition of the Smithson trust, and was an active member of the Smithsonian’s board of regents until his resignation from the Senate.

The expedition between “St. Paul’s and Puget’s Sound” was the first railroad survey team organized by Secretary Davis to determine, as directed by Congress, “the most practicable and economical route from the Mississippi River to the Pacific Ocean.” Some years later, at the height of the railway debate in the late 1850s, one senator accused Davis of attempting to “belittle” northern lines and “magnifying” the extreme southern line. Davis countered that he knew the northern line was “the most difficult survey and therefore should have the largest amount of time.” He had considered Stevens “specially qualified” to head the party given his distinguished service in the Corps of Topographical Engineers and the Coast Survey. At his direction the Stevens party had “a number of military officers [and men] not furnished to any other expedition” and had been allotted “a larger sum than was given to any other route.” One item Davis neglected to mention in his defense: Stevens’s was the only party assigned a musician.

Following Davis’s departure from the Pierce cabinet, sectional disputes erupted over selection of the nation’s first continental railroad route. Then-senator Davis recommended that a private contractor select the route. Testifying before Congress in 1859, Davis was “confident that [the extreme southern route] would be the location adopted by contractors who invested their own money in the enterprise.” Speculating as to the possible effects of a southern rail line, he averred, “If the railroad ran across the continent on that parallel [the 32d] it would bring those hordes of carpet-bag men,... I do not believe that would be any advantage to our section. We [the South] prefer the more slowly progressing and more stable population that would come over the wagon road.”

Davis thought highly of the spendthrift Stevens who sometimes tried the secretary’s patience with additional requests for time and funds. After describing the proposed use of a $40,000 appropriation, Secretary Davis urged “most rigid care” in using government funds and cautioned against requesting too much from government bureaus. Ultimately, the additional expenditure may have been validated—the northern survey produced the most thorough and comprehensive of all reports submitted.

Governor Stevens combined an engineer’s pragmatism with a sense of history when he spoke of his appreciation for the “old Roman principle of conquering a country by the roads it built.” His superior recognized the value of road construction as well. In a May 9, 1853, letter to McClellan, Secretary Davis delivered instructions for the construction of a military road from “Walla-Walla to Steilacomb, Puget’s Sound.... It is important that this road should be opened in season for the fall emigration, you will therefore use every exertion to do so.... In any event, you will so arrange your operations as, first, to secure a practicable wagon road between the extremities of the road;... always endeavoring to make the whole road a good one.”

Many years later McClellan spoke highly of his former boss and subsequent adversary. His son reported him as saying, “Colonel Davis was a man of extraordinary ability. As an executive officer he was remarkable. He was the best Secretary of War—and I use best in its widest sense—I have ever had anything to do with.”

Sometimes referred to as “the Favorite,” Secretary Davis had great influence within the Pierce Administration. During
a northeast speaking tour in July 1853 the new war secretary made national news when he announced administration support for a government-sponsored Pacific railroad. According to the influential Washington Union, it “caused a moving of the political waters, where before the stillness and unbroken solitude of the Dead Sea reigned supreme.” That federal support for this “great national work” had now been “first avowed by the most straight-laced constructionist member of his [President Pierce’s] cabinet has given to it an interest, and excited a degree of remark, which but few questions of the present day have done.”

The secretary spoke of how a continental railroad could unite an otherwise divided country. “[It would] give to the people on opposite sides of snow-covered mountains a common interest, a common feeling and, with their own consent… unite under one government all countries which the hand of nature had divided by barriers to ruder man commercially impassable.” Extolling the fact that most of the country [with the exception of the Far West] was now “tied by lightning,” he was troubled that “our Pacific possessions would be at the mercy of a powerful enemy in time of war…. A railroad extending from the valley of the Mississippi to the Pacific is the only means by which that part of our possessions can be defended and made secure.” Davis lauded the expanding trade between the United States and Asia and looked forward to seeing railroad cars carrying “Pennsylvania iron… creeping in a long serpentine track to the slopes of the Pacific.”

Explorations of all types had received Davis’ support from the time he entered public life. He had long taken an interest in the Coast Survey and naval explorations, as well as the Corps of Topographical Engineers, opposing attempts to reduce their funding and securing appropriations for the purchase of new equipment and instruments when requested.

The West had always been one of Davis’s chief interests and remained so during his tenure at the War Department. He had studied reports of the explorations of Lewis and Clark and Colonel Stephen Long; while appreciating their value, he realized that much more reconnaissance was still needed throughout the remote and largely uncharted West. He urged additional funding for western exploration in his first War Department report in 1853, as it was “so necessary to the government, and of such essential advantage to the population now spreading itself over those territories.” Additional funds were forthcoming, and in early 1855 the secretary organized reconnaissance missions between San Francisco and the Columbia River, with the objective of connecting California to Oregon and Washington. Two routes were explored, one east and one west of the Cascades; Davis evaluated the pros and cons of each in his 1856 report:

A practicable although difficult pass was examined through the Cascade range near Diamond Peak, by which the road can reach the Willamette valley; the route through which to the Columbia is very favorable to the construction of a railroad. The route west of the Cascade range is through the Willamette, Umpqua, Rogue River, and Shasta valleys. It proved to be more favorable than had been anticipated, . . . traversing for nearly the whole distance a fertile and inhabited region.

These explorations showed the obscure country between California and Washington Territory to be more hospitable than had been assumed and served to underscore its agricultural potential. Like most of the railroad surveys, it showed the West to be more attractive in terms of climate and resources than previously thought, thus stimulating greater interest in the remote and misconstrued “Great American Desert.”

In addition to the cross-continent railroad explorations, the secretary directed that further topographical surveys be conducted of the Pacific Coast and inland regions. Orders to General John E. Wool, commander of the Department of the Pacific, included the following: “Topographical information respecting the interior of the country being of great importance, and as yet extremely imperfect, you will cause reconnaissances to be made in connection with all military expeditions.”

Speaking before the Senate in 1859, Davis noted that the West Coast surveys had demonstrated that “we could construct a railroad all along the coast of the Pacific, without which I say its defense will never be complete. If we take into consideration the character of the country,… we are struck at once with the necessity of inland communication to connect the defenses of south with north California, and the defenses of California with those of Oregon and Washington.”

Despite ongoing opposition to federal railroad support from the strict constructionist “ultras” in Congress, Jefferson Davis remained a tireless and eloquent champion for his vision of uniting America’s enormous continental landmass:

Thus inevitably do we reach the conclusion that mountains divide a people and rivers unite them…. Then the question presents itself; shall we share the fate which history points to all nations which preceded us? Shall we allow our territory to be divided? Shall the United States commence her downward step by losing the rich possessions she now holds on the Pacific as the inevitable consequence of that separation which mountains and deserts demand, or shall we use the power which science and art and the progress of civilization have conferred upon man, overcome the physical obstacles, bind the two parts together, and hold this country one and indivisible forever?
Details from the G. K. Warren map showing the Missouri River drainage (top) and the Snake and Columbia River drainages (bottom). Topography, Indian tribal domains, and exploring party routes are incorporated into the map.
Just as Davis considered a Pacific railroad essential for West Coast defense against the “cupidity and grasping ambition of the great powers of Europe,” he viewed coastal defenses as indispensable as well, believing advances in arms technology and steam-powered warships increased their importance. The strategic importance of the Columbia River did not escape Davis’s scrutiny, as indicated in his War Department report of 1855:

The physical geography of the vast region drained by the Columbia river indicates that at some day a great city must arise at the point which shall become its commercial entrepôt. Attention has been heretofore called to the necessity of fortifying the entrance to the Columbia river, and I would again commend it to attention and favorable consideration.

His appeal was eventually acted on—during the Civil War—due to the continuing dispute with Great Britain as to possession of San Juan Island and to thwart British naval forces based at Vancouver Island should they have entered the war in support of the South.

In accordance with taking “all necessary precautions for the security of our distant territory,” Secretary Davis recommended construction of Vancouver Arsenal as well as a military depot to serve both territories at Scottsburg, Oregon. Recognizing the military challenges resulting from America’s emergence as a continental nation, Davis had long advocated enlarging the army on the grounds that the “frontier required constant protection.” With the creation of four new regiments in 1855, the secretary also won pay increases for enlisted men and officers, curtailing desertions and resignations and increasing enlistments. Taking into account the tactics of Native warfare, he expanded and reorganized the system of fortifications and troop deployments along the Oregon Trail to “give the needful protection to emigrants during the season of their transit.”

Despite the additional regiments, forces were spread thin throughout the vast American frontier. Yet Davis was responsive to Northwest contingencies, deploying the newly organized Ninth Infantry Regiment to Fort Vancouver and thus providing essential reinforcements at a time of increasing “Indian difficulties.” The captain and crew of a certain Puget Sound revenue cutter were most accommodating to settlers in times of “distressing conditions”—its name was the Jefferson Davis.

All Northwest requests received the secretary’s consideration; he endorsed compensation for local volunteer troops and authorized improvements and additions to existing military posts along with establishing new installations throughout the region. Fort Bellingham was among them, built in response to a memorial from the Washington Territorial Legislature requesting a military presence at Bellingham Bay. Davis also approved military escorts for road crews where needed, as well as for the survey team of the newly organized Northwest Boundary Commission.

Davis also spoke to the intermittent alliances between the British owned and operated Hudson’s Bay Company and certain Indians against American settlers, suggesting the possibility of dislodging Hudson’s Bay personnel from the area in his 1856 report:

The possessory rights secured to the Hudson’s Bay and Puget’s Sound [Puget Sound Agricultural Company, HBC subsidiary] companies leave, in this portion of our Territory, traders and others who possess great influence over the Indian tribes, but owe no allegiance to the United States... Such persons cannot be expected to pursue any other course than that which would preserve to them the trade and good will of the Indians... In this connexion, it may not be inappropriate to suggest the propriety of speedily extinguishing such possessory rights.

Just as the railroad surveys became the basis for many of the rail lines later built, including the Northern Pacific, many of the roads and highways in use in the Northwest today and throughout the United States are descendants of the pioneering roads championed by Jefferson Davis. The Topographical Engineers were responsible for wagon road construction, railroad reconnaissance, and topographical exploration, reporting directly to the secretary of war. Understanding the complementary nature of their duties, Davis worked closely with the “Topogs,” establishing the Pacific Wagon Roads Office to supervise the various new federal road projects in Washington and Oregon territories. The war secretary’s views on road construction sometimes placed him at odds with officers in the field, however—“that the entire road way should be improved and made practicable, and not a part to be made perfect at the expense of other parts.”

It was “desirable that the construction of the military roads in Oregon and Washington Territories... should be commenced as soon as practicable.” Thus read instructions to Major Hartman Bache from the secretary of war, dated May 14, 1855, following his appointment to the newly created post as superintendent of military roads and lighthouses in the Department of the Pacific. Davis had recommended a $30,000 allocation for construction of a military road from “Astoria to Salem, in the Territory of Oregon.” With an appreciation of human nature, he advised Major Bache, “It is generally desirable that the contracts should be taken by persons residing near the line of the road, or who are otherwise personally interested in its completion.”

Secretary Davis later oversaw construction of two additional Oregon roads extending from the Rogue River valley to Scottsburg. Congress made an appropriation of $25,000 for a road from the “Dalles of the Columbia to Columbia city barracks [Fort Vancouver],” and a $30,000 appropriation for a road from:

Columbia city barracks to Fort Steilacoom, on Puget Sound, both in Washington Territory... The general course of these
roads is evidently indicated by the Columbia and Cowlitz rivers. The first object will be to secure roads practicable for the passage of wagons throughout, between the points indicated, and then to devote the remainder of the appropriations to the improvement of the most difficult and the least durable portions of the road.

Although all roads were to be “constructed under the direction of the secretary of war,” Davis considered efficiency the top priority. The law required War Department approval of all contracts entered into, but the secretary directed that officers in charge not wait for his authorization as the delay “would probably postpone their [the roads’] completion for a year ... Immediately upon their [contracts] being entered into ... proceed to their execution as though approved.”

On Davis’s recommendation, Congress appropriated $35,000 in 1857 to construct a road from Fort Steilacoom to Bellingham Bay where a site for a new army post had recently been selected. Captain George Pickett led the detachment deployed to Fort Bellingham where he participated in road-building operations between the fort and Whatcom Bay.

On his final day in office, March 4, 1857, President Pierce assured his war secretary and chief advisor of his considerable role in the Pierce administration, declaring he had “been strength and solace to me for four anxious years and never failed me.” Davis returned to the Senate the same day and was immediately named chairman of the Military Affairs Committee—an unprecedented tribute to his earlier handling of the post and his colleagues’ “appreciation of the ability and propriety with which he discharged all the duties of the Secretary of War.”

Poor health, in some instances resulting from military service, plagued Davis throughout his adult life. Despite numerous ailments, including neuralgia and eye disease that made it difficult for him to read and write, he resolutely continued in his duties as a public servant.
Undoubtedly aware of Davis’s continuing influence as a nationally respected voice on military matters, territorial delegate Isaac Stevens continued to direct funding requests to the senator rather than to his successor at the War Department. In a May 1858 letter Stevens urged an amendment to the Army Appropriations Bill for completion of various roads in Washington Territory: $15,000 for Fort Steilacoom-Fort Vancouver, to be utilized between Cowlitz Landing and Monticello; $60,000 for Fort Vancouver-Fort Dalles, chiefly for planking the Portage Road, and $10,000 for Fort Steilacoom-Fort Walla Walla. Although they did not endorse the new road projects proposed by Stevens, the senator and the Military Affairs Committee recommended all appropriations requested to complete the roads in progress as well as compensate settlers for their efforts in clearing the Fort Steilacoom-Fort Walla Walla Road some years earlier. Two years later, in 1860, Senator Davis recommended an additional $10,000 allocation to be applied toward the section between Cowlitz Landing and Monticello along the Fort Steilacoom-Fort Vancouver Road.

The initial $30,000 appropriated for construction of the Astoria-Salem Road in 1855 proved inadequate to complete the project. An additional $30,000 requested to complete the road had been delayed by the strict constructionist bloc in the House, as well as sectional interests, with a number of congressmen arguing that the federal government had provided ample resources to complete the road. When the bill for supplementary funding to complete the Astoria-Salem Road finally reached the Senate in June 1858, the senior senator from Mississippi and national spokesman for the southern position spoke on behalf of its passage. "The money [previously appropriated] only sufficed to make it a good wagon road for part of the way, and for the rest of the route only a bridle path... This road is... deemed of great importance for military and territorial purposes, whether we look to defense against the Indians or a foreign foe on the exterior." The Senate immediately approved the appropriation, and the bill was signed at the White House two days later.

Another measure advocated by Davis at this time concerned what came to be known as the Mullan Road, which was instrumental in opening eastern Washington, Idaho, and western Montana to settlement and commercial development during the mining boom of the 1860s. In February 1859 Davis offered an amendment for a $100,000 allocation to construct a military road from Fort Benton to Walla Walla. Stating he had supported the road as war secretary, "the necessity for it... has increased" since the initial "entirely inadequate" appropriation of $30,000 while he was at the War Office. Again, Jefferson Davis urged funding for a Northwest military road:

[The road] is needful in time of peace—it would be more needful in time of war—to have some overland communication
between the head of navigation of the Missouri and the head of navigation of the Columbia rivers, ... it will facilitate the action of the Government ... in its communication with the State of Oregon and the Territory of Washington, and will be a provision for any such necessity as may arise in the event of a war with some foreign power ... it would be altogether impossible to communicate, in time of war, with San Francisco and the Columbia River by any of the means we now have.

Construction began that spring; the following year Senator Davis recommended an additional $100,000 allotment to complete the Mullan Road.

Pacific mail service—serving both foreign and domestic ports—had long been a priority for Davis. In the June 1858 debates on the Steamer Appropriations Bill, he advocated the purchase of additional craft to transport Pacific mail, noting the correlation between mail service, expanding commerce, and national ascendance, and providing an insight into America's relationship with the superpower of the era:

I should most favor, in the establishment of our mail lines, ports on our own continent, ports on the Spanish main and the southern Pacific, where we should open up a commerce beneficial to the United States, and acquire a political power which we have allowed to be transferred to Great Britain, that Government establishing mail lines to all those points where diplomatic relations are important to her as well as to us.

As war secretary, Davis had arranged a collaborative purchase between the Post Office and War Department of a mail steamer to serve Puget Sound where mail had previously been delivered from Astoria by canoe and horseback. He later supported a bill establishing regular mail service to various points on the sound as well.

By 1859 Congress was increasingly preoccupied with the contentious issues over slavery that led to the secession of the southern states and eventual Civil War, becoming inattentive to concerns on the remote Pacific Coast. Jefferson Davis's continued support for Northwest projects made their funding possible as his influence and esteem endured despite rising sectional conflicts. During deliberations on the Army Appropriations Bill in February a colleague on the Military Affairs Committee remarked, “I dislike very much to come in competition with anything the Senator from Mississippi desires....”

Although he returned to the Senate as Mississippi's representative, Davis's interest in and support of the Pacific Northwest never waned. Archibald Campbell, head of the Northwest Boundary Commission, thanked the senator for obtaining funding to complete the boundary survey between Washington Territory and Canada. In a letter from “Camp Simiahmoo,” dated May 3, 1859—six weeks prior to the San Juan pig incident—Campbell extended his “sincere thanks for your successful effort to carry through Congress the appropriation for the boundary survey in accordance with the estimate submitted to the State Department.” Campbell expressed further appreciation for Davis's efforts in increasing the appropriation from $100,000 to $150,000. “Governor Stevens, who has faithfully kept me informed of the progress of the appropriation, wrote me that you being on the Conference Committee carried it through.”

In an earlier letter of November 1858, again from “Camp Simiahmoo, Washn Terr...”, Archibald Campbell discussed the politics of the day. As Davis's chief clerk at the War Department, Campbell, a New Yorker, had come to know Jefferson Davis well. “The course you have always pursued has been so decided and straight forward—and so free from ambiguity that there is no mistaking it.... Among all the prominent men before the country you have the highest reputation for decision of character and unflinching will....”

In considering presidential prospects, Campbell hoped “public opinion may fix upon Jefferson Davis as the man for the times,” as the current hopefuls consist of “men who would make very poor constables.” Discussing the political aspirations of Washington Territory's governor, LaFayette McMullen, he averred, “I should not be surprised to see Gov. McMullen on the track—Now that he is divorced from his old wife, taken to his bosom when he was a sturdy teamster—and has gotten a new wife wedded to him in his high position of Governor of Wash Terr—his ambition may take a high flight....”

In March 1860, less than a year before resigning the Senate when Mississippi seceded from the Union, Senator Davis introduced an amendment calling for $100,000 to construct a fortification at Point Roberts. Despite several years' distance from the War Department, he recalled the regional situation in detail, citing the need for defense against Haida raids. Defense against foreign attack remained a concern as well, particularly given the British anchorage at "Vancouver's Island" and the ongoing dispute as to possession of San Juan Island. Although voicing the hope this "will be but the beginning of a system of defense of Puget Sound and the entrance to the Columbia River," the amendment was not agreed to—one of the few times the Military Affairs Committee failed to yield to Davis's recommendation in support of the Pacific Northwest.

No less a figure than former Oregon senator Mark Hatfield, alluding to these contributions to American history prior to the Civil War, introduced a resolution in 1977 calling for the restoration of Davis's United States citizenship. Hatfield asserted that Davis had been “an honorable public servant” whose salutary accomplishments, like those recounted here, had been thrown into obscurity by "a vindictive conqueror."
Naming Features
Along the Railroad
and Road Surveys
in the Northern
Rockies

BY RONALD E. GRIM AND
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Have you ever considered how important names are in every culture? Especially significant are the words assigned to such assorted landscape features as lakes, streams, hills, mountains, streets, and settlements. Once attached, they provide people with the means of navigating from point to point. In addition, from a historical perspective, they provide evidence documenting events that took place in the past. In some cases they show us what existed at a place before time took its toll on the landscape. A name tells us something about the people who gave a place its identity, and in a few cases names honor those who contributed to the region’s development.

Here we examine names placed on a frontier transportation system—the Mullan Road. Built in 1859-62 under the leadership of a young military officer—Lieutenant John Mullan—the road connected Fort Walla Walla and Fort Benton on opposite sides of the Rocky Mountains, some 624 miles apart. The historical background that resulted in the road’s construction and the text and cartographic records that document the naming process make this mid-19th-century project most interesting.

Aside from discovering the region’s geographic and economic potential, 19th-century American explorers were also obsessed with finding a transcontinental connection between the oceans. Lewis and Clark sought but failed to find a “Northwest Passage.” Instead, the people of their young nation were introduced to the vast geographic area encompassed by the Louisiana Purchase. As the century progressed the nation began to realize the region’s potential for both settlement and economic development.

By the 1840s the values and objectives associated with the slogan, “Manifest Destiny,” had captured the public’s imagination. In consequence, over 200,000 settlers moved westward to pursue the dream of a better life. The exodus was further promoted by the discovery of gold in California. The relocation of a large number of people to the western coastal regions established a reason for the nation to create a functional east-west connection. The principal focus of this effort was the railroad.

But where was the railroad to be built? To answer this question Congress enacted and funded the Pacific railroad surveys in the early 1850s. The northernmost of these, directed by Isaac Stevens, was established to find a good railroad route along the Missouri River through the northern Rockies, and finally to connect with major settlements in Oregon and Washington territories following the course of the Columbia River and its tributaries. In the course of this survey he made many new discoveries.

Stevens’s survey was significant in promoting an understanding of the region’s geography. Unfortunately, the survey did not establish the precise route nor the means to construct an east-west railway connection. Before any railroad could be built, other work needed to be done. First, Stevens had to negotiate treaties with the Indians so that settlers could move into the region and road construction could begin. Stevens accomplished this in 1855. Second, the actual location of an overland connection needed to be plotted.

**THE MULLAN ROAD**

This connection initially took the form of the military wagon road constructed between Fort Walla Walla, Washington Territory, and Fort Benton in Montana, but then a part of Nebraska Territory. This route became known as the Mullan
Road, the construction of which was the obsession and passion of Lieutenant John Mullan, who had served under Isaac Stevens during the 1853-54 northern Rockies survey. Mullan's goal was to select the route for and build a road that would eventually become the route followed by a transcontinental railroad. He had, in effect, adopted the goals of Stevens who introduced him to the need and potential for such a railroad.

John Mullan recorded the results of this road-building project in a final report that he submitted to the War Department in February 1863. The report, which was included with the published congressional documents issued by the 37th Congress, was accompanied by four large fold-out maps and ten lithographic landscape views based on sketches by Gustavus Sohon. The published text and maps provide an invaluable source of geographical information summarizing data gathered by the various military expeditions that traversed the northern Rockies during the 1850s. Many geographical features were mapped and identified using either Native American names, descriptive characteristics, or in some instances commemorative impulses honoring specific individuals or events.

From reading the text it is apparent that Mullan and his staff were not major name-givers. There are only sporadic examples of names bestowed on newly encountered features. For example, Mullan reported: “Crossing the Coeur d'Alene a mile above the mission we lose sight of the river till reaching the Four-Mile prairie, a point four miles beyond, and again lose sight of it until we reach a point we called the Ten Mile prairie.” Earlier he had made a similar observation, “We crossed these hills with moderate work, and at one fell upon another tributary of the Small Prickly Pear, which we called Hard Bed creek.” Obviously, these are descriptive names for relatively minor features.

There are also a fair number of places recorded in text and on maps that commemorate personnel involved in the Mullan Road and the earlier railroad surveys, although the actual commemorative naming or justification was rarely mentioned. For example, Mullan reported, “Our men were set to work erecting such log huts as our wants demanded, and to the camp, I gave the name of Cantonment Jordan.” Though he provided no explanation for this name, it is likely that he named it in gratitude for the assistance provided by Captain Thomas Jordan, who helped outfit the expedition. In the following example the justification for the naming of another camp was mentioned: “I started for the Missouri River on 23d of May 1862. Cantonment Wright, so called in honor of General Wright, a warm friend of our enterprise, was now abandoned.”

While both of these names referred to temporary, man-made features, other commemorative names were associated with physical features, including Mullan Pass for himself, the leader of the project; Stevens Peak for Isaac Stevens, the leader of the northern Pacific railroad survey and a leading advocate of the Mullan Road project; Sohon Pass for Gustavus Sohon, who served as guide, interpreter, and artist on both the Pacific railroad and Mullan Road surveys; and Weisner Peak for John Weisner, the astronomer on the Mullan Road survey. However, the actual naming of these features is not explained in the text.

The principal value of Mullan's report lies in the detailed and meticulous recording of place names that already existed, especially Native American names and names bestowed by prior explorers and settlers in the area. For example, in the area between Fort Walla Walla and Fort Taylor, Mullan recorded in his report:
The creeks found in this length of forty-eight miles are the Dry creek, eight miles from Walla-Walla; the Touchet, twenty-one miles; the Red creek, thirty miles; and the Touchan, forty miles. Already have each and all these valleys become the comfortable homes of the pioneer farmer and grazier, where the hard of industry, adding daily to the wealth and prosperity of the country, gives a new beauty, by the erection of school-houses and churches, those barometers of the intelligence and morality of a people.

He made a similar observation on an area east of the Bitterroot Mountains: “The 90 miles from the Bitter Root ferry to the Hell’s Gate ronde affords a good road.... Many beautifully situated agricultural tracts are found throughout the region. The principal of these are the Nine-Mile prairie, the Nemotet prairie, [and] the Skiotay....”

Consequently, the report becomes a valuable record of local place name usage during the 1850s.

**Latah/Hangman’s Creek**

One interesting example of the naming process for which Mullan’s report provides substantial documentation pertains to one of the most famous cases considered by both the Washington State Board and the United States Board on Geographic Names—that of Hangman’s Creek or Latah Creek. The event that the name Hangman’s Creek documents had occurred just prior to the commencement of the road-building project. Consequently, Mullan’s observations provide a commentary on a place name that was in transition, reflecting the tension of two cultures attempting to obtain or retain control of the landscape.

Prior to the Mullan Road survey we find only two instances where the Anglo culture recorded a name for this feature. Lewis and Clark, in their exploratory expedition of 1803-06, passed through this area and recorded the name as “Lautaw.” The other instance is Isaac Stevens’s Pacific railroad survey. On the three-part map covering Stevens’s entire route, the name of the stream is recorded as Camas Prairie Creek, spelled with a C, while the larger scale map showing only the area from Milk River to the crossing of the Columbia uses Kamas, spelled with a K.

Interestingly, Mullan’s report not only recorded these two names but also listed two more—Nedlwhauld Creek and Hangman’s Creek. Specifically, on the accompanying map showing the area from Fort Taylor to Coeur d’Alene Mission, which is based on surveys conducted in 1858 under the direction of Colonel George Wright, all four names appeared on the map—Camass Prairie, Lahtoo, Nedlwhauld, or Hangman’s Creek. As a foreshadowing of the modern-day place name controversy, this is one of the few instances on the Mullan Road maps in which multiple names are recorded for one location.

This multiplicity of names is further reflected in the textual report. The first mention of the stream was during the summer of 1859, with the primary emphasis on the name “Nedlwhauld,” and only mentioning the other names as variants. In his commentary for July 1859, Mullan first mentioned the stream in the following passage:

> It was a question with me whether we should follow the main valley of the Palouse or strike across the high prairie country and go by the way of the upper tributaries of this stream; by the former we pass to the south of the direct line to the Coeur d’Alene, near the Nedlwhauld, and by the latter to the north of the Pyramid butte.

In reporting the activities for several days following, he clarified the identification of this stream: “On the 14th of July... we found a good location for the road, requiring light work in places, for about sixteen and a half miles, where we reached the Lahtoo or Nedlwhauld creek, which empties into the Spokane.”

In addition, he explained the origins of the name Hangman’s:

> As the survey party left this area there were two further references to the stream as “Nedlwhauld.” It is fairly apparent from these references that during the early stages of the road-building project the preferred name of the stream was Nedlwhauld and the other three names were mentioned only as variants.

However, there was an obvious change by the end of the project. During the summers of 1861 and 1862, as Mullan retraced the route through this area, he referred to the stream as Hangman’s Creek as he did in his final “Itinerary of the Route” published at the end of the report. There was no mention of the other three names at this point. This was also the case on the comprehensive map.
CANTONMENT JORDAN.
This image shows Mullan, Sohon, and others working on maps in the main office building at Mullan's winter camp, 1859-60. An opening has been made in the roof to allow sunlight into the building and make map drafting easier.

Cantonment Stevens served as Mullan's base of operations for exploring the northern Rockies. While Isaac Stevens said that he built a camp for Mullan at Fort Owen, Mullan indicated on official maps that it was 12 miles farther south—perhaps near Hamilton, Montana.

This image was made by Sohon in 1858. It is possibly a scene of the Palouse or Spokane River or Hangman's Creek. The authors would appreciate hearing from anyone who can identify this location.

SHOWING THE ENTIRE ROUTE FROM FOR
WALLA WALLA TO FORT BENTON, WHICH
WAS PUBLISHED WITH THE FINAL REPORT IN
1863. AGAIN, THE STREAM WAS IDENTIFIED
ONLY AS HANGMAN'S CREEK.

SOHON PASS

Another example of the naming process is the designation associated with one of the most critical features encountered on the Mullan Road project—i.e., the pass selected to cross the Bitterroot Mountains. The original name—Sohon Pass—was readily accepted during the four-year construction phase and was widely used throughout much of the remainder of the 19th century. However, the name fell into disuse by the 1890s and was mistakenly renamed St. Regis de Borgia Pass, an associative name derived from the stream that heads in the vicinity of the pass. According to one source this name originated with the early missionary-explorer, Father Pierre Jean DeSmet. However, no map or diary evidence supports this view. DeSmet did travel through the region, and it is possible he named the river of the same name that empties into Clark's Fork at St. Regis, Montana. However, DeSmet made no mention of it in his 1851 manuscript map.

The location and identification of an easily accessible pass through the Bitterroot Mountains was extremely
important for the road-building project because the Bitterroots were seen by the early surveyors and explorers, notable among them Lewis and Clark, as one of the major obstacles in developing a transcontinental connection. In all probability, the military wagon road should have utilized a route at a lower elevation following the river, known today as Clarks Fork. Ironically, Mullan decided that this portion of the route posed a problem because of spring flooding. He further felt that a more northerly location would be subject to greater snowfall. Consequently, he favored a route farther south, choosing a corridor that utilized the Coeur d'Alene and St. Regis de Borgia rivers.

The two rivers were separated by a major ridge of the Bitterroots. Several passes were eventually discovered through the range, but the one originally identified as Sohon Pass was selected for wagon and pack train passage. The other pass, identified on this map as Stevens Pass but probably the one known today as Lookout Pass, was envisioned as the route to be followed by a railroad. However, because of its higher elevation, the survey party planned to construct a tunnel with a long gradient up the slopes of the ridge.

For approximately 50 years Sohon Pass was used for travel through the Bitterroots. It was eventually abandoned because an easier route was found through the mountains. The northern slope of Sohon Pass was characterized by switchbacks and steep grades, which made wagon or stagecoach travel difficult. The Northern Pacific Railroad did, in fact, construct a branch line more or less along the same path envisioned by Mullan's party. Much of the railroad followed the route of old U.S. Highway 10. Both routes utilized nearby Lookout Pass. The railroad company never did construct a tunnel through the ridge to ease its grade.

Today, passage through the Bitterroots has been eased by the construction of a fast, four-lane highway—Interstate 90. As travelers whisk up its slope they are unaware of their passage across the remains of the early wagon road. The railroad branch has been abandoned—a result of declining revenues from transporting timber and mining products into and out of the Coeur d'Alene valley and its famous mining district.

Gustavus Sohon, for whom the pass was originally named, was then a man of at least regional notoriety. In addition to the Pacific railroad and Mullan Road surveys, Sohon was attached to Stevens's treaty expedition of 1855 and Colonel Wright's campaign of 1858 on the Columbia Plateau. Sohon's assignments in these different endeavors were diverse. He was responsible for exploring the Coeur d'Alene region and the lower Snake River valley below its juncture with the Palouse. He also mapped the course of the Snake and Columbia rivers between The Dalles and Fort Walla Walla.

In addition, he was a gifted artist. His work documents the landscapes and peoples that these explorers and surveyors encountered in the region. For example, Sohon created images of such features as the Mullan Road in the Rockies, Coeur d'Alene Mission, and Bird Tail Rock. Together, these drawings represent our first graphic image of the physical and cultural landscape that existed in the northern Rockies during the 1850s.
Sohon's greatest accomplishment, however, was as an interpreter and diplomat. He was a gifted linguist, speaking English, German, and French fluently. In addition, he quickly learned Native American languages, including that of the Flatheads and Nez Perce. This ability prompted Stevens and Mullan to employ him as an interpreter whenever needed, but especially during Stevens's 1855 treaty expedition. Sohon's humanity and interpretive skill facilitated treaty negotiations. Yet, for all his valuable work, nothing remains to commemorate his role in the social
and economic development of the region except an obscure pass that was erroneously misnamed at the turn of the century.

Early American exploration efforts in the northern Rockies beginning with Lewis and Clark were directed toward establishing a viable east-west route across the continent. They were only partially successful in achieving their objective. A road was built, but it was poorly constructed and deteriorated rapidly due to seasonal flooding that resulted in the destruction of bridges and roadbeds. Nevertheless, the route surveyed by Stevens and Mullan eventually became the type of connection they envisioned. Numerous transcontinental connections now exist along portions of the routes investigated by these men. First, railroads follow major segments of the routes—initially by the Northern Pacific, Great Northern, and Milwaukee Road. With consolidation and abandonment, these routes have been succeeded by the Burlington Northern Santa Fe and Montana Rail Link. Second, several interstate highways follow the route—most notably Interstate 90, now known as the Captain John Mullan Highway.

An examination of names used historically and currently for features encountered along the survey routes reveals several facets of the naming process. First, early explorers made a concerted effort to record and use names bestowed on features by the region's initial inhabitants. However, many of these names were quickly abandoned to make use of simpler pronunciations, provide new descriptive terminology more easily recognized by the new settlers in the area, or commemorate people or events significant in the exploration and early settlement of the area. When the Mullan Road party first encountered Latah Creek, they recorded its several Native American names, but within four short years—by the time the road was completed—the stream was known as Hangman's Creek, reflecting a contemporary incident in which several Indians were executed after the cessation of hostilities on the Columbia River plateau. Secondly, well-established names fell into disuse or abandonment because the settlement features or transportation routes with which they were associated changed location or significance. Whereas in the 19th century Sohon Pass was a major feature along the Mullan Road, today it is a relic.

The published reports, maps, and original field notes that were generated as part of the railroad and military road surveys conducted during the 1850s have now become a valuable resource for studying the naming process in the northern Rockies. They are especially important because they document—in detail—local place name usage during the period of intensive exploration and the beginning of Euro-American settlement and economic development of the area.

Formerly with the Geography and Maps Division of the Library of Congress, Ronald E. Grim is now director of Map Collections at the Boston Library, in Boston. Paul D. McDermott is a professor emeritus of Montgomery College, Maryland.
Fingers tightly clenching the plane's doorway as her clothing was whipped about by the wind, the dark-haired young woman summoned her courage and leapt from the airplane. Free-falling toward the earth, Maud Bolin pulled at her parachute cord. The chute opened, braking her plunge with an abrupt jerk. She then enjoyed the pleasant experience of drifting through space to the ground. "I don't think I'll take another jump soon unless it becomes necessary, but I certainly enjoyed the sensation of the two trial jumps," Bolin later commented.

Bolin made the two parachute jumps as a prerequisite to receiving her pilot's license. Learning to fly in 1927, just nine years after Amelia Earhart began flying, Bolin was one of Washington's earliest female aviators, one of only two women living in the Yakima Valley to pilot a plane solo, and the first American Indian woman in the state (Yakama Tribe), and probably the country, to pilot an airplane.

Her first attempt to fly solo was one of Bolin's biggest thrills. She described how difficult it was for her as a beginner to hold the plane steady, but she finally learned to handle the control stick. Bringing the plane in for a good landing was her hardest problem. Still, she persevered until she was able to land without serious jolts or "zooms."

Bolin loved flying, participating in air shows and cross-country tours. In 1928 she made her first cross-country flight. With another pilot, she flew across the state dropping campaign literature for Senator Clarence C. Dill. A charter member of the Yakima Lady Birds, a women's aviation club formed in 1928, she endeavored to make women of the Yakima Valley more flight-minded.

In 1930, after receiving her solo pilot's license, Bolin traveled with the Pacific Northern Airway Tour. Some 40 planes started out on the tour of 16 Northwest cities and towns. Bolin's plane was one of the few that actually completed the circuit, making all 16 scheduled stops. She proclaimed that participating had greatly increased her confidence in her solo flying skills. The Pacific Northern Airway Tour had great educational value for visitors at local airports as well as for the pilots.

The following year, in 1931, while en route to an air meet in Cleveland, Bolin's plane was involved in a collision in Superior, Montana. One of four planes being flown from Seattle to Cleveland as part of the Pacific Northern Airway Tour, Bolin's was the first to land. But within minutes, when another Seattle plane approached the airstrip in an attempted landing, it entered a crosscurrent of wind, causing it to smash into Bolin's plane on the landing strip. Both aircraft were demolished; only the engine and propeller of Bolin's could be salvaged. She received compensation from the other pilot and expected to be able to buy another plane, but her husband Charles had to drive to Montana.

ABOVE: Maud Bolin as depicted in a Toppenish mural scene painted by Larry Kangas, Beaverton, Oregon.
from their home in Toppenish to retrieve his wife and what was left of her aircraft.

Bolin encountered some serious challenges while flying: inclement weather, poor visibility, and overheating radiators were inherent dangers to the solo Northwest pilot. On another occasion her biplane struck a tractor during a landing, shearing off a wing.

Flying airplanes was just Bolin's latest venture in feminine independence. Her earlier career as a cowgirl and rodeo performer also took a great deal of courage, skill, and endurance. Bolin performed with the Spain Brothers' rodeo shows throughout the West. A daredevil, she often raced horses in rodeos such as the Pendleton Round-Up, Ellensburg Rodeo, and Toppenish Powwow.

She frequently competed in the women's relay race, a top feature in Northwest rodeos. In this treacherous race, one person held a string of tough-mouthed relay ponies while the rider made the quick change of mount needed for the race. Riders ran three laps on three different mounts, changing horses after each lap. Bolin rode in the Toppenish Powwow relays until she was well into her 30s, although she admitted that participating in the contest without practice had become difficult.

Bolin's roots were in the Northwest's earliest pioneer days. Her mother, Josephine (Bowzer) Lillie, was a member of the Yakama Tribe. Her father, Nevada Lillie, was an early white settler on the Yakama Indian Reservation, in the Yakima River valley, who had crossed the plains to settle in Washington Territory. He drove stagecoaches throughout central Washington and had a large interest in livestock. Lillie contributed substantially to the development of the Yakima Valley. In addition to ranching and driving stage, he served for many years as a United States deputy marshal. His wife Josephine earned the title, "Mother of Toppenish," because 40 acres of her 80-acre "Indian allotment" was platted to become the business district of the town of Toppenish.

Congress passed the Allotment Act of 1887 with the idea of turning Indians into farmers by allotting 40 to 160 acres of reservation land to each individual. The 1912 census showed that 4,548 allotments had been issued to Yakama tribal members, with each man, woman, and child typically receiving a tract of 80 acres. Unlike reservation land, the allotments (with the granting of a fee patent approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs) could become deeded land vested in the owner's name and sold to white settlers. The results of the act were sometimes disastrous, as Indians who were uninterested in farming sold or lost their land to taxes. By the time the act was repealed 50 years later, Indian land holdings in the United States had dropped from 136 million acres to only 50 million acres.

No one took advantage of Josephine Lillie, a progressive, forward-looking woman who was vitally interested in community affairs. Josie filed her plat with the Yakima County Commission on April 4, 1905. "Toppenish" is a Yakama term meaning "sloping and spreading" and describes the sloping plains at the west end of the reservation's valley. The town boomed, and lots within the 40 acres sold at a feverish pace. This plat became the first deeded land on the Yakama Reservation.

The government granted the Lillies a trading post license in 1890. They erected a small building and opened a store and post office. Josephine served as the town's postmistress and operated the first store. Maud Claire Lillie, born on July 25, 1891, was the fifth of the Lillies' eight children.

Nevada and Josie separated in 1898. Seeking a better education for her children, Josie moved with them to Portland, Oregon. Maud Lillie studied drama, elocution, and millinery at the Western Academy of Elocution and
Dramatics. In a 1929 newspaper interview, she talked about her original goals,

"I wanted to be an actress always, but though I studied for a career on the stage my mother would never give her sanction to such "wild" plans. I served six months apprenticeship as a beauty parlor worker once and again I learned the millinery trade by serving a six months apprenticeship there.

On August 1, 1911, Maud Claire Lillie married Charles F. Bolin, a prominent attorney, cowboy, and Yakima Valley baseball star. The Bolins built a grand manor in Toppenish, the finest home on the Yakama Reservation. Their mansion was centered on an 80-acre ranch comprised of Maud's allotment. Although the couple had no children of their own, for a time they raised two children belonging to Maud's sister.

Bolin became an experienced rodeo performer and ran her own round-up business in Toppenish. At their ranch, Maud and Charley Bolin organized the first Indian Fair & Round-Up in Toppenish, later taking their show on the road. In these shows, Bolin performed with many notable rodeo cowboys and cowgirls of the day. Her Yakama Indian ancestors were accomplished horse riders. When Lewis and Clark explored the Northwest in 1805, the Yakamas had already been horsemen for decades.

Her career as a professional rodeo rider began with the Spain Brothers' Western Show. John Spain, the handsome gentleman cowboy, was a renowned bronc rider in his day. As a young man he won the title in the World Championship Saddle Bronc-busting Contest at the second Pendleton Round-Up, held in 1911. In the famous incident, after a last-,go-around, one judge's vote settled a three-way tie among Spain, George Fletcher (the famous black cowboy), and Jackson Sundown (a noted Nez Perce bronc rider). Spain continued to win rodeo purses even after losing his hand in a roping accident.

A pretty, dark-eyed brunette, Maud Bolin was also a sought-after singer often featured at important Toppenish weddings, funerals, and social affairs. She might one day be found daintily pouring tea at a social affair and the next day be seen clad in soiled coveralls at the airport.

Using her dramatic and musical training, Bolin directed young members of her tribe in a gala production of Hiawatha's Wedding Feast, performed for the community in 1936. It was the first time a Northwest production had used Indian actors and actresses exclusively in a production about Indians. Bolin took great satisfaction in helping the Yakama actors, mostly high-school students or younger, achieve success with the production. She was proud of the youngsters and felt many of them had voices that with training would far surpass the ordinary. Bolin commented,

There was not a trained voice among them. As for the dances—well, of course, they did not need training for them. They were dances every Indian child knows from the time he can stand and walk and run. They didn't rehearse those—they just did them. The dances were outstanding features of the pageant.

Bolin added that to make the most of the limited time available for practice before the show she repeatedly summoned to their minds the stately memory of their grandparents, and they responded by fitting their actions to that memory.

Bolin again directed young Yakamas in a presentation of Sacajawea, performed at the 1948 Toppenish Powwow. This production had a cast of 120—most of them tribal members.

The pageant was performed on three successive nights at the Toppenish Powwow and was host to most of the Yakama Valley population. Bolin's goal was to put on a historically accurate, emotionally appealing show using young Native American performers. This endeavor was a great success.
An asset to her community, Bolin was called upon to lead a wide variety of projects. In 1942 she headed the local United China Relief Committee, which succeeded in raising more than the Toppenish quota of contributions during World War II. She appealed to the citizens of Toppenish, stating, "Contributions will help to maintain Chinese morale at this supreme hour of crisis and keep open our one unbroken fighting front in the Far East."

In 1946 Toppenish sponsored a drive to build its own general hospital. Bolin contributed three quarters of an acre of land for the site of Central Memorial Hospital, now known as Providence Hospital, which opened its doors in 1951.

In 1950, with the assistance of the city of Toppenish and the Chamber of Commerce, Bolin appealed to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs in Washington, D.C., for a fee patent on her allotted land in order to deed it to the city of Toppenish. As mentioned above, allotted land was held in trust for members of the Yakama Tribe and could not be deeded to non-Indians without permission of the Bureau of Indian Affairs. The trust land lay across several streets within city limits, and the land was needed to extend the city limits and ensure the town’s continued growth. The patent was approved, and the land was annexed to the city, becoming "Bolin’s Green Addition."

The gracious Bolin mansion was a focal point in Toppenish. In a generous offer to donate her home to the town of Toppenish as a museum for the purpose of preserving antiques, historical relics, and art of both the Yakama people and the settlers, Bolin stated, "I want to donate my home as a memorial to my mother, the mother of Toppenish. All of the wonderful handcrafts and arts of the Indians and the history of this reservation town should be preserved for posterity.” Fearing a lack of funds would prevent them from maintaining the home, the city turned down the offer. However, Bolin’s offer to donate land for a city park was accepted. The park was named Pioneer Park and dedicated to the memory of local pioneers.

In 1959, Bolin was sent as a local representative from Region V to the White House Conference on Children and Youth. The Toppenish Powwow and Rodeo named July 2, 1960, Maud Bolin Day, in honor of all that she had contributed to the powwow, rodeo, and town. She died six years later, on February 17, 1966, at the age of 74.

Professional cowgirl, singer, aviator, drama coach, community leader—all of these comprised the multifaceted career of Maud Bolin. For her community and tribe, Bolin modeled independence, courage, and leadership at a time when women were expected to find fulfillment solely in their homes.

A Northwest native, Lynn E. Bragg spent six years living and teaching school on the Colville Indian Reservation in eastern Washington. She is author of More than Petticoats: Remarkable Washington Women (The Globe Pequot Press, 1998), from which this article is excerpted, with permission of the publisher.
The Boerhave Sisters Orchestra

Sax player Gladys Schirrmann wrote to her cousin on the back of this picture postcard: "This is our bunch, the Mystic Five Girls. Sometime when you need lots of pep to stir things up, write to Helen Boerhave of Lynden, Wash., and date us for a dance. We play Stanwood, Marysville, Snohomish and all over. Yours for Jazz, Gladys."

All-female jazz bands with names such as the Gibson Navigators, Parisian Redheads, Flying Flappers, and the Pollyanna Syncopators were a popular novelty across the country during the 1920s and 1930s. Lynden's answer to the trend was the Boerhave Sisters Orchestra, also known as the Mystic Five. With Margaret Boerhave's marimba strapped to the running board of their Model T Ford and her sister Helen's illuminated pink bass drum packed inside, the Mystic Five and Vernon Hawley traveled to their gigs at Grange Halls all around northwestern Washington.
The first American women to arrive in Oregon were from New England. They had cultural roots in a northern European dairy heritage, and they took their "milk" cows with them when they moved west. Dairy cows played a vital role in the settlement of the Pacific Northwest. One might even say that the growing presence of American cows tipped the balance in shifting the region from British possession to United States territory in 1846.

In the 1830s the immigrants' reliance on the milk cow was readily understood by top executives of one of the world's largest corporations, the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), which controlled the fur trade in Canada as well as most of North America west of the Mississippi River. Their "no cow" policy—refusing to sell cows to settlers—was meant to discourage Americans from homesteading in the fur trade domain, and for a while it succeeded. White women coming west meant farms and settlement, and that would ruin the fur trade. Eventually, migrating Americans brought in more cattle, but for a number of years tensions in the Oregon Country often focused on who had cattle and who did not.

The Columbia River District was the least desirable post for any of the Scots or English gentlemen who worked for the HBC in the early decades of the 19th century. It was isolated, the natives were often recalcitrant and dangerous, and
the food was terrible. For beef eaters it was hell—the diet was mostly dried fish, and even that was often unpredictable in supply and quality. Hunger pushed the men to eat horseflesh, something unthinkable and uncivilized by British standards. At Fort Nez Perces (Walla Walla) alone, the men had consumed 700 horses in three years.

Eventually the Hudson's Bay Company imported food supplies by ship or overland from the Great Lakes. That expense astonished the newly-appointed governor of the Northern Department, George Simpson, when he toured the Columbia District in 1824 looking for ways to cut costs. Upon discovering how dependent the employees were on imported food brought from London by ship, he noted they “may be said to have been eating Gold.” The fur trade was already on a downhill slide; as an effective administrator he forced the company to focus on self-sufficiency and adopt export agriculture at its outposts.

By Laurie Winn Carlson

SIMPSON ESTABLISHED farms at Fort Vancouver, Fort Colville, and Fort Langley. Along with tillage crops (mainly wheat), the HBC adopted livestock raising, too. The HBC's cattle stock began with four head of cattle brought from San Francisco to Fort George (Astoria) in 1814 by the Northwest Company. In 1825, seven cows and one bull were taken from there to Fort Vancouver. Cattle imports came from Canada, California, England, and Hawaii. They would yield beef and hides eventually, and butter and cheese immediately. To establish the dairy operations, Chief Factor John McLoughlin imported an Englishwoman, Mrs. Capendal, an
experienced dairy woman, arrived in spring 1835 with her husband, who was hired as a field manager. Governor Simpson ordered a house built for the Capendals—something quite "extraordinary," McLoughlin pointed out, since the chief factor's own house was not completed. The Capendals' house was not yet finished when they arrived, and they were forced to share quarters with other families. By November the Capendals asked to go back to England. McLoughlin explained to HBC officials that he was certain Mr. Capendal "would have found himself very comfortable and happy, but his wife finds things, she says, different to what she expected."

Mrs. Capendal may have been dismayed to find that the cattle were not familiar English breeds—in fact, they were not even dairy stock. Artist John Kirk Townsend visited the fort that year and described the cattle as "a large-framed, long horned breed, inferior in the milk qualities to those of the United States." They were California imports, rugged Spanish longhorns, and missionary Reverend Henry Spalding discovered they gave only one-quarter the amount of milk given by American cows. William H. Gray, who arrived with the Whitman-Spalding party in 1836 and accompanied a missionary reinforcement party in 1838, described the HBC's cattle as "the wild, furious untamable California stock at Fort Colville, that required a Spaniard with his lasso to catch and hold, to get the milk for family use."

As far as providing beef, none of the cattle were to be slaughtered until the HBC had 600 animals. Preserving cattle was not easy when English ships arrived with crews starved for fresh beef. Simpson acknowledged that irate ship captains and crews had been problematic. He wrote to McLoughlin, "Both you and I can say that so anxious have we been to increase our stock, that neither of us have ever indulged ourselves by tasting either Beef or Veal." It may have been a pointed reminder that even the chief factor was not to touch a hair on the precious bovines. Simpson added that "if any of the English Seamen put their threat in execution of Killing Cattle in defiance of your authority, do me the favor to send the offender across the Mountains to be dealt with as may be considered advisable."

By 1836 the goal had been met, and 40 oxen and old cows were butchered and salted and used to provision company ships. Cattle were sent to other outposts—Fort Colville and Fort Langley—to feed the employees and act as insurance against crop failure as well as the possibility of livestock disease hitting Fort Vancouver. "So that in the event of a failure of crops, to any evil
happening to our Cattle or Pigs at Fort Vancouver... we may not be entirely destitute of the means of subsistence," Simpson advised. An anthrax epidemic swept the eastern United States in 1819 and quite possibly England simultaneously, so isolating valuable animals from potential infectious disease made sense.

In 1836 the first two American women to enter the Pacific Northwest, Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding, and their missionary husbands took along a small band of cattle. They were the first American women to cross the continent, and their cattle were the first family-owned milk cows to cross the Rockies to the Columbia. Narcissa Whitman, on the journey across the continent in 1836, wrote "Our cattle endure the journey remarkably well. They are a source of great comfort to us in this land of scarcity. They supply us with sufficient milk for our tea & coffee which is indeed a luxury. We are obliged to shoe some of them on account of sore feet." As the hot, dry trek wore on, Narcissa wrote that she and Marcus enjoyed reminiscing about home, particularly envisioning his mother, "thought a sight of her in her Dairy would be particularly pleasant."

By the time they reached the Snake River, she added, "We think it remarkable that our cattle should endure the journey as well as they do. We have two sucking calves that appear to be in very good spirits, they suffer some from sore feet, otherwise they have come along very well." They ended up leaving five of their weakest cattle at the HBC's Snake Fort (Fort Boise), to be exchanged for five others from the company stock when they arrived at Fort Walla Walla. Two were eaten along the trail, and two calves got lost. Only eight made it to Fort Walla Walla. When they met Plateau Indians at the fur trade rendezvous near South Pass, the natives were most interested in the women's clothing, the wagon, or "land canoe," and the cattle. Upon reaching Fort Vancouver, near the mouth of the Columbia River, they were surprised to discover that the Hudson's Bay Company owned so many cattle, "1,000 head in all their settlements." Fields of turnips were "large and fine," grown as winter fodder for the cattle. Narcissa Whitman visited the large dairy there and estimated they milked between 50 and 60 cows.

When Marcus Whitman saw the livestock at Fort Vancouver he asked to buy some from McLoughlin, who agreed to lend cattle, but the offspring belonged to the HBC. If any died, the missionaries would replace them with their American stock. William Gray wrote, "We learned there was not a cow in the country, except [ours] that was not owned by the Hudson's Bay Company. The mission party concluded they would not mortgage their own cattle for the use of the Hudson's Bay Company's."

In his History of Oregon (1870) Gray noted that the Americans realized this stance on the part of the HBC was a strong inducement to discourage the immigration of independent settlers; first, because when all the colonists are in the position of their own servants, they will be able much more readily to prevent interference with the fur trade and secondly, because the presence of private capital... could only tend to diminish their own gains, derived from the export of agricultural produce. And, on the other hand, there will be every possible discouragement to emigrants of the better class to settle in a colony where a large part of the country will be peopled only by the lowest order of workmen, where they may have to compete with the capital of a wealthy company, and that company not only their rival in trade, but at the same time possessed of the supreme power, and of paramount political influence in the colony."

The missionaries were from western New York state, where the building of the Erie Canal had ignited entrepreneurial agriculture. To them the HBC's monopoly was viewed far more negatively than their trade in dead animal skins; in fact, it was equated with heathenism. Gray wrote, "That company, which never has been responsible to any civilized national authority," was an "irresponsible corporation." That tension between family farms and corporate export agriculture would continue to affect the settlement of Oregon. The missionaries fully understood themselves to be interlopers. "Civilization ruins their monopoly," noted Gray. "There was nothing but master and servant in the country, and this honorable company were determined that no other class should be permitted to be in it."

That same year—1836—William A. Slacum arrived on the coast aboard the brig Loriot under orders of President Andrew Jackson to reconnoiter conditions in the Pacific Northwest. Slacum noted that the Americans were desperate for cattle, "I found that nothing was wanting to insure comfort, wealth, and every happiness to the people of this most beautiful country but the possession of neat cattle, all of those in the country being owned by the Hudson Bay Company, who refuse to sell them under any circumstances whatever."

Slacum offered to take a group to California where they could purchase cattle. Reverend Jason Lee, a Methodist missionary in Oregon's Willamette Valley, had driven two cows from Independence, Missouri, to Fort Walla Walla in 1834. He, too, was determined to get privately-owned cattle into the Willamette Valley after he was restricted to borrowing oxen and cows from the HBC. Taking Slacum up on his offer, the Americans formed a joint stock company to raise money and send men to California to obtain Mexican cattle. The agreement they signed stated,

We, the undersigned, settlers upon the Willamette river, are fully convinced of the importance and necessity of having neat cattle of our own, in order successfully to carry on our farms, and gain a comfortable livelihood; and whereas we find it impossible to purchase them.
The Plateau Indians were very interested in obtaining cattle of their own, both for prestige and trade.

here, as all the cattle in the country belong to the Hudson Bay Company, they refusing to sell them under any circumstances; and as we believe that the possession of cattle would not only benefit us personally, but will materially benefit the whole settlement. . . ."

Lee put up $400 for the mission, and even the HBC’s John McLoughlin invested $700. Ewing Young, a seasoned mountain man who had been in Spanish California, was designated to lead the party. In January 1837, 11 Americans and 3 hired Indian hands boarded the Lariat to bring the first trail drive north to Oregon. Lee’s party entered California during the heyday of the hide shipping era, when hundreds of thousands of mission cattle were being slaughtered for their hides in an effort to make soap on account of not having fat and have been obliged to pay fifteen cents a pound at the fort.”

When the second group of American Board missionary families embarked for Oregon in 1838, they took 12 cattle, including 2 fresh milk cows. They took flour, rice, sugar, salt, and pepper, planning to create a diet based on the cows’ milk until they reached the buffalo range where they could get fresh meat. The trip was hard on the cattle and the mission party left some at Fort Hall to be exchanged for fresh animals when they reached the Columbia River. Upon their arrival at Fort Boise they saw the five cattle left in 1836 by the Whitman-Spalding party, which “have grown so large they look like oxen.”

Mary Walker, wife of missionary Elkanah Walker, settled at the mission station called Tshimikain, near the Spokane Indians. Like other rural women, she had charge of the milking, regardless what circumstances—even childbirth—might intervene. She wrote one Sunday in May,

Rested well last night; awoke about four a.m. Rose at five, helped about milking, but by the time I had done that, found it necessary to call my husband. . . . Had scarcely time to dress and comb my hair. Before eight was delivered of a fine daughter. The morning was pleasant; in the afternoon fine showers. The baby is very quiet; think it weighs not more than eight pounds.

Walker and the other mission women relied on their cows to provide the basics of survival for their families: they used deer rennet (from the stomach) to make cheese from skim milk, made butter, and in time “milked six cows morning and night.” In November 1841, three years after they arrived at Tshimikain, the missionaries there butchered their first beef, an aged work oxen. Later that winter Mary “dipped twenty-six dozen candles” made of “very white and nice” beef tallow. She wrote about preserving the meat, “salted a leg of beef by the rule four qts. salt, four lbs. sugar and four oz. salt peter to 100 lbs.”

The American Board missionaries were divided over the question of whether the mission should supply cattle to the Indians. Reverend Asa Smith, who arrived in 1838, wrote, “A few cows are important for our comfort & support but to think of furnishing a nation with them, it would I believe defeat our object in coming.” Certainly, providing the natives with cattle of their own would allow them to become independent of the American missions. The HBC’s policy was not lost on Reverend Smith. The issue was so divisive that the missionaries could only agree not to sell or give cattle to anyone without a vote of the entire group. The speed with which Reverend Henry Spalding was furnishing Nez Perce with livestock worried the others. Worse, in a letter of complaint from Asa Smith to the administrative office in Boston in 1841, Henry Spalding had even parted with an American cow to the mountain man whom he has admitted to the church, to pay him for the work & that too when it was needed in the mission. . . . We would . . . [have] gladly paid that man for his work & taken the cow & denied ourselves in other things to that amount for the sake of obtaining the cow, so valuable is an American cow to us both for our support and comfort.”

The personal difficulties that plagued the mission were rooted in Spalding’s distribution of cattle to Indians and mountain men who worked (and had joined the church) at the Lapwai mission. Other complaints against Spalding were rooted in cattle, too. His views
This 1843 painting of Fort Nisqually shows cattle and sheep grazing outside the fenced areas.

differed from the other missionaries. According to Smith he sought to "get the means of civilization into the hands of the Indians as fast as possible." Spalding and Whitman had "said so much about the importance of furnishing the Indians with cows, that all the money that could be found in the mission was sent to the Willamette to purchase cows there. The price of cows has so risen there that it was not expedient to purchase, being now $60 per head," complained Smith.

All this interest in cattle-owning by American newcomers fueled a response from the HBC, which in 1837 established an agricultural arm of the company, the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company. Casting about for some way to make the operation more profitable, opportunity came their way in 1839 when the Russian-American Company and the Hudson's Bay Company, both corporate interests with monopolies protected by their respective governments, contracted to allow British ships to use a section of coast at Glacier Bay in exchange for the British firm supplying furs and food supplies to Russian fur trade establishments. The 10-year contract, running from 1840 to 1850, promised to supply Russians with butter, ham, salted beef, wheat, flour, and other supplies. Designed to eliminate American ships from the region, it expanded the HBC's export market.

The Russian contract was big. In fact, its terms were impossible to fill, particularly the requirement to send eight tons of butter to Sitka annually. That amount was never met, despite McLoughlin's efforts to establish five dairies at Fort Vancouver, two at Fort Langley, and others at Nisqually and Cowlitz. The company went so far as to move all of its cows from inland posts to coastal dairies in order to increase production.

The Puget's Sound Agricultural Company planned to expand operations based on wage laborers and sharecroppers. Obtaining laborers for the farming operations was difficult. James Douglas noted to Simpson, "A grievous burden is, however, imposed on the agriculture of this portion of America, by the impossibility of finding labourers, exactly at the season, they are wanted, with the option of dismissing them at pleasure."

The idea of importing colonists was taken up. They were expected to lease 1,000 acres and livestock in exchange for half the production. It was a form of indenture, a throwback to the days of landlords, and colonists were not interested. Twenty-two families did trek down from Fort Garry in Canada, but they eventually became so disgruntled that they sued the HBC for breach of contract, going to court in 1854. Owning one's land and livestock was too important; farmers, whether American or Canadian, did not go west to perform wage labor. Without labor, the contracts went unfilled; by 1849 the Russians had eliminated the foodstuffs from the agreement. By then the Puget's Sound Agricultural Company was a political and economic failure.

In contrast to the small-scale American ventures and the corporate British operation, Catholic missionaries had sought to instill a different form of agriculture. By 1845 Jesuit missionaries, seeking to create communal mission farms, brought cattle, hogs, and chickens. Father Pierre Jean De Smet reported that the Pend d'Oreilles (in northern Idaho) had 30 cattle and the women were milking and making butter. The St. Mary's mission (in Montana) had 40 cattle in 1846. Indian women at the Coeur d'Alene mission milked cows as well, packing butter to ship by wagon, barge, and pack train, to Walla Walla in exchange for supplies.

The distance and difficulty of getting dairy products to market limited the growth of the mission dairy operations. While the stock herding efforts at the missions were not significant, many of the Coeur d'Alenes later developed herds of their own. The Jesuits did not emphasize farming as much as the Americans did and their missions were located in colder climate areas where cattle could not forage through the winter.

The Plateau Indians were very interested in obtaining cattle of their own, both for prestige and trade. When the Whitmans arrived at Walla Walla, they found that a Cayuse chief already had three or four cows and heifers and a Walla Walla chief also had a few head of cattle. There is no record of where they obtained the animals—perhaps in
trade or raids. In 1842 Henry Spalding was giving heifers to Nez Perce converts and encouraging them to travel to the Willamette to trade horses for cattle. By 1845 Marcus Whitman wrote that the Indians were building better fences, a necessity because most of them owned cattle. J. B. Littlejohn, who had worked for Henry Spalding, wrote in 1844: 

The Indians are becoming civilized as fast or faster than any tribes concerning whom I am informed. Their anxiety for cattle, hogs, and sheep is very great; leading them to make the most commendable efforts to obtain them, and their efforts are by no means vain. They have purchased a good number from those who are emigrating to this country, by exchanging their horses for cattle.

It might be valuable to reassess the tragic Whitman Massacre which occurred at Wailatpu in 1847 by examining the Indians' desire to increase their cattle holdings and the Americans' resistance to that. Of the Cayuse in 1845, nearly all owned cattle; and five years earlier 22 individuals in the Nez Perce nation owned at least 50 cattle each. As Narcissa Whitman noted in 1842, among the Nez Perce and Cayuse "there is a universal desire for cattle."

In the fall of 1847 that desire to own cattle may have fueled the Indians' hostility toward the Americans at Wailatpu. The previous winter had been harsh and many cattle perished, particularly those owned by Indians who did not set aside hay for winter feed. The "Old Chief" of the Spokans reportedly lost at least fifty cattle, leaving him with only two. A group of Cayuse men left for California seeking to trade for cattle to replenish their losses, but their attempt failed and they returned that autumn to stay. They did not come so far to inure themselves to contract labor or wages. In 1843 the residents of the Willamette Valley banded together in "wolf meetings," to deal with predators, because "the wolves, bears, and panthers were very destructive to the cattle of all alike." The goal was to draw up a form of government. As explained by William Gray, "Our idea was, to get an object before the people upon which all could unite, and as we advanced, secure the main object—self-preservation, both for property and person." The stock owners taxed themselves to pay bounties for wolves, lynx, bears, and cougars. The meetings created local self-government and eventually a petition for United States territorial status. In 1843, when Americans in Oregon petitioned Congress to extend the United States' jurisdiction over the region, the list of grievances against John McLoughlin and the HBC began with their refusal to sell cattle to Americans.

In 1841 Lieutenant Charles Wilkes led the United States Exploring Expedition to the area. Upon arriving at Tshimikain the men "all passed me as I was milking," Mary Walker noted with chagrin. One of the expeditionary members told her, however, that the sight of a lady milking her cows was "the most pleasant sight he had seen in Oregon." According to the 1850 federal census there were 41,729 cattle in Oregon Territory—9,427 of them milk cows—and the sight of a lady milking her cows was no longer a remarkable event.

Laurie Winn Carlson has written several books, including Cattle: An Informal Social History (2001). William J. Spillman and the Birth of Agricultural Economics is due out in 2005 (University of Missouri Press). She lives near Four Lakes in eastern Washington.
Alexander Ross’s Koran

A Rare and Unexpected Volume to Find in a Fur Trader’s Library

By Edward W. Nolan

“...This is a horribly dull place. Here I have been, since you parted from us, perfectly solus. My men, half Canadians and half Sandwich Islanders. The library is wretched, and no chance of my own books till next year, when the Athabasca men cross the mountains. If you, or my friends at Spokan, do not send me a few volumes, I shall absolutely die of ennui.” Thus, in his book, The Columbia River (London, 1832), Ross Cox quoted a letter from fur trader Joseph McGillivray at “Fort Oakinagan,” February 14, 1814.

When one thinks of it, the romantic hustling frontier life of the fur-trader had its down time; hours of sitting in canoes or lake boats, endless winter evenings listening to the winds blow, dreary camp-bound days waiting for the wind to die down before setting off across yet another lake or nameless wide spot in a river. All this boredom was no doubt amplified by the endless buzzing of mosquitoes, black flies, and restless natives. Books must have been a boon—any book, perhaps, would do, as indicated by McGillivray’s letter.

One tome that has been added to the Washington State Historical Society’s Special Collections bears eloquent testimony to the reading of books, particularly by the Astorians. The Astorians were representatives of John Jacob Astor who, inspired by reports of the Lewis and Clark expedition, conceived a plan to dominate the entire fur trade of the Columbia River region. Astor, to this end—having failed to convince the North West Company to join with him in the venture—organized and financed the Pacific Fur Company in 1809. The plan was to establish a fort at the mouth of the Columbia manned by seasoned fur traders and to send a supply ship each year to restock with trade goods and carry the furs thus secured to the Orient—all at a presumed handsome profit.

In September 1810, Astor’s ship, the Tonquin, set sail from New York and arrived at the mouth of the Columbia in March 1811. Among this first contingent of traders was Alexander Ross, a schoolteacher of Scottish origin from upper Canada with education and a drive for adventure that was a prerequisite in the fur trade. In October 1811 the second Astor ship, the Beaver, set sail, arriving at the Columbia in May of 1812. And here the story properly begins.

The book recently acquired by the Society is the Koran, the first American edition, published in Springfield, Massachusetts, in 1806. On its title page is the signature,
A fairly romanticized view of Fort Nez Perces, where Alexander Ross lived and worked during the time period in which he read the Koran.

Title page, with “Benjamin Clapp, 1810” and “Alex Ross 1814.” inscriptions.

“Benjamin Clapp 1810.” Clapp had signed on with Astor in New York as a clerk in the Pacific Fur Company and is mentioned several times by Gabriel Franchère and Ross Cox in their fur trade narratives. Clapp married, according to the custom of the country, a Chinook woman, but he left the Columbia with Wilson Hunt in August 1813 and signed on with the United States Navy in the Marquesas later that year. Perhaps Clapp bought the book in the east to supply himself with reading material while on his fur trade adventure—nothing is known of his life before 1811 and nothing is known after he resigned from service with the navy in 1815.

It appears, however, that Clapp gave this copy of the Koran to Ross Cox, whose signature appears on the front free endpaper. Cox accompanied Clapp on the Tonquin and had, as his narrative indicates, a great many adventures in the ensuing year, which established him as an up-and-coming fur trader. Cox, after a winter at Fort Spokan, returned to Astoria on June 11, 1813, just in time to learn the news of the war with Great Britain and the impending sale of Astoria to the Northwest Company. All the men were given the choice of remaining with the Northwest Company, returning to the States, or returning to Great Britain. Cox, who from his narrative clearly enjoyed the fur trade, chose to stay. Clapp, meanwhile, had decided to leave with Hunt, perhaps in patriotic zeal to remain with the Americans. It appears Clapp passed the Koran on to Cox, no doubt because all books were deemed essential survival gear at Fort George, the new name for Fort Astoria.

The volume contains wonderful internal evidence of provenance not often seen in books of any period. On another preliminary leaf of the Koran is the inscription, “Ross Cox to the Mufti Ben Haden A. Ross.” There also appears on the title page the signature, “Alexander Ross 1814,” and on the contents page the signature “Alexander Ross Ft. George 1814.” Finally, in front of and adjoining Ross Cox’s signature on the front free endpaper, Alexander Ross has written just his first name, thus reading, “Alexander Ross Cox”—a little fur trade humor.

Ross Cox spent a good deal of time in 1814 both at Fort George and Fort Okanogan, with visits to Fort Spokan as well. Alexander Ross was nominally in charge at Fort Okanogan during this period, although he also spent a fair amount of time at Spokan. During this
period they likely discussed Clapp's Koran, and at some point the book became Ross's.

Over the next several years Alexander Ross spent most of his time at various forts east of the Cascades, helping to build Fort Nez Perces at the confluence of the Walla Walla and Columbia Rivers, and eventually took charge of the fort. Things must have been rather quiet there during the summer of 1821, for the next dated inscription in the Koran (this one on the front paste-down) reads, "A. Ross commenced reading the Alcoran Augt. 12th 1821." It must have been slow going for the strict Calvinist Ross, for he records at the end of the book, "Alexander Ross finished reading the Alcoran 10th January 1822."

The previous owners recorded neither the commencing nor completion of their reading of the Koran, if they read it.

In 1821 the North West Company and the Hudson's Bay Company merged, finally ending their long dispute over mastery of the North American fur trade. With that merger came the usual disruption and displacement of personnel. In 1822 Ross wrote to George Simpson, governor of the new company, that he had had enough of the fur trade and wished to leave the country to raise his three children in a Christian manner.

The final dated inscription in the Koran reads, "Alexander Ross to William Brown Esq. Ft. Nez Perce June 28th 1822." Although Ross had already decided to leave the country, this book was going to stay where it was most needed. William Brown had come to the Columbia Department with instructions to proceed north to open new fur areas at the northern limit of the Hudson's Bay Company's explorations in the New Caledonia district. He was departing in 1822 and founded Fort Kilmours on Lake Babine the fall and winter of 1822-23. Ross, it seems, made him a gift of the now well-traveled Koran as he passed through Fort Nez Perces.

What Brown did with the Koran is not recorded, but the volume somehow survived in trunks or on private bookshelves until it was given by a generous donor to the Washington State Historical Society's Special Collections in 1997. It now resides among the many diverse treasures preserved by the Society. Certainly, it is not a book one might have expected to find on the far North American frontiers in the early 19th century, but it bears witness to the early fur trader's wide range of interests, thirst for learning, and hunger for books.

Edward W. Nolan, head of Special Collections at the Washington State Historical Society since 1990, regularly contributes the "From the Collections" column to COLUMBIA.
The historical spotlight is shining brightly on Lewis and Clark during the current four-year bicentennial commemoration of the Corps of Discovery's historic expedition across the American West. Articles, books, musicals, operas, exhibits, reenactments, stamps, coins, and toys dedicated to this American epic are appearing in ever greater numbers. Some are truly significant contributions to our understanding of this historic undertaking and due to their partnership—one of the most famous and successful aspects, stamps, coins, and toys dedicated to this American epic heightened, the captains have been the subject of a variety of articles and books. For some reason, perhaps because of his intriguing nature and tragic end, Lewis has received greater attention than Clark. The life and contributions of William Clark—especially when the information is obscure or contradicts what is commonly believed to be true. There are also scattered factual errors, and some quotes are inaccurate. To readers familiar with the events and people of William Clark's world, the cumulative effect is somewhat unsettling. Accurate and informative sources are available, but they apparently were not consulted. This extends to understanding the era and its people. Slavery is a particularly unfortunate legacy of American history, and Clark's relationship with his slave York serves as an excellent example of this tragic institution and its effect on master as well as slave. A wider reading and use of sources regarding this part of Clark's life and character would have been beneficial to the narrative and the conclusions that Jones draws.

Jones begins the saga of Clark's life with two United States military disasters suffered at the hands of American Indians in the 1790s. Using this as the backdrop for the conflict between white and red Americans that occurred during Clark's entire life, Jones charts his subject's role in that ongoing contest. William Clark was a product of his society and times. He strove his entire life to succeed and meet the expectations of his peers and superiors. This extended to essentially all facets of his life, personally and professionally. Whether it was fighting and negotiating with Indians or dealing with his African American slaves; whether it was seeking the approval of his commanders or of his family, William Clark strove to acquit himself well. His dedication to family and country seemed almost boundless and Jones's study reflects this.

Jones's well-written account of Clark's eventful life focuses primarily on the often-overlooked years of Clark's post-expedition life. More than half the biography is devoted to those years. Jones has noted that Clark's accomplishments on the Lewis and Clark expedition have managed to overshadow his very important later accomplishments. To try to rectify this—and because the story of the expedition is so readily available—Jones devotes only 40 pages to the expedition. But, of course, the expedition is there throughout the book, looming in Clark's future as his experiences prepared him for the journey and the reason he was a leader in territorial and Indian affairs after his return. The expedition was a watershed event in Clark's life and his role in it, as well as post-expedition events, helped chart the course of American history. Clark negotiated and signed more Indian treaties than anyone else. For three decades he sought to achieve United States policy while also trying to achieve a measure of fair treatment for his Indian charges. Clark was the facilitator of a system that was often unfair, callous, and cruel to its victims. He saw no alternative and did the best he could—with varying levels of success and compassion.

Jones is a retired journalist and editor with over 30 years in the magazine business. Taking a more journalistic than scholarly approach to his subject, Jones has written an interesting and worthy biography. Overall, he has succeeded, but there are shortcomings along the way. The journalistic and commercial path has resulted in a style that does not acknowledge certain sources of information. As a rule, Jones only cites quoted material. This leaves readers at a loss if they want to know the source of unquoted information, especially when the information is obscure or contradicts what is commonly believed to be true. There are also scattered factual errors, and some quotes are inaccurate. To readers familiar with the events and people of William Clark's world, the cumulative effect is somewhat unsettling. Accurate and informative sources are available, but they apparently were not consulted. This extends to understanding the era and its people. Slavery is a particularly unfortunate legacy of American history, and Clark's relationship with his slave York serves as an excellent example of this tragic institution and its effect on master as well as slave. A wider reading and use of sources regarding this part of Clark's life and character would have been beneficial to the narrative and the conclusions that Jones draws.

These are observations and cautions but certainly not reasons to avoid reading the book. Landon Jones's attempt to chronicle an American giant in a complicated era in American history has succeeded. Anyone interested in this period of history and
an eventful life full of adventure and accomplishments should definitely add William Clark and the Shaping of the West to their reading list.


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

Everyone affiliated with the tourism industry anticipated that the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Commemoration (2003-2006) would be a lively event. Few persons, however, anticipated the publishing bonanza that has developed to support the visitor-related activities. COLUMBIA has reviewed each of the 11 text volumes of the now-famous University of Nebraska Press edition of The Journals of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, beginning with Fall 1987 (vol. 1, no. 3). Starting in 2003 the number of books on the subject of the Corps of Discovery accelerated markedly. The Fall 2003 issue of COLUMBIA (vol. 17, no. 3), in fact, identified 17 new books on the subject that would be of interest to Pacific Northwest readers. It is time to do it again.

Most of the authors of the recent books on the expedition recognize that the day-by-day story of the journey has been told. One new approach is to offer perspective on the place of the Lewis and Clark experience in the grand history of the West. There are several notable books in this vein. Colin Calloway, One Vast Winter Count: The Native American West before Lewis and Clark (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2003; 631 pp., $39.95) is filled with insights, though clearly the Columbia River tribes are not the strength of this Dartmouth College professor. Prologue to Lewis and Clark: The Mackay and Evans Expedition, by W. Raymond Wood (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2003; 256 pp., $19.95 paper), and Southern Counterpart to Lewis and Clark: The Freeman and Custis Expedition of 1806, edited by Dan Flores of the University of Montana, are both nicely written and each adds to the body of knowledge about the Lewis and Clark expedition.

Similarly, Washington State University graduate John W. Mann expanded on his doctoral research to publish his first book, Sacajawea’s People: The Lemhi Shoshones and the Salmon River Country (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004; 280 pp., $24.95). Laurie Winn Carlson, a Cheney resident and successful author, has written Seduced by the West: Jefferson’s America and the Lure of the Land Beyond the Mississippi (Chicago: Ivan R. Dee Publisher, 2003; 226 pp., $26), tracing the international interest in the American West and how President Thomas Jefferson reacted.


Art of the Lewis & Clark Trail, edited by Jeff Evenson (Bismarck: Whisper'n Water, Inc.; 192 pp., $42.95) features nearly 100 paintings, some of them familiar—Charley Russell, Karl Bodmer, and John Clymer—and some of them not. Lewis & Clark Territory: Contemporary Artists Revisit Place, Race, and Memory, by Rock Hushka and Thomas Red Owl Haukpaas (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2004; 80 pp., $21.95) was prepared to accompany a national touring exhibition that originated at the Tacoma Art Museum. Three-quarters of the 100 illustrations are in color. In terms of photography, the absolute best book thus far on the Lewis and Clark trail is Discovering Lewis & Clark from the Air, by Jim Wark, with text by Joseph A. Mussulman (Missoula: Mountain Press Publishing, 2004; 272 pp., $24 paper). Wark took 3,182 images from an elevation of 1,000 to 15,000 feet and then culled the collection to fit in a book. Anyone who has ever looked out the window of a commercial jet from 30,000 feet and tried to imagine the Lewis and Clark trail will love this volume.

Finally, there are three recent volumes that "reflect on" Lewis and Clark. The first among equals is Two Centuries of Lewis and Clark: Reflections on the Voyage of Discovery, by William L. Lang and Carl Abbott (Portland: Oregon Historical Society Press, 2004; 150 pp., $18 paper). Lang, a leading historian of the Lewis and Clark expedition, has a special interest in examining the ramifications of the expedition on the Columbia River environment. He has also edited the Fall 2004 issue of the Oregon Historical Quarterly (vol. 105, no. 3), called "Dissecting the Columbia: Lewis and Clark West of the Divide," where themes of the Pacific Northwest environment are examined by six regional authors. Dayton Duncan, the scriptwriter for many of Ken Burns’s best PBS-TV productions—including the one on Lewis and Clark—has made four cross-country trips on the Lewis and Clark trail. His mature thoughts about the expedition and its meaning can be read in Scenes of Visionary Enchantment: Reflections on Lewis and Clark (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004; 202 pp., $22). Some chapters may seem familiar; two were previously published in COLUMBIA, one in 1997 and the other in 2001.
Washington State Historical Society
Awards Program

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
The Society announces a call for nominations for awards to be presented at its annual meeting in June 2005. Awards are presented annually to recognize excellence in advancing the field of history in Washington through writing, teaching, historic projects, fostering cultural diversity, and volunteerism. We invite you to help us honor the work that advances the Society’s mission, “to make the study of history in Washington illuminating and inspiring,” by nominating candidates for these awards: David Douglas Award, Governor’s Award for Teaching History in Washington, Peace and Friendship Awards, and the Robert Gray Medal.

For a description of the awards and information on the nomination process, visit the following web page: www.washingtonhistory.org/wshs/awards.htm; or, for a paper copy of the Call for Nominations, contact Marie DeLong, 1911 Pacific Ave., Tacoma, WA 98402; 253/798-5901; mdelong@wshs.wa.gov.

CONNECTING ACROSS CULTURES
17th Annual
Washington Heritage Conference
February 7-8
Red Lion Hotel, Olympia

For more information contact Garry Schalliol at the Heritage Resource Center 253/377-6278; garrys@wshs.wa.gov; or 211 W. 21st Ave., Olympia, WA 98501 or go to www.washingtonhistory.org/wshs/hrc/conferences.htm, where the final program will be posted on January 4.

CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS
for the 58th Annual Pacific Northwest History Conference

The theme for 2005 is “Explorations: Traveling the Full Range of Pacific Northwest History.” The Program Committee welcomes strong, traditional presentations or interesting alternatives. Submission of papers and conference attendance by secondary teachers is encouraged. The committee welcomes proposals for individuals or entire 90-minute sessions. Traditional panels have a chair and commentator plus two or three presenters. The Program Committee will assemble sessions out of individual submissions.

Please send proposals electronically or by mail by January 20, 2005, to: Garry Schalliol, WSHS Heritage Resource Center, 211 W. 21st Avenue, Olympia, Washington 98501; 253/377-6278; garrys@wshs.wa.gov.

Additional Reading

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

Searching for Point Lewis


An Unlikely Champion


The Case of the Mullan Road


Maud Bolin


The Cattle Battle


Alexander Ross's Koran


Following Lewis & Clark Through Idaho?

Many visitors will follow the scenic Lewis & Clark Highway, U.S. Highway 12, as it winds along the breathtaking Lochsa and Clearwater Rivers. Others will explore the primitive ridge-top route called the Lolo Motorway. A trip on this rugged, single-lane back-country road requires much preparation and a Forest Service permit. Apply for a permit from December 1 to January 31. Successful applicants will be notified by mid-February.

For more information, contact us:
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Lochsa Ranger District
Rt. 1 Box 398
Kooskia, ID 83539
208-926-4274
www.fs.fed.us/r1/clearwater

Key to WSHS Staff Photo on Page 2

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The Washington State History Museum is honored to present *September 11: Bearing Witness to History*. We invite you to come listen to the voices of survivors and view the photographs, film, and personal objects that comprise this powerful exhibit while you reflect on the events of September 11, 2001. Embracing a theme of reflection, this exhibition also offers visitors the opportunity to tell their own stories and bear witness to history in their own words. For more information about the *September 11* exhibition, go to www.americanhistory.si.edu/september11/ or visit our web site at washingtonhistory.org.

*September 11: Bearing Witness to History* was organized by the Smithsonian’s National Museum of American History, Behring Center, and is circulated by the Smithsonian Institution Traveling Exhibition Service (SITES). The national tour of this exhibition was made possible by the support of the Congress of the United States.