INSIDE
The Indian paintings of Bill Holm—beloved pursuit of a dedicated artist and scholar
The Seattle Bungalow
People and Houses, 1900–1940
Janet Ore

"Janet Ore's subject — the origins, marketing, development, and legacy of working-class housing in Seattle — offers an opportunity not only to explore architectural history but to characterize the economic, aesthetic, moral, and social dimensions of such housing." — Dennis Andersen, co-author of Distant Corner: Seattle Architects and the Legacy of H. H. Richardson
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River of Renewal
Myth and History in the Klamath Basin
Stephen Most

Portrays a region spanning the Oregon-California border, where a dispute over water rights has pitted farmers and ranchers against those whose cultures and livelihoods depend upon fishing, revealing the urgency for the communities within the basin to find common ground.
Pub. with Oregon Historical Society Press
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Windshield Wilderness
Cars, Roads, and Nature in Washington's National Parks
David Louter

Explores the relationship between automobiles and national parks, and how together they have shaped our ideas of wilderness. Louter traces the history of Washington State's national parks — Mount Rainier, Olympic, and North Cascades — and considers what it means to view parks from the road and through a windshield.
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Wiyáxayxt / Wiyáakaa'awn / As Days Go By
Our History, Our Land, Our People — The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla
Edited by Jennifer Karson

In a collaborative process involving Native elders, students, and Native and non-Native scholars, members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation take on their own historical retellings, drawing on the scholarship of non-Indians as a useful tool and external resource.
Pub. with Oregon Historical Society Press and Tamástslikt Cultural Institute
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National Park, City Playground
Mount Rainier in the Twentieth Century
Theodore R. Catton

Looks at the evolving relationship between the mountain and its surrounding residents, from the late 1890s when the Pacific Forest Reserve became Mount Rainier National Park, examining the many controversies that affected the park's development, from demands for winter access to environmental degradation from overuse of popular areas.
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Art of the Northwest Coast
Aldona Jonaitis

This comprehensive survey of the Native arts of the Pacific Northwest Coast, from Puget Sound to Alaska and from prehistoric times to the present, by the noted anthropologist and art historian, examines how the upheavals of European contact affected the development of a powerful traditional art.
$26.95 paper
Behind the Scenes 2

History Commentary 3

How about giving Sacagawea a much-deserved day off?

By Stephenie Ambrose Tubbs

Washington History Online 7

Digging into the Washington State Historical Society's digital assets.

The Columbia through Time 8

To see the river as a whole, one cannot stop at the international boundary.

By William D. Layman

History Album 16

A visit to the doctor's office.

The Asianization of America 17

A new look at the “Pacific Basin Frontier.”

By Mary L. Hanneman

From the Collection 23

“The Nation’s Playgrounds”—views through a magic lantern.

Sun Dogs & Eagle Down 24

Bill Holm's paintings mirror Indian culture in the Pacific Northwest.

By Steven C. Brown

There is a Land in the Far Off West 32

The Oregon Country, as seen from mid-19th-century Indiana.

By Michael Maben

Oregon or the Grave 38

Tracing the journey of the Peoria party.

By Randal F. Fletcher

Retrospective Review 44

Additional Reading 45

Columbia Reviews 46

COVER: Bill Holm's paintings reflect his artistic and scholarly interest in Native American culture and his dedication to representing it with accuracy and authenticity in every detail. This Holm painting depicts a Kwakiutl canoe traveling down Vancouver Island's Kingscome Inlet near the mouth of Wakeman Sound sometime in the mid-19th century. Another canoe is seen some distance away. The Sisuitl, a legendary serpent-like creature, is painted on the near canoe. The bowman wears a white Hudson's Bay Company blanket around his waist, but some of the crewmen are wearing cedar bark robes, suggesting that it is early in the trade period. See related story beginning on page 24. (Collection of Don Charnley, courtesy of Bill Holm)
Hidden Histories of the Columbia River Basin

March 10, 2007, marks the 50th anniversary of the inundation of the falls and other important Indian fishing sites on the mid Columbia River by The Dalles Dam. Programs commemorating this event include a teachers' workshop and library programs held in the Washington communities of Goldendale, Pullman, Richland, Stevenson, Vancouver, Wenatchee, White Salmon, and Yakima as well as libraries in Oregon and Idaho. “Celilo Stories” programs culminate on March 17 and 18, 2007, when CCRH hosts a conference at the Columbia Gorge Discovery Center. This public event brings together over 20 anthropologists, archeologists, historians, linguists, artists, poets, and scholars for panel discussions and informal conversations on the many meanings of Celilo Falls.

You are invited to join in these conversations about historical events that have affected our relationship to the land and to each other. Visit the CCRH web site (ccrh.org) for more information, including registration information for the conference. Essays by some of the featured speakers will appear in a “Celilo Stories” series in the next four issues of COLUMBIA. These essays will address the historical importance and lasting legacy of Celilo Falls.

CCRH has received generous support for its programs from the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Ray Hickey Foundation, and Humanities Washington, a statewide nonprofit organization supported by the National Endowment for the Humanities and local contributors.

—Katy Barber, CCRH Director

THE CENTER'S FOCUS in 2006-07 is a series titled "Celilo Stories: New Conversations about an Ancient Place."
Heartily Tired of the National Hug: Why Sacagawea Deserves a Day Off

By Stephenie Ambrose Tubbs

For starters, I take issue with those who say Sacagawea has emerged the winner in the Bicentennial Idol sweepstakes. I see the winner of that contest as William Clark who, after 200 years of being in Lewis's shadow, finally achieved the recognition he deserved in the form of two new scholarly biographies of his life and who had his own conference in Billings in July 2006.

What would she think of us 200 years later meeting in Bismarck to understand what her life meant to the history of the United States? How come she gets left holding the bag for a laundry list of interest groups even to this day? Empire builders; white apologists; feminists; Christians; tribal, federal, state, and local governments, and even the United States Mint seem to have ulterior motives when it comes to the way they seek to use her memory.

Why do we want her as our poster girl for causes and interests from A to Z? I am surprised People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals haven't yet dragged her image into a campaign. Tradition has it that, even though she was famished, she passed on eating dog.

Sacagawea has more statues erected in her honor than any other woman, not to mention the rivers, streams, peaks, lakes, hot springs, and mountains that also bear her name, along with countless schools, a constellation, a navy ship, a plane, plazas, a scenic byway, hotels, books, DVDs, a stamp, a coin, a candy bar, and a perfume. She has her own brand of decaffeinated coffee with a label that shows her smiling and winking while holding a cup of hot coffee over the tag line, “Worth the journey.” I understand she was recently given her own hazelnut and that somewhere in Washington is the Sacagawea Industrial Park. But do any of these “honors” celebrate the real woman or are they all monuments to someone who never existed, to someone who might rightly be labeled pure fiction?

After years of molding and imagining her character, isn’t it time we gave Sacagawea her own holiday—and by this I do not mean a day off from work or school for us, but a day off for her. On National Sacagawea Day we would relieve her of the burdens we have foisted upon her for no other fault than that her story is inspiring. Let’s relieve her of the burden of being a national icon. Let’s give her credit for being who she was, not who we want her to be. No pointy-fingered statues, no currency, no postage stamp, no hazelnut, and certainly no industrial park to represent. Let’s set her free from the burden of our collective fantasies.

Who was she really? What do we know about her? Why do we care about her so much?

As for what we do know, there are a handful of descriptions, mainly from Clark, who said she was lighter in skin color than Charbonneau’s other wife, that she was particularly “useful,” and that her patience was truly admirable. Lewis once said he ascribed equal fortitude and resolution to her in an emergency, and named a river in her honor. We know her first experience with childbirth was long and tedious and that she preferred wintering where the potas (wapato) roots grew. We know she insisted on being allowed to go with the party to see the ocean and the whale beached there. In present-day Montana, near Bozeman, Clark called her “the Indian woman who has been of great service to me as a pilot through this country.” And Henry Breckenridge, who traveled with the Charbonneaus when they returned to the Knife River villages in 1811, said she was “a good creature of a mild and gentle disposition.” At the end of the expedition Clark said, in a letter to Charbonneau, “your woman who accompanied you that long, dangerous, and fatiguing rout deserved a greater reward.”

Many see her role as insignificant, certainly not historically relevant, and nowhere near the girl/guide portrayed in popular literature. I think of her as a young woman who saw her place as being by her husband’s side. Even after some five years’ absence followed by a dramatic reunion with her family and tribe of origin, her allegiance, I think she would say, was more to Charbonneau and their child, Jean Baptiste. The bonds of marriage and parenthood superseded the bonds of tribe or family of birth.

Sacagawea likely never had a day off in her life. She would have been part of the communal labor force of the Hidatsa women whose job it was to plant, harvest, gather, butcher, tan, sew, and maintain the earth lodge. I imagine she was adroit at all of these tasks and friendly enough with the other women that she would even stand up for one, once, when she needed defending.
If we could have spent a day with Sacagawea in her Knife River village, I think we would see how clean, orderly, and organized their lives were. The women maintained the crops and passed down the right to plant in certain areas through their daughters. Because the area around the Mandan villages during Sacagawea's lifetime was able to produce a surplus of corn, the Mandan-Hidatsa had a prominent place in the local economy. When it came to actual physical labor, the women contributed more than their share, but they owned the fruits of their labors as well. As Virginia Roberts Peters points out in her book, Women of the Earth Lodges, these women worked from sunup to sundown because they had few laborsaving devices. They processed food, clothing, and shelter for the entire family and took great pride in their work. In Sacagawea's world the women earned and then proudly wore belts and other forms of personal adornment that signified a job well done.

Perhaps to Sacagawea's mind the notion of having the “day off” would mean she was sick or injured. The rest of the time she would have been engaged in the day-to-day chores, rituals, and games that made up Mandan and Hidatsa life. Her situation might have been unique because she was married to a trader and interpreter, but as Harold Howard points out in his biography, Sacagawea, marriage to a trader often increased a young native woman's status in the eyes of both Indians and whites. Becoming a mother certainly gave her a new place in the world, and a reason to never give up.

So the concept of a day off as applied to Sacagawea needs a bit broader context. I propose giving her a day off from groups and organizations trying to plant their flagpoles on her heart and etch their allegiances and trademarks onto her forehead. A “Free Sacagawea” march could be held, we could have bumper stickers, and Jack Gladstone—the popular Blackfeet singer/songwriter—could write us an anthem.

We need add nothing to the Sacagawea record—her accomplishments and talents speak for themselves. I, personally, would like her to pardon us for taking away her history as a living, breathing person and substituting for it almost 80 percent myth, legend, and fantasy. Pardon us for casting you as a torchbearer or guilt holder for all kinds of causes of which you had no knowledge or opinion and which, in fact, you might have objected to if given the chance. Forgive us for endlessly debating the spelling and meaning of your name. I imagine if you knew the extent to which that discussion continues you would want to take a long shower. Surely there is more to examine in your life than the origin, meaning, and spelling of your name. Your parents and family knew it and you knew it. Enough said.

I do not assume Sacagawea would object to all of these memorials and accolades. I simply think she would wonder at the sheer variety and number of them.

What would she make of a Beanie Baby named after her, or an American Girl doll, or a candy bar? Or a decaf coffee? On National Sacagawea Day no one could make jokes or ridicule the coin commissioned in her honor. Why should her memory be contaminated by a coin everyone loves to hate? And believe me they do love to hate it; many businesses have resorted to giving it away when the general public seemed unimpressed and refused to use it.

Again, I ask that we reconsider the historical Sacagawea and give her credit for who she was, not for who we want her to be. For example, although in popular culture she is celebrated as a guide, we do not celebrate her greater genius, which would seem to be her memory for landscapes, her skill as a translator, and her ability to harvest foods and read moccasin tracks. In modern times she might have been an engineer or a crime scene investigator with those skills. In her world landmarks told stories, and because of that they stayed fixed in her mind. Think of Beaverhead Rock. She remembered those places because as a young child she would travel with her people looking for bison and roots to harvest. These travels were based around the seasons and the stories associated with each place; the landmarks

William Clark shed light on one of Sacagawea's contributions to the expedition when he wrote of a sudden encounter with a group of Umatillas: “This Indian woman, wife of one of our interps. confirmed those people of our friendly intentions as no woman ever accompanies a war party of Indians in this quarter.”
Like Pocahontas and Geronimo, among others, Sacagawea has achieved iconic status in American popular culture. Here are a few of the myriad uses to which she has unknowingly lent her visage and her name, clockwise from upper right: a candy bar, moving van side panel, postage stamp, one-dollar coin, coffee label, license plate, and a c. 1904 perfume.

All told stories, and Sacagawea must have been a very good listener. And when it comes to being the champion observer of the expedition, most folks feel no one holds a candle to Meriwether Lewis. But several times along the way Sacagawea proved she was in his league. She noted where the bark of a tree had been harvested by the natives and knew where to find the hog peanut and ground bean stashes of the meadow mice. She gave Lewis the bitterroot and showed him how to eat it; to Clark she gave the white apple and the fennel root, which he also credited her with finding.

I think she often gets shortchanged in acknowledgement concerning her talents as a mother. The fact that you can't find in the journals a single complaint about an inconsolable infant testifies to her mothering skill. Was there anyone there for her to turn to for advice? She depended on what she had observed in both the Lemhi Shoshone and Hidatsa cultures to know how to care for her son, Jean Batiste. That her son went on to become a highly qualified guide and interpreter in his adult life suggests that she served as a strong role model.

Some people marvel at Sacagawea’s endurance; they can’t believe that a woman could keep up with a bunch of hardy young soldiers. Well, what if they had a hard time keeping up with her? I think Clark gives her a pat on the back for her endurance when he writes in his letter to Charbonneau that she accompanied him on the long, dangerous, and fattiging route. But she needs no defenders.

Maybe we stake so many claims on Sacagawea’s memory because we want her to be our friend. We want her approval, her glad tidings, her ermine tails, her stale bread, her lump of sugar, her blue-beaded belt. All the gifts she gave, we want to hold close. Imagine if that blue-beaded belt were somehow found and put on the market today? It might fetch more than the iron boat on eBay!

We want her friendship for the very reason John Luttig noted when she died at Fort Manuel in 1812. “She was a good and the best woman of the fort.” Her integrity was intrinsic; she needs no mythology, no statue. From the very beginning of our noticing her in the journals she stands for something without perhaps even knowing it. Woman. Mother. Wife. Sister. Friend. A woman who was strong, worked hard, and loved her children.

None of these things necessarily makes her a hero, but in a sense it makes her the best kind of hero, one we can recognize and celebrate in ourselves. So let’s pull up our claim stakes, pull out our flagpoles, and, finally, after all these years, let her have a day off; let her rest in peace, let her lay down all of the burdens collected from sea to shining sea.

There are a few intriguing mysteries about Sacagawea I would like to explore:

How did they get her to give up her belt? It was one of her few and certainly one of her most valued and valuable possessions. Whitehouse tells us that her belt was used in trade for a sea otter robe admired by the captains. Clark tells us she was given a blue cloth coat in return for her belt. Hardly an equitable trade. Perhaps Charbonneau convinced her it would be for the good of the whole party. “Come on honey it will make the captain happy and I promise to get you a better one as soon as we get back to Knife River.” I have seen a highly romanticized version of that transaction showing Sacagawea lovingly placing her blue-beaded belt into Clark’s hands as she gazed longingly into his eyes. Reality check. I imagine she was less than happy that particular day, and I doubt she appreciated giving up two of her leather suits for a horse later on. I find it interesting that that particular “handsomely dressed sea otter robe” ended up in Lewis’s personal effects when he died in Tennessee.

What was her relationship to Lewis? His dismissal of her by saying if she had a few trinkets and some food to eat she could be happy anywhere was no doubt meant as an insult. In some ways it also seems to qualify her as a good soldier. I think their relationship was strained but he did respect her, especially after she saved the “light articles” when the white pirogue nearly capsized in the Missouri River. I think he worried about her when she got sick, but mainly because he knew if she died his chances...
of securing horses from the Shoshones would be small. She could not know that in his journal Lewis would refer to her son as “it.” I think if she fully understood his implication she would have been highly insulted. Months before at Fort Clatsop Sacagawea gave 24 white weasel tails to Captain Clark, which I read as her casting a vote for the true leader of the expedition at that point. I am not sure she would have credited him with the “instinctual sagacity” he gave the Nez Perce guides, but clearly both captains recognized that she was a walking peace token and, as such, instrumental in the friendly receptions they received. In the end, I doubt she mattered to Lewis in any personal way, but I’m sure he would be willing to admit that she earned her place in history, and he might even admit that she taught him a thing or two.

What was her marriage like? When Sacagawea was ill at the Great Falls, a line in the journals noted, “Charbonneau petitions to return”; meaning, they weren’t going to cure her so he wanted to take her back and have the Hidatsa try to save her. This one line says volumes about the way Charbonneau cared for Sacagawea. She was more than a slave or a possession to him and he was, in some sense, desperate to save her. A few days later when she recovered enough to eat and ate too much, Captain Clark blamed Charbonneau. I can see him saying, “Mon Dieu, Captain! She won’t even listen to me either!”

Why didn’t Lewis have her with him when he first approached the Shoshones in August 1805? Perhaps because Clark was ailing, but there is no doubt that Lewis wanted to be first; he wanted to be the leader that day. And if Sacagawea had come along, Clark would have been there, too. Lewis wanted to be out in front that day as he often did in times of anticipated “discovery.” He did use information gleaned from Sacagawea to ease the fears of the Shoshones he encountered. He repeated the words “tab a boin,” which he understood to mean “white man,” and in a gesture of peace he learned from Sacagawea, he “painted the tawny cheeks of the women with vermillion.” So even though she was not there during that pivotal moment, she did influence the outcome.

What was her favorite part of the trail? After years of considering this, and discussing it with many of her fans, I think it would have had to be on the Yellowstone River. Despite the mosquitoes and worrying that they were going to eat her son alive, I think she enjoyed her leadership role in finding the way to the river over Bozeman Pass. I feel certain Clark would have told her he named Pompey’s Pillar for her son, and the fact that Clark carved his name on it must have meant something. Personally, I love that site because it forever links Clark with the Charbonneau family and it says most eloquently that they were his friends.

Could she have died of a broken heart? Regarding the death of Sacagawea in 1812, I have always been curious about that, but not for the obvious reason. My curiosity stems from the proximity of her death to the time of leaving her son in St. Louis with William Clark. As a mother myself, I can think of nothing more gut-wrenching and stress inducing than parting with one’s only child. Would that we had an account of their parting. We know that the two cultures of her life both valued family ties and saw the mother’s role as particularly important. Given the circumstances of their time together, it is not unreasonable to assume they shared an extremely close bond. How is it that she was dead in less than a year after leaving him in St Louis? Brackenridge says she had become sickly and longed to revisit her native country. Having just delivered her second child, her first—her dancing boy—was probably in her final thoughts as she left this world. It makes sense to me, but that is only because I am sentimental about such things, and when you study and write history it is best to leave sentiment at the door. But who wouldn’t prefer dying of a broken heart to dying of “putrid fever?”

I n the end, I think we cannot help but romanticize Sacagawea. She is simply too unique. We will always want her to be our friend, to hold our flag, to be our symbol. We want to be like her, have her patience, fortitude, and mild manner. Even though it is tempting to think of her getting a reprieve—a National Sacagawea Day Off—there are too many of us, myself included, who can never surrender our personal vision of her. She will continue to mean this to you and that to me, continue to be what someone once called a human Rorschach test, but maybe with opportunities like this conference we can come a little closer to the true woman and what she really means to America.

Clark always wanted to give her a greater reward; in a way, she has it—young people continue to be inspired by her example as each new generation of children discovers her and wants to know more about her. They, too, want to be her friend.

I recently read a story about children portraying their favorite historical characters. Nine-year-old Vanessa Rodriguez spoke of her kinship with her historical figure. “I sort of look like her,” she said of Sacagawea. “She can speak many languages and she has a strong heart.” The article went on to say that portraying Sacagawea made Vanessa think more about being more patient when she translated English for her Spanish-speaking cousins. Obviously, she has her own version of Sacagawea, and it helps her and gives her strength, just as mine does for me. Last week I was at Beaverhead Rock thinking about her and wondering how she would regard the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial and all of the attention her memory continues to receive. I think she would say, “Go ahead and have your party, play the fiddle, shoot off the fireworks, and raise the glass, but don’t forget that I was a real person made of flesh and bone, just like you. I need no extra credit for things I never did. And please, no more pointy-fingered statues!”

Stephenie Ambrose Tubbs is coauthor of The Lewis and Clark Companion; An Encyclopedic Guide to the Voyage of Discovery. She holds two degrees in history from the University of Montana and currently writes local history and serves on the boards of the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center Foundation, the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation, Friends of Montana PBS, and the American Prairie Foundation. This essay is based on an address originally presented at a Sacagawea symposium that took place in Bismark, South Dakota, in June 2006.
If a Coat Could Talk...

In 1921 a descendant of Washington's first territorial governor, Isaac I. Stevens, donated a hide coat to the Washington State Historical Society. Documents associated with the gift state that a chief of the Nez Perce tribe gave the coat to Stevens in 1854 during the Walla Walla treaty council. However, no other documents to date have been found to verify this assertion. Comparison with approximately 10 other similar coats affirms the mid-1850s date of manufacture.

Careful examination of the coat determined that it does not appear to be a Nez Perce clothing style. Most likely the coat was traded down to the Nez Perce from northern Métis (pronounced may-tee) neighbors originating from the Red River Valley in Canada. There are many possible explanations for how this could have occurred, including via trade through direct transportation by a Nez Perce individual that lived among the Métis.

Extensive trade networks between the Nez Perce and other cultural groups make this scenario for the Stevens coat plausible but not confirmed.

Although the history of the coat is not precisely known, the object does reveal important information about the cultural encounter between Native Americans and European Americans, and among tribal nations.

Visit WashingtonHistoryOnline.org for more information and images related to this object from the Washington State Historical Society's collections.
The Columbia

Developing Whole River Understandings

ABOVE: “Lake Windermere”—1,216-1,221 miles from ocean, 27-22 miles from source.

OPPOSITE PAGE: “Nose Hill on Columbia Lake”—1,243 miles from ocean, at source of Columbia River.

Climbing along the River
Willows never forget how it feels to be young.
Do you remember where you came from? Gravel remembers.
Even the upper end of the river believes in the ocean.
Exactly at midnight yesterday sighs away.
What I believe is, all animals have one soul.
Over the land they love they crisscross forever.
—William Stafford

The Columbia River begins at the head of a lake in a quiet swamp where reeds take root and the water is pure. Three magnificent mountain ranges in British Columbia—the Purcells, Selkirks, and Canadian Rockies—tower over wetlands that comprise its first 120 miles. Before the river was transformed into a large reservoir behind Mica Dam, mountains forced the young river to narrow, giving rise to a continuous series of rapids approaching Boat Encampment, where the Columbia takes its first and most dramatic bend. Heading south toward Arrow Lakes, the river follows a large valley where a chain of volcanic islands joined the ancient margin of the North American continent 180 million years ago.

After entering the United States, the river encounters the great basalt formations of the region’s interior that effectively block its southern passage. In a masterful work of yielding, the river skirts these basalts before cutting through them at Rock Island Rapids. A short distance from its confluence with the Snake River, the Columbia turns westward toward the heart of the Cascade Mountains. Threading a path through mountains framed by volcanoes and waterfalls, the
big river creates landscapes of grandeur that have inspired all
who pass along its banks. After emerging from the gorge, the
river's most difficult work is done. Now widened and stately,
it flows through the Coast Range to join the sea in fullness,
replenishing the great Pacific with billions of gallons of fresh
water per day.

Into all this water come salmon, wave after wave, run after
run. Two centuries ago the numbers were astonishing: in a
good year, 16 million of these magnificent fish entered the
river, forging ahead with an inner mandate to find the waters
where life began. Poet Tim McNulty expresses the relation-
ship well: “The salmon's heart is the river's heart made flesh.
Ours is the wisdom to see them both as one.”

Between the years 1933 to 1984, public and private utili-
ties along with the governments of the United States and
Canada initiated an unparalleled fervor of engineering that
transformed much of the Columbia into a series of large res-
ervoirs crossed by 14 dams. While many grieved the loss of
the free-flowing river, the majority of Pacific Northwest citi-
zens embraced a newly tamed river that would control floods,
irrigate parched lands, and supply electrical power to match
ON EXHIBIT

RIVER OF MEMORY: THE EVERLASTING COLUMBIA

Open January 15 though April 15, 2007, at the Washington State History Museum, *River of Memory: The Everlasting Columbia* restores the Great River of the West to visual memory through a unique display of historic photographs, maps, fish illustrations, poetry, music, and text. The exhibit features 62 photographs of the unobstructed Columbia flowing from its source in the mountains of Canada to the waters of the Pacific. A special sound track composed by Emmy Award winning musician Lynette Westendorf establishes a mood of reflection and quietude.

While the photographs are all in black and white, the museum visitor's first impression upon entering the exhibit is a surprise of bright color. Over 150 life-size, scientifically accurate silk paintings of the Columbia's native fish are suspended from the ceiling, leading the viewer upriver. Poems hung from banners establish a contemplative tone, helping visitors consider their own responses to the river now lost from view. A writing table encourages people to record their own memories of time spent along the river.

On Tuesday, January 23, 2007, at 6 p.m., William D. Layman, guest curator of the exhibit and author of the accompanying book of the same name, presents a talk entitled “Developing Whole River Understandings: The Columbia River through Time.”
ABOVE: “Surprise Rapids”—1,073 miles from ocean, 170 miles from source.

BELOW: “Boat Encampment at the Big Bend”—1,025 miles from ocean, 218 miles from source.
the fast pace of 20th-century invention and need. Little attention was given to looking back at what was lost. Even the otherwise earth-friendly National Geographic published an article in 1942 praising the charming man-made lakes that were superseding “ugly lava chasms” along the river course.

The older, unaltered Columbia shaped the lifeways and character of humans and fish alike. Indigenous people representing four primary language groups developed distinct cultures deeply attuned to the river’s life-giving waters and seasonal flows. The river provided nourishment, shelter, and means of movement to people living along its shores as well as to some 46 native species of fish living within its waters. Dace, sticklebacks, sculpins, suckers, minnows, eels, and salmon all found special niches in the river, their bodies and behaviors shaped by and attuned to what the river’s changing flow offered. Indigenous respect and knowledge extends to other fish besides the all-important salmon—many of these fish figure into the myths and understandings connecting people to place. Suckers prepare the river for the coming of salmon; sculpins have power to predict the weather. In the Ancient Time, Water Monster lurked beneath the river’s whirlpools and fast waters, threatening to swallow the Animal People who preceded humans. Water Monster’s pet, the white sturgeon, measures up to 20 feet and still swims along the river’s bottom.

In a sense, two Columbia Rivers flow through our lives—the river we see today and the natural river that gave rise to the spectacular sights and thunderings of such places as Celilo and Kettle falls. To know either has always presented major challenges. Certainly this was so for the huge Chinook salmon that swam and leapt more than 1,200 miles to reach the river’s headwaters at Columbia Lake. The same applies to the small number of people who have traversed the length of its waters by bateau, canoe, or kayak. One person, river advocate Christopher Swain, recently came to know the challenges of the modern Columbia firsthand by swimming its entire length of 1,243 miles, stroke by stroke.

Unlike humans, fish can travel easily between the United States and Canada without encountering barriers. The international border at the 49th parallel has effectively established a corresponding internal boundary that limits our knowing the river as a whole. While hydroelectric development along the river has brought enormous regional benefits, the creation of the Columbia’s massive dams has also obscured aspects of the river’s identity. When going over the river’s bridges, travelers read signs indicating that they are crossing the Columbia, yet people tend to regard the vast reservoir behind Grand Coulee Dam only as Lake Roosevelt, failing to recognize it
as the river people once knew. A highway heading north out of Wenatchee has a sign that reads, "Rocky Reach Reservoir, Lake Entiat," making no mention at all of the Columbia.

In truth, the Columbia was never an easy river to know. If the legendary explorer David Thompson were alive today, he would certainly concur—it took him all of four years to track the river to the sea. Some historians fault Thompson for not finding the fabled Northwest Passage sooner, but his confusion remains understandable. Rather than flowing south, the river illogically heads north from its source at Columbia Lake. Confounding the river's geographic puzzle, the Kootenay River, one of the Columbia's primary tributaries, is already a full-fledged stream charging southward within a few miles of the Columbia's headwaters. Further, the river's rugged physical character prevents knowing by slicing through inaccessible mountain ranges, vast stretches of unpopulated roadless areas, and extreme landscapes before emptying into the sea.

This complexity of the Columbia's natural and cultural worlds provides unending fascination and allure. Author Gretel Ehrlich writes, "To trace the history of a river is to trace the history of the soul." Rivers are an archetypal presence within the human psyche. They orient us to who we are as well as to our place in the world. A river, like a person, carries a singular identity; but, paradoxically, its waters are never quite the same from one moment to the next. Looking upstream we ponder origins; Pacific Northwest residents begin to think about forested mountains, snowmelt, and glacial ice. Turning downriver the views change, as do our thoughts.
We wonder what lies beyond the next bend. Ultimately, rivers teach us that soon enough we all flow into the limitless wisdom of the ocean.

Imagining these altered landscapes goes beyond a fleeting exercise of the imagination. Ponder the views well and soon you are confronted with what historian William Lang identifies as “important and vexatious questions about the meaning of place” that force us to consider the connections landscapes have with human community. In harnessing the Columbia for our own pleasures, needs, and ends, in what ways have we lost connection to the river’s natural world and, in turn, to our interior selves? For those who identify strongly with the Columbia’s waters, the remembered river brings a mix of feelings to the surface. Many who view these photographs are likely to experience sadness and grief. Yet the Columbia offers much more; the memory of its noisy waters rushing around rock formations and over Celilo and Kettle falls stimulates wonder and awe, and, for some, a feeling of comfort in knowing that somewhere beneath its present waters the Columbia’s spirit remains wild.

William Layman is a recipient of the James B. Castles Award from the Center for Columbia River History and guest curator of the exhibit, River of Memory: The Everlasting Columbia. He is author of a companion book to the exhibit by the same name as well as of Native River: The Columbia Remembered (2002). This article is excerpted from River of Memory with the permission of University of Washington Press and Wenatchee Valley Museum and Cultural Center.

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ABOVE: “Wallula Gateway”—311 miles from ocean, 932 miles from source.

OPPOSITE PAGE, TOP: “Priest Rapids”—397 miles from ocean, 846 miles from source.

OPPOSITE PAGE, BOTTOM: “Mouth of Columbia River from the Pacific Ocean”—1,243 miles to source.

Cascade Rapids with Fisherman

A man stands by the river.
All-that-was flows away.
A woman sits by the river.
All-that-will-be is coming.
A child, in shredded cedar bark, gazes.
At the portage, the people are traveling.
The elders have learned to be still.
The river is teaching, remembering prophecy:
   Salmon goes upriver.
   The fine bones tumble down.
Is the wind a different fluency than water?
Is a child’s long cry a river disguised?
The river, going down, turns over.
All flows toward another place.
Those who are gone stand here:
I will await you in the children.

—Kim Stafford
The discovery of the x-ray in 1895 caused a sensation in medical circles. From the earliest days of modern medicine, doctors have used x-rays for medical diagnostics and treatment. Skin lesions were easily treated, and techniques gradually evolved to treat deeper tumors. These techniques depended on the development of more powerful machines and the use of radium and multiple therapy beams. In this photograph, taken in 1923, a patient is treated with a Wappler deep therapy apparatus at the Tacoma office of x-ray specialist Dr. Charles Fishel.

Wappler Deep Therapy

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THE Asianization of AMERICA

A New Look at the “Pacific Basin Frontier”

By Mary L. Hanneman

In 1872 Horace Wilson, Civil War veteran and mathematics professor from Maine, introduced the game of baseball to his Japanese students. By 1936, Japan had its own professional league and, although the hostilities of World War II resulted in the rejection of the term besuboru in favor of the Japanese neologism yakyu (“field ball”), once the war was over, besuboru was back and America’s greatest pastime continued to flourish in its adoptive home across the Pacific.
In the last decade, Japanese baseball has returned to North America. In 1995 Hideo Nomo became the first Japanese ballplayer to join Major League Baseball, pitching for the Los Angeles Dodgers. Nomo started a trend, and by 2002, 13 Japanese were playing on MLB teams in North America. In 2001 the phenomenally popular Ichiro Suzuki of the Seattle Mariners became the first position player from Japan and won both the American League Most Valuable Player and Rookie of the Year awards that first year. Voted onto the All-Star team for the third year in a row in 2003, he was joined on the team by Hideki Matsui of the Yankees and his teammate, Shigetoshi Hasegawa. In 2003 the Seattle Mariners hosted a “Japanese Baseball Night,” with pre-game festivities including taiko drumming. Fans received caps imprinted with the Japanese word yakyu, players were introduced to the crowd in both Japanese and English, and throughout the game video clips of Japanese baseball appeared on the reader boards.

Ichiro, like Japanese players on other MLB teams around North America, has brought his own brand of play to North American teams, exemplifying the Japanese approach to baseball and influencing attitudes around the league. Robert Whiting, author of The Chrysanthemum and the Bat: Baseball Samurai Style (1977) and The Meaning of Ichiro (2004), contends that “more and more players from Japan will be coming to America... [and they will] change the way our game is played.” He summarizes the Japanese approach to baseball in what he calls the “Samurai Code of Conduct,” which includes such attitudes as gentlemanly conduct both on and off the field, composure in the face of difficulty, and circumspection in dealing with the press.

These developments in American baseball are just the latest and perhaps most visible elements of a trend toward “Asianization” in American culture. In 1993 Arrell Morgan Gibson’s posthumously published book, Yankees in Paradise: The Pacific Basin Frontier, expanded the “boundaries of the West beyond the limits of the contiguous, continental western states.” Building on Frederick Jackson Turner’s 1893 frontier thesis, which examined the role of the western frontier in shaping the American character, Gibson conceptualized the “Pacific Basin frontier as a region undergoing the same expansionary process that took place in continental North America.” Gibson’s Pacific Basin encompasses those territories typically referred to today as the “Pacific Rim.” His examination of the means by which the Pacific Basin became Americanized focuses particularly on this process as it occurred over the course of the 19th century. Gibson’s analysis of the Americanization of the Pacific Basin looks at the pioneering activities of maritime fur traders, whalers, scavengers, traders, and writers as well as at the mining, agrarian, missionary, and military frontiers.

W hile Gibson looked at the Americanizing influences that spread across the Pacific, the Pacific Basin frontier has revealed itself as a permeable membrane through which influences pass freely back and forth. In fact, the reverse of Americanization—that is, Asianization—has been occurring for at least as long as contact between Asia and the West has existed
Asianization has been occurring for at least as long as contact between Asia and the West has existed....

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and has increased dramatically in the years since the end of World War II. It is time now to turn Gibson on his head to examine the spread of Asian influence in the western United States as it has occurred in the areas of society and culture in the years since 1945, with a particular focus on the areas of architecture, entertainment (sports, movies, video games), and food and cookery.

The “Yankee” influence in Asia, especially since the latter half of the 19th century, is well-documented. The United States took a leading role in the “opening” of Japan, enforced the Open Door policy in China, colonized the Philippines, and led the economic penetration of Hawaii. A further step back, however, shows that, in fact, the influence of Asia on Western society and culture is in no way a modern phenomenon. Some of the earliest influences came in the introduction of Chinese technology to the West. Such technologies as paper, porcelain, and gunpowder had unparalleled economic, military, political, and cultural impacts that spread to the West as early as the 1200s. In the Western cultural and intellectual realm, Asian thought wielded important influences that became especially prominent, for example, during the Enlightenment, when 19th-century philosophers were drawn to the image of a wealthy and peaceful China benevolently governed by Confucian-educated scholars. Asian-influenced art and decorative art (Chinoiserie and Japonisme) had become widely popular among the middle class in the 19th-century United States, and household items from silverware to dressing gowns were being designed in the “Oriental style.”

Cultural traffic between Asia and the Pacific Northwest began early, particularly with the establishment of trans-Pacific fur trade. Sea mammal furs were shipped westward and goods such as porcelain and tea returned to the early trading posts on the West Coast. Another early Asian influence arrived in 1832 at Cape Flattery, Makah Indian territory, now Washington, in the form of three young shipwrecked Japanese fishermen who were washed ashore after more than a year adrift at sea. The three were taken captive and enslaved by the Makahs. Captain William McNeill later captured them and transported them to Fort Vancouver. There, they were placed in a school run by John Ball where their arrival caused a stir throughout the Columbia basin. Eventually the fishermen were taken to England and around the world before being returned to Japan, where they became valuable resources for the country’s isolated dictatorship ruled by the shoguns of the Tokugawa family until 1868.

The Asian influence in Western architecture has a long history that may have begun in the late 18th century when the Argonaut, a London ship captained by John Meares, arrived at Nootka Sound with more than two dozen skilled Chinese craftsmen who were charged with the task of building a permanent post there. When the Spanish seized the post in 1789 and removed the Argonaut and its personnel to Mexico, it is possible that some of these Chinese workers, who possessed the technical and architectural expertise to construct buildings and small boats, were left behind. Though evidence of this is not conclusive, some historians believe that a number of Chinese artisans settled in the area and married into the Indian community.

Menu from the Twin Dragon Café in Seattle’s International District, 1935.
In the Pacific Northwest today, the Asian influence on architecture is exemplified in work by George Suyama. Joe Nabbefeld writes that Suyama’s “craftsmanship-oriented, Northwest style... emphasizes simplicity, elegance, natural materials and connections to water, light, and the landscape,” which translates into the use of “such elements as articulated wood ceilings, shoji-like panels... and inset floors reminiscent of tatami mats.”

Frank Lloyd Wright, North America’s greatest architect, openly acknowledged the Japanese influence on his “organic architecture.” According to the Public Broadcasting System program, Inconstant Unity: The Passion of Frank Lloyd Wright, one of the distinguishing features of the Japanese sensibility, Wright believed, was the “idea of a culture in which every human action and every human object was integrated so as to make of an entire civilization a work of art,” and it was this sensibility that Wright tried to integrate into his own work. On a more technical level, Wright admired and found confirmation for his own work in several characteristic features of traditional Japanese architecture, including the use of natural wood and sweeping roof lines that come low to the ground. Wright embraced the concept of the “open plan” approach to design—in which interior spaces open onto one another—as well as the practice of closely integrating the architectural design with the surrounding natural setting.

Eventually, all of these design elements had a major impact on the domestic architecture of the American West, making their way into plans for the ubiquitous ranch houses of the 1950s. The emphasis on the horizontal plane, with horizontal bands of windows and low-hanging eaves, open plans, and the movement of the surrounding landscape into the building through the use of expansive windows, are all characteristic of the ranch house and demonstrate the Asian architectural influence.

As architectural styles and food tastes offer a tangible example of the Asianization of America, a more ephemeral and yet perhaps more pervasive Asian influence on American culture can be found in the world of entertainment, specifically in movies and video games. Perhaps the best place to start looking at the Asian influence in movies is with the internationally popular Jackie Chan. Chan’s 2000 movie, Shanghai Noon—a take-off, if in name only, on Fred Zinneman’s 1952 classic, High Noon, starring Gary Cooper—was billed as “the first kung-fu Western ever.” Shanghai Noon finds Jackie Chan, a luckless guard to the Chinese emperor, in the Wild West to rescue the beautiful Princess Pei Fei, who has been kidnapped (“Shanghaied,” as it were) on his watch. The crucial Asian influence, however, goes beyond the story line and can be seen in the action itself, which combines the traditional drama of the shoot-em-up Western with the thrills of Asian martial arts. Indeed, Chan’s style of action film demonstrates one of the important Asian influences on American film: the transition from gunfights and shoot-outs, the traditional hallmarks of the American Western, to an increased use of hand-to-hand fighting.

A recent instance of the martial arts influencing American movies can be seen in Quentin Tarantino’s two Kill Bill movies. Tarantino acknowledges his inspiration from such Japanese...
The trend toward martial arts in American movies is a relatively new manifestation of the spreading Asian influence. As early as the late 1960s, Japanese filmmaker Akira Kurosawa left his mark on the American film scene. American directors such as Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Brian DePalma, and Martin Scorsese all openly acknowledge a great debt to Kurosawa's cinematic techniques and developments. Marking Kurosawa's death in 1998, Scorsese commented, "His influence on filmmakers throughout the entire world is so profound as to be almost incomparable."

Kurosawa's emphasis on action-based storytelling, according to film critic Steven Prince, fueled George Lucas's approach in the space-age Western, Star Wars (Lucas acknowledges Star Wars' stylistic and story line debt to Kurosawa's The Hidden Fortress), as well as Steven Spielberg's Jaws and Close Encounters of the Third Kind and his Indiana Jones movies. Thus, says Prince, Kurosawa "stands behind the blockbuster turn in American cinema that began in the 1970s."

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Movie posters for Akira Kurosawa's Seven Samurai (1954) and John Sturges's The Magnificent Seven (1960). In Kurosawa's film, villagers hire a band of seven samurai to defend themselves. Sturges reprised the theme with Mexican peasants hiring seven gunfighters to defend their town.

Ironic though it is in light of the well-known American propensity for violence, some of the most important American filmmakers attribute the filming style of their violent denouements to Kurosawa's influence. As Prince notes, Kurosawa developed a highly graphic, stylized approach to depicting violence through the use of "slow motion, montage and multiple cameras." In fact, according to Japanese film expert Mike Sugimoto, Kurosawa developed this new
approach as a “conscious decision to de-emphasize the violence” that had become extremely graphic in other Japanese films of his era. Kurosawa’s highly stylized approach to filming violence had a cascading effect on each succeeding generation of American filmmakers from the late 1960s onward.

Kurosawa’s rescripting of the Western genre in films like Seven Samurai and Yojimbo also provides us with a perfect example of the permeability of the cultural boundaries between Asia and the United States, an example of the osmotic, back-and-forth quality of the transference of cultural influence. Sam Peckinpah, a master of the Western genre who directed such films as Pat Garrett and Billy the Kid, Junior Bonner and the television series Gunsmoke, once remarked that he “wanted to make Westerns the way Kurosawa made Westerns.”

Beyond the Asian influence on Hollywood, the video game industry, which out-earns Hollywood annually, demonstrates the Asian influence in a variety of ways. In 1980 the Nintendo of America Corporation moved its headquarters first to Tukwila and two years later to Redmond, near Microsoft. Nintendo’s biggest hit of all was the red-coated, mustachioed plumber named Mario. The eight Mario games produced between 1985 and 1991 were phenomenally successful, and Super Mario Brothers 3 sold more copies than any video game in history—7 million in the United States and 4 million in Japan.

The games described above plainly depict the impact of the Japanese video game industry in the United States and demonstrate the Japanese tendency toward story lines that emphasize cuteness over heroics and gore. But Japanese values, with an emphasis on such things as respect, self-discipline, and hard work, rather than just gaming styles, had a major impact on young America with the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles phenomenon. In this series, which eventually included movies and a television series in addition to the various video games, four ninja turtles named Donatello, Rafael, Leonardo, and Michelangelo battled the evil Shredder. Their mentor and teacher is Splinter, the “ideal patriarch, the Japanese-American mutant rat who learned to be a ninja in the old country by imitating in his cages the moves of his master.” As author Kinder points out, “TMNT is the only film in the video game genre that makes strong use of the Asian connection; with its Japanese samurai backstory...[it]...adapts the samurai and kung-fu conventions....”

Since the wide-scale advent of Japanese video games in the United States beginning around the early 1980s, the industry has grown beyond its original target audience of adolescent and preadolescent boys (possibly because those boys have now grown up to be video-gaming men). Though not a significant player in the PC gaming industry, Japanese firms have absolutely dominated the video game industry by consistently developing and improving gaming systems and the games designed for them. Sony Corporation produces the PlayStation gaming system. The Nintendo Corporation, founded in Kyoto in 1889 by Yamauchi Fusajiro, originally produced cards for the Japanese card game Hanafuda and now produces Gameboy, Gameboy Advance, and Gameboy SP in addition to the GameCube system.

In summary, the Pacific Basin has revealed itself as a permeable membrane across which America influences Asia and Asia influences America. The Pacific Northwest in particular has been enriched by the cultural infusion of Asian influence in the areas of sports, cuisine, architecture, and entertainment. From baseball and sushi to kung fu Westerns and video games, we have sampled and enjoyed a wide variety of Asianizing influences from our Pacific Rim neighbors. And in the entertainment industry we come full circle: in 1992 Nintendo of America president Yamauchi Hiroshi, great-grandson of Nintendo’s founder, Fusajiro, bought the Seattle Mariners baseball franchise, in danger at that time of being moved to St. Petersburg, Florida.

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The Nation's Playgrounds

The introduction of the electric "magic lantern" projector in 1892 ushered in a new era of public entertainment. The projection of images was certainly not new, but the electric projectors made it safe and easy to "take the show on the road," in order to reach a large audience. In 1917 Charles Norton Hunt traveled the Midwest presenting a series of magic lantern shows augmented with the young technology of motion pictures. His topic, "The Nation's Playgrounds: Rainier, Yellowstone, Alaska," almost certainly used tinted glass lantern slides from well-known photographers Asahel Curtis of Seattle and F. Jay Haynes of St. Paul, both of whom produced massive numbers of slides for the commercial market between 1892 and 1930.

Artist Louis Moen's colorful 1917 poster, advertising Hunt's travel talks and depicting the accessibility of Mount Rainier National Park by automobile, is a recent addition to the Washington State Historical Society's Special Collections. Thus far, both Hunt and Moen elude identification. ✽

FROM THE COLLECTION
A sampling over time of pictures by Bill Holm illustrates a working career that, until his academic retirement in 1985, was very much a part-time avocation, a beloved pursuit that of necessity took a back seat to the more immediate requirements of family, scholarship, and teaching. Though the years before 1985 allowed little opportunity for the time commitment of brush and canvas, Holm’s pens and pencils (and occasionally watercolors) were seldom still. Untold numbers of postal envelopes, napkins and place mats, performance programs, and meeting agendas have served as the spontaneous surfaces on which he projected his artistic nature. Whether he was working out a design or an engineering challenge for a specific project, or visually tinkering with different ideas for some future composition, or just savoring the meditation of movement and the love of beauty and form, the creative edge of his personality was always honed sharp, ready for immediate use.

The paintings of Bill Holm represent but one of the many avenues of expression and creativity that this prolific artist and scholar has explored in his inspiring and highly energized career. It would seem that many lifetimes of knowledge and experience are embodied in this gentle and unassuming man. Each of his paintings is a window into the remarkable experiential background from which the images emerge, suggesting the complex fabric of the personality that is the underlying foundation of his work. Holm himself is self-deprecating of his technical skills as a painter, but
Masterfully designed canoes of many sizes and forms were made on the Northwest Coast by carving from solid logs. Usually these were of western red cedar, but in some areas Sitka spruce or cottonwood was used. Typically these boats were widened beyond the original diameter of the log by the spreading of the steam-softerened sides. Spreading does more than widen the canoe; it introduces major changes of form throughout the hull which the canoe maker must anticipate in carving the log. The straight and level gunwales bend smoothly out and down, while the ends rise, forming a graceful sheer and transforming a rigidly narrow, hollow trough into an elegant watercraft. In order to spread without splitting, the walls of the hull are made remarkably thin.

When the hull is completely carved, water is poured into it to a depth of 6 inches or so and is heated to boiling with red-hot rocks. The resulting steam is confined by covering the open hull with mats. The hot rocks are replaced as needed to keep the water at a boil. The softened sides, heated through by the steam inside and fires outside, begin to move outward, aided by the weight of water and rocks pressing down in the center. Spreading sticks are tapped into place between the gunwales and are moved toward the ends and increased in length in the center as the sides flare outward. When the planned beam and form are reached, the canoe is allowed to cool, the water is removed, and the thwarts, bow and stem blocks, and gunwale caps are fitted and fastened in place.

Here, a medium-size Haida canoe is just reaching its finished width; one last load of hot rocks helps to soften the hull thoroughly. As the covering mat is lifted, steam rolls up, partly obscuring the big plank houses with their massive frontal poles on the bank above the beach. Haida canoe makers were widely respected and their products were in demand throughout the northern Northwest Coast.

many others agree that it is extremely difficult to surpass his work in terms of its overall vision: the intimate feeling that he brings to each scene, the innate familiarity with time and place and with the many intriguing pieces of history and life on which he focuses in each canvas. He is respected and esteemed internationally as a master of his chosen genre, for both his unparalleled knowledge of Native American material culture and the passion for
accuracy he brings to bear in his scholarship and his paintings. There is no question that he does something wonderful in his work, and his acknowledged authority is high among a broad cross-section of ethnographic scholars, Indian artists, Native American hobbyists, and other contemporary painters in the field of historic re-creation. The special qualities he brings to his work are perhaps best recognized by those experienced in and knowledgeable about the subjects that fall within his vision, but they captivate the uninitiated viewer just as soundly.

The verity of firsthand experience is readily apparent in Holm's paintings. He has seen the channels, inlets, villages, and shores of the Northwest Coast from the seat of a kayak, a sailboat, or a dugout canoe. Having observed the movements of paddlers, dancers, mask makers, horse people, singers, and craftsmen of many American Indian tribes in the Northwest and northern plains, he is able to draw upon familiar sights, sounds, and feelings that bring a fresh and natural sensibility to every scene. He knows the glow of firelight in a big house, the shivering of fog on the shoreline, the tinkle of small waves on beach gravel, the hospitality of a tepee fire, and he is able to represent each of these naturally and spontaneously.

A handful of photographers in the 19th century managed to attain his style of documentation—some work by Curtis, Pratt, Winter & Pond, and others. But all were limited in those days by the relatively slow technological development of portable equipment and sensitive film emulsions, by the types of subject and cultural opportunities with which they were presented, and by their own artistic skills, vision, and ethnographic knowledge. In the privacy and timeless quiet of his studio, Bill Holm has been able to draw upon his personal experiences in the worlds of the Native Americans as well as his knowledge of historic traditions and technologies, and to muster his innate skill in visualizing the appropriate imageries with which to assemble these various aspects. As a result, scenes and events that were missed in the visual documents of the past can be pieced back together, reconstructed in lines and colors that more permanently manifest the spirit and imagery of the times. Some such moments took place in the past only once, while others were observed again and again, but most were not recorded in any location except the mind's eye and the memories of the living participants. Holm's paintings recapture the elements that these individuals once perceived and marveled at.

Bill Holm's obvious fascination with the people and historic periods he represents is born not of a romanticized retrospection but rather of a profound respect for the individuals, cultures, historical situations, and realities of those times. To speak with him of the worlds represented in these images quickly reveals the wonder and admiration that underlie his preoccupation with his subjects. His guiding inspiration clearly has been the strength and ingenuity of the Native Americans and their cultures as a whole, as well as a sense of wonderment and fascination with the physical trappings and artistic creations that evolved with them over time. His admiration is tempered with a respectful sense of honesty and truth. Nothing that does not belong within the culture or the moment is to be seen in the picture. We never see the wrong style of weapons in the hands of warriors, an

Haida artist of the late 19th-century at work on an argillite pipe. The massive stern of his canoe forms the backdrop. This canoe is based directly on the 35-foot canoe that I carved and painted in 1968.

Painted for Robin Wright on the endpaper of Analysis of Form.
inappropriate type of beads or design patterns on a shirt or leggings, or the lines of a canoe hull inaccurately drawn or represented in the wrong context. And yet, this seeming obsession with detail never becomes overbearing or pedantic, never seems to take precedence over capturing the essence of the moment. Each is a historic dramatization, true to its place and time, whether the subjects are dressed in cotton shirts, wool pants, draped in a commercial wool shawl, or decked out in full traditional regalia of brain-tanned, quilled, and beaded shirt, moccasins, and leggings. Such details are not the concern of many who work in this genre, perhaps because they are primarily painters and not historians or scholars of art and culture who also paint. For Bill Holm the detail is a natural and inextricable part of the scene. He knows what does and does not belong in the picture, and he would not be personally satisfied if all the parts of the whole were not true and appropriate to the subject, time, and specific place. The evidence of this perspective is everywhere in his pictures, becoming stronger as his artistic vision and sense of purpose have matured over time.

One of the most enriching and extraordinary aspects of Bill Holm’s approach to his subjects is contained in that part of his creative life which does not directly involve brush and canvas but is an inseparable facet of the background of each painting. His daily life can be characterized as an ongoing research project, and his many experiences and tinkering with native materials and techniques, his creation of finished pieces that are the fruition of his curiosity and study, all bear importantly on the content and subject matter of his canvases. Any look at Bill Holm the painter must also incorporate the inquisitive experimenter, the masterful woodworker, the hide tanner, the bead and quill worker, the canoe maker—for the practical experience and knowledge gleaned from each of these pursuits is indelibly woven into the images of each picture. He is more than intellectually aware of the proper type of animal skin that was traditionally employed for a given garment or piece of equipment,
In an eastern Plateau style longhouse, a prominent man speaks in council about the accomplishments of his grandfather, whose old-time spontoon tomahawk he carries. Although the tomahawk is a trade piece from the beginning of the 19th century, the setting here is about 1870. The speaker wears an ermine-trimmed bonnet with wooden, tack-studded horns. His fringed shirt is of an early style, with shoulder and sleeve strips of quill-wrapped horsehair. Panel leggings with headed strips in the transmontane style, pony-beaded moccasins, and a plaid woolen breechclout complete his dress. The listeners, seated on tule mats and robes, are dressed in Plateau style of the latter part of the century.

This spontoon tomahawk is based on one in the Burke Museum of Natural History and Culture, collected near The Dalles on the Columbia River. Lewis and Clark described and illustrated tomahawks of this kind, which the expedition blacksmith made in large numbers for the Indians who visited the explorers' winter camp at Fort Mandan on the Missouri River.

The tomahawks were in great demand, and their trade was an important source of corn for the expedition members. The journals speak disparagingly of the battle axe: "The length of the blade compared with the shortness of the handle render it a weapon of very little strength, particularly as it is always used on horseback: there is still however another form which is even worse, the same sort of handle being fixed to a blade resembling an espontoon."
or the appropriate styles of beaded or quilled designs used by a particular tribe in a given time, or the correct style of Northwest Coast design for a region and time period. He has in fact brain-tanned that skin, made that garment, or quiver, or stirrup; he knows every individual stitch of the bead or quill work that decorates the surface; and he has carved the masks and canoes, built a Kwakwaka'wakw big-house (for Camp Nor'wester, then on Lopez Island) and a Haida-style house (as his studio), and painted or carved in nearly every two-dimensional style known along the Northwest Coast.

Many of these projects were undertaken just to see where the varied processes would lead. Some came about in order to realize the answers to questions inherent in the appreciation of a piece of work or material. How were the sheep horn bowls, ladles, and rattles really made? What happens when you steam a horn bowl, or a canoe hull, and open it out in the traditional manner? How do the traditional tools themselves influence the outcome of a particular carved form? Holm is usually not satisfied to accept a secondhand explanation of a process or technique, especially if his experienced logic sees some fault or discrepancy in a verbal or written account. He simply wants to know the truth of the matter and is inclined to search for it in order to avoid unnecessarily repeating the mistakes or misunderstandings of others.

A beadworker since he was ten years old, he has produced pieces in a wide variety of styles and techniques and has written scholarly articles that have helped to clarify not only the processes and techniques themselves but also the chronology, history, and tribal distribution of designs and techniques. A carver in the Northwest Coast style since he was a teenager, he has made at least one

A Nez Perce scout, mounted on an Appaloosa horse, surveys the back trail during the flight across Montana in 1877. In the distance are the Bull Mountains, a range of rough sandstone bluffs covered with pines, just south of the Musselshell River.

The Nez Perce have once more escaped the pursuing United States Army forces at the Battle of Canyon Creek on September 11, 1877, near present-day Laurel, Montana, and are moving northward toward their goal of crossing the Canadian border.

The scout wears trade cloth leggings and a blanket capote. He is armed with a bow and arrows and an 1873 Springfield carbine. Looking eastward, he is unaware that far over the horizon Colonel Nelson Miles is leading his troops across country to intercept the fleeing Nez Perce at Snake Creek, only 40 miles from safety in Canada.

Just over the Bull Mountains to the north is present-day Roundup, Montana, where I was born and spent my boyhood.
Near midday of June 11, 1792, two small Spanish ships, Sutil and Mexicana, under the commands of the young Frigate Captains Don Dionisio Alcalá-Galiano and Don Cayetano Valdés y Flores, sailed into Guemes Channel near the present city of Anacortes. Their mission was to explore and chart the waterways inside Juan de Fuca Strait and to search for the fabled "Northwest Passage." The two little ships (about 45 feet on the waterline) had sailed here from Acapulco in southern Mexico via Nootka Sound, where they had been refitted and provisioned. The previous evening they had anchored off the southeast point of Lopez Island and a party had gone ashore to observe the emergence of the first moon of Jupiter in order to correct their longitude. The light following breeze was not strong enough to allow the two ships to buck the tidal current in the center of Guemes Channel, so they closed the south shore to take advantage of the side eddies along Fidalgo Island. Four young Indians and an older man from the village on Guemes Island paddled expertly out to the ships and traded blackberries, dried clams, and a dog-skin robe lined with feathers for a quantity of buttons and beads.

example of a great many of the archetypal Northwest Coast artworks—headdress frontlets, rattles, objects made of sheep or goat horn, argillite pieces, masks from nearly all areas and styles (including mechanical ones, in which he especially excels), four canoes (from 11 to 35 feet in length), totem poles in many styles, and metalwork.

These pieces were made not for mere entertainment or profitable sale, or for self-advancement in the field of contemporary native arts, but with the primary goal of understanding the work, on a direct and personal basis, from the inside out. Not content to accept without question the statements of past ethnographers or historians on designs or techniques, he has tried a great many of them himself. He has learned what does or does not work and has rewritten the studies on many individual subjects or encouraged his students and associates to carry forward with an idea for a personal study or an academic thesis. Each of his own scholarly artistic studies he has pursued with the simple agenda of knowing, experiencing, and appreciating the detail, the step-by-step process, and the actual feel of each differing material and approach to creation.

Most of the pieces he has made in this way are still in his family's possession, gracing the walls of their home or his studio. Others were made at the Henderson Camps/Camp Norwester for the enrichment of their youth programs, or for public education through displays in the Burke Museum and his University of Washington classes. Innumerable individuals, through the encounter of Bill Holm's work, have grown immensely in their appreciation for the art, technologies, and cultures of the Northwest Coast and Plateau Indians. He is ever the willing teacher, and each of his creations is the touchstone to a long and enthusiastic story of how it
Humpback and gray whales, migrating along the outer coasts of Vancouver Island and Washington's Olympic Peninsula, were the most prestigious prey of Nuu-chah-nulth and Makah sea hunters, who pursued the whales in cedar canoes in the open Pacific. Whales that were successfully killed and towed back to the whalers' village, as well as dead whales that drifted to shore, were important sources of meat, oil, bone, and sinew. But the economic importance of whaling was far overshadowed by its prestige. Harpooning a whale was an inherited chiefly privilege, and a successful whaler was honored far beyond his own time. Ritual preparation for the hunt was long and arduous, and the loss of a whale was usually attributed to some failure on the part of a crewman to follow carefully all the ceremonial requirements. Even with great care, effort, and skill, the success rate was not high. John Jewitt, describing the Mowachalt chief Maquinna's whaling in 1803, 1804, and 1805, counted 53 days of hunting in which one whale was killed and several were lost.

The canoe used in whaling was fairly beamy for its length of about 36 feet in order to accommodate its crew of eight—the harpooner, six paddlers, and a steersman—and the whaling gear itself: the heavy yew-wood harpoon shaft, up to 14 feet long, the mussel shell-bladed point and its whale sinew lanyard, up to 100 fathoms of cedar with line, four inflated floats of seal-skin, a killing lance, and spare shafts, points, and uninflated floats. Provisions and water were needed, especially if a harpooned whale ran seaward and required a long tow home.

The whaling canoe approached the whale's left side, and at the proper moment, just before the whale dived, the harpooner struck it behind the flipper. As the harpoon struck, the paddlers in turn cast the floats and line overboard and turned the canoe away from the struggling whale. With luck and proper ritual preparation, the whale ran toward land. When it had tired enough, the whalers approached again and killed the whale with a lance. Then began the long paddle back to the beach and the butchering. A cut of skin and blubber including the dorsal fin was ceremonially prepared and displayed in the whaler's house, to honor both the whale and its captor.

came to be, the challenges encountered, and the discoveries made along the way. Many of these objects, made over a period of numerous years, have since become part of the painted record of Holm's work, to be discovered in each canvas. Others were made specifically as studies for particular paintings, so that each object's unique forms, its appearance in drapery or at particular angles, and its other special aspects could be properly represented in a two-dimensional format using oil, casein (for the earlier pieces), or acrylic paints.

In many of Bill Holm's paintings, the setting of the historical scene or the particular geographic location is as important to the full understanding of the picture as is an appreciation for the technical aspect or imagery involved. For this reason, each of the paintings included here is accompanied by Holm's own description of the contextual background for each scene. His words succinctly set the stage for each picture or reveal its historical context—the chain of events leading up to the particular moment being depicted, moments he has brought back to light that we all might learn from them of the beauty and visual magic that the unforgiving conflicts of cultures wrested from us prematurely.

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During the winter and spring of 1852 the Oregon Territory was a subject of great interest to Indiana newspapers and the Indiana General Assembly. This interest led to passage of a resolution by that august body and the publication of a poem, “Oregon,” in an Indianapolis newspaper. On the occasion of the poem’s republishing 150 years later, Indiana’s interest in Oregon Territory is deserving of reflection.

During the 1840s the status of Oregon was a significant national political issue. The Oregon Country was a major issue in the 1844 presidential campaign between James K. Polk and Henry Clay, and there was strong sentiment in the old northwestern states of Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana for the acquisition of Oregon. The Indiana General Assembly passed three resolutions in the 1840s on the Oregon question, urging that the United States take control of the territory. The first was approved on January 28, 1843, and was entitled “A Joint Resolution in relation to the territory of the United States, West of the Rocky Mountains, called the Oregon Territory.” This resolution urged the federal government to take possession of the territory between the 42nd and 49th parallels and organize a civil government. The second resolution was approved on January 13, 1844, and was entitled “A Joint Resolution on the subject of the Oregon Territory.” This resolution, which was extremely anti-British, stated that “the insatiate avarice, and grasping spirit of the British government seem already directed to its subjugation and conversion...” and claimed that the United States should occupy and defend Oregon, “peaceably [sic] if we can, forcibly if we must.” Then, during the General Assembly’s 29th Session, a third resolution, entitled “A Joint Resolution on the subject of the Oregon Territory,” was approved on January 13, 1845. It declared that the United States had the right to all of Oregon south of the 52nd parallel, and it urged the United States “to annul and abrogate the treaty between the two Governments, relative to the joint occupation of such Territory by the two Governments.”

ABOVE: “The mountain’s white summit in rapture
I’d tread, And betwixt clouds and heaven I’d roam.”
View of Mount Baker and the Cascade Range from Whidbey Island, 1854.
At this point, the Indiana General Assembly ceased passing resolutions on Oregon for several years. The Oregon issue, however, continued to arouse people's passions from the halls of Congress and the White House to the towns and newspaper offices of Indiana. On Saturday, October 11, 1845, the Fort Wayne Sentinel stated, "THE HOOSIERS ARE READY" and "Oregon and Texas are ours; and we must have them." The Sentinel published an editorial on March 21, 1846, that concluded with the words, "It is time the Senate was done with this question; we have had words enough, and quarrelling enough; all we now want is ACTION." The Terre Haute Wabash Express ran a long article about Oregon on March 25, 1846, saying in part:

"England cannot come here and whip us into any submission—that is impossible as long as we have any Saxon blood in our veins, but it requires no prophet to say whose blood would flow the freest for many years in the beginning of a war.... We say then, if an honorable compromise can be had, let us have it; if not, put the country in the best possible state of defense, and let WAR and blood and anguish decide who owns the waste lands on the Pacific coast.

It is interesting that the Express contains such bellicose language over what it describes as "waste lands." The Shelbyville Recorder during the spring of 1846 ran the caption, "No Red Lines across the map of Oregon," directly below the paper's name. Finally, on May 23, 1846, the Bloomington Herald stated in reference to Oregon, "No surrender of one single foot whilst one drop of American blood remains to defend it." However, with war looming and then breaking out against Mexico, President Polk was anxious to avoid going to war with Great Britain. In April 1846 he submitted a draft treaty to the Senate; the Senate then approved the terms extending the border down the 49th parallel, and the agreement was signed by the United States and Britain on June 15, 1846, and swiftly ratified by the Senate four days later.

The 36th Session of the Indiana General Assembly convened in Indianapolis on December 1, 1851. It was the longest legislative session in Indiana history—204 calendar days—and one of the most significant. Due to dissatisfaction with the original Indiana constitution of 1816, the electorate of Indiana adopted a new constitution on August 4, 1851, which is still in effect today. The official history of the General Assembly points out that for the 36th Session, "[t]he task of implementing the Constitution caused the introduction of 560 bills plus..."
innumerable resolutions, reports, and propositions.... Some 270 bills emerged from this mass to become law...." One of those resolutions was Senate Joint Resolution 69, introduced by Senator Robert Crawford of Decatur County (southeastern Indiana) and entitled, "A Joint Resolution on the subject of emigration to Oregon and the Pacific coast." Senator Crawford introduced his resolution on January 31, 1852. It was read for the first time that day, and there was no debate on the bill. It was read a second time on February 10 and a third time on February 13. After the third reading the bill was passed by the senate without debate or dissenting vote—39 ayes, 0 nays, out of 50 senators.

The resolution then moved to the house. It was first read the same day that it passed the senate—February 13, 1852. It was read a second time on February 14 and a third time on February 16. As in the senate, there was no debate and the measure passed unanimously—76 ayes, 0 nays, out of 100 representatives. On February 19, 1852, Governor Joseph Wright signed the resolution, which in its enacted form stated:

A Joint Resolution on the subject of emigration to Oregon and the Pacific coast. (APPROVED FEBRUARY 19, 1852.) WHEREAS, It is unsafe for citizens of the States to emigrate to Oregon, or the Pacific coast, by the overland route, rendered so by the depredations of Indians or other persons; and believing, that it is but just, and right that those persons emigrating to the far west should receive protection from the general government, &c.; therefore, Resolved by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested to use their influence to procure as speedily as may be practicable, protection from the general government, to those citizens who may emigrate to the Oregon territory or Pacific coast, &c. Resolved further, That his Excellency the Governor be requested to transmit immediately, a copy of this resolution to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress.

Once this was signed by Governor Wright, Senator Crawford promptly left Indiana and emigrated with his family and friends to Oregon.

After Senate Joint Resolution 69 was approved by the Indiana General Assembly, the subject of Oregon came up numerous times during the spring of 1852 in the Indianapolis newspapers. On March 11, 1852, the Whig Party-leaning (and later the Republican Party-leaning) Indiana State Journal mentioned that numerous parties of emigrants were in the process of leaving for Oregon, with the intention of rendezvousing in St. Joseph, Missouri. On March 15, 1852, the State Journal again commented on emigration to Oregon, stating that "Men in the prime of life as well as old and young, are all imbibing the spirit of chance and adventure, and are bound for the land where sudden fortunes and perfect health are looked for, but after all, rarely found or obtained."

The other major Indianapolis newspaper, the Democratic-leaning Indiana State Sentinel, also ran items concerning Oregon. On April 22, 1852, it printed an article entitled "Fertility of Oregon" in which it quoted an Oregon newspaper's claim that turnips in Polk County "frequently
"The clear mountain stream springs from the rock,
And leaping o'er cataracts,
rolls to the sea." Waterfall at Cape Horn on the Columbia River, c. 1890.
grow to the weight of 25 or 30 pounds." On May 20, 1852, the Sentinel printed a long letter from a farmer in Marion County, Oregon. The writer, Wesley Shannon, sent it to a friend of his in Indiana, a state senator from Dearborn County named James Milliken. The paper stated, "The writer, Mr. Wesley Shannon, was formerly a citizen of Henry county, in this State. We knew him well, and can vouch for the truth of his assertions." The missive extolled the virtues of Oregon, commenting on the fine climate, excellent soil, fruit trees, forests, and availability of waterpower. He concluded: "What I write to you is the result of long experience and close observation. I have carefully refrained from overestimating the advantages of Oregon, for I decidedly prefer emigrants should be favorably disappointed, if disappointed at all.

On April 16 and 17, 1852, the Indiana State Journal printed a poem entitled "Oregon." The poem appears in its entirety at right with some spelling modernized and obvious errors corrected.

**Oregon**

There is a land in the far off West,
Beyond where the mountains are lost in the skies,
Where the eagle screams with warlike crest,
And in lofty career with storm-god vies;
O, there is the land where nature's strain is grown,
With lavish hand, the choice of her store!
And with her green carpet the earth's o'ergrown,
From mountains sublime to the Pacific shore.
'Tis the fairy land—of our sisterly band,
And Columbia's bold eagle broods o'er,
On our banner unfurled, the pride of the world,
Where Britannia's beast, with fallen crest,
Drags his tail on the ground, nor dares he to roar.

The clear mountain stream springs from the rock,
And leaping o'er cataracts, rolls to the sea;
The tim'rous deer, in wild sportive flock,
Or quietly feeds in some mossy glade,
Or along the briny deep ocean's shore.

The mountain breeze, as it flits through the trees,
Flushes with health the pioneer's cheek;
That is the land I'd choose for my home,
Or scours the plain with thundering roar,
Where the eagle screams with warlike crest,
And in lofty career with storm-god vies.

The tim'rous deer, in wild sportive flock,
Flies from the storm, and with its head down,
Or quietly feeds in some mossy glade,
Then down on the plain I'd build me a cot,
Or along the briny deep ocean's shore.

That is the land I'd choose for my home,
In the broad lap of wealth, and blessed too with health.

—Nella

as a symbol for Great Britain (line 12). Mountains figure prominently, including the opening lines in all three stanzas, and are used as a symbol of health and reaching up to God. Health, prosperity, and contentment are mentioned throughout the poem, including the final five lines of the second stanza and several times in the third stanza.

The conflict with Great Britain also takes a prominent place in the poem—the final five lines of the first stanza. This is no surprise, since the struggle with Great Britain over Oregon had only been resolved six years earlier. Religion and personal salvation interestingly are used to close the poem. Finally, the word "Oregon" appears only in the title and never in the body of the poem.

The reaction to all this by someone living in Indiana in 1852 is hard to imagine. It was a presidential election year and the newspapers were filled with campaign rhetoric (since they literally functioned as the political parties’ spokesmen) and discussion about sectional conflict over slavery. The only negative comment about Oregon that could be located in the Indianapolis newspapers that spring was from the State Journal on March 15, 1852, pointing out that "sudden fortunes and perfect health are... rarely found or obtained." Memories of the California gold rush of 1849 probably influenced this statement. However, due to the number of positive comments about the Oregon Territory in the newspapers, many people were obviously pulling up stakes in Indiana and emigrating to the Pacific Northwest, seeking that land of "sudden fortunes and perfect health."

An Oregon native, Michael Maben is employed as the cataloging librarian at the Indiana University School of Law Library at Bloomington. He found the poem "Oregon" in the Indiana State Journal while doing research on the Indiana General Assembly.
On the first day of May 1839 a group of 16 armed and mounted men rode up to the courthouse in the town square of Peoria, Illinois, bowed their heads, pledged themselves never to desert one another, then turned and rode west to the cheers of local citizens who had turned out to see them off. Their stated intent was to colonize the Oregon Country on behalf of the United States of America and drive out the English fur trading companies operating there. Their organizer and elected captain was Peoria lawyer Thomas Jefferson Farnham, and he called his men the Oregon Dragoons. They carried with them a flag emblazoned with the motto, “Oregon or the Grave,” a gift from Mrs. Farnham.

The seed for the expedition had been planted the previous fall when the Reverend Jason Lee visited Peoria on a national speaking tour about the Oregon Country. Lee was a Methodist missionary who had been living and working among the Native Americans in the Willamette Valley since 1833. He was in the vanguard of Christian missionaries sent to Oregon in response to an 1831 visit to the United States by a delegation of four Native Americans representing the Flathead and Nez Perce tribes of the Pacific Northwest. The Oregon tribes had contact with Catholic Iroquois Indians who were working with French-Canadian fur trappers, and they wanted to learn more about the white man’s religion practiced by the Iroquois. The delegation was sent to find and seek counsel from the trusted white men who had visited them some 25 years earlier—Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Lewis was long dead, but Clark was superintendent of Indian Affairs in St. Louis. News of the meeting between Clark and the delegation was sensationalized in East Coast newspapers, and churches mobilized to send missionaries in response. Lee’s Methodists had been the first to arrive in Oregon.

Inspired by stories they had heard about the fertile and beautiful Willamette Valley, a group of 16 men struck out from Peoria, Illinois, to help claim Oregon for the United States.

In March 1838 Lee left Oregon to travel to New York City to request supplies and more personnel for his mission. He carried with him a petition signed by 36 settlers asking President Van Buren to “take formal and speedy possession of the Oregon Country.” The chief complaint of the Americans was that the Hudson’s Bay Company was engaging in unfair competition and acting as a de facto British government for Oregon. HBC was the only available source of supplies and clothing, and the Americans felt they were charged unfair rates.

Both the United States and Great Britain laid claim to the Pacific Northwest, which since the end of the War of 1812 had been under a treaty of joint occupation. The American claim was
based on the discovery of the Columbia River by Captain Robert Gray, the Astoria settlement at the mouth of the Columbia, and to a lesser extent on the explorations of the Lewis and Clark expedition. The British claim was based on the explorations of George Vancouver and David Thompson, and occupation and settlement. The latter took the form of a series of HBC forts, the largest at Fort Vancouver, to protect and promote the company's lucrative fur trade.

When Jason Lee spoke at Peoria's Main Street Presbyterian Church on October 1, 1838, he had with him five Native American boys from the Oregon Country. One of the boys, a Calapooya named Thomas Adams, became ill and remained in Peoria to recuperate. Indian Tom, as he was called, generated a great deal of interest about Oregon as he described the physical features and natural resources of his home in the Willamette Valley. The combination of Adams's stories and Lee's lecture was what inspired some of town's young men to take action, with the intent of helping to claim Oregon for the United States.

Almost all of the men were single, in their early twenties, and imbued with a romantic sense of adventure. When they left Peoria each man had his own horse, a rifle with powder and 120 balls of ammunition, a Bowie knife weighing as much as seven to nine pounds, and $100 to $150 for supplies. The party jointly owned a tent large enough for all 16 men, a wagon with a two-horse team, provisions, and a communal kitty of $100 for contingencies.

Farnham saw himself as a military leader and adventurer. He believed his army of 16, only one of whom had had any military experience, could rally the Americans living in Oregon and drive out the British—by force of arms, if necessary. The party started each morning with marching orders and bugle calls. There was also the motivation of gaining wealth in Oregon. Plans were discussed to ship Northwest salmon and furs around Cape Horn to the East Coast. Party member Joseph Holman, a cooper by trade, would be relied on to make the barrels needed for preserving and shipping salmon.

Almost immediately into the trip the men started arguing and bickering, which culminated in a near-fatal accident and the eventual dissolution of the group. Three weeks after leaving Peoria, the men arrived in Independence, Missouri. There they bought more supplies, including an additional 200 pounds of flour, traded their wagon for pack mules and were joined by two more men: Robert Shortess, a Pennsylvanian who had lived some years in western Missouri, and John Pritchel, an Englishman. The men reorganized, once again electing Farnham captain; Chauncey Wood was chosen as lieutenant. The remaining men were divided into four companies of four men each. All told, the Oregon Dragoons now consisted of two officers and 16 men. They agreed to bury their differences and start out fresh.

The party may have had a map of the West that was published in 1838, but more likely they relied on local trappers and traders for advice on their route. Andrew Sublette, a mountain man and fur trader, was in Independence at that time; he advised the party to start southwest on the more heavily traveled Santa Fe Trail. Farnham decided to follow the Santa Fe road southwest across Kansas and then turn west across what is now
Having traded their wagon for a string of pack mules, the Oregon Dragoons must have looked very much like this 1850s survey party as they headed west.

Colorado, proceed north to Brown's Hole, and pick up what would become the Oregon Trail between Brown's Hole and Fort Hall. This added at least a month to the trip, and the approaching winter became a major consideration as the journey progressed. On the other hand, the proximity of Bent's Fort to their route probably saved the life of one of the men. The party left Independence on May 30.

On June 10 the dragoons had their first Indian encounter on the trail. Farnham’s journal describes the individual:

He had no clothing, save a blanket tied over the left shoulder and drawn under the right arm. His head was shaven entirely bare, with the exception of a tuft of hair, about two inches in width, extending from the center occipital over the middle of the forehead. It was short and coarse [sic] and stood erect, like the comb of a cock. His figure was the perfection of physical beauty. He was five feet nine or ten inches in height, and looked the Indian in everything.

At his solicitous request members of the party gave the man some powder and flint and they parted peacefully. Rain fell continuously and the going was rough. Farnham noted in his journal: “I was so much reduced when I dismounted from my horse on the evening of the fifteenth, that I was unable to loosen my saddle or spread my blanket for repose.” Arguments and fights again broke out among the men. Farnham had made a critical error by counting on game to sustain his men all the way to Oregon. They brought with them just flour, salt, and a little bacon.

The men were so inexperienced that after the first week they were running low on food. They were not skilled marksmen and failed to kill anything with their flintlock rifles. Food rationing became necessary, and each man was limited to a daily food allotment of one-quarter cup of flour, mixed with water and fried in bacon fat. They were wet and hungry and generally miserable.

Three members of the group quit and headed back to Peoria.

Instead of the buffalo the men had counted on, their first meal of wild game was turtle soup, made from a 20-pound turtle shot by Sidney Smith. Their next meals were catfish and then antelope. It was over a month before the men found the hope-for herds of bison. Francis Fletcher and Quinn Jordan brought down the first buffalo. By then, the supply of flour and salt was exhausted and the men lived the rest of the trip on “meat straight,” as described in Holman’s account of the journey. Eventually the party ran into bison herds so immense they couldn’t even pass through them. They would shoot up to a dozen of the animals at a time, often taking just the tongue and leaving the remainder behind. Occasionally they would dry the meat on scaffolds hung over a fire to make jerky.

After crossing the Arkansas River—the “American Nile” to Farnham—the party overtook the Alvarez and Walworth pack train headed for Bent’s Fort. Their fear of Indian raids caused the
two groups to travel together for mutual protection. When it was time for the parties to head in separate directions, one of the traders, William Blair, joined the Peoria men.

Although food was no longer an immediate concern, disagreements continued among the men. The farther they traveled, the more quarrelsome they became. One of the hottest tempered men was Sidney Smith. On June 20, 1839, while Farnham was away from camp, another squabble broke out as the men packed up camp. At the height of the argument, Smith rushed to the tent and pulled out his rifle by the barrel. The gun discharged, seriously wounding him in the side. Smith insisted that someone had shot him until he was shown the smoking barrel of his own rifle. Farnham had brought no medical supplies, so a rider was dispatched to bring back a wagon and “doctor” from the pack train they had recently left. Smith was placed in the wagon and the party headed southwest for Bent's Fort. Before Smith's injury the party had been able to cover 20 to 30 miles a day. Afterwards, they were lucky to travel 15 miles in a day.

The party soon dissolved into chaos and Farnham lost all authority. On the trail to Bent's Fort a heated meeting was held during which Farnham, accused of incompetence and waste of party funds, was deposed as captain. Robert Shortess, who had joined the group in Independence, was elected in his place. At 43, Shortess was eight years older than Farnham and had lived much longer in the West. Both men later published accounts of the trip in which each made derogatory remarks about the other. Farnham referred to Shortess as “a vagabond, miscreant, Napoleon, and His Greatness.” Shortess accused Farnham of ineptness and neglect of duty. The men who had pledged never to desert one another argued over whether to leave Smith behind. Three more men, including their lieutenant, Chauncey Wood, quit the group and headed for Santa Fe. Farnham, Smith, and Obadiah Oakley were nearly expelled from the group but were allowed to remain until the party reached Bent's Fort. Whatever Farnham's shortcomings as a leader, he saved Smith's life. Farnham cleaned and dressed Smith's wound daily and personally drove the wagon that transported the wounded man.

On July 5, 1839, the remnant of the Peoria party reached Bent's Fort, a trading post on the south fork of the Platte River. At the fort Smith's wound was treated and he began a lengthy recovery. However, the borrowed wagon had to be returned to the traders and Smith was forced to ride the rest of the trip. While at Bent's Fort, Farnham, Smith, and Oakley were finally voted out of the group. A division of supplies was made and the three left the fort on July 11 along with two others, Joseph Wood and William Blair, who chose to go with them. Captain Shortess with the six remaining men—Robert Moore, Charles Yates, Francis Fletcher, Amos Cook, Joseph Holman, and Ralph Kilbourne—headed for Fort St. Vrain, another Bent Brothers trading post situated north of present-day Denver.
Farnham with, as he put it, “three sound and good men, and one wounded and bad one, strode our animals and took trail again for the mountains and the Oregon Territory.” Along the trail Farnham’s group encountered a band of fur trappers. The mountain men of the 1830s were generally a rugged lot, but Farnham described in his journal an unusual member of the group:

One of these trappers was from New Hampshire, he had been educated at Dartmouth College, and was, altogether, one of the most remarkable men I ever knew. A splendid gentleman, a finished scholar, a critic on English and Roman literature, a politician, a trapper, an Indian!

Farnham never mentioned his name, but in this man he had met an alumnus from a college that had been founded as a mission school for the “education of Indian youth and others.”

Farnham hired another of the trappers, a Kentuckian named Kelly, to serve as a guide. Kelly had once been employed by the American Fur Company and had been back to the States only once since 1827. He led the men to Brown’s Hole, which they reached in mid August. Brown’s Hole, in western Utah, is today known as Brown’s Park. In the days of the Wild West the area was known as the Hole in the Wall—a notorious outlaw hideout. Here Kelly’s services as a guide ended.

While Farnham and his men were camped at Brown’s Hole, a mountain man named Paul Richardson, arrived. He was described as an old Yankee woodsman who was headed from Fort Hall east to Missouri. Richardson gave a despairing account of the Oregon Country. He included in his bleak description that “rain falls incessantly five months of the year.” Richardson persuaded Oakley and Wood, who had seen enough rain already, to join him and head back to Missouri.

Left with only Blair and the still ailing Smith as companions, Farnham hired an Indian named Jim to guide his trio the 200 miles from Brown’s Hole west to Fort Hall. They started out on August 19. A week and a half later they encountered a buckskin-clad man riding a large white horse. The stranger turned out to be none other than Joe Meek, the mountain man known far and wide as “the bear killer.” He had earned this name in a hand-to-paw encounter with a grizzly. Meek spent some time advising Farnham on the territory; the three saw him occasionally as they traveled. Their guide led them to Fort Hall, where they arrived on September 1, 1839, four months from the day they left Peoria.

After two days of rest they hired a new guide, Carbo, and headed for Fort Boise. That trip was particularly tough on the horses because the terrain was mainly volcanic rock. Even so, Carbo got them to Fort Boise in 10 days’ time. Again, after resting for two days, they continued west. On the trail they met a group of Cayuse Indians on their way to Whitman Mission at Waiilatpu. Farnham decided to go to Whitman Mission with the Cayuse. Smith and Blair went on to the sister mission at Lapwai. After Farnham had quarreled with the hotheaded Smith over their scheme to get rich shipping salmon to the East, the two were glad to part company. Blair spent the winter at Lapwai, but Smith traveled on and became the first member of the Peoria party to reach present-day Oregon. He found
employment in the Willamette Valley with Ewing Young.

After a pleasant stay with Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Farnham resumed his journey on October 1. He traveled to The Dalles where there was a mission operated by the Reverend Daniel Lee, the nephew of Jason Lee. Farnham spent a week at The Dalles “eating salmon and growing fat.”

While at the mission he had an unpleasant encounter with the local Indians. Some men of a Chinookan band surreptitiously stripped Farnham’s saddle of its stirrups and other removable parts while it sat in Lee’s workshop. Farnham recounts in his journal how, enraged and armed, he set off to recover his pilfered property. In the Indian camp, some 40 Chincoks men surrounded him, leveling a number of loaded muskets at his chest. Farnham in turn pointed his rifle directly at the chief. Unflustered, the chief pointed his pistol at Farnham’s heart. They faced off for some time, Farnham notes, describing himself as a picture of “perfect undauntedness, except an unpleasant knocking of the knees, produced probably by the anticipated blasts of December.” Finally, one by one, the various saddle parts were tossed at his feet and the episode ended without bloodshed. Farnham further writes that the Chinooks at The Dalles were of ill repute. Indeed, they are mentioned in various other travel narratives, including Lewis and Clark’s, as being variously treacherous, importunate, and of low character.

Soon after this incident, Farnham set out with Lee for Fort Vancouver, the commercial capital of Oregon. They arrived on October 16, 1839, and were met by Dr. John McLoughlin, chief factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, who had just returned from a trip to London and Canada. Lee introduced Farnham, and the two were invited to be guests in McLoughlin’s home. The chief factor, perhaps mercifully, gave Farnham a set of clothes to replace the buckskins he had been wearing. He rested at Fort Vancouver until October 21, then began to tour the Willamette Valley. While visiting the Methodist missions and the American settlements, he gathered 60 signatures on a petition asking the United States to take possession of Oregon.

By early December the former captain of the Peoria party decided to go home. He boarded Captain Alexander Duncan's ship, the Vancouver, which set sail for Honolulu. There was fairly regular ship traffic between Vancouver and Hawaii at that time. Farnham also visited Monterey, California, but was ordered to leave by Mexican authorities trying in vain to keep Americans out of their territory lest they incite another Texas-style revolt.

Although Smith and Farnham were the first members of the Peoria party to see Oregon, Shortess’s group was not far behind. They, too, had traveled from Bent's Fort to Fort St. Vrain, where they intended to join a large party of traders headed for Brown’s Hole. They spent about six weeks at Fort St. Vrain, hunting buffalo and gathering berries. During that time they lost seven of their pack animals to a Sioux raiding party. The Sioux, faced with the increasing press of white encroachment, felt little compunction about stealing from those they viewed as transgressors. When it was time to leave, Robert Moore and Charles Yates chose to stay behind. Moore spent the winter at the fort but eventually came through to Oregon. Yates headed for Santa Fe.

Shortess, Fletcher, Cook, Holman, and Kilbourne arrived at Brown’s Hole just as winter was setting in. It is said that over three feet of snow fell in less than 24 hours. There was a trading post at Brown’s Hole called Fort Davy Crockett in honor of the Alamo hero killed just three years earlier. Fort Crockett, built for the Rocky Mountain Fur Company founded by Jedediah Smith and Kit Carson, was the site of an annual fur trappers’ rendezvous, where mountain men would gather at the end of the trapping season to settle debts and make preparations for winter.

The Peoria men were advised to spend the winter at the fort; all but Shortess—driven by his rivalry with Farnham—chose to do so. Shortess learned that Joe Meek and Robert Newell, also at Brown’s Hole, were preparing to travel to Fort Hall and he obtained their permission to accompany them. When they reached Fort Hall, Newell and Meek headed to the Green River, leaving Shortess at the fort. Although the Hudson’s Bay Company men welcomed him, he was determined to press on to Oregon and set out again in the company of a French-Canadian trapper named Sylvetry and two Indians.

The party encountered blizzards so severe that the Indians decided to turn back, leaving Shortess and Sylvetry to travel alone in drifts of heavy snow up to three feet deep. They reached the Whitman Mission in early December. From Dr. Whitman, Shortess learned that his rival, Thomas Farnham, had visited there over two months earlier. The news that Shortess was so far behind the man he despised as an incompetent leader must have irked him. Any attempt to cross the Cascade Mountains that late in the year was out of the question, so Shortess spent the winter as the Whitmans’ guest. He left Whitman Mission on March 12, 1840, traveling alone to The...
Dalles and reaching the Willamette Valley in April. Unlike Farnham, who soon returned east, Shortess spent the rest of his life in Oregon. He became a prominent citizen and had a long career in government.

The four remaining members of the Peoria party—Fletcher, Holman, Cook, and Kilbourne—by now the closest of friends, remained throughout the winter at Brown's Hole. They built a cabin, hunted, and prepared for the next leg of their journey in the spring. Holman passed the time making rifle stocks and saddles. Those items were traded for a horse, supplies, buckskin clothing, and some beaver skins, which were better than money on the frontier.

In February 1840 Sioux raiding parties were reported in the Brown’s Hole area. The people there were warned to leave. All of the Brown’s Hole trappers fled, as did the four friends. With Robert Newell they set out for Fort Hall, a journey they expected to complete in ten days. A blizzard overtook them, reducing their speed to a snail’s pace. Where Newell had expected to find buffalo, there were none. After four days without food the men met a Native American woman who sold them two dogs, which they immediately killed and ate. Cook reported, “It was not very good eating, but it was better than starving to death.” Later, they managed to kill an old buffalo.

The journey to Fort Hall, which was supposed to take 10 days, concluded after 40 days in the ice and snow. The men at Fort Hall were all French-speaking Canadians, which made communication difficult. Nonetheless, the language barrier did not compromise their hospitality;

Those who made it to Fort Vancouver encountered Dr. John McLoughlin, chief factor of the Hudson’s Bay Company post.

The Canadians shared their dried salmon and corn with the travelers.

Newell opted to stay at Fort Hall, but the four friends joined a Hudson’s Bay Company agent and went on to Fort Boise. From there they were on their own as they journeyed to The Dalles and then Fort Vancouver. Holman called the trip from The Dalles to Fort Vancouver the hardest part of the journey. The trails along the edge of the river were covered by high water, and the men had to lead their horses along the cliffs of the Columbia River gorge. Dr. McLoughlin could hardly believe it when they reached Fort Vancouver at 11 o’clock on the morning of June 11, 1840, 13 months after leaving Peoria. The four were thin from near-starvation, with long hair and heavy beards, bareheaded, and buckskin clad. They traded their beaver pelts for clothing and food. Fletcher still had some of his money, but the HBC charged him 20 percent to change it into British coin. This practice was another of the complaints that drove Americans to demand United States intervention in Oregon.

On the same day that Fletcher, Cook, Kilbourne, and Holman made it safely to Fort Vancouver, the ship Lausanne arrived from New York with Jason Lee and 40 Methodist missionaries. Accompanying Lee was Thomas Adams, the young Calapooya man who had fallen ill in Peoria and whose stories of Oregon had inspired the formation of the Peoria party. American colonization of the Pacific Northwest was under way.

Amos Cook and Francis Fletcher took adjoining land claims along the Yamhill River. They became business partners and lifelong friends. Joseph Holman settled near Jason Lee’s Methodist Mission, north of present-day Salem. Ralph Kilbourne helped build the ship Star of Oregon and sailed with it to California where he settled. Sidney Smith recovered from his gunshot wound and lived another 40 years at his home in Lafayette. Cook, Fletcher, Holman, and Smith, along with Peoria party members Robert Shortess and Robert Moore, all voted with the Americans at Champoeg on May 2, 1843, to found Oregon’s first provisional government, and all became influential citizens. Their biographies are recorded in the pages of Oregon history.

In 1845 the Oregon Treaty between the United States and Great Britain established the 49th parallel as the international boundary in the Pacific Northwest. Three years later the Hudson’s Bay Company pulled out of Oregon and moved its headquarters to Fort Victoria in British Columbia. John McLoughlin quit the Hudson’s Bay Company, moved to Oregon City, and became an American citizen. The United States government eventually paid the HBC $650,000 for the rights and titles to all property and buildings that remained in the United States. Oregon became a United States territory in 1849 and on February 14, 1859, became the 33rd state.

Thomas J. Farnham returned to the United States where the journal of his trip, Travels in the Great Western Prairies, the Anahuac and Rocky Mountains, and in the Oregon Territory, joined the swelling ranks of travel narratives being published and widely circulated in both America and Great Britain to encourage westward migration. His book contributed to the growing public interest in the Oregon Country. Eventually he returned to California where he died in 1848. He concludes his journal:

For beauty of scenery and salubrity of climate, Oregon is not surpassed. It is peculiarly adapted for an agricultural and pastoral people, and no portion of the world beyond the tropics can be found that will yield so readily with moderate labor, to the wants of man.

Randol B. Fletcher is a fifth-generation Oregonian and the great-great-grandson of Francis Fletcher. He lives in Eugene.
The Works of Margaret Thompson

By Peter Donahue

Novelist Andrew Beahrs says, “If history and fiction are a crossroads, many readers will choose to follow the street paved with character over that cobbled with statistics.” However, for the fortunate reader of Margaret Thompson’s Space for Living: A Novel of Grand Coulee and the Columbia Basin, the choice is moot. Of the many works of history and fiction written about the Columbia River, none combines engaging fictional storytelling and exacting historical research better than Thompson’s 1944 novel.

Space for Living recounts the personal and political struggles that led to the construction of Grand Coulee Dam, hailed as the “Eighth Wonder of the World,” and the Columbia River Basin project, which brought hydroelectric power and unprecedented land reclamation to the Northwest. The novel opens with the return of Verne Carter, in 1919, from the battlefields of France to his family’s homestead in central Washington, where plans are under way to irrigate 3,000,000 acres of desert. According to reports, a gravity-based system of canals and siphons will draw water from three large lakes in Idaho and Montana to turn the arid plains of Washington into lush farmland, thus fulfilling the promise of the Inland Empire.

When an alternative proposal to dam the Columbia at the head of Grand Coulee and flood the vast canyon where the prehistoric river once ran is put forward, the battle is met. The Grand Coulee proposal means federal funding, land appropriation (via eminent domain), and public ownership of power and water utilities. It’s endorsed by members of the Grange, the grass roots organization that supports services for rural communities and family farms. It is fiercely opposed by large property owners and business interests seeking to protect their land investments and control utilities. This fiction, which favors the original gravity plan, accuses the Grangers and other proponents of the Grand Coulee plan of importing Bolshevism to the Northwest. Yet the Grand Coulee plan gains support as massive unemployment, rampant land speculation, and increased soil erosion due to archaic tillage practices threaten the region. Finally, in 1933, under Roosevelt’s New Deal, the Public Works Administration approves the plan and construction begins.

Though Verne Carter is intrigued by the monumental nature of the Grand Coulee plan, his heart lies west of the Cascades, in Seattle, where Evelyn, a University of Washington student whom he met prior to enlisting, awaits his return. Verne’s relationship with Evelyn, which extends over the many years during which the competing irrigation plans are debated, evokes the east-west divide that tends to separate Washingtonians politically as well as geographically. (This divide is also brilliantly evoked in Timothy Egan’s 2004 novel, The Winemaker’s Daughter.)

After Evelyn and Verne have a falling out—she belongs to a social justice student organization and he hires out as a scavenger on Seattle’s waterfront during the 1919 General Strike—he marries his hometown sweetheart, the daughter of a wool grower turned state legislator who backs the gravity plan. Personal ambition, though, coupled with a conviction about what’s right for his home state, draws him back into the public debate over the Grand Coulee project, and back to Evelyn.

Margaret Thompson, a resident of Kennewick who served as superintendent of the Benton County schools for 13 years, understands the people and places about which she writes. She understands how people speak: “I’m stumped to know how we’re goin’ to make it through the winter,” says Verne’s father. “I called we’d haul hay from Ellensburg—but it’s sky high. The prices they’re askin’ would break a man up.” She understands the summer swelter and winter winds that ravage central and eastern Washington, and she knows all about hop picking, bunch grass grazing, rabbit drives, and Fourth of July picnics with rolling pin throwing contests.

Thompson also comprehends the region’s history. As Verne’s progressive-minded cousin tells him, “History gives you a good perspective.” Verne himself collects archaeological objects that he gathers throughout the region—“beautifully polished obsidian arrow points, chalcedony spearheads, jadeite adzes, dentalium necklaces, copper bracelets, bone flutes, and stone pipes”—that he later donates to the museum in Wenatchee. Thompson recognizes that local actions always occur within
a broader historical context, which in respect to the debate over the Grand Coulee project as it plays out in Space for Living means the 1846 Treaty of Oregon, the 1892 Coeur D'Alene mining war, the 1919 Seattle General Strike, and the 1932 election of FDR.

Thompson also carefully explains the geology of Grand Coulee and the Columbia River basin. Glacial erratics, columnar basalt, and vertical fissures play as great a role in the novel's drama as Verne's romance with Evelyn. Similarly, Thompson lays out the engineering behind the dam, from test pits to cofferdams. Unfortunately, reflecting the era's priorities, little attention is given to the project's effect on salmon runs, regarded as the quaint purview of local tribes rather than the stuff of empire building.

Space for Living, the title of which derives from Populist governor John R. Rogers' advocacy of rural life (1897-1901), ends with the dam's completion. After earning his degree in architecture from the University of Washington, Verne designs facilities in the burgeoning state park system, including at Steamboat Rock. He relinquishes his love for Evelyn and recommit himself to his and his wife's family, all of whom are descended from pioneers.

Margaret Thompson, who died in 1963, also published High Trails of Glacier National Park (1936), a splendidly illustrated history and tour of this national treasure, and On the Trail with Marcus Whitman (1952), a popular biography for school-age readers. A committed conservationist, she co-edited with geographer Otis W. Freeman, The Conservation of Northwest Resources (1951), a collection of reports published by the Northwest Conservation League.

Yet Space for Living, the novel in which the author recounts events that would forever change the Northwest, remains Margaret Thompson's most notable work. Unlike British fur-trader David Thompson, who took several wrong turns in his early exploration of the Columbia River, this Thompson always knows which way the river flows.

Peter Donahue is author of the novel Madison House, which won the 2005 Langum Prize for Historical Fiction, and the short story collection The Cornelius Arms. He is also coeditor of Reading Seattle: The City in Prose.

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

The Columbia through Time

The Asianization of America

Sun Dogs & Eagle Down

There is a Land in the Far Off West

Oregon or the Grave
**Snohomish County: An Illustrated History**


Reviewed by Barbara J. Smith-Kubik.

_Snohomish County: An Illustrated History_ is a comprehensive look at the county's geography, history, and economic and industrial development. A team of historians, illustrators, and writers have put together a good volume. They included accounts of large communities like the county seat of Everett (population 97,500) and of small communities like the mountain town of Index (population 140). _Snohomish County_ is a large county with a long and complex 12,000-year history. It is not easy to write and illustrate a "local history" of either a community or a county. Writers must carefully research and develop a history that pleases many different readers. Descendants of early pioneer families look for mention of their families, businesses, and community affiliations. They want to see photos of their community's main streets and schools. Newcomers look for ways to connect to their community with an understanding of place names, festivals, and historic structures. For them, maps showing historic settlements, tribal lands, transportation routes, and geography help settle their own new place in a larger picture. Historians look for attitudes and growth that reflect national and regional trends. Ethnographers seek information about the area's earliest peoples, their cultures, subsistence, transportation, and history. All readers want maps and photographs that are large, easy-to-view, and carefully and accurately identified. Captions are a sample, a vignette, of the larger story and are just as important as the actual text of the book.

So, how does _Snohomish County: An Illustrated History_ measure up to the ideal? The authors have written well-balanced accounts of many communities, from Marysville and Monte Cristo to Everett and Edmonds. For the most part, the history of the growth and development of smaller communities is not overshadowed by those of larger ones. A perusal of the book's bibliography indicates the authors took care to research many of the communities' histories, promotional literature, and weekly newspapers. Numerous sidebars, or vignettes, bring a personal face to this history. At times, the authors contextualize the county's history with national and regional events.

That said, _Snohomish County_ is not without problems. The county's history includes many strong personalities. Isaac I. Stevens, Father Eugene C. Chirouse, and Chief Pat-ka-nim, a signer of the Treaty of Point Elliott, are three such men, and Ella C. Granger, the county's first woman superintendent of schools, is a notable woman. But there are neither biographical sketches of these people nor analyses of their roles in the county's history. It would have been helpful to at least include a list of biographies in the bibliography. There are a few factual errors. For example, the "top secret Hanford Engineering Works" was built in Richland, Washington, not near Toppenish. Likewise, the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki was not made at Hanford; components of the bomb, yes, but not the bomb itself. But overall, the authors of _Snohomish County: An Illustrated History_ have given us a good summation of the economic and industrial history of the county. I know they piqued my interest in the county where I grew up and in my own family's role in the county's settlement and development. I think they will do the same for other readers—pioneer families, newcomers, historians, and ethnographers alike.

Barbara J. Smith-Kubik grew up in Snohomish County. She is a graduate of Washington State University. As a research historian, she works for a variety of scholars, government agencies, and commemorative events.

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**By His Own Hand?**

_The Mysterious Death of Meriwether Lewis_


Reviewed by Dale Roloff.

Would it be great if we could have definitive answers to some of the biggest mysteries in history involving the death or disappearance of Americans whose legendary lives were cut short by unknown circumstances? Did Butch Cassidy die in a Bolivian shoot-out or did he somehow make it back home, some say to end his days in Spokane? Did Amelia Earhart survive her plane's landing somewhere in the remote Pacific, then wind up in the hands of Japanese armed forces that some say she had been observing as part of a United States reconnaissance mission? And did Meriwether Lewis commit suicide or was he murdered by unknown assailants, perhaps as part of a conspiracy to protect a cabal led by General James Wilkinson? The book under review seeks to find answers to this last and greatest of America's unsolved mysteries.

By _His Own Hand?_ is laid out in three basic parts. Part one, by James J. Holmberg, outlines the case for Lewis's suicide, and a compelling one it is. John D. W. Guice takes the opposite tack and makes the case for murder and cover-up, with some keen insights that history has overlooked. Finally, Jay H. Buckley straddles the fence between the two camps and lays out the facts on both sides in a mock coroner's inquest. For the first time, competing views on the death of Lewis are brought forward in one volume to help solve this mystery.
mystery. Although historians may disagree on why and exactly how Lewis died, there is no doubt about the place and time. Efforts have been made to exhume his body for a more definitive answer, but the National Park Service has thus far refused to disturb the memorial site within its charge. There are two good reasons. First, it is doubtful that any decent remains are there for scientific study. At the time of his death, the body was placed in a grave so shallow that pigs are believed to have partially consumed the body and such a shallow grave site would be further susceptible to other natural environmental damage. But the primary reason for federal stonewalling would seem to be that such a precedent would open the door to further attempts to shed light upon other bodies in places that the government would not want to be disturbed.

Until more evidence, such as an unlikely exhumation, is forthcoming, we can only try to determine the case on the available facts. The authors herein have done their best to provide this information and it is presented in a very thorough yet intriguing manner. No one who has been enthralled with the lives and exploits of Lewis and Clark will be disappointed at this remarkable look into the final chapter of events in the life of half of one of the American history's most influential twosome. By His Own Hand? answers many questions, and it is left to the reader to sort out the truth from the many sources available.

Dale Roloff has written about the Lewis and Clark expedition for the Pacific Northwest Inlander, a Spokane weekly.

Peoples of the Plateau
The Indian Photographs of Lee Moorhouse, 1898-1915
Reviewed by William Layman.

Using the word “capture” to describe what happens when a photographer creates a picture through a camera’s lens is a thought-provoking term, particularly when the subjects are indigenous people. Perhaps the contrivance of the camera lends itself to such language. The camera “takes” a photograph while the photographer is involved in its creation. To learn what a given photograph depicts, we must probe into photographer’s motivations, perceptions, life, and times. Thankfully, Steven Grafe’s thorough introduction to the photographs of Lee Moorhouse gives us just the needed contextual element to appreciate how amazing an accomplishment his body of work represents.

Grafe’s research reveals that Lee Moorhouse fully ascribed to early 20th-century mistaken notions that American Indians were people of “a vanishing race,” so his primary motivation was to record what he felt would be soon lost. But as Grafe explains, Moorhouse’s motivations extended beyond a passing interest. Unlike his contemporary, Edward Curtis, he was committed to developing ongoing relationships with Pacific Northwest tribal people, particularly the Umatilla, Cayuse, Nez Perce, Walla Walla, and Yakama. Having served as Indian agent on the Umatilla Reservation prior to developing a passion for photography, he knew many of his subjects as individuals. As a result, his careful attention to recording the names of the people who posed for his camera has won him the respect and gratitude of the descendants of those whom he recorded on film.

One need only see the front cover photograph of Ku-massag, a Cayuse woman also known by her Christian name of Agnes Davis, to know that this will be a beautiful book. The photograph sets a tone that is dignified, respectful, and engaging. Ku-massag looks straight into the eyes of the viewer. Her prominent facial features, accentuated by her eyebrows and full bodied lips, are framed by two shell earrings that pick up the round features of her face. Her presence is solid, forthright, unassuming, and direct.

The book contains 104 black-and-white images that depict a range of Plateau Indian culture at the beginning of the 20th century. We see portraits done both in the studio and in the field. Some feel contrived, even stiff, but others show overpowering intensity. Especially important is Moorhouse’s documentation of southern Plateau equine life. A number of images depict people and horses in parades or encamped at the famous Pendleton Roundup. Others show life in and around the reservation. From scaffolding at Billy Barnhart’s camp on the Umatilla we see hundreds of eels drying in the summer sun. Another photograph gracefully documents the singular beauty of the Umatilla council lodge, the walls of which are made of woven tule mats. Such photographs stand in stark contrast to a series of views documenting the Umatilla Indian School where children, dressed in uniformly Western clothing, stand at uncomfortable attention.

Peoples of the Plateau brings together an outstanding collection of little-known material, excellent scholarship, and beautiful design. These photographs should be viewed over time. With each return the impalpable cultural dialogue between viewer and viewed promises to grow richer. It would doubtless please Lee Moorhouse to know that he has been the instrument of a deep appreciation for the Columbia Plateau peoples for years to come.


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Mortimer & Joan Thomas
Janet Thompson
Joanne Titus Thompson
Virginia Thorson
Shert & Jeff Tom
Mr. & Mrs. Richard Toth
Eckard & Patricia Toy
Mr. & Mrs. Alifie Treleven
Allan Treuer
George Tsutakawa
Teresa M. Tuel
Molly Tuohy
The Hon. Elizabeth E. Verhey
Craig Voegle
Dennis & Doris Walden
Dr. John Walker
Mary Ann Walters
George & Marie Weiss
David & Wendy Welch
Jim & Elaine Wick
Charles Wilkinson
Melanie Ito
Mr. & Mrs. James W. Will
Frances A. Williamson
Dr. & Mrs. John Willmorth
Betty I. Wing
John R. Withers
R. Lorena Wojahn
Judy A. Woodworth
Bernice L. Youtz

AFFILIATE ORGANIZATIONS
Anacortes Museum Foundation
Ballard Historical Society
Bigelow House Preservation Association
Challam County Historical Society Museum
Clark County Historical Society & Museum
Coulee City Historical Society
Des Moines Historical Society
East Benton County Historical Society
Edmonds South Snohomish County Historical Society
Emerclaw Plateau Historical Society
Ezra Meeker Historical Society
Firecrest Civic & Heritage Association
Fort Hill Historical Society
Fort Nisqually Foundation
Fort Walla Walla Museum
Fox Island Museum
Franklin County Historical Society
Gig Harbor Peninsula Historical Society
Grant House Folk Art Center
Historic Fort Steilacoom Association
Historical Society of Michigan
Jefferson County Historical Society
Key Peninsula Historical Society
Kitap County Historical Society
League of Snohomish County Heritage Organizations
Lewis County Historical Society
Maple Valley Historical Society
Maryhill Museum of Art
Missouri Historical Society
Northwest Chapter of the Oregon-California Trails Association
Okanogan County Historical Society
Pend Oreille County Historical Society
Pacific Northwest Historians Guild
Pioneer Farm Museum and Ohop Indian Village
Points Northeast Historical Society
Renton Historical Society
Roy Historical Society
South Pierce County Historical Society
South Sound Maritime Heritage Association
Spanaway Historical Society
Steilacoom Tribal Museum Association
Tacoma Historical Society
Washington Commission for the Humanities
Washington State Chapter of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation
Washington State Jewish Historical Society
Wenatchee Valley Museum & Cultural Center
Whitman County Historical Society
Wilkeson Historical Society
Yakima Valley Museum

THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST HISTORIANS GUILD
invites you to attend

LET'S EAT! A HISTORY OF FOOD AND FOODWAYS IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Saturday March 3, 2007

The conference takes place at the
Museum of History and Industry, Seattle

Pre-registration begins Feb 1, 2007

More information at pnwhistorians.org

Friends prepare a meal at a campground in Mt. Baker National Forest, c. 1930.
Photographs, maps, poetry, sound, and illustrations show the unobstructed Columbia River flowing from its source in the mountains of Canada to the waters of the Pacific Ocean.

River of Memory
THE EVERLASTING COLUMBIA

January 15 - April 15, 2007