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This hand-tinted photographic postcard depicts a somewhat romanticized view of Tacoma’s Point Defiance Park overlooking Puget Sound. The park is still the city’s most popular recreational attraction, and many of its most beloved features were given birth under the expert guidance of horticulturist E. R. Roberts over a century ago. See story beginning on page 15. (Special Collections, Washington State Historical Society)
Search Society Collections on the Web

The year 2008 saw some exciting additions to the Historical Society's Web site content, resulting in expanding opportunities for online visitors. Best thought of as an addition to our already long list of outreach activities across the state, this creative content is noteworthy for its innovative curriculum modules. Called "Washington Stories," this section of our Web site offers students, teachers, and other audiences historical subjects ranging from the Lewis and Clark expedition to the history of transcontinental railroads. The development of our new "Research Washington" Web portal heralds the release of a new, searchable collections catalog that allows visitors to peruse our permanent collection of artifacts, photography, research materials, and finding aids. The Society's growing digital photography archive provides access to an expansive visual and historical record of Washington via our online image collections.

Finally, the launch of a comprehensive Web site redesign demonstrates our commitment to present this wealth of information in a way that our audiences can access, utilize, and enjoy free of charge. And we have instituted a reliable system of metrics providing some benchmark information on our market reach.

This issue of COLUMBIA offers a new light on our online image collections, starting with some poster selections from one of our recent exhibitions, The West the Railroads Made (see page 31). To see these and other colorful images firsthand (or perhaps even order a poster-size print reproduction), please see the online collections at http://research.washingtonhistory.org/collections.

—David L. Nicandri, Executive Editor
The Governor's Mansion Centennial

By Gerry L. Alexander

In Olympia, on August 1, 1908, a ceremony was held and a marble cornerstone was laid to formally inaugurate the erection of the lovely home we have known over the succeeding years as the Governor's Mansion. At the time the cornerstone was laid, construction of the residence had been under way for several months and the foundation and basement of the house were complete.

That long-ago event, like the recent centennial celebration of the Governor's Mansion, was attended by many dignitaries and several hundred spectators. Indeed, most local businesses had declared a half-day holiday in recognition of the occasion. One of the speakers was our then-governor Albert Mead. A little over a year earlier Governor Mead had proposed that the legislature authorize construction of a residence for the governor's use. At that time our governors had no official residence. Governor Mead felt that an executive mansion would be the proper place for Washington's governor to entertain dignitaries who would be visiting the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition, the world's fair that was scheduled to be held in 1909 on the relatively new campus of the University of Washington.

The legislature responded favorably to Governor Mead's request in the 1907 session, passing a bill that provided the then-lofty sum of $35,000 for construction of the residence and the purchase of furnishings. The bill indicated that the residence should be built on a portion of what was called the "Old Capitol" site in Olympia, a ten-acre tract of land that had been donated to the Territory of Washington in 1855 by Olympia's founder, Edmund Sylvester, and his wife Clara. It is noteworthy that the legislature made the appropriation contingent on title to the tract being confirmed by the Washington Supreme Court in a case that was then pending. In its decision, which came down very soon after the legislature
adjourned, the court rejected a claim by Clara Sylvester and her daughter that the property should revert to them. The Sylvesters’ chief contention had been that the donation of the land was conditioned upon the erection of a state capitol building on the site. Up to this point, no state capitol building had been erected there to replace the tired Old Territorial Capitol Building that was still on the tract. Indeed, there was a question in the minds of many about whether a state capitol building would ever be built on the Sylvester donation; the capitol was then situated in downtown Olympia in what we now call the Old Capitol Building. In ruling for the State of Washington and against the Sylvester, the court said the contention that Edmund and Clara Sylvester’s gift was conditional had not been expressed in the 1855 deed, and the fact that the heirs of Sylvester gave a conditional quit claim deed after statehood did not avail them.

Although Governor Mead did not say this in his remarks at the laying of the cornerstone, I am certain that he was thinking he would be the first governor to reside in the mansion. Unhappily for him, a month after the cornerstone was laid he failed to gain the Republican nomination for governor in Washington’s first direct primary election. In rejecting Mead, the Republicans selected Samuel Cosgrove, a Civil War veteran who hailed from Garfield County in eastern Washington. Cosgrove went on to win in the general election of 1908 and became our state’s sixth governor.

Everyone thus assumed that Cosgrove would be the first governor to reside in the new mansion. Alas, that never came to pass either because the governor-elect became ill before he could take the oath of office. Although he was able to attend his inauguration and take the oath, he was not well enough to attend the mansion housewarming and the
inaugural ball. He left Olympia immediately after the swearing-in, hoping to find a cure for his illness in sunny California. He died there in March 1909. Upon his death Lieutenant Governor Marion Hay became governor and, consequently, it was he and his wife Lizzie and their children who became the first first family to occupy the mansion. Indeed, it was Lizzie Hay who assisted in awarding Frederick and Nelson of Seattle the contract to provide furnishings for the mansion with a portion of the funds allocated by the legislature. The Hays' sixth child, Margaret, was the first child born in the mansion. In adulthood Margaret married Frank Weaver, who later became a justice of the Washington Supreme Court. Their son Alan and daughter Sarah attended the mansion's centennial celebration.

Because the primary motivation for erecting the Governor's Mansion was the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition of 1909, the building was not expected to be a permanent structure. In fact, its future became even more tenuous a few years later when the State Capitol Master Plan was developed by Wilder and White, the New York architects who had won the competition to design the capitol complex. Their plan did not even show the mansion. Rather, they envisioned a building identical to what is now the Insurance Building on the spot. Although five of the six neoclassic buildings initially designed by Wilder and White have been built over the years, the sixth, the one that would have displaced the mansion, never got farther than a drawing on a piece of paper. Consequently, the mansion survived, and all of our governors since Marion Hay have lived there with family members.

The residence was designed in the Georgian Revival style by Tacoma architects Russell and Babcock. Perhaps because it had been considered to be a temporary structure, problems became evident early on. In fact, in 1915 Governor Lister moved his family out of the building because it lacked heat. A succession of later governors complained of the cold, of sagging floorboards, inadequate plumbing, and faulty wiring. Over the years a series of renovations and upgrades took place. The mansion's most extensive renovation took place in the early 1970s during the administration of Governor Daniel Evans. In fact, the Evans family had to move out of the building for a period of time while the residence was extensively upgraded and enlarged. Prior to that renovation, there was some discussion about whether the house should be torn down. One of its critics, an architect, called the home "not architecturally wonderful" and not "historically ancient." Governor Evans responded that it was "a lot more ancient than a new one would be." It is fair to say that the mansion was saved for posterity thanks largely to the intervention of Governor Evans and First Lady Nancy Evans.

Looking toward the future, Nancy Evans also spearheaded the creation of the Governor's Mansion Foundation, which was established to "stimulate interest in donating furniture, paintings, and art objects as well as financial support." Today, the artwork in the mansion is as exceptional as the furniture, which reflects various periods: Georgian, French Empire, English Regency, American Federal, and Victorian. Fortunately, a few of the original pieces—most notably the grandfather clock and dining room furnishings—still remain.

Major work was also done on the building during the tenure of Governor Gary Locke. This included replacing wooden floors, fixing a leaky roof, remodeling the private quarters, and, most famously, patching bat holes. The 2001 Nisqually earthquake took its toll on the residence, and damage to plaster walls and exterior brickwork had to be repaired. Right now the mansion is in the best shape ever, and we can truly say on its 100th anniversary that it is in fine fettle, proudly ready to serve the state for another century or more.

A house, of course, is just bricks and mortar—it's the people who live in it that make it a home. Despite a rough start, it has been a happy home to many governors and their families; and it has served as a wonderful venue for countless receptions, dinners, meetings, and public tours, all of which have been important to our state's progress.

Indeed, many famous people have been to this residence while visiting our state, and I thought I would close by listing a few. Let me, however, make the disclaimer that I can't prove that all of these people were here because not everyone signed the guest register. I have, however, been told that the house was visited by U.S. President Calvin Coolidge, entertainers Pearl Bailey and Victor Borge, Queen Margaret of Denmark, Prime Minister Sato of Japan, and King Harald V of Norway. Nancy Evans advised me that during her years in residence the house was visited by Vice President Spiro Agnew and First Lady Patricia Nixon. We know for certain that at an earlier time President Harry Truman visited and actually stayed overnight in the mansion. He did sign the guest register.

After serving for 20 years as a trial and appellate court judge, Gerry L. Alexander became a Washington State Supreme Court justice in 1994 and has been chief justice since 2000.
The day after the presidential election of 1912, 13-year-old Medora Espy wrote to her mother:

Isn't it awful that the Democrats have won all over the U.S.? Wilson president, Lister governor and 294 Democrats in Congress, 125 Republicans and 16 Progressives. I have been wearing a Bull Moose pin but since the election my pin is put safely away where I shall keep it and show my grandchildren the badge the progressives wore the first year of the Progressive Party.

I am anxious to know the County returns.

What is good for Hay Fever? Ans. Listerine. [Medora's joke refers to the newly elected Governor of Washington, Ernest Lister (D. 1913, 1919), and his defeated opponent, Governor Marion E. Hay (R. 1909-1913)].

Medora's interest in and concern over the election results might seem unusual given the time period, her gender, and her age. However, she was not a "usual" girl, nor was she from a "usual" family.

Medora Espy was the eldest of Helen Richardson and state senator Harry Albert Espy's seven children. In November 1912 she was a freshman at Olympia High School, staying at the home of "Mrs. Eadie" at 15th and Adams Streets in the state capital. The boarding arrangement was temporary while Medora awaited the arrival of the rest of her family, at which time they would all take up residence in a rental house. The move would be in time for the beginning of the 13th session of the Washington State Legislature, during which Papa was serving the last year of his term (1911-1913) as senator from the 19th District representing Pacific and Wahkiakum Counties.

Home for Medora and her family was the tiny, tumbledown village of Oysterville in the southwestern corner of the state. Once a pioneer boomtown and Pacific County seat, Oysterville was now an all-but-forgotten backwater where the 50 or 60 residents managed to fish or farm or otherwise eke out a subsistence living.

Oysterville was where Robert Hamilton Espy, co-founder of the town and Medora's venerated grandfather, still lived with his third wife, "Aunt Kate," and where Papa operated his dairy farm. It was where Mama managed the household full of Medora's younger siblings, yet still found time to write to her eldest daughter almost daily. And, it had been in Oysterville during the past summer that Medora, along with nearly everyone in town, eagerly awaited the latest word from Papa during the six long weeks that he was gone from home. That was when Papa was a delegate to the 1912 Republican National Convention.

To be accurate, Papa was an alternate delegate. Even so, his role during the state caucuses proved an important one, and during the five days of the convention in Chicago, June 18-22, he participated as fully as opportunities presented themselves. The experience was certainly the highlight of his short political career, and his children long spoke of the time that Papa was a delegate. Even I, a grandchild born during his dotage, heard him speak of that unforgettable trip.

The letters Papa wrote home during that long-ago summer reveal that the family stories originating from "when Papa was a delegate" referred to far more than his duties at the convention. The trip itself was the experience of a lifetime for Papa, then a 36-year-old dairyman from the Far West. And now, nearly 100 years later, the letters reveal much about Papa-the-husband-and-father, Harry-the-dairyman, and Senator Espy-the-politician.

Papa left Oysterville on Monday, June 10, no doubt riding his horse Nick the four miles south to Nahcotta. There, as was his custom, he removed Nick's bridle, tied it to the saddle, and gave Nick a slap, sending him homeward. Papa then caught the little steamer Reliable (or perhaps her sister ship, the Shamrock), and crossed the bay to the new county seat of South

COLUMBIA 6 WINTER 2008-09
Bend where the following morning he would catch the train for Centralia and points north and east.

**Papa’s first message** home was written that night from Cassels’ Hotel in South Bend. On the back of an International Bank deposit slip he gave Mama detailed instructions on how to fill out such slips should the need arise. He continued to write daily, directing Mama with regard to business matters, expressing concern about the dairy farm, and providing specific directions for her to give the hired men regarding care of the livestock, mending fences, and the planting and harvesting of crops. But gradually, as the miles clicked by, his thoughts turned toward the work that lay ahead in Chicago. [NOTE: Only excerpted portions of Papa’s 1912 correspondence are included here. The letters, along with Mama’s responses, are part of the Espy archives housed at the Washington State History Research Center.]

Seattle, 8 a.m. [Thursday] June 13, 1912

Dearest Helen,

Am just settled on Northern Pacific Atlantic Express Train #4 leaving Seattle at 8:45 a.m. and to reach Chicago at noon Sunday.

Come back by Denver, Salt Lake, Huntington & Portland. Round trip $72.50. Could have returned via Los Angeles for 75.00 and came near doing it but feared I might not have time as it would take 2 days longer....

Harry

[Saturday] June 15, 1912

My Dearest Helen,

Wish you would get from Aunt Kate the names and addresses of our various relatives in Ohio and Pennsylvania and send them to me.

Looking at the map, the distance seems so short compared with the distance I have come, I am nearly persuaded to go see them—particularly if our Roosevelt delegation fails to be seated—as seems not unlikely. Today’s paper says they have thrown out Texas which was on a par with Wash. and I presume we will get the ax also.

Another thing for you to do. I meant to have brought that book relating to the claims of the Chinook Indians [see sidebar, “Still Pending,” p. 13] against the Gov’t but failed to do so. It is a black book about like “Ryans Manual of the Legislature...,” and is in my desk some where near the top. I think it is in that middle partition between the pigeon-

Harry Espy wrote home regularly during his six-week trip east in the summer of 1912, as was his habit during any separations from Helen during their 57 years of marriage.

---

1 Oysterville had served as Pacific County Seat from 1855 until 1893. In November 1892 voters elected South Bend as their new county seat. Citing irregularities in the balloting, Oysterville residents called for a recount. Before that could occur, however, a group of “South Bend Raiders” settled the matter by removing the county records from the Oysterville Courthouse and taking them across Shoalwater (now Willapa) Bay to South Bend. Papa, like many other Oysternatives, always considered South Bend an “upstart” on the political scene.
holes with the company check book and Minute Book. Be sure not to spill anything out of either of those, but if you can, would like you to find that book & see the number of the “Senate bill” it refers to near the start (5 thousand and something, I think) & inform me by first letter. If I go to Washington, will try to get the matter pushed through .

Give love to all. Address mail to LaSalle hotel, though later may have you change. Notice our people are at “Congress” hotel.

Lovingly, Harry

Congress Hotel and Annex, Chicago

[Sunday, June 16, 1912]

Dearest Helen,

I am in the big town, writing this on the arm of a chair in this hotel lobby.

The noise is deafening—arguments and counter arguments—but no one appears to be getting anywhere.

I expect you may see in tomorrow’s (Monday’s) paper a statement of our delegation anent [concerning] the un-seating thereof by the nat’l committee.

The idea & rough draft were by Poin- dexter.2 A Committee of 3 was appointed to make it—on which I was not—but the final refinement & force, such as it may have, is in great part due to yours truly. I did the most of the cutting out—strange part for me to take, to cut out—but I did. You may think it might have been cut more—but had difficulty in getting that much. We merely meant to get a statement which would appeal to the delegates who are on the fence as to whether they will stand for the “rauness” of the Taft people on the Nat’l Committee.

I arrived about 2 o’clock p.m. & spent the most of the afternoon finding a room—then in locating our people.

Then it was a matter of conference & re-conference of our delegates. Then a conference of all the Roosevelt dele-
gates—assignment of work to win over the necessary doubtful delegates bound to Taft but by ties that may be broken.

I have room 767 Palmer House—a top room in what was ten y’rs ago the house of the town but now 2nd or 3rd rate. $3.00 per day for room which is in itself O.K. but on floor I think ordinarily used by hotel help. Rates here are $13.00 per—cheapest. LaSalle about $5.00 cheapest. Four men are there in 2 small joining rooms at $14.00. That is head-
quarters of Washington Roosevelt delega-
tion. Was disappointed in not finding any mail from you but trust all is O.K.

If you want me suddenly for anything wire c/o “Washington Roosevelt Delegation, LaSalle Hotel.” You may also continue to write me there, tho I am staying at the Palmer House.

Have just run across Lorenzo Dow of Tacoma whom you probably remember as a member of the lower house last year at Olympia, and he is going to stay with me tonight. He has room out in suburbs some where with friends of his friends in Tacoma & does not want to run in on them at this time of night.

I believe I will go [to Pennsylvania] to see Chas. Oliver & such other relatives as I find handy there. It only costs about $6.00...and so long as I am so near think I should take it in.

Will also probably go to Washington D.C., if my money holds out & try to get that Chinook Indian matter moving, if possible. If I can get that thru it will mean a great deal to our people there. . . .

[Will close with a hug and armful of] kisses for yourself & the babies. Wish you would suggest what trinket I should bring to each . . .

Lovingly, Harry

2 Miles Poin- dexter (Progressive) from Spokane served as U.S. Senator from 1911 to 1923.

Helen Richardson Espy—
“Mama,” c. 1918.

Congress Hotel and Annex, Chicago

[Monday, June 17, 1912]

Dearest Helen,

This has been a busy day with very little accomplished. Stood opposite to Roosevelt for half an hour as crowd was filing thru shaking hands and had good opportunity to observe him—which I did to the limit. Certainly very energetic and later made a wonderful speech in Auditorium to big crowd.

It looks doubtful if I will get much out of this trip as the man for whom I am alternate is not only present, but very active.

Went thru Marshall Field’s big store during the afternoon— the biggest in the world. That is all the sight-seeing I have done so far . . .

Think you and Aunt Kate are wrong about my traveling with the rest of the crowd. I sure would like to have done so but they are spenders and I would have to keep up my end, or else be worse off than not to be with them. I see enuf of them here to spend more than I can afford and at the same time must seem tight to them. I sneak around and eat a sandwich instead of going with the rest to dinner because the latter means a couple dollars—although they decided before I came that each man should stand his own dinner but you can’t order much different from the rest and must stand some things for all once in a while when the rest are doing right along.

So much for doldrums. Am having a fine experience in spite of lack of money. There is great excitement and strong tension here tonight, getting ready for
the big time tomorrow. It is the most momentous incident or convention for the Rep. party in 20 years, and will probably be the last great one—as in all probability it will be settled by district primaries hereafter...  

Lovingly, Harry

3 The preferential primary was in widespread use for the first time in 1912 and was undoubtedly the basis for Papa's prediction which implied that the direct primary would eventually preempt the caucus/convention system. In fact, the direct primary became the centerpiece of the Progressive movement and the most lasting of the Progressive reforms. It is now the most common form of primary election for all elected offices in the United States with the exception, ironically, of the presidency.

Teddy Roosevelt and the Bull Moose Party

Due to his disenchantment with President William Howard Taft over conservation policy, "Teddy" Roosevelt was determined to run again for the presidency in 1912. At the Republican National Convention in Chicago, however, the political bosses saw to it that the pliable Taft, not Roosevelt, was renominated. Roosevelt, who had served as the nation's chief executive from 1901 to 1908, still retained a large and loyal following. On the evening of June 22, 1912, the former president asked his supporters to leave the floor of the convention. These Republican "progressives" reconvened in Chicago's Orchestra Hall and endorsed the formation of a National Progressive Party with Roosevelt as its presidential nominee. In response to the suggestion by reporters that he was no longer fit for the office, Roosevelt retorted "I'm as fit as a bull moose," giving the new party its nickname.

The Bull Moose Party was dedicated to needed social and political reforms as America was becoming increasingly industrialized and urbanized in the early 20th century. Their platform—"New Nationalism"—included women's suffrage; direct election of United States senators; the creation of an initiative, referendum, and recall process; child labor laws; old-age pensions; a start to Native American citizenship; and a national tariff reduction. The agenda had broad support.

The national election became a three-way race between Taft, Roosevelt, and Woodrow Wilson, the Democratic Party candidate. Splitting the Republican vote with Taft, Roosevelt lost the general election to Democratic nominee Woodrow Wilson, Roosevelt received 88 electoral votes and more than 4 million popular votes, soundly outpacing Taft. No third party candidate has since come close to Roosevelt's success. A final indication of Roosevelt's appeal and influence is that most of his agenda became law, in several cases through a strenuous constitutional amendment process.

In the state of Washington, Roosevelt received a plurality of the popular vote (113,500); Wilson and Taft trailed with 86,600 and 70,100 votes, respectively. However, each candidate was represented on the November 5, 1912, ballot by seven electors from his party.

An interesting footnote: One of the seven Progressive electors in Washington was Helen J. Scott. News reports at the time said that she was the first woman to cast a vote in the electoral college—and therefore may be said to be the first woman who voted for president. However, since some accounts also list women among the Progressive electors in California, the matter is still a point of discussion among historians.
There are many, however, who prophesy that there will be a deadlock and that we will be tied up here for two weeks. If so, they will certainly have to give us cheaper rooms. I, for one, cannot stand $3.00 per day for long. In fact, I am going to make a strong try tomorrow to do better.

Was very glad this evening to get your letter of the 14th—the second so far since my arrival… Was very glad to know that Joe had the windmill working. Hope it continues O.K.—Tell him to put new brake wire on it, and to shut it off whenever not necessary to run—so not to wear the pump (nor mill either) any more than necessary. Hope he is getting in the oats O.K. & don’t let him forget to have the thickest part of those vines on the oats he just harrowed—mowed, if possible. Have them cut high so not to injure the oats under them & they will die…

Lovingly, Harry

Palmer House, Chicago
[Wednesday,] June 19, 1912

Dearest Helen,

There is no news again today.

There has been much of interest in connection with the convention, but you will get it in much better form & greater detail in the paper than I could attempt to write.

Over people lost the fight again today & it is probable there will be two Republican parties tomorrow. Some were anxious to withdraw today but my contention has been to carry the question to the highest tribunal they offer before withdrawing. That means that we will have a majority & minority report of the credentials committee & if the majority report is sustained & the members who are challenged as to their seat, are allowed to vote on their own cases, the Roosevelt forces will probably hold a convention of their own….

Lovingly, Harry

Palmer House, Chicago
[Friday,] June 21, 1912

Dearest Helen,

It is nearly morning so presume I should call it the 21st.

Another day has gone & we are still dead locked. That is the Taft people have a majority of the delegates on the organization but are not sure of enough to nominate, so are marking time & trying to wear the Roosevelt forces out.

We have not been seated but the Taft people are said to have offered to seat us & California if we would then agree to abide by the decision of the majority. Our people, however, have refused to be bound by the votes of any stolen delegates, even if ours are seated…

Late so will close.

Lovingly, Harry

Windsor-Clifton Hotel, Chicago
[Saturday,] June 22, 1912

Dearest Helen,

The convention is over—or maybe I should say conventions are over—and both Taft & Roosevelt are nominated.

I had a hand in the latter but none in the former. Have moved from the Palmer to this hotel where I get a room for half the price… Took ride in auto with four others of our men today, my first dissipation. Went thru Lincoln Park & beyond. Wish I could see the wheat-pit & stock yards before I leave, but fear I will not…

Had two conventions—Taft & Roosevelt—today so am tired & will draw to close. Hope babes are much better now. With much love to them & yourself, I am,

Lovingly, Harry

Hotel Astor, Times Square, New York
[Monday,] July 1, 1912

Dearest Helen,

I left Washington at 9:10 yesterday A.M….went to Atlantic City, arriving at 3:00 P.M. Was considerably disappointed there in smallness of the crowds—though there were some more than in Oysterville—but have now been and feel that it is worthwhile as I can talk with intelligence when, as is always the case, the person I am telling about the glories of our beach wishes me to compare it to Atlantic City….

Of course…even with all day tomorrow can only touch a few of the many things one should see after coming this
far, but I am really getting ashamed of myself staying so long, with you there home alone with all the irksome things you have to contend with...I still hope this trip will be the means of making future trips for us both possible.

Lovingly, Harry

National Hotel, Washington D.C. [Thursday,] July 4, 1912

Dearest Helen,

It is still the “glorious fourth” tho it will not be for long. It is quite warm yet at 11:30 but has not been so hot as was yesterday. Came down from New York in a sweltering heat yesterday and our train (not me) missed connections at Philadelphia making me arrive here (at Depot) 10 p.m. Then went to capitol inquiring for Warburton & Poindexter, especially former as was told the House was in session but found it was not.

After a long time located him and got back to hotel nearly one a.m. Had expected mail from you but finding none decided to wire you...

Got up to keep 9:30 appointment with Warburton which did without breakfast only to wait for him to about 11:00 (tho he had told me he might be late—but want you to know that I was not the late one), then went over and found Poindexter and was prevailed upon to go with him to lunch at 2 p.m. when needless to state I did full justice to the meal. Mrs. P. & their son are down in Virginia for few days so he decided to go with me to Mt. Vernon which we did on 2:30 o'clock boat. Did not get there till four and grounds close at five so time was very limited but felt well repaid for the trip.

At Mount Vernon we ran across three Democratic delegates from Washington just returned from Baltimore. All were from our congressional district. One was [Preston M.] Troy of Olympia—a brother to Senator [David S.] Troy—one [Eldridge] Wheeler from Montesano, another Fitzharry [E. A. Fitzhenry] from Port Angeles in Clallam County—a friend of Senator Troy's.

When got back to hotel ran into them again and have been with them since till started to write this epistle. We went up to see the fireworks....

My this is a "sweaty" country and my nose has bled some but got a light hat which is great help to my head....

Bought little spoons at Mt. Vernon for the girls. First things except card I have seen suitable. Did not go to Niagara from New York as I ran short of money. Hope to from Pittsburg.

This is wonderful trip to me and if you were only along with more time at our disposal would be almost perfect. So sorry you are not along except for danger of you being overdone which
I think it must be ordered that I shall not get home this week. Every turn something occurs to delay.

would affect you all winter unfavorably at Olympia.

Will have to be here over tomorrow at least and possibly to first of next week, when House Committee on Indian Affairs meets. Secured support of our men in the Senate and it passed yesterday. The only question now appears to keep this amendment from being thrown out in conference hope to obviate that by favorable report from that Committee meeting first of next week. See it is going thru as Senate Amendment to House bill which was passed without this included.

Lovingly, Harry

National Hotel, Washington, D.C.
[Friday, July 5, 1912]
Dearest Helen,

Pretty warm weather but the evenings are fine. Believe I would enjoy living in this country—with an income of $7500.00 or so per year. Eating is pretty cheap here I think. Get breakfast of mush, steak or chops etc., bread & butter, spuds, coffee etc. for 25 cents and ½ fried chicken dinner with all fixings for 35 cents all along the avenue here. Of course there are not the most fashionable places but pretty good at the price and much cheaper than I found in either New York or Chicago.

Today I went first to see about that Indian legislation, there to incidentally get a c'k cashed by Warburton—then took in the House & Senate in session—went to Washington Monument and to the top thereof—then to Smithsonian Institute, which closed at four before was half way thru of course.... Then came to take “seeing Washington” car, only to be much disappointed by learning, after hearing “in just a minute” that there Amendment to the House bill and passed with the rest of the bill, but some Montana Senator felt he was aggrieved by the bill being passed in his absence and leaving off some measure of interest to his State so they reconsidered, recalled the bill and now will have to await disposing of the “Lorimer case” before considering it again. However, I do not have to wait on that because there appears little doubt of it passing the Senate again, but the trouble arises in the House, where the committee has not yet reported on the item and unless we can get them to report before the conference, which will occur after the amended bill passes the Senate, the conference is liable to throw it out.

Warburton told me today that the committee should meet tomorrow or next Tuesday at latest, but when he had seen the Chairman yesterday there was not a quorum in town.

Lovingly, Harry

National Hotel, Washington, D.C.
[Tuesday, July 9, 1912]
Dearest Helen,

Has been the hottest of the summer today. Now 2:00 A.M. and just beginning to cool off. Sitting in shirt sleeves and sweating while trying to write.

Went to Bureau of Engraving & Printing today—then tried the Corcoran Art Gallery, but it is closed for the summer. Went then to War, Navy & State

4 The “Lorimer Case” involved charges of corrupt campaign procedures by Senator William Lorimer (R., Ill.) . After a lengthy and rancorous investigation the matter was settled on July 13, 1912, when the Senate declared Lorimer’s 1909 election invalid and stripped him of his office.
Tillamooks of Oregon ..................................................... $10,500
Clatsops of Oregon ....................................................... $15,000
Nuc-queue-clah-ue-mucks of Oregon ................................. $1,500
Cathlamets of Washington ........................................... $7,000
Wabkikums of Washington ........................................... $7,000
Willapas of Washington ................................................. $5,000
Lower Chinooks of Washington ...................................... $20,000

However, according to Ray Gardner, current chairman of the Chinook Nation, only the Clatsops accepted the appropriation. The other Chinook bands refused their portion of the $66,000 which, without interest, came to less than 20 cents per acre for the designated land. The appropriation was to be put in trust for the Chinook Tribe until agreement on an amount could be reached. The matter is still pending.
by old title of Oregon. Other two members of subcommittee were away—one seriously sick but W. got busy and tho we could not get needed majority of full committee together, and they properly had no right to take that report without other two (specially chairman) subcommittee signatures, after many days of effort we succeeded before I left in getting promise of favorable action as soon as committee could be gathered which was necessary before subsequent conference committee could accept it. Also got promise of slated members of Congressional committee to push it through. Happened also that [Wesley L.] Jones felt under obligation to me...and he also got very busy on Senate end of it—had it added to the bill there. Poindexter also worked as best he could.... Great credit is due all but especially Warburton. Congress would not even listen to interest which should have been given but did allow the principal.... Last month I took advantage of coming election to urge Johnson who wrote he would do what he could.

Cleveland, Ohio, 7:30 P.M

[Saturday,] July 13, 1912

Dearest Helen,

Have not had opportunity to really write since I rec’d your bunch of letters at Washington....

I was caught in my first thunder shower little bit ago and got soaked so this is from writing on my wet knee. Think it fixed my suit as had just got off a very smoky dirty train and it surely will grind it in. Had only 3 blocks to go and did that in the "lulls" but was soaked anyway.

Lovingly, Harry

On Train

[Monday,] July 15, 1912

Dear Helen,

Am not yet in Chicago, but nearing it, having just left Columbia City, Ind. The ground is here getting quite rolling, though it is all farmed. Eastern Ohio was also rolling but the western two thirds of Ohio and Indiana to Fort Wayne were quite level. Most too level it seems to me, as there was water standing on the ground in their hay and harvest fields. They certainly have more rain to bother them than we have during harvest—but, on the other hand, can get more help & if they do get a good day can put hay in the same day when cut or the next at latest, whereas this early in season ours takes nearly a week to be fit....

Have passed thru very heavy rains today.... Think I told you of my experience in thunder shower in Cleveland. It cooled the atmosphere greatly, but according to the papers, the next day Sunday was very hot all thru the district.

I was at Niagara and did not notice it greatly there, though many complained. Of course it is much cooler there than further south and in the interior.

I enjoyed the time there hugely. It is certainly grand.

I do hope to find letters there [Chicago] from you and if possible some written since I wired you regarding the course. Am anxious to know if you understood and if you effected sale.... Hope you did. That would pay for my trip—and the pressing debts....

Lovingly, Harry

Hanover, Wisconsin, 8:10 P.M.

[Tuesday,] July 16, 1912

Dearest Helen,

I think it must be ordered that I shall not get home this week. Every turn something occurs to delay. We are now lying at this place which is merely a station waiting for a new engine to take place of one broken down. They sent ahead to Brodhead for one and after wait of about an hour got one (which is now hitched on) about the size of some of those smaller ones on the Nahcotta-Megler run....

From The 13th Session of the Washington State Legislature and State Officials, by Alfred T. Renfro, Legislative Historian (Sherman Printing and Binding Company, Seattle, Wash. 1913.)

Ten days later Papa was back in Oysterville, embraced warmly by his family and friends, all of whom were eager to hear, firsthand, of his adventures. Eventually, Papa did take Mama on the promised "grand tour" of the East—but not until all their children were grown and gone. Even so, the momentous occasion that was "remembered" for half a century and more was the summer when Papa was a delegate. ☺

Author Sydney Stevens is the great-granddaughter of R. H. Espy who, with his partner I. A. Clark, founded Oysterville in 1854.

Since retiring from a career in teaching, she has devoted her time to researching and writing about the history of the Oysterville area. Her most recent book is Dear Medora, Child of Oysterville's Forgotten Years. (Washington State University Press, 2007)
Ebenezer Rhys Roberts was Tacoma’s first professional gardener. Though few remember his name, during the early 20th century he was a top horticulturist and beloved by the community. His influence can still be seen today in the City of Destiny by visiting Wapato, Wright, or Point Defiance parks.

Roberts was born in Wales and from a very young age preferred to be out-of-doors rather than confined inside. He once disappeared from school and drifted off into the woods alone. Missing for days, he was finally found along the bank of a stream, presiding over a miniature garden he had created.

Roberts loved animals, and this served him well when he began collecting them for the emerging Point Defiance Zoo; but as a schoolboy, it sometimes got him into trouble. He created a ruckus one day by bringing a billy goat to class. Though smashed glass and repair bills followed, his classmates were delighted.

As an adult, Roberts harnessed his enthusiasm for the outdoors into a career and became a sought-after gardener. He served as an apprentice at several gardens and estates in Great Britain, including the acclaimed Kew Gardens. In 1875 a 21-year-old Roberts arrived in New York to begin work at the Peter Henderson Seed Company. After traveling through Arizona and meeting his future wife, Mary Ann, he continued on to New Mexico and California. In 1888, at age 34, he brought his horticultural experience to Tacoma.

Roberts quickly became the landscape gardener for Randolph F. Radebaugh, founding editor of the Tacoma Weekly Ledger. Radebaugh wanted to develop his waterfront estate, which totaled about 360 acres around Wapato Lake. His plan was to create an exclusive neighborhood, which he would call Wapato Lake Park. Though his design was grand, he pledged to keep a portion of it public. Roberts helped him carry out his promise.

The horticulturist decided to nurture the park’s natural look with native plants and trees. He was proud to point out the indigenous greenery, saying, “The native trees in the park are of great number. They include pines, cedars, oak, silver fir, alder, ash, maple in varieties, poplar, dogwood, crab apple in great variety, and manzanita. Equally numerous are the shrubs... Ferns are also very prolific and grow in great luxuriance and abundance.” Surveying Roberts’s work, Radebaugh said, “(His) artistic sense and boundless enthusiasm soon began to make a floral fairyland of the place.”
Greenhouses were quickly added for storage and propagation. They produced so much greenery that the park sold the surplus. “Floral parlors” emerged, providing customers with loose-cut flowers, bouquets, and boutonnieres.

Over the course of several years the park developed many amenities. In July 1889 an ad for the park read: “Boating and Bathing, Fine Pavilion with Dancing Platform, Picnic Grounds, Summer Houses, and Delightful Shady Walks,” and finally, “First Class Refreshments.” The ad was quick to point out, “This lake is the only body of water near Tacoma having a temperature suitable for bathing. All others are too cold. Bring your bathing suits.”

The new park proved so popular that in July 1889 the Tacoma & Fern Hill Street Railroad expanded its service to Wapato Lake Park from weekends only to seven days a week. Visitors were doubtless lured by the promise of grottoes, a bathing raft, a diving board, and bridle paths. Plans were also developed for an agricultural fair, and a baseball and cricket field.

Between the efforts of Roberts and Radebaugh, Wapato Lake Park became a destination. Roberts gave tours of the Wapato greenhouse, which at the time was the biggest on Puget Sound. On hot days, Mary Ann Roberts scooped ice cream for the children. Radebaugh even joined in, hosting a candy party on his verandah.

AFTER ROBERTS’S SUCCESS at Wapato, he was hired as foreman to assist landscape architect Edward O. Schwagerl, who was in charge of Wright Park’s early planning. Deeded to the City of Tacoma and named in honor of Charles Wright—president of the Tacoma Land Company (a Northern Pacific real estate subsidiary)—Wright Park was originally 20 acres of undeveloped land on Tacoma’s north end. Not long after hiring Roberts, Schwagerl was accused of spending too much money on the project. Roberts fought to keep his friend on the job, but Schwagerl ended up leaving and taking a position in Seattle. When Roberts took over the project, he gathered the workmen together and made it clear that he planned on building the park without an “infusion of politics.” Schwagerl left behind a design for Wright Park, but it was only partially followed. Instead, Roberts spent many days in the park envisioning where trees and shrubs should be planted. According to historian Herbert Hunt, Roberts decided on the placement of each and every tree:

Day after day he camped on the ground of Wright Park till darkness fell, and he was there at the first streak of dawn studying the problem. He practically had every hole dug before a plant was put out. He was dreaming 50 years ahead when the trees had become large…. (He) planted every tree himself, spreading out its infant roots, and firming [the soil] with his foot.

Meanwhile, park board commissioner George Browne was in Europe with orders to purchase a unique assortment of plants “not indigenous” to the United States. Browne did his job, but it nearly resulted in a catastrophe for Roberts.

Winter was approaching as Browne’s boxcars full of plants arrived from all over England, including Kew Gardens. Schwagerl had ordered a greenhouse for the plants before he left, but for some unknown reason, it never arrived. Without proper protection from the cold, the plants would die and thousands of dollars would be wasted. According to Hunt, Roberts quickly devised a plan:

Roberts suggested that the plants be given to the public with the understanding that those who received them should reciprocate in some way, and thus it came about that in after years many, many...
Tacoma's admiring Roberts’s indefatigable industry, his aspiring enthusiasm, and his remarkable knowledge of plant life, gave plants rare and otherwise in great number for public beautification.

Roberts never gave up on the idea of a greenhouse, and eight years later, in 1908, the W.W. Seymour Botanical Conservatory was built, named after the past president of the Metropolitan Park Board and former mayor of Tacoma. Roberts convinced both Seymour and the current mayor, George P. Wright, to contribute money and offer support. He lobbied the mayor daily with floral bouquets saying, “With my compliments, Mr. Mayor. These are the kind of beautiful flowers we could grow in a conservatory in Wright Park if we had one there.”

Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the Victorian conservatory is today one of the park’s most exceptional features. Impressive plant displays are rotated seasonally, and it is frequently the venue for musical performances and other events. Over the past century the conservatory has served as a refuge from Northwest weather for both plants and people.

Robert’s success at Wright Park paid off when in 1890 the new Board of Park Commissioners appointed him the first superintendent of Tacoma’s parks. He was now in charge of managing Wright, Point Defiance, Lincoln, McKinley, Puget, and Fireman’s parks. Unique among them was Point Defiance. Its magnificent size, deep woods, and impressive location on Puget Sound set it apart from the rest.

Point Defiance was originally a military reservation. In 1888 a bill was introduced in Congress to give the now unused post to the people of Tacoma for a park. Unfortunately, President Grover Cleveland vetoed the legislation. He later signed a similar bill with the caveat that the federal government could revoke the city’s ownership at any point, for any purpose. People were unsatisfied with the proviso, so they decided to try again with no such threat attached. Roberts was involved in this effort.

Roberts was also busy assisting Francis W. Cushman’s congressional bid. After Cushman won he wanted to reward Roberts for his efforts. Roberts simply replied, “All I want is that you get the deed...to Point Defiance.” And Cushman did just that. On March 3, 1905, Point Defiance was officially given over to the city with the passing of the “Cushman Bill,” signed by President Theodore Roosevelt. A bronze statue of Congressman Cushman now stands near the entrance of Point Defiance Park in honor of his success.

Though the park became “official” in 1905, Roberts and his family had been living there since 1898 in a lodge that was built for them. As superintendent of Tacoma’s parks, he was required to reside on the grounds to help ensure the park’s safety from vandals and fires. Living on-site, he was also able to efficiently manage the park’s many activities. It was there that he and Mary Ann raised their four children: Ebenezer Jr. (Eben), Reseda, Trillium, and Woodland (Woody).

One of Roberts’s first official acts as superintendent was to order all the “keep off the grass” signs removed. He believed that lawns were for picnicking and playing on, not for simply admiring. He soon discovered that beyond his regular duties at the park there were unusual chores as well.

In an article published in the Tacoma News Tribune and Sunday Ledger in 1967, on the occasion of the park’s 62nd birthday, Roberts’s daughter Trillium recounted a delightful, humorous, and at times dangerous portrait of life in Point Defiance Park. From the pink, climbing “Hermosa” roses on the covered porch to the pitcher pump and tin sink in the kitchen, she described everything in loving and poetic detail.

There were many exciting moments for the family as they helped shape Point Defiance and its emerging zoo. Unlike today, there was no separation between park and zoo.
Elk grazed throughout the area near the park entrance, and animal cages were assembled on the hill that now leads to the award-winning Point Defiance Zoo and Aquarium.

Kangaroos, wallabies, and emus—imported from Australia—lived near monkeys and native birds. Trillium recalled the morning when she awoke to see cowboys on horseback herding bison that had arrived from Montana via train for the zoo. Several of Trillium’s stories featured bears escaping their pens, bear cubs being raised by hand, and one that, to the astonishment of park visitors, sucked its thumb. She recalled a particularly rowdy Independence Day celebration when youths tossed firecrackers into the bear pen. To protect the bewildered animals, Roberts jumped into the cage and yanked out the firecrackers.

JOINING THE ROBERTS family at the lodge were several beloved pets. A collie named Prince greeted Roberts’s return each day. The pup would fetch his master’s slippers, though the weary gardener had to pretend to cry to get them. They also took in a black and white mixed-breed pup that had been abandoned in the park, naming him “Tippy.” A trusted Saint Bernard policed the park after dark.

Feathered friends joined the family’s menagerie, too. Well-meaning sailors regularly gave away exotic parrots to the family. The birds were gifted with rather colorful “seafaring” language, which they learned, no doubt, while sailing the high seas. One wonders if the family opted to sequester the parrots at home lest the birds upset the public’s Victorian sensibilities at the zoo. Unlike his “fowl-mouthed” cousins, a refined cockatoo charmed people as it sipped tea from a spoon. He preferred to sip perched at the head of the table in Roberts’s chair.

A four-legged chicken and a three-legged cat also roamed the grounds, along with a fudge-stealing raccoon. “Prince” and “Fred,” two retired fire station horses, grazed the fields and helped with a variety of tasks. One afternoon, though, while hitched to a wagon, they heard the fire alarm in town and bolted, their firehouse training prodding them into action. Finally there was “Giddap,” a dusty brown workhorse who could always be counted on for hauling rocks and stumps. Once in a while he was hooked up to the paddy wagon when Roberts needed to remove some ne’er-do-wells from the park.

Though Roberts did set aside areas for formal gardens, he knew the park did not require taming with rectilinear layouts. Given Point Defiance’s spectacular setting and abundance of local flora, he decided to nurture the “natural” look, but there was still much to be done. From clearing brush to building a water tower, Roberts had a huge “to-do” list. Perhaps his favorite “chore” was paddling up Hood Canal in search of specimens for the rhododendron garden.

When plants were added to the park’s collection, they were usually arranged organically. Roberts’s granddaughter, Jean Insel Robeson, recalls stories of how her grandfather, whom she lovingly calls “Grandpa Eben,” had a habit of carrying white pebbles in his pocket. He’d throw them into the air and where they fell to earth, that’s where the plants were placed—a surprising practice for a man trained in formal English gardens.

Many of Roberts’s contributions are now lost to history, such as the log arch, central greenhouse, bear pits, rustic bridges, benches, arbors, and wooden flower planters set upon plinths. One lasting testament to his involvement with the park is its large rose garden. He decided to lay it out carefully, creating it with cuttings provided by local school children. Within three years, 75 varieties were already blossoming. It sits where it was placed over 100 years ago, planted in 1895. The rose garden is living history. Thanks to the donations of cuttings from local residents, it truly belongs to the entire community.

The original central greenhouse, which no longer exists, was built in 1901. It stood near the lodge, just beyond the bowl area at the park’s entrance. The imposing glass structure housed many tropical and exotic plants. There were even some critters who called it home. The humid mists once revealed an orange and black gila monster lurking in a cage inside. Nearby slithered an assortment of snakes. Water lilies floated above darting goldfish in a pond. This was Tacoma’s own piece of paradise.

The plants were changed frequently, especially as foreign ships coming into port gave exotic flora as gifts to the family. Beyond mere display, though, a portion of the hothouse was a factory for sowing seeds, transplanting, and taking plant cuttings. Flowers from the greenhouse and the park were sent to churches, hospitals, and schools. According to the Daily Ledger, Roberts “sent wagonloads of roses to Tacoma hospitals every year.” In the winter, excess greenery was used for community Christmas displays.

OPPOSITE PAGE: “The Lodge” at Point Defiance Park was built as a residence for Park Superintendent Roberts and his family.

INSET: Roberts, his wife Mary Ann, and three of their children—Reseda, Trillium, and Woodland—on one of the many handmade “spooning benches” scattered throughout the park.

BELOW: Bears were early residents of Point Defiance Park, as evidenced by this c. 1900 postcard image.
Mary Ann Roberts took an active role in tending Point Defiance Park. She assisted with the animals, came to the aid of park visitors, and even helped smother fires that endangered the park. During the blaze of September 4, 1902, she called the men working in the nearby smelter to join park employees in putting out the fire. Women gathered with her in the lodge kitchen to prepare the food, coffee, and lemonade she sent out to the fire line. A total of 100 acres, 50 of them inside the park, burned before rain helped extinguish the flames.

The superintendent's wife came to the rescue of the park, its inhabitants, and its visitors on a regular basis. During the summer, band performances drew people to the park grounds on Sunday afternoons to picnic and relax under the canopy of trees. Often a fork or tablecloth was omitted from their tote. On such occasions, a knock at the lodge door was met with kindness; Mary Ann would loan the picnickers what they needed. Fortunately, Trillium recalls her mother batting a "fireball" out the front door, which erupted from the newly installed house wiring. They were at the whims of the cable cars, too. Their lights continually flickered off and on as the streetcars moved up and down city streets, pulling different energy loads from a shared line.

Down by the water, well-to-do families picnicked with cake and coffee. Ladies took tea and beachcombed, looking for pretty shells to paint. Men down on their luck could count on the seaside to provide them with some salmon, rock cod, or bullheads for dinner. Perched on the shoreline stood a grand octagonal pavilion where people could purchase bait, rent a boat, and dine. Built in 1903 by Edwin Ferris, the pavilion featured a large soda fountain that served ice cream, hot popcorn, soda, and peanuts. Among the countertop displays were glass jars filled with tempting bits of colorful candy. Famous homemade clam chowder was always on the menu, accompanied by delicious oyster crackers.

For all his involvement at the park, Roberts was also devoted to the community. In addition to assisting with the annual Rose Parade and the Tacoma Rose and Dahlia Society, he was a familiar figure at fairs, church functions, and in the local schools. He was always reaching out to the people. In July 1905 over 150 members received $250 from the sale of an elk skin and antlers, they requested that it be "expended in furnishing a room in the lodge at Point Defiance for persons taken ill in the park."

Since the Roberts family lived in the wildwoods at Point Defiance, one could say they were pioneers. From trading with Native Americans—salmon and clams in exchange for home-baked bread—to the installation of electric lights, the family certainly bridged the gap between changing worlds. When electricity was first installed at the lodge the family was glad to have it, although there were a few hiccups. Trillium recalls her mother batting a "fireball" out the front door, which erupted from the newly installed house wiring. They were at the whims of the cable cars, too. Their lights continually flickered off and on as the streetcars moved up and down city streets, pulling different energy loads from a shared line.

F
of the American Library Association stopped over in Tacoma for a tour of the park. They must have been pleasantly surprised when Roberts and his crew handed out over 1,000 roses to them as a gift of goodwill.

In 1908, shortly after Metro Parks Tacoma was incorporated with a new five-member elected board of park commissioners, Roberts resigned as superintendent. Quite possibly he left his job due to political machinations, sharing the fate of his friend E. O. Schwagerl eight years earlier. Still eager to work with plants and people, he continued to maintain several greenhouses, including a commercial greenhouse at Gravelly Lake. He also gave regular talks on horticulture. His topics ranged from landscaping and street planting to caring for vegetables and lawns. For the Architectural Society he lectured on the "Embellishment of Home Grounds in Relation to Architectural Art." At Washington School, his topic was "School Gardens." For Bryant School students and faculty he introduced the "Flora of Washington," bringing along an assortment of trees and plants to serve as examples.

In 1912 he gave a six-week series of talks at the Pilgrim Congregational Church. He covered a range of topics, including "Sweet Peas and Potatoes," "Roses," "Kitchen Gardens," "Summer Flowers and Dahlias," and "General Culture of the Yard and Garden." Someone once aptly described him as "teaching the gospel of gardens and flowers to the people of Tacoma."

Roberts's enthusiasm for all things botanical led him to his next official position. In February 1912 he became horticultural editor for The Ledger and News. He helped everyone with their plant problems, hobbyists and professionals alike. Questions came pouring in from all over Washington and Oregon. Roberts was known to pay personal visits to homes, orchards, and gardens, just to see if his advice was successful.

While employed at the newspaper he developed a horticultural calendar based on information and experience gleaned from his 25 years of gardening in the Northwest. Perkins Press published the article as a supplement to The Ledger and News. Since all four seasons were covered, the newspaper encouraged readers to cut out the extensive calendar and refer to it throughout the year.

During his stay at the press he gave away over 100,000 rose clippings and published a free diagram that showed how to cultivate roses. By the end of his journalism career he had averaged four articles a week and answered over 10,800 questions from his office. But he could not keep up such a fast pace. During the summer of 1917 he fell ill and was unable to work. Reporter Frances Stone wrote:

For the last year he has been doing work at the Mountain View Sanitarium, laying out a lovely plot about the sanitarium, and planning for the construction of a miniature lake in the gulch at the side of the main building. Overwork at this task is partly responsible for his present condition.

OPPOSITE PAGE: E. R. Roberts stands alongside a fruiting banana plant in the Point Defiance greenhouse.

BELOW: This hand-tinted postcard image shows the rose garden at Point Defiance Park, c. 1900. Note the gardener bending over the flower bed in the background.
Roberts, at age 65, succumbed to cancer on March 5, 1918, in his home at 3805 N. Eighth Street. Because of the long hours he spent laboring in potting sheds, greenhouses, and gardens over 100 years ago, we have wonderful parks to visit today. At Point Defiance Park alone, over 2 million visitors witness his legacy every year.

At the 2005 centennial for Point Defiance interest was renewed in the park and Roberts’s contribution to it was rediscovered. Many people became excited at the prospect of memorializing him. Suggestions included creating a statue or a plaque, or renaming the rose garden after him. Certainly the most fitting tribute that was offered was to name a rose after him. His granddaughter, Jean, would be pleased to see such a lasting tribute, in his home at 3805 N. Eighth Street. Because of the long gestations included creating a statue or a plaque, or renaming the rose garden after him. Certainly the most fitting tribute that was offered was to name a rose after him. His granddaughter, Jean, would be pleased to see such a lasting tribute, especially since he loved roses and left behind a beautiful expression of that love at Point Defiance.

Unfortunately, when the centennial concluded, excitement subsided and the movement to commemorate him faded. It recalls a similar event 87 years earlier, when Roberts was on his deathbed and a message arrived:

The park board this morning voted to name the next park it acquires after E. R. Roberts, former superintendent of Tacoma parks and well known horticulturist, who is seriously ill at one of the hospitals. The secretary was instructed to send a letter to Mr. Roberts expressing the sympathy and best wishes of the park board.

The next article reflected the community’s sentiments:

The park board did an eminently proper thing yesterday when it inscribed upon its records the pledge to name the next park acquired by the city after Eben R. Roberts, for many years superintendent of parks and an enthusiast whose knowledge and bodily energies have worked wonders in leading the community into the flowered ways.

A well-earned honor, for if ever a city got its money’s worth and a hundredfold beside from a public servant, Tacoma was the city and Roberts was the servant.

The intensity of his love for flowers has made him a knight errant in the community, carrying his gospel wherever there were ears to hear and eyes to see.

His labors in behalf of the parks are well known…. He has imprinted himself so deeply upon the community’s life that it certainly would be guilty of ingratitude should it fail to perpetuate his name.

And finally, in a tribute after his death:

When E. R. Roberts died this week he left a world that was more beautiful because he had lived in it. Few can say as much: few monuments can be more enduring…. It will be impossible for his fellow citizens ever to forget the man who made Wright Park beautiful and whose persistency had no small part in obtaining Point Defiance for a city pleasure ground.”

Since Roberts’s death, parks have been created and added to the city’s register, but not one was named in his honor. Surprisingly, it was not until May 2007 that his grave was even marked. New Tacoma Cemeteries, Premier Memorial, Metro Parks Tacoma, and the P.E.O. combined efforts and provided the Roberts family with a tombstone. He is buried at the Tacoma Cemetery with his wife Mary Ann, and daughter Reseda. The plaque reads: “E. R. Roberts, Creator of Tacoma Parks & Gardens. 1854-1918.”

Though Tacoma’s first gardener has no official monument, it is comforting to walk through Wapato, Wright, and Point Defiance parks knowing that long ago he planted many of the trees, tamping down the earth with his worn boot. Perhaps the parks are his enduring memorials. And, as his granddaughter Jean points out, “Point Defiance is his living memorial.” If her grandfather were alive today, she thinks, he would be just fine with that. In fact, she agrees it is a more fitting tribute than any bronze statue, plaque, or bust.

Roberts’s legacy and his enthusiasm for the infant Point Defiance Park are best summed up by his daughter Trillium. First, she loved growing up in the park: “Living in the park was well nigh ideal. Love of nature and outdoors were a natural expression of that love at Point Defiance.

First, she loved growing up in the park: “Living in the park was well nigh ideal. Love of nature and outdoors were a natural expression of that love at Point Defiance.

Theirs was the sweat, the pick-and-shovel calluses, and frustrations. Theirs was the long vision of the future, which transformed Point Defiance from a wilderness into a beautiful park. When the park closed and the last visitor had departed, then Point Defiance relaxed into its normalcy. The monkeys cuddled together… the animals stopped their restless pacing; the sensitive plant in the greenhouse would “go to sleep”… and a light burned late in the potting shed.

Jennifer Preston Chushcoff is a freelance writer living in Tacoma and an active member of the Pierce County Master Gardeners. She gratefully acknowledges the research and assistance of Melissa McGinnis and Doreen Beard-Simpkins and thanks Jean Insel Robeson for sharing her family stories.
Frank Branch Riley (1875-1975), of Portland, was widely known as "The Ambassador of the Pacific Northwest" for his tireless promotion of the region. He travelled all over the country presenting lantern slide shows and, later, moving pictures. A lawyer by trade and orator by training, Riley was well prepared to undertake this endeavor: "A journey of an hour in any direction from anywhere is an adventure into fairyland. Close by are the fretted rapids and deep blue pools of singing mountain streams, refreshing all summer long with the chill of newly melted snow; and filled with trout crazy for the fly. We enter into the shadowy aisles and under the green canopies of ancient cathedral forests, sanctuaries of wild life, wild beauty, wild flowers, and wild waters."

This poster for Riley's presentation was certainly an eye-catcher. It is a recent addition to the Washington State Historical Society's Special Collections.
Jacob Elshin's imposing oil painting of coal miners at work underground near Renton, Washington, measures twelve feet wide and five feet high without a frame. Elshin created it in 1938 to hang on the wall of the Renton post office. The scene encompasses nine nearly life-size figures diligently working while a mule waits patiently for the coal cart to be filled. The figures are effectively rendered in broad strokes, with selective patches of white highlighting different parts of the underground tableau. The miner with his back to the viewer and the two others close to the frontal plane—all equally absorbed in their tasks—draw the viewer into the busy scene.

The Renton canvas is one of 18 murals painted by artists for post office lobbies in Washington during the Great Depression and among 1,100 post office murals nationwide funded by the United States Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture. The purpose of these murals was to provide artists with employment and bring works of art to communities that might not otherwise have access to public art. As meeting places that existed in every community, post offices were considered an ideal setting.

Jacob Elshin (1892-1976), the artist who painted the Renton mural, received his education in Russia before fleeing to the United States to escape the Russian Revolution. He settled in Seattle in 1923 where he had a successful career in art and teaching that spanned more than 50 years. By the mid 1970s Elshin's work was represented in the permanent collections of both the Seattle Art Museum and the Frye Museum, and among the icons of several churches in the city, the latter reflecting his Russian Orthodox heritage. He exhibited in museums outside of Seattle—in this country and abroad—throughout his professional career.

Elshin's work was obviously pleasing to officials of the Treasury Department's Section of Painting and Sculpture in Washington. He won a competition for a second post office mural in Seattle in 1939, a double scene in the University Station post office appropriately titled: Historical Review of Education and Present Day Education. Shortly thereafter, Elshin received a commission to paint three smaller panels inside the entrance to the auditorium of West Seattle High School, this time under the auspices of the Works Progress Administration (WPA). The first panel depicts pioneers landing near Alki, the second panel shows settlers bartering with Native Americans, and the third depicts a logging scene.

Correspondence between the artist and Edward B. Rowan, director of the post office's Section of Painting and Sculpture, indicates that Elshin was included in the selection process when it came to choosing a subject for the Renton post office mural. He was first asked to familiarize himself with the community in which the post office was situated. He wrote back to Rowan that he already knew Renton as he had lived in Seattle only 10 miles from there for a number of years. He went on to make five or six study trips to the post office itself, where he talked things over with the postmaster and others who might be involved. Elshin suggested several different types of industries in Renton as possible subjects, including sawmills and an automobile foundry as well as coal mines in the vicinity. Everyone seemed to agree that Renton was put on the map.
by its coal mines, the earliest of which was owned by the Renton Coal Company. Like the town, it was named for Captain William Renton. Elshin's letter to Rowan stated, "From both the historical and the industrial standpoints, coal mines seem to be the thing."

Elshin wrote to Edward Rowan that he was fortunate to have the assistance of William Strain, who operated a number of mines in the district. Strain took him to several mine sites, explaining what was of importance and what was typical as they drove along. Strain actually took him into the tunnels, getting the men to pose for him and demonstrate the work. Elshin chose to depict the miners using old-fashioned manual tools instead of modern machinery, reasoning that hand-tools were more picturesque and took up less space in the scene.

There is one charming exchange in the correspondence between Elshin and Insee A. Hopper, assistant director of the Painting and Sculpture Section. Elshin sent Hopper a choice of two sketches, one with a mule conspicuously placed in the center and one with no mule. Hopper definitely preferred the one with the animal, which he thought added variety and interest to the scene. Elshin agreed with Hopper that the composition with the "burro," as Hopper called it, was much more satisfying. That is why it is the only sketch he made in color.

The presence of the mule in the scene actually goes beyond esthetic considerations. In earlier times, before coal companies began using electric or steam engines to haul coal up from the mines, mules were used to pull the laden coal cars from deep underground. They were an essential part of the coal mining
The mule in the post office mural is consistent with the miners' hand-tools. Taken together, they describe a fairly authentic period piece.

Dr. Richard Fuller, then director of the Seattle Art Museum, invited Elshin to exhibit his canvas in the museum for a month, from April 6 to May 1, 1938, before it was permanently installed in the post office. This is testimony to the quality and appeal of Elshin's work.

When the artist asked Rowan for permission to hang the canvas in the museum, he readily agreed, with one stipulation: the museum must make it clear at every turn that the sponsor of the art was the Treasury Department, not the WPA.

A newspaper article praised Elshin's canvas right after it was installed in the Renton Post Office lobby:

MURAL INSTALLED SATURDAY. How many have noticed the lovely mural hanging in the post office? It measures 6 feet by 14 feet (this includes a frame) and was hung in the post office corridor last Saturday. The picture was painted by Jacob Elshin, well-known Russian artist at Seattle, and is almost a life-sized oil painting, depicting miners at work in a coal mine. This is most appropriate for the Renton post office, since the founding of this city and its rapid growth was originally due to the discovery of coal here and in the nearby vicinity and the artist got his inspiration from a Renton mine."

Perhaps the last sentence is in reference to the exceptional opportunity Elshin had to view the inner workings of a coal mine firsthand—courtesy of William Strain.

Once his mural was hung in the Renton post office, Elshin assessed his huge canvas in context. He reported to
Edward Rowan, “The color scheme fits the coloring of the tile and the woodwork perfectly and makes the mural look much better than it did either in my studio or when on exhibition in the Museum. The light is absolutely perfect on the canvass [sic] and there is no reflection on it of any kind whatsoever.”

In truth, despite the confident aspect of the scene in “Miners at Work,” coal miners in Renton and throughout the area were enduring a good deal of hardship in 1937 and 1938. Opportunities for employment had dwindled in the Pacific Northwest as they had all over the United States during the Great Depression. While they helped plead the case for the mine workers, mine owners were often unwilling or unable to meet union demands. Workers would sometimes resort to walkouts. In time, though, there was not enough work to go around. Less costly to produce and more readily available than coal, petroleum products and hydroelectric power also contributed to miners’ woes. Large companies such as the Pacific Coast Coal Company finally closed down. Only small coal mines were still in operation by the time Elshin planned his mural for Renton. Most of them would be out of business in a matter of months. The demand for coal lingered for the next few decades as a home heating fuel source, but it was not enough to provide steady employment for the number of coal miners looking for work. When “Miners at Work” was hung in the Renton post office in May 1938, it did not reflect reality. The oil painting was more a statement of pride in Renton’s coal-mining past than an accurate portrayal of the present.

The Treasury Department’s Section of Painting and Sculpture actually had an additional motive for sponsoring these post office murals. Besides providing needed employment for artists and exposing Americans in small communities to painting and sculpture, the goal was to counter the despair that might well result from the lack of jobs as the Depression wore on. President Roosevelt was reluctant to have any realistic depictions on post office walls that might discourage the people and lead to loss of hope. Scenes of Americans hard at work, even if out of date, were to function as encouragement and inspiration.

Karal Ann Marling summed up the situation well in her study of Depression-era post office murals:

The murals’ representations of work were a reverse image of 1930s America. Often showing those crafts and occupations most crippled by the Depression—the building trades, mining, industrial work—murals proclaimed the strength of America at work to banish the haunting specters of idle plants, unemployment, and farm depression.

“Miners at Work” was moved from the small post office to the Highlands Branch of the Renton Public Library in 2000. Elshin’s mural is a complex statement illustrating the perseverance and determination of people who dug coal for a living there. It serves as a pictorial history of one industry, and a reminder of the strength that resided in local coal miners of an earlier day. And, as stated succinctly in Coal Mining: Renton’s Black Diamond Industry: “The...coal in Renton’s history is far too important to forget.”

Bernice L. Thomas is author of The Stamp of FDR: New Deal Post Offices in the Mid Hudson Valley. Since moving to the Seattle area, she has taken an interest in post office murals in the Pacific Northwest.
A Brief History of Flour Milling in Washington

GRIST FOR THE MILL

By Norman Reed

Flour milling was intimately entwined with the growth and development of Washington. Many a town across the state, large and small, could boast its own flour mill. Colorful packaging and advertising promoted Washington's flour and cereal products to the general populace across the state and farther afield.

For over 10,000 years wheat has been a human staple. In fact, its cultivation on permanent plots was the basis of our modern civilization. Until relatively recent times families had to harvest and thresh their own grain, produce their own flour, bake their own breads and cakes, and prepare their own breakfast cereals.

In this region the North West Company's Fort Colville grew the first wheat and built the first gristmill in Oregon Territory at Marcus Flats near Kettle Falls in 1816. The Hudson's Bay Company built a second one on Mill Plain just east of what is now Vancouver in 1828. Both mills are believed to have been powered by animals. As settlers began to appear, the growing of grains and their milling became more important. Pioneers craved milled flour because although homemade mortar-and-pestle flour was well-suited to gruel, pancakes, and hard biscuits, it did not make good bread.

Michael Simmons built the first American-owned western Washington mill in Tumwater in 1846. Thomas M. Chambers built his mill at Chambers Creek, the outlet of Lake Steilacoom, in 1847. The Chambers mill expanded and stayed in operation for many years.

At Warbassport, or Cow-litz Landing, just a mile downriver from present-day Toledo, E. D. Warbass established a sawmill and gristmill in 1852. In 1857 the A. L. Davis sawmill at Claquato, just west of Chehalis, added a run of stones for grinding flour. At least 17 more mills soon followed in Clark, Lewis, and Pierce counties as farming became established in the territory. Most of the small, rural gristmills in western Washington were short-lived, unlike their eastern Washington counterparts, which had tremendous wheat crop harvests to support them.
Over time a growing population in the Puget Sound region created an expanding market for flour and cereal products. Henry Yesler opened a sawmill at the foot of Mill Street in Seattle in 1853. In 1864 he added a gristmill, following the common practice of mills harnessing their power source to multiple uses.

East of the Cascades, as settlers became acquainted with the soil, they discovered that the region was extraordinarily well-suited to growing wheat. Wheat grew everywhere—on the round tops of hills, and on benches, plateaus, and foothills. No irrigation was necessary, and the rich soil required no fertilization. Yields per acre were much better than back east in the prairie states, and crop failure had not been known, though drought did reduce yields. For flour in excess of the settlers' subsistence needs, trappers, missionaries, soldiers, and miners in the area provided a ready market. Walla Walla soon became the center of the flour milling industry, situated as it was near major rivers that could bring in machinery from Portland and supply customers in all directions. The area had abundant waterpower available in the Touchet and Walla Walla rivers. At one time there were seven gristmills in operation on a 30-mile span of the Touchet River. All in all, 11 mills operated there in the 19th century, beginning in 1859 with the Pioneer Mill on Yellowhawk Creek, which was run by Almos H. Reynolds.

The earliest railroads were established to expedite the grain and flour trade. In 1875 Dr. Dorsey Baker completed the Walla Walla & Columbia River Railroad. Its wooden rails connected Walla Walla with Wallula to hook up with the Columbia River steamboats. Soon the Palouse region in southeastern Washington became known as one of the greatest wheat-farming regions in the world. Mills sprung up wherever there was a waterpower source. W. O. Breeding built the first gristmill in Palouse town in 1875. At its opening, a group that had gathered to view its complicated mill workings stayed for a dance in the warehouse.

**Milling Methods**

During most of the 19th century flour millers utilized stone grinders. Two round flat stones, usually imported from France, did the job. The bottom stone was stationary and the top stone was the "runner" that turned. The grain was fed down into a hole in the middle of the top stone and the flour exited, radially, out from between the stones. These mills were simple in concept and worked for centuries. Though not the best for wheat flour, they worked well on corn and buckwheat and are still in use today for producing specialty flours.

In the mid 1850s roller mills were adapted for flour milling in Switzerland and Hungary. The first roller mill of commercial importance in the United States was put into use in Minneapolis in 1878. The roller mill, along with an air-classifier called a "purifier," produced a more uniform flour at less cost and worked better on the harder, high-gluten spring wheat used for making bread. Roller milling also made possible the construction of larger, more efficient mills, hastening the abandonment of community mills and stone grinding.

**RIGHT & OPPOSITE PAGE:**

Like its peers, Albers produced a variety of grain products, which it packaged and marketed with colorful and (sometimes) cute graphics.

LEFT: By the 1910s flour milling had become big business in the Pacific Northwest. The Albers Company was then one of several large milling concerns operating on Seattle's waterfront.
room. Twenty-eight mills were running there by the late 1890s.

Since a gristmill was so important to the success of a town, millers were in great demand. Sylvester Wait was one such miller. He came west from Vermont in possession of sound training in the flour milling trade and in 1863 founded a mill on the Touchet River. An honest and respected man, he became county commissioner in 1867. Wait was considered the founding father of the town that grew up around the mill, and the townspeople voted to name the town Waitsburg in his honor.

With demand for flour still growing, Wait helped Jessie Day start a mill downstream; that town became Dayton. Pomeroy is also named after a miller. Ellensburg is named for Ellen, wife of John Shoudy, who was the miller at the Tjossem mill.

John Houser was the successful operator of Meyer's Mill in Colville. Spokane founder and booster James Glover offered Houser a riverside site on his 160 acres plus the waterpower rights for just $600 if he would come and build a gristmill. The Spokane area farmland was not to his liking, though, so he went instead to Patala City and built his mill there in 1878. It remains there to this day.

Spokane came late to the party, not being developed until 1878, but it caught up rapidly. The town's excellent hydropower, growing population, and easy rail access ushered in the era of big city mills that eventually brought about the demise of rural gristmills. By 1889 the Echo Mill, C & C (Clarke & Curtis) Mill, Spokane Flour Mill, and the Centennial Mills were leaders in this bigger-is-better movement.

Between 1880 and 1893 the Pacific Northwest experienced a rate of growth seldom equaled in any part of the country. The development of Tacoma and Spokane was phenomenal—largely due to the arrival of the transcontinental railroad lines. The flour milling industry reached its heyday at this time. Spokane was said to be the seventh largest milling center in the nation by 1900, just behind such locations as Niagara Falls, Grand Rapids, and Minneapolis-St. Paul.

The Asian trade and the ever-expanding western Washington population encouraged the establishment of larger and more modern flour mills in the Puget Sound region. The Novelty Mills out toward West Seattle was the first, and by 1906 the stretch of Seattle waterfront south of the modern-day stadium district was home to three mills—Hammond Milling Company, Albers Cereal Mills, and Centennial. The Fisher Flouring Mills opened on Harbor Island in 1911. With the addition of the Charles Lilly Company, which produced flour as well as seeds, feeds, and fertilizer, and the City Mills just north of downtown, Seattle had seven mills. Tacoma had the Puget Sound Flouring Mills, the Tacoma Grain Company, Watson and Olds, Albers Milling Company, and the Cascade Cereal Mills. North of Seattle the Everett Flour Mill produced Best Everett Brand and Bellingham had a big mill on South Hill next to the water where the three-masted schooners could easily load up.

The international grain trade was huge. Tacoma had a mile-long grain warehouse on the waterfront that handled wheat. Freight trains stopped on the shore side and the great ocean-going schooners tied up at the water side for loading. Large quantities of Washington's wheat also shipped out of Portland and Astoria. Combined, the grain and flour trade was one of Washington's major industries in the early 20th century.

Inevitably, consolidation hit the industry. Spokane's C & C Mill was purchased in 1895 by the Portland Flouring Mill Company, which by that time had nine mills operating in the West. North Pacific Flour Mills operated in Walla Walla, Dayton, and Prescott, Washington, and had mills in Idaho and Oregon. Around 1902 Henry P. Isaacs, North Pacific's owner, closed some mills and sold others to the Portland Flouring Mills, which also owned the Puget Sound Flouring Mills in Tacoma. The California-based Sperry Flour Company moved into the Northwest in 1920 with the acquisition of the numerous mills owned by Portland Flouring Mills. General Mills of Minneapolis, the nation's giant, moved west in 1929 to merge with Sperry.

During the 1920s and 1930s many of the older mills in the state—deemed too small or technologically obsolete—were closed. General Mills operated the old Sperry plants in Tacoma and Spokane until 1965. The Spokane Sperry mill was sold to VWR United (the Centennial, United Pacific, Van Waters
Last Man Standing

Fires were always a threat to flour mills. Flour dust is flammable and under certain circumstances can even be explosive. Many mills have burned down over the years. The state's biggest flour fire took the Centennial Mill on Tacoma's Old Town waterfront in 1947. Having evolved from the Tacoma Grain Company, built in the 1890s, it had become obsolete by the 1940s and was not rebuilt.

Two water-powered gristmills have been preserved and kept in operation. They are Cedar Creek Mill, near Woodland, and the Thorp Mill, about 10 miles northwest of Ellensburg. Most early mills were built of wood and are no longer standing. Three have survived in eastern Washington—in Oakdale, Patah, and Waitsburg. The J. C. Barron mill in Oakdale still runs periodically. A few mills built of brick still remain and have been converted to modern use. The flour Mill Mall in Spokane (formerly the C & C Mill) and the Albers Mill condominium in Tacoma are good examples. The Albers Mill in Portland has been rebuilt into an office building. Around 1910 poured concrete came into use in the construction of multistory mills and grain elevators. Many of these are extant and being used for grain storage.

and Rogers combine) in 1970 and converted to a starch-gluten plant. In 1981 the plant was sold to Archer Daniels Midland Company (ADM) and it is still in operation today.

Washington's largest and longest lasting milling company was Centennial Flour Mills, founded in 1889. Company president Moritz Thomsen built the Seattle mill in 1896 and bought mills in Wenatchee, Ritzville, Pasco, Sprague, Reardan, Vancouver, and Creston, Washington, and Wasco, Oregon. By 1931 Centennial had purchased the Tacoma Grain Company on Tacoma's Old Town waterfront. The company built a new mill on East Trent Street in Spokane in 1939 and bought the Crown Mills of Portland in 1948 from Balfour, Guthrie & Company, moving its headquarters there from Seattle in 1958. Under new ownership, the mills were updated and the firm again became a leader in the milling industry with its effort to modernize older mills. In 1981 ADM bought Centennial and is still operating the huge Trent Street plant in Spokane.

The Fisher Flouring Company of Seattle became western Washington's only mill in 1965. It flourished for many years before being acquired by Pendleton Mills of Oregon. Pendleton was associated with the popular Swans Down Cake Flour brand of the General Foods Company. Pendleton closed the Fisher Mill in 2002 and moved its production to Blackfoot, Idaho.

The only other mill still operating in the state belonged to the E. M. Martin Grain and Milling Company in Cheney. It was sold in 1942 to the National Biscuit Company and is now part of the ADM conglomerate. From many dozens of mills down to two—the ADM plants in Cheney and Spokane—Washington's flour milling industry has gone the way of many business enterprises in the last 100 years or so, but its rich history is so closely interwoven with the growth and development of the state that it deserves and rewards careful study.

Norman Reed is a retired manufacturing executive from Kent. He enjoys traveling around the region and researching its historical, industrial, and agricultural roots.

Eastward Via the Northern Pacific Railway, brochure, 1929 (2003.50.1)

Western Wonderlands, Union Pacific, brochure, 1930 (2002.116.1)

The Land That Lures, Summer in the Pacific Northwest, brochure, 1912 (2001.32.69)

Alaska and the Yukon, White Pass & Yukon Route, booklet by Frederick Hiren, 1928-1934 (2001.1.48)

Land of Geysers, Yellowstone Park, booklet, 1913 (2003.216.1)

These images and others from the Washington State Historical Society’s Image Collections can be viewed and ordered online at: http://research.washingtonhistory.org/collections and http://collections.washingtonhistory.org/emuwebwshs.
McLoughlin’s Grand Jury

The lawless Pacific Northwest Coast provided the setting for a brutal murder in what is today called Wrangell, Alaska. It occurred in spring 1842 at the Hudson Bay Company’s (HBC) Fort Stikine, an isolated fur trading post as far from western civilization as one could get.

This dark episode in the annals of fur trade history has a unique connection to Fort Nisqually, which was situated in present-day DuPont, Washington. Over the course of several hot summer days in 1842, this small trading and farming site became the setting for a murder investigation. The victim was John McLoughlin Jr., eldest son of the HBC’s Fort Vancouver chief factor, Dr. John McLoughlin, who convened the jury. Pierre Kanaquassé, as murder suspect, delivered the testimony.

Commonly known as “Peter the Iroquois,” Kanaquassé had a villainous reputation and was, according to the chief factor, one “whom necessity alone has obliged us to Employ.” McLoughlin’s “us” was the Hudson’s Bay Company, a British fur-trading conglomerate founded in 1670, which maintained fur-trading posts all across present-day Canada and up the Pacific Coast from southern Oregon to what is now Alaska. Such posts brought the HBC’s many employees, or “servants,” into close contact and direct commerce with local indigenous peoples who sometimes became employees themselves.

Kanaquassé had joined the company’s ranks in 1833. Likely born on the St. Lawrence River, about 10 miles above Montreal, Quebec, the Sault St. Louis native was a full-blooded Iroquois Indian. He was also a thief and a liar. Serving six years east of the Rockies as a laborer, the unscrupulous rogue’s criminal behavior soon included murder and armed robbery. Briefly stationed at Fort Vancouver on the Columbia River in 1840-41, Peter soon found himself posted at Fort Stikine. There, because

An Inquiry into Treachery, Conspiracy, and Murder at Fort Stikine
of a frail rapport with the local Tlingit tribesmen and the isolated nature of the place, any desertion from the fort was tantamount to suicide.

Here, we will witness through the eyes of "Peter the Iroquois" the occurrences that transpired in the house of John Jr., Dr. McLoughlin's eldest son—a man living under a death mark. At Fort Nisqually in July 1842, the Iroquoian revealed to Dr. McLoughlin a clandestine plan that fueled the chief factor's growing obsession to expunge his dead son's tarnished name. Seeking justice, the "Father of Oregon" empanelled the region's first "grand jury" while sowing the seeds of his own ruin. To make sense of this intersection of justice and tragedy, let us return to the murderous night of April 20, 1842, on Wrangell's harbor.

Two men lay in ambush nearby. Three more took aim from the bastion overhead. All had a clear shot at anyone in the yard.

Eight men sat on the floor of the chief clerk's house drinking rum. Seated in circular fashion, their furtive glances captured the attention of 29-year-old clerk John McLoughlin Jr., whose men called him "Mr. John" and referred to him as "the master." McLoughlin navigated around the half empty bottles littering the floor. Outside the circle lay five Tlingit Indians either unconscious or drunk to the point of incoherence.

This was no holiday drinking party—hate-filled tension clouded the room. At about nine o'clock, Pierre Kanaquasse took his place in the circle along with the fort's other French Canadian and Iroquois employees. Handing Kanaquasse a tin pan brimming with rum, McLoughlin threatened to beat him senseless if he did not down it immediately. Incapacitation was the master's goal—threats against his life had come from these very men. For the next 15 minutes the master circled like a hawk, watching and waiting for the liquor to take effect. Outside the circle sat the young apprentice clerk Thomas McPherson, a Scotsman, and Antoine Kawenasse, who had warned his Uncle Pierre to remain sober because the master "was going to die tonight." Consequently, a large portion of Kanaquasse's rum disappeared down the front of his shirt.

Satisfied with the rum's effect, McLoughlin stepped out once again onto the raised wooden boardwalk that fronted the building. Armed with a loaded rifle and pistol, the clerk looked right through Kanaquasse, who made it clear that he was not involved in the fight. But when pressed for the Canadians' whereabouts, Pierre feigned ignorance.

Two men lay in ambush nearby. Three more took aim from the bastion overhead. All had a clear shot at anyone in the yard. Heavy footfalls soon echoed throughout the enclosure. The Canadians held their fire as Mr. John quickly passed and entered their house. He then returned to the doorway, young
This likeness of an Iroquois hunter illustrates the clothing, accoutrements, and weaponry typical of Iroquoians employed by the HBC along the Pacific Northwest Coast.

Canadians he might meet. Proceeding left around the house, Mr. John inched toward the hidden assassins. Readying his rifle, McLoughlin called out, "Kill me if you can.... If you kill me, you will not kill a woman, you will kill a man!"

Next, Kawenasse's voice barked out, "Fire, fire!" An erratic volley of five, maybe six lead slugs belched forth from the bastion and woodpile, striking the victim, the ground, and nearby structures. One shot slammed downward through McLoughlin's breastbone and out his lower back, severing his spinal cord and flattening him "with such force as to break the stock of his rifle." As smoke engulfed the scene, someone shouted "Stop, stop, stop, he is dead now!"

Another of the Canadians, Urbain Heroux, rushed out and savagely crushed the victim's neck with his foot. McLoughlin, "weltering in his gore" was nearly dead when the others emerged.

"Who killed our master?" they asked.

Heroux declared "You have no business asking who killed him....the master is dead; do not say it was me."

Stepping up, Kanaquasse addressed the corpse: "You will now think no more of flogging men." Turning to the rest of the group, he yelled: "My friends, we have now done what we long intended to do, let us now carry the body back to the house."

The Hawaiians, whose faces betrayed their remorse, offered to help.

The others walked away, muttering, "When a dog is killed, there it is left."

No prayers were said, but the body was dressed for burial and deposited in a makeshift morgue. Some visited while others retired to their houses. Not so for Pierre's nephew Antoine. Exhilarated by the macabre scene, he smeared McLoughlin's blood on his face and arms and proceeded to get drunk.

By morning the flags were lowered to half-mast. On April 23 the body was committed to the earth as a salute of guns was fired. Though Heroux refused to touch the coffin, he seized control of the fort's keys and imposed his own brand of law. Now in a virtual lockdown, Fort Stikine's "new master" doubled the sentries and forbade access to the Tlingit village. He then clarified his position: "Nobody shall go out."

The young Scottish apprentice clerk now fell under Heroux's brutish scrutiny. "McPherson is getting as proud as [Mr. John] and will be telling tales upon us.... We will give him a sound thrashing," commented the Canadian.

Several days later, the HBC's North American governor, Sir George Simpson, was scanning the harbor surrounding Fort Stikine from the foredeck of the company's barque Cowlitz. Simpson knew the half-masted flags spelled trouble. Once ashore, his worst fears were realized.

The governor immediately investigated the circumstances surrounding this "most disgraceful scene." Drunkenness, mistreatment of the local Indians, floggings, kept women, prostitution, embezzlement, and book-keeping irregularities blemished the dead master's name. The slightest infraction, so the men stated, threw Mr. John into a psychotic, alcohol-driven rage, leavened only with a cat-o'-nine-tails across their backs.

Life under McLoughlin, Simpson surmised, had been a living hell. Relying on memory, he turned his interviews, "not fit to appear on a public dispatch," into written depositions that were forwarded...
to the HBC’s London offices under private cover. Sensing restlessness within the nearby Tlingit village, Simpson met with Kwas-hteh-te, the village headman who openly admitted planning an attack on the fort. Apparently, Simpson’s arrival and the presence of a heavily armed Russian steamship invalidated such plans. With peace restored, Charles Dodd, first mate of the Cowlitz, was installed as Fort Stikine’s acting clerk, with George Blenkinsop, a seaman, left ashore as his assistant.

While justice was important to Simpson, keeping this “most embarrassing” affair hidden from world opinion was critical. Citing the young clerk’s intemperance and unbridled fury, Simpson made three declarations: 1) McLoughlin’s death was his own fault; 2) the fort’s men were absolved of all guilt; and 3) the affair was closed. Two exceptions to this decree included the shooter, Urbain Heroux, and Pierre Kanaquasse, who had previously made attempts on McLoughlin’s life. While Heroux was sent to a Russian prison in Sitka, Pierre was delivered in shackles to the Cowlitz’s Captain William Brotchie along with related documents. These were to be forwarded to the dead clerk’s father at Fort Vancouver.

On June 7 the Cowlitz arrived at Fort Vancouver’s wharf. Dr. McLoughlin and his wife Marguerite were shocked and anguish on learning of their son’s death. Simpson’s unsympathetic views worsened the picture: “I shall not here distress you by a detail of the occurrences of that memorable and fatal

As he questioned the men about this sad affair, HBC governor Sir George Simpson pieced together facts of the case by drawing this map of the interior of Fort Stikine. On the margins, he made note of the various points of conflict that occurred between the men and young “Mr. John” on that fateful evening.
night... From all I can collect, the whole conduct and management of Mr. McLoughlin were exceedingly bad, and his violence when under the influence of liquor, which was very frequently the case, amounting to insanity.

Though Dr. McLoughlin’s grief could not be staid, his son’s checkered past brought validity to Simpson’s unsympathetic words. Initial success in a Paris college boiled down to a “mysterious and unpardonable offense” that had landed young John back in Montreal. Squandering money, time, and energy on frivolous and inane pursuits, the young man forsook further education, and, at one point, had to be rescued from a Montreal debtor’s prison. Governor Simpson finally caught up with John Jr. after he had joined a madcap expedition to out West Mexico from what is now the American Southwest.

This bronze bust of Dr. John McLoughlin reflects a father’s sadness and concern, emotions that turned into rage when he discovered of the real reasons behind his son’s murder.

Once in the HBC’s employ, John had matured intellectually, developed virtues, and become “frank, open, firm—but kind and generous,” according to his father.

As Dr. McLoughlin poured over Simpson’s smugly presumptive investigation, holes began to show. Only six men had been interviewed. Eyewitnesses had been left unquestioned. Sworn testimonies had been taken, but voluntarily, and no one had been cross-examined. From the grieving father’s perspective, the governor’s conclusions appeared to be marred with inconsistencies.

On learning that he was supposed to send Pierre Kanaquasse back to Canada to be set free, McLoughlin balked, ordering instead that he be detained indefinitely in the Cowlitz’s brig. In the weeks that followed, Pierre badgered his jailers for a meeting with the chief factor, but McLoughlin would have none of it. In mid June, when the Cowlitz hoisted anchor, Kanaquasse was moved to the fort’s hospital. Now less than 75 yards from the chief factor’s home, the prisoner’s requests still went unheeded.

Knowledgeable in legal precedent, Dr. McLoughlin knew that information gathered in a one-on-one meeting would be inadmissible in a court of law.

“By the first opportunity, I sent him across to Nisqually to embark in the Cadboro,” related McLoughlin. Kanaquasse was headed back to Sitka to face the Russian courts with Heroux. Records suggest that he was sent north with an overland party within days of the Cowlitz’s departure. By now, details of the murder were circulating along the coast.

At Cowlitz Farm the prisoner was heard to boast, “This [murdering of a gentleman] is the way we break these fellows in. I am going to the coast again, and if any of them does any thing to me, I will shoot him [as well].” Once in Chief Factor James Douglas’s custody aboard the Cadboro on Puget Sound, the prisoner found himself locked up again and alone in the brig.

Chief Factor Peter Skeen Ogden and Chief Trader Donald Manson had arrived at Fort Vancouver with the Snake Country Brigade in early June 1842. Both were hungry for news; Stikine’s troubles and McLoughlin’s grief is what they got. In Douglas’s absence, Ogden and Manson provided the inconsolable couple with support and sympathy while the brigade’s arrival provided the doctor with numerous distractions. As the days passed, Fort Stikine dominated their conversations. Simpson provided this description of the place:

The establishment... was situated on a peninsula barely large enough for the necessary buildings, while the tide, by overflowing the isthmus at high water, rendered any artificial extension of the premises almost impracticable; and the slime, that was periodically deposited by the receding sea, was aided by the putrid and filth of the native villages in the neighbourhood, in oppressing the atmosphere with a most nauseous perfume... and the supply of fresh water was brought by a wooden aqueduct, which the savages might at any time destroy, from a stream about two hundred yards distant.

Furthermore, Fort Stikine was a dangerous place. During the Russian American Fur Company’s occupation, the local Tlingit tribesmen had attacked a number of times. Chief Trader Donald Manson, familiar with the region’s first people, concurred that they had always been traded with at arm’s length. Matters had been made worse when, in the fall of 1841, Simpson had deprived Fort Stikine of its second officer. This troubled all the gentlemen. With warlike tribes so near, and “where the most liquor is Expended in the trade and where the men can obtain it from the natives—unless strictly watched by their officers—no person the least Versant in the Business of the N.W. Coast, Even with Good men, would think of leaving only one officer...,” Dr. McLoughlin criticized.

Compounding such problems was Dr. McLoughlin’s reluctant decision to populate Stikine with “Canadians and Iroquois [who] were the Greatest Blackguards in the department and were sent to Stikine to prevent their giving trouble in other places as I knew these men would only be kept to their duty by the dread of
punishment....” With Mr. John’s murder, Stikine’s descent into a “hell upon Earth, a Sink of pollution and profligacy,” had finally hit rock bottom.

McLoughlin, Ogden, and Manson had one final concern. The life of an HBC officer had been taken with impunity by a group of subordinates. Simpson’s blithe consideration of this fact set a dangerous precedent. Dr. McLoughlin prophesied that, “without doubt, if this melancholy affair is passed over and not thoroughly examined, [and] unless the Officers allow the men to do as they please, [more officers will be killed by their men]....”

Given his experience on the coast, Manson was instructed to relieve Dodd as Stikine’s new senior officer. Then, around the first of July 1842, a courier delivered a note that brought Dr. McLoughlin to his feet. It stated that while skirting the waters off southern Vancouver Island, James Douglas had interviewed Kanaquasse, who seemed “to have viewed the murder with curiously little emotion or fear of consequences, and neither delicacy nor apprehension appear to have made him hesitate to answer questions.” On writing these words, McLoughlin biographer W. Kaye Lamb of the University of British Columbia attributes Kanaquasse’s sudden shift in attitude to his being “such a villain.” Others have suggested that he may have felt immune to prosecution because he was beyond Russian jurisdiction.

Motivations aside, the Iroquoian told of a murder conspiracy fueled by liaisons with local Indian women. Kanaquasse revealed that the men’s sexual encounters had been paid for with stolen company property. As McLoughlin sat down in disbelief, the whole sordid mess came into focus. Justice would now be served. Kanaquasse’s testimony would now be taken in a manner admissible in any civil court of law.

Having bolstered Manson’s party to 11 men, McLoughlin likely felt compelled to join them. However, pressing concerns required his presence at Vancouver for the moment. As Manson departed he was told to detain everyone at Fort Nisqually. Several days passed before McLoughlin headed north. On July 10 he reached Cowlitz Farm only to hear of Kanaquasse’s brazen threats to kill more officers. After collecting several statements, his party pushed on, arriving at Fort Nisqually late on July 12.

The following morning Dr. McLoughlin assembled his colleagues to prepare for an official inquiry. Clearing out a space, sweeping it, and gathering furniture fell to the fort’s postmaster, Angus McDonald. Following breakfast on Friday morning, the gentleman jurists assembled.

Chief Factor McLoughlin, a 40-year veteran of the fur trade, presided. Historian John Hussey describes him thus: “Standing six feet four inches in height, his powerful, well-knit frame gave an impression of physical strength which was almost overwhelming. His blue-gray eyes flashed out beneath ‘huge brows,’ and crowning his rosy-cheeked face was a magnificent head of prematurely white hair which he allowed to flow down onto his broad shoulders.” Known to be fair but despotic at times, “he was a King...and much feared” by the French Canadians under his charge. No one carried more influence than he.

Chief Factor James Douglas, a 23-year veteran, and McLoughlin’s right-hand man, was once described as “a fine man, distant in manner, and inclined to be pompous.... A large fine looking man, in contradiction to Simpson, who was a small man.” The future governor of Vancouver Island could assess a man’s talents and abilities simply by speaking with him. His knowledge of the operations and Indians along the coast would prove an asset to the investigation.

Chief Trader Donald Manson, a 24-year fur-trade veteran and trusted colleague, was “a fine looking fellow, upwards of 6 feet high and stout in proportion. He had always been in the interior and to the Indians was a sort of a terror, and they feared, and at the same time obeyed him.” No stranger to abrasive situations or the coastal fur trade, Manson was McLoughlin’s enforcer. He would use this circumstance to further his reputation as an overly harsh disciplinarian.

Chief Trader Captain William McNeill of the steamer Beaver, though an American, was as staunch an HBC servant as one could find. In 1832, shortly after his hiring, one colleague stated: “The experience [McNeill] has acquired of the natives and his intimate acquaintance with the different Harbors, Bays and Inlets of the Coast...render him eminently qualified to give affairs in that quarter a favorable turn.” In his time with the company, McNeill had acquired a reputation as a no-nonsense skipper who was known to flog mutineers and confront angry Indians without hesitation.

Captain James Scarborough of the schooner Cadboro had been in the HBC’s sea service for 12 years prior to this gathering. Familiar with the company’s operations and the Indians along the Northwest Coast, Scarborough would soon be sharing Manson’s fate, sailing that party into dangerous and unknown waters.

Four clerks, junior in rank to the others, were also in attendance—Angus McDonald, James Steel, Paul Fraser, and John O’Brien. McDonald had previously spent time at Fort Simpson, up in the Northwest Territories, and was familiar with the men. O’Brien had witnessed the depositions taken by Simpson, so his presence was critical. Steel was an agriculturalist assigned to Nisqually’s farms and knew what it meant to have command of one’s men. Fraser likely acted as court clerk and transcribed the proceedings.

Invited as unbiased observers were two American missionaries who possessed influence and reputations beyond reproach—Dr. John Richmond of the Nisqually Methodist Mission and the
Reverend Jason Lee, who oversaw all Methodist missionary activities within Oregon. In terms of American religious leaders residing in the region at that time, there were none more respected.

As he entered the room, the Iroquois man likely took pause, for he was met with hushed whispers and a steely-eyed phalanx of disapproving faces. Following Kanaquasse's sworn oath, Dr. McLoughlin began questioning him in French, as an English translation was committed to paper by Fraser. Since James Douglas had already obtained details of the murder, Dr. McLoughlin launched into Simpson's allegations about his son's conduct.

When asked if Mr. John was a tyrannical drunk who beat his men for the slightest infraction, Kanaquasse acknowledged that few had escaped the master's lash, boot, pistol butts, cane, or fists. In explaining the justification behind the abuse, Pierre reeled off a laundry list of serious offenses: sentinels caught sleeping on their watch; men refusing to obey orders; physical assaults on Mr. John's person; and the illicit commerce of food, blankets, and gunpowder that the men had stolen. In addition to these infractions, the men had spread lies about Mr. John's strict adherence to HBC policy.

Kanaquasse then confessed to having seen his master only "drink our health on Christmas morning..." but never with the men. Asked if he was ever seen drunk and wandering about the fort incoherently, Pierre replied, "No.... He was elevated [on the day he was murdered] but knew very well what he was about."

Dr. McLoughlin then asked: "When Sir Simpson and Mr. Douglas arrived at Stikine in October preceding, did anyone complain to Sir George of the deceased?" Kanaquasse's response was: "No one complained." These replies confirmed that Mr. John was no drunk. They also established that his response to the men's offenses was within HBC policy.

The murder conspiracy issue was then broached. Though he first denied any knowledge of the plot, Kanaquasse finally relented. In December 1841, he recalled, Urbain Heroux and William Lasserte began making plans to kill the master. The meetings were kept small and private because "Mr. John kept so vigilant a watch upon them, that they were afraid he might suspect their intentions if they went [to Heroux's house] in a body." Initially, the Hawaiians, or "Blue men," objected to using guns. Poison was considered a better method. Kanaquasse also noted that Thomas McPherson objected to the plan altogether, arguing, "No, do not [kill him]...let him be 'till the governor comes by and bye & then we shall have redress." The Canadians quickly dismissed the idea.

Acquiescing under pressure, the apprentice clerk drew up a murder contract that "was signed in Heroux's house, where the men [arrived] by Pierre's note, were often allowed to leave the fort, walk on the wharf, or visit Tlingit lodges—but only if there were few Indians about. If the number of Indians increased and their intentions appeared hostile, the gates were closed and the men sequestered. No one was allowed outside the stockade at night. While snoozing sentries often left the fort vulnerable to attack, the fort's single men regularly broke curfew to visit their Tlingit "mistresses." Mr. John's punishments, if they were caught, only solidified their resolve to see him dead. Further, William Lasserte jealously suspected that Mr. John was bedding his wife, which only fanned the flames of his hatred.

Ultimately, "the strictness with which [Mr. John] prevented [the men from] sallying from the fort in quest of women" was exposed as their motive for murder. These answers dovetailed tightly with earlier statements. But the interview ran long, and those present needed to digest the findings, so Kanaquasse was excused.

When the grand jury reconvened Saturday morning, its members were shocked to learn from Kanaquasse that Stikine's men planned to kill anyone who struck or punished them for any reason. Dr.
McLoughlin then asked if his son-in-law William Glen Rae, also a clerk, had quarreled with Mr. John while in a drunken rage. No, answered Kanaquasse, but Rae had interceded when McLoughlin caned one of the men, and had been able to remove him with little difficulty.

The verdict was clear: Simpson had been deceived. Dr. McLoughlin concluded: "When these men do not say what it is they are accused of, when they are ill treated as they say, it is because they are aware if they tell the truth, people will know their bad conduct." With copies of the testimony freshly inked, Dr. McLoughlin signed each one, stating: "The short and the long of the affair is this: These fellows wanted to impose on my son, to which he would not submit. They, finding they could not make him bend, conspired and murdered him."

Unfortunately, the jurists had no legal authority to hand down indictments. Their business concluded, each member packed up and left Fort Nisqually. At Stikine, Douglas and Manson threw themselves into the murky business of identifying the conspirators. Fort Colvile’s chief trader, Archibald McDonald, said it best: "The Worshipful Bench [McLoughlin] furnished [Manson] with a commission to inquire, or rather re-inquire, into the unfortunate affair of young McLoughlin at Stikine.... Our learned deputy has made a sweeping business of it—upon very slight evidence made every white man at the establishment, 13 in number, prisoners."

With over half of Stikine’s men so charged, Dr. McLoughlin ordered them sent to the Russian authorities in Sitka. However, safely transporting all prisoners aboard a small vessel like the Cadboro was impossible. For their part, the Russians wanted nothing more to do with the affair and, following the return of three prisoners, made it clear that no prosecution would take place within their jurisdiction. Eventually, 14 men were dispersed to other HBC establishments along the coast until the late fall of 1843, when Dr. McLoughlin had them placed in Fort Vancouver’s jail—which had been built specifically for that purpose.

The grand jury’s questioning of Pierre Kanaquasse at Fort Nisqually marked a turning point in Dr. McLoughlin’s private and professional life. As his personal vendetta became increasingly tangled up in HBC business, one colleague observed: "I fear we have got ourselves into a bobble and that it will turn out we are more at fault in our humble occupation of Indian traders than as the dispensary of her Majesty’s criminal law." Evidence collected by McLoughlin’s grand jury went straight to the top. In 1843 Archibald Barclay, secretary to the governor and committee, wrote to George Simpson:

I need not say any thing about the new light thrown on the murder of Young McLoughlin at Stikine since you were there, as you will have seen the depositions taken in the case. The crime was clearly long premeditated and if ever men deserved hanging, Heroux, Kanaquasse, and the scoundrel McPherson ought to be strung up. It is evident that the men’s charges of habitual intoxication and excessive severity were trumped up after the deed was committed as a screen to the villany [sic] of the culprits.

Unfortunately, the jurists had no legal authority to hand down indictments. Simpson never conceded that point. Conducting what only now can be described as a corporate cover up, the knight would (in today’s courts) likely be charged with slander, aiding or abetting after the fact, or obstruction of justice. Moreover, the jurisdictional “hot potato” remains unanswered to this day.

In retrospect, Stikine’s tragedy claimed two McLoughlins. The son’s body was moved to Fort Vancouver in 1843. The father’s obsessive behavior clouded his judgment and foreshadowed an end to his career as a fur trader. Dr. McLoughlin’s biggest faux pas came in 1844 and involved the conveyance of the alleged conspirators overland to Montreal to stand trial. This action paved the way for a censuring by his superiors in London. Eventually the costs exceeded even Dr. McLoughlin’s deep pockets. With a conviction unlikely (even for the most guilty), the London directors distanced themselves from the affair. Those accused were eventually freed and paid for time spent “under watch and ward.”

To Dr. McLoughlin’s disgust, several were even rehired and sent back to the Columbia Department. Forced to take a leave of absence in 1846, Dr. McLoughlin moved to his home in Oregon City, parting ways with the HBC. In 1857, after a period of declining health, he died, embittered with Simpson and the HBC for the losses he sustained in the spring and summer of 1842.
The Dalles Dam project had a profound impact on both the Indian community of Celilo Village and the non-Indian town of The Dalles. The following is based on an excerpt from Katrine Barber’s Death of Celilo Falls (University of Washington Press, 2005), a work which examines the negotiations and controversies that took place surrounding the dam’s planning and construction and how they intertwined with local issues of concern across the American West: treaty rights, federal Indian policy, environmental transformation of rivers, and the idea of “progress.”

Salvage archaeology conducted during construction of The Dalles Dam confirmed that Celilo Village was an ancient fishing community that had been continually inhabited for thousands of years. The successful historic community, which developed around the fisheries and trade, had since become impoverished and encumbered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs, a federal agency that frequently neglected the needs of the community. In the 1940s Celilo Village consisted of about 30 permanent households built on sand-covered basalt that presented few natural resources apart from access to fish runs in the Columbia River. Residents enjoyed neither electricity nor indoor plumbing (an above-ground pipe carried water from a well to homes), and there was no proper garbage disposal or way to dispose of fish remains.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs negotiated with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers in the 1950s for funds to relocate Celilo residents displaced by The Dalles Dam. Under the direction of Barbara Mackenzie, an experienced social worker, the BIA and Wasco County commenced the Celilo Relocation Project, the removal of 36 families from Old Celilo Village. Although dam-related relocation was perhaps the most intense period of direct governmental intervention in the history of Celilo Village, it was also characterized by the usual neglect the community suffered at the hands of local, state, and federal agencies.

Wasco County had heretofore been able to judge most Celilos ineligible for welfare because many were enrolled members of reservations. County officials who were engaged in relocation were motivated by their determination to keep Indians off the welfare rolls in the face of what would be an economic catastrophe for the village. The Bureau of Indian Affairs was also caught in the midst of a congressional struggle at the time of relocation. During bureaucratic restructuring, the BIA lost its subagent at The Dalles, Clarence Davis, who oversaw Celilo Village. But the agency continued to fend off efforts by congressional Republicans to dismantle the BIA in the push for termination policy. Lastly, Army Corps of Engineer officials dragged their feet when it came to negotiating compensation with the four treaty tribes affected by the dam and relocation, doing so only when Congress withheld appropriations.

The Army Corps of Engineers planned to purchase Indian homes that would be flooded by the dam, but by 1954 it had no intention of relocating displaced residents. The Wasco County Welfare Commission responded to this news with alarm. County officials worried that Indians would simply move their homes to higher ground, “creating an unsightly and unsanitary condition” at a new site, and that the out-of-work fishermen posed a “serious welfare problem.” The corps was legally responsible only for providing Indians with the appraised value of their homes and drying sheds, an often meager amount that would not cover the cost of a minimally acceptable replacement. The corps’ inaction mobilized Wasco County Judge Ward Webber, who asked Barbara Mackenzie to propose a plan for relocating displaced families. The BIA, in turn, did its best to compel the corps to respond to the cost of the move.
Part of The Dalles Dam project consisted of moving the Union Pacific Railroad to higher ground where it passed Celilo Village. The corps needed an easement through the village from the Department of the Interior. This provided the BIA with adequate leverage to exact cooperation from the corps. In February 1955, the BIA “urged that no right-of-way be granted” by the Interior Department to the corps until given the chance to strike a deal, a compromise that was reached in a meeting between the BIA, the Army Corps of Engineers, and Wasco County. The corps agreed to transfer $210,000 to the Interior Department and the BIA agreed to transfer five and a half acres to the corps for relocation of the railroad. The Interior Department would then transfer funds to Wasco County, which would administer the relocation of the Indians. Congressional appropriations in 1955 made the swap and plans for relocation possible.

Barbara Mackenzie wrote the original relocation proposal. At this early stage, Mackenzie made important decisions that affected the outcome of relocation. She insisted that the Bureau of Indian Affairs allow her great independence in her dealings with the Indians at Celilo. She recognized that, because most Celilos distrusted the BIA, “nothing would succeed” unless she could appear to act autonomously. Second, and even more important, Mackenzie organized an advisory committee that included Indians and non-Indians to handle the difficult issues that relocation was bound to raise. This group recommended families for relocation and determined which were qualified. Years later, Mackenzie recalled that she rented a trailer so that she could live at Celilo. She moved to the outskirts of the village and opened her curtains, the conventional invitation in the community for visitors. For weeks she waited to be approached, until Flora Cushinway Thompson, wife of Chief Thompson, made her way to the white social worker’s trailer. Thompson’s visit signaled acceptance and instigated a partnership between the two women.

To prepare for relocation, Wasco County interviewed Indians who might need new homes. The survey and subsequent interviews indicated that most wanted to remain in the Celilo area, but the relocation committee, citing problems with sanitation, the availability of utilities, and access to area schools, proposed $500 bonuses for families who relocated at least ten miles from the village. The committee’s plan allowed each eligible family about $7,500 apiece to put toward an existing home or to pay for building a new home. All of the houses required approval by the BIA, and in the kind of paternalism common at the time, the program would not allow Indians to sell or mortgage their new homes without a cosigner.

Eligible Indians had to document residency in the village from May 17, 1950, the day Congress approved The Dalles Dam. In all, fifty families applied for aid, and the committee deemed 36 qualified. The binational advisory committee (which included Marshall Dana, J. P. Elliott, Charlie Quitooken, Edward Edmo, Mathew Gowdy, Farwell Booth, Kennedy Klamath, and George Cloud) met nine times between January and August 1956, convening in Judge Fred Mauser’s office, to decide which families to recommend to the Bureau of Indians Affairs for relocation. Barbara Mackenzie’s tasks included notifying families that were approved, arranging relocation plans with individual families, determining costs of the new homes, reporting back to the advisory committee, and acting as secretary. Bert Keith initially appraised homes selected by Indian families but relinquished his duties after two weeks; Mackenzie then took on this role as well.
In March 1956, the BIA awarded a contract to construct new homes at New Celilo to B&W Construction of The Dalles. Abe Showaway, an interpreter who lived at Old Celilo, and his wife Minnie were the recipients of one of the four new homes at New Celilo. The couple's journey through the relocation bureaucracy was rapid. By the committee's first meeting on January 12, 1956, the corps had already relocated the Showaways into temporary quarters to make way for dam construction, which made their eligibility a moot question. Abe Showaway wanted to build at New Celilo, and in May he collected the keys to a new home, along with three other families who stayed in the community. By mid April, seventeen families had negotiated the process of identifying and buying homes, twelve were embroiled in the details of finding suitable houses, three were contemplating where to relocate, and one family was waiting word on its eligibility. At the committee's final meeting in August 1956, only two families were still looking for homes.

Although Mackenzie's advisory committee hoped to provide stability for the families it aided, relocation ultimately fragmented the Indian community at Old Celilo. The committee focused on the strength of nuclear families—by insisting that couples marry and that families with children move away from Celilo—rather than on the effects that dispersal would have on the larger Indian community. Ultimately, only five out of thirty-six families moved to New Celilo, while the rest moved to Gresham, The Dalles, the state of Washington, or their respective reservations. The five that stayed were families without children. With the fishing sites gone, men and women left to find work. Martha McKeown called the post-relocation village a town of "old people or widows with school age children."

The final report on relocation insisted that the project was a success, claiming that "little discrimination was encountered" and that "probably the worst place for an Indian is on a reservation." The report described Indians as having "found a ready acceptance by white neighbors in schools, in churches, and in employment, . . . most appear quite happy in the new surroundings." But relocation was a painful process that tore at the very fabric of community at Celilo. The relocation plan moved residents who had lived within an Indian-centered community into the surrounding white community. Mackenzie was discouraged when poten-
tial neighbors of the relocated families complained about the possible devaluation of their property if Indians moved into their neighborhoods. Moreover, the relocation project evolved out of a governmental culture that largely ignored the people of Celilo Village. Except to residents and a few sympathizers, relocation was a backburner issue tended to only when conflict threatened to boil over.

On a rainy Sunday in 1957, Celilo residents watched the river's current slow as the new reservoir inundated the islands, fishing sites, shores, and surrounding landmarks that had inscribed their lives. Chief Tommy Thompson spent the day at Hood River, Oregon, in a rest home. By then more than 100 years old, the chief had succumbed months earlier to an illness that left him an invalid. He visited Celilo Falls one last time after the flood, for a New Year's celebration at the village longhouse. The chief died on a Sunday evening in 1959, two years after the completion of The Dalles Dam. On Chief Thompson's final journey to Celilo, a newspaper reporter described him as "taken in darkness past the gleaming, whirring massiveness of The Dalles Dam which he bitterly opposed and which in life he had declined to look at."

More than 1,000 people, Native and non-Native, gathered at the Celilo longhouse to pay their respects to a leader known for his humor and the ferocity with which he defended Indian fishing rights and opposed The Dalles Dam. Flora Thompson wrapped her husband's body in white buckskin and ten Pendleton blankets and placed him in a hand-hewn cedar coffin. A single eagle feather in his clasped hands denoted his rank. Friends carried his body from the village to an Indian cemetery a few hundred feet above the river for a televised funeral. The chief was a fighter to the end. He refused to accept the $3,750 due him to compensate for lost fishing sites at Celilo Falls, saying that he would never "signature away" his salmon.

Chief Thompson's death marked a significant turning point, the end of leadership that had lasted more than eighty years. His death mirrored the death of Celilo Falls. Yet Tommy Thompson and his generation left a legacy of struggle, as evidenced in his fight against the many plans for relocation and his opposition to damming the Columbia River. The Dalles Dam transformed the river environment and destroyed the economic basis of the Indians living there—and the very reason for the village. For the first time, salmon fishing was no longer the center of economic activity at the old site.

In the spring or fall, if you travel Interstate 84 twelve miles east of the city of The Dalles to what is now Celilo Lake, you may very well find Indians fishing a placid Columbia River. They are fewer in number and their catches smaller, but they continue to enact their treaty-reserved rights to fish "usual and accustomed" places. Across the freeway, Celilo Village still stands. The problems of the 1930s—poverty, confused jurisdiction over an Indian town not on a reservation, sanitation, lack of services—still trouble the tiny community. At the same time, residents continued their struggle to remain. Arita Davis, a Celilo Village resident in 1985, told yet another Celilo task force, "I hope you can understand. We don't 'come from' anywhere; this is where we were born, this is where we lived all our lives and we don't want to leave."

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THE WORKS OF JUNE BURN
By Peter Donahue

In terms of authentic American wanderlust, no one tops June Burn (1893-1969). Throughout most of the 20th century, she and her husband Farrar crisscrossed the country seeking adventure from the Arctic Circle to the Gulf Coast. Yet, of all the places they called home, the Puget Sound country was the one they cherished most: “A haven secure against want and trouble—a fortune cached away which none can thieve,” as Burn lavishly declares in Living High: An Unconventional Autobiography, her 1941 account of the Burn family’s footloose ways.

The work opens in 1919 with June and Farrar living in a cabin in the Maryland woods, preparing to set out for the Northwest. Fulfilling Frederick Jackson Turner’s definition of the frontier as free land, they stake claim, via the federal land office, to the last available island in the San Juans—a 15-acre rock pile called Sentinel Island—and thus begin pursuing their homesteading dream.

“We had a theory that only physical work left the spirit free,” Burn says as she and Farrar spend their last $20 on supplies and set up camp on the island. They fish, garden, pick berries, hunt seagull eggs, boil nettles, go sluckus (seaweed) gathering, catch rainwater, visit island neighbors, and row to Roche Harbor to barter for supplies. They also write: June, magazine pieces she sells to New York editors, and Farrar, light verse and songs hepeddles where he can.

June and Farrar’s values anticipate the principles of simplicity and self-reliance found in Ralph Borsodi’s School of Living in the 1930s, as well as in the anti-consumerist, back-to-the-land movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Such values are reflected in their notions of child-rearing. “[Children] should be let alone to do things for themselves,” Burn asserts. “They should be taught not to care for position or fame, for possessions or ease or comfort, so that they might be free to choose how they would live.” And after teaching their two sons to read, they let the boys (named North and South) roam free, guided only by their youthful curiosity.

Yet June and Farrar do not remain long. They venture to a Native village in the Arctic where they work for the Alaska School Service for a year. When the Depression sets in, they hit the road in a donkey cart and later a “little house on wheels” that Farrar rigs up. At one point, June even jumps freight cars with her younger son to meet up with Farrar back east.

“We had a theory that only physical work left the spirit free,” Burn says as she and Farrar spend their last $20 on supplies and set up camp on the island. They fish, garden, pick berries, hunt seagull eggs, boil nettles, go sluckus (seaweed) gathering, catch rainwater, visit island neighbors, and row to Roche Harbor to barter for supplies. They also write: June, magazine pieces she sells to New York editors, and Farrar, light verse and songs he peddles where he can.

When the family moves to Bellingham, they build two cabins for themselves in the woods outside of town, and June begins writing a column for the Bellingham Herald, profiling people and places throughout the region. As the conservationist in her emerges, she warns readers of the harm done to Puget Sound if commercial fishing, farming, and logging continue unregulated. “I would get Mr. Ickes [Harold L. Ickes, FDR’s secretary of the interior] down on me,” Burns says of her advocacy for sustainable ecological practices, “and in the next breath, the Forest Service.”

When the family moves to Waldron Island, June and Farrar start a weekly publication called The Puget Sounder, filling its pages “with pictures of this scenic land and with articles and stories by all the writers and leaders of the Northwest.” Unfortunately, the hardships of the Depression soon catch up with them, the publication folds, and the family uproots itself once again in search of employment—which is where High Living ends.

In 1941, following the book’s success, June and Farrar returned to Waldron Island, and in 1946 they launched their next big project—touring the San Juan Islands in a salvaged Coast Guard lifeboat christened the San Juanderer. They ride the tides, camp on beaches, visit with island residents, listen to old-timers reminisce, go purse seining, dogfishing, and clam digging, and generally acquaint themselves with the many islands and their many idiosyncratic inhabitants. And throughout their odyssey, June chronicles their adventures for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer in a series called 100 Days in the San Juans, typing out 1,000-word dispatches from a make-shift desk aboard the San Juanderer.
or from her driftwood "office" along one of the many beaches on which they camp.

Recognizing that the "past is the only source of understanding about ourselves in the present," Burn offers a thorough history of the islands, large and small alike. She refers regularly to Edmond S. Meany's *Origin of Washington Place Names* (1923) and Roy Davidson McLellan's *The Geology of the San Juan Islands* (1927). She also recounts the oral histories of original settlers, many of whom arrived when British soldiers were still garrisoned at English Camp on San Juan Island before the resolution of San Juan Boundary Dispute in 1872.

In the 1950s, though, June and Farrar left the Northwest again, this time for good, retiring to an Arkansas farm owned by Farrar's family. June died there in 1969, and Farrar in 1975. Their oldest son, North, became a prominent college administrator in Massachusetts, though he returned to the Northwest in his final years. Their youngest, South, remained in Puget Sound country and wrote about the effects of tourism on the region. Today the Burn family retains its property outside of Bellingham and on Waldron Island, while Sentinel Island is in the care of the Nature Conservancy.

Living High was reissued in 1958 with a postscript by June Burn, and in 1992 a paperback edition of the book appeared. In 1983, 100 Days in the San Juans, with photographs taken by June and Farrar, was published in a single volume. Together the two works can still incite a restive reader to pull up stakes, put the oars in, and seek out a sliver of island on which to bivouac.


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**Additional Reading**

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

**When Papa Was a Delegate**


"Are We Almost to Oysterville?" by Sydney Stevens, and other articles about growing up in Oysterville. *The Sou'wester* (Winter 2005-Spring 2006).

**Ebenezer R. Roberts**


**Grist for the Mill**


**Miners at Work**


**McLoughlin's Grand Jury**


Narrative of a Journey Round the World, During the Years 1841 and 1842, by Sir George Simpson. London: Henry Colburn, 1847.

**Celilo Village**


Carl Maxey
A Fighting Life
Reviewed by Robert Keller.

In 1970 I sponsored Washington State Initiative 256, a statewide
effort to require deposits on all beverage containers. During that
election an African American attorney in Spokane—the same
age Barack Obama is today—challenged the reelection of Senator
Henry M. Jackson during the Democratic primary. The attorney was
Carl Maxey, and one of his campaign posters, spinning off I-256,
displayed this caption underneath a soldier in battle: “No deposit…
no return. Is Vietnam Henry Jackson’s idea of conservation?” Maxey
lost to Jackson, and my band of young environmental rebels lost to a
unified bottle, can, and grocery store conglomerate. We disappeared,
but Carl Maxey did not.

Jim Kershner, a journalist at Spokane’s Spokesman-Review, has
written a highly readable, well-documented account of Maxey’s life.
It would be worth reading at any time, but it holds particular interest
today after the dramatic events of November 4, 2008, and the equally
unusual occasion of January 20, 2009. If Barack Obama represents the
most recent milestone in African American history, an earlier marker
along the way was the remarkable career of Carl Maxey.

Born in Tacoma, Maxey by age four found himself abandoned
at a Spokane orphanage where he remained until age twelve when he
was forced out, as Kershner documents, because of his race. The
fatherless child then landed in a juvenile detention facility where a
humane Jesuit priest, Cornelius E. Byrne, finally rescued him. Father
Byrne, in Kershner’s telling, saved Maxey’s life.

Part of that salvation involved admission to Gonzaga University
where Maxey proved at best a mediocre student but an exceptional
athlete. Pearl Harbor and military service interrupted college, then
he returned to Gonzaga after being discharged in 1946. In 1950 he
won the NCAA boxing championship. Maxey then entered and
completed studies at Gonzaga Law School to become the first
African American to pass the Washington state bar. Although he could
have practiced in Seattle, Olympia, or Tacoma, Maxey chose to re­
main in Spokane, at the time not exactly the most color-blind city in
our state. Supporting himself with family law—mainly divorce cases
where both sides often emerge bitter losers unwilling to pay attorney
fees—he also tackled high-profile, often pro bono civil rights litiga­
tion that brought him state-wide recognition and awards.

Kershner carefully traces the legal story while also tracking
Maxey’s personal life, which included two strong wives and two
children. As with any well-constructed biography, we finish the book
feeling that we have just met someone personally. Carl Maxey: A
Fighting Life is a fitting tribute to a controversial ground breaker in
our state’s history. Today it is actually much more than that. It stands
as evidence testifying to the hard road traveled by many African
Americans and thus a tribute to the recent accomplishment of our
44th president.

Finding Chief Kamiakin
The Life and Legacy of a Northwest Patriot
By Richard D. Scheuerman and Michael O. Finley. Pullman: Washington State University Press,
2008; 288pp., $34.95.
Reviewed by Barbara Kubik.

Once again, Washington State University Press shows us why
it is the “go-to” press for carefully-researched, well-written,
readable Northwest histories. Richard Scheuerman brings
his years of work with Native Americans of the Columbia Basin—his
respect for their stories, the ways they tell those stories—to the pages
of this new book. Scheuerman’s coauthor, Michael O. Finley, brings
expertise as an archaeologist and cultural resources coordinator in ad­
dition to his personal history as a member of the Colville Confederated
Tribes and a descendant of pioneer fur trader Jace Finlay.

Finding Chief Kamiakin is just that, the story of the two authors’
long search for Kamiakin and the legacy he left his people. The
authors delved into libraries and archives in small towns of eastern
Washington and searched records in the Catholic archdioceses, the
federal government, numerous universities, even reaching as far as
Australia. They are thorough, using oral histories, letters and jour­
nals, unpublished manuscripts, interviews, and government docu­
ments to trace the Kamiakin family history. The search was certainly
not easy. Kamiakin’s story moves across the landscape of the Pacific
Northwest. He and his family are intertwined with numerous other
Northwest families, including those of Moses, Qualchan, Owhi, and
Tilcoax. Parts of the stories are held close to the family members’
hearts. Some stories, like that of the desecration of Kamiakin’s grave,
still remain difficult to tell and even more difficult to resolve.

The book moves slowly and regally, like an oft-told tale in a
winter lodge. There is the thoughtful portrayal of the patriots, the
sense of place along Rock Creek and the Palouse River, and the story
of Salmon Man. This timeless winter tale is highlighted with rare
photographs and artwork, hand-drawn maps, and the breathtaking
photography of John Clement. The book is a gentle reminder that
we all tell history differently by using the written word, the spoken
word, and the visual arts. Is one better than another? I think not, and
the writings of Scheuerman and Finley tell us they agree.

I would encourage both authors and WSU Press to remember that
it was not just whites who came to the West to stake claims to the
Correspondence

Reflections on Peter Stanup

Nathan Roberts's article about Peter Stanup (Fall 2008 Columbia) is provocative and offers a wonderful overview of human nature in the battle for economic control of the Tacoma tide flats. There seemed to be noble objectives with the Dawes Act to divide reservation lands into individual plots for families. Yet with that act, Congress also imposed values on the tribes that were foreign to them. When tribal leaders, such as Peter Stanup, sought to assert the economic rights of their people under the new federal law, Congress nevertheless kept control by maintaining supervisory authority over the tribes. In the case of the Puyallups, economic interests with political pull in Washington, D.C., seemed to steer local Puyallup Indian land policy. Thus, for the ultimate power brokers the death of Stanup could be rationalized as just another senseless tragedy of a wayward Indian. Stanup's politics, rather than any possible vice, seem to be what caused his death. The truth of such a claim would never be tested in Tacoma court, despite the coroner's findings. Furthermore, imagine how a jury of one's peers during that period would have been composed, assuming anyone could have been charged in Stanup's death. The Tacoma of that period was, it seems, ruled by Caucasian males who felt entitled to bestow grace on people of minority races in the community; as a group, they were not leaders who promoted justice for all. One is reminded of the apocryphal words of President Andrew Jackson after Chief Justice John Marshall's decisions in the tobacco cases at the foundation of federal Indian law known as the Marshall Trilogy: "Chief Justice Marshall has ruled. Now let us see him enforce his decisions."

The Marshall rulings' intent forms the irony of Stanup's mysterious death in that he seemed to seek self-determination for his people but also contained the intellectual seed for the revitalization of the Puyallups as a nation. In the 1960s and 1970s, federal agents began asserting the rights of the Puyallups against the general Tacoma community, starting with the so-called fish wars on the Puyallup River. Marshall's words were given fresh meaning, most evident in the Boldt decision on Indian fishing rights rendered in a Tacoma courtroom. Political differences still raged within the Puyallup Nation, but the tribe's interests were no longer represented and supervised by non-Indians who had a financial stake in the outcome. Indeed, the spirit of Peter Stanup returned to Tacoma a century after his death. Roberts wrote an insightful piece.

—Jonathan Feste, Port Angeles

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riches of the Northwest, but also African Americans, Chinese, and Hispanic peoples. To help us understand the issues that plagued the tribes in the post-treaty years, it would be helpful to see a copy of one of the treaties as well as an overview of such congressional documents as the Dawes Act, the Burke Act, and the Snyder Act.

Kamiakin stood in two worlds, that of his Washani religion and that of the Catholic "black robes," and he encouraged all of his wives and children to do the same. He was at peace in both worlds. In these days of strident religious beliefs, his is an example worth emulating. Kamiakin's legacy is meaningful for all of us—he believed it was important to preserve and respect the past, learn to live peacefully in many worlds, honor the promises we make, and carry ourselves with dignity, kindness, and grace.

Barbara Kubik is a public historian living in Vancouver, Washington. She is a past president of the Lewis and Clark Trail Heritage Foundation.

Current and Noteworthy
By Robert Carriker, Book Review Editor

Coffee table books make great gifts. It is likely that many readers of COLUMBIA received one or more for Christmas. The large format suggests there is a weighty subject just behind the hard covers, while numerous color photographs on the inside make it easy to flip mindlessly through the pages. Seldom are these books worthy of intense scrutiny. That is decidedly not the case for John Kirk Townsend: Collector of Audubon’s Western Birds and Mammals, by Barbara and Richard Mearns (United Kingdom: www.mearnsbooks.com, 2007; 400 pp., £49 plus shipping from UK). This book is worthy of close attention and also the hefty price tag it sports. If you did not get this volume for Christmas, lodge a complaint.

Barbara and Richard Mearns are British naturalists with 20 years of experience and three books on ornithology to their credit. Richard has several decades of service as a countryside ranger in Scotland and the Outer Hebrides. Their personal research while on Townsend’s trail brought the couple to the Pacific Northwest on several occasions beginning in 1993 and continuing through 2002. After that the couple spent months evaluating Townsend’s bird and mammal specimens in Philadelphia, finally finishing up by performing reference checks at 15 research institutions from New York to Philadelphia to Chicago and various locations in the UK. The product of their labor is substantial. It is also complex. The first part of the book is an introductory narrative about John Kirk Townsend, Thomas Nuttall, and John James Audubon. The third part brings to a conclusion Townsend's biography. Part II, the middle section, is the most educational for Pacific Northwest historians.

In 1833 Nathaniel Wyeth planned a second overland expedition to the Columbia River. He invited Englishman Thomas Nuttall, a distinguished and published botanist, to join him. Nuttall, in turn, probed the interest of 24-year-old John Kirk Townsend, a Philadelphian by birth and education, to participate as a zoologist. Townsend found the idea irresistible. Arrangements were quickly made to launch the expedition from St. Louis. From that point forward Townsend wrote a journal that he later published in 1839, without art work, as Narrative of a Journey Across the Rocky Mountains. The full Narrative was reprinted in 1905 and 1999; reduced versions appeared in 1970 and 1978.

Part II of the book by the Mearnses is a reprint, one that hand­somely highlights Townsend's references to the birds and mammals he observed with 350 illustrations, most of them in color. None of the earlier reprints of the Narrative illustrated Townsend’s natural history commentary, nor did they draw material from unpublished journals or letters. This volume does exactly that. Keep in mind that after the journey and publication of the Narrative, Townsend’s natural history discoveries were drawn and painted. They were not included in the original publication of the journal or in reissues, but painted they were, and not just by anyone, but by John James Audubon, who placed them in his own books, Birds of America (7 vols., 1844) and The Viviparous Quadrupeds (2 vols., 1846). Townsend and Audubon, as a result, are forever linked by the several publications that resulted from the second Wyeth expedition.

On September 3, 1834, Wyeth’s expedition arrived at Fort Walla Walla and shortly thereafter reached Fort Vancouver. After a short respite in Hawaii, Townsend returned to the Columbia River in April 1835, and there he remained until the end of November 1836. His collecting brought him to diverse destinations: the falls of the Willamette, the Blue Mountains, Fort George, Cape Disappointment, Youngs Bay, Willapa Bay, Sauvie Island, and the Columbia River bar. Along the way he met John McLoughlin, Peter Skene Ogden, Reverend Samuel Parker, and Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, among others. Townsend describes 56 mammals on the entire journey, and the same number of birds—some seen and others collected—in the Columbia River region alone. The lists presented in 18 appendices truly help the reader sort everything out. Ten maps, two indexes, and a bibliography are very useful. No library collection of Pacific Northwest history is complete without this book.
A morsel of genuine history is a thing so rare as to always be valuable.

-Thomas Jefferson
WOMEN'S VOTES
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