Words by
Rene Bronner
March Song.
Written and Composed
expressly for the
AYP Exposition
W. MARTIN
1790 FIRST AVE., SEATTLE

Music by
Frederick Richard Benjamin.
Author of
Welcome, the Boys in Blue
Etc.

INSIDE
Was the Alaska-
Yukon-Pacific
Exposition the
most beautiful
world's fair ever?
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U.S.-Canadian Wildlife Protection Treaties in the Progressive Era

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COVER: Planners selected the cactus dahlia as the official flower of the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition and commissioned this and other songs to promote the fair. Seattle composer Frederick R. Benjamin wrote the music, and the lyrics, penned by Rene Briner, ended with a chorus that went like this: “Where the cactus dahlia’s blooming...”
Mrs. Shopin stood straight-backed and tall as a birch tree, taller than any woman we fifth graders had ever seen. Her short, wiry red hair was parted on the side and swept back in a wave that never moved. She seemed perpetually angry, or on the verge of it, which kept us in a constant state of vigilance.

I can't say that I liked her; she wasn't someone you warmed up to, but she had my grudging respect because I felt sure there was nothing Mrs. Shopin did not know. She was the one person who knew more than my parents. By contrast, at age 10, I was certain I knew nothing. But as we came to learn such wondrous things as all 50 state capitals, the Gettysburg Address (which made my heart squeeze in my chest to say it), and the location of Haiti on the map of the world, each day I added to my possessions a small piece of Mrs. Shopin's infinite knowledge. It gave me reason to feel “smart,” and I began to hold my head up a little higher among grown-ups.

What really made fifth grade stand out from the blur of my elementary school days—besides Mrs. Shopin's towering form—was music. Into a tapestry of discipline and daily ritual, Mrs. Shopin wove American folk songs, giving them as much weight as long division and penmanship.

We started each morning with the Pledge of Allegiance and remained standing for a round of songs, which no one sang with as much enthusiasm as Mrs. Shopin herself. Like a choir director, she never used a bench but stood at the cream-colored school piano, pounding out the chords with dramatic gesticulations, much to our embarrassment. She didn’t simply sing—she roared, belting out the words with operatic zeal and painfully piercing our eardrums on the high notes.

She led us through songs as though charting a wild new country. And we followed her—how could we not? My classmates and I didn’t know what else to do. Instead of giggling and covering our mouths or just mumbling the lyrics, we sang with all our might. There was something else, too, some gnawing sense that what we were doing was important. So I threw my small, squeaky voice in with the rest, knowing that even 30 of us would hardly be heard above the pounding piano chords and Mrs. Shopin's aria-like renditions of simple folk melodies.

The songs were classic American ballads about the struggles of early settlers, the bounty of the land, and the taming of the West: “This Land Is Your Land,” “The Erie Canal,” and—the one that always set my heart pounding—“Roll on, Columbia,” about the damming of the Columbia River. It has been 25 years since I walked up the covered ramp to attend Mrs. Shopin’s class, but I can still remember the awesome strength of her voice as she led us through the chorus:

Roll on, Columbia, roll on;
Roll on, Columbia, roll on.
Your power is turning our darkness to dawn.
Roll on, Columbia, roll on.

She would warble that first “Roll,” making it sound to our tender ears like a much longer word than it had any right to be (and sung at a higher octave than we could possibly reach). Then she’d hit “Columbia,” bringing out the second syllable like it held something vital for us to know: “Co-LUM-bia.” I could still feel the hum of that syllable in my mouth as we finished the phrase.

Much as I dreaded those mornings in class, something about Mrs. Shopin’s delivery brought the meaning of the songs home to me. It was as if her exaggerated flourishes and genuine enthusiasm—and her determination to have us sing every day—were expressions of her own brand of patriotism. Mrs. Shopin felt the American soul of these songs, and tried in her way to convey it to our young ears and hearts. We were too young then to appreciate it, too easily embarrassed, and our embarrassment blocked our much, though not all, of what she tried to teach us. Like that second syllable of Columbia, those rich folk melodies and lyrics—as much a part of our history as the battles and the presidents—have stayed with me long since.

Teresa R. Herlinger is a Portland freelance copy editor and writer who grew up in Tacoma. She has written for the Christian Science Monitor’s Home Forum page, Conte: An Online Journal of Narrative Writing, and the Litchfield Review.
It was an impossible task. All across the enormous stretch of the western border, shadowy groups of brown-skinned people from an impoverished land were swimming across rivers, hiking through mountains, and even slipping in by boat along the Pacific Coast. Sometimes they died out there—of thirst, exposure, or drowning. Guides charged exorbitant fees to smuggle “illegals” across the line and then murdered them if pursuers appeared. Most of these migrants were just seeking work. Some carried drugs—cheap where they came from but precious on the American black market. The job of the border guards was to stop the flow of contraband and illegal aliens across the line, but it was hardly their only duty. They were also the nation’s first line of economic defense, in charge of enforcing a jumble of regulations governing goods crossing the Canadian border. Every shipment had to be inspected and every penny of tax collected.

Commerce between the states is enshrined in the United States Constitution. Economic integration with Canada and Mexico, despite globalization and the passage of the North American Free Trade Agreement, is much more controversial. This is not new. Recent fears about increased cross-border traffic include: diminishing wages owing to immigrant labor, illegal drug smuggling, terrorist infiltration, importation of unsafe food or other products, and declining domestic manufactures resulting from the availability of cheap foreign imports. Similar concerns arose in the Northwest at the turn of the 20th century, only they were focused on the Canadian rather than the Mexican border.

In their efforts to reach the United States, would-be Chinese immigrants took advantage of Canada’s less stringent immigration requirements. Differences between Canadian and U.S. tariffs on opium created a thriving black market. Militarily, many still considered Great Britain a threat. Yet despite wide public attention to these sensational issues, the vast majority of work performed by northern border guards involved regulating everyday economic activity. During the nation’s first century border security focused primarily on containing economic competition from the British Empire. Congress therefore enacted protectionist tariffs well before it passed laws about immigration, drug importation, and food purity. The intention of tariffs is to create an uneven playing field. They tend to give producers the advantage over consumers and benefit some regions and industries over others. Border dwellers feel this keenly as cheaper though illicit items are always close at hand.

It has become an article of faith that our borders serve to keep “them” out, not us in. A majority of voters support strict border policing in the belief that a strong boundary is a military and economic necessity. The historical evidence, however, suggests a more complicated reality.

By Mary C. Greenfield

The border town of Sumas and its train depot, c. 1905.
In looking at the experience of Sumas, a small town on the Canadian line, about 20 miles east of Blaine and northeast of Bellingham, it appears that during the first decades after its border station opened in 1890, agents spent most of their time trying to curb the behavior of local residents. Expansion of the enforcement apparatus provoked the community's ire and placed its interests in direct conflict with federal policy.

The operational principle is simple: differentials in prices create opportunity for profit. Two nations, two legal systems, and two sets of tariffs created the differential. People exploited the opportunity with regard to headline-grabbing items like opium as well as such mundane articles as butter, horses, hay, sugar, flour, wool, and—well before the Volstead Act—whiskey. Certainly there were professional smuggling rings operating on the border. There were also farmers, grocers, and roadhouse owners. In the words of 18th-century Scottish economist and philosopher Adam Smith, the smuggler “would have been, in every respect, an excellent citizen had not the laws of his country made that a crime which nature never meant to be so.”

As the 19th century progressed, economic expansion, population growth, and transportation improvements made it easier to turn a profit by circumventing tariffs. At the same time, an increasing number of goods and activities came under customs regulation. Among these were opium and Chinese immigrants. The former was not prohibited but carried a very high duty. The latter were barred under the nation’s first major immigration law—the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882.

It is nearly impossible to police a lengthy land boundary, and it is absolutely impossible to do so without local support. Protectionist politicians and journalists used the hot-button issues of opium smuggling and illegal Chinese immigration to argue for expanded federal policing of Northwest borders. Washington congressman Watson C. Squire railed throughout the 1890s that his state needed expanded resources to combat illegal immigration and smuggling and to deter the British from launching an attack from Victoria.

These issues were effective in garnering local support for the otherwise unpopular program of border enforcement. Yet research into the archives of specific customs stations shows that agents spent only a fraction of their time intercepting drugs and undocumented workers and a great deal of time policing communities. While overwhelmed agents often used racist appeals and drug scares to elicit support, the example of the Sumas station suggests that their most important function was to convince border dwellers that the line was worth respecting.

The U.S. suffered tremendous economic instability in the latter half of the 19th century. While the economy—particularly the industrial base—was expanding faster than anyone could have imagined, the nation experienced 13 recessions, several of them painful and deep, between 1873 and 1900. In response, political leaders advocated two contradictory courses of action: protectionism and free trade. Positions changed frequently, and each party had a minority faction that favored the opposite of whatever the majority wanted. Indeed, historian Thomas Terrill suggests that because the parties enjoyed near-equal popularity during this era, both seized on the malleable tariff issue to court niche markets and swing voters.

The tariff of 1846 set a moderate rate of 30 percent on many items. In 1857 new legislation relaxed these rates. A brief financial crisis followed the passage of that law, leading some to argue that higher tariffs made for a more stable economy. The pro-tariff faction won out with the Morrill Tariff of 1860. This act increased duties on items such as sugar and wool. Federal expenditures rose sharply during the Civil War. In 1864 Congress passed an expanded war tariff measure to raise revenue. With a few exceptions—such as another increase in the duty on wool in 1867—these rates remained in place until the Mongrel Tariff of 1883, which maintained high rates on over 100 items. The 1890 McKinley Tariff raised duties to their highest levels ever.

The Elgin-Marcy Reciprocity Treaty, signed in 1854, had allowed for the free movement of many basic commodities across the U.S.-Canadian border, from fish and butter to coal and timber. Consequently, border dwellers developed a small-scale international market in which smuggling prohibited goods such as whiskey was regarded as a very minor infraction. In 1866, however, the Senate repudiated the treaty in retaliation for Britain’s new North American tariffs as well as for its support of the South during the Civil War. Thus, what was perfectly acceptable one year was illegal and unpatriotic the next.

Collection of tariffs fell to the United States Customs Service, a branch of the Treasury Department. Every customs
It did not help that the Port Townsend customs office was famously inept, ineffective, and corrupt.

The deputy collector in charge of the Sumas office reported to the special collector at Port Townsend, and later at Seattle. Correspondence shows the relationship to be one of exasperation, misunderstanding, and annoyance on both sides. Early deputy collectors such as Larry Flanagan (1891-1897) and S. P. Conner (1897-1905) tried to be somewhat accepting of their own limitations and flexible in dealing with local problems. This was not acceptable to the Puget Sound special collectors, who pressed the Sumas agents to stick to the letter of the law. In 1894 Port Townsend Collector Walter Benson wrote to Flanagan, "It is strange we did not get a copy of [the] car manifest for August 20, 1894, which is required by Customs Regulations. Canadian lading certificate is not sufficient, as [you] will readily see by reading this form enclosed carefully." In 1898 Port Townsend Chief Fred Huestis replied to an inquiry made by Conner: "Sir: There is no law that will permit threshing machines from British Columbia to do work in the United States without the payment of duty. You will govern yourself accordingly."

The "look out for" circulars sent by federal and state headquarters made for captivating reading, concerned as they are with prostitution rings, opium-running "hop fiends" with gold teeth, diamond smugglers, and at least one large family of Bulgarian gypsies accompanied by seven bears and five monkeys. The Sumas officers did occasionally make a big bust; in 1900 they found a number of Chinese immigrants hiding in boxcars filled with shingles, and they sometimes...
caught shipments of opium coming in by rail or automobile.

More common were problems such as that of A. C. Bowman, who lived half a mile north of the boundary line and hauled timber south of it. Did he have to pay duty on his team and wagon every time he crossed? Yes, according to Huestis—who added that Conner should have known better than to ask. A mining camp on the U.S. side had to be assessed regularly for the staples they imported from Vancouver. The local cross-border farmers' market was shut down in 1898, with Huestis writing to Conner, "Replying to yours of the 15th instant regarding the farmers of British Columbia coming to your port with their baskets of eggs, butter, and other farm products to sell to merchants, I would respectfully refer you to Sections 218 to 257 of the Dingley Tariff law...as I have already referred this matter to the Department once, it will do no good to do so again."

Conner continually complained to Huestis about the resentment this was causing but received little relief from his boss. Regarding the farmers, Huestis told him, "Of course treat them with as much leniency as can be done under the law and regulations. At the same time, protect the interests of the Government in all cases, explaining to them that you are simply carrying out the law and instructions." As for the trains, Conner was to search them all, including passenger baggage, for smuggled goods and undocumented immigrants while not inconveniencing the railway companies or offending travelers. When Conner repeated a request for more help, he was again told, "This is all the help that I am able to give you at present, and you must take care of the business between you two."

Not surprisingly, locals simply ceased paying attention to the customs office at Sumas—if, indeed, they ever had. In 1900 C. E. Bowman was suspected of hauling freight across the line on a regular basis; Conner was to "seize the rig at the first opportunity." British Columbia farmers continued to bring their produce to southern markets. Conner was to arrest them all, as well as the freight haulers who had begun coming in at night when the office was closed; he apparently did no such thing. Conner did make some effort to thwart frequent smugglers, but as the penalty was generally a fine, recidivism was the rule.

In 1899 Conner caught J. E. McSoray selling 1,000 pounds of sugar, 70 pounds of tea, and 5 sacks of rice to area merchants. Huestis told Conner, "I think it would be a good idea to arrest McSoray two or three times; keep piling up evidence against him." In 1901 the United States attorney charged with bringing indictments against cattle smugglers noted that if he indicted everyone who was guilty there would be no one left to testify. A creamery set up shop on the north side and Conner was ordered to "seize their outfit" as well. Northern Pacific Railway officials protested against the delays to their trains. Meanwhile, railway employees frequently engaged in smuggling of all kinds.

The troubles of the Sumas office continued to grow. Livestock, mobile by nature, was a constant problem. The Fraser River overflowed in 1907 and cattle had to be brought south for pasture. The Sumas collector was told to charge duty on the herds. Then there was the problem of American cattle that wandered north of the border, calved, and returned. Did one impose a tax on the calf? The question was raised but never answered.

The 1906 Pure Food and Drug Act exponentially expanded the office's duties. Items to be sampled by the Food and Drug labs before entry included: meat products, dairy products, olive oil, sardines, spices, chocolate and cocoa, coffee, colored confectionary, food colors, cordials, stock foods, anchovies, dried figs, preserves, non-alcoholic beverages, macaroni and similar products that were colored, canned vegetables and fruits, any food products in cans found swollen, rice or other food products that were misbranded as to country of origin, medicinal preparations likely to contain alcohol or morphine, headache preparations, Japanese or Chinese medicinal preparations...
Locals simply ceased paying attention to the customs office at Sumas—if, indeed, they ever had.

Some of the farmers east of Sumas stated that there was too much Red Tape in reporting to the office at Sumas when they purchased stock or anything just across the line, so that they would much prefer to take the chances of being caught smuggling. And after some investigation thru that section I feel satisfied that the people thru there do not have any respect for Customs Laws and that there has been considerable smuggling of cattle etc.

In 1898 the Sumas customs officers received uniforms. In 1904 they began raising the United States flag. In 1925 they obtained a stop sign. Yet the task of enforcing the nation’s laws continued to be overwhelming. Today, illegal immigration, drugs, and military threats are usually the topics that draw our attention to the boundary line. This was also true in the 19th century. Money was appropriated and the border apparatus continually expanded. Nevertheless, border guards were not particularly effective at stopping those threats. To the extent that they were effective, it was through the use of informants and paid spies, not the checkpoints, patrols. In Sumas, local residents did tip off agents to trails used by Chinese immigrants, and occasionally—they pointed out known smugglers of hard drugs. Paid tipsters—often desk clerks at Vancouver and Seattle hotels—were extremely helpful in ferreting out criminals. There are also anonymous letters in the archives about “disloyal” organizations or persons during the World War I era.

At the present time there are none of the highways covered by Inspectors at your port, the main highways passing thru Sumas being one half block from the office and the office being located so that the same cannot be seen from the streets where the main traffic passes. All other roads and trails are not covered at any time.... West of Sumas there are a number of roads over which Automobiles and Horses and Wagons travel and there is no doubt but that they are passing thru with no intention of reporting to any Customs Office.

Congressman Squire successfully lobbied for more money to strengthen the border on the basis of the threats posed by illegal immigrants and smuggling. Interestingly, Squire was also adamantly against tariff reduction, which might “leave American artisans and laborers exposed to the competition of the miserably underpaid labor of Europe and the rice-eating pagans of Asia.” A hard-line anti-immigration, pro-tariff position was ideologically consistent in its isolationism. But in an age of globalization—fueled by improvements in transportation—it was futile.

As the 1920s commenced, the Sumas customs office did finally achieve success in curbing the local tariff-defying cross-border trade. With more stations, more officers, and more severe penalties, the risk/reward ratio plummeted for smuggling high volume, low margin items such as hay or flour. Meanwhile, that ratio remained stable for illegal immigrants and actually improved for drug smugglers as new laws caused the price of opium and other contraband to soar. Large-scale trade continued to grow, making consistent inspection of commercial shipments impossible. And of course, fanatical ideologists bent on causing harm do not assess the risks of border evasion in terms of financial reward or self-preservation.

In a post 9/11 world new military threats have encouraged more stringent measures at northern border stations. Meanwhile, economic worries have led some to advocate the construction of a wall on our southern border. History suggests, however, that these problems cannot simply be solved with “more police,” particularly when our boundaries have a combined length of over 5,000 land miles. As German geographer Freidrich Ratzel observed in 1897, “The border fringe is the reality and the border line is the abstraction thereof.” Measures such as enforcing laws against employing undocumented workers, increased surveillance of terrorist groups, more foreign investment, and advanced tracing systems for international shipments—tools better suited to the messy realities of global economics—may make much more sense than trying to make real what will always be an abstraction.

Mary Greenfield is a doctoral candidate in history at Yale University, writing a dissertation on steam and technology in the 19th-century Pacific world. She would like to acknowledge John Mack Faragher and George Miles, in whose graduate seminar vague abstractions began to take shape as research questions, ideas, and conclusions.
Seattle photographer Yukio Morinaga (1888-1968) shot "Smoke and Steam" at the train yard near Jackson Street. A prolific artist, he had already shown 56 prints in 15 exhibitions when this photograph was displayed in 1925 at the Second International Salon in New York City. Morinaga had arrived in Seattle around 1908. He worked as a photo finisher and refined his camera skills as a member of the internationally recognized Seattle Camera Club. The diversity of the Japanese émigré community was reflected in the club's membership, which included physicians, clerks, and waiters. In 1942 Morinaga was interned like other Japanese and prohibited from using his camera. Wartime hysteria marked Japanese photographers, even long-time residents like Morinaga, as likely spies. He was sent to the Puyallup assembly area and then to the Minidoka Relocation Center in Idaho. After his release Morinaga lived in Tacoma until his death in 1968. His seal is visible on the lower right-hand corner of the photograph.

—Maria Pascualy

To donate prints or negatives of regional historical interest to the Washington State Historical Society's photograph collection, please contact Ed Nolan, special collections curator (253/798-5917 or enolan@wshs.wa.gov). To purchase a photo reproduction of an image in the Society's collection, visit WashingtonHistory.org and click on Collections, or contact Fred Poyner IV, digital collections curator (253/798-5911 or fpoyner@wshs.wa.gov).
The Short but Promising Career of Seattle Post-Intelligencer Reporter

Bobbi McCullum

By Kimberly Voss

Passersby in front of the bronze fountain outside the Seattle Post-Intelligencer building at 101 Elliott Avenue West on Seattle's waterfront are likely unaware of what that sculpture represents. “Moon Song,” created by George Tsutakawa, was dedicated in 1971 to Bobbi McCullum—a beautiful young reporter who was riding the second wave of the women’s movement when her life was cut short. A tragic accident prevented her from reaching her promising potential, but she made the most of a short career and in doing so paved the way for other women in Seattle to reach new heights of success in journalism.

In 1968, at age 25, Seattle Post-Intelligencer reporter Bobbi McCullum won the top national reporting award for women’s pages. Her five-part series about young pregnant women, “Unwed Mothers—The Price They Pay,” examined the lives of women facing significant social stigma. She interviewed teens, hippies, career women, and African American women. She told warm yet probing stories of young women whose voices often went unheard. Her work demonstrated what was happening at newspapers across the country in the 1960s—women’s pages were changing. New topics captured women’s attention and their voices were being heard in a new way. For a young female journalist it was a great time to be a part of a progressive newspaper.

Barbara “Bobbi” McCullum was born in Hartford, Connecticut, on July 21, 1943, the only child of Dorothy Vaile McCullum and James McCullum, a retired navy captain who became a Boeing executive. Because her father’s naval career kept the family on the move, McCullum went to elementary schools in Illinois, Rhode Island, South Carolina, and Virginia. She started high school in California and ultimately graduated from George Mason High School in Falls Church, Virginia, in 1962. She was accepted at Northwestern and Stanford universities but ultimately chose Cornell.

McCallum worked at the student-run Cornell Daily Sun and wrote for the university’s monthly alumni magazine. In a column about her college years, McCullum noted: “My four years at Cornell have been the happiest I’ve ever spent.” In 1965 she graduated from Cornell with honors—and an English degree—expecting to pursue a career in journalism. At that time, most women who sought careers in journalism rarely worked in the newsroom. Following the path of many would-be female journalists of the day, McCullum went to work that summer for the women’s department of the Seattle Post-Intelligencer.

Women’s pages had long been a part of metropolitan newspapers, and women typically staffed these sections while men wrote the rest of the news. Until the early 1970s,
the only exceptions had been wartime and Eleanor Roosevelt's women's-only press conferences. The content of women's sections was largely based on the four Fs—family, fashion, food, and furnishings. This usually translated into a collection of clothing layouts, recipes, and bridal features. Yet sprinkled among the more traditional fare were stories about women's changing roles in society. After all, it was typically the women's pages—not the book sections—that reviewed Betty Friedan's ground-breaking book, *The Feminine Mystique*, in 1963. While the book largely addressed homemakers, women on college campuses—McCallum among them—were also questioning the limitations placed on them in American society.

Women in the media were questioning their roles, too. Until the late 1960s or early 1970s, newspaper women were still working in the society pages. But the content in those sections was changing, giving women a voice and reflecting a different reaction to women's liberation than the rest of the media, which was dominated by men. The traditional media mocked women's roles. For example, the ABC evening news began its coverage of a peaceful women's liberation march by quoting Spiro Agnew: "Three things have been difficult to tame. The ocean, fools, and women. We may soon be able to tame the ocean, but fools and women will take a little longer." On the CBS evening news, journalist Eric Sevareid commented, "The plain truth is, most American men are startled by the idea that American women generally are oppressed, and they read with relief the Gallup poll that two-thirds of women don't think they're oppressed either."

In the *P-I*'s women's pages, editor Sally Raleigh saw the women's movement as significant and sent her reporters out on nontraditional assignments. In the *P-I*'s women's pages editor Sally Raleigh saw the women's movement as significant and sent her reporters out on nontraditional assignments. Reporter Susan Paynter, who worked with McCallum in the late 1960s, described the situation thus: "While management's eyes were diverted by 'real news,' I traded in my little black dress for a police press pass and a shot at the stories nice girls didn't do." These stories included abortion reform and the Equal Rights Amendment. But as journalism historian Kay Mills noted in her book on women journalists, *A Place in the News*, "Enlightenment alone did not unlock newsroom doors. Legal action helped."

McCallum was a creative and descriptive writer. A profile of George Quimbly, director of the Thomas Burke Memorial Washington State Museum, began: "Say 'anthropologist.' Now sit back and let your brainwaves take over. Do you get a picture of a knobby-kneed excavator in British Bermudas and a pith helmet digging around?" She told the readers they would be wrong and began describing a man who "prefers bow ties to pith helmets." She could make a potentially dry subject interesting.

McCallum profiled Ugandan nun Mary Vincent who had recently graduated from Seattle University. The nun was part of a program to educate women who would return to Uganda and help other women. In the article McCallum addressed gender inequality in the nun's home country. She quoted Vincent: "There are still more men with better educations who get the jobs first."

In a profile related to fashion—one of her favorite subjects—McCallum wrote about fur expert Florence Balut. The story began: "The Master Furriers Guild of America's 'Man of the Year' is a Dietrich-voiced, vivacious grandmother of five with a flair for fashion." The story goes on to note Balut's interest in animal preservation, including working with the U.S. Department of the Interior. While Balut was a furrier, she also spoke out about balancing the needs of the animals. She described the environmental impact on a small Alaskan island, "We take just enough to keep the herd balanced. If we didn't, the food on the island couldn't support the herd and they'd all starve." This story went well beyond fashion fluff.

Another commonly overlooked topic for women's pages was the arts. McCallum would have been aware of the counterculture movement and its impact on art when she wrote a story about visiting choreographer Deborah Hay. It began: "To a sensitive critic, Deborah Hay is 'one of THE important avant-garde choreographers.' To a sensitive friend, she's 'little magic girl.'" She then invited readers to a Seattle event to discover which was the real Hay. McCallum went on to explain that the choreographer's role was to challenge the traditions of the dance community at a time when art was being redefined by a younger generation—her generation.

McCallum wrote a story about a Japanese art exhibit at the Seattle Art Museum. It began: "How do you picture hell? A sea of mud, swarming with human-hating, soul-stinging bees? A torture chamber, manned with fire-breathing demons? That's how Twelfth Century Japanese saw it, according to the Hell Scenes they painted." She intermingled descriptions of the paintings with comments from local art experts.

In one story she covered a children's educational program at A Contemporary Theater in which children improvised a play. She wrote about the children's initial nervousness and how they were quickly swept up into the excitement: "Total theater took over and even shy violets couldn't escape a little audience participation."
Several of McCallum's stories involved traditional four F's-fare-particularly fashion. It was in this area that a woman could assume a voice of authority. According to the American Press Institute: "No aspect of news is further from the comprehension of the average male editor than fashion." McCallum learned about the world of fashion from her editor Sally Raleigh and soon developed her own style—both in her reporting and in her own clothing. Photos of McCallum show her in fashionable outfits, including a pantsuit accessorized with white feathers. She wrote about new local stores, focusing on youthful fashions. One of her stories began: "Memo to boutique buyers: take one bright idea, one bright girl—or three—and a flair for fashion. Combine the right location. The result? Two new treats to tempt boutique-hungry Seattle shoppers." She described the shop owners as career women and elevated the importance of fashion in her female readers' lives.

In another article McCallum described the opening day event at Elizabeth Arden's Red Door salon, which included a fashion show. Again she wrote about a topic women cared about in a way that did not dismiss fashion as frivolous. In a first-person story she explained to men the role of fashion in women's lives—an indication that more men were beginning to read the women's pages. She wrote: "Sometimes a man just doesn't understand" when a woman with a closet full of clothes says she has nothing to wear. After mentioning that clothes can be a boost for morale, she concluded the article with, "Now you understand, don't you?"

McCallum covered local fashion events, beginning one fashion show story with: "The Mother of the Mod, England's Mary Quant, has moved on to other things in '68. Anything goes with her feel for free movement in fashion—punchy polka-dot jumpsuits or long-line silhouettes in all-American colors." Another fashion show story featured clothing for older women. The article began: "Fashionably speaking, is a woman sunk in the September of her years?" She goes on to answer in the negative and offers tips based on the current style of "Indian Summer."

Family was another of the F's McCallum tackled. In 1966, a time when the topic was not typically discussed, she wrote a series about infertility, featuring the views of several doctors on medical procedures then in development. Treatment for infertility was then controversial and under study by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. In another article, a marriage counselor addressed emotional problems related to infertility.

McCallum's writing often explored the changing definition of family. She wrote a four-part series on adoption that was progressive for its time. The first article featured the story of Beth, a young woman who was giving a baby up for adoption. The second story was about a couple who had been unable to conceive children and decided to adopt. The next article focused on another controversial subject—adopting a child of a different race. The final article in the series continued the story of the mixed-race adoption, after the child had
been placed. A month after that series ran, McCallum wrote a story about a foster family taking care of disabled children after having raised their own biological children.

Sally Raleigh, the P-I’s progressive women’s section editor, was willing to let her reporters “go for it.” Women’s roles were changing dramatically at this point. This was especially so for young, middle-class women. McCallum graduated from college planning on a career and intended to continue that career, married or not. In an article on a computer dating service she had heard about on the radio, McCallum revealed how she felt about being a single, working blonde, rejected the first suitor after he said he preferred redheads. The second prospect was deemed an unsuitable choice due to his conflicting horoscope. She quizzed the third bachelor, asking him what she described as a “loaded question”: “Would you consider marrying a girl who couldn’t do this— this— cooking, keeping house—a cook and housekeeper.” It was a time when men were not taking on the housework themselves, equality in housekeeping being an unfamiliar concept.

McCallum spent five weeks during the summer of 1967 traveling through eight European countries and sending stories back to her newspaper. She described the art in Rome and a multilingual mass conducted by Pope Paul VI, concluding, “The magic of the moment belonged to the Pope.” From Venice she wrote, “Take every Italian tale of romance, fact or fable, and multiply by 1,500 years of practice. That’s Venetian charm. The citizens never had much choice. They have to be romantic.” She addressed social class in London—with a reference to civil rights struggles in her own country: “Equality. It’s the carrot minority group leaders are dangling before their disciples from Hyde Park to Volunteer Park. The worse the hunger, the hotter the pressure cooker. Sometimes the pressure builds to an explosion as loud and brutal as a Selma march or a Berkeley riot.”

McCallum had written about racial issues in other stories. For example, in a profile of Margaret Braman, wife of Seattle mayor James Braman, McCallum noted the absence of race riots in the city. She quoted Braman in the language of the time: “I’ve always had a great love in my heart for the Negro.”

The biggest project of McCallum’s journalism career was a five-part series on unwed mothers, which ran in the women’s section beginning on May 19, 1968. Unwanted pregnancy among unwed girls and women was not openly discussed. In fact, the stigma was so significant that many pregnant teens were sent away to homes until the baby was born and given up for adoption. The first story outlined the significance of the social issue: the growing number of pregnant, unwed teens. The article began descriptively: “KEEP THE BABY, FAITH! You see the button in high school corridors, on college campuses, at after-hours parties. It’s the popular pun, the symbol of a society so hip it can laugh off social problems—someone else’s. Last year, 300,000 girls weren’t laughing.” McCallum interviewed a number of teens staying at Seattle’s Florence Crittenton Home, including a girl who had been a college-bound high school senior the previous September but who was now eight months pregnant. The point was that these were just average girls. McCallum quoted the teen: “When I came here, I felt like the lowest form of life. I was sure only tramps got pregnant out of wedlock. I found out how wrong I was. Most of these girls come from good homes.” The home’s director noted that three out of five girls there had had access to birth control pills but failed to use them.

The second story in the series explored the price unwed mothers paid—especially women in their 20s and 30s. The language used demonstrates the stigma of the time. The story began: “Most American women are cutting back on baby production. Unwed mothers aren’t. Legitimate births from 1960 to 1965 decreased 19.1 percent. Illegitimate births increased 65.8 percent.” The story outlined a program...
for pregnant women who were no longer in their teens—the Washington Children's Home Society. One of the staff members expressed a rather progressive view for the time when she said, "We'd like to counsel the fathers—the phrase should be unwed parents, not unwed mother—but we simply can't."

The third article looked at the overall issue of sexuality in society and the impact on teen pregnancy. The article began with a quote from an expert: "Our society sells sex, not sexuality. Once, her culture encouraged a girl not to get pregnant. Now the need for sexual expression bombards her. Even toothpaste and deodorants have sex appeal." McCallum viewed the topic through a societal lens, looking at reasons for the increase in teen pregnancy in the "free love" era.

The fourth article addressed abortion and the "hippie" lifestyle. Quoting the director of Seattle's Open Door Clinic: "This is not the place where unwed mothers can come for an abortion." Like other states across the country in the late 1960s, Washington was debating the topics of abortion and reproductive rights, but abortion was still illegal. Some women turned to underground abortion networks. This made the news in February 1967 when a 24-year-old Seattle woman, Raisa Trityak, was found dead after a botched abortion. This tragedy and others like it, along with the work of psychologist Samuel Goldenberg, led to Referendum 20, which made it legal—with some restrictions—to obtain an abortion in the first four months of pregnancy. Voters passed the legislation on November 3, 1970, three years before the Supreme Court made the procedure legal nationally.

The final article addressed programs that allowed pregnant teens to earn their high school diplomas. It began with a description of the graduation ceremony, noting that the only thing missing was the valedictory speech—the valedictorian had gone into labor. The story pointed out that a pregnant teen still had a future after the birth of her baby.

Her series on unwed mothers made McCallum a nominee for the prestigious Penney-Missouri journalism award. The J. C. Penney Company partnered with the University of Missouri School of Journalism in 1960 to create the Penney-Missouri Awards program, which honored the best work of women's section editors and reporters. This award included a cash prize of $1,500 and a week-long workshop in which the winners described their approach to women's news. Awards went to top women's sections in different circulation groups. There was also an overall reporting/writing award—which went to McCallum. The P-I reran the series in the Northwest Today section on five consecutive Sundays.
described taking a flying lesson: “One thing. Don’t forget to shout ‘Clear!’ before you rev up for take-off. That gives any poor soul in your propeller path a fighting chance to split from your taxi strip.” In another column she wrote about an interview she conducted with a Mississippi women’s page editor about racial strife in the South. McCallum wrote, “She was a Southern editor talking Southern problems with a Southern accent. And trying to make a Western writer understand.”

McCallum received other accolades. She was cited by the National Federation of Press Women for her article, “Teen-Agers Dig Young Life’s Bible Beat.” She won several reporting awards from Sigma Delta Chi (which would later become the Society of Professional Journalists) and the Washington Press Women. McCallum had been voted into the Seattle chapter of the women’s professional journalism organization, Theta Sigma Phi (now called the Association for Women in Communications)—although she died before she learned of the honor. In her short career, she had reported from 49 states and 10 countries.

On June 3, 1969, McCallum began undergoing minor facial surgery in a doctor’s office to remove acne scars. She had been in a minor car accident a few minutes prior to the appointment but had no observable physical injuries. About 25 minutes into the surgery she went into convulsions in reaction to the anesthesia and was dead an hour later. Her death was a shock for the P-I staff. Her photo and a story about her death ran on the front page the next day, a month shy of her fourth anniversary with the newspaper. In an accompanying article Lou Guzzo wrote: “She was one of the most promising reporters I’ve ever met. I am shocked beyond belief.”

On June 6, 1969, Sally Raleigh wrote in a tribute to McCallum, “Bobbi was exceptionally pretty and was ‘well brought up.’ That showed in small courtesies, in poor soul in your propeller path a fighting chance to split from your taxi strip.” McCallum had taped a guest appearance for the TV Good Morning Show on May 18, 1969. With her parents’ approval, the segment aired on June 12, 1969.

On June 29, 1969, the National Federation of Press Women announced that McCallum was the overall national winner for her award-winning articles. These included two series on unwed mothers and a fashion article. Said to have “earned national rank in every category entered,” she was honored posthumously with a trophy during the organization’s national convention in Billings, Montana.

Paul Myhre, director of the Penney-Missouri Awards, wrote to McCallum’s parents to express condolences. Raleigh had earlier called Myhre with the bad news. He noted, “We were impressed by her poise, her charm and her friendliness. And not least, with her sincerity and her pride in her journalistic accomplishments, which were outstanding for one so young.”

Her parents responded to Myhre with a note of appreciation and their hope of establishing a “sparkling fountain” in their daughter’s name, “which will to a degree capture Bobbi’s spirit and be an inspiration to us all.” A note appeared on the P-I’s editorial page announcing a memorial fund. McCallum’s parents issued a statement: “The Post-Intelligencer has done a beautiful thing in establishing the Bobbi McCallum Memorial Fund. We have experienced nothing but love all around us.”

Work on the memorial did not move fast enough for Raleigh. She wrote in a letter of her frustration that progress on the memorial was so slow, “The P-I is moving like molasses and no two people like the same ideas submitted by architects.” She also noted, “Our publisher very carefully doesn’t discuss it with me because he knows I’d speak up and be loudy!” Ultimately, the memorial reached completion in the form of a fountain created by Seattle artist and sculptor George Tsuchakawa. It was named “Moon Song” in reference to a nickname McCallum’s parents gave her—Moon Child—after the first man to walk on the moon did so on what would have been her 26th birthday. Governor Dan Evans dedicated the memorial in 1971. The fountain still stands at the P-I building’s main entrance.

Dr. Walter Scott Brown, who was operating on McCallum when she died, established a scholarship fund in her name, which is still awarded annually to a promising female journalism student in Washington. The fact that Brown funded the scholarship was not made public until after her death. Others also contributed to the fund. Questions have been raised about the cause of McCallum’s death. A review of the June 1969 Seattle Post-Intelligencer does not reveal the results of her autopsy. Her death certificate lists cause of death as acute anaphylactic shock resulting from a reaction to local anesthesis.

McCallum’s career, though short, illustrates the changing role of women journalists in Seattle and across the country in the 1960s.
FROM THE COLLECTION

The Society's Special Collections recently received a series of letters from Minnie Kruger (1871-1939) to her cousin Etta Welke in Hammond, Minnesota, written between 1886 and 1889. At age 12 Minnie moved with her German-immigrant parents from Hammond to a farm near Rocklyn, not far from Davenport. These letters reflect the daily life of a lonely but busy teenage farm girl in an isolated, sparsely populated part of Washington Territory. She writes about her daily life, family, school, "Chrismus" and birthday presents, and frequently comments on the scarcity of girls and the abundance of "bachelors." She describes her sister's house as "...fixed up nice. they have wol paper in sied. it is ofe nice there. they are living on a crick. they live about 11 miles from us. here husband is a nice looking follow. he is about 30 year old. I could make more discirption but you wont belive it. anny way you always think we rite lyes to Minnesota."

Although a small collection (MsSC 186A), it provides insight into the lives of ordinary people who came to Washington Territory in the late 19th century.
FROM Wilderness TO Wonderland

THE GARDENS OF THE ALASKA-YUKON-PACIFIC EXPOSITION

By Kathy Mendelson
Long before the Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition (AYPE) opened in 1909 promoters were making grandiose claims about how good the landscape of this world's fair would be. They used superlatives, promising gardens and grounds that would dazzle and impress. Charles Dana Gibson, the illustrator who created the iconic image of the Gibson Girl, was typical. He visited Seattle in late 1908 and wrote of the AYPE: "It will unquestionably be the most beautiful exposition ever held in the world...."

Earlier fairs had set a standard that would be hard to match, let alone surpass. The Chicago World's Columbian Exposition in 1893, for example, ushered in the City Beautiful movement. Closer at hand, Portland's Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in 1905 had capitalized on the natural beauties of the Pacific Northwest, incorporating views of Mount St. Helens and the Willamette River. It would take inspired design and the best plants horticulture had to offer to improve on other world's fairs.

When the AYPE opened on June 1, 1909, the grounds were unquestionably a horticultural wonderland, but was Seattle's first world's fair really the most beautiful exposition to date? To answer that question, it helps to know a little about horticulture at the turn of the 20th century. In big cities such as Chicago and San Francisco, parks and public gardens often had opulent summer flower displays. These seasonal plantings arranged flowers in ranks by size and color, often in large, geometrically-shaped beds carved from lawns. Such floral extravaganzas were a product of their time. Greenhouses were inexpensive to operate, and garden labor was cheap. In illustrated catalogs national seed companies offered a multitude of flowers, including new and improved varieties. They could send orders almost anywhere via the railroad. Some municipal parks in the Pacific Northwest put on seasonal flower displays. In Seattle, Kinnear Park on Queen Anne Hill and Leschi Park on Lake Washington had ornamental trees, shrubberies, rustic benches, pavilions, and other amenities. In summer they also had beds that were literally knee-deep in flowers.

Clearly, if the AYPE was to live up to the claim that it would be the "world's most beautiful exposition," fair planners were going to have to come up with something exceptional. And so they did. They hired the Olmsted Brothers firm to design the grounds. Arguably the nation's best landscape architects, the Olmsted firm began with Frederick Law Olmsted's acclaimed 1858 plan for New York's Central Park. Olmsted was soon in demand, designing parks, estates, campuses, and other landscapes across the country. His son, Frederick Law Olmsted Jr., and his stepson/nephew, John Charles Olmsted, came up in the firm and formed Olmsted Brothers when their father retired.

By 1907 the Olmsted Brothers had already done work in the Northwest. In 1903 they prepared a comprehensive plan for Seattle's park system. That same year, Portland hired the Olmsted to design their parks. Five years later Walla Walla commissioned the Olmsteds to plan Pioneer Park. In between they designed the grounds for Portland's 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition.

The Olmsteds had a particular gift for finding the best features in a parcel of land and then making the most of them. Their design for the AYPE was no exception. It arranged the fair on a formal axis, named Mount Rainier Vista in their 1906 plan. The U.S. Government Building stood at the north end of the axis. Below it on a gentle slope a broad watercourse called the Cascades sent water tumbling down broad steps south to Geyser Basin (now Drumheller Fountain on the University of Washington campus). From there the vista trailed away to distant Mount Rainier. At Geyser Basin secondary axes radiated out like spokes. One went east to Lake Washington; the other, Lake Union Vista, headed west. Some of the fair's largest pavilions stood on this grand axis, complemented with beautiful gardens and floral displays. Away from Rainier Vista the grounds had dozens of additional buildings. It also had many landscape features—acres of flowers, a picturesque woodland, lush shrubberies, small agricultural displays, giant floral urns, boxed trees, and other horticultural designs beautified the grounds.

As they considered the fairgrounds, AYPE planners weighed many landscape options. The site offered unprecedented opportunity. Although much of Seattle had already been logged, the university tract still contained timber. Although no world's fair had ever been set in a woodland, planners embraced the idea and declared that every tree that could be spared would be spared. Still, saving trees would not be easy. Construction damage was one concern; aesthetics was another. Nobody had ever seen fair pavilions paired with wild trees. The success of the plan would depend on the landscape architects. The Olmsteds proved more than capable.

On the southeast side of the fair the Olmsteds set aside about 100 acres of existing forest next to Lake Washington. They called it "The Park," a name that conveyed the goal of "Nature perfected." To prepare this area, workers cleared tangled brush, removed stumps, and filled low spots. Then they added assorted ferns, wildflowers, and select exotics such as Japanese iris. The result was a woodland that was a little rugged and wild, and thus picturesque. Broad walks threaded through the trees, opening in places to scenic views. Rustic benches encouraged fairgoers...
to pause and take in the forest. The *Post-Intelligencer* called this area "The Woods" and praised it, saying that it gave "the impression of being a perfectly primeval forest." It was a view never before seen at a world's fair.

In the heart of the exposition the Olmsteds used native plants in innovative ways. The Michigan Building, for example, nestled in a stand of young conifers. In 1909 the region's trees already had a well-established reputation in Europe. Introduced there by the early 1800s, Northwest conifers such as Douglas fir quickly became coveted landscape design called for about 4,600 plants. More than half were trees and shrubs that gave the plantings structure and provided a backdrop for the floral display. The others were summer flowers, including sweet peas, cactus dahlias, phlox, Shasta daisies, foxgloves, and red and pink roses.

A short walk west from the Washington Building the landscape changed yet again. At the Court of Honor, adjacent to the Cascades, the design paired the buildings' elaborate architecture with a formal landscape built on symmetry and straight lines. Square panels of lawn marched down the slope next to the Cascades. On these lawns a row of young horse chestnuts (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) stood two by two in rectangular planting beds. Bay trees (*Laurus nobilis*) clipped into perfect domes stood in containers that lined the walks like sentries. The buildings rose above all these lines and angles. Behind them native conifers stood silhouetted against the sky. The combination was no accident. The designers liked the juxtaposition of classic architecture and rugged nature, saying "domes and pinnacles and towers...would harmonize with the multiplicity of the spire-like fir trees."

In addition to handsome trees and bordering shrub beds, the Olmsted plan called for lavish flower displays. Although the grounds probably had some small vignettes, displays using thousands of plants were the rule. For example, 12,000 salmon-colored geraniums bloomed at the fair's main entrance and 30,000 bright white 'Alaska' daisies filled a dip in the grade at Alaska Avenue. Hundreds of cactus dahlias flowered along Lake Union and Lake Washington vistas, and on the Pay Streak, 20,000 "brilliantly colored" geraniums (as Dawson described them) bloomed all summer. Still more flowers—this time massed 'Dorothy Perkins' roses—covered the sloping banks at the Cascades with pink blooms. There were so many flowers that the AYPE became known for them. Alice Stone Blackwell was quoted in the *History of Woman Suffrage* as reporting that delegates to the National Suffrage Convention held at the fair in early July "agreed that the display of flowers on the grounds were more beautiful than they had seen at any previous Exposition. Some of the delegates from the Atlantic coast said it was worth coming across the continent just to see this flower garden."

These exhibits were merely a prelude to the fair's largest floral garden, which lay south of Geyser Basin on Rainier Vista. Here, Dawson divided the ground into parterres—geometric planting beds outlined in low, clipped hedges and separated by walks. In these beds Dawson orchestrated a magnificent floral composition that bloomed for the entire run of the AYPE. His design used more than 50,000 plants in bold color blocks: whites and pastels in the center; midrange pinks, yellows, and oranges in the middle; dark colors at the perimeter. All told, the design featured more than five dozen different flowers. Many were perennials, including basket of gold, daylilies, delphiniums, phlox, and poppies. Others were familiar annuals, such as petunias, snapdragons, stocks, and sweet peas. Many, especially the heliotrope and lilies, were fragrant. It was probably the biggest flower display Seattle had ever had.

As extravagant as the flowers may have seemed, they were actually practical. John C. Olmsted decided to use flowers early in the design process. Writing to his wife in April 1907, he remarked that he wanted to employ perennials "because they bloom, many of them, much later than shrubs." Woody plants raised other problems, too. Full-sized plants were too expensive. The gardeners could start with young plants, but growing them to size took more time than they had been given. In comparison, flowers were easy and quick. Besides, they were perfect for a fair that would only last a season. They were labor intensive but doable.

Once the decision to use flowers was finalized, Dawson had to find tens of

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**On Geranium Day, 1,500 people showed up, each with the required geranium. By the time the AYPE opened, exposition gardeners had propagated thousands of geraniums from these donated plants.**
thousands of flowers. The garden crew grew many of them. By 1907 the AYPE had a 20-acre nursery on the southern part of the grounds. About half of it was a turf farm, which produced crop after crop of sod for the exposition. The other half included a 100-foot-long greenhouse and cold frames for propagation and overwintering tender perennials. The rest of the nursery was used for growing young plants and as a holding area for specimens waiting to be planted around the grounds.

Even the thousands of plants this nursery could produce would not be enough. Dawson turned to other sources. Seattle's park department lent plants and rented the AYPE growing space in the production greenhouse at Woodland Park. Local nurseries also provided plants. J. J. Bonnell, a prominent Seattle nurseryman, lent and rented the AYPE plants that were installed at the Idaho, Japanese, Manufactures, and Washington State buildings. Another local supplier was dahlia specialist Charles W. Bovee.

Seattle gardeners pitched in as well. In 1908 Dawson was planning a significant geranium exhibit “several hundred feet” long at the main entrance, and he wanted another 20,000 geraniums for the Pay Streak. The AYPE greenhouse crew could grow geraniums but needed starts. To get them, the exposition hosted an event called Geranium Day in November 1908. The price of admission that day was a geranium. Big or small, healthy or not, a cutting or a whole plant—the gatekeepers took them all. In return, visitors could tour the grounds and see how work was coming along. On Geranium Day, 1,500 people showed up, each with the required geranium. By the time the AYPE opened, exposition gardeners had propagated thousands of geraniums from the donated plants.

Although Dawson made the most of local sources, he was still short on plants. After all, Seattle was a small city in 1909 and local nurseries couldn’t possibly provide enough plants. Neither could other growers around the Pacific Northwest, so Dawson broadened his search. He contacted some of the world’s best growers at nurseries across the United States and in Europe. For example, Dawson needed thousands of cactus dahlias, the exposition’s official flower. To obtain tubers he invited nurseries to participate in a cactus dahlia contest at the exposition. He asked each exhibitor to send five each of ten different varieties.

Thirteen growers agreed to participate. American dahlia specialists in Boston, Chicago, Denver, Philadelphia, and elsewhere entered the competition. So did growers in England and France. Though their names are unfamiliar now, they were the heavy-hitters of the dahlia world. W. W. Wilmore took first prize at Chicago’s World’s Columbian...
Exposition. The famous French dahlia nursery of Rivoir, Pere & Fils had introduced a whole new class of dahlias called collarettes at the 1900 Exposition Universelle in Paris. Others, including Americans Henry A. Dreer and W. W. Rawson and England’s J. Strewick & Son and I. T. West, owned nurseries that carried dozens of cactus dahlias, including some of their own introductions. When the AYPE opened hundreds of cactus dahlias from these commercial growers grew in beds lining Lake Union and Lake Washington vistas. Thousands more grew in other plantings.

Dawson called on equally prestigious growers for other types of plants. He turned to Arthur Cowee of New York for gladioluses. At the time, Cowee was one of the three largest gladiolus growers in the country. He sent 5,700 gladiolus bulbs to the AYPE, an assortment of 22 varieties. Five of them were Cowee introductions, and one of those—‘Victory’—was new in 1909. The exposition’s 800 peonies came from the nationally-known Brand Peony Farm in Minnesota. Like Cowee, Brand supplied dozens of varieties, including introductions released in 1909. Dawson had to be pleased. AYPE visitors would see the best and brightest horticulture had to offer, including some plants even the most avid gardeners had never glimpsed before. He used the glads and the peonies at Geyser Basin and elsewhere on the grounds.

The AYPE’s flower exhibits would not have been complete without roses. In the formal gardens near Geyser Basin, Dawson planted some 200,000 tufted pansies in a broad band encircling Geyser Basin, having ordered custom-grown seed from Great Britain at a princely six dollars an ounce. The display was color-coordinated in yellow, white, and blue. At the end of the fair Dawson, who had seen a great many floral displays in his career and was not a man to boast, described the pansy planting as “probably one of the grandest displays of flowers that has ever been witnessed.” Fairgoers were likely to agree. Dawson had delivered a horticultural wonder—pansies blooming in high summer.

As glorious as the tufted pansies undoubtedly were, the AYPE selected a different plant—the cactus dahlia—as the exposition’s official flower. Immensely popular in the mid 1800s, dahlia popularity fizzled by 1900. Gardeners had, in their seemingly endless quest for a better plant, moved on. Dahlias were never orphans, but they became, regretfully, old-fashioned. They might have remained so had a plant hunter not found an entirely new kind of dahlia—one with quilled petals—in Guatemala. He sent this plant, named *Dahlia juarezii*, to Eu-
rope around 1872. It crossed easily with others, but perfecting it took time. Many early cactus dahlias looked too much like the older dahlias. The edges of the petals rolled back, but only a smidgen. Even so, they were extraordinarily popular. Some early cactus dahlias looked too much like others, but perfecting it took time. Many man of national stature, featured them prominently in his 1898 catalog with a full-page color illustration. Under the banner “Cactus Dahlias” the illustration showed gorgeous flowers with edges that rolled back but were not quills. By 1903 horticulture had a new standard for cactus dahlias. On the best of them the petals rolled into spiky quills. Gardeners could choose among at least 400 different varieties. By 1909 there were even more—perhaps as many as 1,000.

The exposition boasted some 12,000 cactus dahlias massed in large displays or blooming in mixed borders. Next door, the University of Washington campus planted “thousands of cactus dahlias” in beds at the main entrance and near the dormitories. Still more grew in gardens all over Seattle. Newspapers told their readers that “every resident should plant the cactus dahlia in his yard this coming spring, and help to make the general display beautiful and impressive.” They especially urged homeowners along the streetcar lines to plant banks of cactus dahlias.

Although postcards of the official flower show a crimson blossom, cactus dahlias actually came in white, pink, red, yellow, orange, lavender, and purple, and in shades from soft pastels to vibrant brights and rich jewel tones. A few varieties were two-tones with contrasting tips or shading. In fact, cactus dahlias came in nearly every color except green, blue, and black. Nobody had seen all of them. Many people had never seen the newest varieties. Blooming in large displays with hundreds of flowers at the AYPE, the cactus dahlias were impressive. The Dahlia News, published by the New England Dahlia Society in Boston, said that making the cactus dahlia the official flower of the AYPE was “the greatest impetus towards popularity any flower has ever received.”

In addition to the grand vistas, generous flower displays, and fine shrubbery, the AYPE featured agricultural plants in outdoor living displays. The Hawaii Building, for example, had a small pineapple plantation. Visitors to the California Building could see some of the agricultural wonders of the Golden State—orange trees, a date palm, and a few tropicales. Judging by photos, none of these found Seattle’s cool summers to their liking. At the Utah Building sharp-eyed visitors could see cacti growing outdoors. At the King County Building strawberries and dwarf fruit trees showed the agricultural potential of the region. None of these exhibits was more exotic than the display at the Japanese Pavilion, where gardeners tended a small rice paddy.

When the fair closed in October reviewers reflected on the exposition. Promoters had promised that the AYPE would be the most beautiful exposition ever held. Had it lived up to that claim? The fair had accomplished many horticultural feats. The Olmsted design, which arranged the fair on a long axis with the Court of Honor, Geyser Basin, and Rainier Vista, was a shining example of landscape design. Today, Rainier Vista survives. It is the campus feature most associated with the AYPE. Like the design, the plantings were exceptional. The Olmsted plan called for 2 million plants and used them to spectacular effect. The formal gardens below Geyser Basin were probably the largest flower exhibit Seattle had ever seen. The plants themselves were equally memorable. From the latest roses to tufted pansies and cactus dahlias, the exposition included the horticulture’s offerings. The existing forest itself, saved for its inherent beauty and used as a counterpoint to the architecture, showed the world the beauty of Washington’s native flora.

In the summer of 1909 the AYPE grounds achieved that elusive collaboration of inspired design and gorgeous plants. Various reviewers of the time weighed in, the general consensus being, as one commentator stated, “The Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition is an inspiring sight... The claim made at its inception, that it would go down in history as the world’s most beautiful pageant, has been made good.” The AYPE delivered on its promise.
The Longview Homesteads

Children on the banks of a slough at the Longview homesteads. The homesteads were interspersed with sloughs—marshlike, backwater troughs—connected to the Columbia River.

A New Deal Experiment in Urban Farming

By Robert M. Carriker
Between 1933 and 1935, President Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal created thirty-four communities under the Division of Subsistence Homesteads (DSH). Only four were in the Far West: Phoenix, Arizona; El Monte and San Fernando, California; and Longview, Washington. The DSH, funded at $25 million, pledged to organize pilot programs showing how the country could benefit from semirural neighborhoods with part-time farming. Allocation of funds was not made on the basis of state equality, and the program was decidedly not a relief effort aimed toward the unemployed. Demonstration of support from a state college was a decided plus. Each project would be initiated at the state level and administered through a nonprofit corporation. Successful applicants would offer a combination of part-time employment opportunities, fertile soil for part-time farming, and locations connected to the services of established cities. DSH director Milburn L. Wilson stated:

A subsistence homestead devotes a house and outbuildings located upon a plot of land on which can be grown a large portion of foodstuffs required by the homestead family. It signifies production for home consumption and not for commercial sale. In that it provides for subsistence alone, it carries with it the corollary that cash income must be drawn from some outside source. The central motive of the subsistence homestead program, therefore, is to demonstrate the economic value of a livelihood which combines part-time wage work and part-time gardening or farming.

The DSH existed independently for only two years before being subsumed by the Resettlement Administration (RA), which survived for another two years before transitioning into the Farm Security Administration (FSA) and then into the federal Public Housing Authority (PHA). In many ways, the western manifestations of the DSH's work were among its most successful and pure. In California the prior existence of a successful part-time farming program headed by a Los Angeles Times columnist led to Southern California's two subsistence homestead projects. In Arizona the personal and political connections of Congresswoman Isabella Greenway ensured a subsistence homestead project for Phoenix. In Washington the combination of a proactive governor, a determined town, and the efforts of a college professor brought the Longview subsistence homesteads to fruition.

Clarence Martin, Washington's Democratic governor, wasted little time getting his state on the list of those interested in the program, and as early as mid-August 1933 he sent a letter to Secretary of the Interior Harold Ickes identifying Washington as eager to be a site for DSH projects. Unbeknownst to Governor Martin, a week earlier a letter from the manager of the Washington State Emergency Relief Commission had already reached M. L. Wilson's desk asking for "regulations, circulars, state quotas, etc." Numerous requests from private citizens and civic organizations followed. Wilson appreciated the attention, which he accepted as an endorsement of the New Deal. The reward for this early expression of support came in October 1933 when Wilson set aside $300,000 dollars for homesteads in Washington. By that time, Martin had named an Emergency Washington Subsistence Homestead Committee to handle the public's response, disseminate information, select sites, and draw up a proposal for one, or possibly two, subsistence homestead...
communities. Simultaneously, Edward C. Johnson, dean of
the Washington State College of Agriculture in Pullman, vol-
unteered his time to field questions from boosters and inter-
ested homesteaders across the state. He also made the college's 
resources available to the undertaking, noting, "We have the 
climate, the products of forest and farm, splendid highways, 
and limitless potential power."

Interest spiked throughout the state. Charles Ernst, chair-
man of the governor's committee, spearheaded the project. 
This was not Ernst's first foray into studying the potential 
of subsistence homesteading. In February 1933, a month before
Roosevelt's inauguration, Ernst requested the help of 
E. O. Holland, president of Washington State Col-
lege, "in considering the whole matter of Back to 
the Land movements, Sustenance Gardens, Gar-
den seeds etcetera." Holland replied that Professor 
Rex Willard, head of the college's Department of 
Farm Management and Agricultural Economics, 
was the man for the job.

Ernst contacted Willard and soon came to rely on 
his expertise to study land throughout the state and
determine the most desirable agricultural, economic, 
and geographic locations for subsistence homestead 
projects. Willard was a known authority on such 
land issues and was already a principal in a wheat 
project for the Agricultural Adjustment Administra-
tion. His expertise lent credibility and strategic 
input to the state's application. Willard also knew 
director Wilson fairly well, the two of them having 
attended many of the same conferences. Initially 
Willard hesitated to get involved with the proj-
ject, reporting to Dean Johnson that he felt his 
other duties prevented him from devoting time 
to this new federal project. But he soon changed 
his mind. Wilson expressed satisfaction with 
the governor's choices and offered an especially 
favorable opinion of Willard: "He is a person who 
strikes straight from the shoulder and at times is not as diplomatic
as he might be, but I have always regarded him as a very capable
person." With thousands of applications coming into the DSH 
office, it was critical for a state to have the director's support.

As word of the subsistence homestead program spread, 
Washingtonians jockeyed for the opportunity to par-
ticipate. Though their reasons ran the gamut from
being altruistic to self-serving, individual citizens, 
municipal organizations, and private companies offered assis-
tance and suggestions. John B. Renshaw volunteered his 120-acre 
parcel of land in Pend Oreille County for $3,000 because at age
77, "My wife and I are getting old and can no longer do the farm
work." The Kiwanis Club of Cle Elum offered its city as a desirable
location. Likewise, civic organizations in Seattle, Kennewick,
Yakima, and Wenatchee sent proposals. The Puget Mill
Company submitted a lengthy, if one-sided, proposal suggesting that
building 40 country homes near the Everett mill would benefit
workers. A Seattle group calling itself the Puget Sound Gardens
Corporation urged the DSH, in a meticulously detailed proposal, 
to establish homesteads for 300 families on 1,500 acres in western 
Washington. The most striking aspect of the Puget Sound Gar-
dens proposal centered on the idea that the homesteaders would
work in the angora wool industry, with each homesteader owning
between 400 and 1,000 "woolen" (Angora rabbits).

The Chehalis Chamber of Commerce sent its homestead 
application directly to M. L. Wilson, without going through
the proper vetting procedure. Professor Willard thought the 
proposal little more than an appeal for "a government com-
mmitment to the plywood industry," adding, "If we
were to undertake to examine every project and
application that has been submitted, we would
do nothing else for a long period of time." And

time was of the essence.

Supporters of subsistence homesteads in Longview understood the nature of the DSH program and therefore offered a fully developed proposal that was quite different from those of its competitors. A planned community of the Long-Bell Lumber Company, Longview threw all its efforts into siting the homestead project in the 10-year-old city in southwestern Washington at the confluence of the Cowlitz and Columbia
rivers. A new part-time farming district fit with the direction in which the company hoped to see the city expand. As urban historian Carl Ab-
ott explained, Longview was a city that touted
its climate, opportunities, beauty, permanence, 
cleanliness, morality, development potential, and
idyllic setting. More likely than not, officials in the
nation's capital knew of its national recognition
as a planned community, highlighted as it was in various city planning publications, plus the Lib-
arly Digest and the Saturday Evening Post.

The Depression hit Longview and its lumber indus-
dustry hard. When the county welfare office opened in April
1933, a line of unemployed stretched for blocks. Longview's 
Skidville, comprising temporary homes on skids that had func-
tioned as provisional housing while the city was being devel-
oped in 1923, was now a dilapidated refuge for the desperately
poor. None of that, however, stopped large numbers of migrants 
from coming to the Pacific Northwest looking for timber jobs.

Although Longview's selection may have been a forgone
conclusion, the fact remains that only Longview succeeded in
working closely with the governor's committee to meet all the
DSH's requirements. And Longview knew how to conduct an
effective lobbying campaign. Its program included assistance
from the chamber of commerce, the Longview Daily News, local
businesses, and, perhaps most important, politically connected
representatives from the Northern Pacific Railway's Agricultural
Development Office. The Longview committee supplemented
its application with numerous letters of support, including
some from Long-Bell Lumber Company, Weyerhaeuser Timber
Company, Mount Solo Grange, and Longview Fiber Company. The city’s campaign plus the railroad’s influence gave Longview a distinct advantage over other Washington communities.

On November 29, 1933, after surveying prospective sites statewide, Rex Willard tentatively named Longview as the state’s most promising homestead site. Unfortunately, he also mentioned in his report that he had not seriously considered any of the public’s voluntary proposals. People across the state who had invested enthusiasm and resources in the application process did not appreciate being dismissed this way and questioned the motives behind the proposed selection of Longview. Did Willard have “friends and past associates” in the city? C. J. Zintheo, a former professor of M. L. Wilson’s, informed the governor’s committee that “as a soil expert Prof. Rex Willard is a first class mud-slinger.” Zintheo may have had an ulterior motive, inasmuch as he had submitted his own idea to the committee on behalf of the City Wide League of Greater Seattle. His plan called for turning an old incinerator into a working factory where fir tree stumps from 150,000 homesteader’s home sites near Renton would become marketable “oils, acids, gas, and charcoal.” Today, that factory site is Gas Works Park on the shores of Lake Union.

Criticism over site selection did not stop when, in December, Willard announced Longview as his final recommendation. Though it might have irked some folks, Longview was a prime location for the division’s experiment, and no credible information indicates that Willard made his recommendation with anything but detached indifference. He took into account the type and quality of soil and considered employment opportunities, recreation, education, transportation, and the availability of city services such as water and electricity. If the division had desired a relief project, then Seattle might have been more deserving. But the DSH was not about relief. As a demonstration project for industry, workers, and part-time farming, Longview was the most suitable choice. The town offered the added benefit of showcasing the experimental community to residents of both Washington and Oregon, which lay just across the Columbia River.

The state committee authorized Willard to file the required paperwork with the DSH. According to the procedures, Longview would form a local corporation, and the DSH would provide a loan of $160,052. The corporation would then construct a 60-homestead community on 141 acres purchased from the Long-Bell Lumber Company about three miles west of Longview’s city center. Willard estimated the average per unit cost at $2,675.55.

The land purchase sparked a second round of complaints regarding the Longview site’s suitability. Rumors surfaced that the Long-Bell Lumber Company’s $200-per-acre price for the land was excessively high. When these stories filtered back to committeeman Charles Ernst, he took quick action by confidentially asking the Cowlitz County Welfare Board’s director to investigate. This inquiry revealed that, in fact, the price was unreasonably low, well below the market value of $500 to $600 per acre. The owners, it seemed, had agreed to sell the land at a loss to show the thing for them. The owners, it seemed, had agreed to sell the land at a loss to show the governor’s committee that “as a soil expert Prof. Rex Willard is a first class mud-slinger.” Zintheo may have had an ulterior motive, inasmuch as he had submitted his own idea to the committee on behalf of the City Wide League of Greater Seattle. His plan called for turning an old incinerator into a working factory where fir tree stumps from 150,000 homesteader’s home sites near Renton would become marketable “oils, acids, gas, and charcoal.” Today, that factory site is Gas Works Park on the shores of Lake Union.

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Longview offered an ideal setting for one of the Division of Subsistence Homesteads’ experimental projects, and the chamber of commerce played an integral role in driving the venture to the city.

I am writing in regards to the Subsistence Homestead Plan…. We have a large family of six children and this town life is not the thing for them. I am writing this so you can get in touch with me as soon as anything is ready.

—Oscar Bond
One of the main requirements was employment, which meant that many could not be considered for the homestead program. The division's goal was to begin with the urban employed and move toward reestablishing the working and living environment of rural areas.

Once Washington had secured its homestead project, the role of state government lessened while federal oversight increased. The DSH sent its own project manager, Alfred E. West, an engineer and construction expert from Roanoke, Virginia. After establishing his project headquarters in the Longview post office building, West called his first meeting with the corporation's board of directors. Sending a new project manager answered local pleas for action, but bringing in an outsider was contrary to the division's overall policy of employing local people. It is true that both Charles Ernst and Rex Willard, the two most likely candidates, already had full-time jobs and could not do more. Happily, West impressed city officials with his style—so much so, in fact, that an advisory committee of local representatives disbanded.

The most striking recognition of the homes' quality... came when municipal officials in Louisville, Kentucky, requested the house plans for its own subsistence homestead project.

To West’s disappointment, the summer months slipped away with little work taking place on the site, which had been named Columbia Valley Gardens. Meetings consumed most of his time as the DSH constantly reinvented itself. Annoyed with idleness and wanting to show the community some concrete progress, West ordered the construction of roads to the building site and then boldly announced that he was putting 114 men from the Washington Emergency Relief Administration on the site to work “uninterrupted until finished.” West’s intentions were good and his optimism refreshing. Knowing the value of good public relations, he next appointed an architect. The division’s policy required a local architect, a person who understood the regional issues of home construction. In early August 1934, West selected R. V. Weatherby, an area native with an established reputation. Within a week Weatherby sent officials in Washington, D.C., preliminary sketches of 10 colonial-style houses.

West called a public meeting to update the citizenry. Highlighting the 10 house plans, he pointed out that by using varying exterior sidings and color schemes, it would be “almost impossible” to find any two houses alike. The frame homes had shingled roofs, concrete foundations, and four to six rooms. He detailed the amenities of each dwelling, dubbing the homes “little estates.” Each had spacious living quarters, an attached garage, and a floor plan that would easily convert for adding extra rooms. “The greatest criticism I have heard of this project is that it is in Longview and not my town,” commented one official from the adjacent community of Kelso. To West’s great pleasure, an article in The Christian Science Monitor favorably introduced all of America to the first-class work being done in Longview.

Work on the project slowed as a third round of sniping from Longview opponents made its way to Washington, D.C. Rex Willard alerted officials in Longview with this terse message: “You may be interested to know that the subsistence homesteads crowd in Washington are all hot and bothered some more about the quality of land under consideration.” From his experience testing the soil, Willard knew the accusations were unfounded. A complicating factor was that federal officials could no longer lay their hands on Willard’s original soil report. He had written it longhand while riding on a train, then sent it to Washington, D.C., where it disappeared into the New Deal files.

West was convinced that the DSH only considered the complaint because...
someone is trying to promote a free trip out here." Indeed, just as West predicted, J. H. Jenkins, a division soil expert, and Charlotte Smith, a secretary and confidant to Secretary Ickes, traveled to Longview for a firsthand site inspection. Jenkins solemnly declared the soil first-rate and gave West the go-ahead to call for construction bids. Meanwhile, since Willard was not available to replicate his work, two other experts came by train from Pullman to prepare another report. Professors L. J. Smith, head of the Department of Agricultural Engineering, and C. L. Vincent of the Department of Horticulture arrived in Longview in January 1935. Their joint inspection of the tract resulted in a favorable report, and everyone in Longview breathed a sigh of relief.

When in the middle of March 1935 West opened the bids for construction of 60 homes, he expected figures in the $100,000 to $120,000 range. The Hoffman Construction Company of Portland won the contract with a low bid of $119,234, beating out companies from Tacoma, Seattle, and even Dallas, Texas, with bids ranging from $122,658 to $150,499. Founded in 1922, Hoffman Construction had a deserved reputation for bringing projects in on time and under budget. Lee Hoffman's work could be seen all around the Portland metropolitan area in projects such as the Heathman Hotel, the Public Service Building, and the Portland Art Museum. Coincidentally, Hoffman Construction had worked side-by-side with architect R. V. Weatherby on the Longview post office building.

Honoring their contract to deliver a completed project within 120 days proved difficult. During the first week construction halted twice when the local carpenters and joiners union stopped work to renegotiate wages. Other delays came when a lumber strike prevented building materials from being delivered to the site, a contractor halted work when his paycheck was held up because the DSH had been reassigned under the RA, and a subcontractor neglected to obtain the proper building permit.

Towards the end of summer site visitation increased, especially on Sundays, as curiosity seekers came to view New Deal money at work. West usually made himself available to answer questions and distribute applications while Lee Hoffman pleaded with people to stop "tramping" around the unfinished homes. As Hoffman Construction placed finishing touches on some of the houses at the end of September, residents began moving in. Finally, on October 27, 1935, six months after construction began and two years after the initial proposal, everything was complete. Thousands of people, including federal, state, and local government representatives, gathered for a joyous dedication ceremony. Although Eleanor Roosevelt declined an invitation to the event, Governor Martin accepted. Regrettably, Alfred West, the man who had devoted so much time and effort to the project, could not participate in the festivities. He had left Longview earlier in the month after being reassigned. His assistant, Erma Johnston, took over as community manager, a position she held for the next seven years.

The editor of the Port Angeles newspaper snooped around the site and reported to his readers, This writer went out to the resettlement tracts Friday morning, secretly expecting to find a modified Matanuska, with houses shaped alike, painted the same color and standing like the toy soldier factory towns or coal-mine towns of other days. He remained to give...a pat on their backs for what appears to be a practical, workable venture that should prove an example for realtors, industries and others to follow.

The most striking recognition of the homes' quality—and the greatest compliment to the project designers—came when municipal officials in Louisville, Kentucky, requested the house plans for its own subsistence homestead project and wanted to imitate them. This was just the sort of cross-pollination the DSH had hoped these experimental projects would initiate.

DSH regulations urged the selection of people with steady work histories who were cooperative and would get along with their neighbors, knew how to farm, and could raise their own livestock. A pool of applicants started to form when the project was tentatively announced in November 1933. In March 1934, Charles Ernst toyed with the selection process, stressing that homesteaders would be families living in the western Washington lowlands. This preferential provision seemed exclusionary, but it was actually necessary because of the diversity of farming techniques employed on Washington farmlands. Alfred West added the final touches in mid-August 1934 by naming a selection committee. With his committee in place, West called a public meeting in the Longview Public Library to answer questions and place applications into people's hands. Two hundred people attended. Each received an illustrated layout of the project, complete with descriptions of the landscaping, building designs, and the variety of products one could produce in the garden. West also gave prospective residents a breakdown of the expenditures, estimating that the homesteads would cost $2,700 yet hold a value of $4,000.

Fewer than half of those in attendance filled out applications. Through conversations with citizens, West came to understand...
an irony imposed on the entire homestead program: the project was not a relief program, so people who needed relief were not eligible, yet many of those who were eligible wanted to avoid the project because it seemed like relief. Even West's repeated reassurances that the homesteads were for "substantial citizens," with full- or part-time employment, went unheeded. The public's misconception was perpetuated, in part, by the unfortunate decision to entrust the county welfare office with the job of distributing project information. By mid October, as misunderstandings prevailed, a mere 90 completed applications sat in West's file cabinet. Initially, DSH sought people with plumbing or carpentry skills, food preservation abilities, fire prevention knowledge, poultry raising experience, and so on. In reality, these strict guidelines were never used, but as word leaked out about expected qualifications, the line of potential applicants thinned.

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Even though a relatively small number of people submitted applications, the process closed on schedule in mid November 1934, and thereafter members of the Longview selection committee worked evenings to complete its recommendations. Although the local committee coordinated the application process, officials in Washington, D.C., made the final decision. To the townspeople, this was another sticking point. They could work with the local selection committee but they did not favor sending their applications to federal bureaucrats.

A profile of the first 36 families selected for the project found that they were an unusually similar—perhaps uncomfortably so—group of people coming largely from the same community church, with only one Catholic, one Mormon, and one Episcopalian among them. In terms of national origin, the group was 100 percent American, though two families had members who were foreign-born. With the exception of a barber, whose wife worked in a soda fountain, everyone worked for one of the two large lumber companies, Long-Bell or Weyerhaeuser. In order to find families for the remaining homesteads, the DHS extended the application process. That, coupled with added opportunities to clarify the nature of the project to prospective homesteaders, allowed West to secure over 450 applications for 60 homes, at last providing him with a more-than-adequate pool.

The people chosen to receive homesteads at Longview were a select group. Their annual salaries ranged from $1,059. Most of the men were employed in forest products industries. At least one person in every household demonstrated familiarity with farming or gardening although, oddly, no one in the pilot group had grown up on a farm.

To sustain the momentum of initial enthusiasm—but also in response to regulations imposed by the Resettlement Authority, the agency to which the DSH had been transferred—in April 1936 residents organized a nonprofit association, Longview Subsistence Homesteads, Inc. The RA sold the entire project—including the water system and roads, which belonged to the city and county—to this non-stock corporation for $175,900, an amount nearly equivalent to the funds expended by the government. Henceforth the association would collect the residents’ monthly mortgage payments, which, based on a 40-year commitment at 3 percent interest, amounted to approximately $13 per household.

Formation of the association made the community a self-sufficient entity, allowing the government to distance itself from the project. The various agencies that subsequently took over the DSH's oversight duties continued to guide the homesteaders by providing advice, instruction, and legal counsel. They also tried to give residents a sense of autonomy, perhaps more autonomy than DSH officials would have encouraged. Turnover in Columbia Valley Gardens during the first decade was almost nil. The homesteads matured through a combination of continuing federal presence and the homesteaders' own interest in maintaining the experiment's integrity. The association's board of directors actually ran the homesteads, and all indications are that they did an exceptional job. For example, only a few years after organizing, it became possible for the association to invest $5,000 in government securities. Throughout its history, the association often held surplus funds, which it conservatively invested for the association's contingency budget.

Impressed with the homesteads and the added attractiveness they brought to the city, the people of Longview vigorously supported an attempt by John McClelland, the local newspaper publisher and editor, to expand the endeavor to 200 units. The chamber of commerce and local industry officials supported the proposal. Options were secured to purchase additional land, but expansion fell through after a change in the federal agenda and several agency reassignments. Neither the RA nor the FSA was interested in expanding the project, mainly because it did not fit with their current schema. The homesteads were an inheritance from the demise of the DSH—and not an especially welcome one. The federal government removed itself completely from the project's operations in 1942 and henceforth the homestead association was free to function as it saw fit. The tract remained an ideal place to live and continued to generate a cooperative atmosphere of rural neighborhood. In fact, many homes have not significantly changed over the past seven decades, and most still have resisted subdividing their original large plots of land. Best of all, the homesteads are recognized for their unique history, even if that history has not been fully understood.

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Asahel Curtis (right), Skagway Trail, Alaska, 1897. Street scene in Spokane, 1911.


These Asahel Curtis photographs (clockwise from top left: #1943.42.40639, #1943.42.22031, #1943.42.37055, and #1943.42.28470) and many other images in the Washington State Historical Society's collection can be viewed and ordered online at WashingtonHistory.org. Just click on Research WA and select Image Collections or Collections Catalog, then type in a search word or term.
The Hudson’s Bay Company in the Pacific Northwest

By André M. Peñalver

ABOVE: The Hudson’s Bay Company kept its own flag and maintained its own calendar based on the year its charter was granted.

FACING PAGE: Detail of an 1869 sketch of Fort Nisqually. The HBC maintained its trade through a network of forts armed with bastions and cannons, and governed with a martial spirit.

DMITTEDLY, the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) and the 19th-century fur trade are not particularly original topics of study. “It is fair to say,” historian Theodore Karamanski claims, “that 20th-century historians working in this area have outnumbered the actual 19th-century mountain men.” Although many books have been written on the fur trade, no historian has analyzed the political behaviors of the Hudson’s Bay Company as if it were a sovereign power. Though historians might use a term such as “empire” to vividly portray the company’s enormous size, nothing has been written about the HBC as a government entity in and of itself, independent of the British Crown to which it maintained nominal allegiance.

The prevailing idea, to the contrary, is that the Hudson’s Bay Company acted as an agent of the British Empire. As historian John Galbraith writes, “In North America, west of the narrow strip of land on the St. Lawrence called Canada, ‘Imperial Britain’ throughout most of the period between 1821 and 1869 was the Hudson’s Bay Company.” From this perspective, the two were not separate empires in conflict but harmonious partners in a single empire. Peter Newman echoes this notion in Empire of the Bay when he states that the HBC’s “corporate objectives and England’s priorities were one and the same.” If such a relationship existed, then one would expect a harmony between the company’s interests and actions and those of the British government. No such harmony existed. Like two other trading companies chartered by Great Britain—the British East India Company and the British South Africa Company—the Hudson’s Bay Company often acted as a government in its own right rather than as an agent of government.

The Hudson’s Bay Company arrived in the Pacific Northwest in 1821. Left to itself in this vast unsettled territory, the company acted on its own authority. As part of its “domestic policy,” the company supplied the basic framework and services usually undertaken by government—roads, schools, hospitals, and the
like—and provided security through its strong network of forts. The HBC’s main agenda was to exert its considerable power in order to promote its own unique interests. In this distant frontier the company actually came to develop an effective government through its remarkably independent organization, policies, and infrastructure.

The HBC ENTERED the American fur trade in May 1670, when Charles II signed the company’s charter and granted it 1.5 million acres around Hudson Bay, the equivalent of about 40 percent of present-day Canada. The king left the limits of the territory undefined, thus allowing the company to extend itself to the Pacific. Within this territory—called Rupert’s Land after Prince Rupert, the king’s cousin and first HBC governor—the company and its officers were to be “the true and absolute Lordes and Proprietors of the same Territory.” Joined by ten knights, two earls, a duke, a lady, and the chemist Robert Boyle, Prince Rupert’s new company was indeed “a princely undertaking.”

The British Crown considered the Hudson’s Bay Company to be its ally in this unsettled territory. Peter Newman writes that with the establishment of the Hudson Bay fur trade, “the interests of the two parties were united—that of adventurers for profit and that of the government for the development of trade.” Unfortunately, the government could not predict the extent to which the HBC, when left to its own devices, would build an empire of its own.

As a business operation, the company maintained the same hierarchy from its inception until it was sold in 1863. At the top of the structure sat the London committee men: the governor, deputy governor, and board of directors—all chosen by the shareholders. Next came the regional governors, chief factors, and chief traders—the men who directed the company’s posts and its army of laborers and skilled tradesmen. Occupying the lowest level of the hierarchy, these workmen, the “servants of the honourable Company,” as they were known within the organization, made up about 85 percent of HBC personnel. All directives from London were processed through regional officers who could take into account the many contingencies that arose on an isolated continent. Using this flexible yet tiered structure, the company operated in the distant territory of the Pacific Northwest with few major problems of authority.

In the early 19th century several factors came together that left the Hudson’s Bay Company alone in the Pacific Northwest. First, an 1818 treaty between the United States and the British government settled on a policy of joint occupancy in the Oregon Country. Though the Joint Occupancy Treaty left the Pacific Northwest to the British and Americans, it did little to establish a presence of either government in the area. The real purpose of the treaty was exclusion: to keep the Russians in Alaska and the Spanish in California from encroaching. For the Hudson’s Bay Company, this treaty meant that competition in the Pacific Northwest would be limited to the Americans and other British trading companies.

The only American company that could compete in the Pacific Northwest was John Jacob Astor’s American Fur Company. In 1811, Astor modestly established Fort Astoria at the mouth of the Columbia River to serve as the heart of his Pacific fur trade, but his plans were cut short by the War of 1812 and the perceived threat of a British attack on the fort. Taking advantage of the situation, a rival Montreal-based enterprise, the North West Company (NWC), warned the Astorians in 1813 of an impending attack by British warships and “generously” offered to buy the fort at the low price of $58,000. Though rights of the sale were questionable, Astor could not regain the post even after the war’s end. So ended any burgeoning American fur trade in the Pacific Northwest.
RIGHT: Rupert’s Land, Charles II’s original grant, makes up 40 percent of modern Canada. Not quite satisfied, the company expanded all the way to the Pacific.

BELOW: Such “young able bodied” workers were known as the “servants of the honourable Company.” They made up about 85 percent of HBC personnel.

FACING PAGE: Prince Rupert, cousin of King Charles II and the company’s first governor. Joined by fellow peers, he started his “princely undertaking” in May 1670.

As the first European presence in its new territories, the Hudson’s Bay Company took upon itself the responsibility of building the region’s first roads and bridges. In 1841, A. C. Anderson, an officer of the Puget Sound Agricultural Company (PSAC)—a Hudson’s Bay Company subsidiary—led a team of men to build a road from Fort Vancouver to Cowlitz Farm, a distance of over 60 miles. As Anderson proudly pointed out, the roads and bridges his work force opened were “those which form the main communications of the country.”

In addition to road construction, the HBC ventured into education and health care. In 1834, in keeping with company policies, Dr. John McLoughlin, the chief factor at Fort Vancouver, opened the fort’s first school. He also initiated a Sunday school where, he wrote, “weekly lectures were delivered in the Native language,” thus “diffusing the seeds of sound principles” to both European and Indian inhabitants. With the help of the fort’s doctor, Meredith Gairdner, McLoughlin opened the infirmary that A. G. Harvey has called “the first attempt at permanent hospitalization in the Pacific Northwest.”

Through its PSAC farms, the HBC introduced large-scale agriculture into the region. Dr. William Tolmie, a PSAC chief factor, brought in strawberries, dahlias, and quail, species he...
acquired through HBC trade routes to Hawaii and California. In all its public initiatives, the company took on the responsibility of providing basic goods and services for those within its territory, Native American and European alike.

Far more telling—and more startling—is the HBC’s use of force in the region. The company staked out much of its place in the Pacific Northwest through its network of forts; by 1843 it operated eight forts and several other outposts between the Fraser and Columbia rivers. Though the forts primarily served as places of business, they also doubled as security points. British army spies noted in their report to the secretary of the state for the colonies that Fort Vancouver’s blockhouses held six three-pound iron guns. Likewise, Fort Nisqually was built with two bastions, both armed with cannons and swivel guns. These forts were the cornerstone of the HBC’s hold on the territory.

Within the forts themselves, the managers maintained strict discipline. Forts were built on the British imperial model, each one flying the company flag. Service to the company was recognized with its own medals; shift changes, meals, and bedtimes were signaled by ship’s bell, mirroring British Royal Navy procedures. In keeping with this martial spirit, the company did not tolerate unruliness within its ranks. To enforce discipline, officers most commonly levied fines. For worse cases they employed floggings, which ranged from a simple whip or cat-o’-nine-tails to running the gauntlet, a particularly useful “expression of communal disapproval of certain crimes—usually theft.” There were some crimes that resulted in imprisonment.

An HBC fort might also launch an attack force against an external threat. The most telling instance of the company’s willingness to use violence came in 1828 when John McLoughlin responded to the murder of five company employees by sending two armed parties to attack the village of the local tribesmen held responsible—one party by boat and another by land. After killing eight members of the tribe en route, the two armed groups burned the village and killed another 21 people. In all, McLoughlin wrote, “the whole expedition was most judiciously conducted.”

Through such harsh methods the Hudson’s Bay Company kept a tight hold on its territory, successfully exercising a monopoly over violence in the region. The company at times extended protection to outsiders, as when in November 1847 a party of Cayuse Indians overran the Whitman Mission near Walla Walla, killing 14 missionaries and taking 53 prisoners. It was a Hudson’s Bay Company employee who negotiated the prisoners’ release, for lack of any response by Oregon’s fledgling territorial government.

During the period in which the HBC operated without interference in the Pacific Northwest, it alone oversaw those goods and services traditionally administered by government. For all the benefits it bestowed on the region, however, the HBC was thoroughly autocratic in its operations.

LIKE ANY OTHER government, the HBC had its own foreign agenda. As early frontiersman Pierre-Esprit Radisson boasted, “We were Caesars, being nobody to contradict us.” And just like Caesar, the company was disinclined to submit itself to another power. As a result, it often acted against the interests of both the British and the Americans. First the HBC frustrated British policy by selling supplies to American settlers. Next, it frustrated settlers by trading arms to the Indians. Once the settlers created a territorial government of their own, the company imposed itself on that, too.

The Oregon Country, consisting mostly of the present states of Oregon and Washington, had been a source of conflict between British and American diplomats since the Treaty of Ghent in 1814. Americans claimed the land by title of discovery as a result of Captain Robert Gray’s 1792 exploration of the region. The British countered with their title by settlement, since the only real non-native presence in the region was that of the Hudson’s Bay Company—a British corporation. As already mentioned, diplomats had more or less agreed to disagree in 1818 by leaving the territory to joint occupancy. In 1827, as the 10-year treaty was about to expire, diplomats once again took up the “Oregon Question.” While Americans would gladly have taken Oregon in the spirit of Manifest Destiny, the fact remained that the Hudson’s Bay Company’s British employees were the only settlers in the area. As a result, the 1827 treaty again settled on joint occupancy by the two countries.

The consensus among historians is that British interests were closely linked with those of the Hudson’s Bay Company during this period. John Galbraith, however, went one step further, arguing that “by the retention of its Columbia posts the Company expected to provide British diplomats with their most potent argument.” By this account, not only did the HBC happen to aid the British government in its territorial claims but it intentionally served the government’s interests. This claim is not consistent with the company’s operations in the territory.
Though the Hudson's Bay Company had some interest in British control of the region, it had no intention of holding onto this territory at the expense of its broader interests. Accordingly, the company hedged its bets in Oregon by abandoning holdings it viewed as a financial liability. Once it was clear that Oregon was likely to be taken by the Americans, the HBC settled on a "denuding" policy—large teams of experienced trappers would strip the land of its beaver population so as to maximize the company's own profit from the land while leaving future competitors empty-handed.

To justify these expeditions, HBC officials refer only to the company's interests and never to the interests of the British government. George Simpson, the HBC's regional governor, writes of "our interest to reap all the advantage we can for ourselves, and leave it in as bad a state as possible for our successors." As he explains later, these are the "exertions necessary for the protection of our own interests, and to prevent our rivals in trade from profiting by their encroachment... if we do not relax there is little doubt we shall soon be left Masters of the Field."

By abandoning the area south of the Columbia River, however, the HBC provided the American government with more justification for its possession. The company further advanced American claims to the area by directly aiding American settlers. In 1838 the HBC purchased Idaho's Fort Hall on the Oregon Trail to profit from sales to settlers on their way to Oregon. Richard Grant, the fort's chief trader from 1842 to 1851, recorded sizeable profits on his sales of flour, rice, coffee, sugar, and other staples. Regular operations notwithstanding, company officials such as Grant took advantage of such opportunities to profit from the American pioneers, even when doing so undermined British claims to Oregon.

The HBC's presence offered American settlers the only safety net in the frontier wilderness. Trading posts provided settlers with necessary food and supplies, and the company's roads and bridges facilitated their travels. A company-built sawmill on the Willamette River was for a time the only sawmill between Puget Sound and San Francisco. For these reasons, settlers were initially appreciative of the HBC's presence in an otherwise unwelcoming environment. On March 21, 1845, as Oregon began to form its own government, its executive council sent a letter to McLoughlin expressing gratitude for the company's aid in the "peace and prosperity" of the new territory. Even the Methodist missionaries used their 1845 annual report to express appreciation for the "gentlemen of the Hudson's Bay Company." That same year McLoughlin could accurately report to his own superiors that "all the immigrants are treated most kindly by the Hudson's Bay Company."

To explain this aid to American immigrants, McLoughlin focused on its benefits to the company, whether directly in sales of provisions or indirectly in keeping out competitors who might provide such provisions. The chief factor felt certain, says Peter Newman, "that the Company's future would be best served by his sometimes costly efforts to treat the growing influx of settlers as potential customers rather than unwanted pests." Though this reasoning may have helped the company's balance sheets, it did not serve the British government's attempt to maintain a hold on the Oregon Country.

By facilitating the American settlement of Oregon, the Hudson's Bay Company dealt a mortal blow to Britain's claim. Americans were fast becoming a sizeable presence in the region. This tipped the diplomatic scales enough that the United States was able to solidify its claim in the Pacific Northwest. As Frederick Merk writes, it was the Oregon pioneers who "brought pressure to bear on the British government during the final stages of the Oregon negotiations, and this was a factor in winning for their country the empire of the Pacific Northwest." By
June 15, 1846, both governments agreed to a border on the 49th parallel, thus leaving the United States with all of modern-day Oregon and Washington.

Though the Hudson's Bay Company played an important role in the United States' acquisition of the Oregon Country, it had no scruples in promoting its own interests against those of the American settlers. Both before and after the Treaty of 1846, American settlers expressed frustration at being dependent on a foreign corporation for their survival. In an 1835 report sent to President Jackson, for example, two settlers complain of the "tyrannizing oppression of the Hudson Bay Company here, under the absolute authority of Dr. John McLoughlin [sic]." Thomas Farnham, another early pioneer, reports in his own narrative that he was constantly asked, "Why are foreigners permitted to dominate over American citizens, drive their traders from the country, and make us dependent on them for the clothes we wear as are their own apprenticed slaves?"

Perhaps more balanced than settlers' accounts is the perspective of the Methodist missionaries who, though grateful to the company, were suspicious of its power. Writing about the assistance the HBC had provided, the Reverend John Frost noted: "As they, the Co. design, as far as possible to monopolize all the trade of the country, they will make the necessity of the missionaries turn to their advantage." Frost understood the problems of dependency on the HBC.

After the 1846 treaty, Oregon citizens established a territorial government, and in 1853 the portion of the territory north of the Columbia River was broken off to form Washington Territory. The highest priority of Washington's new territorial government was to eliminate any threat from the native tribes who held a majority of the land. The strategy was to force the various tribes onto designated reservations. By 1855 tensions between the tribes and the settlers became so inflamed that hostilities erupted.

Overseeing Washington Territory at this time, Isaac Stevens conveniently held the dual position of governor and superintendent of Indian Affairs. Leading up to the conflict, one of his agents, W. B. Gosnell, reported that one "inducement to go to war was offered to [the Indians] by certain employees and discharged employees of the Hudson's Bay Company." Gosnell claimed that on several occasions HBC men had encouraged the Indians to fight the Americans and made "promises of further assistance in case of war." Shortly after one of these incidents, a party of prospectors traveling through the area disappeared, thus setting off the war. Though Stevens harped on these claims in his speeches, the accuracy of Gosnell's report remains uncertain.

While it is unclear whether the HBC actively encouraged the conflict, there is no question that the company traded arms to the Indians. In an 1854 letter, HBC officer James Douglas addresses the accusations made against the company regarding its arms trade with the tribes. Disregarding the consequences, Douglas rationalized thus: the Treaty of 1846 left the company with the right to transport goods to their establishments; because the only inhabitants were the tribes and because nobody would transport goods except for trade, then trade with Indians—both of arms and supplies—was implied and justified.

If the HBC simultaneously opposed both the American and British governments, it is because the company's interests were best furthered by having no formal government at all. As Douglas wrote to his London superiors, "The interests of the Colony and Fur Trade will never harmonize—the former can only flourish...by establishing a new order of things, while the Fur Trade must suffer by such innovation."

It may have been with this trade-off in mind that McLoughlin predicted in a letter to the HBC governor that Oregonians would "declare themselves an Independent State." Of course, an independent state in the frontier Oregon Country was practically no state at all, as the Whitman Massacre later made clear. In light of such a weak, independent state, McLoughlin further foretold, "Our influence is increasing and will increase and in the mean time you may depend no efforts of mine will be spared without sacrificing an iota of the rights of the Hudson's Bay Company to keep affairs in a right way."

To ensure that its own interests were protected, the company did not stop at McLoughlin's musings. After the election of Oregon's first legislature in May 1844, the HBC took a direct role in territorial politics. The first treasurer in the provisional government was Francis Ermatinger, an HBC chief trader. James Douglas, the officer who saw such a conflict between his fur trade and civilization, was made a judge. Two years later the company ran its own candidate, PSAC director Dr. William Tolmie. In a letter regarding the latter's candidacy, Douglas instructed Tolmie on certain positions to take while assuring him, "I think the majority of the suffrages of the people at the Cowlitz will be given in your favour as we intend to lend you all our influence."

WITH SUCH AN adverse relationship between the fur trade and organized government, it is not surprising that the waxing of Western civilization in the Pacific Northwest correlates strongly with the Hudson's Bay Company's decline. As American pioneers built up their own settlements and institutions, the company lost much of its advantage in the area. By 1860 the United States government had taken over most of the HBC's forts south of the 49th parallel. Soon after, the company retreated to the Canadian side of the border.

Contrary to the prevailing view, it appears that the HBC was not a agent of the British Empire in the Pacific Northwest. When left to itself in this vast frontier, the company took on all the trappings of a sovereign state and undermined the British and American governments in turn. For better or worse, the company acted as its own government for a fair portion of the 19th century, answering to no one but itself and its profit margins. Even as it gradually gave way to a more formal, representative form of government in the region, the company made every effort to guard its bottom line.

André M. Penalver is a Pacific Northwest native in his third year of law school at Cornell University.
THE POETRY OF MARY J. ELMENDORF

By Peter Donahue

For many readers, Northwest poetry begins with poet teacher Theodore Roethke's appointment to the University of Washington faculty in 1947. Indeed, his influence on major Northwest poets such as Richard Hugo, Carolyn Kizer, and Tess Gallagher cannot be underestimated. Unfortunately, the renaissance in Northwest poetry inaugurated by Roethke often obscures the poets in the region who were actively publishing their work prior to World War II.

There are, however, notable exceptions. In the 1920s, Portland poet Hazel Hall published three volumes of verse that garnered significant national attention: Curtains (1921), Walkers (1923), and, posthumously, Cry of Time (1928). In 1935, Seattle-born Audrey Wurdemann, a 24-year-old University of Washington graduate, won the Pulitzer Prize for Poetry with her second volume of poems, Bright Ambush (1934), becoming the youngest person ever to win the prize.

And in the late 1930s Mary Barnard, a Reed College graduate from Vancouver, Washington, began publishing in literary magazines the poems that would distinguish her in the decades following the war.

To this company of early Northwest poets should be added Mary J. Elendorf (1873-1937), who, though having published only one volume of poetry, was a central figure in Northwest poetry throughout the 1920s and 1930s.

Born in New York City, Elendorf moved west with her family when her father, a mining engineer, took a job in Colorado. After marrying, she followed her husband, also a mining engineer, to various locations throughout the Northwest, including Spokane and the Yukon Territory, eventually settling in Seattle in 1914. It was in Seattle that she began to publish poems in regional and national periodicals, including The American Mercury, The Saturday Evening Post, The Overland Monthly, and Poetry, and to win prizes for her poetry. She also became active in regional literary organizations, including the Seattle branch of the National League of American Pen Women, the Seattle Poetry Club, and the League of Western Writers, which fostered literary culture through writing seminars and guest speakers.

A key moment in Elendorf's career came when H. G. Merriam selected three of her poems for the anthology he was editing, Northwest Verse (1931), published by The Caxton Printers, a major publisher of Northwest authors, located in Caldwell, Idaho. The anthology was the first of its kind in the Northwest and included more than 100 poets from Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Montana. The next year Elendorf was invited to write the foreword for Washington Poets: An Anthology of 59 Contemporaries (1932), recognizing the voices that would interpret "the dusky silence of our forests, monarched by the lordly Douglas fir, the pinnacled immensity of our mountains, and the unplumbed profundity of the Pacific." And though James Stevens and H. L. Davis, in their essay "Status Rerum" (1927), had several years earlier called the kind of sentimental poetry the two anthologies tended to include "beguiled pastries...which surfeit without satisfying," both anthologies established a sense of regional identity and purpose among what was still a rather inchoate and unrecognized roster of Northwest poets.

In 1935, Elendorf published Two Wives and Other Narrative Poems—also with Caxton—a collection of 54 poems that are at once romantic and severe, as if influenced equally by Sidney Lanier and Robert Frost. The poems often have a haunting tone to them, as in the title poem, "Two Wives," which opens "Small comfort is there in a house / When its upright head / Is a man with dual wives—one living / And the other dead," and ends with the birth of a child fatefully named after the first wife. Many of the poems are dramatic portraits of women, with eponymous titles such as "Judith," "Elizabeth," "Louella," and "Lucinda." One reviewer remarked, "Mrs. Elendorf's best accomplishment lies in her psychologically shrewd, sympathetic, deftly turned portrait studies, especially of women."

While a number of her poems have generalized Northwest settings, Elendorf's Northwest is most apparent in the dark, gothic quality of the lives she depicts.

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THE POETRY OF MARY J. ELMENDORF

By Peter Donahue
In “The Clam Digger,” for instance, we hear how “His face was bleak as a rock / The breakers flail; / His eyes were quick and cold / Like scuttling hail,” and then watch as this taciturn clam digger beats to death the man who cuckolded him when the man dares to step off the ferry and back onto the clam digger’s home shore. And in “Heritage,” Elmendorf gives a harrowing account of a Northwesterner’s quest—the perennial quest of most Northwesterners—to return to the land he loved and felt closest to.

While the poetic diction and rhyme schemes of Elmendorf’s poetry may at times sound archaic to today’s reader, her poems are expertly realized in terms of their chosen subject and form. Mary J. Elmendorf died before the publication of her second volume of poetry, which, according to her obituary in the Seattle Times, was to include a number of poems based on Northwest material. Nevertheless, the poems that she did publish, and her dedication to Northwest poetry, earn her a place in the annals of Northwest verse.

Peter Donahue’s new novel, Clara and Merritt, about longshoremen and Teamsters in Seattle in the 1930s and 1940s, is due out in May 2010.

Additional Reading

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

**Bordering Reality**


**Bobbi McCallum**


**From Wilderness to Wonderland**


**The Longview Homesteads**


**Private Republic**


Calamity
The Heppner Flood of 1903
Reviewed by Claire Keller-Scholz.

The unexpected events of June 14, 1903, in the prosperous small town of Heppner, Oregon, were undeniably tragic. Joann Green Byrd’s Calamity: The Heppner Flood of 1903 examines the underlying causes and the community’s response. Built on Willow Creek, a small waterway in northeastern Oregon, the town of Heppner suffered immense property damage as well as 238 deaths out of a total estimated population of 1,290. Byrd counts as additional casualties seven people who later died of typhoid, contracted from contaminated water. Although the author’s desire to memorialize each victim occasionally slows down the narrative, Calamity successfully illustrates how a society built on the values of community and independence reacted to and recovered from a devastating blow.

Early chapters introduce the town of Heppner and provide a detailed account of the flash flood’s progression, aided by a map at the beginning of chapter three. In her assessment of the flood’s causes, Byrd concludes that if local residents had not altered the landscape several times in the years preceding the flood, the damage would have been much less severe. The second half of the book discusses the reaction of Heppner citizens and those in surrounding Morrow County to the disaster and the relief efforts and donations that came from all over the Pacific Northwest. Byrd stresses that this was a town of individualists who normally made their own luck, yet even these hardy pioneers needed support for such tasks as burying bodies and clearing debris.

The section titled “In Remembrance: The Victims” gives a brief biography of those who died. A family tree diagram would have been helpful for readers to make connections among the extended families in this small town. The widowers who remarried and the blended families described in the obituaries illustrate Byrd’s introductory statement: “Being alive at the beginning of the twentieth century was a dangerous business.”

Byrd’s research delved into a variety of sources, from personal interviews with descendents to private journals and newspaper articles. The inset photographs of the people and the town before and after the devastation offer valuable documentation and make the physical destruction of the flood tangible to the reader. The author cites contemporary articles about other disasters as well as the most recent Heppner Flash Flood Emergency Plan, all of which provide context for the 1903 flood and its aftermath. Byrd has produced a book aimed primarily at local historians and Heppner residents, but it is also a case study of natural and man-made disaster and disaster response.

Claire Keller-Scholz is a native of Tacoma currently engaged in graduate studies in the field of public history.

Greenscapes
Olmsted’s Pacific Northwest
Reviewed by Anne Patricia Peyton.

Each of the 10 chapters Joan Hockaday writes about John Charles Olmsted contains nuggets of information relating to the formation of park systems, campuses, private homes, and exposition sites in Washington and Oregon during the first decade of the 20th century. Inheritor of the firm that bore the distinguished name of his stepfather, Frederick Law Olmsted Sr., John C. Olmsted made a name for himself in the field of landscape architecture as both a principal in the succeeding firm of Olmsted Brothers and the first president of the American Society of Landscape Architects.

Portland’s Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition lured Olmsted and his Boston firm to the Pacific Northwest in April 1903. The success of the 1893 Chicago World’s Fair inspired St. Louis to announce sponsorship of a Louisiana Purchase International Exposition in 1904. Before long Portland decided to host a Lewis and Clark Centennial Exposition in 1905 and Seattle had on its mind an Alaska-Yukon-Pacific Exposition for 1909. Portland and Seattle were near unknowns to businesses and travelers in the Midwest and East, so local leaders knew they had to showcase the natural attributes of their cities to best advantage. The City Beautiful movement in urban planning encouraged the use of building architects as well as landscape architects—thus Olmsted’s April 1903 appointment in Portland. Shortly after that he visited with Seattle parks commissioners for the entire month of May. In both cases Olmsted viewed the lay of the land from the highest tower in the city, then spent days in horse-drawn carriages evaluating existing parks, proposed parks, and proposed sites for the respective expositions. Along the way he picked up several commissions from wealthy citizens who wished to add private gardens to their architecturally impressive estates.

The Pacific Northwest proved to be a good fit for Olmsted. He returned often throughout 1911, but then his ill health brought extensive travel to a halt. Besides Seattle, where he did most of his business, Olmsted visited Oregon on 11 separate trips. On several other occasions he included Vancouver Island, the Willamette Valley, Bellingham, Walla Walla, and Spokane on his itinerary. Besides public parks, boulevard neighborhoods, country clubs, and private homes, Olmsted in time expanded his workload to include advising eight Pacific Northwest colleges—the University of Washington...
and Whitman College among them—on the placement of walkways, buildings, and gardens around the campuses.

John C. Olmsted's private correspondence, today housed at the Harvard Graduate School of Design, exceeds 5,000 letters, over 500 of which he wrote to his wife from the Pacific Northwest. (The Olmsted Brothers' vast office correspondence is catalogued in the Library of Congress.) Hockaday cleverly weaves quotes from Olmsted's letters into the text, providing personal insight into the man's true comfort level with the Pacific Northwest. For example, in 1907 he traveled to the estate of Robert Moran, and in his letter back home he compared his impressions of Constitution Mountain and the beaches of Orcas Island in the San Juans with locations familiar to his wife at their summer home near Mount Desert, the beaches of Deer Island, and Penobscot Bay, Maine.

Olmsted submitted a 123-page report to the Portland Park Commission in 1903, and with it came high public approval. He prepared his first review of Seattle parks the same year but kept at the project for many more years and ultimately wrote a dozen reports for the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners. (Approximately 300 of Olmsted's 500 letters to his wife from the Pacific Northwest bore a Seattle postmark.) Spokane also hired Olmsted to review its park system. He spent about 100 days working on an evaluation despite his intense dislike of snowy streets. Unfortunately, when the report arrived in 1908, highlighting both the good and bad aspects of the city's 10 existing parks, the city mothballed it out of fear that Olmsted's recommended additions to the park system would drive up real estate prices before a bond issue could be passed to buy the property for the city. Such had been the case the year before the report came out, when the railroads in Spokane had trumped the park board by buying some of the land parcels Olmsted was then most seriously considering as possible additions. Decades later Spokane's Expo '74 brought one part of the Olmsted plan to fruition—a downtown park along the river—and 100 years after the report's submission Spokane has committed itself to another part of the Olmsted plan—a Spokane River Gorge park below the falls. Each of the three city reports (Portland's, Seattle's, and Spokane's) is given an overview in the book, with excerpts in separate appendices.

Greenscapes is not without inconveniences. The black and white reproductions of Olmsted's plans are often too tiny to be of much use. Several of the color illustrations are taken from postcards, which never had good color rendition in the first place. A persistent question will be: how much was Olmsted paid for his expertise by park boards spending public funds, by wealthy clients like hotel owner Louis Davenport or Seattle Judge Thomas Burke, and by public colleges and private schools? Computer programs today can convert sums of pre-World War I dollars into approximations of current funds, and such information might give us a new perspective on the importance of landscape architecture during the City Beautiful movement. These criticisms and comments aside, Greenscapes is a valuable book. There are previously published lists of Olmsted designs, including a prized publication by Catherine Johnson on Olmsted in the Pacific Northwest for the Friends of Seattle's Olmsted Parks (1997), but Hockaday has given us more than a list—she has given us insights and analysis. This is a book you will see in the hands of locals and tourists next summer as they poke around Portland, Seattle, Spokane, and elsewhere on personal field trips that place their feet where John C. Olmsted placed his in the first decade of the 20th century when he changed the landscape of the Pacific Northwest.

Anne Peyton, a native of Seattle, previously taught at Gonzaga Preparatory School in Spokane. A home-schooling parent, she has two graduate degrees from Columbia University in the City of New York.

Current & Noteworthy
By Robert Carriker, Book Review Editor

There are any number of persons—historians, writers, members of the Jedediah Smith Society—who scoff at the exploits of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark. Similarly, these people have no patience with honors given to David Thompson, the current explorer de jour with a bicentennial celebration, for his achievements of overland discovery above and below the Canadian border. The greatest explorer in American history, their argument goes, is Jedediah Smith, the fur trader who, according to a new biography by Barton H. Barbour, "roamed through more of the American West than practically any man of his era," meaning 1824 to 1831 (Jedediah Smith: No Ordinary Mountain Man; Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2009; 290 pp., $26.95 cloth).

Specialists in Pacific Northwest history may be inclined to dismiss Smith, if they have heard of him at all, as influential only in exploring the Great Basin and Mexican California, but not anywhere between the 42nd and 49th parallels. That will change now that Barbour, a professor of history at Boise State University and a top expert on the fur trade era, has had his say. His in-depth analysis of Smith's Northwest Expedition in 1828 follows this intrepid explorer from the 42nd parallel to the Umpqua River, to Fort Vancouver, to Fort Colville, to Lake Flathead, and into Pierre's Hole. So even if you choose to remain loyal to Lewis and Clark and David Thompson, read chapter seven of Jedediah Smith.

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Icons of Washington History is presented by the Washington State History Museum and supported by Ben B. Cheney Foundation, Click! Cable TV and Sequoia Foundation.

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