

# Murray's People: A collection of essays

## Introduction

Murray's People is a selection of essays by noted Northwest author and historian Murray Morgan. These essays have been chosen and edited by Librarian Gary Fuller Reese from more than 30 years of newspaper and magazine articles, radio broadcasts, and books, by Mr. Morgan, Murray's People offers readers a fascinating glimpse into the people, events and history of the Pacific Northwest.

Wobblers and patriots. Explorers gold-diggers, bankers, printers, and newspapermen. For more than 30 years, historian and journalist Murray C. Morgan entertained, enlightened and delighted readers with his stories of the people and the events which played a critical, and oftentimes humorous role in the growth and development of Tacoma and the Pacific Northwest.

Murray's People is a collection of essays selected by Librarian Gary Fuller Reese from more than 30 years of newspaper and magazine articles, radio broadcasts, and books, by Mr. Morgan, What will you find here? Accounts of the leveling of Seattle in 1898; a mammoth hoax involving the discovery of a woolly mammoth; Mark Twain at the Tacoma Theater; a Tacoma's teenager's encounter with President Woodrow Wilson at the Stadium Bowl, stories of the Wilkes Expedition, dirty political goings-on, and a young cub reporter's scoop on the rescue of Amelia Earhart.

These are terrific stories of a time past - a time when a world was waiting to be discovered, when a man's vision could create a city, and when life was lived intensely by people who were willing to take risks and knew how to have fun. Enjoy!

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Alexander Pantages Skid Road  
The Viking Press, 1960 P.151-158.

## Alexander Pantages

Pericles Pantages, who started calling himself Alexander after he had been told the story of Alexander the Great, was born on a Greek island. He ran away from his native village at the age of nine and shipped out as cabin boy on an undermanned schooner.

Three years later he was beached in Panama after contracting malaria; he stayed on the isthmus two years, swinging a pick and running a donkey engine in the ill-starred French attempt to dig a canal. He learned to speak "a sort of French," as a friend phrased it, and he got malaria again. A doctor told him he'd die if he stayed in Panama, so he shipped out on a brig bound for Puget Sound.

Young Pantages made a memorable entry into the Sound. As the ship entered the harbor at Port Townsend, he fell off the yard-arm into the chill water, a shock treatment that he later claimed cured his malaria. The free-and-easy atmosphere of Seattle's Skid Road (where Considine was in his first term as manager of the People's) appealed to Pantages; he talked about jumping ship and settling there, but a companion persuaded him it would be better to go on the beach in San Francisco.

Pantages spoke half a dozen languages, "English as bad as any," as an acquaintance put it. He found a job as waiter in a German restaurant on the San Francisco waterfront; the owner liked him because he could always find a language in which to communicate with a sailor.

Though multilingual, he could read "very little much more than my very own name," but he was a meticulous man with figures. When his boss decided to visit his homeland, he left Pantages in charge of the restaurant. Pantages seems to have run it efficiently.

For a time young Alexander thought that his future was in the prize ring. He appeared in some preliminary bouts in Vallejo, a booming fight center. Short - about five feet six inches - but husky, he fought as a natural welterweight, 144 pounds. Side experts soon decided that Mysterious Billy Smith, the reigning welter champion, had nothing to fear from Pantages, and though it took him longer to make up his mind, he came to the same conclusion and hung up his gloves.

He was still looking for a quick way to fame and riches when the Excelsior steamed into San Francisco on July 26, 1897, with more than a million dollars in Klondike gold. Pantages felt that fate had nudged him. He withdrew all his savings - more than a thousand dollars, for though his pay was not large he was frugal - and started north. But fate put him aboard a ship loaded with some of the world's most adroit cold-deck artists.

When he reached Skagway, a boomtown where coffee cost a dollar a cup and ham and eggs five dollars a plate, he had twenty-five cents in his pocket. He stopped worrying about getting rich and started worrying about getting food. He took the first job offered, as a waiter in the Pullen House, an establishment that had just been started by Harriet "Ma" Pullen, a thirty seven year old widow who had arrived in Skagway from Puget Sound with four children, seven dollars, and a knack of making wonderful pies out of dried apples.

Alexander failed to make anything like the money his employer did - his salary was board and room - but he did pick up enough information about the trail to the gold fields to be able to foist himself on a party of tenderfeet as a guide.

The party made it over the White Pass trail, escaping the dangers of the precipices and the infantile paralysis epidemic then raging. Pantages' role as guide had the advantage of permitting him to cross the Canadian border in spite of the fact that he had no grubstake or passage money to display to the Mounted Police, but the disguise also had its complications: a guide was expected to build a boat to take his charges down the Yukon to Dawson City.

Alexander bluffed it out. He wandered about a riverside camp, watching the experts whipsaw lumber from the trees, arguing with the experienced boat builders, telling them what they were doing wrong, soaking up information when they explained why their methods were right. He learned enough to build a boat that looked like a boat, but when he put it in the river it listed dangerously.

Quickly he hauled it ashore, explained, "Well, the job's half done," and made another. He lashed the two boats together and ushered his uneasy companions aboard. They made it to Dawson. Pantages later confided to a friend in Seattle that his method of shooting the rapids was to close his eyes and trust that he was too young to die.

Pantages had a quick enough head for figures to realize that while prospectors might get very rich, they were more likely to die or go broke. He abandoned his dream of finding gold in the creek beds and concentrated on removing it from the men who had already found it. He found a job in Dawson tending bar. He had never mixed drinks, but a sign over Charlie Cole's Saloon read, "Wanted, One Expert Mixologist. Salary \$45 per day."

The money convinced him he was an expert, and he soon became one, not only at mixing drinks but in such specialties of the Alaskan bar keep as pressing his thumb on the bar to pick up stray grains of gold and spilling a little dust on the ingrain carpet under the scales when he weighed out payment for drinks.

After a good day a shaky man could fluff an ounce from the carpet. It was at Dawson that Pantages first became interested in the financial possibilities of entertainment. He realized that, the drinks being equal, men would patronize the saloon that offered the most amusement.

He suggested that Charlie Cole turn his saloon into something of a box-house, with a real stage and a regular orchestra. Cole did, and his place prospered.

When gold was found in the dark sands along the beach at Nome, Pantages rushed there with a group that has been described as "the liveliest, speediest, swiftest and most sporting Dawsonites, with everyone ready to do everyone else." Alexander was as greedy as the next

Sourdough "to do" a rival or, if there were enough money in it, a friend.

He had been trained in a tough school; many of his friends were pugs and pimps; the most legitimate people he knew were gamblers; he asked no quarter and he gave none. In the town of white tents on the dark and treeless beach he expected to start his conquest of the world of entertainment.

He spent the first winter working in another bar. It was so cold that he could hear his breath snap when it left his mouth, but he burned with an inner fire. Finally he found what he was after: a theater in financial trouble. Though the costs of operation were fantastic (a new violin string cost forty dollars), Pantages was sure the reason for the failure was bad management. He talked some entertainers into staking him and took over management of the enterprise.

Pantages did well; his associates did well to get their money back. Among those he was reported to have bilked was Kate Rockwell, Klondike Kate, the Queen of the Yukon. There were men who hated him until his dying day (in 1936) for playing fast and loose with the money lent him by Alaska's favorite dancing girl. Even if they hated him, they had to go to Pantages' Orpheum, where a seat cost twelve-fifty, if they wanted to see the best show in Nome.

The rush petered out before Pantages could make a millionaire's killing in Nome. What he gained was a grubstake and confidence that he knew what people wanted. In 1902 he sold the Orpheum and sailed for Seattle. He rented an 18 x 75-foot store on Second Street, fitted it out with hard benches, bought a movie projector and some film, hired a vaudeville act, and opened the Crystal Theater. He was his own manager, booking agent, ticket taker, and janitor.

Sometimes he ran the movie projector. Instead of twelve-fifty a ticket, Pantages set admission at ten cents. He based his hopes on keeping ticket costs down and turnover up. He was seeking a mass audience and he found one.

"On Sundays there was no such thing as a performance schedule at the Crystal," a vaudeville fan has reported. "With people lined up at the box-office waiting to get in, Pantages would limit a vaudeville turn that usually was on stage twenty minutes to half that time, and the moving picture streaked across the screen so fast you could hardly recognize the scene. Turnover was all that mattered."

Pantages made enough from the Crystal to open a more pretentious establishment at Second and Seneca in 1904. He unblushingly named it The Pantages. Tickets still cost a dime and customers still lined up to wait for the next show. In 1907 Pantages opened a third theater in Seattle and began to expand his circuit southward along the coast. Big John Considine became aware that in the little Greek from Alaska he had a rival who might run him out of business.

The duel between Considine and Pantages was intense. Each man wanted to break the other, yet in the moments when they were not trying to steal each other's acts and customers they got along well. Each knew the other was an able operator in a difficult field.

In their battle for control of vaudeville, first in Seattle, then along the coast, and finally in all points west of the Alleghenies, Considine had the advantage of Tim Sullivan's political and financial connections; Pantages had the advantage of genius.

A man without roots, a man who knew six languages but could write in none of them, a man who had traveled widely and always among the lower classes, a man without illusions, tough with the cynicism that comes from rubbing elbows with pugs and pimps and gamblers, he had an unerring instinct for what would please most people. He judged any act by the act itself, not by the names of the performers.

On a trip to New York he saw outside a theater an enormous electric sign which said simply, "John Drew." "Who's he?" asked Pantages. "What kind of act does he do?" His rivals scornfully repeated the story. How could a theater man not know the great star of the day? But that was one secret of Pantages' success: he wouldn't have booked a Barrymore for his name's sake.

Pantages and Considine took great pleasure in stealing acts from each other. Pantages probably came out ahead; he worked at it full time, often putting in an eighteen-hour day at his booking office noon to six a.m. Whenever Considine announced a star attraction a juggler, for instance Pantages would not rest until he could hire someone better, say W. C. Fields, and put him on stage the day before Considine's man arrived.

Performers, aware of the rivalry between the two promoters, would make tentative agreements with each and wait until they arrived in Seattle to learn which promoter offered more. Pantages fought fire with fire. While Considine's agents met the trains with a row of greenbacks, Pantages' man met them with a moving van.

The actors might sign with Considine only to find their equipment at Pantages', who of course wouldn't give it up. Eugene Elliott tells, as typical, the story of a xylophone trio that came to town. When Considine offered them twice the money, they argued with Pantages that their agreement with him was not airtight and they preferred the schedule at the other house.

Pantages got his stage manager on the phone. "'Are those xylophones down there?' he asked. The stage manager said they were. 'Take them in the alley and burn them.' The wood-block virtuoso tore his hair. 'My life, my soul,' he cried. 'For twenty years I've played those instruments. You couldn't do that to me.' 'Burn 'em,' repeated Pantages into the phone. The trio appeared at his theater."

The two Seattle showmen fought each other in their home town and across the nation. Considine had entered the national entertainment scene in 1906 when he allied himself with Sullivan; the same year Pantages had begun to expand by buying out a six-theater circuit that had lost its principal showplace in the San Francisco fire.

By 1911 the Sullivan-Considine Circuit had become the first transcontinental, popular-priced vaudeville chain in America and could offer performers seventy weeks' continuous work; Pantages, the same year, made agreements with three Middle Western chains that let him offer sixty straight weeks.

Better booking procedures won the day for Pantages in Seattle, and nationally. He simply booked better acts. Nationally he never made the mistake of relying blindly on New York booking agents. The New Yorkers were likely to send out talent that had succeeded on Broadway with the attitude that if the hicks in the sticks didn't like the act, the hicks didn't

know what was good for them.

Pantages shuddered at such efforts to uplift the national taste. He wasn't out to improve the customers' minds; he just wanted their money. He gave them exactly what they wanted.

Ten years after their personal rivalry started in 1904, Pantages was clearly the victor. Considine was ready to quit. Sullivan had gone insane in 1913 and could no longer raise money or use his political influence to arrange for good theater sites. The circuit involved a great amount of real estate, but each new theater had been built by mortgaging one of the others. To keep things going, Considine had to travel a hundred thousand miles a year, and he wanted some home life.

The Considine and Sullivan interests sold out to Marcus Loew and a Chicago syndicate in 1914; they were to receive a million and a half for good will and two and a half million for the real estate four hundred thousand in cash and the rest over a period of several years. Loew retained the right to call off the agreement on thirty days' notice.

World War I disrupted vaudeville business by shutting off the international circuit and in 1915 Loew turned the chain back. Though Considine had Loew's down payment with which to finance operations, he was unable to get vaudeville going again. In 1915 he told the court he did not have cash on hand to meet a twenty-five-hundred-dollar judgment. The next year the New York Life Insurance Company foreclosed a mortgage on his most important property. The circuit fell apart and Pantages picked up the pieces.

By the end of the war in Europe, Pantages had the strongest circuit in America. He kept adding to it. At the peak of his operations in 1926 he owned thirty playhouses and had control of forty-two others. In 1929 just before the crash picked the pockets of the nation's audience and the talkies administered the coup de grace to vaudeville, Pantages sold his circuit to Radio Keith Orpheum for twenty-four million dollars.

Throughout the struggle Considine and Pantages remained personal friends not close friends, but amiable. Some years after Pantages had driven his rival to the wall, his daughter Carmen, who had been born in Seattle, married Considine's son, John Junior, in Los Angeles, where both families had moved after leaving the Sound country and where the Considines, father and son, did very well indeed as motion picture producers.



"At 82, Above Seattle photographer is still on the way up" The News Tribune  
 July 7, 1994  
 P. FP10

## At 82, Above Seattle Photographer is Still On the Way Up

When my old friend Emmett Watson called to ask if I would spend an hour or so showing a visitor from San Francisco around Tacoma, I didn't know what an interesting time I'd have. The visitor turned out to be Bob Caeron, one of the best aerial photographers in the world and certainly, at 82, the oldest.

He has asked Emmett to write the text for "Above Seattle," the 11th volume in a series of picture books he is doing on great cities and their environs. The assignment puts Emmett in distinguished company. On previous books Cameron wafted Alistair Cooke above London, Pierre Salinger above Paris, George Plimpton above New York, and Herb Caen above San Francisco.

Emmett knows more about his home town than anybody but, true to Seattle type, he confesses that his knowledge of Tacoma extends little beyond the aroma. He wanted me along in the helicopter when Cameron was taking pictures so they wouldn't confuse Stadium High with a hotel or the Narrows Bridge with the Eleventh Street bridge.

So up the three of us went in a rented helicopter with a pilot who didn't mind back seat drivers.

We went first to Seattle-Tacoma International Airport. The tower gave us permission to park above the waterside runway. We sat there about a thousand feet above ground while Cameron decided exactly the angle that would best show the field, the terminal building and hangars, the Old 99 strip, the valley and Mount Rainier, which was cooperating splendidly.

"Back about a hundred," Cameron would say over the intercom, and the buildings would move away. "Up fifty," and the buildings would sink. "Over a bit to our right." That did it.

We spent about half an hour over Tacoma. The great thing about the flight was watching Bob Cameron work. It is always a privilege to see an old pro doing his job - and Cameron is the oldest pro in the aerial photography field. He keeps his tools to a minimum but uses the best available. His camera of choice is a Pentax 6-by-7 centimeter single lens reflex. He uses color transparency film, and carries an ultraviolet filter, a Pentax TLL metering prism, and several lenses which are always fixed at infinity. His treasure is his \$5,000 Kenyon Gyro-Stabilizer, which he began using when he shot "Above Paris" 10 years ago.

The stabilizer looks a bit like a squashed bowling ball. With the long-snouted Pentax bolted on top it seemed ominous. When the two gyroscopes inside - one horizontal, the other vertical - are whirling at 22,000 revolutions per minute, it sounds like a disturbed wasp nest. Small wonder that Cameron sometimes has trouble at airport pass-through checkpoints. Once aloft, though, the stabilizer gives him a tripod that rests, magically but firmly, on thin air.

Cameron has taken aerial photos from everything that can get airborne except a glider or a spacecraft. He has used blimps, dirigibles, balloons and fixed-wings, but he much prefers helicopters. He likes the opportunity to pick the exact spot and insists they are the safest thing in the air.

His own experience with cameras goes back to 1919 when his father gave him a Brownie. He didn't plan to be a photographer. After high school he knocked around France for several years before enrolling at the University of Iowa. He married a coed he met there (they now have four children, eight grandchildren and four great-grandchildren) and dropped out of school to earn a living. He found work as a photographer for a Des Moines newspaper. When photographing the aftermath of murders began to pall, he went into the dry ice business. Then came World War II.

Classified 4F by Selective Service, he found a job photographing Army camp and factory construction for the War Department. He enjoyed being airborne with a camera, but peace grounded him. He took a job with a Connecticut company franchised to sell French perfume and did so well he became company president. He visited San Francisco on business so often that he fell in love with it, sold his share of the company to his partner and moved the family west.

Under the San Francisco influence he wrote a long essay, "The Drinking Man's Diet," which argued that eating lots of steak and drinking lots of red wine promoted good health and longevity. No one would publish it so he published it himself. It sold more than two million copies. So he founded a publishing company, Cameron & Cameron (the other Cameron being one of his sons) and in 1965 produced "Above San Francisco."

Total sales for the "Above" books exceed 2,500,000. All remain in print. So, as he approaches 83, Bob Cameron is looking for more cities to rise above. He yearns to do Mexico City but laments, "with all the pollution, you can't see it anymore."

## **Billy Gohl of Grays Harbor**

### **The Last Wilderness**

**Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 1955**

**P. 122-128**

# Billy Gohl of Grays Harbor

Billy Gohl was a short, round-headed, heavy-shouldered man in his forties. He had brown hair, which he wore parted in the middle, bartender fashion; and, indeed, he sometimes tended bar. His eyes were big and blue and wide-set-honest, you might say. In an era of free-flowing mustaches he went about bare-lipped. His chin was square, his neck short, his chest heavy. He was tough and he looked tough, which was no disadvantage in the Grays Harbor of the Big Cut.

Billy was a great talker. His conversation centered on his business pursuits and his hobbies. If the reports of his listeners to policemen, sheriffs, and grand juries are to be credited, his conversations were unforgettable. You'd start chatting with Billy about the weather, and the next thing you knew he was launched into a recital about a house he had burgled, a hotel he had burned, a ship he had pirated, a man he had murdered, or a deer he had shot out of season.

"Nice weather for ducks," a bartender in a saloon on Wishkah remarked one evening shortly before Christmas in 1909 when Billy rolled in out of the rain.

Billy slapped his sou'wester across his thick thigh, settled himself solidly against the bar, and said, "I've got to kill Charley. As long as that scissor bill is walking around, I'm looking right into the penitentiary." Charley was never seen again.

A cigar-store operator, whose competition had driven Gohl into temporary bankruptcy, told police that Billy approached him amiably on the street and remarked, "You ain't going to be in business so long yourself." That night the hotel housing the cigar store burned to the wet ground—two guests along with it, one of them being an elderly Swede who had annoyed Gohl some years before. Billy was in excellent spirits when he next saw the burned-out tobacco man. "Ain't it funny how things work out?" he said. "I never dreamed there'd be a bonus in it."

One night in a bar he explained to a considerable group how he had rigged the bomb. "I used electricity to set it off," he said. "I had the damndest time. I fastened the cord to his light circuit, but the son-of-a-bitch hadn't paid his light bill, and it was turned off. I had to run a wire in from clear across the street to make it go."

The burned-out tobacco man felt the police should take the matter up with Billy. So did Sig Jacobson, a former associate, who complained to the authorities that Billy wouldn't pay him for the infernal machine he had used to start the fire. A detective was sent around to see Billy, but he came back with the word there was nothing to it. (It was not impossible to get arrested in Aberdeen at this time; Mac DeLane, the proprietor of the Pioneer Liquor Store, who happened to be an enemy of Gohl's, was jailed for smoking a cigarette on the street.)

Billy could be remarkably persuasive. A man who shot a friend at Gohl's suggestion told a jury, "Billy looked at me and said, 'You take him,' and I knew I had to. There wasn't anything else to do. He had a great deal of animal magnetism."

During one eight-month period while Gohl was active forty-three bodies were found floating in Grays Harbor. Some had been shot, some slugged, a few showed evidence of poison, and the majority appeared simply to have drowned after falling or being pushed into the water while drunk. These anonymous dead men, culled from the hordes of migrant laborers who had flocked to Grays Harbor to cut trees, came to be known as the Floater Fleet.

Billy Gohl was credited with launching most of them. If he was responsible for even half of the floaters found in the harbor during his day, Gohl was America's most prolific murderer. Over a ten year period the fleet numbered 124.

Gohl first appeared in Grays Harbor in 1900 one of many men who drifted in broke from the Yukon. He said he had been born in Austria, though one police report credited him to Madison, Wisconsin, and another to Bergen, Norway. He found a job in a waterfront saloon, where he attracted attention with a tale about eating a man during a cold snap near Whitehorse.

He is said to have picked up bonus money by recruiting seamen, usually unconscious, for misery ships that called at the Wishkah mills for lumber. A bartender could be most useful when shanghaiing was necessary to round out a crew. But this story may be libel, for that is one of the few crimes Billy never boasted of committing, perhaps because he soon graduated from barkeep to agent for the Sailors' Union.

Gohl was an effective agent. Aberdeen became one of the first ports on the Pacific Coast with a union hiring hall. People seldom talked back to Billy. Once during a strike, when there were rumors that a citizens' committee in neighboring Hoquiam was planning to intervene, Billy strapped on a pair of forty-fives, cradled a shotgun in his elbow, and boarded each streetcar as it came in from Hoquiam.

As he searched the passengers he explained blandly, "to make sure there ain't nobody going around town illegally armed."

In 1905 the captain of the lumber schooner Fearless, which was tied up in port by a strike, sneaked a non-union crew aboard, cast off, and headed for the Pacific. A runner bounded up the steps to the union hall, over the Pioneer Saloon, and reported the getaway. Billy recruited a boarding party, commandeered a launch, and put out after her. The seagoing pickets were sighted as they approached the schooner in the dark.

Somebody started shooting. The gun battle lasted half an hour before the Fearless escaped over the bar, which was too rough for the launch.

Later Gohl was arrested. The papers said he was charged with piracy, but actually it was "aggravated assault." He was fined twelve hundred dollars. On leaving court he remarked, "It'll be worth every penny of it, for advertising."

Gohl seldom missed an opportunity to expand his reputation for violence. One of his stories was that after the Fearless returned he sent word to four of the scabs that another non-

union boat was waiting to sail. "After I got them on my boat," said Billy, "I took them out to the bar at low tide. I made them get out on the spit. Then I held a gun on them until the tide came in."

A private detective was hired to check on Billy. He's just trying to scare people," the operator reported. "He's all talk."

Gohl's headquarters were in the union hall, a gaunt, narrow room with flaking yellow wallpaper. A scattering of scarred tables stood stark under bare light bulbs. There were some rung-sprung chairs and sturdy splintered benches. One day a friend told Billy that a rumor was going around town that Billy sometimes killed sailors who left money with him for safekeeping and then dropped the bodies through a trap door into the Wishkah.

"That's silly. There ain't no trap door here," said Billy. "And if there was it would just open into the saloon." Then he took the man by the arm and led him to the window. "Tell you what I did do, though. The other day some Swede came in and gave me some money to hold for him while he hit the crib houses. I told him something was up. I thought a scab boat was coming in.

"I got him to put on a logger's outfit-there was some old stag pants around-and I told him to go out and sit on those pilings down there and keep a lookout for the boat. When he got out there I got my rifle and shot him from here, right through the head."

In 1909 there was a shift in political alignment at the city hall. Billy was arrested for stealing a car robe. He was indignant. "A auto robe, for Chrissakes!" he said. He was acquitted when a friend who rustled cattle on the Chehalis River said he had bought the robe at a pawnshop and given it to Gohl.

Gohl brooded about the fact of his arrest. Rumor reached him that the cattle rustler had been seen talking to a deputy sheriff. It was then that he told the barkeep at the Grand that he would have to kill the man. When the barkeep mentioned some weeks later that he hadn't seen Charley around, Gohl told him, "You won't. He's sleeping off Indian Creek with an anchor for a pillow."

A report of this statement reached Montesano, where the sheriff decided Gohl might not be joking. He waited for a day of low tides and went to Indian Creek. Not far off shore he found Charles Hatberg's body, weighed down by a twenty-five pound anchor.

Gohl was arrested. He denied everything. "It's a frame-up," he said, and many believed him. Their confidence was shaken two months later when the schooner A. J. West returned from a run to Mexico. Aboard her was a very nervous seaman named John Klingenberg. He had been seen with Gohl the night Hatberg disappeared. He had tried to jump ship in Mexico, but the captain, who had received a telegram from the sheriff, kept him aboard.

On its return run the schooner was held up two weeks at the Grays Harbor bar by adverse winds. The delay, said Klingenberg, "left me in a highly nervous state." When a sheriff arrested him at the dock he was anxious to talk.

Klingenberg said Gohl had asked him to go along to kill Hatberg so Hatberg couldn't tell anyone what he knew. They had gone to Indian Creek, where Gohl kept a small schooner. There

they met a man named John Hoffman. Gohl asked Hoffman to go with them to Hatberg's cabin. After they were on the launch Gohl drew his gun and shot Hoffman in the back, wounding him. Hoffman begged for his life.

Gohl sat on his chest and shot him through the forehead. They threw his body overboard and went on toward Hatberg's. "He'd have been in the way," said Gohl. Near the cabin they ran on a mud bank.

Hatberg came out in a skiff and rowed them ashore. The three men spent the night in the cabin. Klingenberg said he didn't sleep much. The next morning Hatberg rowed them out to the launch. "You take him," said Gohl to Klingenberg. And Klingenberg did.

"But," he told the deputy, "I didn't shoot him in the back." Gohl and Klingenberg went back to Aberdeen together. A few days later Gohl suggested to Klingenberg that they go for a walk alone on the beach.

Klingenberg declined; the next day he shipped out for Mexico.

When brought to trial for his life, Gohl maintained that Hatberg and Hoffman were somewhere in Alaska, tending lighthouse. He didn't know exactly where; didn't have any idea whose body the sheriff had found off Indian Creek. The State then brought Hatberg's arm, which had been pickled, into court so the jurors could examine some identifying tattoo marks.

Gohl was sentenced to life. He was later transferred from the state penitentiary to a hospital for the criminally insane, where he died in 1928. Klingenberg was sentenced to twenty years in prison.

**Clinton P. Ferry, Duke of**

**Tacoma Puget's Sound:**

**A Narrative of Early Tacoma and the Southern Sound**

**Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979**

**P. 267-268**

## Clinton P. Ferry, Duke of Tacoma

C. P. Ferry came to Tacoma only a few months after Matthew Morton McCarver. He built a house near that of the old boomer in Old Town, served for a time as McCarver's private secretary, correcting the general's inspired spelling and eventually marrying a daughter of McCarver's second wife, which made him McCarver's stepson-in-law, though he preferred to be called the Duke of Tacoma.

A man of imposing presence, big-nosed, long-jawed, loose-framed, he was hard-working and intent on money. Ferry served as agent for the Tacoma Land Company, handled McCarver's estate after his death, and managed his own property well.

He pioneered the development of South Tacoma and the papers guessed he was worth a million or two. After his first wife died, Ferry courted and won a vivacious, auburn-haired divorcee, Cynthia Trafton, who of course was considerably younger than he. He was very proud of her. Jealous, too.

In 1889 Ferry's contributions to the Republican party were rewarded with an appointment as United States commissioner to the Paris Exposition. It seemed the perfect honeymoon: Paris, visits to the 984-foot tower Alexandre Gustave Eiffel had built for the event, a suite in the best hotel, a government carriage for rides on the Champs Elysee, diplomatic status. What more could a girl ask? Well, Cynthia wanted to learn French.

Ferry hired as tutor a champagne salesman who claimed noble connections. Cynthia's efforts were assiduous, her accent improved steadily, but Ferry's enthusiasm for bilingualism lessened. He found the tutor to be more than efficient, he was also young and handsome.

A story in the Tacoma Ledger quoted a story in a New York paper to the effect that the Duke of Tacoma was going about with his hand in a cast because Cynthia had broken his forefinger when he waved it under her nose during a discussion about elisions in latinate derivatives.

Ferry decided it was time for them to return to Tacoma with the ob'ets d'art they had collected for the new house Cynthia was planning. She wouldn't go.

Ferry agreed to stay in Paris a while longer if she would promise not to admit the tutor to their suite nor recognize him on the street. She kept her word. She met him at a hotel. Ferry and a detective interrupted one of the French lessons. During the explanations that followed, she bit

a chunk off her husband's nose. He demanded, unsuccessfully, that Parisian authorities jail her as "a common woman."

When the Duke of Tacoma returned to his home turf, his patrician nose appeared intact but Mrs. Ferry was not with him. She was no longer Mrs. Ferry. He was accompanied, however, by the collection of art they had purchased for the new house.

Most of it Ferry gave to the city's new museum, which he helped finance and which was named for him. Some he gave to the city for its parks. The two maidens guarding the Division Avenue entrance to Wright Park are mementos of the Duke of Tacoma's time in Paris.

Out of personal misfortune, civic amenities.



**"Cub reporter scooped them all on Amelia's  
rescue" The News Tribune**

**P. FP12**

## Cub Reporter Scooped Them All On Amelia's Rescue

Yet another book has been published about the disappearance of Amelia Earhart over the Pacific in the summer of 1937.

This one, "Lost Star," contends that Earhart was on a spying mission for the United States and was captured by the Japanese. The author theorizes that she still may be puttering around the U.S., age 96, keeping her secrets for reasons of her own.

Revelations like these remind me of my biggest scoop in my days as a reporter. I achieved it when, fresh from the University of Washington School of Journalism, I was a cub reporter on the Grays Harbor Washingtonian in Hoquiam.

The Washie, as everybody called it, was not a great newspaper. It was not even the best newspaper on the Harbor, that distinction belonging to the Aberdeen World. We were short on subscribers, short on advertisers and, consequently, short on staff. But we were a morning paper and did come out on Sundays, which the World didn't.

Our Sunday edition wasn't one of the monstrous ad-wrappers now burdening carriers. It was lean to the point of emaciation, sometimes only six pages, with a news hole so small that one man could handle all the editorial work between 4 p.m. and midnight press time.

Which is why I was all alone in the city room on the night my big story broke.

It was only the second time I'd played editor of a real paper. I felt important sitting at the big desk by the door to the backshop, the linotypes clanking behind me, the Associated Press teletype clattering out wire copy in the booth to my right. I even put on City Editor George Sundborg's green eyeshade.

I was penciling in stories on the dummy for the front page when the phone rang.

"Washingtonian," I answered. The conversation that followed was something like this: "I've just picked up Amelia," the caller said.

The first woman to fly the Atlantic had disappeared over the Pacific months before but the Navy was still looking for her. "You've what?" "I just picked up a message from her. She's all right. She's on an island somewhere." "Who is this?" "Fred Something," he said. "I'm over on Elm street." He gave me an address. "The signal was weak but I could make it out." "Just a minute, Fred." I stuck my head in the backshop. "Anybody here know a Fred Something?" "Yeah. He's some nut that fools around with radios."

I went back to the phone. Fred had hung up. I found an address for him on Elm and dialed the number. Busy.

Then I remembered The Associated Press. I went into the teletype room. The wire service was on regional split, sending material for the state papers. I turned on the sender, tapped the bells for a break-in, and typed HAM OPERATOR SAYS AMELIA SAFE.

Seattle cut right in. "HQ - GIVE US FULLEST."

I typed: HOQUIAM - Fred Something, a local ham operator, reports picking up a message from Amelia Earhart, saying she is on an island, and safe. More to come.

The phone was ringing on my desk. It wasn't Fred, it was AP in Seattle, asking me to give them all I had. I said that was all my information. Just then Bill, our Aberdeen reporter, came in. He had the day off but had been nuzzling the bar at the Elks and stopped in to pick up his coat.

I sent him over to Fred's and told him to call in the details as fast as he could. I went back to the desk and began planning a new layout for the front page. The Washie had a font of huge woodblock letters, maybe six inches high: Second Coming type, it was irreverently called. I decided AMELIA SAFE! would fit.

AP called and asked if I had more. I said I didn't. They said they couldn't get through to Fred either. More time passed.

Bill finally came back, redder of face than before. "Where have you been? Why the hell didn't you call?" "Aw, no story. False alarm. The guy's a nut. He just collects old radios. Place full of Atwater Kents but no wireless at all. He can't send or receive. He had a case of Rainier though."

I went back to the teletype, rang for the wire, started to type a revise:

HOQUIAM - Fred Somebody, who reported receiving a message from Amelia Earhart, does not possess wireless equipment. A collector of used radios, he ..."

The teletype bells clanged. BUST BUST BUST, Seattle order. Avoid libel.

Seattle straightened out the revise. I wadded the AMELIA SAFE! headline and missed the wastebasket on a push shot. There went my world scoop. That, I thought, was that.

A few days later, the AP sent me the front pages of a few West Coast papers that had been closing their early editions just as I sent out my bulletin.

For them, I'd still found Amelia.

**Doc Maynard and the Indians, 1852-**

**1873 Skid Road**

**Viking Press, 1960**

## Doc Maynard and the Indians, 1852-1873

In 1850 Dr. David Swenson Maynard was living in Lorain County, Ohio; he was forty-two years old and in debt. On the morning of April 9 he shook hands with his wife Lydia, whom in twenty years of marriage he had come to dislike, kissed his two children, mounted his gray mule, and rode off toward California, where he hoped to recoup his fortunes.

Maynard intended to join another Ohioan, Colonel John B. Weller, in the gold fields, but kindness and cholera sidetracked him. Instead of panning for nuggets he became one of the founding fathers of Seattle and in some ways the most influential figure of the early days on Elliot Bay.

Maynard was a man of parts, a warm human being whose worst faults grew out of his greatest virtue, his desire to be helpful; and few people ever got into more trouble trying to help others. He went broke being helpful in Ohio, where during the 1830s he ran a medical school. There is no record that the Vermontborn doctor ever dunned a patient, and he not only extended unlimited credit but signed his patients' promissory notes.

His school went under during the panic of 1837, and so did the projects of a number of friends he had sponsored; he found himself saddled with more than thirty thousand dollars of other people's debts. For twelve years he labored to pay off his creditors and feed his family; but when his children were old enough to look after themselves, Maynard found irresistible the appeal of California, where a man might unearth a fortune.

The fact that the new eldorado lay half a continent away from his wife made it no less attractive. The first entry in his travel diary expressed the intention of many another man who eventually settled in Seattle: "Left here for California."

Maynard was still intent on California when he reached St. Joseph on the Missouri. He was traveling light. He had a mule, a buffalo robe, a few books, a box of surgical instruments and some medicines; he had almost no cash and he relied on his profession to pay his way. At St. Joseph he attached himself to a caravan of wagons bound for the West. They crossed the river on May 16. Four days later the doctor scribbled in his journal: "Passed some new graves."

Death was part of the pioneer experience. Day after day, as the wagons rolled west across prairies green with spring, Maynard counted the graves beside the trail:

May 21 Passed the grave of A. Powers, of Peoria County, Illinois, died on the 20th inst. about sixty-five miles west of St. Joseph. Traveled about eighteen miles. Was called to visit three cases of cholera. One died, a man, leaving a wife and child, from Illinois, poor. He lived seven hours after being taken.

May 22. Rainy. Fleming and Curtis taken with the cholera. Wake all night. Called upon just before we stopped to see a man with cholera, who died soon after.

May 23 Curtis and Fleming better but not able to start in the morning.

May 24 Camped at Blue River. One grave, child eleven years old. Forded the stream. Raised our loading. Got my medicine wet.

The doctor himself was touched with the disease. He said nothing, not wanting to worry his companions, but he confided his trouble to the journal:

May 29. Started at six o'clock, going about eighteen miles. Water scarce and poor. Curtis gave the milk away. Went without dinner. A drove of buffaloes were seen by a company ahead. Left the team and went on ahead. Saw one buffalo and one antelope. Took sick with the cholera. No one meddled or took any notice of it but George Moon.

May 30. Feel better. Start on foot. Continue to get better. Travel up the Little Blue twenty miles. Wood, water, and feed tolerable. That week they passed Fort Kearney, a low, wood-and-mud building on a sandy plain that rose into sandhills. Maynard wrote with wonder of the tame buffalo grazing near the fort. A spring cloudburst caught them on the Platte and for two days the party shivered, unable to get a fire going; there was more cholera.

June 4. A man died with the cholera in sight of us. He was a Mason. I was called to see him but too late.

June 5. Have a bad headache; take a blue pill.

June 6. Unship our load and cross a creek. One death, a Missourian, from cholera. Go eighteen miles. Pass four graves in one place. Two more of the same train are ready to die. Got a pint and a half of brandy. Earn \$2.20. The next day cholera changed Maynard's life. But at the time Maynard was most impressed by the fact that he earned nearly nine dollars, doctoring.

June 7 Started late. Find plenty of doctoring to do. Stop at noon to attend some persons sick with cholera. One was dead before I got there and two died before the next morning. They paid me \$8.75. Deceased were Israel Broshears and William Broshears and Mrs. Morton, the last being mother to the bereaved widow of Israel Broshears. We are eighty-five or ninety miles west of Fort Kearney.

June 8. Left the camp of distress on the open prairie at halfpast four in the morning. The widow was ill both in body and mind. I gave them slight encouragement by promising to return and assist them along. I overtook our company at noon twenty miles away. Went back and met the others in trouble enough. I traveled with them until night. Again overtook our company three miles ahead. Made arrangements to be ready to shift my duds to the widow's wagon when they come up in the morning.

The Broshears' train was headed for Tumwater at the extreme southern tip of Puget Sound, where the widow Broshears' brother, Michael T. Simmons, had settled five years earlier, in 1845 - the first American to homestead on the Sound. Maynard agreed to stay with her until

she reached there. The doctor, who had never so much as switched an ox, now found himself in charge of a team with five yoke of oxen and two yoke of cows.

He was also physician to a group that was deathly ill; even with his ministrations, the party had seven deaths from cholera in two weeks. And he was the newcomer leader of a group split by dissension; several members wanted to turn back. For two weeks after shifting his duds to the widow's wagon the doctor was too busy even to write in his journal the only lapse in his record but by the Fourth of July things were in good enough order for him to note: "We celebrated a little."

They kept moving. For two months the Broshears' train edged westward, four miles, ten miles, occasionally twenty miles a day. Maynard experienced the routine hardships of the Trail and knew too the occasional joys of good water, of fresh fish, or a day without petty disaster. He underwent the ordeal that gave the settlers of the Pacific Northwest a hard core of mutual understanding.

Nearly every family that came to Seattle during the early days had passed through the trials by dust and dysentery that Maynard, writing by firelight or in the early dawn, penciled in his little journal:

Dragged the team through sand eight miles to Devil's Gate.... Oxen sick; vomiting like dogs. Discovered a party of Indians coming upon us. We heard that they had just robbed one train. Prepared for an attack. When within half a mile they sent two of their number to see how strong we were. After viewing us carefully left us for good. ... Kept guard for fear of Mormons.... Traveled in sand all day, and camped without water or feed.

I was well worn out, as well as the team, from watching at night. A miserable company for help.... Traveled all day and night. Dust from one to twelve inches deep on the ground and above the wagon a perfect cloud. Crossed a plain twelve miles, and then went over a tremendous mountain....

Team falling behind. Found them too weak to travel Left camp at six-thirty, after throwing Lion and doctoring his foot, which Mrs. Broshears, George and myself did alone.... Indians are plenty.... Was called to see a sick papoose

Got to Fort Hall. Found the mosquitoes so bad that it was impossible to keep the oxen or ourselves on that spot. Oh, God! the mosquitoes. Sick all day and under the influence of calomel pills. Started late on Lion's account. Drove two and a half miles, and he gave up the ghost. We then harnessed Nigger on the lead....

Lost our water keg. Sixteen miles to water. Road very stony.... Traveled six miles to Salmon Falls ... bought salmon off the Indians. This place is delightful. The stream is alive with fish of the first quality, and wild geese are about as tame as the natives

Watched team all night. Am nearly sick but no one knows it but myself....

Crossed creek and climbed the worst of all hills. Went up three times to get our load up. Geared the wagon shorter. Threw overboard some of our load.... Cut off the wagon bed and again overhauled. Left this morning a distressed family who were without team or money and nearly sick from trouble. Left Brandy and Polly to die on the road....

Here we began climbing the Blue Mountains, and if they don't beat the devil.

Came over the mountains and through dense forest of pine, twenty miles. Traded for a mare

and colt and Indian dress. Paid for the things a brass kettle, two blankets, a shirt, etc....

Bought a fine spotted horse, which cost me \$55.

Came to the Columbia River twenty miles through sand all the way. This night I had my horse stolen. I was taken about sunset with dysentery, which prostrated me very much.

Drove to the Dalles. Sold the cattle to a Mr. Wilson for \$110... and prepared to start for Portland down the river. Sat up nearly all night and watched the goods.

Loaded up our boat and left. Came down about fifteen miles and landed for the night. We buried a child which we found upon the bank of the river, drowned.

Hired a team and got our goods down below the rapids. Engaged Chenoweth to start out with us immediately but he, being a scoundrel, did not do as he agreed.

Hired an Indian to carry us down in his canoe to Fort Vancouver. We had a hard time, in consequence of the Indian being so damned lazy. By rowing all the way myself we got to the fort at one in the morning as wet as the devil....

Left the fort with two Indians who took us down the Columbia eight miles to the mouth of the Cowlitz, which is a very tired ox team to Bend. Came to Plomondon's landing about noon. Obtained horses and started out ten miles to Mr. J. R. Jackson's

Made our way twenty miles through dense forest and uneven plain twenty-five miles to M. T. Simmon's, our place of destination, where we were received with that degree of brotherly kindness which seemed to rest our weary limbs, and promise an asylum for us in our worn out pilgrimage. Maynard, of course, was in love with the widow Broshears, and he quickly fell in love with the Puget Sound country. The weather was wet but mild; after the dust and heat of the plains, after the cold of the mountains, after the alkaline water of the plains, Maynard did not mind the rain. He liked the gray, overcast days when the fir and hemlocks on the near-by hills combed the bottom of the heavy clouds that pulsed in from the Pacific.

The salt water fascinated him: the Sound stretched northward for more than a hundred Miles from the Simmons' homestead, a quiet inland sea, its shoreline charted but its surrounding hills almost unexplored. It was good too, after the weeks on the trail to relax in a house with windproof walls, to listen to rain on the cedar shakes, to sleep in a bed, to eat white bread and fresh vegetables, to talk to Catherine Broshears, who was beautiful or even to her sister-in-law Elizabeth Simmons, who was not.

The brotherly kindness shown by Simmons on the party's arrival did not extend to Maynard after Simmons detected that his sister's interest in the doctor exceeded that of an employer for her ox-team driver. It did not matter to Simmons that Maynard was a doctor and a fellow Democrat he was also a married man. Simmons suggested that Maynard move on to California before the other fellows dug all the gold.

Maynard stalled. He had heard rumors that coal had been discovered on the lower Sound and he wanted to investigate. In mid November he hired some Indians to paddle him north on a prospecting trip. The Sound stretches south between the Olympic Mountains and the Cascades. To the west the Olympics sheer up from the water "big and abrupt as a cow in a bathtub," as one early traveler put it; they were almost black with fir and hemlock, and though explorers had located several good anchorages along the western shore, the absence of any extensive farm lands discouraged settlement.

Like the Hudson's Bay people who had covered this territory before Doc Maynard skirted the eastern shore as he paddled north. The Cascades stood well back from the water; a plain nearly

thirty miles wide stretched between the salt water and the rugged foothills. The plain was forested and useless for farming, but mountain streams flowing from the glaciers on Mount Rainier and Mount Baker had cut several valleys, which offered broad acres of rich, volcanic soil the Nisqually, already cultivated by the Hudson's Bay Company; the Puyallup, twenty miles to the north, and just beyond the Puyallup, the Duwamish.

Maynard was headed still farther north, to the Stilquamish, a swift stream that enters the Sound at a point due east of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the channel to the Pacific Ocean. His journal of the trip is matter- of-fact, but it is not hard to imagine the feelings of a man from the plains as he rode in the black-painted cedar dugout over the gentle waters of the Sound, the islands dark with Douglas fir, the wind sharp with salt and sweet with the scent of red cedar.

The great mountain rose in the east, its white cone streaked with blue-black ridges, and to the west stood the Olympics, white with the early snow. Seals bobbed up to stare roundeyed at the black canoe, and porpoises curved through the waters ahead. just below the surface floated translucent jellyfish, and when the Indians paddled close to shore Maynard could see giant starfish clinging to the rocks, and anemones, pink and green and gold, moving in the currents.

Even the barnacles were open and waved pale tentacles in search of food. And fish! When the canoe drifted through the Narrows on the outgoing tide Maynard could look down and see salmon lying head to current in the deep water below the clay cliffs. The slap of fish breaking surface sounded almost as steadily as the beat of the cedar paddles.

Gulls wheeled overhead on steady wings, turning their smooth heads slowly as they scanned the water for prey. When the canoe skirted the shore, cranes flapped heavily into flight. Sometimes mallard and coot skittered along the green surface, or a helldiver flipped under.

The party landed and bought salmon and potatoes and mats from some Indians who were smoking them near the beach. They camped for the night too low that night and the tide drove them off, to spend the night on the water. Maynard lost a skillet cover and got his gun wet.

The next day a southwest wind came up and rain fell. The Indians raised a sail, and the dugout ran with the waves under a flat roof of clouds that stretched from the dark islands to the dark shore. In the rain Maynard coasted past the sandy spit where, within a year, Seattle would be founded, and in the rain reached the Stilquamish. The record of his exploration for coal is lost. He is believed to have found some traces and, on his return to the upper Sound, to have sold the pages of his journal describing the location to another explorer.

Maynard settled in a small community on Budd Inlet, three miles north of Tumwater. The place, now called Olympia, was then known officially as Smither, though most people called it Smithfield, both names honoring Levi Smith, a Presbyterian divinity student who settled there in 1848 but lost his life when he suffered an epileptic attack in a canoe. While Maynard was living in Seattle, Congress awarded the town a customs house, and it became the first port of entry on the Sound.

The town prospered but not Maynard, whose money ran out. There were not enough people on the upper Sound to support a doctor, so he borrowed an ax and between calls on the widow Broshears he cut wood. He kept cutting for half a year, and by the fall of 1851 he had four hundred cords piled at tidewater.

Maynard persuaded Leonard Felker, captain of the brig Franklin Adams, to haul him and his wood to San Francisco. There the wood brought him more than two thousand dollars. He used the

money to buy a stock of trading goods from a wrecked ship.

Before returning north Maynard looked up his old friend John Weer, who was reconverting himself to politics after serving as a colonel during the Mexican War. Weller tried to talk Maynard into staying in California, but the doctor protested that the situation in the gold camps was too rowdy: in two days he had been called to treat four gunshot victims. He would return to Puget Sound, where life would be more orderly.

Weller told Maynard of two other Ohioans, Henry Yesler and John Stroble, who shared Maynard's conviction that western Oregon had a future and who planned to start a sawmill somewhere in the Northwest. Weller said to Maynard, "Doctor, let me advise you. You have the timber up there that we want and must have. Give up your profession. Get machinery and start a sawmill. By selling us lumber you'll make a hundred dollars for every one that you may possibly make in doctoring, and you'll soon be rich."

He was right, of course, but Maynard did not have enough money to buy machinery and he was tired of cutting trees by hand. He sailed back on the Franklin Adams with his stock of trading goods. Going down the Sound, the vessel passed a cluster of cabins on a spit near the mouth of Duwamish River, a settlement which, Maynard was told, was derisively called New York-Alki meaning "New York-pretty soon."

Maynard rented a one-room building in Olympia and opened his store. His business methods were unorthodox, even for the frontier.

Since he had purchased his goods at half price, he sold them at half the price asked by other merchants. If he was feeling particularly good - and alcohol often made him feel particularly good - he was inclined to give his customers presents; he offered credit. Maynard was popular with the townsfolk but not with other merchants, among them Mike Simmons, who felt that Maynard was not only hell bent for bankruptcy but was a bad influence on customers. His business rivals suggested that Maynard would probably be happier selling his goods somewhere else.

One day an Indian named Sealth (pronounced Seealth and sometimes Seeattle), the tye, or chief, of the tribe living at the mouth of the Duwamish River (which was also known as the Duwamps and the Tuwamish and, to everyone's confusion as the White), paddled up to Olympia on a shopping trip. Sealth was a big, ugly man with steel-gray hair hanging to his shoulders; he wore a breechcloth and a faded blue blanket.

His arrival caused some stir in the little community, for the whites considered him one of the most important tyees in Oregon Territory; they certainly were more impressed by Sealth than the Indians were.

The tribes along the Sound were of the Salish family; the Nisquallies, the Duwamish, the Muckleshoots, the Puyallups, the Suquamish, the Snohomish, and other groups varied in number from less than a hundred to more than a thousand, but they all seem to have had the same notion about the role of a chief: a chief had little authority. He was merely a rich man with some eloquence, a man whose opinions carried more weight than those of his fellow tribesmen.

Since wealth was hereditary, the chieftaincy often stayed in one family, but it did not



necessary go to the eldest son; the tribe might agree on a younger son, on an uncle, on anyone who was rich, or at least generous and wise, or at least persuasive. A tribe might agree to have more than one chief; nearly all had one leader for peace and another who took over during war.

Sealth appears to have been in exception to this rule; he was a peacetime tyee, but there was a story current in his lifetime that he had distinguished himself as a strategist in some distant campaign and that his military genius had established his people's hegemony over the lands at the mouth of the Duwamish, on the western shore of Lake Washington, and on the eastern side of Bainbridge Island. Sealth was, as the settlers put it, "an old Indian" meaning he refused to wear "Boston," that is, American clothing, and he would speak neither English nor the trade jargon called Chinook; he talked in Duwamish, and anyone who wished to speak with him either learned Duwamish or found an interpreter.

Nevertheless Sealth was considered to be friendly toward the whites and was on good terms with the storekeepers in Olympia. It may have been Mike Simmons who suggested to Sealth that he speak to Maynard about moving his store up to the settlement of New York-Alki. Maynard agreed. He held a hurried sale, loaded his remaining goods aboard a scow, and, accompanied by Sealth and a squad of Duwamish paddlers, started north.

The forty-mile trip took four days and three nights. Maynard and his companions landed on the sandspit of New York-Alki late on the afternoon of March 31, 1852.

## **Financial flight of the America**

**Tacoma News Tribune and Sunday**

**Ledger April 14, 1974**

# Financial Flight of the America

Of all the people England sent to the Pacific Northwest to look after British interests during the "54-40 or fight" crisis none was more notable or less effective than the Honorable Captain John Gordon, who came as commander of the fifty gun frigate America.

Later than any U.S. vessel in the Pacific HMS Americawas sent to show the Union Jack off the Columbia and on Puget Sound. Her 1845 visit was pure gunboat diplomacy, calculated to overawe the Yankees and let British residents in the Oregon Country know the crown was not abandoning them.

The Admiralty's choice of Gordon for command raised some eyebrows. He had joined the Navy in 1805 and attained, thanks to the Napoleonic wars and the War of 1812, the rank of captain in only eight years. The pickings were poorer in peace time and he had been without a deck under his feet for twenty-seven years when given Britain's largest vessel in the eastern Pacific.

Some critics thought his assignment was less a mark of ability than of connections; one of his brothers was a lord commissioner of the Admiralty, another, the Earl of Aberdeen, was foreign secretary.

The dispatch of the American did not impress Chief Factor John McLoughlin at Fort Vancouver. He complained to London that she was too big to get across the Columbia River bar and would have to be stationed on the Strait of Juan de Fuca or in Puget Sound where there were no Americans to be intimidated.

The Admiralty had noted the at the America's fifteen foot draft would prevent her from entering the river. Captain Gordon's instructions were to proceed to Fort Victoria, the new Hudson's Bay Company post on Vancouver Island.

There he was to borrow the steamer Beaver, the only steam vessel in the Northwest, and send a party to Fort Nisqually, then overland to Fort Vancouver.

Gordon was to determine whether coal beds reported in the Puget Sound-Cowlitz River area would provide suitable fuel for steamships, check out the supply of timber fit for naval use and load spars 72 feet long 27 inches in diameter to serve as main yards.

Contrary winds delayed Gordon's arrival at the Strait of Juan de Fuca two months beyond schedule. Poor charts, strong tides and late summer fogs prevented him from finding the entrance to Victoria harbor.

Gordon went instead to Port Discovery.

When a small boat from the America found Victoria the officers were told that the SS Beaver was up north trading with the Tlingits. So the inspection party had to go south up the Sound by small boat rather than steamer.

This group was led by Lieutenant William Peel, son of the incumbent prime minister who carried out his assignment brilliantly and submitted a solid, detailed report on the Oregon Country and its potential.

While Peel was on reconnaissance, Gordon visited Fort Victoria. Chief Factor Roderick Finlayson, a fellow Scot, took him fishing. The salmon were running, Indians were netting and spearing them by the hundreds, but Gordon insisted on fly casting. He was skunked.

"What a country, " Gordon complained, " where the salmon will not take the fly." He told Finlayson he would not trade "one acre of the barren hills of Scotland for all that he saw around him."

Gordon was equally dour in talking to James Douglas, another resident Hudson's Bay Company official who reported to the company governor that "The old Gentleman was exceedingly kind, but no wise enthusiastic about Oregon or British interests. He does not think the country worth five straws."

After five weeks in the Northwest, Gordon was convinced that Puget Sound and the Oregon Country was of such scant worth that "...the single Harbour of San Francisco in California with its surrounding shores is worth the whole of it."

He reported to the Admiralty that in his opinion the United States government was encouraging emigration to the Oregon Country as a ruse, since newcomers would probably "instantly quite it for the fertile plains of California, and thus the American Government plant their native population in their friendly Neighbor's territory."

Gordon decided to winter in warmer climes. He left Port Discovery for Hawaii, then visited Mazatlan. Mexico was in turmoil and British merchants feared their money might be confiscated. They asked Gordon if he would transport an estimated two million dollars in specie back to England.

Under existing British law a commander received a per centage of money rescued under such circumstances. Gordon agreed, loaded the gold and silver and sailed home. Thus while the Admiralty was counting on the America's presence in the North Pacific in event of war with the United States, Captain the Honorable Gordon left his station, in the bitter words of a superior, "without orders, with money."

Gordon was court marshaled. The charge of "...leaving his station, contrary to orders, " was held to be "full proved," and Gordon was "severely reprimanded," but not relieved of his command. He resigned a few months later, taking his cut of the two million, estimated at ten thousand dollars, into retirement.

Gordon's money cruise did not effect the boundary settlement. Britain and the United States had agreed to the 49th parallel as the dividing line before it was known that the America was

missing from her station.

## **Frank Ross Saw Tacoma's Destiny in World**

**Commerce The Tacoma News Tribune**

**May 5, 1994**

**P. FP12**

# Frank Ross Saw Tacoma's Destiny in World Commerce

Frank C. Ross was 21 years old and broke when he arrived in Tacoma (Pop. 700, but growing) on December 23, 1879. He worked a few days as a waiter for his board at Halstead House, a few weeks shoveling gravel into the mud holes on unpaved Pacific Avenue, a few months at the Hatch and Forbes sawmill and then in the Northern Pacific railway shops.

When his brother Charles arrived from Pittsfield, Ill., they teamed up to make a quick \$321 selling cigars, confectionary, California fruit and imported newspapers at a fair in Chehalis. With the proceeds he bought the southeast corner of 11th and Pacific, where Peoples Store was later built, and opened a real estate office.

In an autobiographical sketch he wrote for Herbert Hunt's "History of Tacoma," Ross tells of sawing logs on South Ninth from St. Helens Avenue to E Street (now Fawcett) so as to be able to run a wheelbarrow up the hill to lots 3, 4 and 5 in block 9, which he purchased for \$225 and sold weeks later for \$1,000.

From then on his passions were real estate development and transportation that would speed up development. He helped organize and finance the Tacoma & Lake City Railroad that built a line from Union Avenue to Lake City on the north side of American Lake. The right-of-way later passed into the hands of the Union Pacific. He was later involved in the ill-fated attempt to run rails along the eastern shore of the Olympic Peninsula to Port Townsend, a plan that got nowhere.

The tidflats fascinated him. He bought acreage wherever it became available, platted it and named Lincoln Avenue and many of the streets on the land east of the river. When the law regarding Indian reservation land was changed to permit individual Indians to sell or lease their share of reservation property, he contracted to buy some 1,500 acres of marshland, a sale never consummated because of government objections.

In 1892 Ross, together with Peter Stanup, one of the leaders of the Puyallups, organized a coalition of Indian owners whose land stretched across Browns Point. They started to lay track for rails, the plan being to establish a connection with the Great Northern which was approaching Seattle from the north.

The Indian agent on the Puyallup reservation called up federal troops from Fort Vancouver

to block construction. Ross went to federal court in Seattle and secured an injunction forbidding the United States from invading the Puyallup Nation. But the Circuit Court in San Francisco lifted the injunction. Ross lost that battle but henceforth styled himself "Colonel" Ross in honor of his part in the Indian War of Browns Point.

In 1913 Ross again made front page headlines. At a banquet in Moose Hall, he addressed a group of 156 Japanese immigrants who had booked round-trip passage on the Chicago Maru for a four-month visit to their homeland. He presented the delegation with 200 boxes of cigars, which he said cost him \$500. Each box had on its lid pictures of Mount Rainier and the Olympics. He asked that at least one box be given to every member of the Japanese parliament "so that every time they open the box to take a smoke, they'll look at the wonders of Tacoma."

He felt that Japan and Tacoma were inexorably linked, which was greatly to Tacoma's benefit since Japan was destined to control the commerce of the sea.

"All nations overestimate the business to be generated by the completion of the Panama Canal. Too many steamers are being constructed. Your nation will be able to step in and buy them at half the cost of construction, and with those you already have you will very nearly control world commerce."

Ross urged that:

the United States and Japanese governments join to establish schools and employ teachers to educate your very young girls with our very young boys. By this method the children would become attached to each other and the sequel would be early marriage.

If it is impossible for our governments to unite in this great cause, then it might be that our states could bring this problem to a wonderful termination. I am very anxious to see a school of this kind established. I have a beautiful location and would gladly give the site for that purpose. I would not only donate the site but I would give money towards building the school and employing teachers. Then I would give money for building a home for the children. There would be no trouble in getting orphans to attend in case the parents of other children objected to sending their little ones here.

Ross' speech received a standing three banzais from the audience. It was not widely praised when published. Indeed there was indignation.

The ladies of the Aloha Club passed a resolution protesting the proposal for government-sponsored miscegenation.

Ross, who always boasted that he belonged to no church, no lodge or secret society, no political party, was amused by the uproar. "They would have ridden me out of town on a rail," he observed, "but they couldn't find a rail rough enough for their purpose."

He remained in Tacoma until his death on Jan. 10, 1947, still independent as a hog on ice, still prophesying the city's future in world commerce.

## **Frederick Law Olmstead and Tacoma**

### **Puget's Sound: A Narrative of Early Tacoma and the Southern Sound**

**University of Washington Press, 1979**

**P. 169-173**

# Frederick Law Olmstead and Tacoma

Laying out cities in the 1870s was child's play. The ideal was a broad rectangle subdivided into squares. All that was required was a map and a ruler. James Tilton, who had been surveyor general of the territory back in the Isaac Stevens era, was still around. They handed him the ruler and told him to start drawing.

It has been said that Tilton used as his model a plan for Sacramento that McCarver brought north after his misadventures there, or that Tacoma was patterned after Melbourne, Australia; but chances are that the old engineer needed no pony.

Tilton's sketches do not survive. An account in the Weekly Pacific Tribune for October 3, 1873, indicates he made a few modifications to the basic grid plan then in vogue. Three main avenues 100 feet in width paralleled the waterfront. Two others slanted diagonally up the face of the hill, a concession to the difficulties of horse-drawn street-cars, not to mention pedestrians, would encounter on a direct climb. The five avenues were flanked by blocks 120 feet deep which ended in 40-foot-wide streets, too broad to degenerate into alleys but not grand enough to detract from the designated thoroughfares.

In the middle of town a twenty-seven-acre knuckle of land about 1,000 feet south of the bay was left open for development as a central park or as the campus of a building complex should Tacoma become county seat or territorial capitol. Two smaller parks stood on the north and south flanks of the town.

This first dream of Tacoma failed to get off the drawing board. While Tilton was still making sketches, events and decisions back east aborted his conception. Board members expressed some dissatisfaction with Tilton's proposals for solving drainage problems on the clay-bank hill, but far more important was Jay Cooke's slide toward bankruptcy. As the sale of railroad bonds slowed, sale of land at the terminus offered the best hope of raising working capital.

The Northern Pacific in August formed a subsidiary, first called the Lake Superior & Puget Sound Land Company but quickly renamed the Tacoma Land Company, which was capitalized at one million dollars and assigned to develop the terminus and sell the town lots. C. B. Wright was selected by the Northern Pacific directors to head the land company. Almost immediately President Wright began to discuss replacing Tilton with the country's best-known landscape architect, the brilliant, unorthodox, opinionated, highly controversial Frederick Law Olmsted.

A journalist turned planner/administrator, Olmsted had conceived and brought into being New York's Central Park; in 1873 he was embroiled in a widely publicized struggle with Tammany Hall to prevent its commercial exploitation.

He had also designed Morningside Park in Manhattan, the Brooklyn Parkway (he coined the term parkway), and on commission from the Quincy Railroad he had planned for Chicago commuters the suburban community of Riverside which, as Olmsted put it, emphasized "gracefully-curved lines, generous spaces and the absence of sharp corners, the idea being to suggest and imply leisure, contemplativeness and happy tranquillity."

Whether Wright and the board were concerned with prompting happy tranquillity at their terminus is doubtful. Probably what attracted them was Olmsted's capacity for getting attention and his reputation for finding novel solutions to difficult problems of terrain. Whatever their reasons, the board summoned Olmsted to the New York headquarters of the Northern Pacific on September 19 (just one day after the closing of Cooke's bank) and commissioned him to make in all possible haste six weeks a preliminary study for the townsite.

Olmsted teamed with G. K. Radford, whom he described to Wright as "an experienced sanitary and hydraulic engineer," in creating the plan. He did not visit Tacoma but worked from contour maps and sketches. It is not clear how the two men divided the labor but it is likely that Radford concentrated on drainage problems, Olmsted on creating a town that would blend with sea, forest, and mountain. Sketches in the Olmsted Papers at the Library of Congress show his concept of a latticework of diagonals to climb the hill back from the bay.

The plan was delivered to the Northern Pacific on schedule in early December and reached Tacoma the week before Christmas, where it was put on display in the Tacoma Land Office. Residents who had been eagerly awaiting the metamorphosis of the clay cliff into the metropolis of their dreams studied Olmsted's vision with a bemused blend of boosterism and dismay.

Thomas Prosch, who had bought the Pacific Tribune of Olympia from his father, Charles, and moved it to Tacoma on the strength of its prospects as terminus, reflected the ambivalence of the locals in a long but muted story that appeared on December 23.

The new plan he found "unlike that of any other city in the world," and "so novel in character that those who have seen 'hardly know whether or not to admire it, while they are far from prepared to condemn it." He outlined the main features:

The ground laid off is on the southern shore of Commencement Bay 1000 acres in extent, and reaching from the Gallilier mill pond two and a half miles down the bay to the Tacoma mill pond. A portion of the mud flat is also laid off, for future use. The most peculiar features are the varying sizes and shapes of the blocks, and the absence of straight lines and right angles.

Every block and every street and avenue is curved. The lots have a uniform frontage of 25 feet, but differ in length, averaging, however, 180 feet. The curvature of the blocks does away with corner lots, and their great length with much of the misery of street crossings, where collisions and accidents always happen, and where mud and dust are invariably the deepest. . . .

The three grand avenues are Pacific, Tacoma and Cliff. Pacific leads up the banks, from the rail road dock, and out into the country; Tacoma is about a mile only in length, intersecting



up in town with Pacific Avenue and running down to the beach between the old and new towns; Cliff Avenue extends along the brow of the bluff, two miles or more in length. . . . The first is intended for the business of the town, and for country trade and driving; the second takes one past the principal parks; and the third will be magnificent for residences, promenading and driving, as it will be high and slightly, with nothing between it and the water . . . There are seven parks laid out, consuming about 100 acres of ground, and varying from two to thirty acres each in extent.

Young Prosch felt that time alone would prove the plan's practicality but added, hesitantly, "Certainly, if a large city is ever built here, after that plan, it will be through and through ' like a park, and have very many important advantages over other cities."

In rival Portland, the Bulletin discussed the Olmsted plan with irony. Conceding the originality of the great planner's concept, the paper commented that since "Tacoma is already set upon a hill, or two hills for that matter, it would be ridiculous for such a city to copy after unpretending places like Chicago or San Francisco. Tacoma resolves to have an individuality and to assert it. . . .

"The curve is the favorite geometrical line at Tacoma. it is supposed to be borrowed from the magnificent movements of the celestial spheres, or other great operations of nature; and with these movements Tacoma is determined to be in harmony. Tacoma, with her new plat, must be almost as perfect as anything can be in this ill-favored world."

Tacomans were not amused. Neither were they enthusiastic. Prosch, in a follow-up story on the plan, concentrated on the assumed wisdom of the managers of the Pacific Division of the Northern Pacific ("Save for unscrupulous, mendacious, hiring editors and their abettors, none have any fault to find with their course") rather than on the plan itself.

He allowed that the Olmsted concept was approved by "many men of ripe judgment and unquestioned taste; in their view it will make a beautiful city and is in every respect adapted to the character of the ground." His own opinion he kept to himself.

Even among the scrupulous, the nonmendacious, the unhired, and the nonjournalistic there were to be found skeptics who questioned the incarnate wisdom of the Pacific Division managers, the genius of Olmsted, and the merits of a nonangular street plan.

Speculators who wanted to buy corner lots saw no merit in a downtown deliberately left deficient in fourway intersections; Olmsted's dream of a business district without bottlenecks was to them a nightmare. Nor were the engineering crews assigned to run lines amid the downtown stumpage to locate Pacific, Cliff, and Tacoma avenues persuaded by Olmsted's dictum that "speed of traffic is of less importance than comfort and convenience of movement."

Early settlers who had seen others profit from the rise of foursquare business districts grumbled that the plan for their town resembled "a basket of melons, peas and sweet potatoes." They said that in the street patterns one could find representations of everything that has ever been exhibited in an agricultural show, from calabashes to iceboxes."

In prosperous times the Olmsted plan might have survived, even benefited from, the controversy and ridicule. Had the Northern Pacific board had the confidence to wait out

discontent, the materialized dream might well have answered the doubters. One has only to look at the plan and imagine the park-like city that could have been on the lovely curve of Tacoma's harbor to grieve that the vision was not made manifest.

But Jay Cooke's bank had failed, the panic was deepening into depression, the railroad was desperate for capital. With confidence shattered and money short, there was no rush to invest in the western terminus of an ailing and incomplete railroad. The NP balled out.

Late in January, only forty-three days after he had submitted the plan, Olmsted was notified that his ideas would not be used and his services were no longer required. The letter of dismissal, and Olmsted's reply, have never been located. Olmsted never mentioned the rejection publicly.

## **George Browne becomes a useful member of the Tacoma**

### **Community Bill on the Boot**

**Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1982**

**P. 55-56**

# George Browne Becomes a Useful Member of the Tacoma Community

Tacomans, accustomed during the construction of the Northern Pacific to long delays between the announcement of a project and its commencement, let alone its completion watched with surprise and delight as the new people went about their business.

The Griggs-Hewitt party arrived on the afternoon of June 4, 1888. Before the day was done they had filed articles of incorporation with the Pierce County auditor for the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company, capitalized at \$ 1,500,000.

They had held an organizational meeting and elected a board of directors. Colonel Griggs was to be president of the company; Foster, vice-president; Hewitt, treasurer; and George Browne, in whose office the organizational meeting was held, secretary.

George Browne served as a link between St. Paul & Tacoma and the Northern Pacific: he was a nephew of NP Vice-president Oakes. A native of Boston, whose forebears had arrived in Salem from Lancashire in 1635, Browne had been educated in New York. At twenty he went into the Union army, was commissioned lieutenant in the Sixth Independent Horse Battery, and served with conspicuous gallantry.

He was frequently cited in dispatches, the first time after action at Kelly's Ford on the Rappahannock during the battle of Chancellorsville. "The guns were served with great difficulty, owing to the way the cannoneers were interfered with in their duties," wrote General Pleasanton. "Carriages, wagons, horses without riders and panic-stricken infantry were rushing through and through the battery, overturning guns and limbers, smashing caissons and trampling horse-holders under them. While Lieutenant Browne was bringing his section into position, a caisson without drivers came tearing through, upsetting his right piece and seriously injuring one of the horse drivers, carrying away both detachments of his horses, and breaking the caisson so badly as to necessitate its being left on the field."

Browne was again mentioned after action at Cedar Run. He rode with Sheridan on the raid to cut Lee's communications with Richmond during the battles of Wilderness and Spotsylvania and was in action at Yellow Tavern near Richmond when the Confederate cavalry genius, Jeb Stuart, was fatally wounded. For all his gallantry, he was only a senior lieutenant when mustered out.

After his war experiences, the young Yankee saw little risk in Wall Street. A big man with

bold, open features, a cascading mustache, and wide cultural horizons, he accumulated friends and market tips with equal ease. In his midforties he decided he had made enough money and took his family to France for an extended stay.

On returning to New York in the spring of 1887 at the age of forty-eight, Browne was invited by his uncle Thomas Fletcher Oakes, to cross the country to Tacoma to attend a Fourth of July celebration that would mark the completion of the temporary switchback railroad over Stampede Pass.

The party reached Tacoma a day early, and Randolph Radebaugh of the Ledger, invited Oakes for a drive in the country. Radabaugh, a long-nosed man with a trim vandyke, had more in mind than fresh air and a look at the Mountain. He hoped to interest the NP vice-president in local real estate. They drove south past Wapato lakes where Radabaugh had a homestead. He yarned about the time he sat on his porch and watched a bear kill a calf that had become bogged in the mud between the lakes and went as far as the pleasant rise known as Fern Hill.

When Oakes admired the terrain, Radebaugh revealed that he had an option to buy at \$75 to \$100 an acre some two hundred acres from homesteads owned by two Civil War veterans. Would Oakes care to join him in a development.

Oakes agreed on condition he could bring in his nephew, George Browne, who came with him from the east and had a room at the Tacoma Hotel and plenty of ready money.

"I have the highest esteem for him and want him to locate in Tacoma because I have great faith in the town." That evening, back at the hotel, Browne accepted the proposition without even looking at the land, and Tacoma acquired a highly useful citizen.

# George Cotterill, Hiram Gill and the Potlatch Riots

In the election of 1912 the [Seattle] voters had a clear cut choice between good and evil-at the very least, between a closed town and an open town: Hiram Gill versus George Cotterill.

Cotterill was a solidly built, youngish civil engineer of forty-seven, a politician of liberal-reformist kidney. He had served as assistant city engineer under that cross-grained genius Reginald H. Thomson, and had helped to formulate the plans for reconstructing the water-supply system of Seattle and the topography of part of Puget Sound.

Though Cotterill's first political leanings had been Republican (he came to Seattle from England by way of New Jersey), he became disgusted with the local GOP because, as the dominant party, it was being wooed and won by open-town advocates. William Jennings Bryan's cross-of-gold oration won Cotterill for the Democrats, and he usually supported them, though he had nothing against Populists, Silver Republicans, and Bull Moosers.

In 1902 Cotterill ran against Tom Humes, "a race for principle, not for office," he later called it. In 1912 the reform element picked him to try again. This time Cotterill made it, defeating Gill, to the disgust of the Times.

Colonel Blethen was in a pet. All the sacred orthodoxies were being overthrown. The direct primary ended the party-convention system, and candidates in city elections ran without the official backing of political parties. Women had suffrage. The reformers captured the city government.

The state not only cast its seven electoral votes for the Progressives in 1912 but the Republicans finished third, far behind the Democrats and a bare thirty thousand votes ahead of the despised Socialists. The Colonel got the Wobbly Horrors.

The Wobblies--the Industrial Workers of the World--were active in Seattle. Every night their speakers mounted soapboxes along the Skid Road and sometimes in the business district--even in front of the Times Building.

One spring afternoon in 1912 they marched through town in a parade, the red flag flying next to the Stars and Stripes. The police didn't stop them, but the crowd did. There was a small riot as spectators fought the Wobblies for possession of the red flag. From that time on Blethen campaigned against Mayor Cotterill on the issue of "red-flag anarchy."

Blethen contended that the mayor, by permitting the Wobblies to talk, was endangering the safety of the community; he argued that, law or no law, the Wobblies should be suppressed; permitting them to carry on their activities was not liberty but license.

Cotterill believed that to deny someone the right to speak or to carry a banner when no law prohibited such speeches or banners was "to evade the rule of law and was therefore no

way to suppress anarchy. Indeed, such actions would be anarchy."

The dispute came to a climax on a sultry August evening in 1913 Josephus Daniels, the Secretary of the Navy, had been invited to Seattle to speak as part of the Potlatch Days celebration, a jamboree arranged to draw visitors to town during the dog days. After being introduced by Mayor Cotterill to the dignitaries assembled at the ultra-respectable Rainier Club, Daniels made a routine patriotic address, a set speech he had delivered some weeks before in Erie, Pennsylvania.

Most of the men present were political opponents of the city administration and they cheered with unusual fervor when Daniels spread the eagle.

While the business community was demonstrating its sympathies at the Club, Mrs. Annie Miller, a pacifist, delivered a speech to a Skid Road crowd from a portable platform she set up on Occidental near Washington Street. As she talked a trio of sailors on leave from Whidbey Island joined the crowd. They heckled the speaker, and she in turn called them drones and burdens on the working class.

The crowd was pro-Miller. When she left the stand, one of the sailors mounted it and made a speech too, probably just as patriotic as the speech delivered by the Secretary of the Navy, but it was received with jeers. After a while Mrs. Miller tried to get her stand back from the sailors; it was rented, she said, and if she didn't return it now she'd have to pay overtime. A sailor told her to shut up and raised his fist.

Then, according to the sworn statement of several witnesses, "a large well-dressed man, with a diamond ring, who bore no resemblance to the typical IWW, broke in. 'You would strike a woman!' he shouted, and struck the sailor with his fist a number of times."

Some soldiers rushed to the support of the Navy. The military were roughed up thoroughly before the police came to their rescue. Three of the men were treated at the hospital, but all were released in time to make it back to their stations. Up to this point it was just another street-corner brawl, but then M. M. Mattison, the political reporter for the Times, went to work on it. He gave his story the full political treatment: Practically at the very moment a gang of red-flag worshippers and anarchists were brutally beating two bluejackets and three soldiers who had dared protest against the insults heaped on the American flag at a soap-box meeting on Washington Street last night, Secretary of the Navy Daniels, cheered on by the wildly enthusiastic and patriotic Americans present, rayed as a type the mayor of any city who permits red-flag demonstrations in a community of which he is the head. Warming to his topic, the Secretary proceeded with a merciless denunciation of the cowardly un-American, who, occupying the highest position in the gift of an American city, fosters anarchy in the streets by permitting the display of the red flag and the demonstrations of its adherents.

After reporting a version of the street fight in which Mrs. Miller was described as an IWW and was accused of swearing at the sailors and insulting the flag, Mattison closed his account with a series of quotes: "The participants in last night's outrage ought to be rounded up and driven out of town," said a National Guard regimental commander. A leader of the veterans of the Spanish-American War was quoted as saying that his men would parade past the headquarters "armed with everything from bolos to head axes." And "underground channels"

were said to have notified police that a large force of enlisted men would circulate in town that night, ready to "decisively answer any insult."

When the sailors appeared in the evening and smashed up Wobbly headquarters, Mattison was there. After the riot he retired to the Times office and wrote his story: Anarchy, the grizzly hydra-headed serpent which Seattle has been forced to nourish in its midst by a naturalized chief executive for 18 months, was plucked from the city and wiped out in a blaze of patriotism last night. Hundreds of sailors and artillerymen, who carefully planned the entire maneuver yesterday morning, led the thousands of cheering civilians to the attack and successfully wrecked the Industrial Workers of the World headquarters and "direct action" Socialist headquarters in various parts of the business district, fired with patriotic enthusiasm and armed only with small American flags, the men in uniform wrecked the Industrial Workers of the World headquarters on Washington Street, demolished the news stand of Millard Price at Fourth Avenue and Pike Street, cleaned out the Industrial Workers of the World office in the Nestor Building on Westlake Avenue and the Socialist halls at the Granite Hotel, Fifth and Virginia, and in an old church at Seventh and Olive Streets.

They also broke into Socialist headquarters and messed things up a bit, then wrecked a gospel mission in the Skid Road; when they discovered their mistake in the latter spot, members of the mob made one of their number kneel and kiss the flag. The active mob, estimated at from a thousand by the Sun to twenty thousand by the Times, was watched by a huge crowd that had gathered for a Potlatch parade. According to Mattison's story, everyone was happy; Mattison obviously was--his delight echoed in his prose: The smashing of chairs and tables, the rending of yielding timbers, the creaking and groaning of sundered walls, and above the rest the crash of glass of the windows on the east side all blended together in one grand Wagnerian cacophony. And all the while the crowd outside just howled and cheered. It was almost more joy than they could stand.

It was definitely more than Mayor Cotterill could stand. He felt that the Times had stage--managed the riot, and, while it had passed almost without bloodshed--one Wobbly got a broken nose--a resumption of the battle, with the Wobblies ready and the town packed with holiday visitors, might bring on real anarchy. Cotterill assumed personal command of the police and fire departments.

He ordered the second platoon of firemen, the men ordinarily off duty, to help police the town. He issued orders that the liquor stores must remain closed on Saturday and Sunday, and that all street meetings and public speaking be suspended. He ordered the chief of police to see to it that no copies of the Seattle Times were circulated within the city limits until the following Monday, "unless the proprietors submit to me the entire proofs of any proposed issue and that it be found and certified by me as containing nothing calculated to incite to further riot, destruction of property and danger to human life."

Chief of Police Bannick stationed a force of twenty-five policemen around the Times Building, to see that no copies of the Times leaked out, then went to the colonel's office and handed him a copy of the proclamation. When Blethen calmed down enough to be articulate he telephoned his attorney. The lawyer called Judge Humphries at his home--it was a Saturday morning in August and Humphries was the only jurist in town--and asked him to hold court. The

judge wrote out bench warrants for Mayor Cotterill and Chief of Police Bannick, ordering them to appear in court at once.

It was early afternoon before the warrants were served and the officials brought before the bar. Judge Humphries, a ponderous man of profoundly conservative views, asked Cotterill what he meant by such interference with freedom of the press. The mayor, using Blethen's own favorite phrase, said that stories as inaccurate as the one that touched off the Potlatch Riot were not an exercise of liberty but of license.

The irony of Blethen's paper being suppressed on the ground that it was creating anarchy in its advocacy of suppressing anarchy was lost on Judge Humphries. He was not amused. He issued an order restraining Cotterill from interfering further with the Times. (His phrasing indicated that he considered the mayor's action to be in restraint of business rather than a violation of freedom of the press.)

But having told Cotterill to remove the police from around the Times plant immediately, Humphries proceeded to scold him for almost an hour for overstepping his authority, a lecture the mayor rather enjoyed because as long as he was in the courtroom listening the Times Building was blockaded.

The police were withdrawn by mid afternoon. The Times hit the streets with an account of the riot and a story about its troubles with Cotterill. It referred to the mayor as "an advocate of anarchy," and the leader of a red-flag gang," and "a loathsome louse," but in general its tone was mild. No one was incited to further riot. The last evening of the Potlatch celebration passed quietly.

On Sunday the Seattle Sun, a newborn reformist paper, carried a long statement by the mayor, reviewing his actions. He stood four-square on civil liberties for everyone, with the possible exception of Colonel Blethen: From the time I became mayor of the City of Seattle, I have directed constantly that in the making of arrests without warrant no person shall be thus arrested unless the officer making the arrest has information of his own knowledge or evidence from some other person upon which to base a definite charge for the violation of some law or ordinance. So far as I have controlling influence, there has been and shall be no dragging of people to jail for detention and release without charge, or for nominal charge unsustained by evidence or expecting dismissal by the police judge. On occasion when the Seattle Times has printed quoted treasonable statements alleged to have been made by some speaker, I have demanded from the reporter or city editor that they support by evidence a prosecution in the particular case which they claim to have heard. Such request has been refused. I can not lawfully, nor will I arbitrarily, attempt to suppress or curtail free speech anywhere on suspicion or rumor or Seattle Times lies.

In cases where anarchy was openly advocated, as Cotterill felt it had been in the Times' story of Daniels' speech and the Skid Road brawl, he would take action. He defended his move in depriving Seattleites of alcohol and Blethen editorials for the duration of the Potlatch as being in the public interest. "I applied every power at command," he said, "to preserve the peace and prevent renewed rioting and threats to life and property. If I can be blown down by a putrid blast from the Seattle Times, I have no right or desire to publicly serve."



It was neither the cool civil-libertarian logic nor the hot rhetoric that attracted the most attention in Cotterill's statement. What Seattle buzzed about was his reference to some photographs, doctored and dirty. There had been rumors of these photographs but now the story was out in the open.

In May 1912, according to Cotterill, he had gone to Blethen's office to talk over his troubles with the Times and to see if some agreement could be reached. But "Blethen was bitter in his denunciation of Dr. Mark A. Matthews, Prosecuting Attorney Murphy, and others connected with the grand jury which had indicted him," Cotterill wrote. With singular boldness he forced upon my attention two disgraceful photographs bearing the heads of the two gentlemen upon human figures in indescribably loathsome relations.

He--Alden J. Blethen--explained in detail how and why he had conceived the idea of these vile photographs, secured foundation pictures by searching out some indecencies from a Paris collection, engaged one of our best Seattle artists to combine them with perfect photographic skill with the heads and faces of Dr. Matthews and of Prosecuting Attorney Murphy. The name of the photographer and the price he paid for making these faked exhibitions of degeneracy was part of the Blethen recital."

The townsfolk looked toward the Times Building for further developments. Blethen's answer was not long in coming. In a front page editorial the colonel admitted that he had had the fake photographs put together. His purpose, he explained, was purely educational.

When the grand jury had indicted him for association with the city vice lords, he had heard a rumor that the prosecution proposed to introduce "a piece of testimony . . . of a most damnable character, an alleged photograph, faked for the purpose, but representing the editor with a lewd woman under extraordinary circumstances."

So, to demonstrate to a jury how easily such documentation could be faked, Blethen had ordered similar photos involving Murphy and Dr. Matthews.

"The sole purpose, as Cotterill knows, was to demonstrate the viciousness of the Corliss-Burns gang, and to what ends they would go to convict an innocent man of crime." But since the judge had directed the jury to bring in a verdict for the defendant without Blethen's taking the stand, he had not needed to use the photographs in court. He had shown them to Cotterill merely because he thought the mayor would be interested.

The fight reached the halls of Congress. Representative J. W. Bryan of Bremerton, a Republican who had bolted to the Bull Moose and won election as delegate-at-large, read into the Congressional Record a long critique of the colonel's actions, including the complete text of Cotterill's statement.

Representative Humphreys of Seattle replied on behalf of Blethen. He said, "As to the action of my colleague in attacking various persons in private life here upon the floor of the House, where he has the protection of the Constitution thrown about him and can not be called to account elsewhere for what he may say, one of the highest privileges that the Government can confer, I do not care to comment."

Bryan hurried back to Seattle.

In a speech before five thousand sympathizers in the Dreamland Auditorium he repeated the charges without benefit of congressional immunity from libel. The meeting adopted by acclamation a resolution censuring the Times "terroristic tactics" and agreeing to boycott not only the paper but the advertisers who make its existence possible."

The boycott failed dismally. The Times continued to prosper. The affair of the Potlatch Riots dwindled off into a series of lawsuits--the Times against Cotterill, Bryan against the Times, Blethen against Bryan-- none of which was ever pushed to a conclusion.

The real beneficiary of the confusion arising out of the Potlatch Riots was wiry and wasp-tongued Hiram C. Gill. In the serenity of the sidelines, the deposed mayor figured out a remarkable political maneuver by which he turned the riots to his own advantage.

Gill had written his own political epitaph after his defeat by Cotterill. When a reporter had asked him if he would run again, he said, "Hell, no! I'm one dead'un who knows he's dead." But when he looked at the list of candidates in the mayoral primaries in 1914 he felt it was time for his resurrection.

Cotterill, his eyes on a Senate seat (which he did not achieve) had declined to run for re-election. Seven clean-city candidates offered themselves at once. Nobody admitted believing in an open town. On the last day for filing, Gill appeared at the city hall. He paid his filing fee with one-dollar bills and told reporters, "Frankly, I'm getting into this because I know politics well enough to recognize a soft touch when I see one."

Gill's re-entry into municipal politics was a surprise to many, but his campaign was a shock to nearly everyone. He announced that he was a reform candidate, the only candidate with the ability to run a closed town effectively. Gill said he was running "to seek vindication" and to prove to his children that he was a good man.

His little boy had come home from school crying one day not long after the 1912 election; his playmates had said that his father was so bad he had been kicked out of his job. Now, said Gill, he just wanted to prove to his son that all he had been doing was the job as he had promised to do it. The people had elected him in 1910 on his promise to give them an open town; nobody could deny he kept that promise.

The people had changed their minds about an open town and as a result they "diselected me." Well, he had changed his mind. He agreed with the voters. He believed in a closed town and, with all the knowledge he had gained about vice operations in his previous administration, he could run a better closed town than any uninformed reformer.

He sounded convincing. Even the Reverend Dr. Matthews felt it might be a good idea to give Gill a chance. When the primary votes were counted, Gill polled two-fifths of the total. He ran two to one ahead of his nearest rival, a businessman named James D. Trenholme.

"Why, that man was unbeatable," Cotterill said later. "He had all the vice votes. They didn't take his reform seriously and they had no one close to vote for anyway. But he got a lot of our votes too," Gill agreed. "I told you I wouldn't have run if it wasn't a particularly soft spot," he said.

Gill remained a gentleman through the month of the final campaign. Gone was the

candidate who in 1912 had lashed out at Cotterill as "a politician who sold the souls of young women to dive-keepers for votes." In his place was a gentle campaigner who said of his opponent, "I think James D. Trenholme is personally a fine man; he is a man of excellent moral character." As an afterthought he mentioned that Trenholme was backed by the Seattle Electric Company, which was then in very bad odor.

On a rainy March day the voters of Seattle elected this new Hiram Gill mayor by the largest margin by which anyone had ever won the office. Among those wiring congratulations was John Considine. He suggested that the mayor-elect appear on a vaudeville show and deliver a five-minute monologue. He offered five hundred dollars a week and said Gill could have it until he took office. Gill declined, saying that Considine had paid Sarah Bernhardt seven thousand a week and "I being younger than the Divine Sarah should not consider an offer of less than ten."

When he took office Gill ran a closed town. He offered the post of chief of police to one of his political foes, Judge Austin E. Griffiths. Griffiths didn't want the job but took it when Dr. Matthews asked him to. Within a few months there were pictures of Hi Gill smashing kegs of whisky in illegal saloons and breaking up gaming devices with a sledgehammer. Within a year Colonel Blethen was demanding Gill's recall on the ground that he was too easy on Wobbly agitators. "An advocate of anarchy," said the colonel.

Blethen died in 1915, and Gill was elected again in 1916. His third term was his worst. Chief Griffiths had resigned to run for Congress; his successor resigned as chief after being indicted by a grand jury. Gill said he hadn't known what was going on. Dr. Matthews thought this probable and spoke out for him. Talk of another recall was dropped, but in 1917 Dr. Matthews and Gill and all Seattle were told what was going on. The Skid Road was wide open again. Military authorities noted that the venereal- disease rate at the major Army post of Camp Lewis was skyrocketing and placed Seattle off-limits to troops.

Again Gill reformed. He named a strapping seven-footer, Jim Warren, a former United States marshal, as chief of police, and closed things down again. But he was dead politically, and this time he didn't know it. He ran for re-election in 1918 and was badly beaten in the primaries.

He had not made the most of the chance he had once asked the voters to give him-the chance to tell his grandson that he had been mayor of Seattle, had made a mistake, had been kicked out, but had come back to be the best mayor Seattle ever had.

In the finals that year Seattle elected a red-headed reformer named Ole Hanson.

**George D. Shannon: Moving the Capital to Muddy**

**Hogham Tacoma News Tribune and Sunday Ledger**

**February 17, 1974**

## George D. Shannon: Moving the Capital to Muddy Hogham

There probably has been no session of the Washington legislature, state or territorial, in which some law makers did not lament the fact that they had to meet in Olympia. Nor any session which some Olympians did not wish were happening in Wapato, Wenatchee or Walla.

There even have been times when other communities, not excluding Tacoma, have coveted propinquity with the legislators, or anyway the treasurer and have schemed to snatch the capital and its payroll. Of all those who have proposed purloining the government and establishing a site more conducive to their own economic interest, my favorite is George D. Shannon, who suggested Hogham, a marshy spot between the Nisqually and McAllister Creek, to which he held title.

A native of New York who served a long and unprofitable apprenticeship in the railroad and lumber businesses, Shannon showed up in Olympia in 1870 as superintendent of construction for the Kalama to Tacoma spur of the Northern Pacific. He latched onto 1,000 acres of the Nisqually bottom land which between political appointments he farmed.

In 1887 there was agitation to transfer the territorial government from Olympia to an area of great economic potential. Patriots and promoters from North Yakima, Walla, Waitsburg, Seattle and Tacoma suggested their communities as suitable for capital-hood.

When members of the Committee on the House upon Public Buildings and Grounds promised serious consideration of the applications, each to be weighed to determine if it were "...the most eligible and central location in the Territory," George Shannon had drawn up and printed a proposed act accepting his "Munificent Offer To Locate the Capital permanently at Hogham." Echoing the euphoric cries of rival enthusiasts, Shannon described Hogham on the flats as possessing the:

...climate of perpetual summer though surround by perpetual snow. There the lover of Nature can admire his mistress to his hearts content.

At no point in the Territory is the eye gladdened or the senses enthralled by scenes more grand. Pastoral fields stretch away to the ever restless sea; while on the West and North the grand Olympic range rears its jagged crest, snow crowned.

On the East and South the magnificent Cascades, the acme of grandeur, stand guard; while grand old Rainier is never hit. It is from this most eligible and central location, the

grandest most unapproachable view of this incomparable mountain may be had, while the face of this lovely and pastoral field is bifurcated at right angles with many natural canals that could and should be declared to be public highways, streets and avenues of the new capital of the Territory, thus making the capital a modern American Venice.

Under the kind skies, magnificent climate, the protection of the government and its most eligible and central location, Hogham will become the home of the good and beautiful, and the abode of brotherly and sisterly love.

Conceding there were other claimants worth considering, Shannon proposed that the capital be "placed on wheels and run into that city, town, village, or hamlet or possession of a private citizens that makes the legislators the best offer."

Should the legislators choose his land, Shannon pledge to execute "...a penal bond binding myself, my heirs, administrators, executors and assigns to deed to the Territory four hundred acres of productive and fertile land with the finest trout fishing and duck shooting preserves in the territory for use as capital grounds." providing that when the Capital reaches Shannon Place the wheels shall be knocked out from under the moving caravan and all moving machinery shall be destroyed.

Each legislator voting in the public interest and for acceptance of his offer would receive, he pledged one thousand dollars in gold coin.

Further he would furnish each member fishing rods, flies, creels, leaders, lines and if required an expert fly fisherman. Also guns, ammunition and a thoroughly trained retriever. Also all the Whiskey (OPS Cutter), Beer (Val Blatz), Cider (Shannons) and Cigars needed by each and every member all and singular of each and every legislature that shall meet at Hogham.

"It is stipulated," he continued, "that each and every member so desiring shall enjoy the privilege of adding to his mileage and per diem, drawing to a pair, two pairs, a straight, threes or a bobtail, and that he shall be free to place his own estimate upon the hand after the draw. In the enjoyment of these privilege there shall not be any distinction on account of race, color or previous condition."

When the legislators who voted for Hogham had spent "either economically, riotously or otherwise," their thousand in gold, "I will provide for, care for and maintain each and every such one in the Asylum for the Insane of Washington territory, without any intervention of the Probate Court, which in this case shall be deemed an unnecessary inquisition."

Shannon didn't get the capital on his mudflat. But he did win gubernatorial appointments to the territorial building committee, the board of trustees of the Steilacoom Asylum and later the state board of land commissioners.

## George W. Bush and the Simmons Party

# George W. Bush and the Simmons Party

There was an exquisite appropriateness in that first party of Americans to reach the Sound in the fall of 1845. They symbolized, as Lieutenant Peel indicated, the filling up of the Willamette Valley by the covered wagon pioneers and the overflow of American settlement across the Columbia.

The dam of HBC opposition had broken. And they symbolized, too, the diverse motivations at play in the great migration that began in 1843—patriotism, curiosity, land-lust, health, poverty, prejudice. All played a part in bringing the Bush-Simmons party not only across the plains and over the mountains to the Oregon Country but across the river and through the trees to the inland sea the British had monopolized.

An odd pair, these family men: Michael Troutman Simmons, thirty, born in Bullock County, Kentucky, one of ten children; George Washington Bush, at least fifty-four, maybe sixty-six, born in Pennsylvania or New York, if not Louisiana, an only child, a man of color, his mother Irish, his father possibly East Indian, probably black.

Simmons, big-framed, bearded, blue-eyed; Bush, big-framed, bearded, brown-eyed. Simmons, by his sworn testimony all but illiterate; Bush, by others' testimony, well-educated. Simmons, a self-taught millwright; Bush, a mountain man turned rancher.

They met in western Missouri where Bush raised cattle and wheat, and Simmons ran a gristmill he had put together from an illustrated book on mechanics by the cut-and-see-if-it-fits method. It is not known how much the Bush and Simmons families influenced each other in the decision to join the covered wagon train to Oregon in 1844, the year after the first mass crossing of the plains by Americans, but they formed the nucleus of a group of Clay County residents, which included Simmons' mother and father-in-law and his wife's brother and sister-in-law and their neighbors, the James McAllisters.

Big Mike westered for all the standard reasons: he was, to begin with, a mover-on. His mother left Kentucky with her brood of ten when he was still a boy. They settled in Pike County, Illinois. From there Michael went to Iowa, where at the age of twenty-one he had married fifteen-year-old Elizabeth Kindred, small enough to stand under his outstretched arm.

After five years they moved to Missouri and now, another four years later, it was time to think of moving on. Times were tough in the Midwest, drought-stricken tough; Missouri was full of talk about the Willamette, a land of deep soil and blessedly frequent rains, where crops never dried up, a land that might be lost to the British who wanted it, the politicians said, not to cultivate but as a preserve for beavers and the wild Indians who hunted beaver—and to encircle the United States and block Uncle Sam's way to the Pacific.

It was patriotic to go west, and patriotism might turn a man a profit. Congress was considering a bill to guarantee each settler in the Oregon Country 640 acres—a square mile—

with another 120 acres for every child. To Simmons, father of three, that meant 1,000 acres. Why not Oregon?

To Bush, at fifty-four going on sixty-six, wealth and land were not the problem. Color was the problem. Historians and genealogists may debate Bush's ancestry but to the man himself what mattered was that he, and his children, could fall within the reach of laws restricting nonwhites from possession of land, from citizenship, even from the right to testify in court against white men.

The chance to be himself had drawn Bush to the frontier, that cutting edge of American independence, but others who also sought freedom brought with them the virus of discrimination. One recourse open to white men who found it difficult to compete with slave labor was to move on. Opposing slavery, they saw in the exclusion of blacks the surest way to prevent slavery. Institutionalized exclusion moved with the American frontier, ahead even of apple pie.

"The prejudice of race appears to be stronger in the states which have abolished slavery than in those where it still exists," reported Alexis de Tocqueville, "and nowhere is it so important as in those states where servitude has never been known." Ohio in 1807 excluded blacks from residence unless they posted bond of five hundred dollars for good behavior.

Illinois in 1813 ordered every free Negro to leave the territory under penalty of thirty-nine lashes every fifteen days until he did so. Michigan, Iowa, and Wisconsin denied blacks the franchise. Indiana and Illinois in 1840 wrote Negro exclusion laws into their constitutions. Congressman David Wilmot, author of the Wilmot Proviso which excluded slavery from free territories, explained his object as "to preserve for free labor of my own race and color those new lands."

Horace Greeley in urging young men to go west, meant young white men. "The unoccupied west," said Greeley's Tribune, "shall be reserved for the white Caucasian race."

Though the Missouri census of 1830 listed Bush as a "free white person," there was clearly a question about his ancestry. Perhaps it would be different in Oregon.

Bush bought six broad-wheeled Conestoga wagons, apparently furnishing four to the Kindreds and the McAllisters. In the family wagon he nailed at least \$2000 in coin and bullion in a false bottom. The little party ferried the Missouri at the crossing where Joe Robidoux, a retired fur trader for whom Bush had worked in the west, had a log-cabin warehouse. There was enough traffic going by to cause Robidoux to lay out a town, which, as a government official put it, "with proper self-regard he named after himself, St. Joseph."

On the prairie west of Robidoux Crossing the pioneers gathered to organize the wagon train. Simmons was elected "Colonel," second-in-command, an honor somewhat diminished by the election of the blustering Cornelius Gillium as "General," but one which gave him a title he carried to his grave.

So they set off along the Oregon Trail, a trail not yet rutted deep. They were beleaguered not by Indians but by unseasonable rain, then drought, then the shortages and disasters and dissension inevitable to such a caravan. A man died of cholera; his wife gave birth to a daughter

then fell under the wagon wheel, which shattered her leg.

There could be no waiting. The train moved on and the injured woman gasped out her life in the jolting wagon. The Bushes helped look after the orphans. Farther west, an Indian rode off with Bart and Rachel Kindred's baby boy, then brought him back with a new buckskin shirt, beaded moccasins, and his wife's compliments.

The journals give glimpses of other moments beyond the routines of the trail: Simmons in flaming argument with Gillium; the Simmonses abandoning Elizabeth's heirloom oak chest at a crossing of the Platte, Bart Kindred and Bush hunting antelope for the party, Bush warning men sent on ahead that they'd be crossing hungry land and should shoot and eat anything big enough to hold a bullet.

One day Bush and a young Englishman, John Minto, who kept a journal, were ahead of the party, "he riding a mule and I on foot. He led the conversation to this subject [of prejudice]. He told me he should watch, when we got to Oregon, what usage was awarded to people of color and if he could not have a free man's rights he would seek the protection of the Mexican Government in California or New Mexico. He said that there were few in that train he would say as much to as he had just said to me."

Minto later was detailed to ride ahead to Fort Vancouver, get supplies, and meet the party at The Dalles with a barge. When the Bush-Simmons wagons got there December 7, Minto informed Bush that the Provisional Government of Oregon, an ad hoc settlers' organization which had no legal power but did reflect the mood of the populace, had just voted to exclude blacks.

The method was to be periodic whippings for any black, slave or free, man or woman, who sought to stay in Oregon. This barbarous penalty was never exacted, but its presence on the books greeted the man of color and his party on arrival.

There is no hint in any known journal of the influence the black exclusion law had on the decision of the Bush-Simmons group to settle not on the "American" side of the river but on the north, where the Hudson's Bay Company dominated, and soon afterwards to migrate to Puget Sound. The journals and later volumes of reminiscence speak only of love of country, of the desire to penetrate an area from which the HBC sought to exclude Americans.

Most of the Clay County contingent wintered at Washougal on the north side of the Columbia, upstream from Fort Vancouver. Bush, the experienced cattle man, stayed on the south side at The Dalles, looking after their herd as well as some cattle of other members of the train. Simmons rented a three-walled sheep pen at Washougal, paying a Hawaiian a yellow, homespun shirt (well worn), and moved his family in.

In the spring, Elizabeth Simmons gave birth to a son conceived on the trail. His name reflects their venture and the river of their destination, Christopher Columbus Simmons. The Indians called him Kickapus, the White Seagull.

Already Big Mike was ready to move on. In the spring he and five other men set out by canoe to look at the land around Cowlitz Prairie and the Sound. The Cowlitz was high with rain and snow-melt. They struggled up as far as the forks, pulling themselves



along by the branches that showered them with water at the touch, avoiding trees that swept down on the flood, but Simmons recalled a bad dream he had had in Missouri of disaster on a river, and they went back to Washougal.

In July Simmons tried again, this time with a party of eight and a French Canadian guide. They spent several weeks on the Sound, getting as far as Whidbey Island and Hood Canal, but selected for settlement the area at the extreme southern reach, where the Deschutes River falls into Budd Inlet. Simmons saw in the plunge of the river from the prairie to sea level at Tumwater the power needed for grinding grain and cutting lumber.

Bush was at Washougal when Simmons and the scouting party returned in September. The younger Kindreds, Bart and Rachel, chose to settle near Astoria, where Bart became a bar pilot, but the rest of the Bush-Simmons group, thirty-one in all, stuck together.

In the last week of September, with the fall cloud cover low over the hills and the rain incessant, they set out for the Sound, a party of men driving the cattle overland, the others, including all the women and children, moving by flatboat down the Columbia to the Cowlitz, then trans-shipping to canoes for the upstream struggle. They paddled to Cowlitz Landing, just upstream from today's Toledo and set out along the Indian trail. Although it had been improved by traffic between Fort Nisqually and Cowlitz Farms, they needed fifteen days to move fifty-eight miles.

## Harry Morgan and His Business

### Puget's Sound: A Narrative of Early Tacoma and the Southern Sound

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# Harry Morgan and His Business

Other entrepreneurs met other needs. Harry Morgan drifted into Tacoma in 1884 from Maryland, or so he said, and quickly established himself as Boss Sport, the fellow in charge of the community's illicit entertainment activities.

He was in his mid-thirties, a compact, dark-haired man with a big dark mustache and ill-fitting dark suits, the prototype of the boomtown gambler: friendly, Republican (the Republicans were in local power), generous to the needy - especially to those he had helped become needy, provided they did not complain to authorities - and reputed to be a man of his word in business dealings, though this was hard to prove since he seldom signed papers.

The gambling games that Morgan ran were, if not honest, at least open: there was little excuse for not knowing what you were getting into. Morgan was loud in defense of vice as a civic virtue:

"What do you want to blast us for?" he asked a reporter from the Ledger, which showed an unfavorable interest in his Board of Trade Billiard Hall when it first opened. "You never saw a religious town in your life that was worth a damn."

"If it comes to that," one of his henchmen added, "we and our friends have more influence in the town than all the church people. The refined element ain't any good. They don't build up a town because they ain't got enterprise."

"I tell you," Morgan concluded in a classic apologia, "a town without saloons and gamblers ain't worth a damn. Look at Seattle. Everything is open there and strangers say it's a good place because things are lively and men spend their money. If you break up this game you are only driving money out of town."

There was no question that Morgan's activities brought money into town, though the prosecuting attorney on occasion raised difficulties about the methods employed. There was, for instance, the Livensparger case.

The J. C. Livensparger family of Minneapolis was among the thousands lured west by the completion of the Northern Pacific. In the spring of 1886 Livensparger sold his livery stable, withdrew his life saving from the bank, and with wife and young daughter took the train west. They arrived in Portland looking for a new life, but first a place to spend the night.

Under the gaslights outside the station, Livensparger fell into conversation with Jefferson J. Harland, who directed the newcomers to a rooming house nearby. The accommodations

proved unsuitable. Occupants in adjacent rooms changed every half hour or so, and between times were noisy. In the morning the Livenspargers found more decorous lodging, and in the afternoon Jeff Harland, heavy with apology, found them. He said he should have realized the rooms would not be to family taste, but he had been preoccupied with business problems.

He was developing a new town, Coal Harbor, and the work was almost more than he could handle. So many details; so much for one man to do. Here he was, a sure-fire millionaire in the making, sole owner of an enterprise that was a key to the mint, and he had to scabble for cash. Why, he was going to take time off from the really important things to go up to Seattle and collect money. Not that those people up there were deadbeats, just slow to pay if you didn't put a hand on their shoulder and look 'em in the eye.

After all, it was only a few thousand dollars. A year from now they'd all be bragging they'd been in business with Jeff Harland and might have gotten in on the ground floor of Coal Harbor.

Livensparger got in at the basement. He not only went north with Harland to scout out the Puget Sound area for investment, but he bought Harland's ticket and loaned him money to get his watch out of hock.

The NP schedule was rigged so that travelers to Seattle had to spend the night in Tacoma. The men took a room at the Blackwell. Harland went for a stroll and returned to say he had bumped into an old friend, George Williams, a very shrewd fellow, very far-sighted, knew everybody and everything in Tacoma, exactly the fellow to give Livensparger good advice on business opportunities. Williams would be at Harry Morgan's Board of Trade that evening.

Torches set in iron stands guttered on the board sidewalk outside the Board of Trade. A barker sporting a derby and checked vest described the opportunities for judicious investment.

Come on now, any gentleman with half a dollar and a whole heart. Tempt the Goddess of Fortune. If you have half a dollar don't squeeze the coin till the Bird of Freedom farts and the Goddess of Liberty faints. Invest it here. Throw the dice and see what you draw. Everybody has a chance. If you're lucky you win, if you ain't you lose. The smallest prize is a dollar bill.

Inside the swinging doors the visitors found themselves in a big room with a bar along one wall, a small stage alongside it. Waitresses took turns singing and dancing. The stage faced a line of curtained boxes where in obscurity the girls could hustle drinks, at the very least. Harland and Livensparger went to the gaming rooms on the second floor. George Williams was rolling dice in a game called Twenty-One, or Bunco. He was doing so well Harland joined him. He invested the last of the money Livensparger had loaned him in Portland, lost it, borrowed more, lost that.

Harland was no quitter. He kept trying as long as Livensparger had anything left to loan. On their way back to the hotel, Harland assured his patron that he had no cause to worry about the \$610 they had left at the Board of Trade. He would pay it back out of the money he was going to collect in Seattle next morning.

Next morning Harland was gone. So was Livensparger's watch. Livensparger became suspicious. He told his story to Prosecuting Attorney Fremont Campbell, who had heard similar tales. Harland and Williams had both worked in the past as dealers for Morgan, and Campbell

suspected were now employed as bunco-steerers who hung around railroad stations and saloons and improvised freelance swindles.

A grand jury indicted Harland for swindling and theft, Williams for helping. Morgan hired the veteran, respected, and expensive Elwood Evans to defend the con men. He got Williams off, but the jury found Harland guilty as charged and the judge sentenced him to eighteen months in the new territorial prison at Walla Walla. Evans appealed.

His brief cited as error the fact that women served on both the grand jury and superior court jury that convicted his client. The territorial supreme court sustained the appeal; the legislative act giving women of Washington Territory the right to vote and serve on juries was ruled unconstitutional. Harland was free to go about his business

Knocking out woman suffrage was a bonus to Morgan, who, like most sporting men, disapproved of females having the franchise, the theory being they would favor prohibition. The publicity resulting from the trial, as well as the continued attacks by the Ledger, helped Morgan considerably. Tacoma was growing fast, but every newcomer to town soon learned where Morgan operated and the recreation he offered.

In 1888 the Boss Sport opened a new joint, Morgan's Theater (later called the Comique), at 817 Pacific Avenue, where the Olympus Hotel now stands.

The Ledger implied that Sodom and Gomorrah would have rated PG to Morgan's X. They blamed the Morgan Theater for every Tacoma shortfall from stumps in the street to the murder of a young man on a somewhat distant downtown street. But the paper did offer a convincing diagnosis of the myopia among policemen visiting Morgan's establishment and the prevalent vertigo among magistrates dealing with offenses committed on the premises: money impeded vision.

Once some patrons of Morgan's place were brought before a municipal justice unaccustomed to encountering as defendants those who had not yet been victimized. It dislocated him so much that he imposed fines of only ten dollars, which the prosecutor felt obliged to note was only half of the minimum required by law.

Adjusting admirably, the judge raised the fine by ten dollars and suspended half the imposition. Such adumbration eventually led the city council to revoke Morgan's license, a defeat he calmly circumvented by transferring the license to a buddy.

In time the Ledger's carping annoyed Morgan sufficiently to cause him to bankroll the transformation of his theater program bill into a dally paper. It was called the Daily Globe and employed as its editor J. N. Frederickson, a desk man whose memory lingers in the Valhalla of journalism as perpetrator of the headline, over the story of a hanging, JERKED TO JESUS.

Editorship failed to inspire Frederickson further, and Morgan lured, from the Oregonian William Lightfoot Visscher, a Civil War cavalry colonel of impetuosity and pungent prose. Visscher was disenchanted with a community which relied on gravity to pull riches past it. He did not want to become a freshwater barnacle. He responded to Morgan's brandishments to come to Tacoma and say something nice about vice.

Direct endorsement of sin Visscher avoided, at least as far as one can tell from surviving issues of the Globe. But sinners he tolerated as he did Masons, Democrats, Englishmen, and Socialists not opposed to hard liquor.

Tacoma journalism could be rough. Sam Wall of the Evening Telegraph disagreed so strongly with an eightline comment on his character that he walked into the Evening News city room and told Herbert Harcourt, who had emitted the offending opinion, that it was his intent to kill him. He then shot Harcourt through his tiepin, a target that deflected the bullet from fatal course. Wall was captured but not brought to trial. Harcourt found employment elsewhere.

Visscher avoided such excesses of expression. He contented himself with giving good coverage of community affairs and parodying the Ledger's former anti-Chinese theme by running edits headed THE LEDGER MUST GO.

The Globe scored points, gained circulation, lost advertisers, and, after two years of understated vindication of vice, went under.

Morgan, too. The Boss Sport died unexpectedly in April of 1890, aged forty, to the relief of the Ledger and the benefit of the Pierce County legal profession. Morgan left no will. He was reputed wealthy, and court records showed him possessed of papers for considerable real estate, much of it gained on double- or-nothing bets lost by patrons who had blown their cash.

Included in his inventory were a shingle mill at Buckley, a sawmill on Boise Creek in King County, and two thousand dollars in IOU's from Pierce County Sheriff Lewis Byrd, which might have come in handy. But Morgan's list of creditors read like the city directory, and as word of his intestate state spread, heirs sprouted. One styled herself Lena Morgan and produced three little Morgans alleged to be issue of Harry.

Others claiming descent or blood ties included an Edwin C. Morgan, Marty Morris, Mary Barry, and three people named Hampton. Litigation dragged on for more than a decade. By the time the estate was settled the lawyers had the money and the Tacoma Boom was hardly an echo. Morgan's property was auctioned at ten dollars a lot, the shingle mill for one hundred dollars, and the theater for fifteen hundred, including Ledger ill will.

Dora Charlotta Morgan, whom the courts held to be Harry's one and only widow, was left with nothing except his bouncer, Frank "Jumbo" Cantwell, whom she had married.

**Henry Tukeman:**

**Mammoth's Roar was Heard**

**All The Way to the**

**Smithsonian**

## Henry Tukeman: Mammoth's Roar was Heard All The Way to the Smithsonian

Rummaging around the attic looking for something else I recently came across a file I began keeping years ago on Alaska improbabilities. Among the accounts of talking whales, lost emerald mines, backward-flowing rivers and mountainleveling beavers was the story told by a Klondiker who signed himself Harry Tukeman. It was printed in McClure's magazine in October of 1899 and, unlike the other improbables, it had consequences.

Tukeman told of encountering mammoths, living mammoths, on the Porcupine River near the Alaska/Yukon border.

While wintering at Fort Yukon in 1890, he said, he passed the time by reading aloud to an Indian friend named Joe. One of the stories concerned elephants. When he showed Joe a picture of an elephant the Indian became excited. He said he had seen such an animal, up there, pointing north and east.

Joe said he had been hunting on the upper Porcupine River when he came to a cave filled with bones of big animals. The cave opened onto a valley, and in the valley were fresh tracks, "footprints longer than a rifle." Joe followed the tracks to a lake, and in the lake stood a creature of size and shape he had never seen, or heard of around the campfire.

"He is throwing water over himself with his long nose, and his two front teeth stand out before his head for ten gunlengths, turned up and shining like a swan's wing in the sunlight. Alongside him, this cabin would be like a two-week boar cub beside its mother."

Tukeman said Joe wouldn't guide him to the cave but told a younger tribesman named Paul how to get to the mammoth stomping grounds. They found the cave, found the valley, and, sure enough, found a mammoth. But how does one bag a mammoth?

Tukeman theorized that most mammoths had disappeared during a period of intense volcanic activity. If so, the descendants of the survivors would hate fires.

So he and Paul built a shooting platform in a tree. Then they built a smudgy fire below the tree. Sure enough, the mammoth came to stamp it out. All the time the mammoth was stomping,

they were shooting. Killed him, too.

It took weeks to skin the monster and cut out its enormous tusks. After measuring the internal organs, they left the valley with the trophy skin and tusks. Somehow they managed to descend the Porcupine to the Yukon, the Yukon to the Bering, and from there they made it to Seattle.

Tukeman wrote that his plan was to turn the specimen over to the British Museum, but a shy American millionaire bought it, had the skin stuffed and presented it, anonymously, to the Smithsonian. He wanted no credit for his charity and pledged Tukeman to remain silent until after his death. He had died in 1898 leaving Tukeman free to tell the story.

Mammoth stories were always worth repeating. This one appeared in McClure's, a publication largely devoted to serious stuff. The mammoth yarn was sandwiched between an essay by Gov. Theodore Roosevelt of New York on the career of Admiral George Dewey and a report from Paris on the trial of Captain Alfred Dreyfus for alleged treason.

Not only did Tukeman's mammoth whopper stimulate arguments in saloons from Tacoma to Dawson City, it drew swarms of visitors to the Smithsonian. They wanted to see the creature that in one account had become "big as a governor's house, with tusks as long as the moral law, and a tail resembling the mainmast on a clipper ship." Told that the Smithsonian had no such exhibit, that no mammoths had existed for thousands of years, they were indignant with the Smithsonian.

Finally, the Smithsonian's paleontology expert, Charles Schuchert called a press conference. He and a representative from McClure's explained that Henry Tukeman was really an American short story writer named H.T. Hann. McClure's editors had thought the fantasy was so apparent that there had been no need to identify it as fiction. The mammoth tale was not intended as a hoax, just "an interesting story without foundation in fact."

It has been some time since we had a Sasquatch sighting.

**Henry Warre and Merwin Vavasour, British**

**Spies Tacoma News Tribune**

**December 9, 1973**

## Henry Warre and Merwin Vavasour, British Spies

An aborted mission to the Pacific Northwest in 1845 by two British spies has provided us with our most accurate information about the Puget Sound country at the time of the 54-40 or Fight crisis and as a bonus a charming folio of paintings and sketches.

On April 3 of that year Sir George Simpson, governor of the Hudson's Bay Company in North America, was closeted at Number 10 Downing Street with Sir Robert Peel, the British Prime Minister and the Earl of Aberdeen, foreign minister. Sir George, who gloried in the nickname of "Little Emperor" and thought in Napoleonic terms, noted that a dispatch just received by sailing packet from America reported that the new American President, James K. Polk, in his inaugural address had declared that the United States claim to all Oregon, the entire region from the Rockies to the Pacific, from Mexico to Russian America, as "clear and unquestionable."

The Little Emperor proposed that England send four war ships to the Oregon Country, occupy Cape Disappointment at the north side of the mouth of the Columbia and place artillery on the bluff.

He proposed using two of the ships to guard the Strait of Juan de Fuca and Puget Sound while 2,000 Indians and mixed blood auxiliaries trained for service in the Northwest in case of war.

Peel and Aberdeen were inclined to interpret President Polk's tough talk about "all Oregon" as preliminary bluster, the establishment of a bargaining position from which he could afford to make concessions.

The fifty gun British frigate America was already on her way to the Oregon Country. Though she drew too much water to enter the Columbia River, her presence in the Strait of Juan De Fuca should give pause to Yankee Hawks and comfort to British fur traders.

But Prime Minister Peel did agree to send a pair of undercover agents west "...to gain a general knowledge of the capabilities of the Oregon territory in a military point of view, in order that we may be enabled to act immediately and with effect in defense of our rights in that quarter, should those rights be infringed by any hostile aggression or encroachment on the part of the United States."



Chosen for the mission were Lt Henry J. Warre, aid de camp to the governor of Canada and Lt. M. Vavasour of the Royal Engineers.

They were instructed to pass themselves off as young gentlemen visiting the west "for the pleasure of field sports and scientific pursuit."

Warre who had considerable talent as a painter took along a sketch pad and water colors.

The young spies were rushed west from Montreal in a Hudson's Bay Company express canoe. They covered the 2,300 miles to Fort Garry on the Red River in the month. From there they traveled with a fur brigade on horseback.

The trip to Fort Vancouver on the Columbia took from June 16 to August 12, claiming the lives of 33 of their 60 horses, and convinced them that the idea of supplying a military force by the overland route was, in the words of Warre's report "quite impractical."

He was deeply impressed with Eastern Washington. "The barrenness of the soil, the total absence of wood and water, completely excludes all hope of its ever being adopted to the wants of men."

During their six month stay in the Oregon Country the spies gave a good demonstration of their idea of the wants of man, running up a considerable bill at the Fort Vancouver commissary.

The expense account submitted along with their spy reports shows they worked hard at their role of young gentlemen of leisure. They purchased several beaver hats of the highest quality (\$8.88 each), frock coats (\$26), cloth vests, figured vests, tweed trousers, nail brushes, hair brushes, fancy handkerchiefs, shirts, tobacco, pipes, wines, whiskeys and a quantity of extract of roses.

Wherever the sweet smelling spies went in the Oregon country, and their travels took them down the Willamette to the American settlements to the mouth of the Columbia, up the Cowlitz River and across the plains to Puget Sound, down the Strait of Juan De Fuca to the new Hudson's Bay Company post at Victor, Warre sketched and painted.

Indians and settlers and fur traders might occupy the foreground of his pictures, but the back ground often included areas of military importance; the guardian rocks at Camp Disappointment, the defensible defiles on the Columbia, the wooden bastions of Fort Nisqually, and Fort Victoria. And while Warre sketched, Vavasour gathered information about the Indian population and the attitudes of the English and American settlers.

### Spies Ignored

Henry Warre and Mervin Vavasour, the British secret agents who visited the Pacific Northwest in the winter of 1845-46 in the guise of young gentlemen seeking amusement, were assigned to assess the military potential of the area.

They were less than sanguine about the capacity of the Hudson's Bay Company posts to withstand the impact of missiles impelled by energy greater than that released from a bent bow. The buildings at Fort Nisqually, they wrote off as totally incapable of defense, those at Fort Vancouver as "poorly located," and at Cowlitz Farms the only structure they considered of any

military worth was the Catholic church and it "...was in want of loopholes."

While they deplored the state of British fortifications, the spies were even more alarmed by the rising tide of American immigration. Whereas British movement across North America still was along the canoe routes of the Hudson's Bay Company beaver trade, the Americans had found, far to the south, passes through which they could roll wheelers. The covered wagon caravans were moving through the Rockies, bringing to the Oregon country not ragged individualists dropping out of the fur business but ready made farm families looking for land.

Warre and Vavasour foresaw the danger to British interest in the Americans' westward movement though they did not state them as vividly as an American Congressman who, in an address to the House declared that the United States should neither fight Britain for possession of Oregon, nor agree to a diplomatic settlement, but rely on time and sex. "We will win the contest for Oregon in our bedrooms. We will outbreed them."

While not mentioning the fecundity of the young American families moving west, the British agents noted their numbers. Already the Americans had taken up most of the Willamette Valley and were beginning to stake out claims along the Columbia and even on Puget Sound from which the Hudson's Bay Company had managed until 1845 to exclude them by denying supplies from the post at Nisqually.

"Till the year 1842-43, not more than thirty American families were resident in the country," Warre wrote in his secret report. "In 1843 an emigration of about one thousand persons with a large number of wagons, horses, cattle, etc., arrived on the Willamette having traversed the vast desert section of the country between the Missouri, the Rocky Mountains and the Columbia..."

"The American immigrants have as yet confined themselves principally to the valley of the Willamette which has by far the richest soil and finest land in the whole country. The cultivable part of it, however, cannot be said to extend more than sixty to eighty miles in length, and fifteen or twenty miles in breadth. Nearly all the Prairie land is now taken up, and the Immigrants are too indolent to clear the woods.

"They are consequently forming new settlements on the banks of the Columbia at the mouth of the same river and on the beautiful but not very rich plains to the north, in the neighborhood of Nisqually and Puget's Sound.

The mention of Puget Sound was the first reference by the spies to the arrival at Tumwater of a party led by Michel Troutman Simmons, a wagon train colonel, and George Washington Bush, a black pioneer. They were the first Americans, other than missionaries to settle north of the Columbia.

In the final spying mission along the Wallamette at the end of their six month stay, Warre and Vavasour found "...the village at the falls (Oregon City) much improved in appearance, many buildings having been erected and the trees, etc. cleared from the adjacent heights."

They recommended that if war came, the community be occupied by British troops. "A small force could overawe the present American population and obtain any quantity of cattle to supply the troops in other parts of the country."

The agents noted too, that "since the summer a village called Portland has been commenced between the Falls and Lenton." Lenton was Linnton, the town founded by Morton Matthew McCarver, who later helped promote Tacoma.

The spies, both engineering officers, proved better judges of townsites than the professional boomer. "The situation of Portland is superior to that of Lenton," they said flatly, "and the back country of easier access."

In the Spring of 1846 Warre and Vavasour returned to Montreal, from where their report was forwarded to England. It arrived too late to influence the officials who had commissioned it. Prime Minister Robert Peel had already decided to yield the area between the Columbia and the 49th parallel to the Americans.

The Warre and Vavasour spy reports gather dust in the Public Records office in London.

Warre did find some use for his sketches. He wrote a book "Sketch of a Journey Across the Continent of North America from Canada to the Oregon Territory and the Pacific Ocean." He illustrated it with many pictures, but made no mention that they had been done while he was spying.

## **J. Ham Lewis, the Best Dressed Politician of His**

**Day The Tacoma News Tribune**

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**P. FP12**

# **J. Ham Lewis, the Best Dressed Politician of His Day**

When James Hamilton (J. Ham) Lewis came to Tacoma in 1885 he brought with him certificates indicating he had been admitted to the practice of law in Virginia, a reputation for sartorial elegance and an urge to enter politics.

Finding no clients he wound up loading lumber on the Tacoma waterfront. When at last he was asked to represent someone in court, it was a fellow Steve Dore accused of stealing cigars. J. Ham got the man off but his fee was just 90 cents. He relocated to Seattle, where he entered into partnership with Luthene Claremont Gilman, whose purchase of a Caligraph machine had introduced Puget Sound to the wonders of typewriting.

After only a few weeks' exposure to Lewis' courtly manners (he was so chivalrous he stood up when speaking to a woman on the telephone), his flow of words (which won him a job teaching rhetoric at the UW) and his habit of strolling Seattle's board sidewalks at midday in what he considered everyday garb (longtail coat, flowing cravat, plaid waistcoat, striped pants and mauve spats), his new constituents sent him to Olympia to represent them as senator in the Territorial Legislature.

"The Dude," as his fellow legislators called him, attracted immediate attention by signing the register at the Carlton Hotel in a flowing script that covered four lines.

On the senate floor he reflected the popular mood when he defended territorial womankind against the perils the fair sex would be exposed to the right to vote, which had been taken from them by the Territorial Supreme Court, should be restored. As voters and full citizens, they might be called to jury duty and hear cases that would expose them to the facts of life. No decent man would wish that upon them. His position was the popular one for another 20 years.

As an attorney, Lewis attracted further attention when he represented James Wickersham, the Pierce County probate judge, against charges that he had seduced and impregnated one Sadie Brantner when she solicited him to buy a set of encyclopedias. Lewis' defense was that it was Wickersham who had been seduced, that certain circumstances indicated he could not be responsible for Sadie's pregnancy and the whole sordid business had been concocted by political rivals.

Wickersham was convicted but, a few months later, Lewis returned to court with Sadie's admission that she had misidentified herself as an unsullied victim. The judge ordered a new trial, the prosecutor asked for dismissal, and Wickersham moved on to fame as Alaska's great pioneer jurist.

As for The Dude, he presided over the first Democratic convention after Washington became a state. He decided against running for Congress in 1890, or governor in 1892. In 1894, Democrats in the legislature favored him for U.S. senator but the Republican majority prevailed. In 1896, he was put forward as a possible vice presidential nominee on the Democratic ticket, which lost.

But in November, Washington voters elected Lewis to Congress. He lasted only one term.

In 1889 the Democrats in the Legislature favored him for Senator but the Republicans again prevailed. That was his last hurrah in this state.

In 1903 Lewis moved to Chicago to practice corporate law. But he was far from through with politics. In 1905 he backed the winning candidate for mayor of Chicago and was appointed corporation counsel.

In 1912, the Illinois Legislature sent Lewis to Washington, D.C., as a senator. He was chosen by his fellow senators to fill the newly created post of majority whip. That put him in charge of keeping the Democratic senators in line for Woodrow Wilson's New Freedom program of breaking up trusts and combinations and restoring competition. The Dude also found himself arguing in favor of woman suffrage. But Lewis was again a one-term wonder, and lost his seat in the Republican sweep of 1918.

In 1930, with the Republicans in trouble because of the depression, he again ran again for the senate. His opponent was Congresswoman Ruth Hanna McCormick, the widow of the man who had defeated him in 1918. He treated her with belittling gallantry and won, 2 to 1.

Back in the senate Lewis was again chosen party whip, this time with the job of keeping the Democrats in line behind FDR's New Deal program, although he denied that he was a New Dealer.

The Dude became ill while on a 1935 junket to Russia, died in Washington, and is buried in Arlington National Cemetery.

## **J. Ross Browne and Port**

### **Townsend The Last Wilderness**

**Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1955.**

**P. 39-45.**

# J. Ross Browne and Port Townsend

One difficulty with a federal payroll is that it means federal inspectors. For Port Townsend, one trouble with being port of entry for Puget Sound was J. Ross Browne.

After the presidential election of 1856, the faithful followers of James A. Buchanan lined up hopefully. Among the job hunters was a heavy-shouldered young Democrat from New York, J. Ross Browne. He listed his qualifications for government service as including employment as blubber-stripper on an Antarctic whaler, squirrel hunter in the Kentucky backwoods, ferry-keeper, flatboat hand, short-story writer, and all-important-campaigner for Buchanan. He was offered an appointment as special agent for the United States Treasury Department on the Pacific Coast. Browne said later, "At great pecuniary sacrifice (in a prospective sense, for I hadn't a dime in the world), I announced myself as ready to proceed to duty."

Browne's reports may well be unique in the history of the Treasury Department. What experience he lacked as an accountant he attempted to compensate for by his talent for burlesque. His reports on the revenue service operation on Puget Sound were models of unrestrained unenthusiasm. Of the revenue cutter based on Port Townsend he wrote: She finds occasional occupation in chasing porpoises and wild Indians. It is to be regretted that but little revenue has yet been derived from either of these sources; but should she persist in her efforts there is hope that at no distant day she may overhaul a canoe containing a keg of British brandy that is to say, in case the paddles are lost, and the Indians have no means of propelling it out of the way.

Now and then they run on the rocks in trying to find their way from one anchorage to another, in which event they require extra repairs. As this is for the benefit of navigation, it should not be included in the account. They generally avoid running on the same rock, and endeavor to find out a new one not laid down upon the charts-unless perhaps, by some reckless fly-in order that their vessels may enjoy the advantage of additional experience.

Nor was Browne swept off his feet by the charms of Port Townsend, which now termed itself Hub City of Puget Sound: Port Townsend is indeed a remarkable place. The houses, of which there must be at least twenty in the city and suburbs, are built chiefly of pine boards, thatched with shingles, canvas and wood slabs. The streets of Port Townsend are paved with sand, and the public squares are curiously ornamented with dead horses and the bones of many dead cows. This of course gives a very original appearance to the public pleasure grounds and enables strangers to know when they arrive in the city, by reason of the peculiar odor, so that, even admitting the absence of lamps, no person can fail to recognize Port Townsend in the

darkest night. The prevailing languages spoken are the Clallam, Chinook and Skookum- Chuck, or Strong Water, with a mixture of broken English; and all the public notices are written on shingles with burnt sticks, and nailed up over the door of the town-hall. A newspaper, issued here once every six months, is printed by means of wooden types whittled out of pine knots by the Indians, and rubbed against the bottom of the editor's potato pot. The cast-off shirts of the inhabitants answer for paper.

Public affairs, Browne indicated, were oddly managed. He said the jail, a log edifice, had been built on beach sand and that some Indian prisoners, "rooting for clams, happened to come up at the outside." He went on to discuss the manner in which the pioneers determined those best suited for civic leadership: On the day of election, notice having been previously given on the town shingles, all the candidates for corporate honors go up on the top of the hill back of the waterfront and play at pitch penny and quoits till a certain number are declared eligible; after which all the eligible candidates are required to climb a greased pole in the center of the main public square. The two best then become eligible for the mayorally, and the twelve next best for the common council. These fourteen candidates then get on the roof of the town hall and begin to yell like Indians. Whoever can yell the loudest is declared mayor, and the six next loudest become members of the common council for the ensuing year.

One purpose of Browne's visit to Port Townsend was to have an audience with the Duke of York, a chief of the Clallams. Opinions differ about the duke, whose Indian name was Chetzemoka. Local residents considered him strong and intelligent, a friend of the white man, and a pillar of strength for his people.

William Welsh, an authority on Port Townsend, says, "His part in the development of the Northwest, and more especially, Port Townsend, has reserved a place for him on the historical honor roll of the region. Beautiful little Chetzemoka Park is named for the gallant Indian who many times saved the settlement from extermination."

But Theodore Winthrop, who rented a canoe from him in 1853, begins his description of the incident with the remark, "The Duke of York was ducally drunk." And Browne, who called on him four years later, said that not only the Duke but his two wives, known to the whites as Queen Victoria and Jenny Lind, had had a snootful: I complimented him upon his general reputation as a good man and proceeded to make the usual speech, derived from the official formula, about the Great Chief in Washington, whose children were as numerous as the leaves on the trees and the grass on the plains. "Oh damn," said the duke, impatiently. "Him send any whisky?" No, on the contrary, the Great Chief had beard with profound regret that the Indians of Puget Sound were addicted to the evil practice of drinking whisky, and it made his heart bleed to learn that it was killing them off rapidly, and was the principal cause of all their misery. It was very cruel and very wicked for white men to sell whisky to the Indians and it was his earnest wish that the law against this illicit traffic might be enforced and the offenders punished. "Oh, damn," said the duke, turning over on his bed and contemptuously waving his hand in termination of the interview. "This Tyee no 'count!"

Browne's accounts of life in the Pacific Northwest came to the attention of a congressman who, during a debate on the budget, inserted some quotations in the Congressional Record. And Browne sent articles to magazines and newspapers for publication. In time some of the documents

were reprinted in the Olympia Pioneer and Democrat and reached Port Townsend.

Pioneers may have callused hands, but their skins are thin. The dullest barb pricks them painfully. Browne's broad axe cut deep into Port Townsend's pride. Civic leaders, including Plummer, Pettygrove, and Hastings, composed a long and humorless letter of protest. Browne replied with an open letter in the San Francisco Bulletin, in which he apologized, after a fashion: You do not think it can possibly have escaped my memory that I found you engaged in your peaceful avocations as useful and respectable members of society. Now upon my honor I can not remember who it was particularly that I saw engaged in peaceful avocations, but I certainly saw a good many white men lying about in sunny places fast asleep and a good many more sitting on logs of wood whittling small sticks, and apparently waiting for somebody to invite them into the nearest saloon; others I saw playing billiards and some few standing about the corners of the streets, waiting for the houses to grow.

This apology was not accepted. There followed a vigorous public correspondence, the result of which, Browne was to argue later, made Port Townsend the Northwest city best known to Californians.

During this period a bearded young Scot passed through Port Townsend en route to Olympia.

His tattered appearance attracted little attention, but when he bought a new wardrobe and paid for it with gold dust poured from a poke made of the scrotum of a bull elk, he no longer went unnoticed. All at once he had a hundred friends and a thousand questioners. He was a reticent man, but he could not keep his secret.

His name was McDonald, and he had found the gold himself up in Canada, on the Fraser River. He and a partner named Adams had spent the preceding year on the Fraser and Thompson Rivers, and they had, in what was then a fresh and lovely phrase, "struck it rich." Long afterward some people paused to wonder what had become of Adams, and the legend grew that McDonald had arrived with gold enough for two. But at first no one had time for such speculation. Everyone along the coast was outfitting-or helping others to outfit for the rush to the Fraser.

Marine traffic picked up. Port Townsend had more than its share of visitors. For this Browne publicly took credit.

The people of California were well acquainted, through the Newspapers, with at least one town on Puget's Sound. If they knew nothing of Whatcomb, Squill-chuck and other rival places that aspired to popular favor, they were no strangers to the reputation of Port Townsend. Thousands, who had no particular business there, went to look at this wonderful town, which had given rise to so much controversy.

The citizens were soon forced to build a fine hotel. Traders came and set up stores; new whisky saloons were built; customers crowded in from all parts; in short it became a gay and dashing sort of place and very soon had quite the appearance of a city.

So it was that when official duty brought Browne back to Port Townsend he was met not by a tar-and-feather brigade but by a delegation from the common council, who made speeches of welcome. Then they escorted him to a saloon, where, Browne recalled in an article in Harpers



Monthly, "we buried the hatchet in an ocean of the best Port Townsend whisky."

He was mellow enough to add a careful postscript. "It is due the citizens to say that not one of them went beyond reasonable bounds on this joyous occasion, by which I do not mean to intimate that they were accustomed to the beverage referred to."

This time few took offense. Browne kept up a correspondence with several of his former antagonists, sending them presents from out-of-the-way places. In 1867 he came back again, this time in a private capacity. Waiting for him on the dock, a bottle of whisky under his arm, was the Duke of York. And in the Port Townsend Weekly Message there appeared a poem of greeting: Welcome stranger, to our clam beach,

To our clams and tangling whisky.  
 The Duke and wives all wait to greet you:  
 Toothless, blear-eyed, dusky matrons-  
 Matrons soaked in strychnine whisky,  
 On the clam beach at Port Townsend.  
 All were drunk, though patient waiting,  
 For the hyas Boston tyee  
 Who remembered them in Lapland  
 And their dear  
 Port Townsend whisky.

Several generations of Port Townsend residents cherished the reputation that their waterfront first achieved during the Fraser gold rush. Even the reformers took pride in the gaudiness of night life down on the beach; one Christian lady boasted, "Sodom and Gomorrah wasn't in it." A pamphlet issued by the Chamber of Commerce a few years ago wistfully quoted a retired admiral on the good old days: There was a man's town! Port Townsend was wild and prosperous then. A little too wild for a young ensign from the East. The first night I spent in a hotel there a man came down with smallpox in one room next to mine, and in the other a man was murdered.

There were giants in those days. You could smell the whisky in the dirt along Water Street to a depth of ten feet, they said. There was one saloon for every seventy inhabitants-man, woman, and child. Local bad men formed a union known as the Forty Thieves. So many men, after visiting Victoria, returned to Port Townsend with bottles concealed in their high rubber boots that peninsula philologists claim the town gave to the language the word "bootlegger."

**James G. Swan, Promoter**

**The Last Wilderness**

**University of Washington Press, 1955**

**P. 90-100**

## James G. Swan, Promoter

Norman Smith's only peer on the peninsula, as a promoter of unbuilt railroads, was James G. Swan of Port Townsend, a vastly different type. Swan was a sort of Renaissance figure in the rain forest: scientist, author, judge, ethnologist, collector of art, collector of customs, teacher, oyster-grower, promoter, linguist, fish commissioner, diplomat, historian, deputy sheriff, admiralty lawyer, journalist, trader, artist, and representative for the Northern Pacific.

In 1848 it would have seemed easy to predict the course of swan's life; hard work, shrewd trading, gradually accumulating wealth and respect in his native Boston, where his family had lived since before the Revolution and owned, in fact, some land the Battle of Bunker Hill had been fought on a good life, but unexceptional. It was not at all the one he lived.

Swan had been born in 1818, married in 1841, and was the father of a girl and a boy. He had read for the law and was doing well as a ship chandler. He was a grave little man with a rather thin voice, something of a scholar, it seemed; at least he always had a book thrust in the pocket of his coat.

Then gold was discovered in California, and the respectable, conventional Mr. Swan sold out his shipping business, left his family, and took passage on the Rob Roy for San Francisco.

In 1851 Swan was working as purser on a Sacramento River steamer, the Tehama. One of the passengers, Captain Charles J. W. Russell, a big oyster and clam-huckster from Willapa Harbor, just north of the Columbia, invited Swan to come north for a visit, which he did.

After spending a year with Russell, Swan went into the oyster business himself. It was mainly a matter of persuading the Indians to bring to him huge Willapa oysters, big as plates, which were put in barrels and sent to San Francisco. Success in the oyster business depended for the most part on maintaining good relations with the Indians, who pried the crop from the harbor rocks at low tide.

Swan was as good a friend as the peninsula Indians ever had. He learned their language - not just the Chinook trading jargon, but the individual tongues of the varied tribes; he studied their art and their culture, viewing both with far less condescension than that shown by other observers of the period.

As a Boston man with an interest in ships, he was particularly impressed with their great canoes, and though normally the writing in his journals is cool and objective, well adapted to scientific description, excitement shows through whenever he writes of the great black dugouts:

The canoe which I had purchased was a beauty. She was forty-six feet long and six feet wide, and had thirty Indians in her when she crossed the bar at the mouth of the Bay. She was the largest canoe that had been brought from up the coast, although the Indians round Vancouver's and Queen Charlotte's islands have canoes capable of carrying one hundred warriors.

These canoes are beautiful specimens of naval architecture. Formed of a single log of cedar, they present a model of which a white mechanic might well be proud.

In the summer of 1854 Swan was appointed customs collector for the coast between Willapa Harbor and Cape Flattery, a district that assured him of some exciting canoe rides. At the time there were only two white men known to be living in the entire stretch, and one of them was William O'Leary, a singularly taciturn Irishman who had holed up in a cabin beside a small stream emptying into Grays Harbor and went twenty years without speaking to anyone. Swan's district was not overburdened with customs receipts.

His main function was to keep an eye on British and Russian traders, who sometimes visited the coast to trade with the Indians for sealskins, whale oil, dogfish oil, and an occasional sea otter pelt.

When Territorial Governor Isaac Stevens undertook to negotiate a treaty with the coastal Indians he chose Swan as an aide. On a cold, foggy February morning, Swan rode with the governor and twelve other white men to the meeting ground in a grove of trees on a bluff above the beach-site of the present town of Cosmopolis - where there had already gathered representatives of the various tribes.

The negotiations broke down over the question of a reservation. Governor Stevens insisted that the Indians all retire to one reservation around Lake Quinault. Nakarty, a leader of the Chinooks, stated the case of those who refused.

"We are willing to sell our land," said Nakarty, "but we do not want to go away from our homes. Our fathers and mothers and ancestors are buried there, and by them we wish to bury our dead and be buried ourselves. We wish, therefore, each to have a place on his own land where we can live, and you may have the rest; but we can't go north among the other tribes. We are not friends and if we went together we should fight, and soon we all would be killed."

Swan felt this was a legitimate argument, and though at the time he was not able to convince the governor, a treaty providing separate reservation was negotiated the following year by Indian Agent Mike Simmons, a pioneer from Tumwater, who, though illiterate, was an authority on Indian languages and Indian customs.

In 1856 Governor Stevens became Congressman Stevens, and with him to Washington, D. C., went Swan as private secretary. While in the capital he became friends with the administrators of the Smithsonian Institution, which was then only ten years old; later he was to gather several of their most important collections. He also found time to write his first book, *The Northwest Coast, or Three Years' Residence in Washington Territory*.

Swan returned to the Territory in 1858 and settled in Port Townsend, thus raising its population to 531. He saw in the settlement "an inevitable New York," which was par for the

course; most Puget Sound pioneers considered their communities certain to suffer in the near future the blessings of overcrowding. Seattle's pioneers referred to their first cabins as New York Alki, "Alki" being jargon for by-and-by. At Whiskey Flat, as Dungeness was then called, the saying was, "We're as big as New York, only the town ain't built yet."

In 1859 Swan became associated with a trading post at Neah Bay, where Samuel Hancock, a Virginia-born handyman, had tried unsuccessfully to establish a post in 1845. Hancock was one of the more colorful pioneers. He started west without even twenty-five cents to contribute toward the hire of a pilot for the covered wagon train he joined, but with skill enough as wheel-maker, brick-baker, kiln-builder, and coal prospector to earn an interesting living in the Puget Sound country. He came to Neah Bay on an impulse and set himself up to trade in whale oil and otter skins, but the Makahs were not inclined to cooperate.

They boycotted his store, broke his canoe, threatened his life. He spent one night crouched in his cabin with four Colt revolvers loaded and an Indian boy as hostage. The next day, according to his account in his autobiography (a book that reads in spots like fiction, and probably is), he bluffed the Makahs into tolerance by pretending to write a letter to President Millard Fillmore, tattling on them. He tore up the letter when they rebuilt his canoe. But he soon gave up on the trading post.

Swan did not fare much better. He soon abandoned trading for teaching, accepting appointment as a teacher for the Indian Service. It was a trying experience. The Makahs were suspicious of the school. They looked on it as an instrument for turning Indian children into imitation white men, which it was.

The Makahs were not interested in Shakespeare or the Tudors or Latin, or even in methods of growing cotton. One of Swan's rare bursts of impatience with the Indians came when some of the Makahs asked him to pay them for sending their children to his classes.

One evening shortly after the end of the Civil War, while Swan was still on the reservation, the smoke of a steamer was observed on the horizon. Steamers were rare on the Pacific. Swan thought this might be the Confederate raider Shenandoah, then still at large, coming in to bombard the lighthouse on Tatoosh, or perhaps to ravage Port Townsend. He ordered the employees of the Indian Agency to run up the American flag and stand by to repel attack.

The steamer entered the harbor after dark and anchored far out. The men ashore spent an anxious night until, with the dawn, they made her out to be Her Majesty's Ship Devastation, just in from the Queen Charlottes.

In 1866 Swan returned to Port Townsend to practice law. He served seven years as probate judge, taking time out on one occasion to act as a deputy sheriff. That was when no one else wanted the assignment of arresting twenty-six Clallams who had surprised a party of Vancouver Island Indians on Dungeness spit and killed them all. Swan brought back the offenders for trial.

He also served as assistant United States Fisheries Commissioner and engaged in a loud scientific argument with Henry Elliott over the swimming habits of seal pups. But the last thirty

years of Swan's life centered on his efforts to get a railroad for Port Townsend. That endeavor proved more frustrating than teaching school at Neah Bay.

When the Northern Pacific was slowly pushing its line north from the Columbia River to Puget Sound in 1871, Swan called a meeting of Port Townsend business leaders and persuaded them to offer the railroad a large amount of local property if it would bend the line north and bring it to tidewater at Port Townsend. Any chance of that dream coming true ended with the collapse of Jay Cooke, that flower of inflation. The N. P. terminus went to Tacoma, which was cheaper.

For nearly fifteen years Swan worked to raise the interest of editors and financiers in a railroad to Port Townsend. He sat at his desk "amidst Hydah gods and Cape Flattery devils, images in stone and wood, and implements of savage warfare," as one visitor put it, and wrote, with a stub pen dipped in purple ink, long, almost indecipherable letters on the merits of Port Townsend's harbor and the riches awaiting the sponsors of a railroad.

Local businessmen incorporated the Port Townsend Southern railroad in 1887. It was to run to Portland, and the only thing, it needed to be a success was money. When no one offered to put up the money the populace, in approved fashion, started laying track themselves and laid the standard mile before diving up.

The Oregon Improvement Company, a subsidiary of the Union Pacific, agreed in 1890 to take over the franchise if Port Townsend would help out with a subsidy of a hundred thousand dollars. The gift was bundled up by popular subscription. Fifteen hundred laborers started laying track down to Hood Canal. This was the dream come true.

Port Townsend boomed. Population doubled to 3500 and doubled again. Waterfront lots sold for ten thousand dollars, and lots out of sight of water - in fact, out of reach of water - brought a thousand. Farmers who the year before had had trouble buying flour for the kitchen sold their homesteads for as much as a hundred thousand; Tom Bracken got a record \$160,000 for his 160 acres. Real-estate transactions for 1890 totaled \$4,594,695.93

So was faith rewarded. And most of the old settlers promptly reinvested in Port Townsend. The ships that would come to meet the railroad would need a dry-dock; the inhabitants ponied up to subsidize construction of a floating dry-dock. A smelter had been started at nearby Irondale, and Port Townsend helped finance a rail factory that was to use its iron. The town was sure to grow to twenty thousand, and the old timers raised sandstone warehouses and office buildings and hotels to meet the needs of the newcomers; for themselves they built on the bluff a handsome array of tall clapboard houses, capped with widows' walks.

The rails reached from Port Townsend to Quilcene before the bottom dropped out of everything. Brandon Satterlee has described how the news struck one community on the fine:

It was one of those wonderful days when nature seems to cry out for all her creatures to luxuriate. Frank and I were setting type for the next issue; Father had been writing at his paperstrewn table and had arisen to fill his trusty corncob, when we heard the rumble of Telegrapher Lord's handcar.

He entered the shop and handed Father a telegram with the remark, 'Here's something for

you, Sat, that I don't think you'll like,' and immediately left. Father opened the envelope, read the message and dropped heavily in his chair. He stared at it a long time; then came over to my case. I thought I detected a note of worry in his voice as he said:

'Let me have your stick, Brandon. I'll finish this take and you go up to Fil Hamilton's and tell him to come down here as soon as can be and bring the squire with him.'

I was glad to get outside, and raced up the track like a pupil on the last day of school. I found Hamilton in his orchard and delivered my message. He looked puzzled.

'What's up, Dub?'

'I don't know,' was all I could reply.

'Come out to the barn while I hitch up and you can ride back with me.' On our way to the barn we stopped in the store and Fil told Squire McArdle. By the time we had the horse hitched to the buggy, he was at the barn. The men seemed to sense disaster and the trip to the office was made principally in silence.

Charley Hamilton, Lou Seitzinger and Jay Bristow were at the office when we entered. 'What's up, Sat?' was Hamilton's quick greeting. He ignored the other men. Father walked over to the table and picked up the telegram. 'I'm afraid this is it,' he said with a sigh; then read:

'The jig is up. Reliable word reached me that Portland court today appointed receiver for O. I. Co. This kills all hope that road will be extended. SWAN.'

Frank had not stopped the rapid motions of typesetting, and the click of the type as he dropped them into the stick sounded like hammer blows in the long, deathlike silence that filled the room while the men absorbed the full import of this news. Hamilton opened his mouth in amazement, and the squire began to make the familiar nervous motion with his hands.

From outside came the soothing plop, plop, plop, as each bucket of the water wheel passed under the spout of the flume and received its quota of water, and then the splash, splash, splash as it was discharged into the stream at the low point of revolution. In a Madrona tree nearby a colony of crows set up a raucous scolding, while over the bay a flock of graceful, screaming gulls circled above the white sails of a yawl.

It was the comedian, Bristow, who broke the impressive silence with Len Flickinger's favorite expression, "Therein be hell poppin' an' no pitch hot." Bristow could afford to be facetious - he was the least affected.

Hamilton shot a meaningful glance at Father, and McArdle said in a low tone, "Let's go out on the beach." They went out together, and the other men, taking the hint, started up the track toward the townsite to spread the gruesome news. I picked up my composing stick where Father had laid it down when we came in. Through the window beside my case I saw three troubled men sit on a log at highwater mark. I would have given much to hear their conversation. Frequently Hamilton arose and took a few nervous steps back and forth.

When Frank filled his stick and dumped the type on the galley, he broke the silence: "Did you hear that telegram Dad read?" he asked.

"Yes. Doesn't sound very good, does it?" "Not a bit. Judge Swan would never send a message like that if it wasn't true. Nobody in the world wants to see the road extended more than he. I wonder what will become of us."

That was in Quilcene. In Port Townsend it was even worse. The real-estate boom collapsed. Those who had become suddenly rich became suddenly bankrupt. The floating dry-dock was towed off to Dockton, down the sound. The machines in the nail factory were sold for junk. Cobwebs gathered in the sandstone warehouses. For a time even the brothels closed

Judge Swan was one of those who stayed on. He still believed. He still wrote long letters in his tiny hand. In time even Port Townsend found his faith a bit funny. It was his habit to go each evening to a small restaurant near Union Dock to eat a quiet meal and read the paper. One evening a young man decided to have some fun at the judge's expense.

Taking a seat near Swan's, he launched a discussion on the economic future of Puget Sound. His central theme was that the future of Port Townsend was as nothing when compared to the possibilities of Seattle. Within a year, he predicted, no right-thinking man with a decent desire to better himself would remain in a tomb like Port Townsend unless Seattle saw fit to raise a twenty-foot fence to keep out those who would share in her inevitable wealth.

Judge Swan laid down his paper. He listened in silence to the young man's monologue. At last he rose and walked over to the table and leaned closer, as if to make certain he had heard correctly.

Then, certain no mistake had been made, he raised his heavy cane and brought it down with an echoing thump across the youth's shoulders. That attended to, he shot his cuffs, straightened his black frock coat, stroked his beard, and stalked from the restaurant with the air, said an enraptured observer, of one who has performed a meritorious deed and has done it most effectually.

Judge Swan died in 1900, still believing.

No railroad has yet been built to connect Port Angeles or Port Townsend with the transcontinental lines.

**Jane O'Roark and Gustave Stromer Were Fated to Have a Brief Flight Together in  
Tacoma The Tacoma News Tribune**

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## Jane O'Roark and Gustave Stromer Were Fated to Have a Brief Flight Together in Tacoma

Gustave was a big, adventuresome Scandinavian of few words. He appeared in Tacoma, apparently out of nowhere, and set himself up as a manufacturer and pilot of hydro-aeroplanes. The Stromer Co. had offices in the Berlin Building at 11th and Pacific, where the Washington Building now stands. He fabricated float planes in a shop on Day Island.

Jane, whose real name was Emil Rorke, was a tiny adventuress from Los Angeles who sought fame as an actress/celebrity any way possible. Her stage training was financed by unsecured loans from well-fixed Angelenos, among them a past president of the prestigious Union League Club. She eventually attracted considerable attention when she named them all as creditors she would be unable to pay when declaring bankruptcy. Manfully they denied having loaned her anything. With her financial future uncertain, she sought new opportunity on Puget Sound.

After a few appearances in Seattle, where she ran up a hotel bill that the New Washington filed suit to collect, she signed on for the 1915 season with the Richards Stock Company, which was staging shows at the Empress Theater between Ninth and 10th on Pacific Avenue.

The actress and the aviator met while she was appearing in Jack Lait's melodrama, "Help Wanted." Jane played a double role: the sexually harassed stenographer for a wealthy importer and the deceived wife of her amorous boss.

On meeting Stromer after a performance she told him that she longed to be an aviatrix and had taken flying lessons from Weldon Cook, who had recently been killed in a crash. Her mother had insisted that she stop taking lessons, but she had gone into the clouds with Glenn Hartin, Robert Hamilton and Glenn Curtis, a passenger.

Stromer predictably made her an offer: the chance to be the first woman to look down on Tacoma from the air. Would she? She would. When could they get together in the air? How about next Saturday?

Charles Richards managed the Empress Theater. He had Jane under contract for the



season. He also had a good sense of the value of publicity. He objected to the idea of having one of his leading ladies risk her pretty neck by flying. His objections resonated more loudly when he realized the venture was scheduled for the ominous 13th day of the month.

He objected strenuously, most strenuously, but not firmly enough to prevent the flight. Somehow the papers got wind of it. Jane told reporters she was afraid of neither heights nor ominous dates on the calendar. Richards said he'd get an injunction. Jane said she'd get aloft.

On the Saturday morning of sinister date, actress and manager staged a dramatic tableaux in front of the Empress. Jane sat at the wheel of a Maxwell racing car loaned her by the proprietor of the Tacoma Motor Company. Richards came running down the sidewalk waving a legal-looking document. Reporters took notes that resulted in different versions of the drama. The consensus was that Jane ordered a stagehand to crank up the Maxwell, Richards arrived in time to thrust a document in her hand, Jane looked at it, the motor roared to life and she tore the paper in two, handing it back with the explanation, "I'm sorry, but this morning I cannot read."

At this moment the Maxwell's motor roared to life. "I'll be back for the matinee," Jane cried as she started to drive away. Richards jumped onto the car to try to stop her. From here accounts differ. One story is that he fell off. A nother has him sprawling sidesaddle across the hood across the 11th Street Bridge and on to the Tideflats.

Stromer was waiting for her at the Middle Waterway after having flown in from Day Island. The hydro- aeroplane, which resembled a box-kite with a structured tail, was moored to a log raft. Jane settled into a seat beside him, unprotected by anything remotely resembling a windbreak. They posed for pictures: he imposing in leather jacket and leather helmet, she diminutive in a red sweater and wool cap.

Shortly after noon, to the cheers of spectators on the Tideflats, at Firemen's Park on the Tacoma bluff, and on the verandah of the Tacoma Hotel, the hydro-aeroplane taxied down the waterway for about 100 yards and lifted into the air. Stromer turned her toward Browns Point and continued the climb until they were about 800 feet up. He circled back along the east side of the bay, then turned back to the city, passed over the Perkins Building and followed 11th Street south to the College of Puget Sound (where Jason Lee Junior High now stands) before turning back to the bay, descending. They passed low over Stadium. As they came in for the landing the plane made an unexpected drop but leveled off 25 feet from the water and touched down gently.

"Wonderful, simply wonderful," Jane exclaimed as she was helped from the log raft to the shore. I've been up with a great many celebrities, but Mr. Stromer has them beaten to a pulp. I've flown with Hamilton, who won the \$20,000 prize for a flight from New York to Philadelphia, but Stromer has them all lashed to the mast. But I'm nearly frozen."

Reporters asked Richards of the Empress what he was going to do about his star's disobedience. "Do? What's the use of doing anything after everything's done?"

Jane was by no means done. Nor was Stromer. Probably with Richards' help, they quickly conceived a more newsworthy flight for the following Saturday the first delivery of airmail in the Pacific Northwest.

Courtly Frank Stocking was about to retire as Tacoma postmaster. He was not adverse to

going out with a festoon of headlines. Without bothering to check with Washington, D.C., he authorized the dispatch of a packet of mail to Seattle by hydro-aeroplane. He agreed to write a letter to his Seattle counterpart, Postmaster Edgar Battle. Tacoma Mayor Angelo Fawcett, who was a passionate non-avoider of publicity, volunteered to write one to Mayor Hiram Gill of Seattle.

(Though their cities were rivals, Fawcett and Gill had a common bond. Each had been defeated for reelection on charges that they countenanced an open city, then made comebacks running as reformers.) Jack Haswell, the manager of the Tacoma Motor Company, who had loaned Jane the racing Maxwell as part of the first flight publicity, now announced that if Auburn, Kent and Renton officials gave permission, he would try to beat the hydro-aeroplane to Seattle in a Maxwell identical to one used by Eddie Rickenbacker in several winning races.

Amid all these flourishes, impresario Richards neglected to speak of injunctions. Came Saturday morning, Feb. 20, 1915. Jane drove the borrowed Maxwell from the house she and her mother had rented at 624 N. Alder to City Hall. Mayor Fawcett's letter to Mayor Gill awaited. His Honor told the Other Honor that receipt of the missive would "signalize the success in the latest step in the evolution of transportation between Tacoma and Seattle."

Fawcett concluded by congratulating "you and ourselves on the elimination of one-third of the time that has heretofore separated the two great cities of Puget Sound."

Then on to the post office at 11th and A. Postmaster Stocking opened his letter to Postmaster Battle with the optimistic statement that its delivery marked the beginning of daily air service between Tacoma and Seattle. It closed with a prescient note of caution: "Let us hope that the conclusion of this flight will not be like that of Darius Green and his Flying Machine of 90 years ago, which caused Darius to soliloquize as follows 'Wall I like flyin' well enough, but they ain't sich a thunderin' sight of fun in it when ye come to light.' "

In addition to his own letter, Stocking gave Jane a bag containing between 50 and 100 other letters that ordinarily would have gone to Seattle by ship. Each was canceled with the handwritten postmark, "Aeromail to Seattle."

Stromer was waiting for Jane at the Middle Waterway. He had flown in earlier from Day Island with Addie LaVoie, a waitress at the Donnelly Hotel across Pacific Avenue from the Empress Theater. Addie's enthusiasm for the flight was modest. She allowed that it was more enjoyable than the submarine ride she had taken in Massachusetts water.

After Jane for the second time settled into the unsheltered seat beside Stromer, Jack Haswell took over the red Maxwell. He had not received permission from local authorities to race through their towns on the red brick road that led through the valley to Seattle, but what the hell! It would be fun to race the plane. So he drove to the post office and kept the motor running.

At 10 they were off. (Some spectators alleged that Stromer jumped the gun by three minutes. But there was no gun. Stromer, at about 10 o'clock, taxied down the waterway. Haswell started along Pacific Avenue.)

The hydro-aeroplane rose through light fog, crossed Browns Point and straightened out over East Passage, following the steamer route to Seattle. The plane caught and passed the

steamer Indianapolis off Poverty Bay, skirted Three Tree Point and West Seattle in patchy fog, and prepared for a landing in Elliott Bay off Colman Dock about 10:24 only to be faced with a 134-foot complication.

The SS Kennedy was pulling out, bound for Victoria. It was kicking up more waves than Stromer chose to risk. He pulled around, made a wide circle over Elliott Bay and came back in. Too soon. As he touched down the chop brought the plane to a shuddering halt, splashed water over Jane and Stromer, and killed the motor. Plane, Jane, Stromer and the mail drifted for a quarter hour before someone came out in a small boat and took Jane to Pier One.

She hitched a ride to town. Stromer, when the plane was finally grounded, went to West Seattle to rest up for the return flight. Stromer's time, Tacoma to Seattle, was listed as 27 minutes for the estimated 24 airline miles. Haswell was credited with making the 40 mile drive in 46 minutes.

Because of the plane's delay after touchdown, Haswell got to the Seattle post office just as Jane was delivering the mail. O'Roark and Haswell went together from the post office to City Hall only to find Mayor Gill absent. His secretary signed a receipt for Mayor Fawcett's letter.

Having set a record for the longest heavier-than-air flight by a woman in Washington, and having literally delivered the mail, Jane drove back to Tacoma in the Maxwell with Haswell. She arrived in time to play her two parts in "Help Wanted." Stromer spent the afternoon in West Seattle, then flew back to Tacoma with Arthur Aronson, for whom he was building a plane. The return flight took 30 minutes.

Stromer's plan for daily flights to Seattle never materialized. Neither did his idea of forming an air squadron for the National Guard. He left for Oregon in 1917 and eventually turned to manufacturing boxes, not hydro-aeroplanes.

Jane finished the season at the Empress, which did not reopen in 1916. She went back to California and completed the bankruptcy proceeding, still hoping for a stage career. Her last notice in the New York Public Library for the Performing Arts file has her at the Bishop Theater in Oakland in 1917, playing in "A Fool There Was."

## Jumbo and Mrs. General Cantwell

# Jumbo and Mrs. General Cantwell

A soft-spoken man with a trim mustache and rimless glasses, Jacob S. Coxey looked more like a prosperous farmer than an economic messiah. He proved ineffective at publicizing his proposals until he teamed with Carl Browne, a hustler whose faults did not include a lack of flamboyance. Browne had been a housepainter, cartoonist, theosophist, snake-oil salesman, and private secretary to Dennis Kearney during that demagogue's anti-Chinese agitation.

A big fellow, notoriously reluctant to bathe, with long graying hair and a beard worthy of a prophet, Browne decked himself out in buckskin coat, fringed, of course, and with buttons made of Mexican half dollars. His ensemble was completed with high boots, sombrero, a fur coat of dubious derivation, and a necklace of amber beads. His vocal range was from foghorn to buzz saw. As an attracter of attention, Browne was a triple threat, combining visual, vocal, and odoriferous pollution. He was also imaginative.

Browne and Coxey decided to send Congress "a petition with boots on." The unemployed would march on Washington to demand passage of a Good Roads Bill and a Non-Interest-Bearing Bond Bill. Coxey took credit for the idea of the march, Browne for calling the marchers "The Commonweal Army of Christ."

Browne painted a remarkable banner for the army to march under. It bore a picture of Christ which critics felt looked suspiciously like a Browne self-portrait, and it was captioned "Peace on Earth, Good Will to Men, He Hath Risen, but Death to Interest on Bonds."

The first battalion of the Commonweal Army started for Washington from Massillon on Easter Sunday, 1894.

A color-bearer with Browne's banner led the way, followed by General Coxey in a piano box buggy drawn by his forty thousand dollar pacer Acolyte, and, in a separate carriage, the second Mrs. Coxey, who held in her arms their infant son whose baptismal certificate read, no mistake, Legal Tender Coxey. Marshall Browne rode a spirited stallion.

The others walked. Among those in the ranks were Cyclone Kirtland, an astrologer who claimed that according to the stars the army would be "invisible in war, invincible in peace"; Unknown Smith, who had earlier been known as ringmaster for a disbanded circus; David McCallum, author of an economic treatise which sold under the title *Dogs and Fleas*, by One of the Fleas; Christopher Columbus Jones, a five-foot apostle of reform who marched under a silk hat; and Jones's private secretary, who "sustained a plug hat with impressive dignity."

The Commonwealers numbered only two hundred by the most favorable count but they were accompanied down the glory road by forty-three reporters, four telegraph operators, and two linemen.

Carl Browne had done his public relations work well. Though the stories the reporters

filed were heavy with ridicule, they were numerous. Coxe's tatterdemalion troops captured the national imagination as they traipsed south. Others followed.

Tacoma and Seattle organized separate contingents in April, Seattle first. On the afternoon of Saturday, April 8, some two hundred men gathered in a skid road hall furnished with only two chairs and a card table. Harry Shepard, a soft-spoken engineer, made a quiet speech that called on "the respectable unemployed" to unite for the amelioration of their condition. He urged order, discipline, and self reliance in gathering food and funds for a protest march across the continent.

The seventy-two who signed the muster roll the first day pledged themselves "to uphold the constitution, recognize only honest workmen, assist any officer in the lawful discharge of his duty, repudiate all connections with drunkards, thieves and convicts, and to protect life, liberty and property." They elected Shepard their general.

Tacoma organized a week later. The unemployed and their sympathizers gathered in the National Theater, a run-down hall at Twelfth and A streets. After considerable speechifying, the mantle of leadership settled not on a quiet engineer like Shepard but on one of Tacoma's loudest personalities, Frank P. "Jumbo" Cantwell, long-time bouncer for Harry Morgan, occasional prize fighter, and current husband of Morgan's common-law widow, Dora Charlotte-usually called Charlotte.

Not for Jumbo a tone of respectability or a demand that his followers eschew association with thieves and drunkards. Cantwell himself was not unknown in police court. Respectability he could do without.

Notoriety was the spur.

Cantwell told the would-be marchers that they could hire a train at cutrates to carry them to Washington. How to pay for it? "Every feller who follers us from Tacoma, we'll make him dig up ten cents; militia, police, I don't care who he is-we'll make him dig up. Then we'll use the money to pay our way. But when we come back to Tacoma, we won't hang out at the Old National. Oh, no. We'll go to the Tacoma Hotel and be the elite."

Or so said the Ledger in a report on his speech. The Ledger complained that Jumbo's followers were "the best dressed, best fed lot of unemployed to be found on the Coast," and disapproved of "emigrants going not west but east, with no purpose but to present a demand that the government shall help them, shall take them in its charge and provide for them. The Army is marching to the unknown in search of the impossible and the impractical." The paper suggested that the government simply draft the unemployed, ship them out of the country to Nicaragua, furnish them with pick and shovel, and set them to digging a canal.

The Commonwealers were not to be dissuaded by such suggestions. They organized into companies, or "cantons," of sixty men, drilled at marching by morning and in the afternoons rustled provender for the mess. "General" Cantwell helped out by boxing an exhibition and turning over his purse to the commissary. Two meals were served daily. They were long on clams, crab, salmon, and beans, short on meat and bread.

Cantwell and Shepard arranged that their Tacoma and Seattle armies would meet at

Puyallup at the end of the month. They would then ask the Northern Pacific for train service east. While preparations were being made for the Puyallup encampment, a Commonweal contingent from Butte, Montana, flagged down a freight train, piled four hundred men into fourteen empty boxcars, put an unemployed engineer at the throttle, and headed east.

The Coxeyites regarded this as hitching a ride, the NP as stealing a train. Railroad officials obtained a court order forbidding anyone to deprive rightful owners of the use of their boxcars. Fifteen deputy marshals were hastily sworn in. They caught up with the train at Billings, where a crowd had gathered to wish the Butte army godspeed.

The deputies started shooting and several bystanders were wounded before the engine was uncoupled from the freight and the engineer arrested. The townsfolk sided with the unemployed. They helped the army liberate another engine and supplied the Commonwealers with food. The train pulled out for the East with flags flying and a live rooster perched on the locomotive. President Cleveland called out the United States Army. Regulars from Fort Koegh found the freight parked on a siding at Forsythe, Montana, the engineer catching some sleep. The Industrials surrendered without resistance.

A reporter asked Jumbo Cantwell his views about commandeering trains. Cantwell at the time was trying on a uniform that had been presented him by fellow members of Tacoma's gambling fraternity: a longtailed coat with epaulets, dark pants with blue stripes down the leg, a broad-brimmed black hat heavy with braid. "We'll get back there one way or another," he promised, admiring his finery in a mirror. "We ain't too proud to steal a train. Them fellers in Congress has broke the law. Why can't we?"

United States Marshal James C. Drake began swearing in deputies to guard railroad property. Deputies were easy to find: why, the pay was five dollars a day, and room and board. Drake dispatched a dozen to Puyallup where the Commonweal armies were to rendezvous; others patrolled train yards in Seattle, Ellensburg, Yakima, and Spokane.

They were armed with .45s and Winchester rifles requisitioned from Tacoma sporting goods stores, and they carried copies of a restraining order issued by United States Circuit Court Judge C. H. Hanford of Seattle. It prohibited any action which would deprive the receivers of the bankrupt Northern Pacific from the regular use of the line's locomotives, cars, and equipment.

The Seattle Commonwealers under "General" Shepard started for Puyallup on April 28, Jumbo's Tacoma troops a day later. A light drizzle was falling as the unemployed marched down Pacific Avenue that Saturday afternoon, through a thin line of spectators on the plank sidewalks. A guard of honor carried a flag presented the Commonwealers by the local post of the Grand Army of the Republic. It hung limply.

General Cantwell, his uniform partly concealed by a macintosh, followed the flag. He kept the Colonel, his pet Saint Bernard, on a long leash. Some four hundred Coxeyites marched after him. They sang as they went down Pacific to Puyallup Boulevard then over to the river, Civil War songs, and "Good Night, Ladies," and, to an old tune, the new words of "Coxey's March".

## Mark Twain in the Northwest

# Mark Twain in the Northwest

One hundred years ago this week Mark Twain came to Puget Sound on a speaking tour that was to carry him around the world.

He has been credited with saying: "The pleasantest winter I ever spent was one summer on Puget Sound."

The quip has Twain's tone but no one has ever cited the time and place of his uttering it. And considering what happened to Twain while he was here it's unlikely that he would recall his visit with much pleasure.

Twain arrived here dead broke. His publishing house had failed during the Panic of '93, leaving him \$70,000 in debt. His two most recent books, Pudd'nhead Wilson and The American Claimant, were financial flops. His wife was a semi-invalid and two of his three daughters were seriously ill. He professed to dislike lecturing, saying the same old things night after night, but a world speaking tour seemed to offer his only hope of paying off his creditors.

And even that hope seemed dim. His friend Henry H. Rogers, one of the major figures in Standard Oil, warned that he could think of no instance in which a man past 58 had recovered from financial failure. Twain was 60 at the time.

When Twain's party reached Portland from his home in Elmira, N.Y., on Aug. 3 he had cleared \$5,000 from his cross-country lecturing. But prospects in Oregon and Washington seemed dim. The Pacific Northwest was still mired in the post-Panic depression. Bankers in every town claimed they knew the whereabouts of every double-eagle gold piece in the community.

Worse, it hadn't rained since the Fourth of July. The wet side of the mountains was experiencing drought and forest fires. There were great conflagrations in the Olympics, smaller outbreaks throughout the area. Choking smoke hung over the whole region. The sun hadn't been seen for days. Twain, who contributed to the pollution by smoking his usual 10 cigars a day, was suffering from a nasty carbuncle on his neck, a heavy cold and sore throat. He was scheduled to give six lectures in 10 days before sailing from Vancouver for Australia.

In Portland he drew a full house. In Olympia, where he faced competition from a Women's Christian Temperance Union convention and an amateur play, the turnout was so small that the editor of the Standard scolded his readers for their disinterest in culture.

Twain's Tacoma appearance filled the Tacoma Theater. After the performance he was honored at a confabulation hosted by the Tacoma Press Club and, long after midnight, was regaling his hosts with "I- used-to-be-a-newspaperman-myself" stories. One listener said that if the theater talk had been worth a dollar, this was worth at least eight.

In Seattle, facing competition from a performance of "Pinafore" aboard "a real man-of-war" anchored off Madison Park in Lake Washington, an electric fountain display at Madrona

Park and a concert under Japanese lanterns by the First Regimental Band, he nearly filled the Seattle Theater.

By the time he reached New Whatcom and Fairhaven on Bellingham Bay he was exhausted. When the mayor of New Whatcom called at the Fairhaven Hotel to pay his respects he found Twain in the bridal suite, "wrapped in the arms of Morpheus and a luxurious quilt."

His lecture that night was given in the Lighthouse Theater on the fourth floor of a building with no fire escape. Smoke from nearby fires filled the room. After the lecture it was realized that no one had planned a reception. Keys were found to the Fairhaven Businessmen's Club but when Twain asked for a hot whiskey someone had to run to a Greek restaurant, wake the proprietor and get him to boil some water. It cooled by the time the messenger got back to the club. Twain pronounced it satisfactory and asked for seconds.

On reaching Vancouver Twain was so hoarse he almost canceled the lecture. Since it was to be the last before leaving for Down Under, he soldiered on.

Then he learned that the steamer Warrimoo had run aground at the entrance to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and would require repairs.

That enabled Twain's manager to book another lecture in Victoria. The tug Charmer, chartered to take the Twain party to the provincial capital, lost its way in the prevailing haze and arrived five hours after the lecture was to start. Twain gave the talk the next day.

Small wonder then that he was asked, as he boarded the Warrimoo, whether he had enjoyed the local scenery, Twain said he had seen nothing but the ground he walked on and it looked pretty much like any other ground. Then, catching himself, he said, "But really, your scenery is wonderful. It is quite out of sight."

In light of all this, I find it hard to believe that Twain ever described his summer here as the pleasantest of winters.



## McCarver, Carr and Tacoma

### Puget's Sound

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# McCarver, Carr & Tacoma

On the afternoon of April 1, 1868, a tall, blue-eyed man with sandy-gray hair and a face elongated by partial baldness sat astride his worn horse and looked out at Commencement Bay from the bluff above the southern shore, the old Judson claim.

He had ridden north from Portland to study the Puget Sound country and he liked what he saw: an Indian canoe moving across a bay streaked by silt from the river which flowed across tide-flats green with sea grasses; the Mountain high and white against the eastern sky; a small sawmill in a swale of skunk cabbage to his right; to his left a shallow cove; the forest all but unbroken, the land undeveloped, the magnificent sheet of water awaiting ships.

Looking out from the bluff, Morton Matthew McCarver saw not the all-but-empty bay, nor did he smell the clean, thin scent of fir. He envisioned a city: wharves and streets and steamships and locomotives; a county courthouse, perhaps a state capitol; he breathed the heady incense of coal smoke and new-sawn lumber, heard the clang of trolleys and the wail of factory whistles.

But McCarver saw cities wherever he looked. He was a boomer, one of the nineteenth-century Americans irresistibly drawn to undeveloped land, no more capable of resisting the impulse to look at a field and proclaim a metropolis than other frontier types were of foregoing a drink or a look at the hole card.

Booming was his vice.

He shunned alcohol and helped circulate the Northwest's first manifesto extolling prohibition; his language was mild, his family life exemplary though intermittent; he was upright, god-fearing, and a sucker for a stretch of empty waterfront or a hint of industrial development. Though he deplored all games of chance, his optimism about property futures was steady and unearthly. As he lay dying, seven years after his first look at Commencement Bay, his last requests were for someone to read him from the local paper any stories about road building or coal mining.

McCarver was born on a farm near Lexington, Kentucky, in 1807. His father died when he was a child; his mother, a stern woman, brought him up within a religious philosophy that advocated celibacy and deplored dissipation. (He was a lifelong teetotaler but the father of ten.)

The boy ran away to the Southwest at fourteen. Poor, with little schooling and no friends, he found himself competing for work done by slaves. The experience left him with a lifelong prejudice against blacks. He went home, broke, only to have his mother turn him away, saying

they were "dead to each other on earth."

The young man drifted west. In Illinois he found a wife but not prosperity. He fought in the Black Hawk war and, when the treaty was signed opening Indian land in Wisconsin to settlement, claimed the site that became Burlington. When Wisconsin was divided into two territories in 1838, the southern portion became Iowa and Burlington its capital. McCarver was appointed commissary general of the territorial militia. The pay was trivial but the honorific "General" served him the rest of his life.

At the age of thirty-five, after a decade in Burlington, McCarver was the father of the town and of five children, but he was ten thousand dollars in debt, his prospects poor. The price of corn and hogs, the measure by which the farming West judged prosperity, was at a twenty-year low. Iowa echoed with talk of greener pastures. The great migration of 1843 was aborting. McCarver was ready again to move on. There were greater towns to be created beyond the Rockies.

In the spring of 1843, McCarver took leave of Mary Ann, their children, and their town, and joined the pioneers gathering at Independence, Missouri. A man of imposing appearance, the general was elected to the Council of Nine, which governed the wagon train.

The office was no easy honor. Disputes among the nine hundred travelers were frequent. Some were insoluble, some ludicrous. A bachelor had a wagon so large it was called Noah's Ark, so cumbersome it required the muscle of a score of men to get it up the worst slopes. Eventually the council demanded to know what was in it. The owner allowed as how he was transporting near a ton of soft soap with which to woo the womenfolk out west. The unromantic councilmen made him leave it beside the trail for the possible benefit of puzzled Indians.

McCarver played Solomon in such cases but chaffed at the slow pace of the cow column. What if someone else spotted the ideal site for the great city of the West while he was listening to debate about cow-pies in the drinking water? He had struck up an alliance with the captain of the wagon train, a young lawyer named Peter Burnett, who also fancied himself a town builder. After the train reached Fort Hall, about ten miles from present Pocatello, the two men agreed that McCarver should ride on ahead and try to outguess destiny.

The site McCarver selected was near the confluence of the Willamette and the Columbia. They called it Linnton in honor of Senator Lewis Linn, the sponsor of much legislation promoting westward immigration. McCarver deluged editors and other opinion makers with letters booming the prospects of his townsite ("There is growing in a field less than a mile from the place where I am writing a turnip measuring four and one-half feet around but neighboring Portland became the metropolis of Oregon.

Elected to the provisional legislature in May of 1844, McCarver was chosen Speaker. His influence and prejudices were reflected in two of the measures passed that year. One banned the distillation or sale of ardent spirits "lest they bring withering ruin upon the prosperity and prospects of this interesting and rising community." The other threatened black immigrants with the lash if they stayed in Oregon.

Giving up on Linnton, McCarver bought out a settler who had land near the falls of the

Willamette. He farmed, planted an apple orchard, and sought political appointment. Mary Ann brought the children west but died the following year. McCarver soon married Julia Ann Buckalew, a twenty-two-year-old widow who had lost her husband on the trail. She brought one child to the marriage and bore McCarver five others. When gold was found in California, McCarver joined the stampede south.

A few days of panning on the Feather River convinced him that he would do better at promoting than at prospecting. He persuaded John Sutter, Jr., to put him in charge of laying out a town at the juncture of the Sacramento and American rivers, but the elder Sutter overruled young John and assigned the work to a lawyer who had just arrived from Oregon. Thus McCarver found himself displaced by his former partner, Peter Burnett, who made one hundred thousand dollars from the arrangement and went on to become California's first governor.

McCarver bought land in Sacramento, built a store, invested in a river schooner (though even a river trip made him seasick), brought his family south, and entered politics. He won election to the town council, the territorial legislature, and the California constitutional convention. At Monterey, where the state constitution was drafted, McCarver wasted his influence and oratory on a bigoted attempt to win acceptance of an article barring free blacks from California ("They are idle in their habits, difficult to be governed by the laws, thriftless and uneducated"). While he was thus fruitlessly engaged, floods ruined his Sacramento property.

McCarver gave up on California and went back to Oregon to tend his apple orchard. It did well.

"McCarver's Big Red Apples" were noted for beauty and flavor. He bought a bark, *Ocean Bird*, and shipped some apples to Hawaii but sold her after discovering that going to sea was no cure for seasickness. He invested in a river steamer but it blew up. During the Indian War he served as commissary general of the Oregon militia, and as spokesman for civilian opposition to General Wool.

When Isaac Stevens resigned as governor of Washington Territory, McCarver sought the appointment but lost to a Virginia lawyer, Fayette McMullen, who wanted the job because the territorial legislature had the power to grant divorces. (McMullen stayed in Washington only long enough to get a bill of divorcement.) McCarver joined in the gold rush to the Fraser River and the silver rush to Idaho, where he ran a general store in Bannock City only to lose it in a fire.

Time was running out on the old boomer in 1868 when he heard that the Northern Pacific planned to end its transcontinental on Puget Sound. He was a grandfather now. He had left scratch marks on the continent but had not created the city of his vision. Here was one last great chance. Securing the promise of financial backing from Lewis Starr and James Steel, president and cashier of the First National Bank of Portland, he rode north alone to try to anticipate the site of the terminus.

On the map Commencement Bay, accessible to Snoqualmie and Naches passes and offering deep water close to shore with protection against all but north winds, looked promising. He went there first. The reality was even better than the promise, and he did not bother to look at other locations. Instead he rode to the Puyallup Reservation and far into the night studied the land office maps and talked to the government people.

They told him the head of the bay, where Milas Galliher had started up the old Delin mill only to find the foundations so uncertain that boards came out as wedges, afforded poor anchorage and was silting up. The old Judson claim was high bluff. But at Shubahlup there was deep water close to a gentle slope. The next day McCarver went over to meet Job Carr.

Morton Matthew McCarver at sixty-one was a promoter, a salesman, an optimist. Job Carr at fifty-five was a man of hope and good will rather than driving ambition. McCarver was dissatisfied with his achievements, sure that destiny had intended him to do more. Carr thought a railroad should come to Shubahlup but had been content to wait for others to recognize the merits of the site, meanwhile working at the mill, or painting and papering the houses of other settlers.

McCarver talked of the terminal city that would transform the gentle slope into Manhattan, of capitalists ready to build a steam-powered sawmill on Commencement Bay and run a railroad north from Portland even before the Northern Pacific came across the continent. Carr listened to this heady stuff, and to the role he could play in tying together east and west of the nation that had so nearly blown itself apart north and south. He did not hesitate. He would not stand in the way of progress.

If McCarver's company needed the Shubahlup waterfront to bring in the railroad, he would not stand in their way. They could have all but the five acres immediately around his cabin. The other 163 3/4 acres he agreed to sell for \$1,600, of which \$600 was to be cash, the rest in land McCarver owned in Oregon City, a 100 acre plot that Carr eventually sold for \$724, making the payment actually \$1,324, or \$8.08 an acre. Job retained a claim farther west which included the Puget Gulch.

"Bully! Shout hosannas to all the listening of the earth!" Anthony wrote in his diary after his brother came up to Steilacoom with news of the deal. "Great cause for rejoicing have I. Long will I sing paeans of joy for this day's news. The Spring of Youth has been found. Now will I live, aha!" Later he added, "Bully for Shubollop. It's going to come out after all."

Howard was less euphoric: M. M. McCarver bought Father out 600 coin and 100 acres land in Oregon. . . Bully for the company. We may iscum talla alki [get rich byandby." He set to work finishing the cabin on his claim.

McCarver hurried back to Portland to check with his backers before signing any papers. When he returned to Shubahlup he brought with him Lewis Starr, the bank president, himself no tower of financial strength, and two friends from Oregon City, David Canfield and Thomas Hood.

They camped for a night below the Stadium Way cliff near the foot of Seventh Street, beside an Indian burial canoe and a boulder marked with hieroglyphs (a treasure casually buried under debris from the grading of Pacific Avenue a few years later). Starr was so impressed he claimed the site, using his brother's name lest he antagonize bank clients in Portland.

McCarver filed a preemption claim on adjoining land to the west, where Stadium High School and the Stadium Bowl were later built. Hood and Canfield took contiguous claims on the high land behind the Judson claim.

The solitude of Shubahlup ended. The rhythm of axes striking living wood, the screech and

thud of falling timber, the clang of sledge on wedge, the beat of hammer on nail echoed across the bay as claimants worked on the cabins they needed for shelter and to prove up. Tom Hood was first to finish and in June moved into a cabin at what is now M and South Ninth.

McCarver hired Anthony Carr to build a log cabin for him on the curve below the cliff just east of Stadium High; he called his place Pin Hook and early in August brought his wife and their three youngest daughters, Virginia, Bettie, and Naomi up from Portland, to the delight of bachelors as far away as Olympia and Seattle.

Once back on the scene, McCarver hired a civil engineer from Olympia to survey the former Job Carr property, on which he planned to create a town which he called Commencement City. Howard and Anthony ran the lines. The survey was completed on August 13. It was foggy that morning and to everyone's surprise a steamer began whistling from out in the bay, where no steamer had been before.

Anthony, who happened to have his rifle, fired a shot to answer each whistle. Crewmen from the Eliza Anderson used the sounds to guide them through the fog to the shore with the first passengers to land from a steamer on Commencement Bay. They were Mr. and Mrs. Clinton P. Ferry, who had come to join the McCarvers, Mrs. Ferry being one of Mrs. McCarver's daughters by her first marriage.

Territorial Governor Marshall Moore, a lawyer from Yale who had risen to the rank of major general during the Civil War, paid a visit soon afterwards. On leaving he asked McCarver to find him some property. McCarver told Anthony Carr that the governor's presence would benefit the entire community. Anthony borrowed McCarver's beloved old gray, galloped to Olympia, and sold Moore forty acres.

With some of the proceeds Anthony bought a load of sawed boards from the Galliher mill, rafted them to Shubahlup, and started a big frame house. He was working up nerve to propose to Josie Byrd, the daughter of the owner of the gristmill.

Dreams were coming true and more were aborning. There were happy rumors everywhere. "Whether construction of the Northern Pacific Railroad is delayed longer or not," said a story in the Seattle Intelligencer, "coming next after that in importance is the projected railroad from Portland to Commencement or Puyallup Bay, and the laying out of a new town on that Bay.

It is of great significance, as showing the estimation in which our country and the Sound are held by capitalists abroad; it is of further significance in the warrant it gives of increase of business. Backed as the originators of this new town are by immense capital, with the charter of a railroad behind, the hope is reasonable that an impetus will be given to business on the Sound which will never be withdrawn."

Such talk, especially the references to the nonexistent charter and the inflated capitalists, reflected McCarver's talent as a promoter of empty acres. He was booming the new town with every trick of the land-development trade. He showered friends, acquaintances, and especially editors with effusions about the bounties of the bay ("I can frequently with my bare hands throw out enough smelt to supply a camp of fifty men").

He contributed to out-of-town papers a history of railroading in which he started by taking

credit for originating the idea of a transcontinental line and ended with the terminus at Commencement Bay.

He plugged away even in letters to his backers ("My family say that they have never lived in a new place they liked so well"). And he put every bit of money and energy he possessed behind his words. He bought another 280 acres from the owners of nearby claims. He went prospecting for minerals that would add to the economic base of the terminus.

With Howard Carr and Dan Canfield, McCarver started up the Puyallup Valley in late August to check out reports of iron and coal. The rumored iron proved to be a deposit of inferior bog ore. McCarver returned to town, but the younger men rode on.

They camped the night of September 1 on the North Fork of the Puyallup. "Went on up the mountain 6 or 8 miles," says Howard's journal for the next day, "when we struck a 12 foot vein of coal and turned back. Camp on South Prairie Creek." Nothing came of their discovery for several years, and neither Carr nor Canfield benefited from it, but reports of a bituminous bed up the valley boosted interest in the town.

By the end of August all the land on the south side of the bay from the waterfront to the crest of the hill had been claimed. Prices were going up. Job Carr had received eight dollars an acre for land that included waterfront. In August Howard sold two acres back from the water for forty dollars, but lost the money out of his pocket while paddling back to Shubahlup from Steilacoom. "Lost two lots overboard from the canoe," was the way he put it.

In mid-September, to everyone's delight, Philip Ritz of Walla Walla came down on the steamer from Olympia. Ritz was a handsome and cultivated man, a scientific farmer, a contributor of learned letters to assorted editors, a member of a group of Washingtonians who were vainly, it developed seeking a franchise from Congress to build a railroad from Portland to Puget Sound. He was also thought to be an agent for the Northern Pacific on an inspection trip.

After spending a night with McCarver, Ritz expressed enough enthusiasm that the old boomer tried to sell him one-fourth interest in the entire development project, on condition that Ritz devote his full attention to its promotion. Howard Carr later rode down to Olympia to offer to sell him forty acres.

Nothing came of either proposition, but Ritz's visit did put a new name on the map. Ritz was enthusiastic about *The Canoe and the Saddle*, a humorous account by Theodore Winthrop, scion of the Massachusetts Winthrops, about a visit to Washington Territory in 1853. Winthrop wrote the book in 1859, but it was not published until after he attracted considerable attention by becoming the first Union officer killed in battle in the Civil War.

It then became immensely popular. In one of his humorous efforts, Winthrop deplored the "sibilantous gutturalty" of the Salish languages but proclaimed Tacoma melodious. He admired the Mountain, too. "Of all the peaks from California to Fraser's River," he said of the view from Commencement Bay, "this one before me was royalest. Mount Regnier Christians have dubbed it, in stupid nomenclature, perpetuating the name of somebody or nobody. More melodiously the Siwashes call it Tacoma, a generic name also applied to all snow peaks."

As far as is known, W. H. Cushman brought the first copy of *The Canoe and The Saddle*

(and four other books by Winthrop) to Washington Territory shortly after the war. Cushman settled in Olympia, and it is probably no coincidence that a Tacoma Lodge of the Good Templars was organized there on September 2, 1866, and a hotel called the Tacamah House opened for business in the capital eight months later.

During Ritz's visit to Olympia, he read Winthrop's book and was struck by the beauty of the Indian word. While he was visiting McCarver and Job Carr he marveled at the loveliness of the Mountain and spoke glowingly of the aboriginal word. About a month later, after a series of conversations involving McCarver, the Carrs, John W. Ackerson of the Hanson, Ackerson and Co. Mill, and McCarver's Portland partners, Lewis Starr and James Steel, there was general agreement that Tacoma would be a better name than Commencement City for the city they were planning.

McCarver always credited Ritz with the suggestion; Ackerson later claimed he was first to suggest the name, having heard it from a Puyallup whom the whites called Chief Spot. Steel's version was that Ackerson favored naming the town after another Puyallup "chief," Sitwell. Job Carr had favored Eureka but switched to Tacoma after Ritz's visit.

Late in October, McCarver and his secretary C. P. Ferry were in the offices of the First National Bank in Portland. After discussion with his backers, the old boomer told Ferry, whose handwriting was handsome, to cross out "Commencement City" on the survey map that had been drawn in August, and write in "Tacoma." This was done but McCarver did not immediately have the plat filed with the Pierce County auditor.

Anthony Carr had decided to create a separate town on his claim. On November 30 he appeared in the auditor's office in Steilacoom with a plat for a small community which he called "Tacoma." Three days later General McCarver showed up with his papers, only to find that Pierce County already had a Tacoma. So he called his site "Tacoma City." (Five years later the Northern Pacific platted "New Tacoma." Eventually they coalesced.)

The first newspaper to mention Tacoma was the Portland Commercial on November 16, 1868, before either McCarver or Carr had filed their plats. The Commercial spoke in terms of the new community's threat to Portland and warned that construction of a Tacoma and Vancouver railroad would sap the life blood of Oregon.

The Seattle Intelligencer on November 23 spoke in a more friendly vein about the new community. In a story obviously based on a letter from McCarver, the Intelligencer declared: "The name of the new town laid off by General McCarver and known as Commencement City, has been changed to Tacoma after the Indian name for Mount Rainier. It is reported to us that great progress is making in erecting houses on the site, and the building of roads has commenced."

It was almost the last friendly word from Seattle.

**Mercer's**

**Maidens Skid**

**Road**

**The Viking Press, 1960**

**P. 58-66**

## Mercer's Maidens

The bulk of the white population on Puget Sound was young and unmarried and masculine. Only one adult out of ten was a woman, and rare indeed, was the girl over fifteen not spoken for. At least three-fourths of the men in town had to be chaste or sinful and even the latter course led to the question of whom to be sinful with. With a population of less than two hundred in 1860, the community was too small for adultery to be inconspicuous. That left the lusty with the choice of marrying Indian girls, a solution frowned on although practiced, or of taking Indian wives.

The Indian girls were not unwilling, either way. The Salish culture had a different sexual ethic from the white; men who wanted relations with Indian maidens had little difficulty persuading the girls or their parents. But there were other problems. The whites had brought venereal disease, and it was ravaging the tribes. Nor did the Indian habits of sanitation lend enchantment; some tribes piled excrement around the house walls to add warmth in winter; even the more fastidious girls reeked of smoked fish and washed their hair with urine.

Although there is little reason to think that the bearded and unwashed Anglos were much less noxious than the girls, the men believed that they smelled better. In spite of smells there was considerable intercourse between the settlers and the tribeswomen, but much of it was desperate and impromptu.

The plight of the Puget Sound male was indeed sad. The Herald, upSound at Steilacoom, came out with periodic editorials bemoaning the impossibility of adequate sexual activity. Where demand was so sustained and so obvious, somebody was certain to try to hustle up an adequate supply. That somebody was a Barbary Coast gentleman named John Pennell.

How Pennell came to desert San Francisco for Seattle is uncertain. Probably some seaman from one of the lumber ships told him of the yearnings of Puget Sound males; and with the supply in Pennell's line almost exceeding demand along the Barbary Coast, he may have decided to prospect the virgin territory to the north.

In the summer of 1861 Pennell debarked from a lumber schooner on the sand spit beside Yeslers Mill. A single glance at the pedestrians on the dusty reach of Front Street, who were as predominantly male as the crew of a ship, must have confirmed the reports he had heard in San Francisco. An examination of Seattle's economic base could only have made business prospects seem bright. Here was a town of bachelors, a town with no commercial entertainment, a town with an established payroll. Here was a town just waiting for the likes of John Pennell.



Within a month of his arrival there stood on the shore of the bay, not far south of the point where the logging road reached the mill, a pleasure palace of rough-sawed boards, the pioneer of a long line of establishments which were to give this part of town a distinctive character. The lot on which this bawdy-house was built was "made land," a fill created on the tide flats by pouring in the sawdust from Yeslers Mill. It was not desirable land, for the flats stank when the tide was out; but Pennell could not be too particular, and the site had the advantage of being only a few minutes' walk from the mill and in clear view of the ships entering the harbor.

The Ilahee, as Pennell named his house, was in the great tradition of the Old West. The oblong building of unpainted boards housed a large dance floor, which was flanked by a long bar. Along one side of the floor was a hall leading to a number of small rooms. Pennell imported three musicians (a fiddler, a drummer, and an accordion player) from San Francisco; the rest of his help was native. He traded Hudson's Bay blankets to local chiefs for a supply of Indian girls. These recruits were vigorously scoured, their long hair was combed and cut, they were doused with perfume and decked out in calico.

A girl would dance with anyone without cost, but her escort was expected to buy a drink for himself and his companion after each dance. (The bartender usually substituted cold tea for whiskey in the girl's glass, though the charge was for whisky.) When a man tired of purely social intercourse, he could always buy a couple more and lead his partner down the hall to one of the little rooms.

There was no attempt to conceal what was going on at the water's edge. One historian has argued that it was the establishment of Pennell's place that led straight to Seattle's present-day dominance of the Northwest, the scholar's thesis being that word swiftly spread throughout the timberland about the "entertainment offered at the foot of the skid road in Seattle. The town had," in that historian's words, "the best mouse trap in the woods; hob nails and calks were deepening all the paths to its door."

While this economic argument gives more importance to sex than even Freud would be likely to admit, there can be little doubt that Pennell drew his clientele from all over the Sound country, and that the men who came to town to enjoy the girls also spent money on more legitimate trade. Some respectable members of the Seattle community accepted Pennell's establishment as a non evil; others deplored it but failed to convince Sheriff Wyckoff that he should close the place as a nuisance.

Somehow the name Ilahee - which meant homeland in Chinook didn't catch on. It may have been among the strait laced that the establishment then came to be known as the Mad House, but the nickname stuck and was later applied to other houses whose stock-in-trade was of Indian origin. Those who did not call the brothel the Mad House sometimes referred to it as the Sawdust Pile or Down on the Sawdust. The inhabitants were known as Sawdust Women.

During a depression period in San Francisco at the end of the Civil War, Pennell rounded up a handful of out-of-work Barbary Coast girls and shipped them north. They were the first white women north of the Columbia to ply the oldest profession. Though it is doubtful that prostitutes unable to prosper in San Francisco were unduly attractive, their presence in the Ilahee, according to a chronicler of the period, "had a powerful imaginative effect on the whole

nude population of the Puget Sound country, and old-timers still relate fabulous legends from those happy days."

The legends were the standard ones of the red-light district. There was the tale of the ladylike whore who murdered the men she learned were carrying large mounts of money. There was the legend of the girl who fell in love and demurely denied her swain the favors she still sold, albeit unwillingly, to everyone else. And, Of course, there was the story of the girl who married a client and moved into one of the white clapboard houses on the hill.

That some Seattle families grew out of love affairs in the Mad House is not inconceivable. Women were few and a man could not be choosy, especially a man who patronized the establishment. There were, however, many who considered such marriages undesirable, and among them was a righteous and energetic youngster named Asa Mercer, fresh from the midwest.

Young Mercer was the brother of Judge Tom Mercer, a solid citizen who had arrived in 1852 with a team of horses and had prospered as Seattle's first teamster. Asa worked as a carpenter on the new Territorial University building, which was going up on the hill northeast of the skid road, and when the building was completed he moved inside as president and faculty of the institution.

One day during a conversation on the territory's topic of shortage of maidens worthy to become the wives of pioneers Judge Tom remarked that in the name of posterity the territorial government should appropriate public funds to bring west a party of acceptable young ladies. The idea had an understandable appeal to the twenty-two-year-old university president, who was unmarried and moral; he took it up with the governor. William Pickering, Washington's fourth governor," was a husky, spade bearded man in his mid-sixties; he agreed as to the need but sadly called Mercer's attention to the lack of public money. Asa decided to carry off his venture as a private enterprise.

He talked to a number of Seattle's frustrated young men and, after pocketing an unspecified amount of contributions, caught a ship for Boston. The daughters of that sedate community were not to be talked into venturing west but in Lowell the young proselyter found more attentive listeners. Lowell was a textile town, racked with depression since the Civil War had cut off Southern cotton from its looms, and there Mercer found eleven virgins willing to forsake the land of the cod.

They traveled from New York, crossed the Panama Isthmus, rested briefly in San Francisco (where some enterprising Californians tried to talk the maidens into easing that region's shortage of pure females) and went by schooner to the Sound. They debarked at Yeslers wharf about midnight, May 16, 1864, and were welcomed by a delegation headed by Doc Maynard.

With the exception of one girl who took sick and died unwed, all the girls soon found husbands. The details of the courtships are unknown, and it is uncertain whether the maidens married the men who had financed Mercer's trip. As for Asa, his grateful contemporaries elected him unanimously to the upper house of the Territorial Legislature.

The young legislator thought less of laws than lasses. He wanted to import young women

not by the short dozen but by the hundred. Soon he was circulating through the territory, talking confidentially to lonesome bachelors. His proposition was simple. For three hundred down paid in advance, he would bring a suitable wife.

There were several takers, how many only Mercer knew, but enough so that he started east in high spirits and with great confidence. He talked of bringing back enough girls to provide mates for every single man west of the Cascades.

Everything went wrong. Lincoln was shot, and Asa, who had known him slightly, lost a potential ally. Mercer didn't know President Johnson, but General Grant, who knew from personal experience how lonely a man could get among the rain forests, promised to lend Mercer a transport, but the Quartermaster General quickly pointed out that such use of federal property was illegal.

Then, out of nowhere, appeared an angel, a wartime speculator named Ben Holladay, who offered to buy the surplus transport and carry Mercer's five hundred charges around the Horn to Seattle "for a minimum price."

Mercer quickly signed a Contract. The trouble was he didn't have five hundred passengers; he didn't have half that many; he didn't even have a hundred. For this Mercer blamed the New York Herald and its cross-eyed editor, James Gordon Bennett. The drive had been going well, Asa wrote his backers, until it attracted the attention of the Herald, which ran an "exposed" of the project.

The expose implied that most of the girls were destined for waterfront dives on Puget Sound and if anyone did gain a legal mate, she must steel herself to the fact that he would probably be ugly, unnumbered, illiterate, and probably diseased.

Massachusetts authorities investigated too, though hardly thoroughly. Since no politician is likely to admit that young women would do better to leave his state, the report implied that Mercer's girls might be headed for a fate worse than Mormonism.

Besides getting a bad press, Mercer was up against the fact that it was easier for his prospects to say they'd make the voyage than it was for them to walk up the gangplank leaving behind them all that was home.

When the day came to sail, January 6, 1866, fewer than a hundred nubile passengers appeared. Mercer sold passages reserved for girls to men and married women, but he was far short of filling his five hundred reservations. Holladay demanded payment in full. He didn't get it, but he got every cent Mercer had. Once at sea, Asa figured his financial worries were over.

Three months later the ship docked at San Francisco. The captain ordered everyone ashore. This, he said, was as far as he was going.

Mercer argued and lost. When they put him ashore he rushed to the telegraph office and wired Governor Pickering: "Send two thousand dollars quick to get party to Seattle. Pickering wired back his best wishes, collect. In desperation Mercer appealed to the skippers of the lumber schooners that plied between Seattle and San Francisco; these gentlemen, pleased at the prospect of feminine companionship on what was usually a dull voyage, took them fare free.

A few of the girls decided to stay in California and who can blame them? Mercer must have been tempted to stay. He had spent every cent that had been given to him; he had brought back fewer girls than he had promised, and those not on schedule. He must have known the home folks weren't going to elect him to the legislature for this performance.

A Seattle woman who has been working on the Mercer expedition for some years tells me that she has been unable to find the Herald story.

On Mercers return to Seattle rumors spread, wild and ugly. On May 23 the Puget Sound Daily had a front-page story saying that "Honorable A.S. Mercer will address the citizens of Seattle and vicinity, at Yeslers Hall this evening, for the purpose of refuting the numerous stories that have been circulated in regard to himself, in connection with his immigration enterprise. The editor urged, "Turn out, everybody, and hear the other side of the question."

The report of the meeting is irritatingly incomplete. Rev. Daniel Bagley was called to the chair, who briefly stated the object of the meeting, which was to hear an address by Mr. A.S. Mercer in regard to his experience while in the East conducting the famous immigration enterprise. Mr. Mercer then addressed the audience, to which a marked attention was paid, the speaker being frequently applauded.

The audience was composed, in part of the fair immigrants who had so recently arrived, and it is a fact that has no little weight in the vindication of Mr. Mercer's reputation against the assaults that have been made upon it, that those immigrants place the utmost confidence in him. At the close the immigrants made a few very appropriate remarks, after which the meeting adjourned, apparently with the best of good will towards Mr. Mercer and all concerned."

The night after Mercer's speech a "Marvelous Magical Entertainment" was held at Yeslers. No matter how impressive the legerdemain and the paper also gave it a rave notice - it could hardly have been as remarkable as Mercer's feat of pacifying with words the angry men who, after waiting almost a year for delivery of the women they had ordered, found themselves without brides and minus a hundred down.

Mercer himself married one of his imports, Annie Stephens, a few weeks later. They soon removed to the Rocky Mountains area, where Asa lived out his days as a rancher, as far from ships as he could go.

John Pennell faded from the Seattle scene at almost the same time as Asa. He left for parts unknown. But the type of institution that he had founded on the sawdust fill south of Yesler Way did not vanish with him. Other entrepreneurs built bigger and better houses. The honky-tonk was there to stay.

The Skid Road had been born.

## Murray Morgan on Murray Morgan

# Murray Morgan on Murray Morgan

Murray C. Morgan was born in Tacoma in 1916, the year the Smelter was rebuilt and Pierce County began commandeering land to present to Uncle Sam in return for the Camp Lewis payroll. The room in which I was born looks out over the gulch that Allen Mason bridged to open the North End to residential development. From that room one sees the bay, the Cascades, the Mountain.

The enclosed world of the ravine with its singing stream (now buried as part of a storm sewer project), the expanse of salt water leading off to every seaport in the world, the ethereal bulk of the Mountain sometimes manifest on the eastern horizon still mean, to me, living in Tacoma.

One of my first memories is of being held up to look over the railing of the balcony on the second floor of the house to watch a long line of great gray warships steam down the East Passage, round the point where George Vancouver dined with the Puyallup, and anchor in the bay Charles Wilkes named Commencement.

The war to end wars - the first war of my lifetime - was over, though children still sang, "Kaiser Bill went up the hill to take a look at France; Kaiser Bill came down the hill with bullets in his pants." The visit of the Pacific fleet marked victory. Marked, too, Tacoma's linkage with the military, a growth industry more reliable than railroads.

From our house on North Thirty-first Street on quiet nights one could hear the trains clanking along the waterfront on track laid by the old tunnel builder, Nelson Bennett; hear, too, the long whistles, mournful and romantic. We used to play by the tracks, though we were not supposed to, and the great game was to put a penny on the rail, then retrieve it after the train had passed.

The penny would be paper thin, misshapen, and almost too hot to touch. The money from the railroads was thinning out too. Tacoma's romance with rails was fading.

In 1920 the Northern Pacific moved its traffic department to Seattle; soon afterward the rest of the western headquarters went north. The Tacoma Lumbermen's Club telegraphed a complaint that this was "like throwing over an old love for a new." But the NP left its shops and their payroll in Tacoma as a sort of alimony, and the city acquired the graceful old Headquarters Building at Seventh and Pacific Avenue as an auxiliary police station.

Tacoma's affair with the Union Pacific had ended in a breach of promise. As for the Chicago, Milwaukee, and St. Paul, it had found little profit in reaching the Pacific. The railroad managed to go broke during the great twenties boom. Sold at courthouse auction it passed into the hands of Wall Street receivers who had no sympathy for Tacoma.

When Osaka Shosha Kaisha, the Japanese shipping line which gave the Milwaukee Line considerable business, shifted its terminus to Seattle, the Milwaukee's western headquarters

went too. Tacoma, a railroad creation, was left as a way station. Only the Union Depot and streets bearing the names of NP officials - Wright, Villard, Oakes, Ainsworth, Wilkeson, and Sprague - recall the days when Tacoma had a special relationship with its rails.

As children we didn't care about the loss of the termini. What bothered us was the loss of our Mountain. Tacoma had never acquiesced in the decision by the United States Geographic Board that the great peak was Mount Rainier. We called it Mount Tacoma and wanted the world to do likewise.

In the twenties, Tacoma created another justice to the Mountain Committee to get the bureaucrats to give us back our Mountain.

The committee marshaled considerable support. Theodore Roosevelt, Ambassador James Bryce, Mary Roberts Rinehart, Amelita Galli-Curci, and Will Rogers were among those who favored Mount Tacoma. Tacomans combed the records for proof that Theodore Winthrop knew what he was writing about when he said the Indian name was Tacoma.

Others researched Peter Rainier and announced triumphantly that he was fat, myopic, funny-looking, foreign, and had fought against the United States in the Revolutionary War. Tacomans persuaded a national convention of Indian leaders "to pray to the Great Spirit Kitchemanitou to restore to the Indians Tacoma, meaning Nourishing Breast." School children wrote essays, local historians wrote letters to editors, and everybody wrote poems.

My father wrote one of many poems called "The Mountain That Was God," the title deriving from a highly suspect "Indian" legend, and my mother, part Indian, wrote "The Mountain That Was Ours." And they lost again. The Geographic Board clung to Rainier.

Tacomans then petitioned Congress for relief from the intolerable burden. The Senate, in its wisdom, passed a bill on April 21, 1924, declaring Mount Rainier to be, henceforth and forevermore, Mount Tacoma. But the Public Lands Committee of the House of Representatives failed to report the bill to the floor. So Mount Rainier it remains, except in Tacoma, where we usually refer to the ethereal presence simply as The Mountain.

Tacoma hasn't even had good fortune with nicknames. Back in the 1880s the eccentric eastern promoter, George Francis Train, saddled the community with the sobriquet "City of Destiny." That one went sour during the Panic of Ninety-three. When the Milwaukee Road and the Union Pacific rekindled civic expectations early in the twentieth century, the Chamber of Commerce came up with the slogan "Watch Tacoma Grow."

That proved to be about as exciting as watching coral accrete. Tacoma grew by only 16,000 between 1910 and 1920, achieving a population of 96,965. Seattle during the same ten years gained 127,000 inhabitants.

Tacoma then styled itself the Lumber Capital of the World. So, for a time, it was. Logging trains continued to roll in from the mountains, bearing to the saws the carcasses of giant trees. The ships of the world came to the wharves below the bluff to pick up lumber from mills that lay like beached sea mammals at the tideline. By night one could trace the curve of the harbor by the ruby glow of the screens atop the waste burners.

Few questioned the practice of discharging industrial waste into the sky for all to share. Particulate matter from the mills, like the chemical exhaust of the Smelter, smelled like dollars in a community anxious for payrolls. Nevertheless the old-fashioned sawmill was an endangered species.

Costs rose as lumbermen chased the virgin forests deeper into the surrounding mountains. Distances were greater, the slopes steeper. The cream had been skimmed. There was decreasing profit in the simple geometry of transforming round logs into rectangular planks. A new technology arose, more sophisticated and more capital intensive. Logs were not merely sawed; they were broken up by machines and chemicals to be reassembled as plywood, fiberboard, cardboard, and newsprint. St. Regis Paper Company bought the land where the great pile driving war had been waged in the 1880s between John Burns and the Tacoma Land Company.

They built the Kraft mill which has helped to stabilize the economy while making its contribution, too, to what is known as the aroma of Tacoma. West Tacoma Newsprint was built at the mouth of Chambers Creek not far from the site of Andrew Byrd's grist mill, where Job Carr found occasional employment while waiting for the city of his dreams to materialize.

One by one the waterfront sawmills I knew as a boy disappeared, usually in a burst of flame, a rain of cinders, and an investigation by the insurance company. Tacoma's publicly owned power system, part of the heritage of the Angelo Fawcett period, lured electrochemical industries such as Penn Salt (now Pennwalt), Hooker Chemical, and Ohio Ferro Alloy to the tideflats to replace the lost payrolls. They were most welcome. But they made Tacoma, increasingly, a community in which the basic economic decisions were made in distant board rooms.

Tacoma's struggle long since had become not to surpass Seattle but to survive as something other than suburb or satellite to the metropolis, to remain a community with a distinct economic base and personality. During the Depression, survival was all. Any activity that kept people in town was welcomed. Banks might fail and mills might close but the oldest profession flourished in Tacoma with a vigor unsurpassed since Harry Morgan was blindfolding the police department with dollar bills.

During the Thirties, Tacoma received more national headlines than at any time since the great boom of the Eighties - most of them inadvertent and unfavorable. It was the city's misfortune to be the scene of two kidnappings at a time when the murder of Charles and Anne Lindbergh's son made kidnapping the most newsworthy crime. Charles Matson, the young son of a prominent Tacoma physician, was taken from his North End home by a gunman, sexually assaulted, and murdered. The manhunt went on for years. The FBI file on the case remains open but the killer was never caught, or identified.

George Weyerhaeuser, scion of the timber family (and now president of the Weyerhaeuser Company), was pulled into a car as he walked home from grammar school. He was released unharmed after several days, and his kidnappers were captured and convicted; but though the story had a happy ending, it helped fix on Tacoma the reputation of being kidnap capital of the West.

Even successes went quickly sour. In 1940 Tacoma realized an old dream of direct

connection with the Kitsap Peninsula. The Narrows Bridge was opened to traffic fifty-one years after George Eaton, a clerk in the NP Land Department, proposed a Tacoma to Port Orchard railroad to link the terminus of the transcontinental with the proposed Puget Sound Naval Shipyard.

But Galloping Gertie, as the slender, swaying suspension bridge was nicknamed, went into the Sound almost before the echoes of dedicatory speeches died down, the victim of design changes brought about by demands for economy in government including bridge construction. It was not to be rebuilt until 1950.

The New Deal, American rearmament which followed the rise of Nazi Germany, and World War Two lifted Tacoma out of economic stagnation. During the war, everything Tacoma produced was in demand, especially soldiers. Fort Lewis, Madigan Army Hospital, and McChord Air Field, which had been acquired by the War Department in 1938, expanded hugely, while the tideflats sprouted shipyards. Not since the days of Stampede Tunnel construction had Tacoma shared so fully the heady excitement of common purpose and overtime pay. But with the outbreak of peace it was back to the same old problems in the same old city.

The generation that had been off to the wars returned to a town strangely unchanged. Tacoma had won its fight for survival, but Downtown was a relic of the nineteenth century. It was like a pressed flower, a memory of when Tacoma had been invited to the dance.

City government, too, was something out of the past. Tacoma voters adopted the commission form of government in 1910, when that was the latest municipal style, like the grid pattern on streets. For a time the system of elected department heads who sat as a council to make policy energized municipal affairs. The combination of legislative and administrative authority allowed able men, like Ira Davisson, the utilities commissioner, to sell their plans to the public and carry them out.

Tacoma's light and water departments provided electricity and water to the citizenry and industries at rates as low as could be found in the nation. The public works department, too, was innovative and efficient. But inevitably innovation settled into routine. Timeservers became policy makers. Vision perished. Municipal politics became largely a question of who ran the police department, because that's where the money was.

The mayor might be titular head of Tacoma but he had direct control only of the garbage department while the commissioner of public safety appointed the chief of police. The mayoral race drew two or three candidates at most; the lineup in the public safety commissioner primary usually looked like the start of the Boston Marathon.

Tacoma had an open town tradition. There had been a "crazy house" on the hill above Old Town before the village was incorporated. New Tacoma was not far behind in providing commercial sex as an amenity. Harry Morgan gave gambling a good name.

Prohibition brought the speakeasy. Night life in Tacoma meant bookie joints, slot machine and pinball routes, unlicensed drinking spots, and an abundance of brothels, most of them in Opera Alley, between Broadway and Market Street. They offered all the glamour of a fastfood franchise, but the operators paid high rent. Reform advocates were assured that Seattle was worse and more



prosperous.

Control of night life in Tacoma centered on two local organizations that grew up during Prohibition. Sometimes they shared, more often they competed. There was little rough stuff, just politics and corruption. Each side financed one or more candidates in the quadrennial election of safety commissioner. The side that won the election got to run things without raids while its rival planned better precinct organization.

Change came, surprisingly enough, from within the police force. Some idealistic young men returning from military service objected to selective enforcement of the vice laws. Styling themselves a Vigilance Committee they raided some joints that had paid their dues. The safety commissioner was embarrassed. His embarrassment increased when other cops with ties to the out of power organization began making raids too.

The commissioner suspended several policemen for excessive diligence. The Civil Service Board, after a prolonged hearing, ruled that a policeman could not be suspended for enforcing the law, no matter on whose behalf he was enforcing it.

In the ensuing uproar a reform candidate for safety commissioner, backed by church groups, won election. Unfortunately between the night of victory and the day of inauguration he made a tour of inspection of the places he was pledged to close and was tape-recorded in intimate conversation with a charmer of no discernible virtue. His reform administration thereafter labored under difficulty.

Whenever enforcement became onerous to the forces of the night somebody would phone the commissioner, play the tape-recording and suggest the virtues of moderation in all things. Moderation became so rampant that the military threatened to put the town off limits. The American Social Hygiene Association sounded the alarm on venereal disease. National magazines ran articles deploring "Seattle's Dirty Back Yard." A legislative committee headed by State Senator Albert D. Rosellini held the town spellbound with a televised investigation of Tacoma vice that made city officials look, if not wicked, awfully silly.

Tacomans had had enough. A charter proposing a council/manager system of municipal government was drawn up by a freeholders committee. It won adoption at the general election of November 1952 - the, one in which General Eisenhower was elected president. Tacomans went on to elect an elitist city council, perhaps the best-educated city council in the history of American governance.

Its nine members averaged six years of college education. In their collective wisdom they hired a city manager of rigorous honesty, who appointed an old shoe chief of police competent and content to live on his salary. The climate changed. Tacoma won a Municipal League rating as an All American City, night life disappeared as a serious political issue (and almost disappeared altogether), and the populace had time to address more important problems, such as Tacoma's role as second city and worry about law enforcement in surrounding Pierce County.

The City of Destiny remains unsure of what its destiny should be. The land is much changed from that which George Vancouver called "the most lovely country that can be imagined" where "the labour of its inhabitants would be amply rewarded in the bounties which

nature seems ready to bestow on cultivation." Few would care to depend on cultivation of the land today.

Nor will Tacoma ever be the metropolis of the Pacific that Job Carr envisioned that Christmas Day when he stood in his canoe and shouted "Eureka." It is unlikely to become, as Allen Mason hoped when his earlier dreams of greatness had faded, a Philadelphia to Seattle's New York, though the possibility remains that it will be, as R. F. Radebaugh of the Ledger once predicted, a Liverpool to Seattle's London.

The Tacoma of today, 187 years after Vancouver's visit, 128 years after Delin started his mill among the skunk cabbages, 115 years after Job Carr exulted in his first sight of the Sheltered Place, 106 years after the Northern Pacific chose Commencement Bay as its terminus, 81 years after Nelson Bennett undercut the Cascades, 76 years after the crash stilled the great boom, remains a city set in beauty, a city small enough for people to say hello on the downtown streets, a city where it is safe to walk at night and a morning's drive takes you to mountain or ocean, a city of easy access to parks and playgrounds, and to the more metropolitan delights of Seattle: in short, a pleasant place to live.

An anonymous visitor to the Pacific Northwest, quoted in the January 12, 1894, issue of Harper's Weekly, had it right: "Well, gentlemen, if I were a man of wealth seeking a home and investments on Puget Sound, I would live in Tacoma and invest in Seattle."

## Nelson Bennett and the Stampede Pass Tunnel

# Nelson Bennett and the Stampede Pass Tunnel

On January 22, 1886, Captain Sidney Bennett, temporarily resident in Yakima, received a telegram from his younger brother Nelson, then visiting in Philadelphia. The wire said the Bennett brothers had won the contract to drive a tunnel 16 feet wide, 22 feet high at the crown, 9,850 feet long through the north shoulder of Mount Rainier. "Get going," said the kid brother, who was boss.

Sidney Bennett needed no urging. Haste was imperative. He and Nelson were not only undertaking an assignment of formidable difficulty, but they were betting more than they possessed that they could finish the job in twenty - eight months. Their contract pledged a one - hundred - thousand - dollar performance bond plus 10 percent of the contract price if they failed to have trains rolling under the Cascades by May 22, 1888.

Back in Philadelphia where the bids had been opened, the defeated contractors, who numbered a dozen, were predicting that the Bennett brothers' victory would not make them but break them. Their bid had been so low - less than half that by some of their more experienced rivals - that even if they beat the deadline they could still lose a fortune. But if anyone could get the job done on time, it was agreed, the Bennetts were the ones.

Nelson Bennett was forty - three years old, five feet nine inches in height and almost as wide: put a mustache and goatee on a bulldozer and you would have a reasonable facsimile. Born in Canada, left fatherless at six, Nelson quit school at fourteen to work on a farm. He came to the United States during the Civil War, helped build Army barracks for a time, then caught on as a brakeman on the Dixon Air Line.

Nelson was in Detroit in 1864 when he received a letter from one of his brothers in Pennsylvania: "I have found the Eldorado - Come at once. I am boring for oil and we can slip into a fortune as easy as eating mince pie." Nelson could not draw his railroad pay until the end of the month, so he got himself fired on his next run. He arrived in the oil fields with two dollars, worked four weeks as a day laborer, then passed himself off as a contractor and agreed to bore a six - hundred - foot well ("I hired a competent man to manage then stood round looking wise until I learned something").

He sank twenty - seven wells before the boom tapered off. He took a small fortune west but lost it in land speculation in Missouri and Iowa. Next he taught school in Missouri (he had gone through the sixth grade), fought Indians (twenty personal acquaintances were killed in the race wars of the West), prospected in the Dakotas, organized a mule - train freight service in the Southwest. He was in Salt Lake City, broke again, when the copper rush to Montana began.

Bennett contracted to move a quartz mill from Ophir, Utah, to Butte, six hundred miles, on mule back, and did it. He put the profits into building Butte's first street railway and the

profits from that into moving a steam sawmill into the Lost River region of Idaho. He was rich again.

His Rocky Mountain activities brought Bennett into contact with Washington Dunn, who was building the Utah and Northern for Jay Gould. Bennett teamed up with Dunn, doing the outside work while Dunn hustled contracts. They undertook to dig a thirty - five - mile irrigation ditch in Idaho to carry Snake River water to 270,000 acres.

The job required six hundred men, twelve hundred horses, and an arsenal of drilling and blasting equipment. On this project Sidney Bennett, Nelson's leaner and meaner older brother, a cavalry captain in the Civil War, demonstrated what an admirer called "a peculiar genius for slave-driving." Dunn died, and Nelson Bennett went into the negotiating end of the business, leaving Sidney to direct field work. The Bennetts won the contract for the first 134 miles of the Cascade Division, Pasco to Ellensburg, before securing the Stampede assignment.

A human bulldozer and a slave - driving genius were needed on the Stampede. just getting men and machines to the work site required prodigious effort. Nelson shipped west five engines, two water wheels, five air compressors, eight seventy - horsepower boilers, four large exhaust fans, two complete electric arc-light plants, two miles of six - inch wrought - iron pipe, two miles of water pipe, two fully equipped machine shops, assorted tools, thirty - six air - drilling machines, several tons of steel drills, two locomotives (named "Sadie" and "Ceta" after his daughters), sixty dump - cars, two sawmills, and a telephone system.

On the east side of the Cascades, the rails toward the mountains ended just beyond the village of Yakima; on the west they had been run from Tacoma through Buckley to Eagle Gorge. Beyond the railheads only vague pack - trails twisted through the forests, up to the mountainsides, to the portals.

An even sketchier path went up through the pass to connect the east and west work sites. It was so indistinct that the veteran John McAllister and a companion lost their way and their horses in a snowstorm, and survived for a week on nothing but boiled oats. When a search party reached them McAllister was shoveling a path down the mountain through ten feet of snow.

"Have you any grub?" McAllister asked his rescuers.

"Yes."

The old settler sat down and wept.

Through such country, in the dead of winter, Sidney Bennett had to move an industry, a work force, and living facilities, against a deadline. The first wagons started from Yakima only eleven days after the contract was signed. In the dry, rocky hills around Yakima the crews chipped away at the road with picks, but as they approached the mountains they came to a stretch of fifteen miles where a warm Chinook wind had melted the snow.

The wagons sank above the axles. So they built a moving roadway of planks. Boards were laid end to end across the bog, the rear boards being hand - carried forward as soon as the back wheels of the wagon cleared them. It proved impossible to keep the wheels on the planks with the horses hitched in the normal way. They rigged block and tackle, fastened one end of the rope

to the wagon tongue, the team to the other end, and drivers slogged ahead of the wagon shouldering the tongue to guide it. When all went well they could make a mile a day.

Things were worse in the mountains. The trail led along gorges five hundred to a thousand feet deep; it crossed creeks and rivers; it threaded through a tangle of forest. Where the grades were steepest and not even double - teaming could move the wagons, the block and tackle was rigged from trees to allow the horses to pull downhill. In some stretches the machinery was put on scows that could be skidded across the frozen snow. The weather was awful, alternating rain and snow. The winds could knock down a horse.

An advance party under Master Builder W. H. Buckner reached the east face on February 9. "Before we could get to the portal," he reported, "we had to shovel a road through snow 800 feet long and eight feet deep. At the face of the tunnel there was 200 inches of water falling from the top of the bluff 170 feet, which had to be turned.

There was ice eight to ten feet deep across the cliff. We made a cut through snow and ice twenty feet wide, eight to ten deep and 150 feet long just to get at the portal at the east end. In order to reach the west portal it was necessary to shovel a trail through snow four to ten feet deep, four feet wide, and four miles long."

Hand - drilling on the approach to the east face began February 13. Entries in Sidney Bennett's work journal are laconic:

Feb. 15. Work on excavation on approach to tunnel will be prosecuted until point of heading is reached.

March 15. 36 inches of snow fell within the last 36 hours.

March 21. Rained for last 24 hours.

March 27. Began work on the "bench" inside east portal.

March 31. Commenced timbering; put 12 sets in - the first used.

April 1. Sixty men worked in east end. Completed excavation of the approaches to the heading at west end.

April 2. Commenced running the heading of the west end. The extent of the day's work was 51/2 feet by hand drills. The excavators at the east end have made to this date 200 feet.

April 6. Harder rock - blue trappite in the west end.

May 1. Snow retarding the work in the east end.

May 5. The first man injured. It was by falling rock.

On the trail, organization replaced improvisation. A hundred wagons were moving men and machinery up the roads. Stations had been built every twelve miles. These were "rag shows" - tent camps - where teamsters could get food and sleep. It had been found that sleds that worked on the slanted snow fields

could be hauled across mud as the freezing line rose with the temperature. At the portals the men lived in real houses, though on the east side workers had to shovel away fifty feet of snow to reach solid ground for the foundation of what was called Tunnel City.

The first compressor boiler left Yakima on February 22. It was eight weeks reaching the portal but on June 19 the equipment was assembled. Sidney's notes say triumphantly, "Two Ingersoll drills started in the east end - the first machinery that started."

If the Bennetts were to beat the deadline, it would be with the help of technology. They planned to attack the rock with six Ingersoll Eclipse drills at each end of the tunnel, the power to be generated on the east side where six large boilers were installed to supply four 480 - horsepower compressors. A pipe 12,500 feet long was run over the pass to carry air to the drills at the west face.

Captain Sidney hoped to drill 400 feet of rock a month when under full steam.

More than 122,000 cubic yards of rock were to be chipped out of the mountain. Just finding a place to put the debris was a problem. On the west end the rock was run down a spur for a quarter of a mile, then dumped into a ravine that was eventually filled and used as roadbed for the track. A visitor who rode one of the dump trucks reported that it went downhill "with a speed that made a person's hair rise like the quills of a fretful porcupine."

Reporters trooped "to the front." Those from Tacoma tended to be enthusiastic, those from Seattle and Portland dubious. A favorite rumor was that there had been an engineering miscalculation and when the east side and west side meet in the middle they'll be a mile apart." Tilton Sheets, a civil engineer and surveyor, visited the digs in July to assure readers of the Tacoma Ledger that all was well. His tone was that of a recruiting sergeant:

Any man who will work can find employment and command from two dollars all the way to three per day according to how he can work. If he is worth three he can get it.

How do the men live - their board and all that? Very well - as cheaply and well as they could live in Tacoma. The contractors have built camps and the men are well fed - plenty of beef and good food otherwise, for all of which they pay \$4.50 a week. Of course it's roughing it a little - that's understood. Every man provides his own blankets. Good meals can be obtained at points along the road towards Ellensburg at two - bits, but up towards the summit they come higher, naturally enough - say four - bits. For parties visiting the scene on a flying excursion it is advisable to take provisions along.

Saloons? Oh, yes - too many of them. That's one trouble. Many of the men get caught by them every pay day and don't work till they have to.

Another Ledger reporter met a professional gambler coming down from the west portal. He was in complete agreement with Surveyor Tilton about the opportunities for diversion on the mountainside:

His smile was contagious even across a hundred feet of space. He carried only a little hand satchel such as ladies affect. Shaking this and smiling over the clash of ivory and what - not within, he asked: "Poker? Roulette? Chuckluck? Try your hand. Anything you wish." Pleased at

the reception of this sally, he continued. "What's your racket? I can tell you, it's no good up there. I've been all through it, from Ellensburg to the Gorge, all through. It's worked out.

"There's saloons and restaurants every fifty feet. You can get a good meal for two - bits - as good as you can at Tacoma. There's nothing left in it for us. What's your game? Whiskey?"

Such prosperity and luxury proved more than some men could stand. The week that Tilton Sheets' effusion appeared in the Ledger, Captain Sidney penned an unusually long entry in his daily journal:

About 150 men in east end struck for nine hours as a day's work. [They were working twelve - hour shifts, seven days a week.] It lasted two days but did not prevail. In this matter the sheriff of [Yakima] county was called upon the ground to prevent disorder and injury to persons or property. One man was shot by him in his attempt to escape arrest on a criminal charge.

In a letter to Nelson, who was at company headquarters in Tacoma, Sidney remarked that they were using three crews at all times, "one coming, one drilling, one quitting." But the work went on.

August 9. Electric lights were extended in the west end, having previously been placed in the east end. The rock in the east end is getting so hard it has to be blasted with No. I Giant Powder.

August 18. One man killed and another injured by blasting.

Sept. 1. Three Ingersoll drills started for the first time in the west end.

At this point Sidney added up progress and estimated what remained to be done to meet the deadline. They would have to average 13.58 feet a day through May 21, 1888. The crews had yet to make as much as 13 feet on any day.

Sept. 5. Work was advanced so far that the smoke and gas incident from blasting had to be remedied, and the steam fans were applied, which helped clean the tunnel thereof.

Sept. 25. Drilling delayed because of the breaking of rock above the face of the tunnel caused by blasting shots. Five days to remedy.

Oct. 1. The end of this month found us 33 feet short of the daily average required.

Oct. 15. Air boxes were extended 265 feet in the west end.

Oct. 29. The tunnel is in bad shape. The roof is cracking and rock is falling, which causes delay.

Oct. 31. This month showed a gain of 17 feet over the daily average required.

Nov. 1. A Foreman and five men have quit because of some grievance and left camp.

Nov. 18. Snow sheds over the dump track to be built.

Nov. 29. A land slide into the crib became so extensive we had to stop work in the east end for a week, which delays progress.

Nov. 30. This month work fell behind 231/2 feet.

Dec. 1. Work delayed by rain which caused east end of tunnel to be flooded.

Dec. 31. There was a loss of the required average in December of 9 feet. Five months of machine work in tunnel during year. 48 feet behind schedule.

The delays in construction and the increasing stridency of the campaign in Congress for forfeiture of the unearned land grants caused NP President Harris early in 1887 to decide to lay a temporary switchback track through the pass. That way train service could begin before the tunnel was complete.

A thousand more men were hired in March to shovel snow off the mountain above the tunnel so that rails could be zig - zagged over the summit. With the realization that they would have a direct connection with the east a year ahead of schedule, Tacomans were caught on a rising tide of enthusiasm. Tourist excursions were organized to visit the end of the line and applaud the workers as they marched off to the front, shovels on their shoulders.

"Beyond the end of the track," wrote the Ledger's front line correspondent, a clearing very like a new country road extends along the edge of the river and fringes the hill and is soon lost at the turn. A few men may be seen lifting and letting fall their shovels here and there where the road leads over into full view. Columns of blue smoke rise above the trees at irregular intervals.

A few workmen are building a footbridge across the river back of the station. The large tents are in the midst of a partial clearing and about 30 horses and mules stamp and whinny under the trees while pack men are binding to their backs bales of hay, barrels and bundles of every description, while for every switch of the tail or misstep of the burdened animal his heart is sent to perdition forty times in the loud prayers of the drivers.

They are leaving now, as late as 11 A.M., starting away by the trail, which, a mere pathway, begins at once a precipitate ascent of the mountain. They go in single file, the drivers or pack men more noisy than before, keeping the horses in line. A few laborers have just come in and are directed on toward the picks and the new dirt and the smoke in the shadowy gap further along.

A sound, as of distant cannonading, seems to shake the earth as it rolls down from out of the mysterious shadows of the gulch and beyond. Every few moments a thunder and crash through the woods tells of the blasting rocks and the fall of giant trees.

And this is the front.

By March 28, 1877, the shovel brigade had cleared enough roadbed for the start of track - laying above the tunnel. The rails sashayed up the slope in a series of three switches on each side of the mountain. At each switchback the train would run up to a dead end and back onto the track climbing to the next switch. This Z - route reduced the grade to 297 feet per mile.

The last spike on the switchback was driven at two minutes past six on the afternoon of June 1. Assistant General Manager J. M. Buckley (for whom the Northern Pacific named the town of Buckley) served as master of ceremonies. Mrs. H. S. Huson, wife of the assistant project engineer, made the final tap on the spike with a bottle of champagne. An experimental



first train - two locomotives, a baggage car, caboose, and a wooden - seated coach - was sent from Yakima to Tacoma on June 6.

The route having been tested, Charles Wright was carried over it in triumph the next day in his private parlor car.

Scheduled traffic over the Stampede began July 3. The first regular overland train to the east - four coaches, with twenty passengers - left Tacoma at 1:45 P.m. The first westbound passenger train arrived at 7:15 - seven hours late.

On the Fourth of July Tacoma for the second time celebrated the completion of the transcontinental. President Cleveland was invited to speak but the celebrants had to settle for lank, scruffy Eugene Semple, the governor. A grandstand was built at the present site of Stadium High School. The papers claimed that eighteen thousand visitors came to town, which would have been more than the combined populations of Seattle and Olympia.

Festivities lasted three days, marred only by a dispute in the hose - laying contest between the Seattle and Tacoma fire departments. Somebody recognized one of the Seattle volunteers as a professional sprinter who specialized in running at carnivals with the handicap of a fifty - pound flour sack on his shoulders.

The switchback served more as a symbol of the Northern Pacific's intention to complete the route than as a serviceable means of transportation. The track had been laid so hastily on frozen ground that much of it had to be replaced after the first thaw. The grade was too steep to permit heavy freight. Crews drew hazard pay for running the huge decapod lokeys that were hooked fore and aft to trains of five passenger coaches or five light - loaded freight cars for the eight miles between Martin on the east side and Stampede on the west. There was a brakeman for every two cars.

Notwithstanding the precautions there were accidents. Engineer Harvey Reed was taking a decapod over the pass with a load of heavy bridge timbers. The engine broke down. Reed tried to jockey the load over the top with a little Baldwin, Engine 457. He pushed the freight car up the first leg of the switchback but, as he backed up the second leg, snow jammed into the sand pipes. When he called for sand, none spilled onto the track.

The wheels of the Baldwin began to spin on slick steel. Engine and car slowed, halted, and, after a desperate wheel - spinning pause, slipped backwards, slowly at first, then faster and faster. Reed and his firemen jumped, landing safely in snowdrifts. Engine and car sped down the slope, rocking around curves until they came to a curving trestle where two men were working.

The engine struck one man killing him instantly. His companion dropped face down on the ties. Just as it reached him the engine lumped the track, hurtled over the side without touching him, and plunged into the ravine.

Engine 457 was restored to service, as was Engineer Reed. He was at the throttle of the little Baldwin three months later when it was overtaken and rammed from behind in a tunnel. The coal tender was knocked loose but there was enough water left in the boiler for Reed to get back to Marlin. For years old - timers yarned about the arrival of the bob - tail lokey.

While the trains ran the slalom course over the summit, Captain Sidney's work gangs miled below, none too expeditiously. There were slides, strikes, cave - ins, deaths from blasting, and some mayhem at management level. Sidney persuaded Nelson to persuade President Harris to remove the project engineer, with whom Sidney did not see eye to eye.

And somebody, somewhere along the line of authority, decided to furnish slave - driver Sidney with a carrot as well as a club. A bonus was offered. Each month, for every foot gained over the necessary average of 13.58 feet a day, laborers doing continuous duty were paid twenty - five cents extra, drill men and expert workmen, fifty cents. The pace increased phenomenally.

On September 1, 1887, a year after the Ingersolls were put at both faces, work was 410 feet behind schedule. In the next eight and a half months they made up 4541/2 feet - 1321/2 in April alone. It cost the Bennetts thirty - three dollars extra for every man who had worked steadily that thirty days - and it saved the performance bond.

Moving into May, when each blast might mean open space ahead, the Bennetts offered a thousand dollars to the first man through the bore with the fringe benefit of a steak dinner and whiskey for the side he represented. Each team picked a tough little powder - monkey who could wiggle and struggle. Foremen had problems keeping the chosen men out of the area of flying rock when shots were touched off.

Shortly after noon on May 3, 1888, the men who rushed into the smoke and rock dust after a blast felt a draft. The west side representative wriggled into the hole and collided, head - on, with the eastern representative.

As the delegates butted each other, their constituents pushed in behind, heaving and struggling, until at last the man from the west was shoved through - skinned, bleeding, triumphant. For the west this offset the statistic that through the long campaign the east had moved more rock.

Captain Sidney's wife had long insisted she would be the first person to walk under the Cascade range. She at least was the first of her sex. On her first crawl, Mrs. Bennett, a lady of heroic proportions, became stuck. The eastern team managed to pull her back by her ankles.

Chagrined but determined she went down the tunnel, shed some undergarments, and, according to legend, sent out for a bucket of lard to coat her shoulders and hips. This time the men of the west gallantly pulled her through. She arose, her dark hair powdered with blasted basalt, and uttered the immortal words, "The drinks, gentlemen, are on my husband."

In Tacoma, along Cliff Avenue, the cannons thundered again. For the third time the Northern Pacific had been completed, this time for real.

**Nena Jolidon-Croake, Mystery Feminist of**

**Tacoma The Tacoma News Tribune**

**August 4, 1994**

**P. FP12**

## Nena Jolidon-Croake, Mystery Feminist of Tacoma

It is remarkable how little biographic information we have about the life of Dr. Nena Jolidon-Croake of Tacoma, one of the first two women to serve in the Washington State Legislature.

She may also have been the first female physician in Pierce County. But we don't know where she spent her youth, where she was educated, when she came to Tacoma, where she went when she left town in 1923, or what she did before her death was in Los Angeles in 1934.

Her public record during approximately a quartercentury in Pierce County is that of an active and effective feminist. She served as president of the Washington Equal Suffrage Society. She was a comrade in arms of Tacoma's Emma Smith Devoe in the successful 1910 campaign to amend the state constitution and give women the right to vote.

In the first election to be held after the adoption of the Fifth Amendment she filed for one of the two seats from the 37th Legislative District, which embraced much of downtown Tacoma and the North End. Five other candidates, all male, also sought the two positions.

Her slogan was "Consideration for Women is the Measure of a Nation's Progress." During her sixweek canvass she spent afternoons at parlor gatherings in the homes of women she had found to be sympathetic during the suffrage campaign. The issues she raised were the need for legislation opposing child labor and capital punishment, favoring vocational training in public schools, juvenile courts and establishment of a teachers' reserve fund.

When not teaklatching, she went door to door talking to those she described as "the stay-at-homes and the sometimes disinterested." Evenings, she went to public forums to debate her rivals. Any free time she spent cranking the phone and expounding on the need for women lawmakers.

"Now that woman is enfranchised," she argued, "it is only just and fair that she be given a trial. If she fails it will be no greater crime than it is for the man that sits by her side, and we know that men have not always made a success in law making. In going to the legislature, I will make but few promises, but this I will say: I am willing and eager to learn and will always be found at my post, doing the very best my conscience dictates."

The six candidates - two Republicans, two Democrats and two Progressives - were competing for two positions. The races were not for individual seats. The two candidates from

the 37th receiving the most votes would go to Olympia. It was a close-run race. Dr. Jolidon-Croake finished second, nine votes behind one of the Republicans but 68 ahead of the other Republican.

Her election was challenged by a Democrat who finished fourth. He complained she had violated the rule against campaigning within the polling station. But she explained that she had used her machine (she was one of the first women in Tacoma to drive) to bring seven friends to the polls. They were already committed to vote for her victory and she had not needed to campaign. Her victory was certified.

Her husband, John B. Croake, a former Pierce County deputy sheriff and former U.S. district customs collector, whom she had married in Victoria, B.C., "sometime around 1890" died at the age of 63 during her first year in office. She did not file for reelection but continued to live in the family home at 513 S. L St. until 1923 when her name disappears from the city directory.

Nothing more was heard about her in the papers until 1934 when a oneparagraph item from The Associated Press with a Los Angeles dateline appeared in The News Tribune reporting her death.

Other information about her career is sparse. She first appears in the local census records in 1900, where she is listed as Mary Jolidon-Croake. She told the census taker that she was 44 and had been married 20 years. In the 1910 census she gave her first name as Nena, her age as 45, and again reported she had been married 20 years. In 1920 she reported herself a widow and declined to give her age.

If her 1900 response about age is accurate she was born in 1856.

The most complete information about her antecedents is found, surprising, in an article that appeared in the great Paris weekly *L'Illustration*, which in 1913 told its readers about the election of a woman of French extraction to the legislature of an American state.

"The cradle of her family is Vauthiermont in the ancient county of the Haut-Rhin," said the paper. "Her greatgrandfather was one of the French volunteers enrolled in the United States to take part in the revolutionary war of independence. After his return to France the soldier of Washington became a teacher. He was mayor of Vauthiermont in 1814, at the time of the invasion of the Allies, and was killed by the Prussians.

"The grandfather of Mme. Jolidon-Croake, also a teacher in Vauthiermont, quitted France for America in 1826. He took with him two children, one of whom, Francois Jolidon, returned often to the old country and kept alive the most intimate relations between the American and French branches of the same family."

She is first listed in the Tacoma City Directory of 1903 as Nena Jolidon Croake, "successor to Sommer & Croake, osteopath."

This raises the question of when and where she studied medicine. Osteopathy is based on theories advanced by A.T. Still in 1871. The first school of osteopathy was founded in Missouri in 1892, but by then she seems to have been married to Croake and living in Tacoma.

In a form filled in for the 1913 legislative session, Dr. Jolidon-Croake's response on the line for higher education was simply "Yes." It seems probable that she studied privately with Dr. Everett A. Sommer, an osteopathic physician who lived only a few blocks away on South G Street and maintained offices in the California Building.

Let us hope some history student decides to do a thesis on this enigmatic, early state legislator.

## **Nicholas Delin and his Mill**

### **Puget's Sound:**

#### **A narrative of early Tacoma and the Southern Sound**

**Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1979**

**P. 76-82 (excerpts)**

# Nicholas Delin and His Mill

On April Fool's Day 1852 a long-nosed, spade-bearded Swede was grubbing in the golden skunk cabbage at the southeastern edge of Commencement Bay. It was hog-work, leveling the soggy silt washed back by the tides from the out fall of the Puyallup River, not the type of labor a master carpenter preferred. But Nick Delin was preparing the ground for industry.

In this patch of bog, where the no-see-ums hovered and the blackbirds flashed their underwing rubies, he would build a dam to impound the waters of two rivulets flowing from the gulch to the south and use the water from the millpond to drive a saw in a mill of his own devising. The spade-bearded Swede in the swamp at the far edge of nowhere, crushing insects against his forehead as he rubbed back the sweat, was the cutting edge of technology on the Northwest frontier.

We know little about Delin's early life. He was born Nicholas Dahlin somewhere in Sweden sometime in 1817. He was apprenticed as a carpenter and after learning his trade crossed the Gulf of Finland to St. Petersburg in Russia, where he worked as a cabinetmaker.

After five years he left for New York, then left New York for Massachusetts, left Massachusetts in 1849 with some 150 other adventurers bound around the Horn for the California gold fields, left San Francisco for Portland the next year, and in 1851 moved on to Puget Sound.

The scattered farms of the Bush-Simmons party had given rise to a village. There Delin found work and learned the brief history of Olympia. Big Mike Simmons had completed his grist mill below the falls of the Deschutes in 1847, furnishing it with grindstones chiseled from granite found on Eld Inlet. Now the settlers could eat their own wheat, though the first years were unusually dry, the crops were small, and most grain was needed for seed.

The gristmill in operation, Simmons started building a sawmill. Seven other settlers teamed up with him and on August 20, 1847, they entered a "corporate commercial venture" to be called the Puget Sound Milling Company. The mill was built half a mile below the falls, far enough down the river that logs could be floated in from the inlet.

It was amid this change and turmoil that Nick Delin, the quiet Swede, reached Olympia and quickly attracted attention by his competence. The demand for lumber was growing; new mills were being built up and down the Sound. Delin found financial backers for a mill on

Commencement Bay.

After he smoothed out the ground around what is now Twenty-fifth and Dock streets in Tacoma, Delin hired Sam McCaw, a young Irishman who lived near Steilacoom and had a team of oxen, to drag the foundation timbers into place. He paid \$150 for three days' work, an extraordinary price at the time. Most of the other work, Delin did himself. The mill stood on tall pilings, a gaunt shed facing the bay with a broad trough extending down into the stream (Delin Creek) up which saw logs could be moved.

A little to the south, Delin built his house, twenty-four by thirty feet, one and a half stories tall, its exterior of upright planks, the inner walls of hand-planed cedar weatherboard twelve inches wide. It was simply but handsomely furnished, for Delin was not only cabinetmaker but Scandinavian.

Nearby was a typical pioneer garden, a bit larger than most since it supplied food for the mill hands: corn, beans, pumpkins, squashes, potatoes, peas, turnips, cabbages, melons, cucumbers, beets, parsnips, carrots, onions, tomatoes, radishes, lettuce, parsley, sweet fennel, pepper grass, summer savory, and sunflowers. Delin had a few chickens, a dog and a cat, but he had yet to find a wife.

He needed only three or four helpers in the mill. Jacob Burnhardt, a twenty-nine-year-old German who had come out from Illinois, built a log cabin at the edge of the bluff near today's Seventh and Pacific, but Delin built small houses near the mill for his other workers. Into one of them a young English couple moved: William Sales to work in the mill, his twenty-four-year-old wife, Eliza, to cook. On October 23, 1853, she gave birth to their son, James, the first white child born in what is now Tacoma.

The mill started cutting lumber sometime late in 1852. The Puyallup Indians thought it a wonderful show, watching solemnly as one of the mill hands rolled a two-foot fir log onto the crude carriage, fastened it with iron dogs, and Delin shoved the lever that released water down the flume. The mill wheels slowly turned and the muley saw rose and fell against the face of the log. Yellow sawdust cascaded to the floor and the air grew heavy with the scent of fresh-cut wood.

Delin's mill could do two thousand feet a day on the days when the saw didn't hang up too often. It took him nearly six months to make enough lumber to form a shipload. Then, since it all had to be rafted down the creek and out to the George W. Emery and hand-loaded over the side, several more weeks passed before the brig sailed for San Francisco. But Commencement Bay was now a port of call.

Most of Delin's logs were brought in by settlers who were clearing their land. He paid not in cash but in lumber. He ran an ad in the *Washington Pioneer of Olympia*: **SAW LOGS! SAW LOGS!** The undersigned will let a contract for furnishing his mill with saw logs on the following terms: he will allow \$6 per log to be paid for in lumber at \$20 per thousand. Application to be made immediately at his mill on the Puyallup Bay.

In the fall of 1853 the local population was increased by the arrival of the first party of settlers to struggle over the Cascades. A wagon train, led by James Longmire, had come up the

Yakima Valley and through the Naches Pass-the route taken in 1841 by Lieutenant Bob Johnson of the Wilkes Expedition-rather than following the Columbia to the Cowlitz, then dog-legging north.

The Longmire party expected a wagon road but found only the incline trail that had been widened in places that summer by a party of west-side settlers hoping to encourage immigration. The trail was a torment. The wagons crossed the Naches River sixty-eight times.

At one point on the west side the party had to slaughter some oxen to provide rawhide ropes to lower wagons down a cliff. But thirty-four of the thirty-six wagons and all 171 pioneers made it to the Sound. Nick Delin had not only a fresh labor supply but a local market for lumber as they scattered to homesteads around Pierce County.

One wagon brought Peter Judson, forty; his wife Anna, thirty-six; their sons Steven, fifteen, and Paul, thirteen; and their niece, Gertrude Meller, thirteen, who had lost the rest of her family to cholera on the trail. Originally from Cologne, Judson had lived in Illinois before starting for California; along the way he changed his mind and joined the Longmire train.

His fellow German, Jacob Burnhardt, was ready to give up on Puget Sound. Judson bought Burnhardt's cabin at the foot of today's Stadium Way for thirty dollars and filed claim on 321 acres stretching from Seventh to Twentieth streets.

Such land as was naturally clear, about six acres in all, they immediately sowed with grain and in the summer of 1854 harvested oats where the post office now stands and wheat near the Union Depot site. The Judson boys threshed out thirty-five bushels of wheat with flails and rowed it to the Simmons gristmill on the Deschutes for grinding.

Young Steve yoked the family's six oxen and snaked logs down the gully the Indians called Shu-bahl-up, "the sheltered place"-today's Old Town. The logs were stored in a lagoon, then towed one at a time by rowboat to the Delin mill. With the aid of one feller, a Swede named Peter Anderson, Steven could keep ahead of Delin's saw. Besides supplying Delin with sawlogs, his new neighbors provided the thirty-seven-year-old bachelor with a wife.

On November 25, 1854, Gertrude Meller, then fourteen, married the mill owner in a ceremony performed at the Judson's new house on the present site of the Union Depot. Portly little Sherwood Bonney, another member of the Longmire party, who had just been elected Pierce County Justice of the Peace, performed the ceremony. There was now a community of whites on the south shore of the bay.

The Sales had staked a claim on the bank of the Puyallup, where they had as neighbors three German-American veterans of the Mexican War-Jacob Kershner, Peter Runquist, and Carl Gorisch-as well as Adam Benston, a Scot who had arrived as a servant of the Hudson's Bay Company. On the waterfront west of the Stadium gulch, a cooper named Chauncey Baird had built a small cabin alongside a big shed in which he assembled fir barrels.

These he sold to John Swan and Peter Reilly, the first commercial fishermen on the bay. When the salmon were running, Swan came up from Olympia and with Reilly dragged in enormous catches with seines set between Shubahlup and Cho-cho-chluth-"the maple wood"-



where the Smelter now stands. There are no recorded figures, but pioneer memoirs spoke of hauls of two thousand salmon. The fish were brined and shipped to San Francisco.

With logging, sawmilling, farming, barrel making, seining, and fish-packing under way the little community seemed ready to coalesce into a town. Instead there was war, and all was lost.

## **Norman Smith the Port Angeles**

### **Promoter The Last Wilderness**

**University of Washington Press, 1955**

**P. 88-90**

# Norman Smith the Port Angeles Promoter

Hundreds of the colonists [of the failed Puget Sound Cooperative Colony] had come to love Port Angeles and stayed on, their hopes rising and falling with the rumors of the coming of the railroad. Most of these rumors centered around the activities of a handsome, pink-bearded surveyor, Norman R. Smith, son of Victor, heir to a tradition.

After his father's death Norman had been taken East. He went to school in Ohio. He served for a time as a page boy in Congress. He went to California and learned surveying under the redoubtable George Davidson - the same Davidson who, as a youth, had surveyed Juan de Fuca Strait. Then young Smith returned to Port Angeles.

He showed his father's energy, his father's impatience, his father's judgment, and great personal charm. He was elected mayor and, while mayor, wooed and won away judge George Venable Smith's young wife - a marriage that rocked the community. He was sent east to try to retrieve for Port Angeles the position of port of entry, which Port Townsend had stolen back, and he returned with a government promise to rate Port Angeles as a sub-port, which was something.

It was after this trip that Smith, who liked to think in terms of millions and was forgetful of his small creditors, encountered his tailor on Front Street. As the tailor approached, obviously intending to raise the subject of his bill, Smith pivoted gracefully and began an earnest conversation with a storekeeper. Timing his movements by the tailor's reflection in the store window, he managed to keep his back firmly to his creditor, who, in extremity, drew from a sheath his tailor's scissors and with a flourish trimmed off Smith's coattails.

Norman Smith was convinced that the Union Pacific would approach Port Angeles from the west, coming in between the mountain and Lake Crescent. So to gain control of the right of way he bought one iron rail, sawed it in two, and had it packed up to the pass, where he personally spiked it to the ties, becoming the proprietor of the Shortest Railroad in the World. No one ever tried to buy it from him, though.

In 1893 a railroad to connect Port Angeles with Everett was proposed. The sponsors brushed aside the objection that lying between the two ports was a lot of salt water. That, they said, could be solved by a rail ferry. But, they admitted, there was one little difficulty - money. It would help considerably if, as a token of good faith and sincere interest in the Port Angeles & Everett railroad, the people of Port Angeles, who would benefit immensely, would raise, say, \$350,000.

A mass meeting was held and the money pledged, with Smith making spectacular offers

which some say totaled more than fifty thousand dollars. He didn't have fifty thousand dollars, nor did many of the others have the amounts they subscribed, except in land, the value of which the owners were inclined to overestimate. But it didn't matter. The railroad was never started, and no one lost the money he didn't have.

So it went, with the Oregon Railroad & Navigation not building a railroad in 1895; the East Clallam & Forks not building in 1896; and a putative syndicate of Chicago millionaires taking out a franchise and hiring a local man as engineer in 1898, but neglecting to supply him with locomotive or track.

In 1903 it was Smith's turn again. He interested Eastern capital in the Port Angeles Pacific, which was to run to Grays Harbor - incorporating the Shortest Railroad in the World as part of its track, Smith said. The company got a franchise. It got a right of way through town. It cut ties and it laid track as far as the city limits.

It sent an engine - the Norman Number One, it was called - and it sent a flatcar, on which Norman Smith placed bleachers and took some fifty friends for a triumphant ride. Then it went broke. Smith hurried East, came back with a promise from an insurance company for two million dollars, and was hailed yet again as invincible. But the two million dollars never materialized, the receivers did, and Smith gave up. He moved to California, where he died in 1954, at Crescent City, not far from the reef where his father had gone down on the Brother Jonathan.

## Not Much in Puget Sound Impressed Early Day Travel

Writer **The News Tribune**

March 2, 1995

P. FP14

# Not Much in Puget Sound Impressed Early Day Travel Writer

Albert Richardson was one of the first professional newspaper travel writers to visit Puget Sound. That was in the summer of 1865.

After Robert E. Lee's surrender at Appomatox in April effectively ended the Civil War, companies with contracts involving the delivery of mail to the West offered Schuyler Colfax of Indiana, the newly elected speaker of the House of Representatives, an all-expense tour of places needing mail service, including "special coaches for crossing the continent and unusual facilities for studying the vast and varied interests of the West, yet in their infancy."

Colfax invited four sympathetic newsmen, including Richardson, to accompany him on the junket. In spite of the sponsorship, theirs was not always an easy ride.

Here is Richardson's report on the luxury train from Portland to Olympia in 1865:

We steamed down the clear Wallamett twelve miles; down the blue Columbia for thirty-eight; up the mudding Cowlitz for two, and landed at Monticello in Washington Territory. Then to Olympia, ninety miles, an open stage wagon carried us over the worst roads and among the grandest woods in the world. It also demonstrated how fifteen passengers can be transported in a vehicle which only has seats for nine \_ viz: by putting six of them on horseback.

He admired the forest, "thick with slender fir, pine, hemlock, spruce, cedar and arbor vitae; the trunks gloved in moss of orange-green, and branches tufted with long, swaying, hair-like strands of Spanish moss; the ground white, yellow and purple with luxuriant flowers." But villages were too small to be named, and farm houses five to ten miles apart. "For miles the telegraph wire is supported by trees alone, and not a pole is seen."

On their second evening they came to Tumwater on the Deschutes, and half an hour later they were in Olympia, facing a choice between two hotels. They chose the Pacific, "kept by a peculiarly intelligent negro woman, whose husband managed the kitchen, while she superintended the establishment, conducted its finances, and put money in the family purse."

The Pacific was about the only thing he admired in the territorial capital, which he noted had no daily newspaper. Nor was there one in the whole territory. Olympia he dismissed as "a quaint village among logs and stumps, traversed by plank sidewalks erected upon stilts to avoid mud and deluge. The arterial begins on the level shore of the smooth, shining sound, climbs a low muddy hill, and plunges out of sight in the deep pine woods.

"The capitol is a lonely, white frame building, like a warehouse. It is a settlement struggling hard against primeval Nature and Aboriginal man. Thus far the advantage is rather with the forest and the Indian."

Richardson was more impressed on the second day when Olympia celebrated the presence of the highest government official to visit the Territory. In the absence of Gov. William Pickering, Elwood Evans of Tacoma welcomed the speaker and an old cannon was fired, or as Richardson described it, "the rude throat of an old field-piece did hoarsely counterfeit the dread thunders of immortal Jove."

Colfax responded with an oration that moved the author almost to tears: "I never realized the magnitude of our Union until in this remotest wilderness, forty-four thousand miles from home, I found not only the same language, and the same currency, but the same flag, and, vibrating from every extremity of the vast continent, the same hopes, sympathies and undying memories."

From Olympia they caught a steamer north:

upon Puget Sound, the loveliest body of water body of water in the western hemisphere. Spreading in a great complicated network of arms, straits and inlets it has fourteen hundred miles of navigation, and affords Washington more harbors than are possessed by any other region of equal area in the world.

What most impressed Richardson? The Mountain, of course:

Nearly all day we were in sight of Mount Rainier, triple-pointed and robed in snow. Baker, Adams and St. Helens are all striking. Shasta is grand. Hood is grander; but from this standpoint, Rainier, whose summit has never been trodden by man, is monarch of all, the Mont Blanc of the Pacific Coast.

**Old Bill Fife played song of success in early**

**Tacoma The Tacoma News Tribune**

**May 6, 1993 , P. 10**

## Old Bill Fife Played Song of Success in Early Tacoma

I was doing some library work the other day when someone asked how it happened that Tacoma named a street after a musical instrument.

Turned out he meant Fife Street, which like the city of Fife was named for an early settler, not a high- pitched flute.

William H. Fife certainly deserved to have things named for him. He was one of the area's most enterprising characters. A Canadian, born in Ontario to Scottish immigrants, he was apprenticed at 17 to work in a general goods store for \$5 a month.

He owned his own store by the time he was 20. At 30 he took time off from store-keeping to join the rush to Caribou gold fields in British Columbia. Coming back three years later with a modest fortune, he moved his family to Michigan, then to Iowa, where he built a store at a river crossing east of Sioux City and watched the town of Cherokee grow up around it.

The idea of having the first store in a growing town appealed to him. In 1873, when Fife was 40, the Northern Pacific Railroad was about to decide where its western terminus would be on Puget Sound.

Fife visited the area and happened to be on Commencement Bay when the N.P. announced that New Tacoma was its choice. He hurried home, sold off his Cherokee holdings, and headed west with his wife, their five children and two servants. They arrived at the Tacoma station on the wharf on the evening of April 14, 1874 - the day before the Tacoma Land Company officially put downtown lots on sale.

After spending the night in the Blackwell Hotel, Fife slogged up the dirt path to Pacific Avenue, climbed the hill to C street (now Broadway), and went to the headquarters of the Tacoma Land Company, a one- room shack in a patch of skunk cabbage at the southwest corner of Ninth and C. There, on the city plan sketched by William Isaac Smith, he selected the northwest corner of Ninth and Pacific Avenue as his first investment. "We arrived on a Saturday," he recalled years later, "and on Tuesday we took dinner in our own house. You would hardly call it a house now, but it was somewhat of a mansion in those days, a shanty 18 by 24 feet. Nine of us sheltered beneath its roof until I could put up a large house, which I began without delay, a two-story frame directly in front of the shack. This I used as a store and dwelling combined. It was the first general merchandise store in Tacoma."

Two months after coming to town, Fife was appointed Tacoma's postmaster by President

Grant. When the first sack of mail, containing six letters, arrived at New Tacoma, 17-year-old Billy Fife volunteered to hand deliver them, a service he performed intermittently until he went to California to attend the Oakland Military School in 1877.

Young Billy (as he was called to differentiate him from his father, Old Bill) also found time to play in Tacoma's first baseball game, an inter-squad match between members of the Tacoma Invincibles. It ended 28 to 29, both sides claiming victory.)

Anyone wanting stamps or other postal service had to call at the Fife store. Old Bill thoughtfully put the counter in a far corner so patrons had to thread their way past tempting barrels of molasses, pickles, flour, sauerkraut and fish. This encouraged conversation as well as sales. Fife became the best-informed man in town about business opportunities. He invested in timberland, mineral claims and nearby farmland, one section of which is now the city of Fife.

In an early venture, Fife bought a corner at Ninth and Market, where there was a free-running stream. (The whole Tacoma hill was so water-soaked that an Oregon editor joshed about the N.P. trying to build a city in the shallowest lake or steepest swamp known to man.) Fife built tanks, captured the spring water, piped it down Ninth in bored-out logs, and provided Pacific Avenue with its first tap water and a modicum of fire protection.

In the boom that followed the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1883, Fife prospered. His two-story frame was replaced by a five-story masonry business block and hotel. He became vice president of the Tacoma Coal Co. He organized the Puget Sound Dry Dock Co. that brought a huge floating dry dock to Quartermaster Harbor. He was a director in the Crescent Creamery, the Tacoma Exposition Co. and the Tacoma Opera Theatre Company; and a trustee of the Chamber of Commerce and the Methodist church. Newspaper estimates in 1890 put his wealth at \$1 million or \$2 million. He was said to pay more taxes than anyone in the county.

The Panic of '93 hit Tacoma harder than any other city in the country. Population fell from its estimated 53,000 in 1893 to a census confirmed 37,714 in 1900. Wealth fled too.

Old Bill lost almost everything. In '93 he was living in style in a hotel he had named for himself. In 1896 he was in a boarding house a block away and his old hotel was called The Donnelly.

Friends marveled at his good humor and optimism. When word came of the gold strike in the Yukon, Old Bill rushed north. He got no farther than Skagway and returned as broke as when he left. He went to live with a daughter in California who had married a congressman, but at 70 he bolted to Nevada on news of another gold discovery.

That didn't pan out for him either. He returned to his daughter's home in Alameda just before his grandson was born in 1904. The child was named for him. William Fife Knowland was to become publisher of the Oakland Tribune and a United States senator.

Old Bill died in January of 1905.

## **Peter Puget on Puget's Sound**

### **Puget's Sound: A Narrative of Early Tacoma and the Southern Sound**

**University of Washington Press, 1979**

**P. 4-14**

# Peter Puget on Puget's Sound

The British merchant captains who visited Northwest America in the sea otter trade that commenced after Cook's voyage reported the existence of the Strait of Juan de Fuca leading toward the interior. The Admiralty instructed Vancouver to explore it, reminding him that "the discovery of a new communication between any such sea or strait and any river running into or from the Lake of the Woods [in northern Minnesota] would be particularly useful."

These orders had brought Vancouver to the Sound. His hope was that this inland sea might swing eastward through the Cascades or at least be fed by a river that did. But there were complications to exploring it. The waterway just ahead was split by a headland: a broad channel to port slanting southeast, a narrow arm to starboard leading south.

These were constricted waters and the 330-ton Discovery drew fifteen feet. Vancouver decided it would be prudent to leave the ship at anchor awaiting the arrival of its small consort, the Chatham, which was making a reconnaissance along the eastern shore. He would send a party to explore the southern Sound in small boats "although the execution of such a service in open boats would necessarily be extremely laborious, and expose those so employed to numerous dangerous and unpleasant situations."

Having made his decision, Vancouver seated himself on a chest that doubled as chair, laid paper on the slanted surface of his writing box, and took up a quill pen. I like to imagine the scene: the ship rocking gently, rigging creaking, small waves slapping, gulls mewling as they wheeled on steady wings. Somewhere out in the darkness a loon laughed. In the cabin, the soft light of the whale oil lamp; ashore, the flare of the Indian fires.

Memo (to Lieutenant Peter Puget):

Concerning a further Examination of the Inlet we are in Necessary and capable of being executed by the Boats. You are at 4 o'Clock tomorrow Morning to proceed with the Launch accompanied by Mr. Whidbey in the Cutter (whose Directions You will follow in such points as appertain to the Surveying of the Shore etc) & being provided with a Weeks Provision you will proceed up the said Inlet keeping the Starboard or Continental shore on board. Having proceeded three Days up the Inlet, should it then appear to you of that Extent that you cannot finally determine its limits and return to the Ship by Thursday next, You are then to return on board, reporting to me an account of your Proceedings and also noticing the appearance of the country, its Productions and Inhabitants, if varying from what we have already seen.



Given on board his Britannic Majesty's Sloop Discovery GEO. VANCOUVER

In the predawn darkness of Sunday, May 20, the longboats were stowed with muskets, pistols, cutlasses, powder and ball, presents and trading goods, tents, navigating equipment, survey equipment, food, and wine for the officers. The launch was clinker built, twenty feet long and broad enough to seat five pairs of oarsmen, two abreast; it had two demountable masts which, when in place, carried lugsails.

The cutter was smaller, eighteen feet, with six oars and a single mast. Neither had cabin or decking, though a canvas awning astern gave the officers some protection from the weather.

They were a young lot, accustomed to hardship. Nearly all of the enlisted men were in their teens or early twenties. Second Lieutenant Peter Puget was twenty-seven or twenty-eight his exact birthday is unknown and had spent half his life in the Navy, having entered service as a midshipman in 1778.

Puget had attracted Vancouver's attention while serving under Captain James Vashon in the West Indies after the Revolutionary War. Joseph Whidbey, master on the Discovery, was about Puget's age, had served under Vancouver in the West Indies, and was the best man with instruments on the expedition.

A fine mathematician, Whidbey had perfected the method of surveying from small boats. His system was to land on conspicuous points, take compass bearings of other prominent landmarks, and, whenever possible, make observations of the sun at noon to determine latitude. As the boats cruised between landings, the officers sketched and took notes. On return to the Discovery, the data were put down on a smooth map and tied into the charts already drawn.

The oldest man in the longboat party was Archibald Menzies, thirty-eight, a spare, craggy Scot who had visited the Northwest Coast in 1787 as physician aboard the sea otter vessel Prince of Wales and now represented the Royal Society, Britain's leading scientific organization, as botanist.

He had asked to accompany the Puget party "though their mode of procedure in surveying Cruizes was not very favorable for my pursuits as it afforded me so little time on shore . . . yet it was the most eligible I could at this time adopt in obtaining a general knowledge of the Country."

It was still dark when the longboats pulled away from the Discovery, heading south. A small island (Blake) loomed dim, ragged with fir, against the eastern sky. By the time they entered the chute of Colvos Passage, the Cascades were silhouetted black against an orange sunrise. The tide was against the oarsmen. Squadrons of coots flipped below the surface as the boats approached with thrashing oars.

Gulls circled, crying warnings to their nesting young. Seals surveyed them with round, blank eyes, leaned back, and disappeared, the memory of their closing nostrils lingering like the smile of the Cheshire. Herons lifted from the surf-line on somber wings and, with cries like tearing canvas, settled into the tree tops.

The English were not alone. A small, dark dugout followed them, its two paddlers

holding close to the western shore, responding neither to waved handkerchiefs nor to the flourish of fir branches, a sign of peace among Indians farther north.

About eight o'Clock the canoe spurted ahead and turned into a narrow cove (Olalla, "the place of many berries"). It was time for breakfast. Perhaps the natives would join them. Puget gave orders to enter the inlet. They found the canoe "hauled up close to the trees" among the salal and huckleberry, but the Indians had disappeared. "Some Beads, Medals and Trinkets were put among their other articles in the Canoe as a Proof that our Intentions were Friendly."

The tide was slack when they again took to the water, but a fair north wind helped them down a channel two miles wide and so deep that though "soundings were frequently tried no Bottom could be reached with 40 fathoms of line." The sky was clear, the sun hot. About noon, the shore on their left curved away to the east. They found themselves tooling up Dalco Passage into Commencement Bay where Tacoma now stands.

Ah, to have been with those first Europeans to see the bay, see it unimproved, the cone of the slumbering volcano heavy with winter's snow sweeping up from green tideflat and dark forest to dominate the Cascade barrier. They had sighted the Mountain before - Vancouver first noted it from Marrowstone Point up by Port Townsend on May 8 and named it in honor of an old friend, the myopic Rear Admiral Peter Rainier - but no view of Mount Rainier surpasses this one.

"A most charming prospect," wrote the scientist Menzies. The Mountain "appeared close to us though at least 10 to 12 leagues off. The low land at the head of the Bay swelled out very gradually to form a most beautiful and majestic Mountain of great elevation whose line of ascent appeared equally smooth & gradual on every side with a round obtuse summit covered two thirds of its height down with perpetual Snow as were also the summits of a rugged ridge of Mountains that proceed from it to the Northward."

From the poor vantage of sea level, they puzzled out the pattern of waterways and guessed correctly that the land they had coasted on the port side was an island (which Vancouver later named for Puget's old commanding officer, James Vashon). Their instructions were clear; they were to follow the shore to starboard, so they did not inspect Commencement Bay, instead entering the Narrows where "a most Rapid Tide from the northward hurried us so fast past the shore that we could scarce land."

For five miles the rowboat flotilla rode the tidal stream south. Then an arm opened to westward, Hale Passage, and they entered it only to find to their surprise the current so strong against them they could make little progress. (It sweeps clockwise around Fox Island, the southern shore of the passage.)

So Puget's party put ashore on Point Fosdick to take their noon meal and wait a change of tide. As they dined, two canoes which had followed them through the Narrows passed the picnic spot and disappeared into an inlet farther west.

The Puget party reached the inlet about three in the afternoon. Wollochet Bay, the place of squirting clams, is narrow but about two miles in length. The evergreen forest was interspersed with the cinnamon boles of madronas and the rounded crowns of mountain ash, the first ash they had seen on the Sound. "The Soil appeared good and produced a quantity of

Gooseberry, Raspberry and Current Berries now highly in Blossom which intermixed with Roses, exhibited a Strange Variegation of Flowers but by no Means unpleasant to the Eye."

Just inside the eastern entrance they detected the house frames of a deserted village, but not until they were leaving the cove did they see Indians. Then they heard a shout from the western shore and saw a party digging clams. When it became clear the English intended to land, the women and children gathered their baskets and "scudded into the woods loaded with parcels."

The men came out in two canoes to meet the strangers. They were all naked. "In their Persons these People are slenderly made. They wear their Hair long which is quite Black and exceeding Dirty. Both Nose and Ears are perforated, to which were affixed Copper Ornaments & Beads." This first meeting of the Puyallup-Nisqually people with the whites went well.

"We made them some little presents to convince them of our amicable intentions, on which they invited us by signs to land," says Menzies. "The only one we found remaining on the Beach was an old woman without either hut or shelter, setting near their baskets of provisions & stores. The former consisted chiefly of Clams, some of which were dried and smoked and strung up for the convenience of carrying them about their Necks, but a great number of them were still fresh in the shell, which they readily parted with to our people for buttons, beads & bits of Copper."

The women and children who had hidden in the forest were lured from the woods and were also presented with beads and bits of metal.

When the explorers set out, the Indian men followed in their canoes. Puget made camp about eight o'clock on Green Point, where Hale Passage merges into Carr Inlet. As the seamen erected the marquee, a large field tent, for the officers and smaller shelters for themselves, the Indians "lay on their Paddles about one Hundred Yards from the Beach attentively viewing our operations."

The presence of the Indians presented Puget with a bit of a problem. It was customary when making camp to discharge the firearms that had been carried primed and shotted in the boats during the day. But Puget was afraid the shots would alarm the natives.

"Finding however they kept hovering about the Boats & being apprehensive they would be endeavoring to commit Deprecations during the night, I ordered a Musket fired but so far was it from intimidating or alarming them they remained stationary, only exclaiming Poh at every report, in way of Derision."

Whether the Indians were mocking the whites or merely mimicking the sound remains in doubt. No matter. They soon withdrew and made camp on Fox Island. The night passed without incident.

The Englishmen awoke Monday morning in light rain and set off without breakfast. The tide ran against them but the rain soon stopped. Flocks of pigeon guillemots cruised the heavy green waters; some dived as the longboats approached but most skittered across the surface in long take-off runs, trailing hoarse whispers of protest as they curved toward land to fire themselves point blank into nest holes in the clay cliffs.

When the English landed on a small island off the mouth of Horsehead Bay (the journals do not make clear whether it was Raft Island or tiny Cutts), a host of crows voiced objection. In vain: the explorers shot some fledglings and breakfasted on young crow cooked on spits over a beach fire. Puget was pleased. He jotted a note that his men's willingness to eat crow meant the provender in the boats could, if necessary, be stretched across extra days of exploration.

Puget thought the inlet led nowhere, but. . . more clearly to ascertain what appeared almost a Certainty, we continued pulling up for its head till near Eleven, when the Beach was close to the Boats. [They were in Burley Lagoon.] In the SW Corner of the Cove was a Small Village among the Pines, and beyond the termination the country had the appearance of a Level Forest, but close to the water it was covered with small Green Bushes. We pulled in toward the Village but seeing a Canoe paddling from it towards us induced us to lay on our Oars to wait their Approach, but neither Copper nor any Article in our Possession had sufficient allurements to get them close to the Boats.

They lay about twenty yards from us and kept continually pointing to the Eastward, expressing a Wish that our Departure would be more agreeable than our Visit. Knowing all our Solicitations would not bring on a Reciprocal Friendship, & we were only losing time, therefore we left Those Surly Gentlemen and Kept along the Opposite or Southern Shore of this Western Branch. However I did not like to quit these Indians altogether without giving some evident Proof that our Intention was perfectly friendly, & an Expedient was hit on that soon answered our Purpose.

Some Copper, Medals, Looking Glasses & other Articles were tied on a Peece of Wood & left floating on the water. We then pulled away to a Small Distance. The Indians immediately Picked them up. Eventually they ventured alongside the Boat but not with that Confidence I could have wished.

These Indians were "more Stout than any we have hitherto seen," and two of the three in the canoe had lost their right eyes and were pitted with smallpox. "During the time they were alongside the Boats they appeared exceeding shy and distrustful, notwithstanding our Liberality towards them Though they wanted Copper from us they would not part with their Bows or Arrows in Exchange." The English rowed southward along the western shore of the inlet.

The day had cleared; it was hot and muggy, Puget's thermometer registering 90 degrees, very warm for May. Early in the afternoon they put into a small cove, probably the lagoon at the mouth of Minter Creek, to dine. "Here," says Menzies' journal, "we found two or three small runs of water & was going to haul a small Seine we had in the Launch, but the appearance of six Canoes with about 20 people in them which our shy followers had collected by their vociferous noise prevented it."

The first confrontation between whites and Indians on Puget Sound occurred in a dispute over fishing. The Salish peoples were not greatly concerned with material possessions but were jealous of songs, prayers, insignia of rank and kinship, and of places where a man had the right to hunt or fish, first or exclusively.

Such rights were sacred possessions passed between generations; they could not be sold or traded, though they might in desperation be risked in gambling. Their protection was integral to

the Indians' web of culture, a basic strand in the fabric of society. For someone to violate such rights was stealing; worse than stealing, it was insult, implying a master/slave relationship: "I am so much above you I need not even ask." And here were these strangers beside the stream with a net.

Puget knew none of this. What he did know was that his party was confronted by men, hostile and armed. He knew, too, that five years earlier a landing party from the British sea otter vessel *Imperial Eagle* had simply disappeared at the mouth of the Hoh River on the western side of the Olympic Mountains. He need not be an anthropologist to recognize danger.

Quietly he told his men to fold up the net but to act unconcerned. He drew a line in the beach gravel and by gestures "the intent of which they perfectly understood" asked the Indians to stay on the far side.

Several of the landing party had brought their muskets ashore. Puget reasoned that to go back to the boats for more weapons might precipitate trouble. Instead he led the party up the bank and settled down nonchalantly to eat, keeping unobtrusive watch. The Indians got back in their canoes and began a lively discussion among themselves, pointing sometimes to the boats, sometimes at the shore party, gesturing as if planning tactics.

Some canoes began to move toward the launch and cutter. Puget's group shouted and pointed their guns. The Indians paddled back to the mouth of the stream.

At this point, a seventh canoe carrying four men entered the cove. As it approached, the Indians already present splashed ashore and began stringing their bows, but whether for an attack on the new-comers or the whites Puget could not be sure. He found his position most awkward, being unwilling to fire on these poor People, who might have been unacquainted with the advantage we had over them, and not wishing to run the Risk of having my People wounded by the first discharge of their Arrows, I absolutely felt at a Loss how to Act."

Doubts about the Indians' intentions were quickly resolved: the men from the new canoe joined the party on the beach and strung their bows.

For a moment they formed an ancient frieze, motionless under the midday sun, red confronting white, native facing invader, stone age man resisting the intrusion of change. No one spoke. The very crows were quiet. Then a lone warrior edged up the bank, bow in hand, quiver bristling, and moved toward the protection of a tree only fifteen feet from Puget's party.

The English arose, muskets ready. The men in the launch and cutter swung the small cannon mounted on swivels at the prow of each craft to menace the Indians by the stream. One of Puget's men approached the young man who had climbed the bank, put a musket to his chest and marched him, unresisting, back to the beach.

On the bank the seamen quickly gathered the equipment they had brought ashore and made ready to leave. The Indians remained on their side of the line in the gravel, shouting, gesturing, sharpening their arrowheads on the beach rocks. Puget ordered one of the swivel guns to be fired across the water as a demonstration of the power of cannon. Neither the explosion and smoke nor the distant splash of grapeshot seemed at first to impress the Indians. Poh, they exclaimed, more loudly than before.

Abruptly, unexpectedly, the confrontation ended. The Indians now offered for Sale those Bows and Arrows which had shortly before been strung for the worst of Purposes." They even sold the garments from their backs, and, as the explorers rowed away, offered what remaining articles they had to trade. At last "finding we were drawing fast from their Habitations they began to leave us. In half an hour we were again left to ourselves but we had the Satisfaction of having convinced them of our Friendship before their Departure."

The weather, too, had changed. Clouds drawn from the ocean by the unseasonable heat released "a perfect deluge of rain" and about five miles from Alarm Cove, Puget landed at South Head and made camp.

For the next five days in weather that ranged from rain to fog "so thick we could not see the boats from the tents" to a thunder storm, then back to brilliant sunshine, the survey party traced the outlines of the inland sea, circling its islands, probing its inlets.

They noted flora and fauna. They found delicious small oysters, abundant clams, "luxuriant ferns that grow over head." They reported few streams, failing to locate the mouth of the Nisqually among the cattails.

Everywhere they found the Indians friendly. Indians brought them presents of wild raspberry shoots, arrow grass, and (on request) salmon while the party camped on Anderson Island; happily traded from their canoes in the shoals off Nisqually Reach; taught Menzies how to count from one to ten in Salish; gave navigating directions by sign language; and on the last day of the survey entertained the English ashore in a village on Eld Inlet.

"We landed for a short time and were received by the Inhabitants with all the Friendship and Hospitality we could have expected," said Puget:

These people I should suppose were about Sixty in Numbers of all Ages and Descriptions. They lived under a kind of Shed open at the Front and Sides. The women appeared employed in the Domestic Duties such as curing Clams & Fish, making baskets of various reeds, so neatly woven that they were perfectly water tight. The occupations of the men I believe consist chiefly in Fishing, constructing Canoes and performing all the laborious work of the Village. . . .

The only Difference I perceived between our present companions and former visitors were the Extravagance with which their Faces were ornamented. Streaks of Red Ochre & Black Glimmer were on some, others entirely with the Former, and a few gave the Preferences to the latter.

Every person had a fashion of his own, and to us who were Strangers to Indians this Sight conveyed a Stronger Force of the Savageness of the Native Inhabitants than any other Circumstance we had hitherto met with; not but their Conduct, friendly and inoffensive had already merited our warmest Approbation, but their Appearance was absolutely terrific.

It will frequently occur that the Imagination receives a much greater Shock by such unusual Objects than it would was that object divested of its Exterior Ornaments or Dress, or the Sight was more familiarized to People in a State of Nature. Though we could not behold these Ornaments with the same satisfactory Eye as themselves, yet in receiving the Looking Glasses, each native appeared well satisfied with his own Fashion; at least the Paint was not at all Altered.

They likewise had the Hair covered with the Down of Birds, which certainly was a good substitute for Powder. near Paint only differed in the Colour and not the Quantity used by our own Fair Countrywomen. In these two Instances we meet with some Resemblance to our Customs and I believe the above mentioned Ornaments were of a Ceremonious Nature for our Reception at the Village. . . .

They appear much attached to the Women and hold Chastity as one of the Cardinal Virtues, and not like our friends at the Sandwich Islands make Prostitution a Trade. Immense Presents would not tempt these Girls, though coaxed with Rage to violate the Marriage Bed and much to their Credit be it Spoken they remained Stedfast in this Refusal.

Credit is apparently due for this steady attachment and affectionate Conduct to their Husbands in such trying Situations, as the Articles offered were of inestimable Value in their opinions, and such as would have flattered their Vanity; not that their Beauty or Appearance created any violent Desire for the possession of their Persons. Such Questions were put merely to try, howfar they conceived Good Conduct was binding in the Matrimonial State, and I may say from these Circumstances that a Contract of that high Importance to Civil Society is among these poor and uncivilized Indians preserved in its greatest Purity.

By Saturday afternoon the explorers had completed their investigation of the inlets. Beautiful as was the inland sea, it was a dead end, offering no waterway to the interior. Had the apocryphal Greek, Juan de Fuca, actually entered the strait now named for him and sailed, as alleged, for twenty days he would have ended not in the North Sea, as myth would have it, but at Mud Bay.

The Puget party dined at Johnson Point. "A favorable breeze sprung up from the Southward which we made use of to return to the ship." The wind strengthened to a gale; though rain began to fall heavily Puget risked sailing by night. The boats swept north through the tide race of the Narrows, crossed the lumpy waters between Point Defiance and Vashon, and rode the gale and current up Colvos Passage. At two in the morning they were back on the Discovery, having completed their assignment in two hours less than seven days.

Puget when he reported to Vancouver was enthusiastic about the area that bears his name:

The Land in the Southern Inlets of these strates is most greatfull to the Eye.

Rising in Small Hillocks and Mounts till the more inland parts. It is overlooked by Lofty Snow Mountains and indeed Nature as if she studied the Convenience of Mankind, has so disposed of the Trees as to form on the Rising Grounds the most beautiful Lawns on which I have seen Grass Man Height.

Little would the Labour be in its Cultivation, yet the Natives either from Ignorance or indolence prefer the Stony Beach to the more healthfull and delightfull plains which distinguish this favored Land from the Rest of the Coast of America

An Island distinguished in the General Chart by the name of Whidbey's Island is absolutely as fine a tract of Land as I ever saw, at least apparently so.



**Political Refugee Hoped Northwest Was His Passage to**

**Freedom The News Tribune**

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**P. FP 12**

## Political Refugee Hoped Northwest Was His Passage to Freedom

The first political refugee to reach the Pacific Northwest arrived in Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island aboard a fur trading ship almost two centuries ago June 19, 1796.

Thomas Muir, revered in Scotland as The Scottish Martyr, had escaped from the British prison colony in Australia and was trying to get to Philadelphia to seek help from President Washington. He didn't make it.

Born in Glasgow in 1765, Muir was graduated in law from the University of Edinburgh in 1787. He distinguished himself as a skillful leader, not only on behalf of clients but as an advocate of political reform. His great cause was extension of the right to vote to men who did not own real property. British authorities considered the idea seditious conduct amounting to treason though without an overt act. Possession of books written by the American revolutionary, Tom Paine, was equally bad.

Muir was arrested on multiple charges of endangering the state. Released on bail, he went to France to consult with Lafayette. He had trouble getting back to Scotland because the British periodically blockaded French ports during the wars that followed the French revolution but he eventually got there and turned himself in. His trial, which was staged in August of 1793, remains a classic of injustice.

Muir, who served as his own attorney, admitted that he had "exerted every effort to procure a more equal representation of the people in the House of Commons but denied advocating the use of means not sanctioned by the constitution. As for Paine's "The Rights of Man," he owned a copy and had lent it to relatives. He urged the populace to read political works of all kinds.

The trial was conducted before a panel of five judges. One observed that Muir deserved to be hanged without a hearing. Another said there was no fit punishment since torture had been outlawed.

In response to Muir's statement that his aim was to win the vote for men without real property, the presiding officer of the court asked:

What right have they to representation.

In this country government is made up of the landed interest, which alone has a right to be represented.

As for the rabble who have nothing but personal property, what hold has the nation on them? They can pack up all their property on their backs and leave in the twinkling of an eye, but landed property cannot be removed.

The trial lasted less than two days. The jury returned a guilty verdict on all counts within two hours. The judges decided Muir should be transported to the penal colony in New South Wales (Australia) for 14 years.

Muir was shipped overseas on the convict transport *Surprise* on May 1, 1794. He was accompanied by four other political dissidents a Unitarian minister, a gentleman farmer and two London advocates of extended suffrage for men as well as by several hundred standard-brand miscreants.

The gentlemen transportees were gently treated. They were not imprisoned; each was given a brick house to maintain at his own expense. They could move freely about the penal colony but did not have permission to leave. After a bit more than a year of waiting for friends to rescue him, Muir left on his own.

A Boston fur-trading ship, *Otter*, en route to Northwest America put in at Sydney to deliver 15 bales of general merchandise and a quantity of molasses, rum, Madeira and port wine. The captain, Ebenezer Dorr, undertook to increase profits by offering transportees a way out of Australia. Muir arranged for passage to Boston for himself and two servants. When they boarded the *Otter* from a small boat just off the coast, they found that they would share limited space with 16 less genteel transportees. After a slim-ration voyage of four months through the Tonga archipelago and across the Pacific, the *Otter* reached Nootka Sound on Vancouver Island on June 19, 1796.

The Spanish schooner *Sutil*, sent north from San Blas in Mexico on an inspection trip, lay at anchor in Friendly Cove. Six of the 15 crewmen on the *Sutil* were disabled by scurvy. The *Otter* had more men aboard than Captain Dorr could feed. So he and the commanding officer of the *Sutil*, Jose Tovar y Tamariz, made a deal. Dorr traded five seamen from his ship to Tovar in exchange for provisions that would allow him to spend time trading with Indians along the coast.

Muir, realizing that staying with the *Otter* would mean a year or two delay in reaching the United States, talked Tovar into taking him south to Mexico. The arrangement worked out badly for nearly everybody. Dorr made a successful fur-trading cruise but lost most of the proceeds in a lawsuit on return to Boston. Tovar was removed from further command by Spanish authorities for having aided foreigners.

Muir was taken to Mexico City, treated hospitably, but denied a loan or permission to go to the United States. Instead he was ordered transported to Spain, his fate to be determined by higher authorities.

Spain and Britain were at war, and the ship taking Muir to Cadiz was attacked by British warships. Muir, fighting on the side of the Spanish, lost an eye and was disfigured but finally reached Cadiz. After long hospitalization in Spain he was allowed into France, where he was briefly treated as a hero, then as a bore. He never recovered his health or his mental balance and

died alone.

Thirty years later some of the reforms he had been exiled for advocating were adopted by Parliament.

**Quiet Leonard Howarth was a giant in Tacoma's**

**finances The Tacoma News Tribune**

**December 2, 1993**

**P. FP 14**

## Quiet Leonard Howarth was a Giant in Tacoma's Finances

He was a wistfully shy little fellow with an oversized mustache, a slight limp from a childhood bout with infantile paralysis and an accent betraying English birth -- no advantage in a frontier community. He had been in town less than three years. But a century ago at the depth of the depression that followed the Panic of '93, he held much of Tacoma's financial future in his slender hands.

His name was Leonard Howarth, a name mentioned around here today mostly because he donated the money for one of the original buildings on the present University of Puget Sound campus, Howarth Hall.

Born in England in 1866, Leonard was an apprentice in a print shop before coming to America with his brother around 1885. The Howarth brothers picked Wisconsin as their land of opportunity, and Leonard caught on as a clerk for Hewitt, Son and Co., a private bank in Menasha. His attention to detail, his memory and his shrewd grasp of financial possibility soon caught the eye of Henry Hewitt Jr., the son in the company's title.

Like Leonard, Henry Hewitt Jr. was English born, although he was only a month old when his family left their Yorkshire farm for America. Like Leonard, Hewitt had a bad leg, having been severely wounded when he tripped the wire on a spring-gun while timber cruising north of Green Bay. Unlike Leonard, he was anything but unassertive. He was said to have acquired more pine forest land than anyone in the world except the czar of Russia. Young Henry made Leonard his private secretary.

In 1888 Hewitt joined his brother-in-law, Charles Hebard Jones, and partners Chauncey Griggs and Addison Foster of St. Paul to form the St. Paul and Tacoma Lumber Co. They bought 80,000 acres of prime timberland in Pierce County from the vast holdings the Northern Pacific Co. received from the public domain as a reward for building the transcontinental railroad. St. Paul and Tacoma set out to build the "world's largest sawmill" on the Tacoma tideflats.

Leonard followed his boss to Tacoma in 1891. On arrival he wrote to his brother, William, from the Tacoma Hotel, marveling at the forested hills stretching back to the mountains -- and at the opportunities offered by the booming town.

The partners in St. Paul & Tacoma were investing all around Puget Sound. The company

itself bought half-interest in the Wilkeson Coal and Coke Co. Griggs was a major backer of the Tacoma Smelting and Refining Co., which took over Dennis Ryan's under-financed smelter. Griggs also joined the group that bought a floating dry dock at Port Townsend and brought it to Quartermaster Harbor on Vashon Island.

All the partners bought stock in Traders' Bank, which had been organized by Henry A. Strong shortly before he returned to his native Rochester, N.Y., to run his new company, Eastman Kodak. Traders prospered and in October of 1892 reported deposits of \$950,000. Then came the crash.

On June 1, Merchants National Bank closed its doors, the first of 17 Tacoma banks to disappear during the depression. That month, for the first time ever, St. Paul & Tacoma received no new orders for lumber. Traders' suffered no concentrated run on its deposits but withdrawals were steady. By July 20 deposits totaled only \$170,000 -- 18 per cent of what they had been eight months earlier. Traders' closed its doors. Addison Foster was appointed receiver.

Hewitt, Griggs, Strong and other directors personally pledged that every depositor and creditor would be repaid every penny. By pledging securities valued at \$200,000, they were able to borrow \$50,000. In January, betting that the depression would ease, they reopened the bank. Times got worse. Again Traders went into receivership. This time the judge appointed 28-year-old Leonard Howarth as receiver. He also became receiver for the Puget Sound Dry Dock Co. and the Pacific Meat Co.

Writing to a banker friend back east, St. Paul & Tacoma's president Griggs pointed up the seriousness of the situation, not just for the bank but for the region: "So long as the moneyed men of our country have not full confidence that the public and the business community intend to pay one hundred cents on the dollar, there is no doubt in my mind that we will be unable to obtain eastern funds in our western country for investment."

Working with characteristic quietness with Griggs and the other St. Paul & Tacoma investors, Howarth was able to see that all debts were honored. Traders' did not reopen, Hewitt having decided "There is no use running a business for the mere purpose of making ends meet." But all depositors and creditors got their money. The Pacific Meat Co. became Carsten Brothers. The dry dock at Quartermaster Harbor returned to profitable operation, then was sold to Manson Brothers and towed to Seattle.

With the termination of his receiverships, Howarth went quietly back to making money for himself. He became a vice president of the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Co. and vice president, as well as largest stockholder, in the Wilkeson Coal and Coke Co. With his brother, William, he owned the Everett Pulp and Paper Co.

In 1927, for better or worse, he played a key role in St. Paul & Tacoma's decision to sell Union Bag and Paper of New York the land on the tideflats for a pulp mill. He did not live to smell it.

Howarth died on May 12, 1930. He had never married and left most of his \$10,000,000 estate to nieces and nephews. There was, however, a bequest of \$150,000 for the City of Tacoma "to be used as city officers see fit." It would be interesting to learn what it was used for.

## **Robinson at Nisqually**

### **Puget's Sound: A Narrative of Early Tacoma and the Southern Sound**

**University of Washington Press, 1979**

**P. 47-51**

# Robinson at Nisqually

On the morning of April 29, [1841] a day of haze and high wind, the Vincennes and Porpoise were racing north through the murk under heavy sail. Suddenly, about 10 A.M., "Breakers under the lee! Breakers under the lee!" The white water was less than a pistol shot distant. The helmsmen fought to hold the ships clear.

R. B. Robinson, a purser's clerk on the Vincennes, stood transfixed,

...waiting with breathless interest, expecting every moment to feel the strike, our ship driving bows completely under. A man aloft reported land on the lee bow, over breakers. The Captain would not believe it, at first, as his reckoning places us at some distance from land. We were going at a tremendous rate through the water and in less than a minute I saw land myself from the weather passway about one point on the lee bow.

It looked very high, shaped like a sugar loaf, and real dismal through the mist and spray. The sea was breaking tremendous heavy against it, and over some smaller ones just showing their heads out of the water alongside it. We lay well up and weathered it by about a third of a mile. As we passed abreast of it we saw an aperture through the center of it of considerable size, and leeward was a still higher and larger rock or island.

As we weathered it we passed clear of the breakers and left as we thought all danger astern but just as we were congratulating ourselves on our narrow escape the cry of Breakers Ahead and to Leeward brought all hands to stations. We had but faint hope of saving the old barkey. We got a cast of lead in five fathoms, the breakers making a clean breach over the bows and almost drowning the armorers who were shackling the chains.

As we were just passing out of this dangerous situation a large rock was discovered about a pistol shot to leeward but it was passed almost as soon as discovered and we were out of the labyrinth of dangers triumphant and grateful for our miraculous deliverance. We now stood off again to get an offing. Had this occurred at night instead of daylight, not a soul of our whole crew would have lived to reach land.

Wilkes praised all hands for their seamanship, a compliment not returned. George Sinclair, sailing master of the Porpoise, felt they had escaped disaster by good luck, not good management. The commander, he wrote, "Insisted on running by his own reckoning and as a matter of course, and thereby he came within an ace of losing both vessels."

Two days beyond their brush with disaster on the Point Grenville rocks, the ships anchored in Discovery Bay, forty-nine years to the day after Vancouver.

Wilkes was unsure how the presence of United States naval vessels, obviously sent to strengthen their country's claim in the disputed land north of the Columbia, would be received by the Hudson's Bay Company garrison at Fort Nisqually. To test the British attitude, Wilkes dispatched a message by longboat asking the help of a pilot and interpreter. After waiting a week he decided that no answer was answer enough and started south on his own. the next day, off Whidbey Island, a day so gusty that the Vincennes' lee guns sometimes went muzzle under, a dugout came alongside with William Heath, a dark- haired Englishman off the HBC supply ship Cowlitz.

Heath piloted them to Port Orchard, where they spent the night. The next morning the Vincennes' crew put on a display of bad seamanship. They set out a light warping anchor while raising their heavy bower anchor and began to set sail; the kedge failed to hold and the ship drifted ashore. They worked her clear before she was hard aground but then the starboard anchor was let go by mistake.

"We were hum-bugging around for two hours," the purser lamented, concerned that all this took place under British eyes. But the cruise south under clearing skies calmed even Wilkes.

The Americans took the west channel past Vashon Island and anchored about 7:30 P.M. across from Point Defiance, a mile north of the Narrows and only a cable's length (720 feet) from shore, Wilkes remarking the extraordinary deepness of the water, seventeen fathoms (102 feet).

"We have a splendid view of Mt. Ranier, which is conical & covered about 2/3 of its height with snow," said the first American to describe it. "Last evening the weather cleared sufficiently to see it and also Mt. Baker at the Entrance of Admiralty Inlet. If the weather should prove calm in the morning I shall make a survey of this part of the Sound. I deem it highly important because vessels are likely to be detained here in consequence of the difficulty in getting through the Narrows, which I trust we shall pass tomorrow and reach the Fort."

The morning brought favorable wind and tide so no surveying was done. Again they had trouble keeping the ships off shore when they raised anchor, but once underway, clear sailing.

"This is one of the most Majestic sheets of Warter I ever saw in all my life," observed the usually dour John W. W. Dyes, one of the scientists' helpers, who specialized in taxidermy and temperance lectures to his mates. "The forrist trees of the largist size grow to the Very Warter's Edge where you may cut a mast or stick for a Line of Battle Ship. I never saw Sutch large forrist trees in any part of the world before. This is principally Pine tho there is considerable oak maple and other branch wood common in the U States."

Wilkes too admired the waterway: "Nothing can be more striking than the beauty of these waters without a shoal or rock or any danger whatever for the whole length of this Internal Navigation, the finest in the world."

At eight that morning, Tuesday, May 11, 1841, the Vincennes and Porpoise dropped anchor below the bluff just south of Sequelitchew Creek, a little seaward of the blackhulled, paddlewheeled Beaver, the first steamship on the Northwest Coast. "Appears to be a fine vessel," commented purser's steward Robinson. From the water they could see no sign of the

fort, but soon a boat bearing two officers rowed out to the flagship.

For the first time, British and American officials faced each other on the water their countries coveted. Alexander Canfield Anderson, the slight, thoughtful chief trader at Nisqually, and Henry McNeill, the burly, short-tempered captain of the *Beaver*, introduced themselves to Wilkes. They promised the Americans "all assistance in their power" or, Wilkes added skeptically in his journal, "at least that was their offer. A few days will show the extent of it."

Anderson meant it. The Hudson's Bay Company gave Wilkes some supplies, loaned or sold equipment, helped line up Indian guides and interpreters, showed the Americans around the post. The fort begun by Heron was complete now. As described by the Vincennes' armorer, William Brisco, the stockade was an oblong, 200 by 250 feet, of "upright posts eight or ten feet high, at each corner a Sentry Box or house large enough to hold fifteen or Twenty persons, perforated with holes of sufficient size to admit the muzzle of a musket."

Lieutenant Sinclair noted that "the site was never chosen by an Engineer or wasn't calculated to stand a seige, as its inmates are compelled to go nearly a mile to get their water." Besides, "the Stockade is falling to decay and they are about to build another in a better site."

The new establishment was to be farther north, closer to the farm and dairy. Wilkes inspected the farm and was surprised to find peas about eight inches high, strawberries and gooseberries in full blossom, and lettuce already gone to seed, some plants three feet high. Out on the plain wheat was growing but not doing well: "They do not average even two Bushels to the acre. I think Rye would have answered better."

Robinson, the purser's steward, hiked up the Nisqually valley about fifteen miles to an Indian fishing station:

We descended a bluff covered with Pine about 200 feet deep & almost immediately came to the river which ran very Swift. It is about 30 yards wide and close to the banks were several huts, just erected, and a basket work dam, just finished.

The stakes for the dam were about 3 inches apart, and there was a double line of them, about four feet apart, and cross pieces to support them both, & on which the Indians stand and spear the Salmon as they leap the barrier. Between the two rows of stakes are nets spread to catch those who fall between the lines. They catch a great quantity of salmon, which they dispose of to the company agents.

When the fish were brought to the Station, Nisqually women cut out the backbones and chopped off the heads. The salter placed them in a large hogshead with a quantity of coarse salt. There they remained for several days until they became quite firm. The pickle this process produced was boiled in a large copper kettle; the blood which was floated by the boiling was skimmed, leaving the pickle clear.

The salmon were then taken out and packed in forty-two-gallon casks, more salt was added, and the casks were sealed and laid on their sides with the bunghole left open. The pickle recovered from the boiling process was poured in until the cask was full. A circle of clay about four inches high was made around the bunghole, into which the oil from the salmon rose. The oil was skimmed, and as the salmon absorbed the pickle more was poured in.



When the oil ceased to rise, the clay circle was removed and the cask sealed. Salmon cured in this manner would keep at least three years. The preserved salmon was sent to Vancouver and relayed to the interior posts as emergency food. Any surplus was sold in the Hawaiian Islands.

But livestock remained the principal source of income at Nisqually. Robinson noted "horned cattle in great abundance" and about a thousand sheep. "I am astonished that our Country should let them get such a secure footing as they already have got on this land."

Wilkes was busy organizing parties to chart the shore and survey the interior. Anderson gave him permission to build two log workshops on the hill above the Sequelitchew. One housed the telescopes and the pendulum clock which was used ashore to check the accuracy of the ships' chronometers; the other served as a storehouse and as drafting room for the chart makers.

Under one corner of the observatory, Carpenter Amos Chick buried two pennies, one minted in 1817, the other in 1838, both borrowed from John Dyes, and a bit of doggerel written by Robinson about the British/American rivalry for land still occupied by the Nisqually.

Though far from our homes, yet still in our  
land True Yankee enterprise will ever expand  
And publish to all, each side of the  
main We triumphed once and can do  
it again.

A problem, a problem, oh! hear great and  
small The true owners of the country are still  
on their soil  
Whilst Jonathan and John Bull are growling  
together For land which by rights belongs not to  
either.

Philosopher, listen & solve me this doubt  
Which has troubled so many wiseacres  
about.

By what right does the Bull claim pasturage here  
Whilst he has plenty of pasturage elsewhere?

## Rudyard Kipling and Tacoma

### Puget's Sound: A Narrative of Early Tacoma and the Southern Sound

University of Washington Press, 1979

P. 270-272

# Rudyard Kipling and Tacoma

In the fall of 1889, twenty-four-year-old British journalist Rudyard Kipling, on a tour of America, came up from California to take a look at what he had been told was a classic example of town, a-booming. "Tacoma was literally staggering under a boom of the boomiest," Kipling reported in *Coast to Coast* his book on American travel:

I do not quite remember what her natural resources were supposed to be, though every second man shrieked a selection in my ear. They included coal and iron, carrots, potatoes, lumber, shipping and a crop of thin newspapers all telling Portland that her days were numbered.

We struck the place at twilight. The crude boarded pavements of the main streets rumbled under the heels of hundreds of furious men all actively engaged in hunting drinks and eligible corner-lots. They sought the drinks first. The street itself alternated five-story business blocks of the later and more abominable forms of architecture with board shanties.

Overhead the drunken telegraph, telephone and electric-light wires tangled on tottering posts whose butts were half whittled through by the knife of the loafer. Down the muddy, grimy, unmetalled thoroughfare ran a horse-car line; the metals three inches above road level. Beyond this street rose many hills, and the town was thrown like a broken set of dominoes over all.

We passed down ungraded streets that ended abruptly in a fifteen foot drop and a nest of brambles; along pavements that beginning in pine-plank ended in the living tree; by hotels with Turkish mosque trinketry on their shameless tops and the pine stumps at their very doors; by a female seminary, tall, gaunt and red, which a native of the town bade us marvel at, and we marveled; by houses built in imitation of the ones on Nob Hill, San Francisco, after the Dutch fashion; by other houses plenteously befouled with jig-saw work, and others flaring with the castlemented, battlemented bosh of the wooden Gothic school.

The hotel walls bore a flaming panorama of Tacoma in which by the eye of faith I saw a faint resemblance to the real town. The hotel stationery advertised that Tacoma bore on its face all the advantages of the highest civilization, and the newspapers sang the same tune in a louder key.

The real estate agents were selling house-lots on unmade streets miles away for thousands of dollars. On the streets-the rude, crude streets, where the unshaded electric light was fighting with the gentle northern twilight-men were babbling of money, town-lots and again money. I think it was the raw, new smell of fresh sawdust everywhere pervading the air that threw upon me a desolating homesickness.

Kipling's companion came back from a ramble, laughing noiselessly. He proclaimed the Tacomans mad, all mad. "Young feller," he warned, "don't you buy real estate here." Nor did he. Kipling took the Flyer to Seattle. It was a memorable trip, "the water landlocked among a thousand islands, lay still as oil under our bows, and the wake of the screw broke up the unquivering reflections of pine and cliffs a mile away; 'twas as though we were trampling on glass."

It brought Kipling to a city which that summer had been swept by fire:

"In the heart of the business quarters there was a horrible black smudge, as though a Hand had come down and rubbed the place smooth. I know now what being wiped out means."

"Seattle, Seattle! Death rattle, death rattle!" chanted Tacoma school children. Businessmen, too, at luncheon meetings.

"Tacoma, a railroad promotion," sneered Seattle newspapers." "Seattle, flea-town on the sawdust."

"Tacoma, village of destiny."

The high school tone of the jibes overlaid hatred. Antagonism lay deep. Fortunes were at stake. Men had bet their futures, and dominance in the region remained in doubt.

**Since 1892, rapid transit plans have been up in the  
air The News Tribune**

**September 7, 1995**

**P. FP15**

## Since 1892, Rapid Transit Plans Have Been Up in the Air

The first proposal for a rapid transit system connecting Puget Sound communities was made more than a century ago.

In the summer of 1892 Lucien F. Cook, a Tacoma real estate dealer and inventor, set up a miniature working model of an elevated, electric-powered railroad. He invited visitors and especially investors to see the big toy in the Tacoma Post Office building at 1016 Pacific Ave.

Cook's contraption had two narrow tracks, one above the other, suspended from poles on a single line of piers. The car was designed to be suspended from the upper track and stabilized by horizontal wheels at the bottom of the car, bearing against the lower rail. The car would be very light and extremely narrow, only three feet wide with passengers in single file, one behind the other.

Cars would be constructed in varied length to seat from eight to 30 riders. Cook estimated that it would cost about \$15,000 a mile to construct a track from Tacoma's Commencement Bay to Seattle's Elliott Bay, and that the trip would take 20 minutes.

Cook found enough support to be able to build a full-sized model, about a quarter-mile long, on the waterfront below the Tacoma Hotel, which stood on A Street Between 10th and 11th.

Test runs were conducted on the afternoon of Friday, Nov. 26. The first runs were made with an empty car. Those runs went so well that as many as 10 volunteers at a time risked the trip in the flimsy cars. There was no regulator to adjust the flow of power so the train's starts and stops were emphatically abrupt, but no one was hurt.

Civil engineer Henry Shaw, who served as motorman, said he would not be afraid to run a train at 100 miles an hour. Promoter Cook thought the upper limit would be 200 mph and spoke of the possibility of a transcontinental train that would deliver the New York morning papers to Tacoma at 1 p.m.

But the Panic of '93 struck a few months later. Investment capital disappeared, as did all mention in the papers of Lucien Cook and the overhead rapid transit system.

In July of 1895 the Tacoma Daily Ledger carried a one-paragraph item on page 2 that said Henry Bucey of Buena was visiting town to raise funds for "an air line steam railroad" to run between Tacoma and Seattle. The subject never again came up in print.

In 1900 a conventional light rail service between Tacoma and Seattle began with electric engines drawing power from a third rail. It lasted more than 30 years before giving way to the automobile and the bus.

But even with the Interurban offering 70-minute trips between the two cities there were still those who dreamed of faster transportation, among them William H. Boyes.

In 1910 Boyes and two other men, all residents in a First Avenue hotel in Seattle, signed papers incorporating the Seattle-Tacoma Monorail Co., which proposed to offer high-speed rail service between Puget Sound cities.

They circulated a photo, supposedly taken somewhere on the Tacoma Tidelands, showing a futuristic car, remarkably like the present Seattle monorail cars.

It appears to be perhaps 25 feet long. Men in business clothes peer from the side windows. An engineer in hat, tie and vest sits in the drivers seat. The car rests on a single rail supported by a dozen closely spaced pillars. To one of the pillars two large signs are fastened. "Wm. H. Boyes," says one. "Monorail" says the other.

No contemporary story has been found in any Tacoma paper about the construction of the model. But in the spring of 1911 a man representing himself as G.E. Boyes, president of Boyes Monorail Edmonds Co. obtained a 25-year franchise from the Edmonds City Council to provide 10-minute monorail service between Edmonds and Seattle at 10 cents a ride.

According to Kay V. Cloud's "Edmonds, The Gem of Puget Sound," the town held a civic celebration on May 2, 1911, when the first support post for the monorail was put in place. "Hopeful speeches were made."

A week later, a "penetrating odor" emanating from the monorail site was traced to a dead skunk that had fallen into an open post hole. The skunk's demise was an ill omen. The timbers and steel for the monorail track and the experimental cars that were supposed to arrive within days never showed up.

On Oct. 21 of 1911 Harry Habey, J.L. Larimer and Royal A. McClure procured an order from a Judge Tallman requiring the Pacific Railway Co. (monorail) and W.H. Boyes, president, to show cause why a receiver should not be appointed. Boyes was ordered to allow stockholders to inspect the company books or show cause for his refusal. The stockholders charged that \$15,000 worth of stock had been sold and that \$10,000 had been used by Boyes for his personal requirements. It is not known if anyone got money back.

Not until Seattle's Century 21 Exposition in 1962 was a working monorail built. The Alweg Rapid Transit Systems built a \$3.5 million line to carry cars designed by an Italian automobile-building firm and manufactured in Germany.

The line runs from the downtown business district to the former exposition grounds, now the Seattle Center. There was talk of extending it to Boeing's Duwamish plant, or even running it to Tacoma.

That didn't happen, but the monorail still serves an estimated 400,000 passengers a year, gliding quietly over the street traffic.

## Strange's Song

Tacoma News Tribune and Sunday Ledger

January 13, 1974

# Strange's Song

Northwest Indians, especially the Nootkans were from the time of their first contact with Europeans fascinated by white men's music. Members of the Cook expedition which roamed the world between 1776 and 1780 reported that of all the native peoples they encountered, only the Nootkans showed interest in trumpets, French horns and fiddles. The others responded only to drums.

Vocal music, too, charmed the Nootkans, and their singing impressed visitors. The Spanish composed an anthem for Maquina, the paramount chief at Nootka Sound during the contact period. He had it sung on ceremonial occasions. The words were no less uninspiring than most paeans to potentates, "Maquina is mighty. Mighty, mighty Maquina." But the chief didn't mind.

Maquina asked a Spanish scholar to translate some of the songs sung by Spanish and English sailors. They were mostly drinking songs or ballads about the charms of girls back home.

Maquina was shocked, "Do the white men sing only of intoxication and fornication?" He asked. "We sing to God."

My favorite story of the Nootkan fondness for music concerns the visit to the Sound in 1786 of an expedition organized by James C.S. Strange, a young Scot of good family who was gathering sea otter skins for the Chinese market. Strange's journal of his experiences, lost for a century and a half was discovered in Indiana. In it, Strange describes one of the most harmonious moments of the maritime fur trade.

"In one of my lucky days, I was visited by several very large canoes filled with strangers who from the style of their dress and from the number of their attendants appeared to be men of a superior class to the generality of those who were residents of the village.

"Having displayed before them a variety of goods, such as knives, chisels, axes, swords, etc. I was greatly astonished at the seeming indifference with which they were viewed by my visitors...

"I was now busied thinking by what means I might strip my gentlemen of their finery, for each had on two or three fine skins, when I observed that their attention was called way by the singing of their attendants to which they themselves kept time by beating two shells together with great precision.

Polite Audience

"I now recollected that among the various articles which composed my trading goods there was a considerable number of cymbals, which I thought would be no bad substitute for their shells...I accordingly produced a pair. The expression of rapture and delight which the first clash of them excited in the breasts of all present is not to be described.

"In displaying the effects of my music, I composed for the occasion a sort of ring ting tune, which had the merit of drawing from my polite audience such bursts of applause was sufficiently satisfactory to me that I did not sing in vain. My song was encored again and again; after I had sung it half a dozen times, I was joined in it by a great majority of all present.

"The consequence of this exhibition was that I stripped my gentlemen to the buff in an hours time, each contending with the other who should be first served. I got from some three and from others four skins, for every pair of cymbals...

"I had next day a visit from several of the same party, who had still something left worthy of my attention. Having selected three or four skins, I offered some articles of iron mongery for them being desirous of reserving the remaining few pairs of cymbals I had left to some other future interesting occasion. My iron mongery was utterly rejected.

"I then presented some articles of copper which hitherto had been in great repute, but that in like manner was refused. I was given to understand that cymbals alone were wanted. These I at length reluctantly gave but before they were received a song was required of me.

"Accordingly I sung the first one that came into my head. That was not relished. I may say I was hissed off the stage. I tried a second, a third, and a fourth which all shared the same fate, each man, shaking his head and telling me it was Claotra, that is, the other they wanted.

"I now perfectly understood what they meant and that it was my yesterday's composition that was required of me. But if all the sea otter skins in Nootka had been the price of it, I could not recollect a note.

Nor was I much surprised at my failure, considering it was the offspring of the moment and no less easily forgotten than composed.

## Surprise Visitor at Nootka

Sound Tacoma News Tribune

January 20, 1974

# Surprise Visitor at Nootka Sound

Late in October, 1789 the month that the Nootka Indians call "Moon of Rough Seas," a sentinel at the Spanish fort just inside the mouth of Nootka Sound saw a tiny schooner attempt to work in between the capes.

He was astonished. The only single masted craft known to be on the Northwest Coast was the Gertrudis a schooner built by the English fur trader John Meares in 1788 and commandeered by the Spanish. She lay at anchor in Friendly Cove, within sight of the Spanish fort. So what could this craft be?

How could a vessel of some thirty feet appear out of the gray green Pacific, when the nearest known European settlements were one thousand miles south at Spanish Monterey, two thousand miles north at Three Saints Bay in Russian America?

The sentinel reported his sighting to Esetevan Jose Martinez, the Spanish commander at Nootka Sound. Martinez, a swarthy, heavy-set man of forty-five with a well deserved reputation for boldness, drunkenness and irritability, was in no mood for surprises. He was closing out the Spanish settlement at Nootka, of which he was both inspiration and instrument.

A year earlier Martinez had commanded a Spanish expedition sent to chart the Northwest Coast and verify the rumors that the Russians were gathering furs in land the Spanish considered theirs. Martinez had encountered Russians near Kodiak and on Unalaska, and had reported, erroneously but not implausibly, that the Slavs intended to establish a fur trading settlement at Nootka Sound.

This report led the viceroy of New Spain to send an expedition north to occupy Nootka before the Russians got there. Martinez, by happenstance, was in command.

When he arrived he found on the Sound, not Russians, but British and American fur traders. He befriended the Americans but quarreled with the British eventually seizing three of their vessels. This precipitated the Nootka Controversy, a confrontation between the British and Spanish empires that threatened a world war.

The consequences of Martinez' action were yet to be worked out. But the captain had cause for concern. He had seized ships claiming the protection of the world's greatest maritime power and sent them south to San Blas as prizes, only to receive word later that Nootka was to be abandoned.

Martinez felt such a move was a disservice to Spain, a disaster for his career, but he was carrying out the orders. And now, a new visitor. He ordered that the captain of the mysterious



schooner be brought to him.

There was a delay. Buffeted by the winds, the little schooner was unable to work into the Sound. She hauled off and disappeared in the driving mist.

Five days later the schooner reappeared in a respite of flat water. This time it was able to enter the Sound. Spanish marines came alongside as it entered. At musket point they welcomed the visitors and took the skipper to Martinez, who was aboard the frigate *Princesa*.

"When he came aboard," the astonished Martinez noted in his diary, "I found him to be a youth of 18 years of age at most. Under orders of his father he held command of the schooner, the *Fair American*, which belonged to a trading company in New York. She carried a crew of five men including the captain, whose name is Don Thomas Humphrey Metcalfe, a native of New York in North America.

"She had left Macao, on the Chinese coast, on the fifth of June and after crossing the open sea to Unalaska in forty-two days, she continued to this port, arriving without provisions, her mast sprung and her sails split."

Martinez' journal thus reports the first American crossing of the North Pacific, west to east. It marked the beginning of the American trade between China and the Pacific Northwest.

#### Young Sailor's Long Voyage

In the fall of 1789 the Spanish garrison at Nootka Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island was astonished by the arrival of a single master schooner with a crew of five.

Nootka was a moon's journey from anywhere, so distant from San Blas, the Spanish naval base in Mexico, so hard to supply that the garrison was preparing to abandon the Harbor. Where did this cockleshell come from?

The Captain of the visiting schooner was taken before the Spanish commander, Estevan Jose Martinez, to explain what he was doing in Spanish waters. He turned out to be an American teenager, Thomas Humphrey Metcalfe of New York and he had just crossed the Pacific from China.

Young Metcalfe had gone to China in 1788 aboard the *Eleanora*, a ship owned and captained by his father, Simon Metcalfe. They intended to load tea for New York but while on the Chinese Coast they heard tales of great profits being made in a new line of trade, the importation of sea otter skins from the North West Coast of America to China where otter trim on a mandarin's robe was a symbol of high status.

Simon Metcalfe decided to detour across the Pacific and pick up some otter skins before buying his tea. An English skipper who had been in Northwest America recommended that he take along a second vessel, one small enough to enter the fjord-like coves favored by the Indians as village sites.

At the Portuguese colony of Macoa south of Canton on the China coast Metcalfe bought a schooner 33 feet long, 8 feet wide, undecked but with a hull well coppered against ship worms. He named her the *Fair American*.

Metcalf found four seamen willing to brave the Pacific in the little craft, and put his son Thomas aboard as skipper.

The Eleanora and her consort cleared Bocca Tigris at the mouth of the Pearl River in May 1789. The Metcalfes planned to sail together to Nootka but a storm separated the vessels while they still were in the South China Sea. Teen-aged Tom was left to find his way across the Pacific, a compass his only navigational instrument, a copy of Captain James Cook's map his guide.

He followed the Great Circle Route, coasting the Japanese archipelago, the Kuriles and Aleutians.

After forty-two days at sea, he put in at the Russian fur-gathering post on Unalaska, not far from the present day Dutch Harbor.

Potak Zaikov, the commander supplied the Americans with flour and dried fish. He may have warned Metcalfe against the Indians in Alaska, the Tlingits having that year been especially hostile to the Russians.

But young Metcalfe was nothing if not bold. Working down the Alaska coast to Nootka, where he had agreed to rendezvous with his father if they became separated, he stopped to trade at Tlingit and Haida villages. The Indians, who could easily have overpowered the five men, gave them no trouble.

When the Spanish searched the schooner on its arrival at Nootka, they found that "...its contents did not exceed the following: some casks of water and some 65 otter skins in different bundles and of all sizes. Don Thomas had no written passport or instructions and no papers except his diary." Even the compass was broken.

Frigate Lieutenant Martinez had been in Alaska and the Aleutians the year before. He knew the dangers of the waters and was profoundly impressed by young Tom's performance.

"He is but a boy, who under his father's orders undertook such an extended voyage," the Spanish commander noted in his diary, "he and his men were exposed to the greatest dangers from rough weather and lack of provisions. They sailed over the open sea for more than three thousand leagues. They were exposed to a thousand insults from the heathen and driven by necessity had to seek a meeting with the Spaniards, from which they expected relief."

Martinez was in a quandary. Though full of admiration for the Americans' seamanship he did not feel he should leave a foreign vessel at Nootka. The purpose of garrisoning the Sound had been to underline Spain's claim to exclusive jurisdiction to the Pacific Coast.

After thinking things over, "...on the one hand taking pity on the hard condition in which the young captain and others in his schooner were; on the other hand, forced to act according to my duty to prevent all commerce along this coast," he arrested Metcalfe and his men, put a prize crew aboard the Fair American and started south for Mexico, where higher authorities would decide what to do with the trespassers.

When the Spanish troops at Nootka on Vancouver Island seized the Fair American, the first U.S. vessel to cross the Pacific from China, they found the little schooner in miserable

shape. Unfit for the voyage south to San Blas, the northernmost naval base on the Mexican coast.

Thomas Humphrey Metcalfe, *The Fast American*

Estevan Martinez who was closing out the garrison Spain had maintained on Vancouver Island that year, reported that he was "...forced to supply her with every thing needed for further navigation to give her compasses, provide her with cordage, and equip her with yards and a new mainmast."

The *Fair American* and its 18 year old captain, Thomas Humphrey Metcalfe, of New York, were under arrest and being shipped to Mexico for "trial."

Martinez also put aboard a new captain, ironically, another American John Kendrick, Jr.

Young John had come to Nootka the previous year aboard the *Columbia* of Boston, which later was to give its name to the Columbia River. While at Nootka he had been converted to Catholicism by the Jesuit priests in the Spanish garrison. He changed his name from John to Juan, hired on as a "piloto" and announced his intention to seek Spanish citizenship.

At dawn on November 1, the frigate *Princesa* escorted the captive schooner out of Nootka bound for San Blas. At 9:30 that same morning the lookout on the warship sighted a sail approaching the harbor they had just left. Martinez ordered the stranger intercepted.

As the Spanish warship approached its quarry, young Metcalfe recognized her as the *Eleanora*, a ship piloted by his father, Simon. The *Fair American* and *Eleanora* had separated on their Pacific voyage but had scheduled a rendezvous.

"When I came within about two leagues of her," the Spanish captain wrote later, "I crossed her course with sails back and raised the King's flag, at the same time firing a cannon shot. Although I maneuvered farther in to get within speaking distances, the packet always managed to prevent my doing so. She raised the American flag and acknowledged ours, but hauled to the wind so that she could make toward the coast."

The *Eleanora* out-sailed the *Princesa* and Martinez eventually gave up the chase. The warship and prize resumed their voyage south.

Off California they were struck by a winter storm so severe that Juan Kendrick was forced to put into Monterey Bay. There the young Catholic convert spent ten days at the Carmelite mission as guest of Father Junipero Sera.

The *Princesa* went on alone. On December 6, she passed the Three Marias Islands and entered her home port, lovely, unhealthy San Blas.

Metcalfe and his men were taken ashore and locked up in the San Blas carcel, the first Americans to winter on the west coast of Mexico. They expressed no delight in the vacation.

Word of the capture was rushed to Mexico City. A new viceroy had just arrived. He bore the non-stop name of Juan Vicente de Guemes Pacheco de Padilla Horcasiras y Aguyo, conde de Revillagigedo (From this collection comes Guemes and Orcas as names for islands in the

American San Juans.).

Revillagigedo was not enthused at the capture of the schooner. Already worried about Martinez' seizure of three British ships at Nootka earlier in the year, the viceroy decided that one international show down at a time was sufficient. He sent word to the commander of the Department of San Blas to release the Americans and to give them back their boat, which had at least reached San Blas.

Later he decided that it would be better to escort the Fair American back to Nootka before releasing her.

Metcalf and his crew had been released before this revised plan reached San Blas, a piece of good fortune which was to cost the young skipper and three of his men their lives. When the viceroy's order was received at San Blas, the Fair American was on her way to Hawaii, where young Metcalfe hoped to find his father and the Eleanora.

"The case was far the reverse with many of my visitors, on which it made a more lasting impression. Some of them seeing my embarrassment struck up my song, and with such precision as to time and tune as infinitely astonished me. I now readily chimed in with them and continued singing whilst there was anything left to sing for.

"It was a matter of surprise to me, as well as to every one, to observe how soon my song became fashionable and how quickly it was learned by all ranks whatsoever. In short there was not a boy or girl in the village who did not in the course of three days sing it as correctly as I could. I seldom after this period bought a skin without being first called upon to sing."

Thus came the first singing commercial and first pop song in the history of the Northwest Corner.

## The Commodore and the Cannibals

Tacoma News Tribune and Sunday

Ledger May 5, 1974

# The Commodore and the Cannibals

After spending two summers in the Antarctic with the loss of one ship, the United States Exploring Expedition of 1838-42 headed for North West America. On the way, they had an important surveying assignment to carry out.

The South Pacific had become the haunt of New England whalers. The dangers of the chase were compounded by uncertainty as to the whereabouts of many of the islands in the south seas. Charts based on earlier French and British expeditions differed dangerously, sometimes by hundreds of miles in the location of islands and archipelagoes.

The Secretary of the Navy's formal instructions to Charles Wilkes, commodore of the squadron, were to determine the exact position of the islands, find new harbors that could be used by the whalers and to make friends with the island peoples.

"You will carefully inculcate on all the officers and men that courtesy and kindness toward the natives which is understood and felt by all classes of mankind; to appeal to their good will rather than to their fears, until it shall become apparent that they can only be retrained from violence by fear or force."

The charting Wilkes did admirably. His performance as a free floating good will ambassador led to his court martial. Some of the people the expedition visited were enthusiastic cannibals. The Fiji Islands, for instance, had for ages ceremonially eaten esteemed enemies killed in battle. After their acquisition of fire arms the custom got out of hand. Hunting long pig for the table became an obsession

There also was dealing in human live stock. A chief lacking a piece de resistance for a scheduled fete could buy a disposable villager from a neighboring chief. The honored one was forced to sit with his chin on his knees; then he was wrapped with vine from head to toe, carried to a large oven and roasted alive. The American visitors found this off putting.

Living in the islands at the time of Wilkes' visit was a 75 year old Irishman, Paddy Connel, who said he had escaped from an Australian penal colony forty years before, had fathered 148 children by native women and was hoping to make it 150. He told Wilkes that eight years earlier the people of the Island of Rewa had captured eight men from the whaler Charles Daggett and eaten them all though complaining that one sailor tasted strongly of tobacco.

A chief named Vendovi was said to have been chef. Wilkes sent his second in command. William Hudson, to Rewa with orders to capture the cannibal so he could be taken back to the United States and tried, if any U.S. Law could be found which applied to the Fiji Islands.

Vendovi eluded pursuit, once good naturedly serving as guide to the party that was

hunting him. He turned himself in when Hudson in desperation took as hostage some of his relatives incautious enough to board the Peacock for a visit.

The captive cannibal became quite a favorite. Though he acknowledged past eccentricities in his diet, the Americans found him to be "scrupulously clean and of proud bearing." He was homesick for his 55 wives but was allowed to bring his hair dresser, a Hawaiian aboard for the duration of the Expedition's stay in the islands.

The stratagem by which Vendovi was taken impressed the Fijians, but not favorably. Wilkes had difficulty getting guests to visit his ships. On some islands survey crews encountered resistance as they set up their paraphernalia; everywhere they had to keep close watch. Even so they were frequently stoned, sometimes their equipment was ripped off. When a boat was stolen, Wilkes sent landing parties ashore to burn two villages and cut down bread fruit trees.

Hostility to the good will expedition grew. Finally on the island of Malolo, lieutenants Joseph Underwood and Wilkes Henry, the latter Wilkes's nephew and namesake were killed in a skirmish. Wilkes demanded that the islands surrender those responsible for the death of the officers. His demands were rejected.

On Wilkes orders landing parties commanded by Lt. Cadwalader Ringgold destroyed two nearby villages. One was burned without resistance. The second defended itself but was demolished by rocket fire.

At least twenty natives were killed in the village, another twenty or so in attacks on canoes seen approaching or leaving the island. The landing party burned outlying huts, smashed 17 canoes found ashore and cut down the bread fruit plantations.

Later the surviving males were forced to crawl on hands and knees abuse themselves at Wilkes' feet and deliver all their livestock and weapons to the ships, which left them subject to the mercies and appetites of their neighbors.

Such reprisals continued. Wilkes ordered the burning and cannonading of villages in Samoa in retaliation for the reported death of a crew man from a whale ship; and of a village on Drummond Island in the Kingsmill group after a sailor from the expedition disappeared while ashore.

Years later after the expedition had returned to the United States Wilkes was court martialled for exceeding his instructions. His defense was legalistic but spirited. He quoted his orders as saying that should he find himself in an unprecedented position he would have to respond as seemed proper to him. Such orders could not be "exceeded."

If he had done wrong it was not that he had exceeded his orders but committed murder a charge which should be brought before a civil rather than a military court.

The various reprisals, however, were "...not disproportionate to the offenses.." the destruction of the villages had been "incumbent on me for the protection of commerce; it would have been criminal of me not to have inflicted chastisement." He did not believe himself guilty of anything. He felt he should not be censured but saluted by the officers of the court:

"May I not venture to say that a bare verdict of not guilty is far less than the nation has a

right to require at your hands? Its honor, its glory, the untarnished lustre of its unconquered flag all have been assailed, through me. With you rests the power of vindicating that honor, exalting that glory, and wiping off any stain which these proceedings have cast on that banner."

Wilkes' peers found him not guilty of all charges growing out of his reprisals against the islanders.

**The John Meares****Expeditions The Last****Wilderness****University of Washington Press, 1955****P. 18-22**

## The John Meares Expeditions

The following year another British trader, John Meares, visited the peninsula. Meares was an odd one, young, good-looking, impetuous, brave, a romantic with an eye for a quick pound, an imaginative man with a weakness for self-glorification and a cheery disregard for fact when distortion or prevarication offered more immediate rewards. The Indians called him Aitaaita Meares "the lying Meares". He was an instrument of destiny. When Cook's men returned to England, talking of fortunes to be made in the fur trade between the Northwest coast and China, Meares listened. He was no man to overlook the possibility of fast money, even though danger might be involved. Meares had been unemployed since the end of the American Revolution, when, at the age of twenty-seven, he retired from King George's Navy, a lieutenant.

There was one big difficulty about entering the fur business: the trade in New World furs was in the hands of two royally chartered monopolies. Meares dodged this by going to India, organizing himself as a Portuguese trading company complete with dummy stockholders, and chartering two ships, which in 1786 sailed east under the green, scarlet, and gold colors of Portugal.

One disappeared after selling a load of opium on the Malay Peninsula; the other reached Alaska, where, during a severe winter, twenty-three of its crew froze or starved before a rival vessel - one with a legitimate connection with the South Seas Company - showed up, gave necessary assistance, but shooed the interlopers out of the company trading preserve. The ship got back to India without pelts.

It says something for Meares' powers of persuasion that by 1788 he had two more ships, the Felice, which he captained, and the Iphigenial, commanded by Captain William Douglas. They departed for Nootka, where Meares proposed not only to barter for furs but to found a permanent colony made up of Chinese coolies and Hawaiian women - an experiment that never came to fruition.

On reaching Nootka, he bought (so he said) some land from the Indians (they said he neglected to pay, which sounds probable), and he set some of his men to building a boat. Then Meares went off exploring. He visited Neah Bay, Where he encountered the formidable Makahs, of whom he wrote:

About five o'clock we hove to off a small island. In a very short time we were surrounded by canoes filled with people of a much more savage appearance than any we



had hitherto seen. They were principally clothed in sea otter skins, and had their faces grimly bedaubed with oil and black and red ochre. Their canoes were large, and held from twenty to thirty men, who were armed with bows, and arrows barbed with bone, that was ragged at the points, and with large spears pointed with muscleshell....

The chief of this spot, whose name is Tatootche, did us the favor of a visit and so surly and forbidding a character we had not yet seen. His face had no variety of color on it, like the rest of his people, but was entirely black, and covered with a glittering sand, which added to the savage fierceness of his appearance.

Mearns wrote of appearances. His first officer, Mr. Duffin, was sent in the longboat to explore the Strait of Juan de Fuca and barely survived to write of action:

At 2 P.M. came to in a small cove in three and three quarters fathoms, close to the rocks.

The people here all claim Tatootche for their chief. They appeared to us to be a bold, daring set of fellows; but not being near any of their villages I was under no apprehensions. At seven A.M. came alongside of the boat several canoes, with a great number of men in each.

Several of the people attempted to come into the boat; I, at the same time, desiring to keep them out, not permitting any of them to come in. One of the canoes put off a little from the boat; when one of the savages in her took up a spear pointed with muscleshell, and fixed it to a staff with a cord made fast to it, at the same time putting himself in a posture of throwing it, and signifying, by his gestures, that he would kill me: I at the time took no notice of him, not thinking him serious.

Upon inspecting, however, their canoes, I found them all armed with spears, bludgeons, and bows and arrows; I also perceived a number of armed people amongst the trees on shore, opposite the boat: I then found they meant to take the boat; upon which I ordered the people to get their arms ready, and be on their guard, and narrowly to watch the motions of the man with the spear, and if he attempted to heave it, to shoot him.

The words were scarce uttered, when I saw the spear just coming out of his hand at Robert Davidson, quartermaster and cockswain; on which I ordered them to fire, which one person did, and killed the man with the spear on the spot, the ball going through his head.

The rest of the people jumped overboard, and all the other canoes paddled away. We instantly had a shower of arrows poured on us from the shore; upon which a constant fire was kept on them, but with no effect, they sheltering themselves behind large trees. I was wounded in the head with an arrow immediately as the man fell.

We weighed anchor, and pulled out with two oars, keeping the rest of the people at the arms. We found the shore on both sides lined with people, armed with spears, stones, etc., so that it appeared plainly their intent was to take the boat. A great quantity of arrows and stones came into the boat, but fortunately none were wounded mortally.

Peter Salatrass, an Italian, had an arrow sticking in his leg all the time till we got clear of them, not being able to pull it out without laying open the leg, the arrow being bearded, and with two prongs; I was obliged to cut his leg open to get it out, as it had penetrated three inches.

The Chinaman was also wounded in the side, and another seaman received an arrow near his heart. As soon as we got clear of them, we made sail and turned out of the bay.

Meares made no more effort to explore the strait. This did not prevent him from showing on a chart he published later a great river, the Oregon, flowing into the eastern end of the strait. He really did see a snowcapped mountain, and he named it Olympus.

The name replaced Sierra de Santa Rosalia, which Juan Perez had applied fourteen years earlier. Meares sailed south and joined the club of those explorers who had overlooked the mouth of the Columbia. He returned to Nootka and was on hand for the launching of his ship, the Northwest America. (Someone forgot to tie the stern line, and, on hitting the water, she almost left on the outgoing tide, but was retrieved.)

Then Meares loaded the Felice with otter furs and sailed off for China, leaving his associate, Douglas, to manage the little colony. (In Hawaii the natives stole the anchors from the Felice, but gave them back.)

Meares sold the otter furs at a good profit. Then he approached some legitimate British traders and talked them into backing him. The following year he dispatched two new boats to Nootka. He didn't go himself; he was writing the narrative of his voyages, real and fancied.

As Meares' two boats, flying the British flag this time, were moving eastward around the world toward Nootka, Spanish war vessels were coming up from San Blas. The Spanish claimed the entire Northwest coast, and they disapproved of visits by ships of rival claimants. The viceroy ordered Don Estevan Jose Martinez and Lopez de Haro to go north and scare the British traders away.

Martinez found the Iphigenia still at Nootka. Since she had Portuguese papers, he gave permission for her to sail, but he warned Captain Douglas not to return.

Then Meares' new vessels, the Argonaut and the Princess Royal, arrived, flying the British flag. The Spaniards seized them. Captain James Colnett of the Argonaut expressed himself so vigorously that Martinez shipped him off to San Blas, and in that mosquito plagued port he went mad.

The Iphigenia brought news of these events to Meares in India. He caught a packet to London, where he hired a press agent and stirred up Parliament. The government went on record as being ready to wage war to sustain the right of British merchants to buy cheap in the eastern Pacific what they could sell dear in the western part of the ocean. Spain backed down, agreeing that both nations should have the right to establish posts on the Northwest coast, promising to return the buildings which Meares said had been taken from him at Nootka, and undertaking to pay indemnity.

Meares turned the full force of his considerable talents to the task of preparing a suitable expense account, and in the fullness of time produced one that ranks as a triumph of imaginative literature. He claimed that his ships were hulked down with otter skins when seized; he inflated the going price for skins; and he reached his climax with a demand for \$210,000, which he got.

Meares thereupon retired from the fur trade and devoted himself to publishing his

memoirs, whose accuracy was quickly challenged by other explorers.

**The man who gave us acres and acres of**

**flowers The News Tribune**

**April 6, 1995**

**P. FP10**

## The Man Who Gave Us Acres and Acres of Flowers

George Gibbs was 52 years old in 1882 when he bought some land on Orcas Island in the San Juans and brought his wife and their eight children west from Missouri. He planned to start an apple orchard and had no idea that he would become the father of the commercial bulb industry in Washington.

A Gloucestershireman, born near the cathedral town of Tewksbury, he did some farm work as a youth but migrated to the United States when he was 17. For two years he worked as a farm hand around Buffalo, then moved west to Michigan. He bought a small farm, married an Ann Arbor girl and enrolled for classes at the University of Michigan.

When he heard of the gold strike in California, nothing could keep him on the farm. He rushed west, spent two years prospecting and returned to Michigan with enough in his poke to buy a larger farm. It prospered. He was able to return to England for several months, where his articles about agriculture found publication.

On his return to the States, Gibbs engaged in a variety of enterprises. He managed a packing house owned by an Englishman, marketed grain and lumber in Iowa and, in 1870, moved to Missouri, where he established a wheat ranch southeast of Kansas City.

Then the westering urge hit him again. Intending to become an orchardist he planted apple trees and an experimental stand of hazelnuts. The apples did well.

In 1890 he leased 121 acres near the present Orcas ferry landing for \$10 a year. He planted more fruit trees but, as one history book of Whatcom County puts it, also "invested \$5 in flower bulbs including hyacinths, tulips, narcissi, crocuses and several lilies."

Gibbs planted his bulbs in a small, hand-dug bed. He left them in the ground for two years. When he dug them in 1894 he found they had increased far beyond expectation, especially some hyacinths that had been damaged in planting. They had a profusion of bulblets around the damaged base.

A thoughtful farmer and an experienced businessman, Gibbs sensed opportunity. The Panic of '93 had depressed prices. Apples were being dumped on the market. There were many orchardists in Washington but no bulb growers.

Gibbs ordered a large quantity of bulbs from eastern growers and from Holland. He planted

them in beds averaging 3 feet in width, 15 feet in length. Bulb cultivation was labor intensive. The beds were dug by hand and planted by hand. But Gibbs and his wife had eight kids.

When ordering bulbs from Holland, Gibbs asked for advice from growers there. The Dutch considered their methods a trade secret, so the advice he got was not encouraging. One grower warned him: "It is impossible for a grown man to succeed in this business of bulb culture without having been familiarized with the industry from childhood."

He replied by sending samples of the bulbs produced by San Juan soil and sunshine. The astonished grower came to Orcas "to see for himself another land which could grow bulbs equal to Holland."

In 1898 a delegation of Dutch growers visited his gardens. A newspaper story quoted them as saying they were "astonished to see such fine plants grown in this part of the world by a man who has never been trained in bulb culture."

Gibbs began entering his plants in flower shows. He won a silver medal at the Trans Mississippi International Exposition, the judges declaring his Madonna Lily (*lilium candidum*) to be the largest and finest they had ever seen.

In 1899 Gibbs sold the apple orchard and moved his bulbs to the mainland, putting them in at the old Fort Bellingham site. Three years later he moved them again to a site near Lynden, where he remained for the rest of his long life.

Gibbs' successes attracted the attention of other growers. Bulb cultivation spread southward throughout Whatcom County and Puget Sound. In 1900 Edwin Wines and Emma Booker began growing bulbs on Fox Island for sale in Tacoma.

George Lawyer of Fife was the first large-scale bulb grower in Pierce County, planting his first bulbs in 1917. By 1920 he had more than an acre in bulbs and harvested 244,000 cut flowers, which sold for \$4,347.75. By 1926 he was shipping bulbs to Chicago and New York. George Gibbs' experimental investment of \$5 in bulbs had led to a new industry.

Gibbs himself died in 1919, the father of eight, the grandfather of 13, great grandfather of 12 - and the Father of Commercial Bulb Growing in Washington. Give him a thought when you drive past acres of flowers that are coming into bloom this month.

Nearly all of the facts in this sketch are taken from "History of the Flower Bulb Industry in Washington" by Charles J. Gould, the long-time plant pathologist at Washington State University's Puyallup Research and Extension Center in Puyallup.

## The Ms. Chief and the Big Trees

# The Ms. Chief and the Big Trees

While the two vessels Lieutenant Charles Wilkes had used in charting Puget Sound were working down the coast to assist the men off the brig Peacock which had been wrecked on the ominous Columbia River bar, a shore party went by canoe from Fort Nisqually to Grays Harbor.

As with most activities of the Wilkes Expedition, the canoe survey was conducted amid controversy. Robert E. Johnson, a young lieutenant with a weakness for medicinal whiskey was assigned to lead the party. Then Wilkes learned that while on a trip to Eastern Washington, Johnson had rewarded a Hudson's Bay Company employee who helped him with a bowie-knife pistol.

The cut-and-shoot weapon was government issue. Wilkes was upset. He wrote an amendment to Johnson's orders stating that no government property was to be disposed of "...except through absolute necessity," in which decision the officer who accompanies you must decide.

The officer accompanying Johnson was Passed Midshipman Henry Eld. Johnson, protested that the order made a lieutenant subject to veto by an inferior. Wilkes didn't like back talk. He ordered Johnson to go below and think things over for five minutes.

When Johnson reappeared he was wearing an Indian hat of spruce root. Wilkes would not listen to him as "...he was dressed very unofficerlike... and showed marked disrespect in his manner and dress to the rules of the Ship and Navy."

Again he sent Johnson below, this time with orders to be ready to leave in five minutes, only to have him reappear "...in some temper and in the same dress."

Wilkes had Johnson arrested on the spot. He put Eld in command and named Passed Midshipman George Colvocoresses as second-in-command. (When the expedition returned to the United States in 1842, Johnson was court martialled on charges of illegally disposing of government property and of disobeying a proper order. He was acquitted on both counts.)

Meanwhile the canoe party made the first American crossing between Puget Sound and Grays Harbor. Besides the midshipmen, the surveying expedition consisted of Marine Sergeant Simeon Stearns, Privates George Rogers and Samuel Dinsman, Seamen Thomas Ford and Henry Waltham, a half Indian interpreter called Joe, and William D. Brackenridge, the expedition's civilian horticulturalist.

Brackenridge was a dour thirty year old Scot, a practical man rather than a scholar. He had been hired because it was hoped his experience as a nurseryman in Philadelphia might enable him to keep botanical specimens alive on the long voyage home.

Brackenridge, whose salty journal is in the possession of the Maryland Historical Society was no admirer of the deposed Lieutenant Johnson. He was especially critical of the young

officer for keeping the party on short supplies in Eastern Washington. At Fort Colville he groused:

"Tis a fact as singular as tis true that after starving for ten days we arrived this place with not less than fifteen lbs pork, 3 whole cheese, 3 cases of sardines...Had I the least idea that such conduct would be approved by the Commander, I would certainly have taken the shortest way for the Untied States, namely across the Rocky Mountains.

Nor did Brackenridge approve of Johnson's successor, describing Eld and Colvocoresses as "...about the poorest hands to conduct an expedition of this sort that I have ever fallen in with." It was a trip to try men's patience.

The canoes purchased form the Indians at Nisqually were rotten and leaky. The party's bread was soaked and spoiled on the first day's paddle to the southern extremity of the Sound.

There Eld negotiated with an unusual Indian chief for horses and porters to carry their canoes and gear across the portage to a tributary of the Chehalis River.

The chief was a woman. She impressed the Americans deeply. "The squaw chief seemed to exercises more authority than any chief that had been met with; indeed her whole character and conduct placed her much above those around her. Her horses were remarkably fine animals; her dress was neat, and her whole establishment bore the indications of Indian opulence. Although her husband was present, he seemed under such good discipline as to warrant the belief that the wife wore the breeches."

Their canoe trip down the "Sachal" and the "Chickeeles" was difficult, " the turns were sometimes so short that the larger canoe would be in contact with thickets on the banks at both ends" and mosquitoes added to their exasperation. But they were impressed by the magnificence of the trees, and by a stand of planks on the south bank of the Chehalis, rudely carved, painted with bright red pigment, of which "nothing could be learned as to origin."

Eld sketched the carvings on the planks and he and Brackenridge wrote the first American description of the huge pines (Douglas fir) of the Grays Harbor hinterland. Wilkes summarized their timber cruise in his official Narrative of the United States Exploring Expedition published in 1845.

"Some of these had been burnt, and in consequence had fallen. Mr. Eld thus had an opportunity of measuring them. One that was not selected as the largest, for there were many of equal if not greater length and diameter was measured, and the part that lay in one piece was found to be two hundred feet long; another piece of the same tree was twenty-five feet long and at the small end still ten inches in diameter.

"Allowing twelve feet for the portion destroyed by fire, Mr. Eld thought twenty-five feet ought to be added for its top; which makes the whole tree when growing 260 feet. Others were believed to exceed this, both in height and diameter."

Small wonder that when the Gold Rush to California created an immense demand for boards and timbers in the early 1850s lumbermen looked north to Washington Territory.

**The Several Lives of John C.**

**Stevenson Skid Road**

**The Viking Press, 1960**

**P. 243-45**

## The Several Lives of John C. Stevenson

John C. Stevenson was a husky, baldheaded mystery man who first attracted attention in the Northwest as the unctuous voice of the Painless Parker chain of advertising dentists.

His salary was reported to be \$1000 a week, and he lived up to it; his house was one of the finest in town, he flew a \$20,000 plane, he piloted a cabin cruiser on Puget Sound. While proclaiming the luster of his patron's lifelike dentures, Stevenson built up a large radio audience; he liked being an oracle and soon was hawking political nostrums along with dental floss. He had the technique down pat: he criticized specific wrongs and proposed vague remedies.

In 1932 he filed in the Democratic primary for King County commissioner. He ran as "Radio Speaker John C. Stevenson," and in a field of nobodies he couldn't miss. He was radical enough to appeal to Seattle's great mass of unemployed and underpaid; he was plausible enough to appeal to the farmers who normally shunned the type of soothsayer who found favor on the Skid Road.

From the day he was elected, he was the most important commissioner any county in the state ever had. He was, as the saying goes, "a comer," and the Washington Commonwealth Federation was delighted to sponsor him.

But there was more to Stevenson than met the ear. He had materialized out of nowhere, like the great Gatsby, and there were odd rumors about where he got his wealth. When he was about to be sworn in as county commissioner, a citizen arose to protest that Stevenson wasn't a citizen, that he had flown in the Royal Canadian Air Force and was a Canadian. Stevenson admitted he had flown for Canada, denied that he was a Canadian, and refused - on grounds of possible self-incrimination - to reveal the name he had been known by in Canada. He was allowed to take office.

A few months later Governor Lehman of New York informed authorities in Olympia that Stevenson was known back East as John P. Stockman and was wanted for fraud in connection with a fake stock sale.

Stevenson said he was Stockman, all right, but that he was innocent; he fought extradition. Governor Martin was in an uncomfortable spot. Should he, or should he not, turn over to New York a man who was at once an influential Democrat and a serious rival? He refused extradition and eventually the charges against Stevenson were dropped.

Any gratitude that the Radio Speaker felt did not last beyond 1936. In the summer of that



year Stevenson felt he was ready to take the state away from Governor Martin and filed in the Democratic gubernatorial primary. The voters were faced with a complicated choice between the rich, honest, unimaginative, conservative incumbent and his rich, opportunistic, brilliant, radical opponent.

The Commonwealth Federation supported Stevenson, ardently at first, then less enthusiastically when it became apparent that he was going to lose. What went wrong with the Radio Speaker's campaign was an experimental election device - the state is always adopting such devices, to the confusion of professional politicians - the blanket primary. Under this system voters can shop around and vote for one candidate for each office, no matter which party he is running for. Any Republican who felt like it could vote for Governor Martin in the primary, and since the Republican nomination was in the bag for mass-backed ex- Governor Roland Hartley, thousands of Republicans joyously indicated they would help the conservative Democrats beat Stevenson in the September primary.

Nobody trusted the public opinion polls very much, but when the gamblers started giving two-tone on Martin, the Commonwealth Federation bosses decided it was time to cut and run. At the last possible moment they held a quick caucus and announced they were filing a written ticket of their own for the November finals.

The Commonwealth candidate would be Howard Costigan, a former barber and mural painter, who had talked his way into the position of executive secretary for the Federation. This tactic was based on a correct interpretation of the way the primary votes would run, but it infuriated Stevenson and his supporters and it helped split the Federation.

Stevenson lost the nomination by 40,000 votes.

## The Tools of Democracy and the Woolly Rhinoceros Eaters

### Puget Soundings

March 1972

P. 14-15

# The Tools of Democracy and the Woolly Rhinoceros Eaters

"In government, the common trade of all men and the basis of all social life, men worked still with old tools, and with old laws, with constitutions and charters which hindered more than they helped. Men suffered from this. There were lawyers enough; many of our ablest men were lawyers. Why didn't some of them invent legislative implements to help the people govern themselves? Why had we no toolmakers for democracy?"

-William S. U'ren

"As regards the essential principles of government, the advocates of initiative and recall are in hearty sympathy with their remote skinclad ancestors who lived in caves and fought one another with stoneheaded axes and ate the woolly rhinoceros."

-Theodore Roosevelt

"The initiative does not promise either progress or enlightenment, leading rather to doubtful experiments and to reactionary displays of prejudice than to really useful legislation. The Referendum has dulled the sense of responsibility among legislators without in fact quickening the people to the exercise of any real control in affairs."

-Woodrow Wilson

When House Speaker Tom Swayze explained recently that he is against annual general elections because they might encourage greater use of the Initiative and Referendum and thus weaken representative government, he joined a debate that has been going on since Tom Jefferson and Alexander Hamilton crossed philosophies in Philadelphia but one with special significance for the Pacific Northwest. It was here that the mechanism for direct legislation was laid on the American system of government.

Many people think that the rights of Referendum, Initiative and Recall are explicitly guaranteed by the United States Constitution. Not so. They are comparatively modern and, indeed, are still sometimes called The Oregon System, for the state which first adopted them.

The founding fathers knew well what had happened in Greece when all citizens voted on all things. But they knew too the evils of rule by a self-perpetuating elite. They tried to create a system whereby the citizens could choose men to represent them; the representatives could inform themselves and determine which policies would best serve the public interest.

Representative government never worked perfectly and at times seemed not to work at all. A century after the adoption of the Constitution, the electorate learned of high-level hanky-panky in the financing of the transcontinental railroads, low-level peddling of influence in the state legislatures. They sought ways to make their representatives more representative. Somebody noticed that, in Switzerland, the people could veto laws passed by the legislature and initiate laws which legislators ignored or pigeonholed.

The man who gave this right to American voters was a frail, pale, tubercular (but long-lived) ex- blacksmith named William S. U'ren. His father was a blacksmith as were his father's seven brothers; their father was a blacksmith, their father's father, and his father, and his.

As far back as the family could trace itself from Cornwell, which was back into Holland, it was blacksmiths end to end. With preachers added. Five of William S. U'ren's seven uncles preached, as had predecessors innumerable but articulate, as did, in his own way, U'ren.

The combination of technology and teaching, Lincoln Steffans noted in a profile, was built-in. He quotes U'ren as explaining in this fashion how he became interested in the Initiative and the Referendum:

Blacksmithing is my trade, and it has always given color to my view of things. When I was young, I saw some of the evils in the conditions of life, and I wanted to fix them. I couldn't. There were no tools. We had tools to do almost anything in the shop. Beautiful tools. Wonderful. And so in other trades, arts and professions; in everything but government.

In government, the common trade of all men and the basis of all social life, men worked still with old tools, and with old laws, with constitutions and charters which hindered more than they helped. Men suffered from this. There were lawyers enough: many of our ablest men are lawyers. Why didn't some of them invent legislative implements to help the people govern themselves? Why had we no tool makers for democracy?

Thus William U'ren as reported by Lincoln Steffens. Here let us note that U'ren was a tried and true Believer: spiritualist, vegetarian, editor, lawyer and Populist political boss.

He had been born in Wisconsin, worked west, was told he would soon die of a weak chest, went to Hawaii where dying was said to be easy, decided against it, returned to California, found it overpopulated, and headed north. On the train platform in Oakland he accepted a pamphlet handed him by an activist and arrived in Oregon with his earlier interest in Henry George and the Single Tax (a proposal to pay all the cost of government by siphoning off in taxes the rising worth of property) rekindled.

In Oregon, spiritualism rather than the single tax brought him into contact with the Lewelling brothers, cherry farmers who tended an orchard which traced its antecedents back to seedlings brought west in covered wagons. The Lewellings were as political as they were agricultural (they patented a cherry known as the Black Republican, except in the South where it is the Lewelling), and they involved U'ren with the newfound Farmers' Alliance and Industrial Union. Its thesis was:

The power of trusts and corporations has become an intolerable tyranny; the encroachments of the landgrabbers have almost exhausted the public domain; and the corruption of the

ballot has rendered our elections little less than a disgraceful farce.

U'ren agreed. But he was no man to believe agreement enough. He arranged for a convention of people of similar mental set his invitations ranged from the Chamber of Commerce to the Knights of Labor and after they'd compromised their differences they chose as secretary of what became the Oregon People's Party (Populist), William S. U'ren.

This was not happenstance. U'ren later told a friendly reporter that he acted on the advise of an old-time political activist: "Never be president. Never be conspicuous. Get a president and a committee and let them go to the front. The worker must work behind them, out of sight. Be secretary."

From his interior location, U'ren worked to turn Oregon's third party into an instrument for constitutional reform. He wasn't interested in the Populists as people. He wanted to see the Populist make available the Initiative process to the people. He believed they'd use it to put across tax reform.

In 1897 the Oregon legislature was split three ways: Republican, Democratic, Populist. The Populists were the smallest segment, but they held the balance. U'ren, as boss, froze the balance. He created a deadlock. He blocked the legislature from even getting organized to start to get to work. The tactic created a scandal: the Holdup Legislature. The notoriety served U'ren's purpose of demonstrating what a little power could do. Everybody was talking about the legislative process. Most of the comment was hostile to U'ren. He didn't mind.

When Professor Woodrow Wilson and, later, vice-president Theodore Roosevelt came out against U'ren's idea of an initiative and a referendum, he merely cited failures of representative government failures more immediate and thus more calling to the voters than theoretic long-range dangers. He was a superb tactician.

Controlling a small but disciplined block of votes in the Oregon legislature, U'ren traded support with Republicans and Democrats on other issues. He pushed constitutional amendments for initiative and referendum votes through two successive sessions of the legislature a superb bit of politicking and onto the ballot in 1902.

Oregon voters approved the initiative and referendum amendments by the incredible margin of sixty-two thousand to fifty-six hundred.

U'ren set out to exploit his new advantage. He organized a direct primary league designed to remove from the party conventions the power of nominating candidates (it did), and a Power to the People League designed to put on the ballot initiatives the legislature was afraid to consider. Somehow U'ren was elected secretary of each league.

Abruptly, Oregon, the Beaver State, was a laboratory for political reform, gnawing at the heartwood of indirect government. The initiative and referendum (and soon, the recall) became known as the Oregon System. The first two initiatives advanced by U'ren's people's power, people passed. They established the direct primary election and local option prohibition.

Two years later, 1906, eleven measures went to the Oregon voters. Among the eight adopted were home rule for the cities, the right to recall officials, and the extension of the

initiative and referendum beyond state law to city ordinances. One that failed was female suffrage.

The Oregon System caught on. Most other western and some midwestern states adopted the devices. Washington accepted the initiative, referendum and recall in 1912 (and Seattle and Tacoma immediately recalled Mayors Hiram Gill and Angelo Fawcett). By 1920, eighteen states had given voters the right to initiate laws, twenty the right to by the state legislatures.

But then the movement faded. The Oregon System of direct legislation led to many quick and beneficial reforms which might otherwise have been long delayed. But it also created problems. Special interests could use the process as they had used the legislatures. And voters confronted with increasingly complicated proposed or passed laws, protested that the ballot was "like voting a bed quilt." It has been half a century since any state constitution was changed or created to include the initiative, the referendum or recall.

With the new tools of democracy in hand, U'ren finally set out to reform the tax structure. He tried but failed to get a single tax initiative on the ballot. So, at long last, the eternal secretary emerged from behind the committees and ran for Governor. He ran third. But the instruments he created remain in the hands of the people. And the debate about their utility goes on, loud if not clear.

**Thea Foss Waterway from mudflats to tomorrow's  
parks** **The Tacoma News Tribune**

## Thea Foss Waterway from Mudflats to Tomorrow's Parks

An exhibition of photographs of "Thea Foss Waterway: Past and Present" opens today at the Handforth Gallery in the Tacoma Library at 11th and Tacoma Avenue. I haven't seen the pictures chosen but since the waterway was literally under the noses of photographers for 125 years, it should be a great show.

The waterway these days is a fresh topic of redevelopment, with planners envisioning expanses of parks, recreation and pedestrian walkways. But the announcement of the Handforth exhibit set me to thinking of moments when nobody was around with a camera.

On the morning of May 20, 1792 two small boats from George Vancouver's ship Discovery came south from the passage between Vashon Island and the Peninsula. For the first time Europeans looked eastward up the bay. No camera man caught it. But Archibald Menzies, the Scot botanist, left a word picture:

"We had a most charming prospect of Mount Rainier. The low land at the head of the Bay swelled out very gradually to form a most beautiful and majestic Mountain of great elevation whose line of ascent appeared equally smooth & gradual on every side with a round obtuse summit covered two thirds of its height down with perpetual snow as were also the summits of a rugged ridge of Mountains that proceeded from it to the Northward. "Variable winds, fine weather for our work. Two boats examined and surveyed Commencement Bay and the rivers emptying into it." (The rivers Sinclair mentioned were two branches of the Puyallup. One followed approximately the river's present course across the tideflats. The other, at least as large, swung sharply south and emptied into the waterway across from today's 15th Street). "These rivers," Sinclair continued, "form a small flat off their mouths which is (word indecipherable) at low water but at high water boats may go in and fill with water. Followed them up about two or three miles. Low meadowlands on their banks covered with fine grass on which vast numbers of ducks and geese were feeding. "There was another opening in the hills to the Southward as though another small stream came in there but there was no water for the boats to go up."

No cameraman was on hand on April Fool's Day 10 years later when Nicholas Delin, a Swedish immigrant who had come west during the California gold rush, began building a dam to impound water for a water-powered sawmill he intended to build at the head of the waterway. No photos exist of the completed mill, or of the little bark George W. Emery that lay for many days out in the bay while a load of lumber was rafted down the shallow waterway and manhandled, board by board, over the stern to be carried to San Francisco.

Tacoma did have a photographer by the time the first steam mill was built in Old Town, beyond the entrance to the waterway. He was Anthony Carr, son of founding father Job Carr.

Tony had been a topographic photographer for the Union Army and came to Tacoma in 1866.

Photographers flocked in after the completion of the Northern Pacific railroad in 1883. Most early pictures of the waterway were taken from the tideflats looking toward the city. That angle displayed the rising skyline. Shots looking out from the downtown bluff showed mostly mud.

The nature of the waterway changed dramatically after 1888 when the St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Company decided the mudflats could be firmed up enough with pilings to support heavy industry. The company acquired 200 acres from the Northern Pacific and started work on what for a time was the largest sawmill in the world.

At the same time the Tacoma Land Company, a subsidiary of the Northern Pacific, had a giant dredge, 120 feet long and 32 feet wide, towed north from San Diego. Anchored at the foot of 11th Street, it worked around the dock for more than two years, dredging 2,500 to 3,000 cubic yards of submerged silt and sand and muck which it spewed out behind walls of pilings on both sides of the channel.

When three-inch-a-day rain, followed by a Chinook wind that melted the snowpack, sent a record flood down the Puyallup in November, carrying whole trees, dead cows, a barn and tons of silt into the deepened waterway, and threatening both the St. Paul & Tacoma mill and the Pacific Naptha Launch Company, workers managed to block off the southern branch of the river. After the river fell, the south bed was filled with mill waste and the Puyallup followed pretty much its present course across the tideflats.

A century of industrial growth followed.

## **Thomson Didn't Climb, He Dug**

### **Skid Road**

**New York: The Viking Press, 1960**

**P. 167-168.**

# Thomson Didn't Climb, He Dug

An Indianan of Scotch descent, Reginald H. Thomson was twenty-five years old when he came to Seattle in 1881. A precise, school teacherish Presbyterian, he decided at once that the town "was in a pit and that to get anywhere we would be compelled to climb." But when he became city engineer in 1891, instead of climbing, he dug.

He dug a sewer north to Lake Union, an enormous sewer, "far too large for a city of forty thousand" some taxpayers complained. Next he laid a pipeline over the hills from the Cedar River and argued the City Council into eighty thousand acres of land in the watershed to prevent pollution. With sanitation and the water supply attended to, Thomson turned his attention to the walls of the pit.

The grades on streets over the hills were twenty per cent in some places; they were impossible for horse-drawn vehicles. Thomson felt that the bottleneck formed by the hills was the only real threat to Seattle's continued growth.

In 1898 he began to apply to the hills the sluicing methods used in Alaskan mining. He literally washed the tops off them.

Denny Hill went first; five million cubic yards of earth were sluiced down onto the tideflats and the maximum grade on the north/south streets was reduced to five per cent. Another three million cubic yards came off the Jackson Hill, and two million from Dearborn Hill. In all, sixteen million cubic yards were washed away, and when Thomson was through, traffic could move easily north and south. Ballard and West Seattle were brought within the city limits.

By 1910 the city was level enough to take advantage of the automobile, which greatly increased land transportation. Most traffic along the Sound had to flow through Seattle, and the city's dominance of the region was secure. Seattle was no longer a leading Washington city. It was the metropolis.



## Vic Meyers Enters Politics

Of all the odd ones who clamored for the attention of the Washington electorate, the oddest by far was a dapper young man with a thin waxed mustache and an air of raffish dignity, Victor Aloysius Meyers, the joke that backfired.

Vic Meyers operated Seattle's most celebrated night spot, the Club Victor, and led its best dance band. He was a glib, personable master of ceremonies who suffered the usual occupational disabilities of his professions: he was often broke and sometimes in trouble with the federal authorities charged with enforcing the Volstead Act. He was a favorite with reporters.

His name was news. Everybody knew Vic and he was always good for a laugh. It was worth a two column picture when the government noticed that people were drinking at the Club Victor and padlocked the joint as a nuisance. It was copy when he won a radio contest as the coast's most popular M. C. It even seemed funny and worth a picture when he fell off a stepladder and broke his arm.

One dull afternoon in January 1932 a group of newspapermen were talking about the collection of fatuous hasbeens and neverwases who were seeking to become mayor of Seattle. The only colorful figures in the race was John F. Dore, a stumpy little trial lawyer with a rasping vocabulary and a gift for sawtoothed phrases, but Dore was running under wraps; he was the businessman's candidate, and not even Irish

Johnny could be lively on the subject of efficiency in municipal government. The rest of the candidates were hardly worth quoting.

Somebody remarked that Vic Meyers was better copy than the whole kit and kaboodle. The remark set Doug Welch to thinking happy thoughts. Doug was an assistant city editor on the Times and the most efficient humorist then practicing in the Northwest. The idea of Vic Meyers as a candidate for mayor appealed to him; Vic would be a good peg on which to hang some satirical feature stories about the other candidates.

After clearing it with the higher brass, Doug phoned Vic and told him that if he'd hustle down to the County City Building and file for mayor, the Times would give him an eight column bannerline on page one and follow that up with daily pictures and features for the duration.

Vic thought it was a lovely idea, and so did the Times' readers, for with Welch and every happy cynic in the city room thinking up gags, Meyers put on a wonderful campaign. His slogan was a straight-faced parody of all the short, meaningless slogans dreamed up to fit on advertising placards: "Watch 'er Click with Vic."

He announced that he would campaign in shirt sleeves, to prove he was not a representative of the vested interests, but later he took to wearing tuxedo, silk scarf, top hat, velvet laped overcoat, and kid gloves. "Somebody," he explained, "has to give this campaign a little class."

Meyers drove a beer wagon around town. His band played "Happy Days Are Here

Again," and Vic parked the wagon at intersections and harangued the townsfolk on topics of the day. There was the usual argument about daylight-saving time and Vic took a firm stand. "I don't believe in it. Seattle should have two four time, allegro."

He burlesqued the economy speeches that John Dore was making. "I'm not very economical and thrifty myself, but you ought to see my wife! As soon as I am elected, I will tum over the city to her. In two weeks Edinburgh will appoint a commission to come and study the economies my wife will put in."

Dore was against waste, and so was Vic: he suggested putting flowerboxes around all the fire hydrants to utilize any water that dripped out.

Vic came out foursquare in favor of graft. "There's not going to be any cheap chiseling on city contracts while I'm mayor," he said. "I'm going to take it all myself." On other topics he was less flatfooted, explaining that he had noticed that mayors who said (t yes" ran into a lot of trouble and those who said "no" had even more. So he was going to be the nation's first "Maybe Man."

Sometimes a serious citizen would ask Vic how he stood on some topic. When he couldn't think of a wisecrack Vic would roll his eyes thoughtfully heavenward, wait a moment, then nod, smile, and lean forward. "I'm okay on that," he would assure his questioner.

He had more gag writers than a radio comedian, and they delighted in thinking up stunts for him.

All the candidates were promising to do something about Seattle's streetcars, which were ancient and ugly and flat wheeled. Vic suggested hostesses, and when Laura La Plante, a reigning blonde in Hollywood, visited town, Vic took her for a streetcar ride. He generously gave her credit for the suggestion that the hostesses supply cracked ice on the late evening cruises.

When all the candidates were invited to speak at a luncheon of one of the service clubs, Vic arrived dressed as Mahatma Gandhi, leading a goat. He sat at the speakers' table sipping goat's milk and munching raw carrots and looking at his rivals over the top of his gold rimmed spectacles. His very presence made all the speeches ridiculous.

It was good fun. Nobody took it seriously except the Star and the Post Intelligencer, which sniffed disdainfully about degradation of the electoral process, and Vic himself. As the campaign wore on and he listened to more of his rivals' speeches, Vic arrived at the opinion the reporters had started with that he was as good as any of the other bums in the race.

From the time that notion assailed him, Vic was a problem to his gag writers. He wanted to talk about issues. He was the comedian hellbent on playing Hamlet. Toward the end of the campaign he announced that the comedy was over; from here on in he was out for votes, not laughs. For many this statement seemed the ultimate in deadpan hilarity, but Vic was serious. He finished sixth in the primary field of ten.

The Times, in his name, demanded a recount. Vic suggested that the FBI study the fingerprints in all the polling booths. Then he went back to leading his dance band but only briefly. After a few months in which he failed to gain an inch of frontpage space, Vic phoned

Doug Welch and suggested another campaign, this time for governor.

Welch said the gag had worn thin; anyway, once was enough. Not for Vic. He decided to run unsponsored, drove down to Olympia, and appeared at the state capitol, ready to file. He was less ready when he learned the filing fee was sixty dollars. "That's too much," said Vic. "What do you have for twenty?" "Well," said the clerk, "you could file for lieutenant governor. That's twelve." Vic hesitated. "I can't spell it," he said thoughtfully, "but I'll take it."

Vic worked hard at his campaign. He used the gags Welch had dreamed up, but he had the swing of it now and made up some for himself. He beat tomtoms on an Indian reservation and expressed surprise when told that wards of the government had no vote. He played his saxophone at a lumber camp. He again wrapped himself in Gandhi's mantle.

He assured the voters he was okay but he also came out for pensions, children's welfare measures and unemployment compensation. None of the professionals took him seriously, not until the September primaries. In the privacy of the voting booth, Washington citizens scanned the long list of candidates for lieutenant governor and found there the familiar name of Vic Meyers.

Enough voters pulled the lever or marked the "X" beside his name to make him the nominee of the Democratic Party. The joke had gone far enough. It looked as though 1932 would be a Democratic year, and the last two Democratic governors had died in office.

Clarence D. Martin, the nominee for governor, was a gaunt gentleman who looked none too durable.

Republicans and many Democrats asked the voters, "Do you want a man like Vic Meyers just a heartbeat away from the governorship?" On election day 286,402 of them did, which was 40,000 more than wanted Vic's Republican opponent.

So Vic had the last laugh. He announced that he would hold a coming-out-of-the-red party for his creditors; he also expressed hope that someone would tell him how to do whatever it was a lieutenant governor did. Editorial writers throughout the nation shuddered in print for the fate of the state.

**Victor Smith, Port**

**Townsend and the Customs**

**House**

## Victor Smith, Port Townsend and the Customs House

The Presidential election of 1856 had brought J. Ross Browne as a federal inspector to Port Townsend. The canvass of 1860 brought Victor Smith, another Treasury special agent.

President Lincoln appointed, as Secretary of the Treasury, Salmon Portland Chase, a man described by his biographer as looking "as you would wish a statesman to look . . . a picture of intelligence, strength, courage and dignity."

Around this paragon crowded the usual throng of office-seekers; these were described by a contemporary observer as "unpractical pulpless clergymen, briefless lawyers, authors, sorethroated, broken down merchants, poor widows, orphaned daughters, all claiming to have helped elect Lincoln." Among them was Victor Smith, a debt-ridden newspaperman from Cincinnati.

Smith had special claims on Secretary Chase. He had not merely supported Lincoln for the presidency; before the Chicago convention he had backed Chase, his fellow townsman, for the nomination - backed him not from propinquity but from principle, believing that Chase was a stronger anti-slavery man than Lincoln. Smith was an abolitionist red-hot, a quick man with the epithet, a doubter of others' motives, a crusader, earnest and impatient and humorless.

Chase's secretary said of him, "He believed in spirit rapping; he whined a great deal about progress; was somewhat arrogant in manner and intolerant in speech; and speedily made himself unpopular. He was not an easy man to have around. Chase may well have been thinking of the merits of absence when he proposed that Lincoln send the gaunt, sandy-haired reformer to the most distant customs house in the United States territories.

Smith was not enchanted with Port Townsend. He quickly decided the community was "a collection of huts," its water supply inadequate, its harbor a mere roadstead, its citizens certainly oafs and probably copperheads. After a few days in town he wrote to the Treasury Department, outlining the need for reform and saying:

I recommend that the Port of Entry be transferred from Port Townsend to Port Angeles, which may be done by the Secretary of the Treasury, as Congress has never legislated on the subject.

While waiting for word from the east authorizing this economic castration of Port Townsend, Smith went about town building up goodwill. He hired the editor of a local weekly as assistant collector, then fired him for incompetence. He deplored the local practice of

importing Hudson's Bay whiskey without bothering to pay duty. He even criticized the view.

Sometimes he tried to be nice: at a party honoring his arrival he expressed his pleasure at finding his hosts as intelligent as the country folk back where he came from. Port Townsend did not cotton to Victor Smith.

In time word leaked out that Smith had recommended removal of the port of entry. He denied it, explaining with something less than candor that he had done nothing more than outline the situation to higher authorities.

Then someone learned that Smith and four other men had acquired title to a town site at Port Angeles. Smith could explain that: the Port Angeles Townsite Company had been organized as a patriotic endeavor to promote the national welfare by developing land across the Strait from the British naval station at Esquimalt.

Didn't the people of Port Townsend realize that Britain was likely at any moment to come into the war on the side of the Confederacy? It was imperative that the harbor of Port Angeles be developed in the interests of national safety. Port Townsend remained unconvinced as to the purity of his motives.

When his letters recommending the creation of a military district at Port Angeles failed to get results, Smith decided to go east and by personal interview convince the nation's leaders of the British menace and the steps needed to combat it. He was fresh out of assistant collectors, and he felt it unwise to deputize any of the Port Townsend citizens, whom he suspected of having subversive tendencies. He asked the captain of the local revenue cutter Joe Lane to lend him an officer for six weeks. Second Lieutenant J. H. Merryman got the job.

Smith left quietly for Washington - so quietly, in fact, that Port Townsend got the impression he had fled the field. The Weekly Republican saluted his departure: "Poor Victor has gone, unwept, un-honored, and unhung."

Lieutenant Merryman brevetted Founding Father Hastings as deputy collector, and together they went over the records of the custom house. First, shades of Judas Iscariot! oh, whelp of Benedict Arnold! - they found a copy of Smith's recommendation to shift the port of entry. (The absent collector was hanged in effigy when that word got out.)

Then they began to go over the accounts. To their delight, Smith came out fifteen thousand dollars short.

Merryman wrote a report to Secretary Chase, picturing Smith as an embezzler - and an inept one at that. Port Townsend settled back happily to await the arrival of Smith's replacement. Two months passed, two sweet months of clear skies, fresh breezes, good deer-hunting, happy clam digging.

The chinooks were biting off the point. Never had Port Townsend whiskey given off a better glow. The Bank Exchange, the Whalesmen's Arms, the Banner Saloon, and lesser dives, all radiated relaxation and joy. Victor Smith was gone.

Then in July the mail from San Francisco brought a copy of the Bulletin with a story that Victor Smith, Customs Collector for the Puget Sound District, was in town, arranging the

transfer of the revenue cutter Shubrick to Port Angeles, the new port of entry.

But you couldn't believe everything you read in the papers. On a warm, overcast evening early in August a small paddle-wheel steamer rounded Point Wilson and approached the town. Her running lights glinted off the bronze of her swivel guns as she jockeyed up to Fowler's Wharf. Word spread that she was the Shubrick. A crowd gathered as she tied up. Down the gangplank came Victor Smith.

No one stepped forward to welcome him. In silence the people of Port Townsend let him pass. In silence he walked toward the custom house.

Lieutenant Merryman was told that Smith was coming. He put the records in the safe, locked the safe, and pocketed the key. Then he locked the custom house door and waited.

The collector approached the deputy collector and announced himself ready to resume his duties. Merryman said he could not permit Smith to do so. Smith asked why.

Merryman said Smith was a felon and an embezzler, that it had been his painful duty to write the report revealing that sad fact to their superiors.

Oh, that, Smith said he had explained everything to Chase. Just a matter of bookkeeping. Merryman hadn't understood his accounting system, that was all. Now the keys, please.

Merryman said he would await official confirmation of Smith's clearance before letting him back into the office. Smith turned and walked back to the Shubrick. From the saloons came the echo of laughter.

An hour later Lieutenant Wilson, the skipper of the Shubrick, came to the custom house. He was a pleasant young man with a soft voice and a courteous manner. He said it was his unpleasant duty to tell Merryman that on instructions from Collector Smith he had ordered his men to load the cutter's twelve- pounders with double shot.

They were at this moment trained on the custom house. If the records were not surrendered within fifteen minutes, the bombardment would begin. It would be prudent of persons residing nearby to leave their houses.

Merryman, after a quick consultation with the city council, gave up the keys. A party from the Shubrick loaded up the records and carried them to the cutter, which at once cast off and moved out into the bay. The next morning a delegation of citizens rushed off to Olympia to see the territorial governor. He rounded up a delegation of officials to find out what the hell was going on at Port Townsend - or, as Governor Pickering phrased it, to study "the complicated and delicate questions of law and conventional usage, or professional etiquette, always to be rightfully observed between officers representing coordinate branches of the same government."

After talking to the outraged citizens, United States Commissioner Henry McGill issued warrants charging Smith and Wilson with "assault with intent to kill." The United States marshal deputized a posse to row him out to the Shubrick, which had reappeared off the harbor.

The marshal boarded the cutter, but he couldn't find Smith. He did locate Lieutenant Wilson and read the warrant to him. Wilson refused to accept it, arguing that he couldn't be

served with a warrant on the deck of a government vessel. The marshal rowed ashore to ask what to do next.

The commissioner told the marshal he could too serve the warrant. The commissioner said he had better get right back out there and do it. Back they rowed. But as the rowboat approached the cutter Wilson or

**William Combe: Writer describes things not seen**

## William Combe: Writer Describes Things Not Seen

William Combe, whose ghostly activities as amanuensis for books of travel in North West America was a master of a prose style well suited to describing action.

Although the writer was circumscribed by the rules of debtor's prison to a narrow area bordering the King's Bench Jail in London, his mind roamed the world and conjured memorable detail in scenes he had not actually witnessed.

Listen to this elegant, albeit bankrupt, Estonian as he describes for John Meares the launch of *The North West America*, the first vessel to go down the ways in the Pacific Northwest. The year was 1789, the place Friendly Cove on Nootka Sound. "The presence of the Americans, Robert Gray and the crew of the *Lady Washington* ought to be considered when we are describing this important crisis which, from the labor that produced it, the scene that surrounded it, the spectators that beheld it, and the commercial advantages, as well as civilizing ideas, connected with it, will attach some little consequence to its proceeding, in the mind of the philosopher, as well as in the view of the politician. "Our suspense was not of long duration. On the firing of a gun the vessel started from the waves like a shot. Indeed she went off with so much velocity, that she nearly made her way out of the harbor; for the fact was that not being very much accustomed to this business, we had forgotten to place an anchor and cable on board to bring her up. The boats, however, soon towed her to her intended station. "Tianna (a six foot five inch Hawaiian prince who Meares was taking back to the island from China) was on board the vessel at the time of her being launched; he not only saw but may be said to have felt the operation as if it had been the work of enchantment, and expressed astonishment by capering about, clapping his hands and exclaiming, "myty, myty," the word most expressive in the language of the Sandwich Islands to convey wonder, approbation and delight. "The Chinese carpenters who had helped assemble the vessel were in almost equal degree of astonishment. Nor were the natives of the Sound, who were present at the ceremony less impressed by a series of operations, the simplest of which was far above their comprehension. In short, this business did not fail to raise us still higher in their good opinion, and to afford them better and more correct notions than they hitherto possessed of the superiority of civilized over savage life."

Combe's racial attitudes, of course, were those of Georgian England. They show up again in a passage from his other famous work on the Northwest, "*Mackenzies Voyages*," in which he describes a wild run down a tributary of the Fraser on June 13, 1793. "We accordingly pushed off, and had proceeded but a very short way when the canoe struck, and notwithstanding all our exertions, the violence of the current was so great as to drive her sideways down the river, and break her by the first bar. "We had hardly regained our situation when we drove against a rock which shattered the stern of the canoe in such a manner that it held only by the gunwales, so that the steersman could no longer keep his place. The violence of this stroke drove us to the



opposite side of the river which is but narrow, when the bow met the same fate as the stern. "At this moment the foreman seized on some branches of a small tree in the hope of bringing up the canoe, but such was their elasticity that in a manner not easily described, he was jerked on shore in an instance, and with a degree of violence that threatened his destruction. "We had no time to turn from our won situation to inquire what had befallen him; for in a few moments we came across a cascade which broke several large holes in the bottom of the canoe and started up all the bars, except one behind the scooping seat. "If this accident, however, had not happened, the vessel must have been irretrievably upset. The wreck becoming flat on the water, we all jumped out, while the steersman who had not recovered from his fright called out to his companions to save themselves. "My commands superseded the effects of his fear, and they all held fast to the wreck; to which fortunate resolutely we owed our safety, as we should otherwise have been dashed against the rocks by the force of the water, or driven over the cascades. "We were forced several hundred yards, ever hard on the verge of destruction, but at length arrived in shallow water and a small eddy, where we were enabled to make a stand. This alarming scene with all its terrors and dangers occupied only a few minutes, and in the present suspension of it, we called to the people on shore to come to our assistance. "The foreman had escaped unhurt from the extraordinary jerk with which he was thrown out of the boat, and just as we were beginning to take our effects out of the water he appeared to give his assistance. The Indians, when they saw our deplorable situation, instead of making the least effort to help us, sat down and gave vent to their tears."