

## THE TIME 1875–1917

### ▶ PEOPLE TO KNOW

Erastus Brainerd  
Charles Dawes  
James J. Hill  
May Arkwright Hutton  
Ezra Meeker  
John Nordstrom  
Mathias Reinbold  
Henry Villard  
Frederick Weyerhaeuser  
Henry Yesler

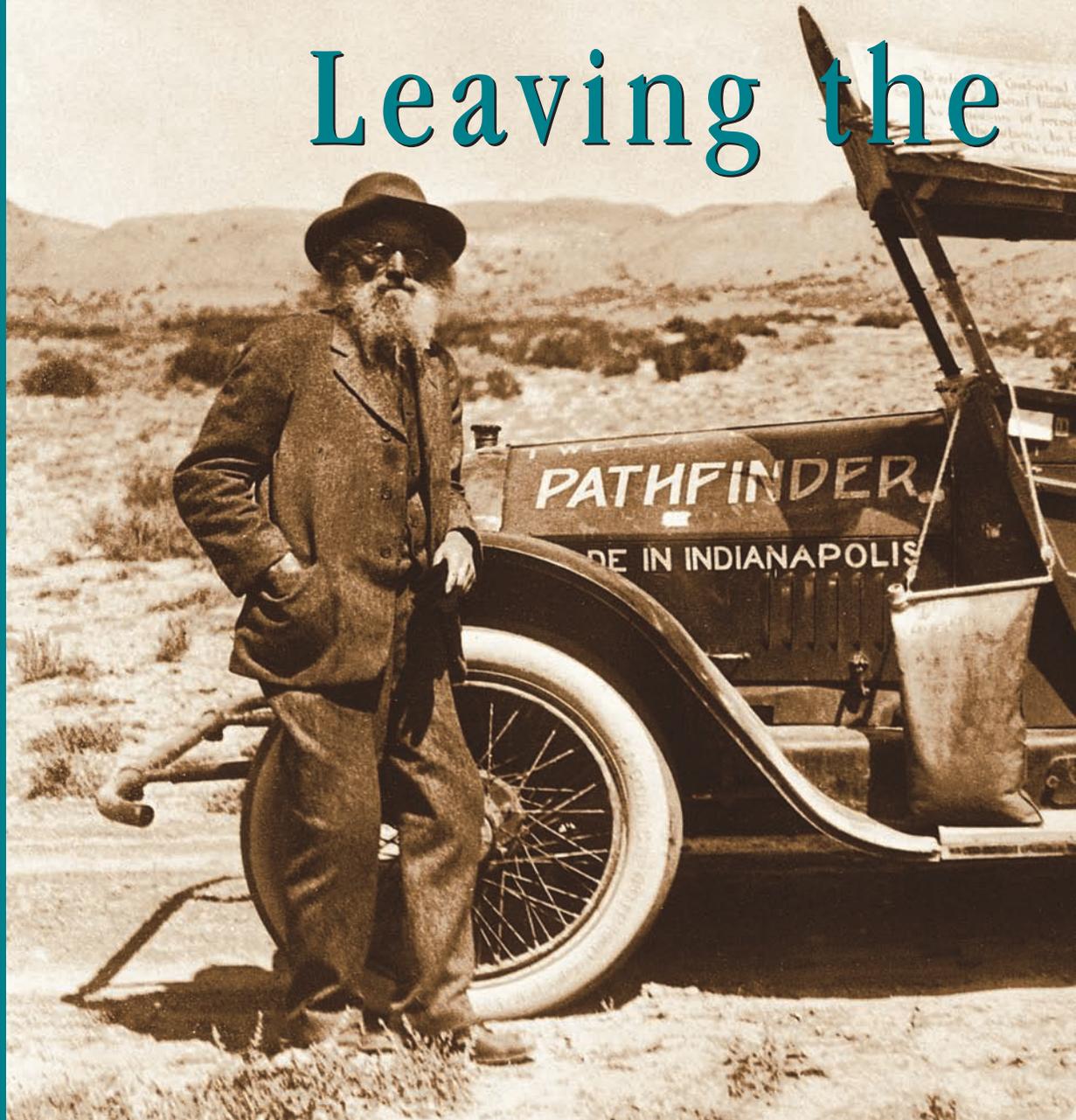
### ▶ PLACES TO LOCATE

British Isles  
Germany  
Scandinavia (Norway,  
Finland, Sweden)  
Italy  
China  
Alaska  
Klondike Region  
Oklahoma  
Nebraska  
Seattle  
Tacoma  
Ellensburg  
Spokane  
Walla Walla  
Palouse Region  
Portland, Oregon  
Washington, D.C.  
San Diego, California  
San Francisco, California

### ▶ WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

coerce  
condensed milk  
degradation  
delude  
derogatory  
domestic arts  
exploit  
fjord  
fraud  
humane  
industrial arts  
insatiable  
irony  
motley  
per capita  
repeal  
revenue  
sanitation  
subsidy

# Leaving the



Ezra Meeker came to Washington by covered wagon in 1852. He lived long enough to retrace the Oregon Trail—first by wagon and then by car—to promote marking the trail with monuments. Then, in the 1920s, he retraced the route in an airplane.

### TIMELINE

▼  
1875

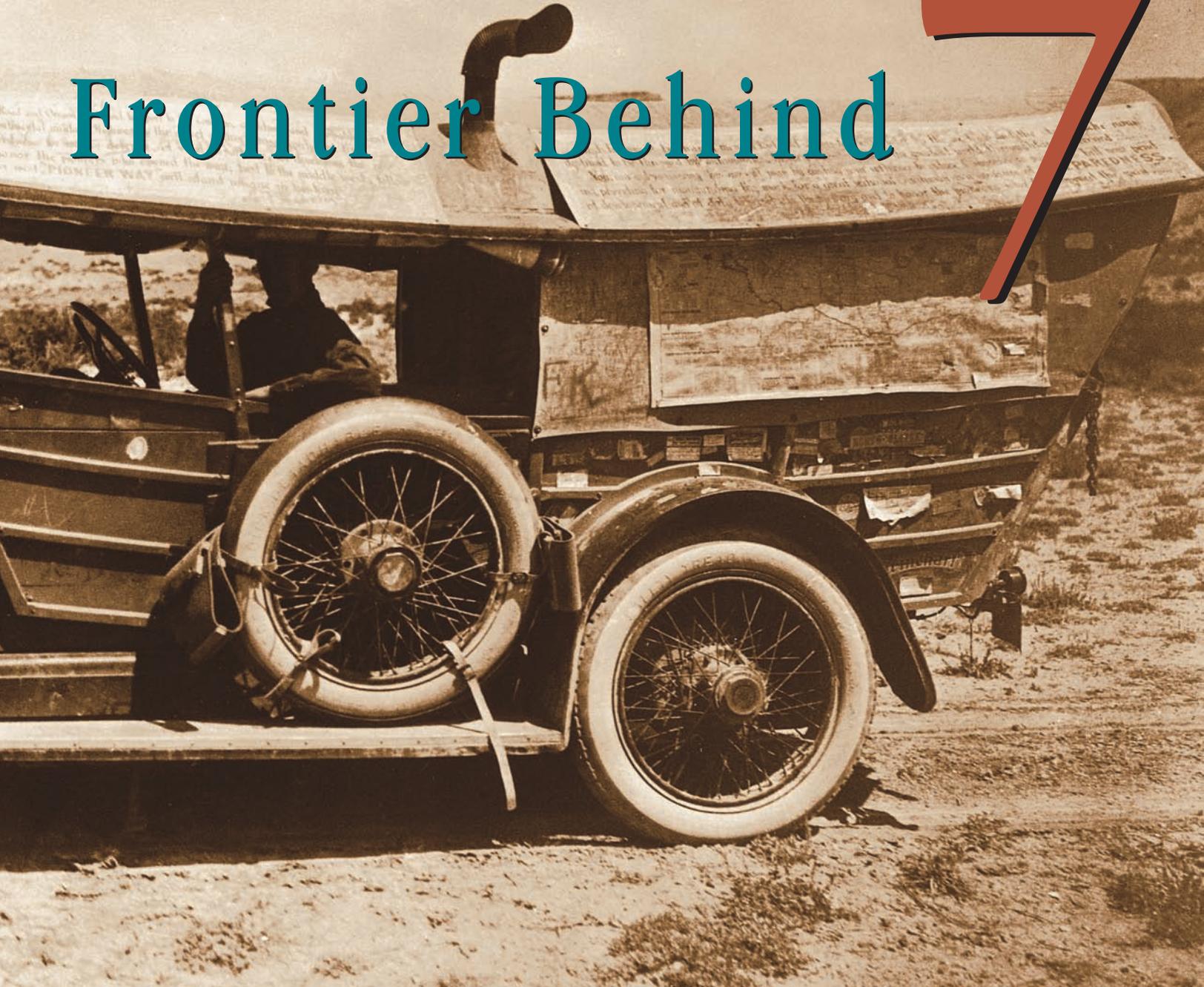
↑  
**1875**  
Congress passes the Indian Homestead Act.

**1883**  
Northern Pacific Transcontinental Railroad is completed.

▼  
1885

↑  
**1885/86**  
Tacoma and Seattle expel all Chinese.

# Frontier Behind



**1889**

November 11, Washington and Montana gain statehood.

Fires burn down much of Ellensburg, Spokane, and Seattle.

**1900**

Weyerhaeuser buys 900,000 acres of timber from Northern Pacific R.R.

1895

**1887**

The Dawes Act deeds reservation land to individual Indian people.

**1890**

Idaho gains statehood.

**1893**

Great Northern Transcontinental Railroad is completed in Seattle.

**1897**

News of gold discovery in Klondike reaches Seattle.

**1899**

Mount Rainier National Park is created.

**1905**

Washington takes the lead in U.S. lumber production.

## The Railroad Age

The frontier period in the Pacific Northwest ended on September 8, 1883. On that date, the tracks of the Northern Pacific's rail line from the Great Lakes to Puget Sound were joined. Now a journey that once took three to five months could be made in only five days—or even less.

Other transcontinental railroads finally reached Washington, too. The companies extended lines into the mining, timber, and farming regions.

### Federal Land Grants

It would have been almost impossible for private companies to build a transcontinental railroad. The vast unsettled nature of the land was a harsh fact. There were deep gullies, raging rivers, thick forests, and steep mountains to cross. There would be trouble with Indians who would resent railroad tracks crossing their hunting grounds. Land had to be cleared, bridges built, and tunnels blasted. Heavy steel rails, lumber, and supplies had to be delivered to the sites by teams of wagons. Thousands of workers had to be hired, trained, and paid. The trains themselves had to be purchased. It was clear that help from a very large company or the national government was needed.

At one time, the federal government owned all of the land in the West. As settlement progressed westward, the government gave land grants to farmers, ranchers, timber companies, and railroads. Huge amounts of land were given to the railroad companies to improve transportation for everyone. Then the railroad could sell some of the land to settlers. This would raise money for construction of the rail lines.

The Northern Pacific Railroad received a land grant *subsidy* of 40 million acres (an area about the size of the state of Washington) to build a rail line from Lake Superior to Puget Sound.

**PUBLIC ATTENTION**

Is now largely directed to the

**VAST NEW REGIONS**

Opened for Settlement by the completion of the

**NORTHERN PACIFIC RAILROAD**

Through MINNESOTA, NORTH DAKOTA, MONTANA,  
NORTHERN IDAHO, WASHINGTON and OREGON,  
The widely known and prosperous

**Northern Pacific Country**

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 The important Geographical Divisions traversed by this New **TRANS-CONTINENTAL LINE**, possess unusually large and varied Natural Resources.

**THERE ARE** New Towns growing in to important trade centers, and there is a steady advance in the values of all property.

**THERE ARE** Large unoccupied areas of FERTILE LANDS especially adapted to Wheat Growing and General Farming.

**THERE ARE** EXTENSIVE GRAZING RANGES, the best in the United States for Stock Raising.

**THERE ARE** RICH MINERAL DISTRICTS to be developed and HEAVY BODIES OF TIMBER for lumbering purposes.

**THERE ARE** Navigable Rivers, Lakes and larger waters and innumerable water powers ready to be utilized.

**THERE ARE** Profitable Fisheries on the Rivers, Lakes and Puget Sound. The fish are of great commercial value.

**THERE ARE** Exceptionally good opportunities for Merchants, Manufacturers, Professional Men, Mechanics and Traders to engage in business.

**The Diversified Resources of this Grand Region**

ready to be developed into innumerable paying industries, will put in use much capital AND REQUIRE A LARGE NUMBER OF OPERATORS AND WORKING MEN.

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**THERE IS AMPLE ROOM**

*In this Great Belt of Productive and Prosperous Country*

**For Millions of Settlers**

To secure COMFORTABLE HOMES and become INDEPENDENT.

 Each State and Territory traversed by the NORTHERN PACIFIC possesses abundant resources to support a compact population. The countries are well watered, the soil is rich and productive, while the climate is superior in the qualities which assure healthful and pleasant living, is favorable for the production of crops, and usually more propitious than elsewhere found for the growth of wheat, oats, rye, barley, fruits and the vegetables.

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**FREE!** For Maps and Publications, SENT FREE OF CHARGE, and for all information relating to Lands and the Northern Pacific Country, apply to or address,

PAUL SCHULZE, Gen'l Land Ag't, PORTLAND, OREGON.	R. J. WEMYSS, Gen'l Land Ag't, ST. PAUL, MINN.
P. B. GROAT, Gen'l Emigration Ag't, ST. PAUL, MINN.	CHAS. B. LAMBORN, Land Commissioner, ST. PAUL, MINN.

Railroad posters promoted the West. How did this poster entice settlers?

The government deeded every other section (one square mile) on both sides of the tracks to the railroad upon completion of every twenty-five miles of track. The government kept the alternating sections for other uses. This resulted in a vast “checkerboard” across the region.

The Northern Pacific Railroad was the most important corporation in the state’s history. No other business had a greater influence on Washington’s settlement and economic development.

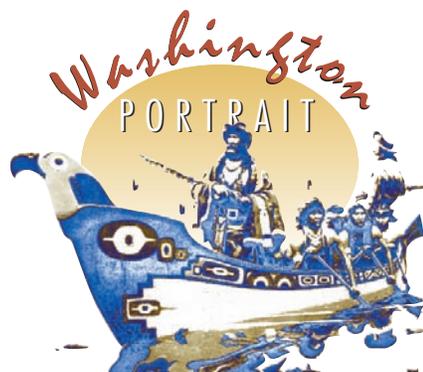
An article in the *Spokane Falls Chronicle* described the excitement surrounding the arrival of the first passenger train of the Northern Pacific:

*About half past 6 o’clock in the evening, Graham’s band struck up a lively tune, and then almost the entire population of the town left homes, stores, shops, and offices, and hastened to the depot. At 7:14 the train came into view . . . the crowd cheered, the band played, and greetings were extended to those who came to Spokane by rail.*

## Railroads and Immigration

In order to earn *revenue* from their land grants, railroads hired land agents to sell pieces of the land to businessmen and settlers. Northern Pacific land agents spread out across the United States, the British Isles, and northern Europe. There were 831 agents in Great Britain in 1883. They distributed advertisements at weekly farmers markets, while another 124 agents carried the same message across northern Europe. Brochures were published in English, French, Swedish, Norwegian, and other languages.

The Northern Pacific, and later the Great Northern Railroads, published detailed instructions on how to travel to the Northwest. Both railroads ran special trains at reduced rates to carry immigrant families and their belongings. Settlers could buy railroad land as low as \$1.25 an acre, though



## HENRY VILLARD

The individual most responsible for the completion of the Northern Pacific was a man of remarkable talent and energy. Villard had emigrated from Germany to the United States when he was eighteen years old. He worked as a journalist, reporting the Lincoln-Douglas debates, the election that Lincoln won, and the Civil War.

During a visit to Europe to recover from overwork, Villard met a group of German men who were interested in investing money in American railroads. They persuaded him to handle their financial affairs in the states. In a daring move, Villard raised \$16 million for the venture.

Villard used the money to form the Oregon Railway and Navigation Company. The company built the ORN tracks along the Columbia River to where they met the tracks of the Northern Pacific Railroad. Then Villard bought the Northern Pacific and directed the completion of the tracks through Idaho and Montana.



Horse teams pulled the heavy iron rails and wooden cross beams to the track site.

some land cost more. If immigrants didn't have the money to buy the land, the railroad sold it to them on credit.

The result was a tidal wave of immigration into Washington. Railroad-sponsored migration was the principal cause of the state's growth after 1880.

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## Who Were the Immigrants?

By providing a faster way for immigrants to travel to the Northwest, the railroads were actually responsible for the ethnic mix of the state. In the late 1800s and early 1900s, mostly Canadian, English, German, and Scandinavian

immigrants came. People also came from many other countries.

By 1910, forty-six percent of the state's people were either born in another country or their parents were. These new immigrants joined the Chinese and Irish already here.

### Scandinavian Immigrants

Puget Sound attracted Scandinavians because its wet climate, high mountains, and many ocean inlets reminded them of home. Norwegians started a colony at Poulsbo on the Olympic peninsula because it looked like their native *fjord* in Norway. Swedes worked for logging companies, doing work that was familiar to them. For the same reasons, Norwegians and Finns were attracted to fishing and Danes to dairying.



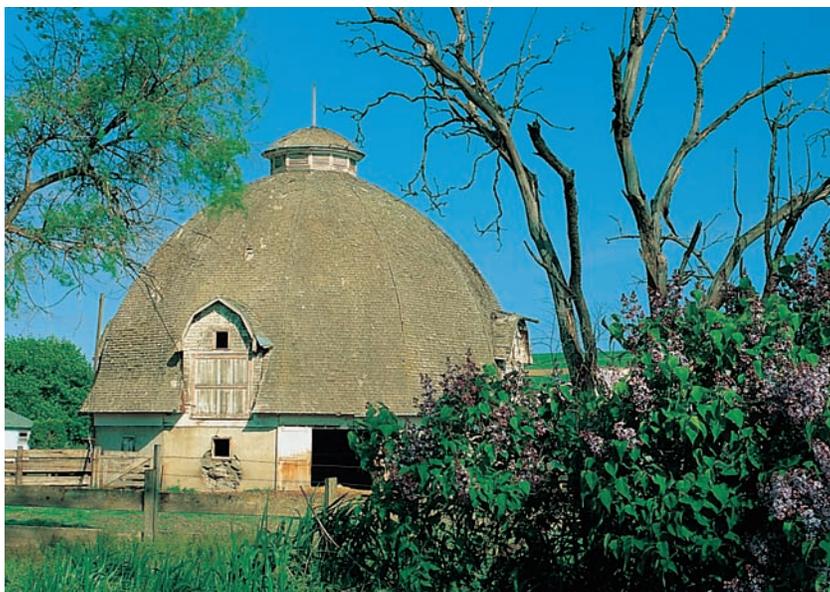
Scandinavian families worked together on a dairy farm in the 1860s.

## German Immigrants

German farmers established small settlements across the Palouse and Big Bend regions. Mathias Reinbold was so impressed by the railroad's message in Germany that he persuaded nine of his fourteen children to emigrate. Today their descendants are found in Lincoln County.

## Italian Immigrants

Washington's Italians arrived with railroad construction crews. Others came as skilled stone masons to help rebuild Spokane, Ellensburg, and Seattle after the terrible fires of 1889. Italian farmers located in the Walla Walla Valley, where they became famous in later years for their sweet onions.



### Fire!

**I**n 1889, the same year Washington became a state, people living in Seattle, Ellensburg, and Spokane had to deal with the devastation of huge fires.

In Seattle, a craftsman was heating glue in his shop when the pan boiled over. When the glue hit the hot stove it caught fire. Soon entire blocks of wooden buildings were burning. Flames were jumping from roof to roof and even across dirt streets. By evening the entire business district was in ruins. Soon people were doing business from tents.

Italian, Chinese and other workers cooperated in rebuilding the cities—this time with fire-proof brick and cement.

German families built round barns. Mr. Steinko's barn actually has twelve sides.  
*Photo by Barbara Murray*

*Swedish, Norwegian, Italian, Japanese, and German newspapers were published in Seattle at the turn of the century.*



This pile of basalt rocks is actually an oven. Italian railroad construction crews in eastern Washington made the ovens to bake their bread.

### LINKING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

**Today, Seattle's International District remains a thriving reminder of the origins of diversity. It is also a stronghold of Asian and Pacific Island cultures.**



After tracks were laid to the forests, logs were carried by rail.

### been treated in American history?

## A Natural Resource Economy

Washington's explosive growth depended on the productive use of its natural resources. The manufacturing of wood products was important. Exports also included metals, canned fish, livestock, grain, and fruit.

### Lumbering

Lumber was our most important industry for many years. Washington became the nation's leading lumber state in 1905.

Seattle had grown up as a sawmill town around Henry Yesler's steam-powered sawmill. Soon larger mills were built throughout the Puget Sound region. Tall

timber next to deep water meant that trees could be cut, milled (sawed into boards), and easily exported by ship.

In California, the demand for lumber seemed *insatiable*. Huge log rafts were towed to San Diego to be processed in a mill built specifically for Northwest timber.

Timber companies were helped by the Northern Pacific Railroad. Huge tracts of timberland, first given to the railroads by the federal government, were sold at bargain prices to timber companies.

Timber companies also benefited from the passage of the federal Timber and Stone Act, which they abused. Timber companies found out-of-work sailors and hoboes and paid them to file homestead claims on forest lands. Then the sailors and hoboes deeded the land to the timber companies for \$50. In some cases, the price was as low as a large glass of beer. One timber

company acquired more than 100,000 acres with this scheme.

## LINKING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

**The largest timber companies in the Pacific Northwest today—Boise Cascade, Potlatch, Plum Creek, and Weyerhaeuser—bought much of their first timberland from**



Amazed by the majesty and abundance of the Northwest's old-growth timber, Asahel Curtis, a noted photographer, made this self-portrait in 1910.

### the Northern Pacific Railroad.

#### Fishing

As the fishing industry grew, salmon became a popular symbol of the Pacific Northwest region. The fish had been the basic food source for most of the region's Indian tribes; then fish became not only a food source, but a way to make money. Fresh, canned, and dried fish were sold to other states and countries. Most of the fish-

ermen were Scandinavians and Finns.

The dirty, smelly work in canneries was done by Chinese. All day long they stood on the wet floors in front of piles of fish, using sharp knives to gut and sort the fish. After the turn of the century, a new machine called the "Iron Chink" was used. ("Chink" was a *derogatory* term for Chinese.) The machine cleaned salmon at the rate of one per second. Each machine could do the work of dozens of workers.

Like the lumber industry, fishing was a victim of careless disregard for a natural resource. The huge salmon runs on the Columbia River were already in decline by 1900, long before the dams were built. Over-fishing was the major reason. Water pollution and destruction of spawning habitats by mining and logging companies had already begun, too.

## LINKING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

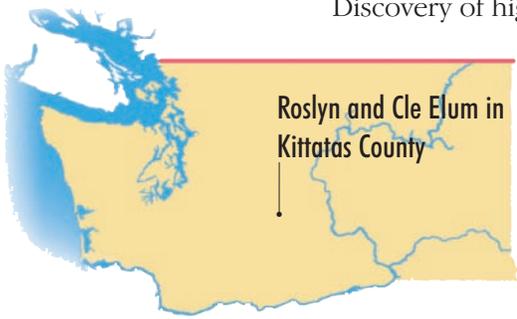
**Today, many salmon runs are on the verge of extinction. Salmon are an indicator used to measure the degradation of our environment. The Columbia River salmon harvest peaked in 1895, when an incredible 40 million pounds of fish were canned! The commercial catch today is less than one percent of that.**

#### Mining

Washington and Oregon never developed significant gold or silver mining districts, but three Washington cities—Walla Walla, Spokane, and Seattle—were greatly affected by mining rushes in other places. Merchants grew rich by supplying food, tents, tools, and clothing to miners on their way to the gold fields of Canada, Alaska, and Idaho. You will read more about them later in this chapter.

Some ordinary people struck it rich in the mines and returned to Washington to spend their money. May Arkwright Hutton, a boardinghouse cook and advocate of

**C**oal production declined rapidly after World War II as hydropower replaced coal. The last mines closed in 1963.



miners and unions, and her railroad engineer husband, Al, put their savings of a few hundred dollars into a seemingly unproductive mine in Idaho. However, their Hercules Mine became one of the richest strikes in Silver Valley, and the Huttons became overnight millionaires. In the next chapter we'll look at how this wealth changed their lives and influenced the Spokane community.

Coal was discovered in the Puget Sound Lowlands and the Cascade Mountains. Coal was burned to heat homes and to provide the power that ran machines in factories. Some of the early miners were Chinese. Others came from England and Wales. The first large group of African Americans in Washington came to dig coal. Even children were hired to sort the pieces of coal.

Discovery of high-quality coal in 1886 in Kittitas County led to the rapid development of the Roslyn coal field. Two towns, Roslyn and Cle Elum, sprang up overnight. Coal mining was important well into



Many Europeans came to work in the coal mines. Mining was very dangerous work. Hundreds of miners died on the job each year. Notice the lamps on the hats, a bag for water, and the lunch pails.

the 1900s.

## Agriculture

**F**rom its earliest beginnings in the Walla Walla Valley, wheat farming spread rapidly across the Palouse region of eastern Washington in the late 1800s. Soon wheat made up forty-five percent of the value of all Washington crops. Whitman County, in the heart of the Palouse, was the wealthiest county *per capita* in the United States. Later, a series of wet years encouraged farmers to raise wheat in the drier Big Bend region.

Farmers put wheat in sacks and hauled it in wagons to landings on the Snake and Columbia Rivers. Then steamboats took the wheat to Portland. Later, wheat was shipped by rail to the ports of Tacoma and Seattle.

Most wheat farms were small by today's standards, averaging 160-320 acres. There were dozens of small farm towns, most of which have disappeared.

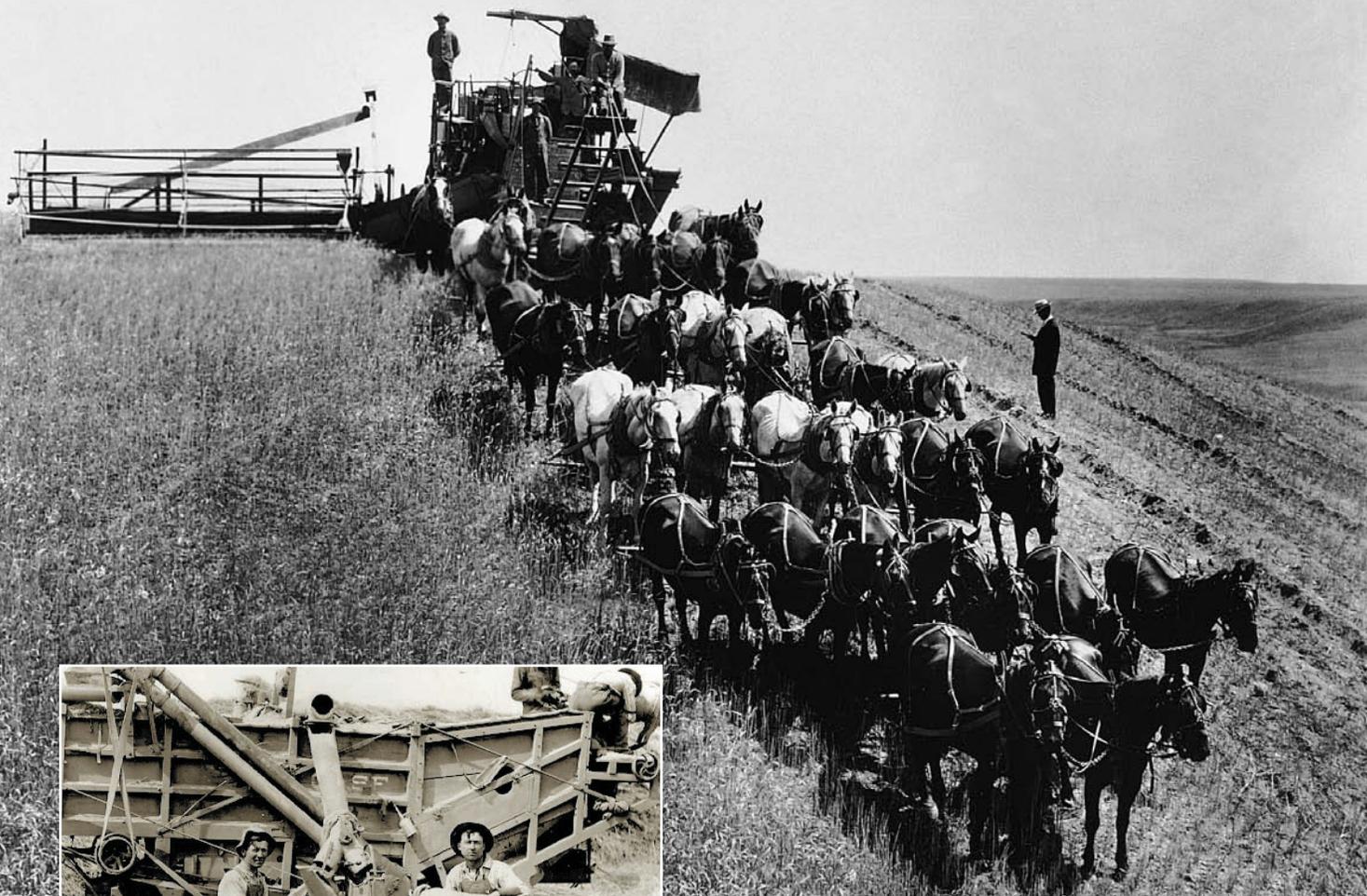
## Apples

Washington apples had become an important crop by 1900. Irrigation projects made it possible to run successful orchards in the Yakima, Wenatchee, and Okanogan Valleys. Washington fruit growers planted over one million trees in one year. The transcontinental railroad and the development of refrigerated cars in 1902 made it possible to ship fruit to eastern markets before it spoiled. By 1917, Washington led the nation in apple production.

## Ranching and Dairying

After farmers started growing wheat on the Palouse Hills, cattlemen could no longer graze their cows on the grass there. In other places, new settlers filed land claims along the rivers and streams and then fenced their land so cattle could not get to the water. Cattlemen retreated to the drier uplands and the foothills of the Cascades.

Harsh winters thinned the herds in the 1880s. The winter of 1889-90 killed half the



Machines that both reaped (cut) and threshed (separated the wheat from the shaft) were called combines. They were widely used by the 1890s. Some required as many as forty-four horses. Later, self-propelled steam combines were used in the Palouse region.

Wheat came down the chute into sacks. A fast worker could sew up to 1,000 sacks per day. Sack sewers in 1911 made \$3 per day.

Wheat sacks weighed as much as 140 lbs. and were moved by hand many times. Wheat was shipped down the Columbia to Portland, then by ship to overseas markets.



*Large families of eight to twelve, and sometimes even fifteen, children made up the rural population. Farming was a way of life for these families.*

Cowgirls try “spinning the wedding ring” in 1912.



cattle in the Yakima Valley and nine out of ten animals in the Big Bend.

The mild moist climate of the Puget Sound Lowland and the Oregon Coast was good for raising dairy cows. There was a growing market for fresh milk, cream, and butter in the rapidly growing cities. Establishment of **condensed milk** plants and cheese factories provided additional export markets. Carnation Company built a large canned milk plant in Kent in 1899.

## Urbanization

The years from 1880 to 1910 were a time of spectacular population growth in the Pacific Northwest. Some places that were inhabited by Indians and an occasional trapper were transformed within a generation into bustling communities with brick buildings, paved streets, trolley cars, and electric lights! In all of American history, there had been nothing quite like this. Nowhere was the transition to the urban age as rapid as it was in the state of Washington.

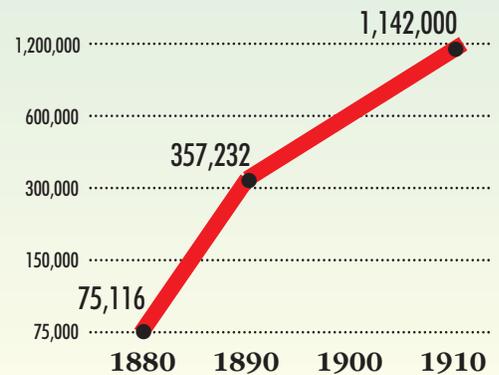
Most of the urban population was found in the region’s four largest communities—Portland, Seattle, Tacoma, and Spokane. By 1910 these four cities contained almost one-

## Population Growth

### Washington’s Cities 1880-1890

City	1880	1890
Tacoma	1,098	36,006
Seattle	3,553	42,837
Spokane	350	20,000

### Washington State 1880-1910



third of the entire population of Washington, Oregon, and Idaho.

## LINKING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

**A time of rapid population growth causes problems with transportation, education, housing, law enforcement, and the environment. What problems has a growing population caused in your city?**

### Tacoma and the Northern Pacific

Leaders of the Northern Pacific Railroad planned to run tracks from St. Paul, Minnesota, all the way to the harbors of Puget Sound. Company officers planned the route, knowing that wherever the tracks ended there would be tremendous growth and new business for cities along the route.

Cities were often built up around train



Tacoma in 1911 boasted a large business district. Business signs on the buildings give clues to the type of work the people did in the city.

stations, especially cities that also had a seaport. Goods and raw materials such as coal, ore, lumber, and grain could be shipped from mines, mills, and factories across the country by rail, then shipped to other countries and cities on the East Coast by sea. People who rode the trains started businesses near train terminals.

When Tacoma was chosen for the railroad terminal, the railroad company bought land cheaply, had it surveyed, and drew land plots. Tacoma's growth rate in the 1880s boomed.

The world's largest sawmill was built there in 1886. Then growth slowed down. An economic depression in the 1890s was especially hard on Tacoma, and opened the way for its rival, Seattle, to forge ahead.

## Spokane

Spokane, first called Spokane Falls, was built next to the waterfalls of the Spokane River, so the city's first advantage was water

power. The water power was first used to run a saw mill and to grind grain into flour. Then the water power produced Spokane's first electricity.

After both the Northern Pacific and Great Northern railroad lines came through, the city's growth seemed assured. Its location made it a transportation hub. Soon branch rail lines linked Spokane to mining, timber, and agriculture areas.

Spokane reaped the benefit when silver was discovered in Idaho's Coeur d'Alene region in the 1880s. People brought their new wealth from the mines and settled in Spokane. Silver from mines in Idaho and British Columbia provided the money to build many of the mansions in Spokane.

*I am today selling four times the quantity of merchandise [to miners] of which I disposed one year ago. I can scarcely order goods rapidly enough to meet the daily requirements.*

*The famous English writer Rudyard Kipling visited Tacoma in 1889 and noted that on the city's muddy streets "men were babbling about money, town lots, and again money."*

*If the rate of growth had continued, the state's population in the year 2000 would have been 37 million—more than six times the actual figure. If the growth had continued, think of the trouble you would have getting to the mall or a Mariners' game!*



The competitive exuberance of the times took different forms. Towns took pride in baseball teams and the height of their grain elevators. Building a courthouse more extravagant than anyone else was important. Town leaders chose the plan of 29-year-old Willis Ritchie for the Spokane County Courthouse, completed in 1895.

—Spokane Review, 1890

Reporters wrote the following newspaper articles about the city:

*My next stop was Spokane Falls, where I was greatly surprised to find the improvements that have been made there within two years. Electric lights,*

*telephones, and other metropolitan conveniences are available. Every face expresses vitality, every voice is cheerful, and everyone has a little money.*

—*The Morning Review*, 1886

*Spokane Falls is well supplied with churches. It is a sure sign of peace and prosperity. . . . People in the East always locate in a place where there are good influences, whether they follow them or not.*

—R.P. Elliot, *Spokane Falls Review*, 1890

## Seattle

Seattle was only one of a number of possible port cities on Puget Sound. However, the Cascades cut it off from the interior of the region. The city, according to historians, grew by sheer will power and a “booster spirit” that produced some spectacular results.

Seattle took on several ambitious engineering programs between 1890 and 1910. It created its own electric power system,

*“Spokane Falls is simply the most marvelous city the American continent has ever witnessed.”*

— A traveling newspaper reporter



Steamships carried goods on the Columbia River to Portland, 1888.



Powerful hydraulic water cannons shot out streams of water to slice away the steep hills of Seattle. Leveling out many hills was a huge engineering project. *Photo by Curtis.*

built a sewer system, and built a water system adequate for a much larger city. The city leaders spent millions of dollars lowering its steep hills and leveling out land in the downtown area to facilitate growth and better transportation. Today you can take an “underground tour” in the Pioneer Square area to see a bit of the old Seattle at the end of the 1800s.

Seattle boosters persuaded James J. Hill to bring his Great Northern Railroad to town and the Northern Pacific Railroad to move its headquarters from Tacoma to Seattle. The crowning achievement of the Seattle spirit, however, was its successful promotion of the city as the only gateway to

the gold of the Klondike.

## Portland

Urban rivalries pitted city against city, for the stakes were high. Growth meant more railroad and steamship connections, higher land values, and more business. All of these meant more money.

Portland, Oregon, according to one author, achieved its importance because of its location. Portland’s position at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers meant that all the trade of the inland regions flowed down to it. Its deepwater harbor opened it to ocean-going commerce.

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*Every city on the Pacific Coast aspired to become the metropolis of the West. More business meant more money. More money meant better transportation, stores, schools, and homes.*



Expecting large crowds, outfitters stacked prospector's supplies on the sidewalks in front of stores. Summer, 1897. Photo by Curtis

# THE KLONDIKE GOLD RUSH

**T**he discovery of gold in the Klondike region of Canada's Yukon Territory in 1897 was an important event in Seattle's history. The city **exploited** the Klondike rush to gain the advantage over all of its rival cities.

No American port was closer to Alaska and the main trails that led from there to the Klondike. 1500 people fled north on the first ship to Alaska, with nine other ships

crowded in the harbor waiting to follow them. Even the mayor of Seattle quit his job and went to the gold fields.

Stores ordered in so many provisions that the merchandise was stacked ten feet high in downtown Seattle. Each miner had to take about a ton of supplies with him, including tents, cooking pots, tools, winter clothes, and over 1000 pounds of food. All the provisions were called an "outfit." Outfits were

sold in Seattle. So were hotel rooms, restaurant meals, and many forms of entertainment. Shipyards bustled with construction. All this meant a booming business for Seattle.

Erastus Brainerd of the city's Chamber of Commerce was directed to promote Seattle as *the* gateway to the Klondike. And he did! Brainerd let loose on the United States and foreign countries a flood of advertisements and articles in magazines and newspapers.

The Klondike region was part of Canada's Yukon Territory and part of Alaska. The "rich man's route" was an all-water route that included more than 2,000 miles on the Yukon River to the gold fields.

The "poor man's route" was shorter but much harder. It included taking a boat to southern Alaska, climbing over steep mountains on foot, then building a boat to go 500 miles down the Yukon.

He wrote letters to government leaders, all touting Seattle as a place for miners to buy their provisions and as the nearest seaport where miners could board a ship for Alaska and Canada.

The frenzied result was a stampede. In fact, the crazed gold seekers were actually called stampedes. Some *deluded* souls took gunnysacks to carry back the gold nuggets they assumed were just laying all around. The truth was that less than half of the 100,000 people who left for the Klondike actually got there. The extreme cold and isolation of the Klondike was daunting. Waterways froze solid. Miners faced blizzards, hikes across glaciers, and falls into crevasses or off icy cliffs.

In the warmer months, deep mud holes, floods, and mosquitoes made life miserable for men and beast. When men reached the tops of icy peaks with part of their provisions, they had to go down again to bring up another load. They repeated this process as much as thirty times.

Finally, the town of Dawson City welcomed them at the edge of the gold fields. Anxious to begin finding gold, miners would often find that the best claims were already staked. They sold their provisions to other miners for a fraction of what they had paid and made the long journey home.

A newspaper correspondent



described the arrival of the stampedes in Dawson:

*It is a motley throng—every degree of person gathered from every corner of the earth and from every state of the Union—weather-beaten, sunburned, . . . Australians with upturned sleeves and a swagger, young Englishmen in golf stockings and tweeds; would-be miners in mackinaws [raincoats] and rubber boots or heavy highlaced shoes; Japanese, Negroes—and women, too, everywhere.*

Some successful stampedes who returned to Seattle invested in local businesses. John Nordstrom invested \$13,000 of his gold into a shoe store. The store was owned by a man he had met in the Klondike. That modest start was the beginning of the Nordstrom department store chain. Edward Nordoff, a Seattle merchant who capitalized on his success during the Klondike rush, turned his small store into the Bon Marché stores.

The gold rush was not good for many miners, but it was very good for Seattle businessmen. New businesses meant more growth. By 1910, Seattle was the largest city of the Pacific Northwest.



A woman stands by a canoe at the Seattle waterfront in 1898. Native people from many parts of the Northwest Coast came to Seattle to trade and buy supplies. *Photo by O.P. Anderson*

## The Vanishing Indian

The flood of new settlers overwhelmed the Indian people. Indian tribes were crowded out of their original territory, and most were assigned to reservations. There were, however, many Indians who had not moved to a reservation. They tried to hold on to their small farms and ranches, believing that the federal government would protect their land titles.

Congress passed the Indian Homestead Act in 1875. It gave individual Indians the right to own a piece of property. But Indians rarely had complete papers for their claims or took the necessary steps to protect their land titles if they did get

them. When whites wanted the land, they often **coerced** the Indian owner to sell it to them, or managed to get it through **fraud**. There were many loopholes in land laws and the Indian people usually did not know how to fight the legal system.

### Dividing up Reservation Lands

Trying to be **humane** to Indians, Congress passed the General Allotment Act. Often called the Dawes Act, the law divided reservation land into individual allotments (usually 160 acres) and encouraged Indians to become farmers.

Under the new act, Indians could not sell their land for a period of time. When they finally got title to their land, they would become American citizens. It was a great **irony** that the first Americans had to wait to become citizens.

The Dawes Act was a catastrophe. Most reservations were on land that was dry and unsuited for agriculture so Indians often sold their land as soon as they got title to it. Whites bought reservation land that was never deeded to Indian people. When the law was **repealed** in 1934, more than 30 percent of the Colville and Spokane reservation land was owned by non-Indians.

### Boarding Schools

Unfortunately, American Indian policy was based upon the idea that there was nothing of value in Indian culture. The majority of whites thought that it was in the best interest of Indians to abandon their old ways and adopt the ways of the white culture.

To accomplish this goal, the federal government took Indian children from their families on the reservations and sent them far away to boarding schools. Children from Northwest reservations were often sent to Oklahoma. Most did not see their parents again for many years.

The boarding school experience was a culture shock. Indian students had their long hair cut short, they were dressed in

uniforms, and given new names. They were punished if they spoke their native language. The students washed their own clothes in tubs of water and kept their dormitory rooms clean. They helped prepare and clean up after meals.

Boys and girls were taught English, reading, spelling, geography, and arithmetic. The course of study for older children emphasized *industrial* and *domestic* arts. Boys learned carpentry and to run machines. Girls learned how to make clothes on sewing machines.

Sid Bird was sent to the Genoa School in Nebraska when he was six years old. Returning years later, he found that he could not talk to his grandmother:

*My own language had been beaten out of me. I was no longer an Indian. I guess I was an imitation white man.*

### LINKING THE PAST TO THE PRESENT

In 2000, Kevin Grover, a Pawnee Indian and head of the Federal Bureau of Indian Affairs, offered the first official apology for this national “legacy of racism and inhumanity.” With tears streaming down his face, Grover said:

*Never again will we seize your children or teach them to be ashamed of who they are. Never again!*

### WHAT DO YOU THINK?

“White makes right” was a typical idea of the time. It affected the treatment of many races of people. How did treatment of the American Indians compare with ways African Americans and Asian Americans have



Carrie Anderson, Annie Dawson, and Sarah Walker were the new names given to these girls on their arrival at the Indian Agricultural Institute.



Carrie, Annie, and Sarah are playing checkers in this posed photograph fourteen months later. The picture was taken in 1880.

## Statehood

Washington's long 36-year wait for statehood ended on November 11, 1889, when it was admitted to the Union along with Montana, North Dakota, and South Dakota. Why did it take so long to gain statehood? There were certain rules about how many people had to live in a territory before it could become a state. The major cause of the delay, how-

**W**omen were allowed to vote only for school board members. They were not allowed to vote in any state or national elections.

The Fourth of July was the most important holiday of the year. Young girls raced in Davenport, 1900.



ever, was the concern of Democratic congressmen in the nation's capital about admitting states that were apt to vote Republican. This obstacle was removed when Republicans captured the White House and both houses of Congress.

In a special election, Washington's male voters overwhelmingly approved their new constitution. They also overwhelmingly rejected the right of women to vote. Olympia was chosen for the state capital.

## ACTIVITY

### VISIT A CEMETERY

Cemeteries contain a wealth of information. Visit a cemetery with graves from the late 1880s and write a summary of what you find. What can you learn?

The dates on tombstones give clues to the life expectancy of people a hundred years ago. Places of birth indicate patterns of migration. Names show ethnic origins. Gravestone art reveals the religion of the people.

In German communities, graves are found in precise rows. Many older graveyards separated people according to race and religion. Mining and logging towns, where people moved in and out often, often have a haphazard layout with no regard to ethnic backgrounds.

### Earliest Photograph

Your county, city, or local universities may have a historic preservation office that could give you a copy or photocopy of the earliest photograph of your community. Or, they may be able to help you find a record or photograph of the oldest building in your area, or the first school or church building, or of early com-

merce, or people celebrating a special event or holiday. In a few paragraphs, describe what you find. Use descriptive words to give an "I was there" feel to the writing.

### Examine an Old Catalog

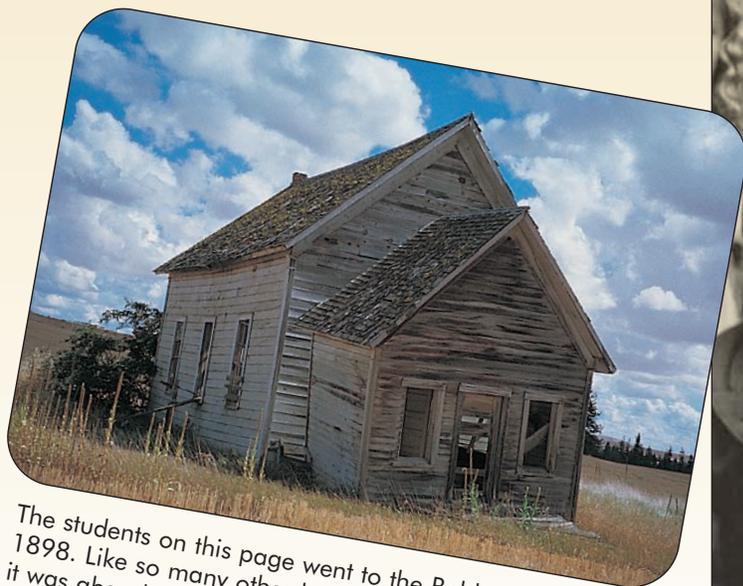
Go to a library and ask a reference librarian if the library has a reprint of a turn-of-the-century *Montgomery Wards* or *Sears* mail order catalog. They are filled with information on what people used in their everyday life—clothing, medical equipment, recreation items, and tools.

Choose a category and compare the items with those you use today, or with items found in catalogs today.



## CHAPTER 7 REVIEW

1. What event ended the frontier era and was responsible for Washington's huge population growth?
2. Describe the federal government's assistance to the railroad companies.
3. List some achievements of Henry Villard.
4. What methods did the railroad companies use to get revenue from federal land grants?
5. List the three largest groups of immigrants brought by the railroads.
6. Which three cities were burned in 1889? What other important event occurred that year?
7. Which natural resources contributed to the state's explosive growth?
8. How did the timber industry benefit from the land given to the railroads? List some modern timber companies that bought much of their timberland from the railroads.
9. Which ethnic groups were fishermen? Which ethnic group did a lot of the canning of fish? What invention helped the men can the fish?
10. What contributed the most to the decline of the salmon fishing industry?
11. What mineral was mined in the Lowlands and the Cascades? What was it used for?
12. What part did the discovery of gold and silver in surrounding states and in Canada have on the prosperity and growth of Washington cities?
13. What important agricultural products (crops and livestock) were grown or produced in Washington?
14. Which three large Washington cities had the highest population growth between 1880 and 1890?
15. How did Tacoma get its start?
16. What event in Alaska and Canada did Seattle exploit to increase business? Who benefited the most—the miners or the merchants?
17. What did the Indian Homestead Act attempt to do? Was it successful? Why or why not?
18. Describe the purpose of Indian boarding schools. What methods were used to try to change the culture of the children?
19. What did the Dawes Act attempt to do? Was it successful? Why or why not?
20. What year was Washington made a state? What city was chosen as the new capital city?



The students on this page went to the Baldrige School in 1898. Like so many other buildings in the wheat country, it was abandoned in the 1920s but still stands today.  
Photo by Mike Green