

April 18, 1961

Mrs. Leo Muoth, Parker Heights Woman's Club,
Route 2, Wapato, Wash.

Dear Mrs. Muoth:

Since your project of marking one of the historic fisheries is one that has long needed attention, I immediately did some research so you can determine even greater significance.

I am enclosing the additional background for your own information. I did not include that this was on the general route of the Territorial wagon road from Walla Walla to Steilacoom,

May I suggest that when the time comes for unveiling, I suspect if you would write Alex Saluskin, chairman of the Yakima Tribal Council and a direct descendant of the Chief Saluskin mentioned, he might agree to assist. And I would want suitable notification of your plans so I could have a story for our paper.

I also would want to take recognition that this marking is in keeping with designating historic sites for Century 21, and would want to have it officially recorded on the records of the State Historical Society of which I am a curator. We have a file of such material. I would ask our director to drop you a note of appreciation and would also make a report of this at the next board meeting of our Yakima Valley Museum Board.

If it happened that you had a club meeting at the time of unveiling in some home in the region, it may be you could prevail upon Mr. Saluskin to attend, address you briefly and then all of you could go to the site.

Please understand I am suggesting this general procedure because last weekend I was at Walla Walla when the first marker, at the military cemetery there, during Century 21 preliminaries, was unveiled and it worked out very nicely.

Perhaps this is all too ambitious. Anyway I am happy to be able to help. The research notes are appended.

Sincerely

Click Relander

There was one of the salmon fisheries along the Yakima River, old even when the Sunnyside Canal Intake was built at the turn of the century. It was a natural fishery, with deep pools along the bank and strong currents from which Indians dip netted steelhead in the early spring and salmon during the early summer and again during the fall runs. They used scaffoldings constructed in the present manner.

A "Yakima Indian Country" military map of 1856 locates a winter mission on the north bank of the river. The same map shows the ~~location~~ location of "A-Tah-Nam," or Ahtanum Mission, founded by the Oblates of Mary Immaculate order in 1847, on Ahtanum Creek at the location of present restoration. Yakima is spelled "Yakama" and the Naches River is spelled "Nachess" on the map.

The pre-dam fishery was a deep stretch of river near rapids close to present Parker Bridge, called Ah-"ah"-um or Deep Water, like a lake. Here the Indians dip-netted for the food fish.

At the location of the dam in prehistoric times was located subterranean dwellings of people of whom Indians living here and interviewed by the Pacific Railway Survey parties of Territorial Governor Isaac I. Stevens in 1853-54 had no knowledge although their lodges were built partially upon the ruins. At only one other location in Central or Eastern Washington were such ~~ruins~~ ruins found and these were on the Columbia near present Hanford. The ruins at this location, known as early as 1840, were destroyed by construction of the intake works without the benefit of archaeological exploration.

The ridge toward the northeast and pass leading to Moxee is location of Donald Pass, the old Konnewock Pass. Konnewock is a word unknown to Indians who called the pass ~~anox~~ Kee-wan-umpt. On the ridge is the legendary canoe, left after the great flood which covered the Valley

in legendary days. Three times, according to legend, has the earth been destroyed, once by fire, once by wind and then by flood.

This region was also the home area of the Saluskin family, whose chiefs were descended from "e-ow-wicht, head chief of the entire region and who died long before the Treaty of 1855, and who in turn had succeeded an older chief by the same name. This was an area occupied by the Pishwanapum, Rocky Ground or Rocky Shoal People, one of the 14 tribes and bands confederated into the Yakima Indian Nation who fished along the river as far north as the Kittitas Valley.

In land settlement days this was a part of Parker Bottom, sometimes called Piety Flat, settled by a cattleman, William Parker in 1864. He first settled in 1863 on Upper Satus Creek. Parker, a devout, religious man wore shoulder-length black hair. The cattlemen, Snipes and Allen used this region for cattle range in earliest pioneer days.

Capt. Robert Dunn, a Union Veteran of the War of the Rebellion came to Parker Bottom in 1876 and lived a mile below the ~~Bar~~ Bartholet Ferry near where the later bridge was built in 1889. A post office was established at Parker Bottom at Capt. Dunn's place in July, 1899 and Miss Theresa Dunn was named postmaster.

G.S. Rankin and Alex McCredy selected an 80-acre tract and laid out Parker townsite in October, 1908 near the crossing of the North Coast and Northern Pacific railroads, previously known as Parker Siding.

Across the river, toward Parker was the long house of old days which the Indians called Ahlie-e or Towards the River.

(There is no need to go into the Mattoon cabin, Isaac Flint, Purdy Flint and French store material)

You would want only to select for the wording of your sign some highlights along the following general lines, I believe:

Members of the Yakima Indian Nation, by their treaty right, still dip net for salmon here at the Sunnyside Canal Intake. This was one of their numerous fisheries along the Yakima River in pre-settlement days and was called Ahwahtum, literally, Deep Water.

On the north shore of the river was located a mission, marked as early as 1856 on a military map of "The Yakima Indian Country." It was a winter mission of the main mission of the Ahtanum on Ahtanum Creek, built in 1847.

The Railroad Survey parties of Territorial Governor Isaac I. Stevens, 1853-53, found ruins here of subterranean dwellers, known to explorers as early as 1840. They were of a type unknown throughout the Northwest except one location on the Columbia and were destroyed when the intake was constructed.

(And for your purpose, even the above would have to be shortened)