

WORK ALREADY BEGUN TO REHABILITATE SPOT FAMED IN STATE HISTORY

--By Virginia Boren

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Likewise she has spent many months in Yakima, where it was necessary to convince the Indians of the sincerity and worth of the project, so that they would turn over the Fort (it was an Indian school for some sixty years), and to get the backing of the various United States departments concerned with the Fort.

But Mrs. Swanstrom, who is a woman of abounding energy and fascinating personality, was well trained to carry out this Herculean historic task.

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During this very period, the present Mrs. Swanstrom's father, Eugene Semple, was conquering new fields as he served as next to the last territorial governor of Washington. He was governor from 1887 to 1889 and was deeply interested in the betterment of the Indians. Later, when Mrs. Swanstrom lived here as a very young girl and then a bride, she was to hear much of the politics of Washington.

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Even the old kiln where bricks were made will be restored. The old parade ground will again glisten and shine in the sun. A huge orchard was planted on this parade ground but only the trees such as the "Father Wilbur" and "President Grant" trees will be preserved. The old flower gardens will be reproduced as far as is possible.

Mrs. Swanstrom reports that the houses which are standing are of early American architecture and every room has a fireplace. Dutch ovens have been uncovered in the kitchens. The old glass in the central house, which has eight or nine gables, was brought around the Horn from England. The old carriage house still stands and can be restored easily. Even the old street lamps which have been taken from the Fort, will be sought out and their return requested.

"We know where many of the original fixtures of these houses are," said Mrs. Swanstrom. "That material belongs to the government and can be requisitioned. But we feel that everyone will be so interested in the restoration of the Fort that they will wish to return these fixtures. Also we want every clue concerning the original fort, every document which tells anything about the Fort, every letter, every bit of information. No clue will be too small, no information too slight. All this should be sent to 'Mrs. Fred Remington Greene, The Highlands, Seattle, Wash.'"

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Mr. Guie has spent a great deal of time among the Indians, compiling many of their old legends. Two years ago he published a small book of animal legends, which had a wide sale in the school and libraries throughout the country. It is called "The Coyote." Mrs. Guie is a sister of Messrs. Arthur and Henry Coffin of Yakima, also well known in Seattle.

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"The Indian Department told me that without Mr. McWhorter's help it probably would have been very hard to convince the Indians that our project would help them," explained Mrs. Swanstrom. "The Indians many years ago named Mr. McWhorter 'Big Foot' and always affectionately call him by that name."

Mrs. Greene and Mrs. Swanstrom stated that the Colonial Dames are especially happy over this restoration project as they feel that there are so few historic shrines in this state. They point out the huge number of people who flock to Williamsburg, Va., the New England States, the South, to see the historic spots. Washington is a newer state and has been so busy making history that it has not had time to preserve its history or landmarks.

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Mrs. Alexander F. McEwan of Seattle also served in this restoration committee of the Colonial Dames.

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Some eight-three years ago Indians moved noiselessly through the woods, peered at this work of the white man and returned to council fires to report the strange doings of the white men and the appearance of more blockhouses.

In the same area General Isaac I. Stevens, the first territorial governor, sent stern commands to his officers, and wrote to the secretary of war that the Indians "dominate us, a nation of old women."

Major Granville O. Haller, a gallant officer, and his hard-fighting men, suffered defeats at the hands of the Yakimas, on the very site of Fort Simcoe.

But stilled are the war cries, gone are the war paint and war bonnets (except for gay Indian celebrations), sheathed are the sharp-pointed arrows. Cleared away is the smoke from the howitzers. Gone, too, is the enmity between white man and Indian. They clasp hands and forget the battles of almost a century ago. They unite to help toward the restoration of one of the state's most noted historic spots. They puff, white and Indian alike, a symbolic peace pipe, and in the curling smoke is visioned the building of a great landmark to the bravery of Indian and white man, alike.

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00 Seattle Times, undated clipping

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The following ladies and gentlemen are among those who will
spend the Fourth at Fort Simcoe: J.B. Pugsley and family; Mr. and
Mrs. George Courter, the Misses Antoinette and Louise
Schanno, the Misses Dunning, G.W. Jones, Fred Parker, W.H. Chapman
and George Vance. 7-3-80