

1847-1947

Dedication Program



WHITMAN

NATIONAL MONUMENT

WASHINGTON

Sunday, September 21, 1947

Walla Walla, Washington

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UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WASHINGTON
25, D. C.

OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

September 3, 1947

The Honorable Herbert G. West
President, The Whitman Centennial, Inc.
Civic Building
Walla Walla, Washington

Dear Mr. West:

The approach of the 100th anniversary of the massacre, whereby Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman and twelve others lost their lives in 1847, is an occasion of great interest throughout the Nation. The Whitmans symbolized the noblest of the pioneers who colonized the West. Through their indomitable spirit, energy, and determination, the American flag was carried to remote regions and thus contributed to our national expansion. Through their self-sacrifice and devotion to duty, the lessons of Christianity were given to a heathen people, and the beginnings of agriculture and letters were taught. Kind and generous, they offered a haven to the traveler. They gave up their lives in the pursuit of their ideals. We honor them not only for what they did, but for what they aimed to do.

The Whitman National Monument, established by Act of Congress in 1936, to commemorate the missionary endeavors of the Whitmans, is hallowed ground of the past. For generations to come, it will remind our people of their debt to these pioneers. The Whitman Centennial Association deserves full credit for its tireless efforts in the creation of this national monument and its continued support in the appropriate development of that area. Such development envisages continuation of the archeological excavations, protection of the great grave and monument erected in 1897, construction of an interpretive museum, the marking of the sites of mission buildings, and the ultimate construction of custodial quarters, utility area, and conveniences for visitors. In the interpretive center authentic dioramas will eventually portray the stirring episodes of the Whitman story. Scale models will re-establish the form of the mission settlement, and the priceless collection of historic objects now in process of recovery from the charred foundations of the mission buildings will be carefully displayed. The execution of these successive developments requires Congressional appropriations, and when these will be received cannot be stated at the present time.

On behalf of the National Park Service, I take this opportunity to express appreciation of your efforts, and those of your associates, to perpetuate for posterity the memory of the Whitmans.

Sincerely yours,

Newton B. Drury
Newton B. Drury,
Director.

Whitman National Monument Dedication Program

At Waiilatpu

"Place of the Rye Grass"

2:30 P. M., SUNDAY,

September 21, 1947

Invocation, the Rev. Kenneth Claypool
Representing the Congregational Church

Representing the Whitman Centennial Association
Herbert G. West, Association President

Representing the Congress of the United States
Honorable Hal Holmes, M. C.

Representing the National Park Service
Dr. V. Aubrey Neasham, Regional Historian

Representing the Department of the Interior
C. Girard Davidson, Assistant Secretary

Benediction, the Rev. E. T. Allen
Representing the Presbyterian Church

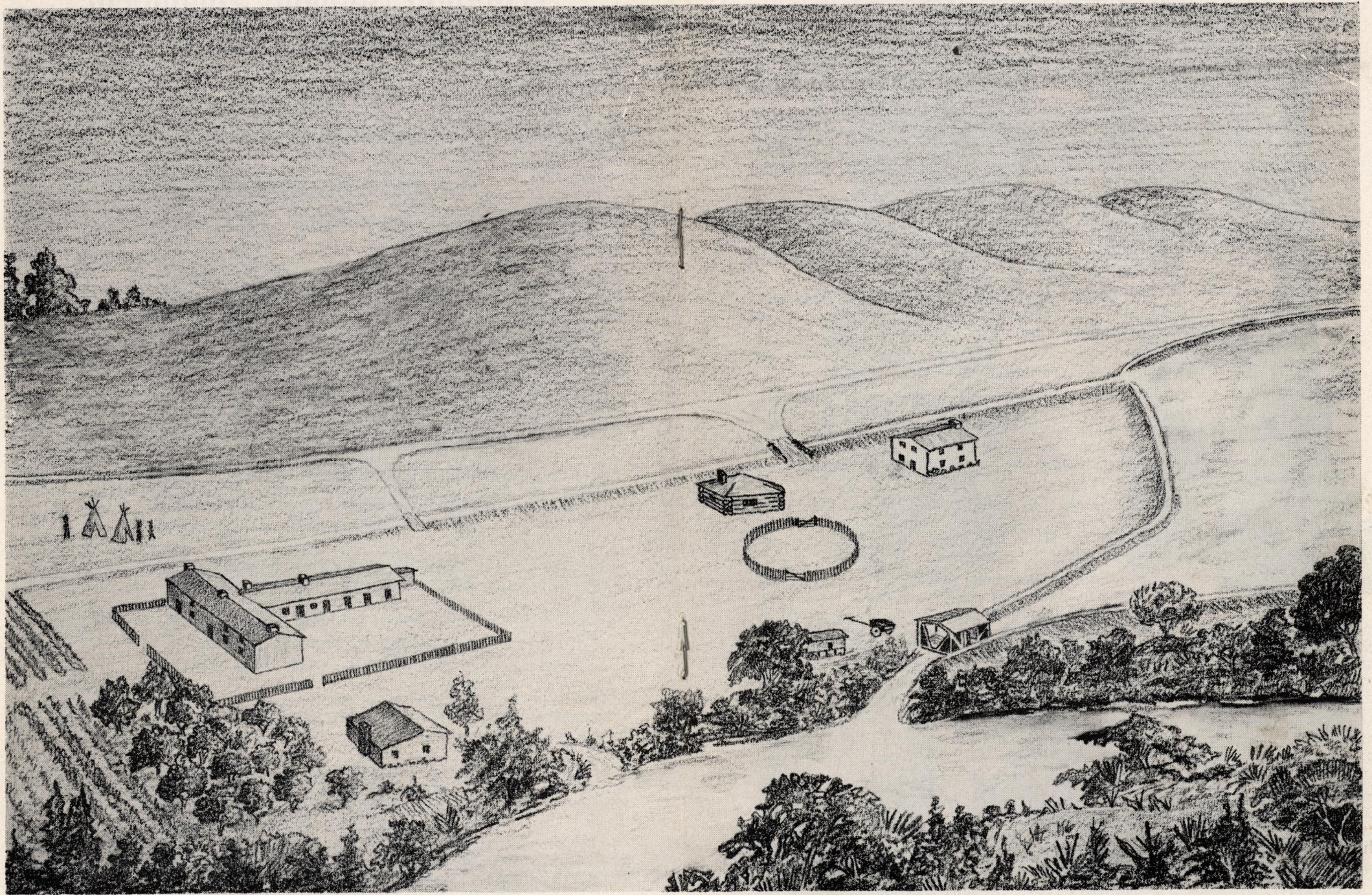
Music by the Whitman Memorial Choir
Directed by Kenneth Schilling
Director, Whitman Conservatory of Music

Ladies of the D.A.R. will be in charge of an information center from which guides representing the National Park Service and the Kiwanis club will conduct tours of the mission grounds.

Copies of the booklet "At Waiilatpu" written by Dr. S. B. L. Penrose are available at 25c each at the information center, as are a limited number of "The Whitman Mission," written by M. M. Richardson.

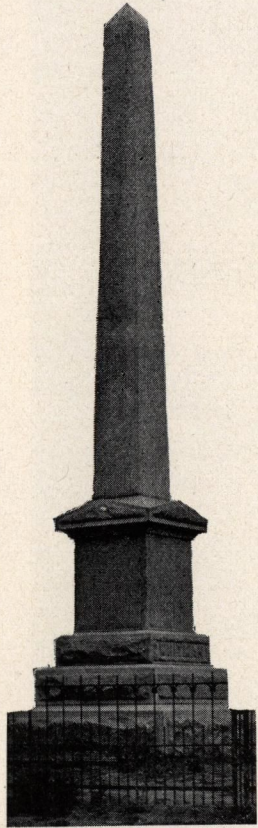
The drawing on the cover of this program is from a sketch made especially for a new distributive pamphlet on the Whitman story being issued by the National Park Service.

An informal buffet supper and reception will be held at the Marcus Whitman hotel at 5 p. m., complimenting participants and guests present for the dedication program.



Artist's conception of the layout of the Whitman mission at the time of the massacre in 1847, looking towards the monument hill from the site of the present temporary museum. Drawing by Elmer R. Alexander.

The Monument's History . . .



Dedication of the Whitman mission site and monument grounds as a national monument represents many years of hard work on the part of numerous individuals and groups.

William H. Gray, who had been a companion of Dr. Marcus Whitman, the martyred missionary-doctor, initiated the movement for a monument at the neglected burial place of the massacre victims until with assistance it became a reality.

Dedication exercises were held November 29 and 30, 1887, on the 50th anniversary of the massacre, but the monument did not arrive on time hence the final part of the exercises were held January 29, 1898. Then followed another period of neglect.

The Walla Walla Kiwanis club became interested about 1923 and finally through act of congress got the title clear in June, 1927.

The Oregon Trail Memorial association in 1928 pledged itself to restore the mission.

Daughters of the American Revolution, Narcissa Prentiss chapter, in 1931 designated the Whitman monument grounds as "the most historic spot in the Pacific Northwest" and agreed to beautify the site. Work was started immediately and grass, plants and shrubs were planted.

The Kiwanis club meantime had secured title to the monument site of between eight and nine acres and turned it over to the Walla Walla Trust foundation as a perpetual monument.

The Whitman Centennial association was organized in 1935 and the following year conducted a celebration commemorating the 100th anniversary of the arrival in the valley of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman. This celebration resulted in purchase of the mission site by the association. The same year Congress passed an act to create a national monument. It became necessary to dissolve the trust which held title to the monument land and this was done through court action.

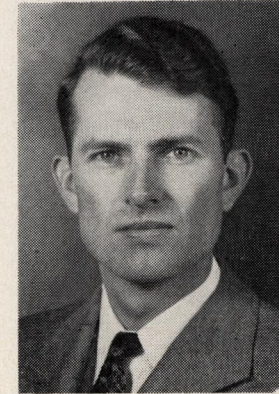
Title to the land was accepted by the government August 8, 1939, 37 acres of the mission site and between eight and nine acres embracing the property on which the monument is located. The deeds had been signed in 1937.

Early in 1941 Thomas R. Garth, currently archaeologist-custodian for the monument, was assigned here by the National Park service. Some work was done on the mission grounds before July 1 that year by the Works Projects Administration. The National Park Service's actual program of restoration started July 1, 1941. However, because of the war the archaeological investigations lapsed for a four-year period.

Garth returned here in September of 1946 and since then has continued the investigation work done before the war.

Actual custodian of the grounds is John C. Preston, director of Mount Rainier National Park.

Participants in Dedication Activities



C. GIRARD DAVIDSON
Assistant Secretary
Department of the Interior



HERBERT G. WEST
President
Whitman Centennial Ass'n.



HAL HOLMES
Member of Congress
Fourth District



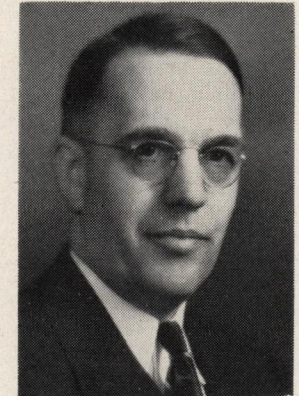
DR. V. AUBREY NEASHAM
Regional Historian
National Park Service



JOHN C. PRESTON
Coordinating Superintendent
Whitman National Monument



THOMAS GARTH
Custodian-Archaeologist
Whitman National Monument



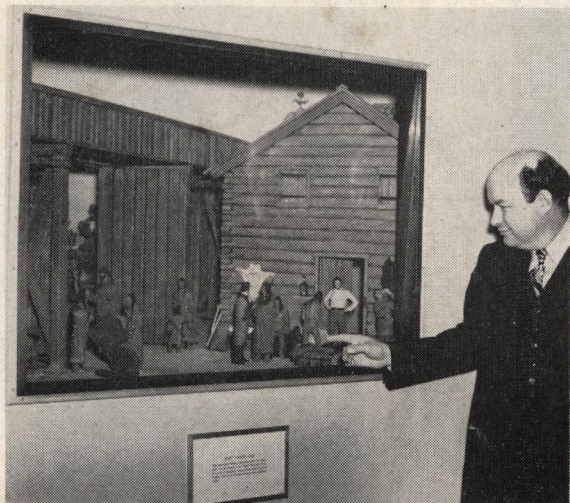
CHAPIN FOSTER
Director, Washington State
Historical Society

The Committee on Arrangements acknowledges the participation of others for whom pictures were not available.

The Monument's Future . . .

Definite plans are in the making by the National Park Service for the ultimate development of the Whitman National Monument.

Creation of a museum near the present great grave is contemplated. In the museum there would be a scale model reproduction of the mission as it existed 100 years ago; several dioramas showing clearly and definitely the most important episodes in the life of Dr. Marcus Whitman; sketches and copies of original photographs or drawings dealing with the mission; as well as artifacts unearthed in the archaeological investigations.



TYPE OF DIORAMAS PLANNED HERE

Ronald F. Lee, chief historian for the National Park Service, is shown pointing out details in a diorama, which is of the type that will be used in the museum at the Whitman National Monument to show some of the most important episodes in the life of Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman. This diorama shows a typical trading scene at old Fort Union at the mouth of the Yellowstone river in 1829. It is located in the interior museum at Washington, D. C.

Visitors to the monument would be able to have the entire Whitman story explained to them at the museum, then walk on improved pathways to the actual mission area which would be left much in its present shape with the locations of original buildings suitably staked out and marked.

Construction of a custodian's residence in connection with the museum is proposed. Office space for the custodian - archaeologist there also is contemplated.

Plans as developed by the park service call for the addition of some land to the north of the original

mission site to be used for the main building and automobile parking space. Whatever further property is required must be provided through local funds, the original congressional act creating the monument having carried this provision.

The progress of the park service program at the monument is almost entirely dependent upon the amounts of money made available by congress.

In the meantime visitors to the monument will have the advantage of the temporary museum which has been arranged in much the same manner as will be the permanent displays.

Although the actual physical development of the Whitman monument has been delayed as a result of the interruption of World War II, the archaeological explorations on the mission site have been of great value. This investigation has revealed physical facts about several buildings which existed prior to the massacre of 1847 as well as the life of its occupants which have altered original conceptions.

Present plans of those interested in the Whitman monument include an observance of the one hundredth anniversary of the actual massacre which came November 29, 1847. However, those plans still are in a nebulous state.

The temporary museum will be open week days except Mondays from 9 a. m. to 5 p. m. and Saturdays and Sundays from 1 to 5 p. m.