

MISSION 66

FOR

WHITMAN

NATIONAL MONUMENT

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
NATIONAL PARK SYSTEM

What Is MISSION 66

Mission 66 is a forward-looking program for the National Park System intended to so develop and staff these priceless possessions of the American people as to permit their wisest possible use; maximum enjoyment for those who use them; and maximum protection of the scenic scientific, wilderness, and historic resources that give them distinction.

Construction is an important element of the program. Modern roads, well planned trails, utilities, camp and picnic grounds, and many kinds of structures needed for public use or administration to meet the requirements of an expected 80 million visitors in 1966, are necessary; but they are simply one means by which "enjoyment-without-impairment" is to be provided.

Under this program outmoded and inadequate facilities will be replaced with physical improvements adequate for expected demands but so designed and located as to reduce the impact of public use on valuable and destructible features. It will provide both facilities and personnel for visitor services of the quality and quantity that the public is entitled to expect in its National Park System. It is intended to assure the fullest possible degree of protection, both to visitors and resources.

Mission 66 is a long-range program; it will require at least 10 years to accomplish on a sound and realistic dollar basis. That means completion in 1966--the 50th anniversary year of the establishment of the National Park Service. The program has received enthusiastic endorsement by the President of the United States and his Cabinet, and well received by the Congress and the Nation at large.

The Mission 66 program, as it pertains to Whitman National Monument, is briefed in the accompanying report to provide information on what is planned and when it will be accomplished.

The dramatic career of Dr. Whitman portrays a colorful and dramatic chapter in Western history. It tells of a man who was the first graduate doctor of a medical school to practice west of the Rocky Mountains. Dr. and Mrs. Whitman were the parents of the first white girl born west of the Rocky Mountains and north of California. In 1842 and 1843, Dr. Whitman was one of the great riders in American history when he travelled over 2,000 miles in the winter time to the east coast to save his mission, and to tell of the greatness and potentialities of

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WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

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Introduction

Who Were the Whitmans?

In 1831, four Nez Perce Indians were sent by their tribe to St. Louis, then the largest city in the western part of the United States, to ask for the whitemen's "Book of Heaven". They told their story to William Clark who had been in their country many years before with the Lewis and Clark Expedition. He promised to do what he could for them. The account of their quest was published, and among those who responded and offered to go among these people to teach them the ways of Christianity were a young physician, Dr. Marcus Whitman, and a young lady school teacher, Narcissa Prentiss. Their mutual interest brought them together, and in February 1836 they were married. The following day they set out for the Nez Perce homeland. They were joined by Reverend and Mrs. Henry H. Spalding, and a layman, William H. Gray, all recruited by Dr. Whitman to assist in the endeavor. The party made its way across the Great Plains, through the Rocky Mountains, across the Great Basin, up over the Blue Mountains, and finally down the Columbia River to the Hudson's Bay Company trading post at Fort Vancouver, following along a route which later became the famous Oregon Trail. In making this journey, Mrs. Whitman and Mrs. Spalding became the first white women to cross the American continent overland from coast to coast north of Mexico.

Later, in 1836, Dr. Whitman erected a dwelling in eastern Washington at a spot known to the Indians as Waiilatpu (pronounced Wy-ee'-let-poo), "The place of the rye grass." Here in December he brought his bride, and here they established their home and began a Christian work which ended eleven years later in the tragedy of the "Whitman Massacre" at the hands of Cayuse Indians.

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the Oregon country. He stood out in the public mind as the symbol of American leadership in Oregon, and has come to be one of the best-remembered pioneers of the old Oregon Trail. On his return from the east coast he provided leadership and guidance for the first great wagon train to come to the Oregon territory. He was an earnestly religious man who persistently tried but fell short of his objective of bringing the Indians to a realization of the white man's God. He was a fearless man with a great devotion to duty. He was struck down while in the very act of giving medical aid to the people he had consecrated himself to serve.

To preserve the memory of the martyred Whitmans and the principles for which they stood, Whitman National Monument was established in 1940 through the efforts of many individuals and groups. At the present time it is 46 acres in size.

What are the Values to be Preserved?

Those who are interested in history find an especial appeal at Whitman National Monument, for the Whitman Mission at Waiilatpu was an important resting place on the early Oregon Trail. Those who are also interested in spiritual values find the Whitman story one of the most inspiring sagas in American life. It is replete with such elemental factors as romance, conflict, love and labor for mankind, devotion to duty, religious zeal, patriotism, and willingness to make a supreme sacrifice for ideals.

At Whitman National Monument one may tread on the ground where the Whitmans trod. One can view the sites where the mission buildings stood and see the dikes that held the gristmill pond. One can see the common grave where lie most of the victims of the massacre. A trail leads to the summit of a hill where Narcissa Whitman used to go to watch for Dr. Whitman to return from his trips to sick people, and where she used to sing, much to the delight of the Indians. While there, one can get a fine view of the colorful and historic Walla Walla Valley, and look over the site where the Whitmans labored for their fellow men. In reverent stillness, one can thank one's Maker that our country had such men and women as Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman when it needed them. Here is preserved a part of America's great heritage.

What Should be Done?

The operation and development of Whitman National Monument

must be carried out in such a way that visitors may derive maximum inspiration from the Whitman story, through a better understanding of the lives of the Whitmans and the factors that led to their martyrdom. The remaining evidences of the Whitmans must be preserved and protected. The part of the historic early route of the Oregon Trail through the National Monument grounds should be properly marked, and the significance of this celebrated old pioneer road explained. Although it does not appear to be practical to reconstruct the various buildings that were a part of the Whitman Mission, due to the fact that vital information concerning details of their construction is lacking, the provision of a scale model of the grounds showing the approximate relative size and location of the various features would go far to enable visitors to visualize the appearance and conditions of the site as it was in the time of the Whitmans. Better access to the grounds from the main highway serving this part of Washington State is needed, as well as facilities for circulation through the grounds, increased protection of the historic features, and for administration and interpretation of the place. Because of the limited size of the Monument these provisions need not be extensive.

The Problem

A short look at what has happened at the Whitman Mission since the untimely end of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman indicates the problems faced today and points the way to their solution.

The Early Days

Three months after the massacre of the Whitmans, a company of volunteer American soldiers, formed at the settlements on the Willamette River, came to the Whitman Mission to punish the Indians responsible for the tragedy. They built Fort Waters on the site where the mission house had stood. Six months later they returned to their homes. In 1859, Reverend Cushing Eells purchased the site of the Whitman Mission and started a school there which subsequently became Whitman College. The land was again sold in 1872 to Mr. Charles Moore, and resold in 1912 to Mr. William Swegle, both of whom carried on farming operations. In 1936 the site was acquired by local people who wished to have it become a National Monument. They donated it to the Federal government and title to it was formally accepted on January 20, 1940.

Establishment of the Monument Caused a Need for Visitor Services and Facilities

In 1941, a temporary adobe building was erected by the National Park Service to serve as a workshop for an archeologist who had been employed to carry on exploration of the historic building sites. World War II interrupted this work and it wasn't resumed until 1948. By the end of 1950 it was complete. In 1947, the archeologist's workshop, 15 by 20 feet in inside measurements, was turned into a small museum of a temporary nature. Since then, two small sheds have been added to it; one to house a well and pressure pump, and another to protect a limited amount of maintenance equipment. With four small wooden toilets, these buildings constituted the only structures in the Monument until June of 1957, when a trailer was brought in to serve as an office for the superintendent.

The Monument is located on a county road, one and a half miles from U. S. Highway 410. If a more direct access to it from this highway were constructed, it would receive and benefit many more visitors than it presently serves.

Since establishment of the Monument, the National Park Service has erected fences along the boundaries, a self-guiding trail with paved walks has been constructed to the sites where the historic buildings stood, an orchard of approximately twenty-five fruit trees has been planted near where the Whitman's orchard grew, and efforts have been made to make the area attractive.

With over 29,000 visitors to Whitman National Monument in 1956, the "stop-gap" measures taken previously have become overtaxed and outmoded. With such a limited space in the temporary museum, there is no room for a satisfactory model of the grounds as they were in the time of the Whitmans. On Saturdays and Sundays, and when school groups are at the Monument, the museum is overcrowded. It is not large enough to adequately portray the Whitman story. When it also had to be used as the Monument headquarters the situation was even more acute. Space is woefully lacking for the storage of the valuable materials which were uncovered in the archeological investigations. Housed as they are in cupboards and drawers in the temporary museum they are not available for study and are subject to damage by rodents.

Adequate protection for maintenance equipment is lacking and at the present time some of the most valuable equipment is without shelter. Vandalism is another problem which requires attention.

Although temporary employees are hired for some of the maintenance and interpretive work, it is evident that with but one permanent employee, interpretation, maintenance, protection, and administration of the area cannot adequately be carried out. Permanent office facilities for the Monument headquarters are also needed.

Careful studies by the National Park Service have shown that there is need for additional land to administer the Monument. To construct needed facilities on the present area would seriously infringe on the historical scene. The acquisition of this land presents a major problem, as the Congressional act which created Whitman National Monument stated that lands to be added to the Monument would have to be donated. So far, such donors have been lacking.

A program has been designed to meet these problems under MISSION 66.

The Program

Land Acquisition

Approximately 46 acres of land adjacent to the Monument should be purchased. This will involve Congressional authorization. The land will be used for sites of new buildings, and to give additional protection to existing features.

Roads and Trails

A new and more direct access road to the Monument from U. S. Highway 410 has been proposed. Roads and a parking area will be constructed to serve new buildings to be erected in the Monument. To accomplish the objectives of the interpretive program the road to the grave of the massacre victims should be closed. Ideally, the present County road through the Monument should also be closed in order to restore it to early Oregon Trail condition and appearance. The trail system will be expanded to give better access to various features of the Monument.

Interpretive and Administrative Facilities

A visitor center building will be erected. It will house a museum, provide safe and adequate storage for the various artifacts uncovered in the archeological investigations of the historic buildings, contain public restrooms, and include administrative offices

of the Monument. Efforts will be made to make Whitman National Monument the center of information on the Whitman story. Interpretive signs and devices will be erected at selected locations along the trails to better explain the important features.

Other Improvements

Residences will be provided for two permanent employees of the Monument. A building will be constructed to house maintenance equipment and a maintenance workshop. The existing temporary buildings will be removed. A water system will be constructed, as will a small sewer system. Adequate entrance signs and markers will be provided, and the area will be landscaped.

The Staff

In order to adequately carry out the necessities of protection, maintenance, interpretation, and administration caused by the added facilities and increased travel which will result, the staff will have to be enlarged to include a superintendent, historian, and a maintenanceman, on a full time basis, with additional seasonal employees to assist in the interpretation and protection of the Monument during the busier time of the year.

Summary

Since its establishment, Whitman National Monument has not received developments commensurate with its needs. This has been caused by the emergencies of World War II, and of the Korean conflict. In recent years the National Park Service has scheduled major developments in the Monument, only to have to cancel them because of the difficulties in acquiring lands needed for building sites. Therefore, this program practically amounts to starting development from the beginning. At the time of this writing it is not known just what the final costs of the MISSION 66 program may be for Whitman National Monument, as there are some factors for which estimates are not presently available. However, a summary of the known items is as follows:

Development of necessary roads and trails ...	\$ 54,000
Utilities--water, sewer, irrigation ditch, etc...	60,500
Buildings, including visitor center, 2 residences and utility building	134,600
Miscellaneous items, including signs and markers, entrance treatment, fences, razing of temporary museum, restoration of Oregon trail	16,700
Total cost of physical development.....	\$265,800

Conclusion

The visitor of 1966 who comes to Whitman National Monument will find a greatly changed place. He will park his car in a spacious parking area close by a fine visitor center building, designed with his best interests in mind. He will enter and be able to see a scale model of the Whitman Mission grounds as they were in the days of Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman, and will see life as it was then, portrayed in a series of well executed dioramas and displays. A uniformed representative of the National Park Service will be on hand to serve him and to explain the various features about which he may have questions. He will then be able to walk around the grounds on a conducted tour if he wishes, or by himself, to see and enjoy the various features of the place. He will look about him and realize that just about the last of the Indians have ridden on, leaving their beloved Waiilatpu. He will look at the towering Blue Mountains and realize what hardy people the pioneers were, our forefathers who made this heritage possible. And when he visits the great grave where lie the bodies of those people who made the supreme sacrifice for their Christian beliefs, he may derive some inspiration, and resolve that he will do his best to see that such sacrifices for him and for the generations to come, were worthwhile.