

Memorandum

from the desk of
A. Alexis Alvey

Jan. 19/52

Dear Chick & Lorraine -
Just another clipping that
may be of interest! Of course
you may see the Seaside
Times - but then, maybe not!

It would be nice to pop
in and have another "gab-
fest" - about our mutual
interests - too bad we are so
far apart. All the best
& hope D. & D - is coming
along! All the best,
Alex

By Recording the Voices of Our Older Indians, a Seattle Professor Is

Preserving an Ancient Culture

By LUCILE McDONALD

LONG after the oldest Indians of Washington have been gathered to the Great Spirit their voices and something of their traditions will continue to live in a box of tape recordings collected by Leon V. Metcalf, professor of music at Seattle Pacific College.

For the past two years Metcalf has been preserving in this form the music, folklore, vocabularies, history and genealogies of tribal patriarchs he has visited in the Pacific Northwest. Young members of the tribes who have good memories of songs and stories told by their parents also have assisted him. Metcalf has taken copious notes to supplement the reels.

Listening to the recordings, one is transported inside an Indian home. Children interrupt, meals are served, dogs bark and young folk titter as a great-grandmother sings her Skagit love song, almost shouting the words in the Indian tongue:

"You can go now, boy.
The light of daybreak is coming."

Another reel goes on the machine and a Chehalis relates the story of "How the Rain Killed the Elk." The room is quiet this time and the inflections of the storyteller's voice are clear as he imitates the footsteps of the grazing animal—"Kla-po, kla-paa."

METCALF says, "Nobody was anybody among Indians if he could not tell stories. Today the art is dying out, partly because the young people do not know the ancient language. One old woman was delighted to tell me stories because she had not had a chance to relate them in a long time. Few in her family understood the words."

He played the matriarch's recording. The voice of a blind Tulalip woman rolled the guttural words on her tongue.

"Storytellers like her soon will be gone," Metcalf remarked appreciatively. "Some of the tribal stories even now are quite synthetic. The main thing is to gather them while one can. I've delayed talking with some of the old people, for one reason or another, and the next time I've gone back they were dead."

"My idea is to get what they have to say down on a reel. I'll transcribe and translate it later with the aid of other Indians. Even when one is well ac-



LEON V. METCALF, left, with Mr. and Mrs. Willie Gus at their home on the Muckleshoot Reservation, listening to

a recording of an Indian whale story. In the right background an altar for Shaker Church rites is seen in part.

quainted with the language of a tribe, words heard on the recordings often prove to be other than one thinks."

WHEN it is possible Metcalf devotes half an hour to setting down a vocabulary given him by each Indian he interviews. His method is to visit a house where he has heard a singer or story teller lives and say, "I have something interesting for you to listen to." He selects a reel which the person can understand and plays it. If he has nothing specific to fit the situation he selects Indian songs.

"As soon as one member of the group has sung for me it's a foot in the door," he says.

"They've heard radios and talked on the telephone, so they are not as suspicious as they might have been in the years before such modern inventions reached their homes. Some homes that are the hardest to get into are also the hardest to leave. The Indians want to sit and listen all night to my recordings."

"Indian music is more the manner of singing than the melody itself,"

Metcalf said. "You could compare it to jazz, which is a manner of playing rather than specific combinations of notes. I have recorded songs which can be played on the piano, but when played on that instrument they do not sound like Indian music."

SOME of the recordings were made to the beating of a tom-tom. An old man intoned a war song while children played around him in the house. A blind woman accompanied herself by beating a stick on a wooden box.

One strange chant Metcalf identified as a work song. It has no words.

"The woman sings it as she shreds material for baskets, weaves them or gathers berries," he said.

Metcalf has worked in 22 Indian languages. His first efforts were taken down by pen and only 16 languages are represented on the reels. He became interested in Indians at the age of 6 when his family moved to Hay Springs, Nebr., near the Rosebud Reservation, where he saw the Sioux pitch camps on the prairie at the edge of town.

TWO years later he moved to Marysville, in Snohomish County, where the Tulalip tribe did not look to him like Indians because they were so different from the nomadic Sioux. While he worked in a logging camp at the age of 16, several Snohomish Indians taught him Chinook jargon and a little of their own tongue.

"Frank LeClair used to tell me about the old ways of his ancestors," Metcalf related. "Some of the loggers would deride him and his stories, but I found later that he was an exceptional source of information. Not long ago I went to see him. He was very frail and hard of hearing. Since then he has passed on. His wife froze to death as she was returning home through the woods."

"My interest was always in music—I majored in it and in education at the University of Wisconsin, Northwestern, and the University of Michigan. Later I studied anthropology and education at the University of Washington and there learned about orthography under Melville Jacobs and William Elmsdorf."

Metcalf began making field trips among the Indians week-ends and in summers, soon discovering that studying their language as a hobby was impossible without full knowledge of how

they lived, worked, played and worshipped.

GATHERING myths was the best means of recapturing tongues as they were spoken long ago. Many words persisted in these stories which had gone out of use in ordinary conversation.

In the legends special dialects were given to various animals. The bluejay, always the clown, had a comical lisp. The raven, representing the glutton, was credited with odd speech and extremely funny songs.

When the impersonations are good the listening Indians burst into uproarious laughter. Any strange way of speech credited to characters must be heard to be appreciated, for it is something which cannot be reduced to writing.

Metcalf says most of the well-known stories and songs already have been set down by scholars. He believes he has found many additional songs never recorded previously and that he may have encountered myths told by remote persons in the Sauk and Suiattle country which no one else has.

He values his friendships among the Indians and willingly plays his recordings when he visits them.

"It is touching to see the old ones cry when they hear their ancient tribal songs," he said.

METCALF recalled questioning Willie Gus of the Muckleshoot Reservation, southeast of Auburn, about the Wenatchee dialect. Struggling to remember certain words, Gus would call to his mother, about 105 years old, in the bedroom, and repeat what she said.

When Metcalf was in the neighborhood again he was told that Gus wished him to return, that he believed he could relate a story in the Wenatchee dialect. Metcalf went to see him, taking the recorder.

Gus began the tale but gave up and went to the bedroom. He returned soon, dragging a rocking chair in which sat a tiny blind woman, his mother.

"After she told the story I played it back to her," Metcalf said.

"I put the microphone in her hands and had her feel the wire and the recording machine. Her son and daughter-in-law explained in her own tongue how the device worked and that her voice would live 1,000 years. She was happy."



ANNIE JACK, at 105, the oldest person at the Muckleshoot Reservation, listens to a playback of a story she recorded in the Wenatchee dialect.—Seattle Pacific College photos by Dean Arlton.

By HERBERT HOLLANDER

WHEN Dwight D. Eisenhower takes the oath of office Tuesday as President of the United States he will do so in the presence of an all-time-record number of his fellow citizens and in surroundings hallowed by long years of history. He will participate in a ritual established at the nation's birth, festivities all deeply rooted in tradition.

Two major committees handle a presidential inauguration. One is the joint congressional committee which takes care of all details of the actual swearing-in ceremony on the steps of the United States Capitol. The other is the local inaugural committee—in reality many committees—which arranges the parade, the inaugural ball, the sale of grandstand seats erected along the historic parade route, and the like.

Long before the presidential nominating conventions were held, advance planning for the inauguration was under way by the congressional committee.

Even as campaign oratory was at its height and the final decision of the electorate weeks away, carpenters and other artisans were hard at work on the Capitol plaza erecting platforms and stands. That job was well on the way toward completion before the votes were counted.

WHILE most Presidents have taken the oath on the Capitol steps, several have been inaugurated elsewhere. For example, Franklin D. Roosevelt was sworn in at the White House after his fourth election. Thomas Jefferson's second inauguration was in the Senate Chamber. In 1909, when the worst blizzard in a century hit Washington, William Howard Taft took the oath indoors at the Capitol.

Victor in the bitter election contest of 1876, Rutherford B. Hayes took the oath in the Red Parlor of the White House in the presence of President Grant and other officials. Chief Justice Waite administered the oath both in the White House and publicly.

It was at the first inauguration, that of George Washington in New York on April 30, 1789, that an incident occurred which set an important negative precedent for all subsequent ceremonies.

The oath was administered by Chancellor Livingston. Washington repeated it, and as he kissed the Bible he said, "I swear, so help me God!"

Livingston, carried away by emotion, turned to the crowd and shouted, "Long live George Washington, President of the United States!"

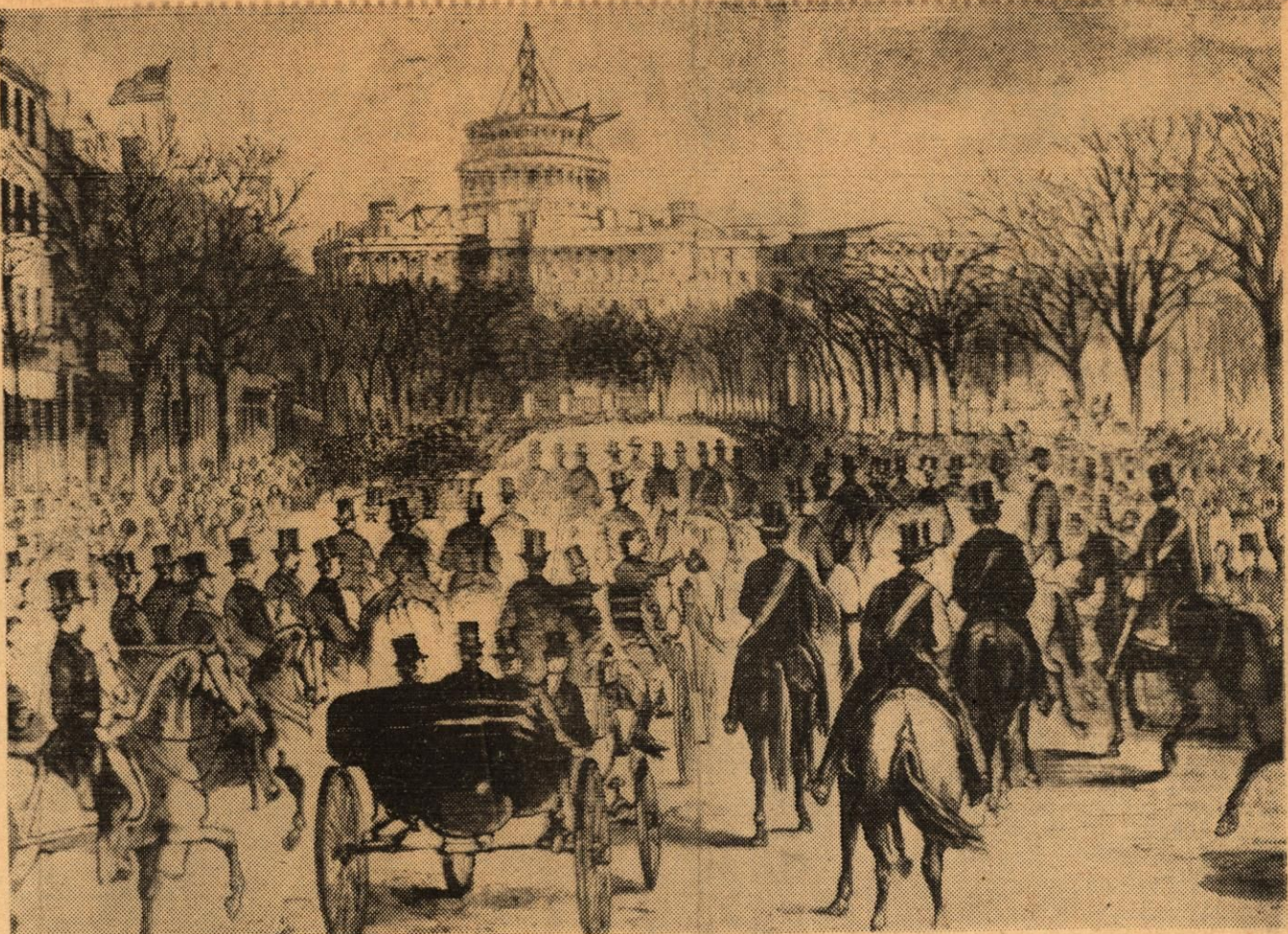
The response was a mighty ovation. But later many declared the words sounded too much like "Long live the king!" So zealous were they that nothing smacking even faintly of hated monarchical forms should obtrude, that Chancellor Livingston's phrase was dropped from every succeeding ceremony.

WASHINGTON'S journey from Mount Vernon to New York was a triumph. He wished the oath to be administered in private. But it was not to be and at noon on April 30, on a balcony outside the Federal Building the first President was sworn in.

The second inauguration was more in keeping with the general's wishes. He took the oath in Independence Hall, Philadelphia.

The inauguration of John Adams presaged the bitterness of his administration. Washington was the center of attraction. Adams took the oath from Chief Justice Oliver Ellsworth in the old Philadelphia State House. Huge crowds followed Washington and Adams complained that "there was more weeping than there ever had been at the presentation of a tragedy."

There is a legend that Thomas Jefferson rode to the Capitol at Washington on horseback, hitched his steed to a fence and took the oath at the then-



TOP-HATTED RIDERS accompanied Abraham Lincoln's inaugural carriage to the Capitol in 1861.

INAUGURATION DAY

Hallowed Traditions, Colorful Memories Surround Rites

unfinished building. However, while Jefferson might have wanted that much simplicity, he acceded to popular demand and allowed himself to be escorted from his boarding house by a battalion of soldiers, while artillery fired salutes. He was sworn in by his bitter enemy, Chief Justice John Marshall.

THE first inauguration of Andrew Jackson beggars description. Never before or since has Washington seen such an exposition. Thousands of ardent followers of the hero of New Orleans went to the Capital to celebrate—which they did until it seemed as though they would tear the town apart. They nearly mortally injured Jackson himself in their wild enthusiasm.

The party at the White House, given by the President for all who wished to attend, developed into a free-for-all. Costly rugs and furniture were ruined and men, women and children were trampled in the ensuing riot.

Jackson arose from a sick bed to attend the inauguration of his faithful lieutenant, Martin Van Buren. Jackson, rather than "Little Van," was the cynosure of all eyes. The strange pair, rough-hewn Jackson and gentlemanly Van Buren, rode to the Capitol in a carriage made from timbers of the frigate Constitution.

The tremendous popular feeling of the "Tippecanoe and Tyler, too" election campaign carried over into the inaugural festivities for Gen. William Henry Harrison, who was to die in office exactly one month later from a cold contracted on Inauguration Day. There was a great pageant featuring log cabins, hard cider and a new power loom with operators at work. The oath was taken and the inaugural address was delivered in the open. Chief Justice Taney administered the oath.

A pageant, featuring a "liberty car" drawn by six horses, and numerous social functions featured the inauguration when James Buchanan took the oath in 1857. A guest of honor was George Washington Parke Custis, grandson of Martha Washington. He had been at every inauguration from that of Washington to Buchanan's.

THE uneasiness due to tremendous national tension, felt in some degree at the Buchanan inauguration, burst with full force upon that of Abraham Lincoln in 1861. Lincoln's trip to Washington was made in secret, and he was under heavy guard. Army regulars took the place of the customary honor guard on the way to the Capitol, and from the roofs of Pennsylvania Avenue houses picked riflemen looked down. At the Capitol, venerable Gen. Winfield Scott himself took charge of the troops.

When Lincoln appeared to deliver his inaugural address, he found himself encumbered with hat, cane and manuscript. As he hesitated for a moment, his old rival, Stephen A. Douglas, stepped forward and took Lincoln's hat. "If I can't be President, at least I can hold his hat," Douglas whispered to a friend.

The most notable feature of the second Lincoln inauguration was the address, now recognized as one of the most masterly state papers of all time. The day had been inclement until it was time for Lincoln to make his speech; then the sun came out gloriously.

President Grant's little daughter, Nellie, clung to her father while he was reading his first inaugural address. She had been sitting with her mother but grew restless and slipped away and held her father's hand for the duration of the speech.

GRANT'S second inauguration took place on one of the coldest March days ever recorded in Washington. Hundreds were frostbitten and the West Point cadets, who paraded without overcoats, suffered intensely. The ball was a failure because the building was so cold the musicians scarcely could play, the refreshments were frozen solid, and the guests could not remove their wraps. The wind blew so hard that when Grant read his address only those within a few feet of him could hear a word.

It was several hours before Vice President Theodore Roosevelt could be found on September 14, 1901, to tell him that President McKinley, who had been shot some days before at the Buf-

falo Exposition, was growing rapidly worse. He was hiking in the Adirondacks. He was found finally near the summit of Mount Marcy and hurried back to Buffalo, where he was sworn in by Judge Hazel.

The 1905 Roosevelt inauguration was gala, with 400,000 visitors in the capital. Rough Riders and Civil War veterans provided the honor guard.

When Woodrow Wilson was elected in 1912, extensive plans were made for the inauguration ceremonies, although the President-elect wanted simplicity, and in deference to his wishes no ball was held. The shadow of war hung over the second Wilson inauguration.

WARREN G. HARDING'S phrase, "back to normalcy," had a subduing effect upon plans for his inauguration. An unforgettable picture was that of Wilson and Harding riding to the Capitol together. None who saw it would have prophesied that the mortally stricken Wilson would outlive the President-elect.

Recent history are the Coolidge, Hoover, Roosevelt and Truman inaugurations; the poignant drama of the former receiving the oath of office from his father in the remote Vermont farmhouse; President and Mrs. Hoover riding back to the White House from the Capitol in the drenching rain of March 4, 1929, in an open automobile; the tenseness of the nation in 1933 as it waited eagerly to hear the new President's plans to lift the country from depression.

The second Roosevelt inauguration took place in a pelting rainstorm. The third came soon after the nation entered the Second World War, and the brief parade was almost entirely military. The fourth, as the conflict was entering the final phase, was unprecedentedly brief and austere.

The Truman inauguration in 1948 was given a special fillip by reason of the President's unexpected victory.

When General Eisenhower and Richard Nixon take their oaths, the nation will witness the symbolic renewal of the priceless American heritage.

(See pictures of past inaugurations in the Rotogravure Pictorial Section.)

MEMORANDUM

WRITE IT • DATE IT • SIGN IT

TO: ClickDATE: June 9/55*Transmitted for your*

- ☐ APPROVAL
☐ DISPOSITION
☐ INFORMATION
☐ COMMENT
☐ REPLY (Return information copy)
☐ FILES

☐ PLEASE RETURN*Message, Comment, or Reply*

A new publication that may interest you:
MUSIC OF THE AMERICAN INDIAN, Northwest (Puget Sound) by Willard Rhodes (Recorded & Edited)
Introduction by Erna Gunther. Library of Congress, Music Division—Recording Laboratory, Archives of American Folksong. (Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Indian Affairs.) Complete with Bibliography, and Illustrations. There are recordings that can be purchased separately to go with the project. (Probably can be obtained from the Lib. of Congress, Wash.25,DC)

Alexis Alvey