

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT
WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

PRESS RELEASE

January 16, 1959

NINETEENTH ANNIVERSARY OF WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT JANUARY 20

Whitman National Monument's Establishment Day will be observed Tuesday, January 20, it has been announced. On that day 19 years ago the National Park Service accepted as public trust, from the Whitman Centennial, Inc., and other public spirited groups, the gift of the site of Waiilatpu Mission, which was founded in 1836 by Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman, 7 miles east of the present day city of Walla Walla.

Whitman National Monument was visited during the year just ended by 36,661 people, which was an increase of 7.51% over the 1957 calendar year travel. Some idea of the present uses and services of the Whitman National Monument are indicated by the numbers and types of organized groups that visited the area in 1958. They included 29 grade and high school classes with 954 students, 5 college groups numbering 438, 30 youth groups with 657 members and 9 adult groups numbering 479 persons. It is also interesting to note that a random check of visitors for 20 days represented 31 states and 5 foreign countries. The staff at Whitman National Monument presented talks to 15 organizations in this area with a combined audience of 3,117 persons.

The authorization for the National Park Service to purchase the much needed land for Monument development was realized on May 1, of last year, when President Eisenhower signed Public Law 388 as passed by the 85th Congress. Superintendent William J. Kennedy in speaking of the signing of Public Law 388 said, " now it will be possible when this land

is acquired to fully institute the Mission 66 Program of the National Park Service for Whitman National Monument. Mission 66, Kennedy pointed out, is a program, which proposes by 1966 to develop and staff the entire System so as to meet the needs of a much greater number of visitors and at the same time to safeguard fully the wilderness, scenic, scientific and historic resources entrusted to the National Park Service.

The improving of the presentation of the Whitman Story and the upkeep of the Monument's features was made possible by the addition of a full time historian, and the increased part time employment of a clerk and maintenance man this past year. The paved walk to the sites of the important features of the Mission was converted into a self-guiding trail and a trail guide to explain and amplify the features was printed and made available to visitors late last fall. Through these and other services, efforts have been, and are being made to make Whitman National Monument more attractive to visitors, and to enable it to better portray the national significance of the work of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman.

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PRESS RELEASE

January 14, 1960

TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT - January 20

The twentieth anniversary of the establishment of Whitman National Monument will be observed Wednesday, January 20, it has been announced by Superintendent William J. Kennedy. This national monument, a gift to the nation from public-spirited people interested in preserving as a part of the national heritage the place where the martyred Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman established a pioneer mission among the Cayuse Indians in 1836, was authorized by an Act of Congress in 1936, 100 years later. However, it was not until January 20, 1940, that the deeds to the land were accepted by the National Park Service and the area formally established as Whitman National Monument.

"Those who saw the early beginnings of Whitman National Monument might have a hard time believing the facts which show that in the 1959 calendar year just past a total of 41,143 people visited it," Kennedy said. This is an increase of 12.2 percent over the 1958 figures. In the 20 years since its establishment, 295,424 visitors have been recorded.

It is expected that the recent publication of Hard Jones' book, The Great Command, which deals with the Whitmans, will stimulate travel to Whitman National Monument in 1960 and succeeding years.

(More)

A record of service began with the establishment of the monument in 1940 was continued during 1959 when some 88 organized groups with 2,198 members visited the park and were taken on conducted trips around the grounds by members of the staff. Talks on the monument and on the Whitmans were also presented by the staff to 18 groups away from the area. These numbered 719 persons.

Ordinarily the entering freshmen of Whitman College make a pilgrimage to the national monument to receive indoctrination in the traditions of their school. However, the 1959 visit was called off on account of adverse weather on the chosen day. Whitman College which celebrated its centennial during the year just ended had its earliest beginnings in a cabin built on the site of the Whitman Mission House by the Rev. Cushing Eells 100 years ago.

Proceedings are now under way to acquire additional land for the national monument as authorized in an Act of Congress signed by President Eisenhower on May 1, 1958. Archeological exploratory work is being planned for October 1960 to attempt to determine the location of the grave of little Alice Clarissa Whitman, only child of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman, and to gather more information about other features. This is a necessary preliminary to carrying out the general plan of development of Whitman National Monument as envisioned by the National Park Service MISSION 66 program of conservation and development for the areas it administers.

(End)

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PRESS RELEASE
For Immediate Release

April 26, 1960

THOMPSON APPOINTED TO
HISTORIAN POST AT
WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT

Mr. Erwin H. Thompson, formerly living in Yosemite National Park, California, has been appointed Park Historian at Whitman National Monument according to an announcement by Superintendent William J. Kennedy.

On his arrival, Thompson said, "I am happy to be in Walla Walla. I know that this assignment is going to be an exciting and challenging one, and I look forward with pleasure to serving visitors to the Monument."

Mr. Thompson received his B.A. degree from the University of California at Los Angeles in 1957 and took his graduate work at the same university. He was a teaching assistant at U.C.L.A. in American History while attending graduate school there. He also taught school in the elementary grades for two years at Prince Edward Island, Canada.

During World War II, Mr. Thompson served in the Royal Canadian Navy. Since then he has been in the U. S. Army for five years and was awarded the Bronze Star and the Purple Heart for combat duty in Korea.

For the past several years, Mr. Thompson has been employed during the summers in Yosemite National Park, California, where he was assigned to one of the High Sierra Camps in the remote reaches of the Park.

(more)

The position of Park Historian at Whitman National Monument was left vacant last fall by the resignation of Mr. Jack Farr who had joined the staff in June 1958. Prior to his departure, Mr. Farr in cooperation with Professor Robert L. Whitner, Whitman College, completed a comprehensive prospectus for the museum to be incorporated in the Visitor-Center building which will be constructed under the MISSION 66 program of the National Park Service.

Mr. Thompson will direct the Monument's interpretive program, explaining to visitors the place of the missionaries in the settlement of the Northwest, and the significance of the work of Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman and their associates. He will carry out further research in the story of the mission. A major research project in the near future will be to determine as accurately as possible the details of the construction and appearance of the original mission buildings. Last week Mr. Thompson conferred with National Park Service Regional Historian Dr. John A. Bussey on matters pertaining to his new assignment.

Whitman National Monument, open seven days a week, is located seven miles west of Walla Walla, Washington, at the site of the mission founded in 1836 by Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman to serve the Cayuse Indians. The mission became a landmark on the Old Oregon Trail and later was the scene of the famous "Whitman Massacre." This historic spot is now preserved by the National Park Service. Visitors in 1959 totaled 41,143.

(End)

UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT
WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

PRESS RELEASE

For release Sunday, January 15, 1961

For further information, call
Erwin Thompson, Jackson 5-1249

TWENTY-FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT - JANUARY 20

Friday, January 20, marks the twenty-first anniversary of Whitman National Monument, according to Superintendent William J. Kennedy.

Founded 125 years ago, in 1836, the Whitman Mission served the Cayuse Indians in the Walla Walla valley until 1847, when the Indians attacked and destroyed the mission. Twenty-five years ago, public spirited citizens presented the mission land to the nation. On January 20, 1940, the National Park Service accepted the deeds to the land and Whitman National Monument was established as a memorial to the martyred Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and their associates.

"In 1960, a total of 40,435 persons visited Whitman National Monument," Kennedy said, "and indications are that more than this number will visit the Monument in 1961." This past year saw the beginning of the MISSION 66 development program when National Park Service Archeologist Paul J. F. Schumacher excavated the site of Dr. Whitman's blacksmith shop and searched for Alice Clarissa Whitman's grave. In 1961, MISSION 66, the National Park Service's program of conservation and development scheduled to be completed throughout the nation by 1966, will bring many improvements to Whitman National Monument. Construction will be started on the new Visitor Center and on other projects.

MORE

"A number of valuable articles were donated to the Monument in 1960," said Kennedy. Among them was the very interesting "Papoose Doll" that belonged to Elizabeth Sager who came to the mission as a young orphan in 1844. This doll, destined to be one of the best known in the history of the Pacific Northwest, was given to Whitman National Monument by Mrs. Frances Muessig of Portland, Oregon, at the request of the daughter of its original owner. Mrs. Muessig, who was assisted by Mrs. Fred Morgan of Gresham, Oregon, also presented Indian baskets, books, and photographs of historical importance.

Other important gifts for the museum received during the year included an original letter concerning Dr. Whitman written by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, from the Walla Walla Chamber of Commerce; a pair of cobbler's pliers, from Mr. V. A. Heitstumen of Milton-Freewater, Oregon; a bayonet, probably used by the Oregon Volunteers in 1848, from Mrs. Laura Chelson of Portland, Oregon; a bolt from the wagon box used in the second burial of the massacre victims, from Mrs. Frank M. Benson of Walla Walla; and a beaver trap similar to those used by the mountain men, given by Mr. Ray Sheldon, also of Walla Walla.

Public-spirited persons also made several valuable contributions to the Monument's research library. Miss Ruth Walker of Dixie, Washington, presented an 1899 issue of The Pioneer which contained Nancy Osborn Jacob's account of the massacre. From Mrs. Leslie Young of Elsinore, Calif., came an account of the mission in 1847 written by John Young. A story about Eliza Spalding Warren in a 1913 copy of Ladies Home Journal was donated by Mrs. Agnes Brown of Walla Walla. Mrs. Frances Hawk of Edmonds, Wash., brought photographs of adobe making similar to Dr. Whitman's method of building. Mr. Walter Bells of Washington, D. C., gave the Monument pamphlets

on the Balls family. An account of the mission in 1847 as told by John Settle was presented by Mrs. Orlan Clark of Kennewick. And Mrs. Charles Crichton of Kitscoty, Alberta, Canada, sent a family tree of the Pambrun family. Pierre Pambrun was the chief trader at Fort Walla Walla when the Whitmans arrived in 1836. These will be of great value to the telling of the Whitman story to the thousands of future visitors.

Among the important events that occurred during 1960 was the visit to Whitman National Monument by Mr. Conrad L. Wirth, Director of the National Park Service. Mr. Wirth met with a group of Walla Walla citizens while here, under the auspices of the Marcus Whitman Foundation, and discussed the MISSION 66 development program with them.

On the eve of its twenty-second year as a National Monument, the site of Dr. Whitman's mission, six miles west of Walla Walla, is fast becoming recognized as an important stop for all those interested in their national, historic heritage.

END

UNITED STATES
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WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT
WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

1-15-62

PRESS RELEASE
For immediate release

For further information, call
Erwin Thompson, Jackson 5-1249

WHITMAN NATIONAL MONUMENT OBSERVES TWENTY-SECOND ANNIVERSARY

Whitman National Monument marks its twenty-second anniversary on Saturday, January 20, according to Superintendent William J. Kennedy.

"This anniversary finds the Monument well along in its MISSION 66 development program," Kennedy said, "and in 1962, most of the construction will be finished. Already, new trails and a new parking area are in operation. Other developments already finished include the restoration of Marcus Whitman's millpond and irrigation ditch, and improvements in the appearance of the great grave and memorial shaft sites."

This National Monument marks the location of the mission founded among the Cayuse Indians by Marcus and Narcissa Whitman in 1836. After eleven years of great endeavor under trying experiences, the Whitmans and eleven others lost their lives in a sudden attack on the mission in 1847 by the Indians. This massacre, born of fear, superstitions, and misunderstanding, brought the missionary era of the Daland Empire to a close.

On the one-hundredth anniversary of the founding of the mission, 1936, public spirited citizens presented the mission lands to the nation so that this part of our historical heritage would be preserved and enjoyed by all. In 1940, Whitman National Monument was formally established as one of the areas in the National Park System.

M O R E

"In 1961, a total of 47,576 persons visited Whitman National Monument," Kennedy said. "This is the largest number to visit in one year," he continued, "and 1962 should see an even greater number. In addition to the developments already finished, a new visitor center with new exhibits telling the story of the missionary era in the Pacific Northwest will be built under the MISSION 66 program. MISSION 66 is a nation-wide program scheduled to be completed in 1966 to enable the ever-increasing number of visitors to enjoy their national parks and to insure that the great scenic, historic, and scientific features of the parks will continue to be preserved," Kennedy explained.

"While this coming year will bring many changes and improvements at Whitman," Kennedy continued, "there will be very little inconvenience caused visitors. The temporary museum will be open daily until the new visitor center is finished, and the self-guiding trail will be ready for all visitors to take a walk into the historical past."

Whitman National Monument is six miles west of Walla Walla, Washington, and is one mile south of Highway 410 from which it is reached by a continuing road.

E N D

UNITED STATES
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WHITMAN MISSION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

8-13-62

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information, call
Mr. William J. Kennedy, Supt.
Jackson 5-1249, Walla Walla

WHITMAN MISSION RECEIVES TWO COLLECTIONS OF HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS

Within a week, Whitman Mission National Historic Site received two collections of historic photographs. Both were completely unexpected but are very welcome additions to the historical files, said Superintendent William J. Kennedy.

The first came from the well-known author, Nard Jones of Seattle. A gentleman from upstate New York, who had just read and enjoyed the account of the Whitman Mission, The Great Command, sent to Author Jones photographs of Whitman's former New York home (now torn down) and a photostat of the Christian Advocate for January 19, 1833. It was this issue of the Advocate that carried an account of the need for missionaries among the Indians of the Pacific Northwest. Out of this came the immediate impetus that resulted in Jason Lee, Marcus Whitman, Peter DeSmet, and the other missionaries coming to the Far West. A copy of this newspaper will be on display in the new visitor center at the Whitman Mission.

"We are glad to have these articles," said Kennedy. "Up to now our photographic files did not have a photograph of the former Whitman home in Rushville, New York."

M O R E

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WHITMAN MISSION NATIONAL HISTORIC SITE
WALLA WALLA, WASHINGTON

January 15, 1963

PRESS RELEASE
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For further information, call
Mrs. Glennis A. Shute, Acting Supt.
Jackson 5-1249, Walla Walla

WHITMAN MISSION OBSERVES TWENTY-THIRD ANNIVERSARY

Whitman Mission National Historic Site marks its twenty-third anniversary on Sunday, January 20, according to Acting Superintendent Glennis A. Shute.

Whitman Mission, oftentimes referred to as Waiilatpu, "the Place of the Rye Grass," is the site of a mission among the Cayuse Indians begun by Dr. Marcus and Narcissa Whitman in 1836 and where they worked for eleven years with the Indians beyond the frontier. With the arrival of large numbers of emigrants to the Pacific Northwest in the 1840's, the mission also became an important way station on the Oregon Trail.

The story of Waiilatpu mission is one of courage and determination. In the face of obstacles set for them by the wilderness and a proud uncivilized people, the Whitmans brought Christianity to the Indians, taught them the beginnings of agriculture and letters, and made their mission a haven for overland travelers. Although the mission effort was ended by Indian violence, the lives of these two people were selfless examples of a willingness to make extreme sacrifices for their ideas. Whitman Mission National Historic Site is a memorial to these missionaries who gave their lives that their principles might endure.

M O R E

On the 100th anniversary of the founding of the mission, 1936, public-spirited citizens presented the mission lands to the nation so that part of an historical heritage would be preserved. In 1940, Whitman Mission National Historic Site was formally established as one of the areas in the National Park System.

"In 1962, a total of 55,175 persons visited the historic shrine," said Mrs. Shute. "This is the largest number to visit in any one year. In the next year we anticipate even greater travel as 1963 will see completion, under the MISSION 66 development program, of our new visitor center which will house a museum with exhibits telling the story of the missionary era in the Pacific Northwest, a diorama of the Whitman massacre, plus a model of the mission site as it was in the days of the Whitmans. Also, the new approach road from U. S. Highway 410 will be completed and provide a more direct entry to the mission site.

"The National Park Service invites everyone to visit the site, to take a walk into the historical past, and to contemplate on the courage and faith that placed the Whitmans among the noblest of pioneers."

Whitman Mission National Historic Site is located six miles west of Walla Walla, Washington, and is one mile south of Highway 410 from which it is reached by a continuing road.

E N D

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For further information call
Supt. William J. Kennedy
Jackson 5-1249, Walla Walla, Wash.

PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

May 14, 1964

WHITMAN MISSION DIORAMA

The massacre on November 29, 1847, of Dr. and Mrs. Marcus Whitman and nine co-workers at the Waiilatpu Mission, site of which is seven miles west of Walla Walla, Wash., is the feature shown in the diorama located in the museum of the new Visitor Center at Whitman Mission National Historic Site.

The Whitman diorama was one of the more difficult ones that has been built in the National Park Service's Western Museum Laboratory in San Francisco. Its difficulty arose because it is the only one to date that portrays a drama happening inside of a building.

Erwin N. Thompson, former historian at Whitman Mission and now on a Texas assignment, performed the diorama research although the idea for it was the brain child of several Park Service officials.

Five figures are shown in the diorama: Dr. Marcus Whitman; the Indian Chief Tomahas who did the killing; another Indian Chief, Tiloukait, who attracted Dr. Whitman's attention while Tomahas slipped around behind to attack the missionary; John Sager, one of the foster children, who was killed while attempting to help Dr. Whitman; and Mary Ann Bridger, who had been doing the dishes and who ran out the door to spread the alarm. Mary Ann was a daughter of the famous mountain man, Jim Bridger.

M O R E

Causes of the violence, which resulted in the death of the Whitmans and 11 of their fellow men, can be traced to the differences in the habits and beliefs of the races contending for the land. The violence was precipitated by an epidemic of measles attributed to the immigration of 1847.

Furnishings of the room in which the massacre started and utensils shown there have been carefully made by hand. The kitchen cook stove is a copy of a model located in the Henry Ford Museum which was patented in 1844 and was of the type the Whitmans used. It even appears to have a fire in it. Chairs were designed from actual chairs which had been presented the Whitmans by Pierre Pambrun, factor at old Fort Walla Walla on the Columbia River. Cecil Pambrun of Athena, Oregon, a descendant of Pierre Pambrun, has presented several of the chairs from the old fort to Whitman Mission.

There is an audio station at the diorama with four hand speakers. The 2 1/2-minute narration tells about the massacre.

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Jackson 5-1249, Walla Walla, Wash.

Ten of Marcus Whitman's Firsts:

1. First man to bring a white woman across the North American continent.
2. Father of the first white child born in the Pacific Northwest.
3. First to bring a wheeled vehicle as far west as Fort Boise.
4. First American to settle in present eastern Washington.
5. Established first home for orphaned children in Inland Empire.
6. Guided first emigrant wagon train from Rockies to Blue Mountains.
7. First medical doctor in the Inland Empire to establish a practice.
8. First man to travel from west to east in middle of winter across continent.
9. Established first American way-station on the Oregon Train, west of the Rockies.
10. First medical missionary from U. S. in the Far West.

He was also among the first Americans to fully grasp the importance of the American government aiding the Western migration and urged the Secretary of War to establish posts along the Oregon Trail and to establish a pony express in order to get a mail service established.

Marcus Whitman is the only person representing the State of Washington in Statuary Hall, Washington, D.C.

Whitman Mission NHS marks the site of the mission founded in 1836 by Dr. Marcus Whitman among the Cayuse Indians. It was created by an Act of Congress in 1940 and today consists of 98 acres. Full development of the Whitman Mission was only recently completed under the National Park Service MISSION 66 program.