

truth
honesty
accuracy
fair play

Columbia Basin News



307 W. COLUMBIA ST.

PHONE 7576

BOX 528

PASCO, WASH.

PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING EXCEPT SUNDAY • MEMBER AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

Pasco, Wash.
Nov. 1, 1954

Dear Click:

You were asking in your last letter if I sent any copies of Man's Life to Wilson Charley or Alex Saluskin. I hadn't thought about that earlier, although I should have. I sent a brief write-up to the Toppenish paper before I got your letter. Assumed that the Indians would probably see the story, and get a copy if they wanted one. Don't know if the story was used or not.

Glad to hear you're making progress on the book. Let me know whenever you want to go ahead on the publicity, and I can drop up some weekend and get the material for the stories. We should be able to get good articles in at least a couple of the Sunday magazine sections.

I'm doing pretty well on my free lancing now. I've built up my files so that I now have enough good material to keep me busy in any spare time I want to spend on it. So far I've had no trouble selling the stuff, although I don't aim for markets that are beyond the material. I'm going to spend more time in the next few months on subjects that I think I can sell to the Seattle Times and Portland Oregonian, and also on several stories that I think have a pretty good chance in some of the men's and outdoor magazines.

We had a party for the news staff here the other night. Both Bonnie and Phil showed up along with the rest. Phil says he still likes ^{the job} well although he has occasional aches and pains. Phil says he's going to stay away from the desk work a little more and work on editorials and talking with people around the area. That leaves Jim Spoerhase, from Bozeman, Mont., doing a good share of the desk work that Phil was formerly doing. I also got sucked in on part of it--spend about three-fifths of the time on the desk and two-fifths reporting. Never did like being tied to the desk, but I guess it won't hurt for a while.

Don't know how soon I'll be in Yakima, but I'll give you a buzz when I do turn up.

Ted Van Arsdol

Ted V.A.

Serving Pasco, Kennewick, Richland and the Great Columbia Basin Empire

truth
honesty
accuracy
fair play

Columbia Basin News



307 W. COLUMBIA ST.

PHONE LI 7-7576

BOX 851

PASCO, WASH.

PUBLISHED EVERY MORNING EXCEPT SUNDAY • MEMBER AUDIT BUREAU OF CIRCULATIONS

Pasco, Wash.

4 Oct. 1956

Dear Click:

Enclosed are clip sheets of review from the News Shopper which is circulated in our area. The Shopper goes to all homes in this area which do not take the News, and appears to be well read. The total circulation of the Columbia Basin News and of the Shopper is about 32,000, according to our circulation manager. This gives the book review ~~about~~ 100 per cent coverage in this entire area.

Your friend from Shield's was in the Richland office the other day and I told her we'd give you some publicity when you came down. I think I covered most of the points on the book in the review. It was very interesting to me. You got a lot of feeling into it.

Sincerely

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads 'Ted'.

Ted V.A.

Ted Van Arsdol

810 Stanton
Richland, Washington

24 January 1960

Dear Click:

I'm planning to resume periodic research on the open -range live-stock industry of the Pacific Northwest, and I thought possibly you might know of some unusual source material along this line that has come to light in the past 10 years or so, including accounts of trail drives to and from the area. Since I'm not up to date on what you're doing, this might conflict with something in which you are interested at present. If it doesn't and if you can help me get one or two unusual items, I could probably get something for you from this area. For instance, I noticed in the Franklin county courthouse the other day a detailed report on the Palouse project which was to irrigate the country around Pasco, and the Franklin county agent's annual reports for the 1920s, giving a good picture of the tough dryland farming conditions in the area.

Next time I'm in Yakima I'll drop in and see you.

Sincerely

Ted

Ted V.A.

Ted Van Arsdol
810 Stanton
Richland, Washington

28 January 1960

Dear Click:

Thanks for the informative letter and the offer of help on the open-range research. I won't be able to do much along that line until about mid-summer, but would sure appreciate your aid. Meantime I've sent about 45 letters to libraries to find out what they have in the form of pictures, manuscripts and other source material on the open-range period in this area, and will have a better idea how to proceed when I hear from them. I'm not sure I'll tackle this but want to find out the status.

I'm mailing photos on the NP for your use. You probably have plenty of material that could be used with the pictures.

When you're ready to do something on Sarah Winnemucca, I can give you the information I have. Also, if I take a trip to eastern Oregon, southern Idaho and northern Nevada in the summer to do some research, including interviews with open-range cowboys, I'll see what I can find on Sarah. When I was at the University of Washington library about 1950 I saw a catalogue card on Old Chief Winnemucca. I didn't look at the item but it seemed to be a fairly lengthy newspaper article--an article from a contemporary newspaper.

You and your friend Vic Hurley might be able to give me a little information at the present about agents. I've been working for 11 months on a non-history book and I'm about ready to send off an outline and some material. The agents that I have in mind now are Paul Reynolds and Jacques Chambrun. The book has what I feel are good commercial possibilities and I'm going into the agent angle carefully. From what I can learn, the Reynolds firm has one of the top reputations among agents. Chambrun was recommended to me by another individual who met him at one time and who has somewhat of an interest in my book, which is a collaborative effort. Chambrun peddled "Peyton Place" and "Return to Peyton Place." ~~However~~ I notice that he is not a member of the Society of Authors' Representatives, and in a letter which he sent in reply to a short one from me he didn't commit himself on the percentage of the proceeds he would take. He did say that he would be glad to look over the preliminary material and report on its possibilities. I probably will try one of these two. If you or Vic Hurley know anything about either of these two agents, I would be interested in getting the information. I worked almost steady for 11 months on the book, and have had to return to newspaper work for a while to pay off my debts. Using weekends to work on the manuscript, I hope to finish up within five or six months.

RICHLAND - The Pacific Northwest's Atomic City

Ted Van Arsdol

810 Stanton

Richland, Washington

I'll drive up to Yakima and see you a little later in the year
when I get somewhat squared away on my MS.

Sincerely

Ted

RICHLAND - The Pacific Northwest's Atomic City

MAIN OFFICE
PASCO
307 W. COLUMBIA
P. O. BOX 851
PHONE 547-7576

Columbia Basin News

Ben-Franklin Publications, Inc.

Pasco - Kennewick - Richland, Washington

BRANCH OFFICE
RICHLAND
707 THE PARKWAY
P. O. BOX 506
PHONE 943-1126

Pasco, Wash.

July 7, 1963

Dear Click:

Sorry for the delay in turning out the book review. I have really been snowed since late last year. We just had a stripped-down newsroom setup here, mostly junior college kids, and nothing but problems.

In the last issue before the paper folded, I ran the enclosed review. We had more than 20,000 circulation at the time, free distribution. After the review had been printed, I noticed that I knocked 25¢ off the book price. Hope it doesn't make too much difference.

You're starting to pile up a good number of publications. I had your Yakima jubilee booklet bound, along with a number of other items, recently. I hope to have two or three of my smaller efforts finished by the end of the year; I may have them multilithed.

The people who are running the paper here are hoping to keep going with a weekly or twice-a-week publication, but there's nothing definite yet. I'm going to try to collect my back pay during the week, but don't know how that will go. The rest of the employees are in the same boat too.

Hope everything's going well with you. Will drop in some day and see you.

Ted
[Van Arsdol]

THE COLUMBIAN



WEST 8TH AT GRANT

Telephone OXford 4-3391

VANCOUVER, WASHINGTON



13 December 1965

Dear Click:

Thought you might be interested in seeking enclosed copy of letter in regard to Chief Moses. Dr. Ruby of Moses Lake had written to Joe Baily that a photo which appeared with my article on Union Gap in the Spokesman-Review was of a Moses of the Cayuse tribe rather than Chief Moses of Moses Lake fame.

Maybe you can provide the archivist with additional information on the subject. I used the picture previously in the Tri-Cities and didn't hear any comments at that time.

Hope everything is going fine up your way.

Not much new down here. We're getting rain and snow today.

I did 10 long articles recently for the Columbian on Vancouver Barracks and probably will publish them in expanded form before long. The Fort Vancouver Historic Site and the local museum want to handle copies of the publication, so I figure I could have a good outlet there.

Sincerely

Ted Van Arsdol
115 East Sixteenth St.
Vancouver, Wash.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20560

December 8, 1965

Mr. Ted Van Arsdol
115 East Sixteenth Street
Vancouver, Washington

Dear Mr. Van Arsdol:

Thank you for your letter of November 17 concerning a probable error in the identification of B.A.E. Neg. No. 2925-a.

As you say, "Chief Moses, Sahaptin" is written across the face of the negative. Apparently on this basis the photograph had been classified as Nez Perce.

A few years ago we received another photograph, clearly of the same man, from Mr. Click Relander, who published it as Plate 9 in his book, Drummers and Dreamers (Caldwell Idaho, 1956), with the caption, "Chief Moses of the Columbias, courtesy C. A. Bushnell." This photograph is marked on the face, "Suc-ah-tal-coss[?]-min or Chief Moses. Copyright by C. A. Bushnell." It is undated, but I have seen a similar print that was submitted to the Library of Congress for copyright which carries the date 1898. Since this photograph shows the same man as No. 2925-a, I concluded that the Sahaptin-Nez Perce identification on the face of No. 2925-a was erroneous, and that both photographs were Chief Moses of the Columbia or Sinkiuse tribe.

Some time later, we received two original glass negatives taken by C. M. Bell in Washington, D. C. One had a label glued to the plate which read, "Chief Moses, Half Moon." The plates were undated, but I found that the published Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1883 stated on p. lxx that Chief Moses and a delegation came to Washington and signed an agreement on July 7, 1883. I concluded that the photograph was probably taken at that time.

All of these pictures are of the same man, and such information as I have collected seems consistent in indicating that they are all Chief Moses of the Sinkiuse (Columbia). The original Sahaptin-Nez Perce inscription on No. 2925-a, is clearly an error but the man shown in 2925-a is the same one as in the other pictures. If Dr. Ruby's statement that No. 2925-a is Moses of the Cayuse is correct, then all of the pictures described above are Moses the Cayuse. I do not think, however, that that is so.

Mr. Ted Van Arsdol

December 8, 1965

-2-

We have one photograph of a different man identified only as "Cap. Moses," with no tribe given. This appears to be on the same style of mount as the 1898 photograph by Bushnell mentioned above, and may have been taken in 1898 also. The man it shows is younger than "Chief Moses." I wonder if this could be Moses The Cayuse? I would be glad to send a print of it to you or to Dr. Ruby if you think it could be identified. Do you have Dr. Ruby's address? I would appreciate any further information that either you or he might provide.

Sincerely yours,

Margaret C. Blaker

Margaret C. Blaker
Archivist
Office of Anthropology

[Enclosure. 1965, Dec. 13]

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
UNITED STATES NATIONAL MUSEUM
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20560

December 8, 1965

Mr. Ted Van Arsdol
115 East Sixteenth Street
Vancouver, Washington

Dear Mr. Van Arsdol:

Thank you for your letter of November 17 concerning a probable error in the identification of B.A.E. Neg. No. 2925-a.

As you say, "Chief Moses, Sahaptin" is written across the face of the negative. Apparently on this basis the photograph had been classified as Nez Perce.

A few years ago we received another photograph, clearly of the same man, from Mr. Click Relander, who published it as Plate 9 in his book, Drummers and Dreamers (Caldwell Idaho, 1956), with the caption, "Chief Moses of the Columbias, courtesy C. A. Bushnell." This photograph is marked on the face, "Suc-ah-tal-coss[?]-min or Chief Moses. Copyright by C. A. Bushnell." It is undated, but I have seen a similar print that was submitted to the Library of Congress for copyright which carries the date 1898. Since this photograph shows the same man as No. 2925-a, I concluded that the Sahaptin-Nez Perce identification on the face of No. 2925-a was erroneous, and that both photographs were Chief Moses of the Columbia or Sinkiuse tribe.

Some time later, we received two original glass negatives taken by C. M. Bell in Washington, D. C. One had a label glued to the plate which read, "Chief Moses, Half Moon." The plates were undated, but I found that the published Report of the Commissioner of Indian Affairs for 1883 stated on p. lxx that Chief Moses and a delegation came to Washington and signed an agreement on July 7, 1883. I concluded that the photograph was probably taken at that time.

All of these pictures are of the same man, and such information as I have collected seems consistent in indicating that they are all Chief Moses of the Sinkiuse (Columbia). The original Sahaptin-Nez Perce inscription on No. 2925-a, is clearly an error but the man shown in 2925-a is the same one as in the other pictures. If Dr. Ruby's statement that No. 2925-a is Moses of the Cayuse is correct, then all of the pictures described above are Moses the Cayuse. I do not think, however, that that is so.

Mr. Ted Van Arsdol

December 8, 1965

-2-

We have one photograph of a different man identified only as "Cap. Moses," with no tribe given. This appears to be on the same style of mount as the 1898 photograph by Dushnell mentioned above, and may have been taken in 1898 also. The man it shows is younger than "Chief Moses." I wonder if this could be Moses The Cayuse? I would be glad to send a print of it to you or to Dr. Ruby if you think it could be identified. Do you have Dr. Ruby's address? I would appreciate any further information that either you or he might provide.

Sincerely yours,

Margaret C. Blaker

Margaret C. Blaker
Archivist
Office of Anthropology

426 W. Northshore Drive
Moses Lake, Wash.
Dec. 23, 1965

Dear Mr. Van Arsdol:

Thank you for your letter of Dec. 13th. I'm glad you wrote about the Moses picture as I hope that the picture can positively be established. I'm of the firm opinion that the picture accompanying your article in the Spokesman-Review is not the Columbia Chief.

No place can I find any documentation that Moses of the Columbias ever cut his hair. All his descendants and relatives deny that he ever cut his hair.

I admit the Shahaptin Moses closely resembles the Columbia Chief. But in studying the picture you will have to admit that he does not appear to be as old as Moses does in many pictures. And I cant feature Moses would have cut his hair ~~xx~~ when in his middle years.

Also the Columbia Moses was not Shahaptin. He was Salish, as the Columbia tribe was, of course.

To answer your letter specifically I cant give you information on the Cayuse (or possibly ~~Nez Perce~~ Moses) but only on Columbia Moses.

One chief difference is the Shahaptin - Salish difference which you would understand.

What I shall do is write to Click Relander who knows that the Shahaptin Moses is not the Columbia Chief and I'll send you his reply or have him write to you directly. He may know the other character and he does know Columbia Chief well also.

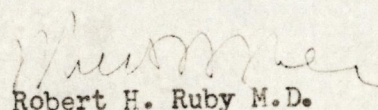
Please keep me informed of any new developments

I hope you enjoy our book on Moses. Shorey's wrote to me two days ago that they had "quantities" of orders for it. And of course, University of Oklahoma books need no recommendations, they are known for their fine publications.

I read with interest your articles/which appear from time to time in the Spokesman-R view. I enjoy them and look forward to reading them.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely yours,


Robert H. Ruby M.D.

Would you please send me a copy of the Smithsonian reply after you write to them again.

Vancouver, Wash.
9 January 1966

Dear Click:

Thanks for your letter of Jan. 3 and for the carbons of the letters to Dr. Ruby on the Moses picture.

I'm enclosing a copy of the article.

I assume that the picture mentioned in your letter is the same one in the article.

Dr. Ruby's book was in the mail when I got back from a short vacation Friday and I ~~have~~ read 40 or so pages up to the present. He and the other fellow certainly dredged up a lot of material on the old chief. I think I'll probably do a book review for the Columbian, tying in with the Fort Vancouver angles.

Sounds like quite a sculpture project for the Wanapum memorial. The suggestion to call Quigley on the painting seems to be a good idea.

Maybe this ~~story~~ ^{project} would be worth a story a little later?

I have resumed my free-lancing, to a limited extent, recently. Turned in seven articles to the Spokesman, and two have been used so far. I plan to write a few for the Seattle Times, too.

Have quite a few projects sitting around, but writing for the newspaper takes so much time that I don't work on them often. I still think the material on Fort Vancouver in the 1850s (this is the Army post) will be my first published effort. I'm off the job during the coming week and probably will do some research then.

We've been having some miserable weather down here, typical West side weather, with plenty of rain. Haven't been in Yakima for quite a while, but will give you a buzz when I stop by.

Thanks again for the help,

Ted V.A.

Vancouver, Wash.
25 January 1966

Dear Click:

Do you have an item, or several, in your collection in regard to the cattlemen Phelps and Wadleigh?

Bruce Wilson asked me to write an article or two for his quarterly, the Okanogan County Heritage. One would be a short story on Phelps and Wadleigh. I don't have much but probably can work up an article that would be of interest up that way, including some general background on the open-range livestock era.

I also thought you might be interested in seeing the story I wrote for the Columbian to help publicize Dr. Ruby's book. I offered to write several reviews for him. So far I have turned out one for the Ephrata Grant County Journal, ^{another for} the Omak Chronicle and one for the Othello Outlook. I'll probably write a review for the Wilbur paper too.

Dr. Ruby and Brown certainly dug up a lot of information about the old chief.

Sincerely

Ted

Ted Van Arsdol
1305 Washington
Vancouver, Wash.

Vancouver, Wash.
31 January 1966

Click Relander
3701 Commonwealth Rd.
Yakima, Washington

Dear Click:

Thanks for the prompt response in regard to Phelps and Wadleigh. After getting the material I sat down and knocked out a story of 11 1/2 pages (double spaced, including footnotes) for Wilson's Okanogan quarterly.

I had several items that you listed but others were new and were a real help. Thought I might as well finish up the story while it was still fresh in its mind. I had more material than I thought-- I had forgotten exactly how much. Called two of the three Harold Beans in the Seattle telephone directory but they were not related to Wadleigh-- will try the third one soon. He wasn't home on Saturday.

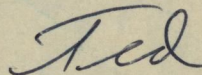
Bruce Wilson seems to be doing a good job with his publication. I got copies of the June and September issues of 1965.

I was interested in your comment about fact and fiction in regard to the Moses book. I would have liked to have seen a little more explanation about the Peone interviews, when these were made, and so on. But the book is going to be quite helpful for people who want to find out about Moses and that era.

Still plan to contact Quigley about his work and especially his mural ~~work~~ for the Wanapum. Think he would make a good article for the Spokesman, if he hasn't already appeared there. I knock out an occasional article for the Spokesman -- like to keep this outlet in the Inland Empire.

Thanks again for your help. I really appreciate it.

Sincerely



Ted Van Arsdol
1305 Washington
Vancouver, Wash.

[Quigley]

Vancouver, Wash.
3 February 1966

Click Relander
3701 Commonwealth
Yakima, Wash.

Dear Click:

Received your letter today re Quigley, etc.

Those are good angles on a possible story about the artist.
I will write to Joe Baily at the Spokesman in regard to doing
an article, and also will contact Quigley.

Will check the ad on the Wanapum dedication in the Spokesman's
Progress edition.

If you have an extra copy of that fact sheet on Quigley, I
would like to get it. That could be useful for the Spokesman
article or for an article in any other publication.

Will keep a lookout for a copy of "Drummers and Dreamers."
Saw the book listed in a Western Americana catalog sometime
recently. Don't recall which one. I may see ~~one~~ in a bookstore
or in a catalog.

Was interested in the information on Sam's book. I read part
of a review copy which Jack Campbell had, but I haven't gotten
my own copy yet. I was quite interested in the subject.
Notice that J.K. Gill has had quite a number of copies most
of the time since publication.

Would like to see your sculptures sometime. You must have put
considerable effort into them. Do you have any pictures of them?

I reached Wadleigh's nephew (72 years old) by telephone tonight.
He was the fourth Harold Bean I had contacted in the Puget
Sound area. This Bean (H.L.) lives at Rt. 1 Port Orchard. All
he had was in his head but he gave me several good items and
is going to look for a picture of his uncle. Think I may have
around 15 double-spaced pages, including footnotes, for my
summary of P&W. That's not too bad considering the bits and
pieces I had to work with. Bruce Wilson gave me the name of
a fellow at the old Guy Waring ranch at Loomis who has a P&W
branding iron and who might be able to add several more items.
The Okanogan Historical Society's summer meeting will be held
at the Waring ranch--Ross Woodard is the name of the fellow
operating the ranch.

Will see you one of these days,

Ted
Ted Van Arsdol
1305 Washington
Vancouver, Wash.

Vancouver, Wash.
7 March 1966

Dear Click:

Thanks for your latest letters. I've been a little slow. Was working on Phelps and Wadleigh and a few other things and finally got them done.

Will go through my Priest Rapids material for the early articles which you mentioned. I had a bunch of extra copies but threw them away when I moved in December. However, I can run off copies of the ones I have.

Sanford should be a good contact for you. Herb Jonas told me about him originally. I don't know if he has more pictures than he showed me. They sure would be worth taking a look at. In regard to prints, it might be easier for you to ~~make~~ make prints of some of the negatives I have. The photographer at the Columbia Basin News copied the pictures, or at least most of them. I think they are fairly good, as far as copies are concerned.

I had done a little more research on Priest Rapids but not much recently. Mrs. Avery at WSU Library told me a woman was writing the early history of that area. I haven't heard anything about her publishing the volume, although I first heard about the project approximately three years ago.

If you let me know when you can come down, I will be glad to meet you anyplace here. I will give Quigley a call Tuesday (tomorrow) or Wednesday. Would like to wind that up before too long.

Sincerely

Ted

Vancouver, Wash.
9 March 1966

Dear Click:

I dug up the earliest articles on Priest Rapids. I think this may take you up to the ones you already have, although there are no dates on mine. I had cut off the headlines and pasted everything together. Also had added footnotes, although several are missing. The missing footnotes are indicated by pen marks. They would be easy to fill in. As I mentioned earlier, I threw away a bunch of clippings of these articles in December.

Ted

①

The position of a particularly rugged stretch of rapids or other barrier was an important determining factor in much of the early history of the Columbia River system.

Celilo Falls, which has been drowned out by The Dalles Dam, was one of the most famous of these—a great rendezvous point and fishing ground for the Indians since time unknown, and a massive block to early-day boats. The historic city of The Dalles was established not far below the famed Falls.

Umatilla Rapids was another great navigation hinderance; at the foot of this rough water the city of Umatilla was established, and land travel was launched overland to the gold camps of eastern Oregon and southern Idaho in the 1860s. An earlier series in CBN related some of the history of the Snake River's Five-Mile Rapids, which figured prominently in pioneering irrigation work in the Tri-Cities area and early promotions leading eventually to Ice Harbor Dam.

* * *

ONE OF THE MOST NOTED and notorious rapids—perhaps second only to Celilo Falls in colorful history—was the Priest Rapids, site of the big hydroelectric project which will be dedicated on June 2. These rapids, situated in a big bend of the Columbia northwest of the Hanford Atomic Works, actually consisted of a series of rapids, stretching for more than 10 miles.

The annual report of the Chief of Army Engineers for 1886 stated that there were seven rapids in the series, extending for 10.22 miles, and that the total fall from highest to lowest falls was 63½ feet at extreme high water and 72 feet at extreme low water.

As these rapids were a major hinderance for swarms of salmon and steelhead ascending the Columbia, the shores nearby were inhabited at a very early date by natives who caught and dried the migratory fish.

The pattern of these people, as with other rival dwellers, was to camp at the fishing grounds during the seasons of peak fish runs, as well as often spending other parts of the year digging edible roots, hunting and in other pastimes.

At the time the first whites arrived, the Priest Rapids area was inhabited by the Wanapums, or River People. Captain William Clark of the Lewis and Clark expedition traveled upstream on the Columbia to near the point now designated by a marker at the west end of Columbia Park, and his information on the Priest Rapids area, as shown in maps he made, was based only on hearsay information.

* * *

FIRST RECORDED WHITE MAN to lead a party down the river to and past Priest Rapids was David Thompson of the British Northwest Company.

His party, traveling in one boat, camped on the evening of July 7, 1806, at the head of Priest Rapids near where the town of Beverly is situated today, at an Indian winter camp of long lodges.

The men, who were harassed in the night by high wind and mosquitoes, rigged up a mast and sail on the following morning. They headed downriver for seven miles, where they reached an Indian camp of 62 families. This first encounter with the Indians at Priest Rapids is described as

follows by Thompson in his journal entry of July 8:

"The rapid current drove us half a mile below the village before we could land. The chief, a middle-aged manly-looking man on horseback, now rode down to examine us. He appeared very much agitated; the foam coming out of his mouth, wheeling his horse backwards and forwards, and calling aloud, who are you, what are you.

"Our custom was to leave one,
(Continued on Page 7)

or two, men in the canoe to keep it afloat. The rest of us drew up near the shore, about three feet from each other, all well-armed, myself in the front apparently unarmed. [Enclosure. 1966, Mar. 9]

"THIS CHIEF sometimes appeared to make a dash at us, when we presented our guns and he wheeled his horse. In about a quarter of an hour he became composed. My native interpreter, who stood with us now, spoke to him in a manly manner, telling him who we were and what we came for, to which he listened with attention, then called out oy oy. He was now joined by a well-made short, stout old man, his hair quite white. He was on foot and came with a message.

"We invited him to come with his people and smoke, upon which he set off at a gallop, the old man on foot keep-

ing near him. Having repeated to the people what he had said and to come forward and smoke, he returned at the same pace, the old man keeping close to him.

"To our admiration, he was naked and barefooted, and we could not help saying to each other, which of us at his age will be equally active.

"The man came and smoking commenced. A present of four salmon, and two fish of a small species, with berries, were made. Of the latter we took only part.

BY THE interpreter I told them what I had to say. The chief repeated the words in a loud voice, which was repeated by a man in a louder voice. The women now came forwards, singing and dancing, which they continued all the time the men were smoking.

"The men were well formed, but not handsome. Though their features were regular, they were poorly clothed, and the women equally so. Two of them were naked, but not abashed. They all had shells in their nostrils. Some had fillets round the head and bracelets of shell round the wrists, or arms, but want of clothing made them appear to disadvantage.

"These people are altogether distinct from those we have seen, and are of the Shawpatin, or as it is sometimes pronounced, Sararpatin nation, of which there are several tribes, and speak a language peculiar to themselves. It appeared soft, with many vowels, and easy of pronunciation. It is the native tongue of the interpreter.

"These people, as well as those of the last village, are making use of the seine net,

which is well made from wild hemp, which grows on the rich low grounds. The net appeared about full six feet in breadth by about thirty fathoms in length.

"It was trimmed and worked in the manner we use it, which gave them a supply for the day, and a few to dry. But fish however plenty can never compensate the want of deer, sheep and goats for clothing, and frequently a change of food."

PRIEST RAPIDS soon became well known to the fur trading parties traveling up and down the Columbia; some of these left accounts of their experiences there, others have been lost to history.

One of these parties which included Ross Cox was stymied at the Rapids in late 1815 when the voyageurs "mutinied" after portaging around a number of the rapids, which were clogged at the time by ice floes. The river was choked, Ross recalled later in his book "The Columbia River," with lines of "high, sharp, and fantastically-shaped glaciers."

The voyageurs who did the physical work on the expeditions along the Columbia River were the huskiest type of men, but it was "quite apparent," Cox said, "that they could not much longer endure a continuance of such dreadful hardship."

The river above as far as could be seen was a solid body of ice, and packing the boats and full cargoes would have been the only way they could continue, in the wintry weather.

The party was forced to camp at the Rapids, where Cox "determined on the earliest opportunity to exchange dog for mutton, and horse for beef; icy winters and burning summers for our own more temperature climate; and copper beauties for fair ones." Some of the men trekked overland to Fort Oakinagan (sic), but the boating party had to wait until the middle of February 1816 when the sun finally began breaking up the ice rapidly.

Possibly more so than any other place in the inland Pacific Northwest, Priest Rapids is the symbol of Indian resistance to the penetration of the white man's culture.

The Wanapum Indians, who lived at the rapids and along adjoining sections of the Columbia River, have never signed any treaty with the U. S. government, they state, and the hard core of this band continued to live on the river shores, pursuing the old way of life as much as possible.

(However, the Wanapums were in land that was ceded to the U. S. and at the Treaty Council at Walla Walla in 1855, Territorial Gov. Isaac Stevens accepted the representation of the other Indians as "occupiers" of the ceded land area — the big area outside of the reservation that was granted to the treaty Indians. The Wanapums are entitled to reservation enrollment.)

At Priest Rapids was one of the most important centers of the Indian religion — the home of Smowhala the prophet of the Dreamer religion, who at one time had wide influence with Indians throughout the West.

The Wanapums have held ... feasts, including last year, in the reconstructed long house, and draw 400 or more relatives and other Indians from the various reservations, mostly Yakima. These feasts have a religious aspect.

The very name of the site connotes the religious angle. Priest Rapids was named by members of the Pacific Fur Company on their first trip up the Columbia in 1811. The place was named for the Indian who took the leading role in the usual ceremony of smoking the pipe of peace, and the ensuing night of dancing and singing. Alexander Ross, one of the members of the party, described him as "a tall, middle-aged Indian, who attached himself very closely to us from the first moment we saw him." The Indian "was called Haquilaugh, which signifies doctor, or rather priest."

THE PRIEST'S RAPID WAS THE name given by the fur-traders to some rough water more than a mile in length, but the name was eventually used for the entire series of rapids which were a memorable experience for the boatloads of Northwest and Hudson's Bay Company fur-traders which traveled up and down the river when the land was under the domination of the British.

The Wanapums, who were estimated to number about 2,500 at the time Lewis and Clark's expedition passed down past the Tri-Cities, dwindled considerably in later years. This band was summarized as follows by author James Mooney in the 1892-93 Bureau of Ethnology report on the Ghost Dance Religion and the Sioux Outbreak of 1890:

"They are a small band numbering probably less than 200 souls, and closely connected linguistically and politically with the Yakima, Palus (Palouse) and Nez Perce.

"Wanapum is the name by which they are known to these cognate tribes and signifies river people from Wana or Wala, 'river' particularly Columbia river, and pum or pam, 'People or tribal country'. Together with other non-treaty tribes of this region they are known to the whites under the indefinite name of 'Columbia River Indians'.

"They are identical with the Sokulk met by Lewis and Clark at the mouth of the Snake River and described as living further up the Columbia. The name Sokulk seems to be entirely unknown among the Yakima and Palus of today. The Wanapum range along both banks of the Columbia in Washington from above Crab Creek down to the mouth of the Snake River.

"Their village, where Smohalla resides, is on the west bank of the Columbia at the foot of Priest Rapids, in the Yakima country. It is called P'na, signifying a 'fish weir' (this is a long cigar shaped contraption made of willows) and is a great rendezvous for the neighboring tribes during the salmon fishing season."



CHIEF MOSES

Sculpture by Click Relander of Yakima Daily Republic

MOST FAMOUS OF THE INDIANS WHO lived at Priest Rapids in the white man's time was Smowhala. One indication of his influence is the following newspaper story of 1873:

"There appears to be something brewing between the Indians. In a conversation a few days ago with Capt. John Smith, agent of the Warm Springs, we learned that Smokehollow, a dreamer and a man of much influence with all the tribes between the Cascades and Rocky Mountains, has been preaching for some time to them that in the course of time the spirits of all dead Indians will arise from their graves and assist in exterminating the 'ruthless invaders' from their country and that they will once more become the masters of the land.

"It is reported that there are over 2,000 Indians congregated at Priest Rapids on the Upper Columbia River, followers of this deamer, Smokehollow.

"We are told that Indians belonging to the Simcoe Reservation have left the agency and many of them say they will not return.

We don't wish to act the part of an alarmist but . . . should the Modocs succeed in maintaining their position in the lava bed for any length of time, there is some considerable danger of a general outbreak." *The Dalles Mountaineer, Apr 19, 1873*

Smowhala, whose name is also spelled Smohalla, was an antagonist of Chief Moses, a noted Indian of the time who signed agreements with the U. S. government and moved his Sinkiuse tribe from what is now the Columbia Basin Project area to a reservation in the Okanogan Country. Smowhala said of the Sinkiuse chief:

"Moses was bad. God did not love him. He sold his people's houses and the graves of their dead. It is a bad word that comes from Washington."

The Wanapums refused to sell their people's "houses and graves," and continued to live at Priest Rapids, worshipping as in the old days.

A detailed account of the Wanapums has been written by Click Relander of Yakima in the book "Drummers and Dreamers," published by Caxton Printers of Caldwell, Idaho. Relander also was active in negotiations between the last Wanapums and the PUD officials in arriving at a settlement for the Indians' losses.

The four "surviving" Wanapums of the famed Priest Rapids site will be spectators on the speaker's platform at the June 2 dedication of the giant Priest Rapids Dam which has flooded out many of the familiar landmarks in the Wanapum country.

Rex Buck and Frank Buck are sons of Puck Hyah Toot (known more commonly to the whites as Johnny Buck), who died a few weeks before the book "Drummers and Dreamers," which told his story, was published in 1956. The other two who'll be seated on the dedication platform will be Bobby Tomalawash, a veteran of the Korean War, and Harry Weyena or Wynn.

THESE FOUR MEN LIVE in the old Pacific Power and Light Co. houses at the dam site, repaired after the Grant County PUD took them over, and all are employed by the PUD. Under the Federal Power Commission regulations for the dams, the PUD has to employ only one Indian, to watch for graveyard excavations and direct removal of the cemetery on the hill, about three miles upstream on the west side of the Columbia. But the PUD employed all of the Wanapums, in addition to repairing and removing the longhouse to the Priest Rapids site and set up a 10-acre "Wanapum Park" for the Indians, not giving the land but going along with the idea that historical preservation is important there.

In explaining the PUD's views on the Wanapums, Herb Jenkins of that organization said:

"The PUD, which built the Priest Rapids Dam and is building the Wanapum Dam, recognized the Wanapum's deep-seated attachment for their river home and assisted them in making a transition from the old to a new era along the river. In addition to furnishing homes and employment for several of the Indians, the District fenced the burial grounds of the Wanapums and set aside another location for their Long House which is used for religious ceremonials.

"Just upstream from the Priest Rapids Dam is Whale Island, which is covered by the waters of the reservoir. On this island are more than 125 rock carvings and paintings, depicting hunters, bear paws, deer, sunbursts, circles and many other conventionalized designs.

"The District employed the Wanapums to locate these pictues which were interspersed among the thousands of boulders on the island. The pictues were marked on a map, numbered, and photographed so that a record of the past could be preserved. Also, the Wanapums were employed to select and move a representative number of the rock carvings off the island. In conformance with the wishes of the Wanapums' leader, the late Puck Hyah Toot, some of the rocks were taken to the burial ground and set in concrete to protect them from vandalism. Others are now in storage and probably will be exhibited in a permanent museum at a later date so that they can become a permanent part of the history of the river.

"Archeologists also have been employed by the District to explore the ancient campsites in the reservoir area. Their findings will help to show as much as possible, at this late date, how and where early man lived along the river."

ONE OF THE WHALE ISLAND rocks, picked out by Puck Hyah Toot before he died, was moved to his grave on the hill and set up as a marker there.

Some of the burying places at Priest Rapids, now under the waters of the reservoir, were quite ancient. The Wanapums were satisfied that rip rap material by used there and that the people "stay buried." These graves were so old that the Wanapums knew only that these were "their people."

Regular cemeteries weren't established until the white man's time and then for protection of graves, according to Click Relander, a friend of the Wanapum's. Until then bodies were buried indiscriminately along the river, any place where the ground was soft enough to dig with what implements might be available.

As mentioned earlier, the Wanapums have a number of relatives elsewhere although only four of the men live at Priest Rapids.

HENRY WHITE, who lives on the Umatilla Reservation, is a Wanapum. He is one of a small group that went there to live before the death of the noted Smowhala. This is one of the rare instances of "transplanted" small groups, surrounded by other Indians, according to Relander.

Most of the Indians turning out for annual feasts at Priest Rapids are from the Yakima Reservation.

Long before the irrigators tried their talents and luck in the sagebrush lands below Priest Rapids, river hamlets had sprung up in that area as supply points and stopovers on the roads to the gold camps.

Steamboats landed cargo and miners at the Columbia River towns, while mule trains piled with supplies and bearded miners on horseback trekked through and deeper into the sagebrush plains on the way to what many hoped would be the finding of fortunes.

The fact that the sternwheelers couldn't push above Priest Rapids — or at least, not without great difficulties — resulted in the mushrooming of several towns. The townsite of Priest Rapids was laid out in 1863, and the river burghs of White Bluffs and Ringgold City were somewhat active in the late 1860s as take-off points for the Bannock mines of Montana and other diggings in Montana and northern Washington.

BUT MINERS had been traveling over the sagebrush plains in the Priest Rapids area, including what is now the Hanford Atomic Reservation, for some years before any of the embryonic towns appeared. Hundreds of miners had swarmed out on rushes to Colville shortly before the Indian wars of 1855-58, and in 1858 the biggest excitement so far was touched off by gold finds on the Fraser River of Canada.

Big and small mounted parties of whiskered miners, headed for the north, stirred the dust of the vast plains along the Columbia River. Numbers crossed the Columbia below Priest Rapids; many followed up the east bank by the way of old Fort Nez Percés (Wallula) and the Pasco vicinity.

In 1860 gold was discovered in the mountains of what is now Central Idaho, and in late 1861 the wildest rush of all was whipped to fever peak by fabulous discoveries in the rich but limited placer camp of Florence in the Salmon River mountains. In the following year thousands of miners scouted and dug the terrain throughout the inland Northwest, including the bars of the Columbia River.

Portland
Oreg-
onian
July 10,
1863
(check
date)

The laying out of Priest Rapids townsite in 1863 seems to have coincided with a rush into that area. Mining there was reported as follows in a news item at The Dalles the same year:

"From Judge Thorp of the Yakima Valley we learn that good diggings have been struck on the Columbia River about six miles below Priest Rapids. The men making the discovery, some six in number, are anxious to keep it concealed, and lay by in day time, working principally at night. They are said to be making \$200 a day to the hand. Judge T. brought a considerable quantity of the dust which we examined at the store of Bloch, Miller & Co."

IN JUNE of that year—1863—the steamer Cascadella traveled up to Priest Rapids with a cargo for the Columbia River mines, and in August it was announced that steamers of the Oregon Steam Navigation Co.'s line would in the future make regular trips from Wallula to Priest Rapids, stopping on the way at the White Bluffs gold mines.

That same month, some gold from Ringgold diggings on the Columbia was landed from the steamer Sierra Nevada at San Francisco. Miners during the summer of 1863 were reported to be working all along the river from the Priest Rapids area to the mouth of the Pend Oreille a distance said to be around 200 miles, and many of the bars were paying from \$4 to \$12 "to the hand."

WHITE BLUFFS, on the north side of the Columbia, was prominent in the news around 1866. A visitor there in the spring reported to the Walla Walla Statesman that the steamer Owyhee and Nez Perce Chief had stopped with freight and passengers for Big Bend and Blackfoot mining regions, and that the steamer Yakima had unloaded material for a Oregon Steam Navigation Co. warehouse.

A Captain Quinn was planning to start two schooners from Celilo with material for buildings to be constructed at White Bluffs, and a Mr. Atwood of Lewiston was to raft lumber down Snake River to be towed up to White Bluffs by Columbia River steamers. The town had been surveyed by L. Scholl of Dalles City.

19, 1863;
Daily Mount-
ain
May 10

States-
man
June 6,
1863

States-
man
Aug. 8,
1863

Daily
Alta
California
Aug 28
1863

Portland
Oregonian
June 19
in SF.
Evening
Bulletin
June 29, 1863

Oregonian
in WW
Statesman
May 4, 1866

In June 1866, two buildings and several tents were reported Ringgold City, 16 lots had been taken, the Mt. Hood schooner was bringing up lumber for more construction, and a ferry had been established on the Columbia at that point.

But the business of the early towns couldn't hold up much longer than the travel to and from the gold mines, and as the camps faded out in the late '60s the river hamlets had to be abandoned by their original occupants. In the late mid-1870s Hollis Conover, a cowboy of the open range, found cattlemen of the area living in the deserted buildings at White Bluffs.

YAKIMA VALLEY cattlemen ran considerable herds on the unfenced ranges between the Yakima and Columbia rivers in the 1870s, and until the rugged winter of 1880-81. The Dalles Mountaineer, commenting on the cattle business of the interior, pointed out in 1876:

"Stocks are to the country what the mines used to be, and more. Everybody talks of stock and nearly everybody owns stock. This is and will be for a long time the principal source of wealth. Bunch grass is the mine that can be worked with the least labor and expense and with greatest profit."

In the mid-1870s cattlemen from the Midwest began traveling to the Northwest to buy herds to trail across the Rockies to fill vast sections of formerly Indian country that had been opened to market, or to take on to market after one winter on the road.

Large herds were taken out of the White Bluffs and Priest Rapids country by some of these buyers for the great drives to the Rocky Mountain area and Midwest.

The severe winter of 1880-81, which destroyed the largest share of the cattle in the inland Northwest, was a turning point in the open-range livestock business. Many cattlemen left the business completely, or switched to horse-raising.

Umailla June 28, 1866 to Oreg-
onian; in Bancroft Scrap-
book on
Oregon, 10:1

March
25, 1876

5

THE NEXT era of note in central Washington was the time of the Iron Horse, and the Priest Rapids-White Bluffs country had to take a back seat in this development as compared with the Yakima Valley and Tri-Cities area. The Northern Pacific built northeast from Ainsworth starting in 1879, and began laying track westward through the Yakima Valley in late 1884.

Meantime, there was some speculation about reviving trade above the Tri-Cities on the Columbia River. Homesteaders were continuing to settle throughout the inland area, including some influx into the northern part of Washington, and many persons were interested in seeing steamboats pass above Priest Rapids to help open the upper country.

On an October day of 1881, a big batteau was tumbled and rolled through the seventh and lowest rapid of the Priest Rapids and then glided into smooth water, where the occupants let out a shout of joy. "We all knew now that our dangers are passed, and thank God for allowing us to safely come through all the rapids," wrote Army Lt. Thomas W. Symons.

The party which landed that day on the south bank of the Columbia River below the rapids also included "Old Pierre Agare," a 70-year-old Iroquois steersman who had piloted boats up and down the river in the old days for Hudson's Bay Co., Indians Pen-waw, Big Pierre, Little Pierre and Joseph, and "Mr. Downing," the lieutenant's topographical assistant.

Lt. Symons was chief engineer of the Department of the Columbia for the U.S. Army Engineers, making a study of the upper Columbia River to find out what could be done for steamboat navigation there. Priest Rapids, a major obstacle to river transportation, was one of the main objectives of the study, and the men learned first hand about the 10 or 11 miles of rugged water there by traveling through all the rapids, which the lieutenant said totaled seven.

The entire trip from the Grand Rapids of the Columbia to Ainsworth, at the mouth of the Snake, starting Sept. 29, covered a distance estimated by Lt. Symons and Downing at 350 to 363 miles.

Lt. Symons noted that about five or six miles of the river above Priest Rapids were sluggish, wide and deep, seemingly more like a lake than a river—this was apparently caused by the damming up by the obstructions at Priest Rapids. The Army man has left a detailed account of the various rapids; in some places were "bed rock points and islands" which rose up "in ugly" black, jagged masses, threatening destruction to anything that touches them" and there were also places where the water was "very turbulent, boiling and roaring a great deal." In one place, the batteau shot through a canal-like channel between two long rock islands "with the speed of a race horse," while the Indians yelled in the Columbia's raging torrent.

LT. SYMONS commented on the Priest Rapids location:

"At this point on the Columbia, at the lower end of Priest Rapids, must surely be located a town of considerable importance, as it will for a long time be the head of navigation on the river. It is the most convenient place from which to reach the Yakima and Kittitas valleys, which now communicate with the lower country by a wagon road over the Simcoe Mountains to The Dalles. The rapids will furnish a splendid water-power, and in all probability here will be located flour and saw mills, as well as warehouses and stores. Logs can be brought down the Columbia to be here sawed into lumber and distributed to the surrounding agricultural regions. The rapids are centrally located for many fine valleys and much promising country, and are easily reached by wagon-roads from many directions."

In his report, which was published by the government in 1882, Lt. Symons said that the proper plan for improving Priest Rapids "must be determined by further surveys and observations extending over a greater length of time than I could devote to them." One suggestion he offered was that a railway be constructed

to transport boats from the foot of the rapids to the head. This would be much cheaper, he said, than digging a canal around the obstructions. (Report of an examination of the upper Columbia River (etc.) by Lt. Thomas W. Symons, Wash. G. P. O., 1882)

One factor increasing the potential for steamboat navigation in the early 1880s was that population was increasing in the Kittitas Valley, and there was no rail outlet. Freight had to be hauled by wagons from The Dalles over the Simcoe Mountains to Yakima City (present-day Union Gap), and then further north to the Kittitas.

In the early 1880s there was some steamer traffic to Priest Rapids, opening an alternate route for the Kittitas people.

E. A. Willis, in a visit to The Dalles in June, 1882, reported that a town named Grainville had been laid out near Priest Rapids, and a large warehouse and store were built there. He said prospects were "very flattering, as this new point furnishes an outlet only 30 miles distant from Yakima and considerably less from the Kittitas. There are good grain producing sections, and with a market would be remunerative."

ishes an outlet only 30 miles distant from Yakima and considerably less from the Kittitas. There are good grain producing sections, and with a market would be remunerative."

THE OREGON Railway and Navigation Co. had promised a boat a month, and would increase the trips as the rate of traffic picked up. (Weekly Times, The Dalles, June 21, 1882)

However, this steamboat trade below the rapids was relatively short-lived. The Northern Pacific pushed its line westward in the Yakima Valley in late 1884 and extended the tracks on into the Kittitas in early 1885, providing a much faster method of transportation in and out of that once-isolated land of stockmen and homesteaders.

* * *

The first steamer to navigate the rapids, according to Lewis & Dryden's "Marine History of the Pacific Northwest" was the John Gates, which was built at Celilo and added to the Oregon Steam Navigation Company's upper river fleet in 1878. The steamer was captained at first by W. P. Gray, later a prominent resident of Pasco. When the boat was taken over Priest Rapids, Rock Island and Cabinet Rapids, in 1884, to determine if the river in that area was navigable, the

captain was Troup, one of several Troups who were in the steamboating business in the early days on the Columbia River system.

IN 1888 a rush was touched off at mines in northern Washington, and the need for steamer navigation on the mid-Columbia increased. The boat which rose to the challenge was the Pasco-built City of Ellensburg (early-day spelling of Ellensburg), owned by Thomas H. Nixon of Tacoma, commanded by Capt. A. W. Gray, and piloted by W. P. Gray, who was later mayor of Pasco. The 120-foot long boat carried 45 tons of freight and several passengers on its memorable July 1888 trip through the Rapids.

"At Priest Rapids," W. P. Gray later recalled, "we attempted to lay a line along the shore and fasten it above the lower riffle and attach it to the boat below. I found we couldn't carry the line clear of submerged reefs. The only thing I could do was to sink a dead man to fasten to, so as to pull the steamer over the lower riffle. To do this, it was necessary to lay the line down through a rough channel between the reefs. It was a dangerous proposition, and if the small boat was encumbered with the extra line the probability was that the men who were not experienced would be drowned. I decided to make a test trip. I put men enough in the boat to weigh about the same as a line. I had the mate put out extra boats to pick us up below the rapids if we capsized.

"NATURALLY, I didn't tell the crew of the boat I expected to capsize. After completing the placing of the dead man I ordered the crew I had selected into the small boat, telling them I wished to make a trip across the channel to see if there wasn't a better place to ascend on that side. After ordering the men to take their places, I took the bow of the skiff, shoved it into the current, stood on the shore myself, and held to the stern until it swung across the current, and then jumped in and caught up the steering oar. I ordered the men to row hard, and I headed her for the rapids.

"A Dane named C. E. Hanson, who was one of my deckhands . . . gave me a steady and resolute look, braced himself and began to pull at his oar. I had picked out a Frenchman who was used to rafting driftwood, and who I thought had unlimited nerve. He drop-

ped his oar and began praying and crying: 'Frenchy will surely die. He is going over Priest Rapids.'

"It seems that his custom had been to let the raft go through by itself and take his skiff around by portage. I was steering. Frenchy had the midship oars, Big John Hanson had the

after oars, the other two men, who were deckhands, were in the bow of the boat. Hanson pulled out into the current, giving Frenchy, who was kneeling in the bottom of the boat praying, a contemptuous look. We passed over the break and I swung the skiff quartering into the swell. In a moment we were in the midst of the turmoil of waters. Big John kept at the oars, and I watched like a hawk with my steering oar. For a moment the waves were higher than the boat but we went through safely.

"MY EXPERIMENT proved the boat would carry a line through so we came down with the line and negotiated the Priest Rapids successfully. As we lined the steamer into the rapids the water poured over the buffalo chocks. Next day we arrived at Rock Island Rapids."

Gray stated later that the City of Ellensburg was taken six miles up Okanogan River, and made two trips over Priest Rapids and five trips up and down through Rock Island Rapids with freight and passengers for the Okanogan mines. Wenatchee, he noted, "was a one-room shack when I was there and we had to cut fuel from driftwood along the bank."

(Pasco Herald Oct 28, 1920)

Historical Society
Quarterly

Dec. 1914

Fred Lockley:

Reminiscences of
Captain William P. Gray

Waterwheels, then

Gasoline engines and water wheels were in use at an early date among settlers in the Priest Rapids Valley in efforts to bring water from the Columbia to the desert lands for irrigation and some more ambitious plans for future projects were in the talking stages in the 1890s. As early as 1895, a Priest

7
Rapids Co. had been capitalized in North Yakima (present day Yakima) at \$300,000, with the objective of diverting water at Priest Rapids and using it for irrigation. The firm's headquarters was North Yakima.

Among the promoters interested in the Priest Rapids potentials in the 1890s was E. H. Libby, one-time editor of the Yakima Weekly Republic. Libby, described by oldtimers as a little man with a great abundance of energy, was active in completing financial arrangements for the pioneer irrigation project of the Lewiston - Clarkston valley - Vineland (later called Clarkston). In a collection of letters formerly in the possession of this reporter's grandfather, C. C. Van

Arnsdøl, who was the engineer of the Vineland project, one from attorney George Clarendon Hodges of Boston to Libby dated 1895 states in part:

"In my judgment the Priest Rapids scheme can be happily started upon the reasonably successful issue of your work at Lewiston, and I think that General Wheeler would not be unwilling to take a hand in it, though I have not consulted him, preferring to deal with Mr. Adams alone so long as there was every prospect of accomplishing your purpose in that direction . . ."

Adams was Charles Francis Adams, former president of the Union Pacific Railway, and Wheeler was a key figure in the Wheeler - Barker Syndicate. The Adams forces soon were deeply committed at Lewiston - Clarkston, along with Libby. That area failed to develop spectacularly in later years as anticipated because the expected transcontinental railroads through Lolo Pass and down Hell's Canyon failed to materialize, and Libby, as far as this writer knows, had to drop his Priest Rapids plans.

THE SITUATION below Priest Rapids in 1897 was described as follows in a newspaper article:

"Just below Priest Rapids and near White Bluffs is a magnificent valley, in what is known as the White Bluffs country. This valley in size averages eight miles wide by 30 miles long. Like all other valleys in eastern Washington the soil is composed of the same material, principally volcanic ash, the same deep, rich soil as spoken of last week about Kennewick Valley.

"The climate there is the same warm, balmy climate as we have in Pasco. This valley is just opposite the White Bluffs in Franklin County and is separated only by the Columbia River, the dividing line between Franklin

and Yakima counties (Benton County was part of Yakima County at that time), but as Pasco is the most available trading post, it is a natural consequence that the settling up of this valley will be a benefit to this place (Pasco).

"In an interview with W. J. Pitt who has just returned from his ranch at that place, we learn that the people there intend, as soon as money matters ease up a little, to put in an extensive electric irrigation plant that will water the whole tract of land. The plant will be put in at Priest Rapids as the water power at that place is almost equal to the Niagara Falls. They think the electric scheme will be the most advantageous, as the only expense will be the dynamo and copper wire, as the people will do excavating and other necessary work themselves. After it is completed, a wire will be attached to each farm and so arranged that by touching the button the headgate will be raised and water flow through the lateral ditches and thus irrigate their gardens, vineyards and orchards.

"In connection with this will be another button which upon receiving the magic touch will furnish every one light that has an interest in the plant. This sounds almost fabulous, but as millions of horsepower can be developed at the rapids with a very small amount of excavation, the proposition will be a cheaper way to obtain water than any other.

"At present, after a few years of experimenting, the farmers are using what is called the 'dip wheel' and in this way have plenty of water. These individual water systems are all right for a small tract of land and as they are inexpensive to construct, the farmers say they are well satisfied with them until they can get their electrical plant, as they have no bonds to pay off and no assessments or rental fees to contend with.

"Mr. Pitt says that the farmers will have plenty of water this season and are making considerable preparation for larger acreage of crops.

"They have just completed a new school house 24 by 24 feet. The walls are built of square timber 12 by 12 and plastered inside. The lime was burnt at White Bluffs, brick for flues and etc. at that place.

"The lime and brick are of the best quality. These and numerous other resources of that part of the country will be spoken of in the future.

"Mr. Pitt says while there, he made a trip to North Yakima and that the climate was like going from the tropics and landing in Alaska. Of course the change, says he, is not as great but the difference was remarkable."

ANOTHER ACCOUNT of life in the Priest Rapids Valley in the 1890s is contained in Vol. 3, "Told by the Pioneers," published as a WPA Project in 1938, and indicates that some makeshift arrangements were in vogue at that time, while the settlers waited for bigger developments. A pioneer identified as "Mr. Craig," who had moved to Klickitat County was quoted:

"When we came into the Priest Rapids Valley, in 1895, our nearest neighbor was at Juniper Springs, 18 miles distant. Once in three months we made the trip to Yakima where we received our mail and made necessary purchases. If we ran out of supplies we made the best of it. Barley was ground and used as a substitute for coffee. 'Sweetening' was made from the centers of watermelons, crushed and strained and added to the juice from boiled corn cobs. Pumpkins were sliced in rings and dried.

"Our first shelter was a little cabin made of stove wood, laid in ricks with layers of alkali clay between the layers of wood. The roof was made of shakes. As soon as possible we built a one-room cabin of logs. Later another room was added and a fireplace was built. For a roof, poles were laid close together and covered with weeds, then alkali clay was plastered over the weeds to make a roof resembling tile when it had hardened.

"Plaster was made from pieces of the White Bluffs across the river. The material was broken off and rolled down the bluff, ferried across the river, and the rock was then placed in a kiln on the river bank for burning.

The front of the kiln and the arch were made of brick we had found at an abandoned steam plant where an enterprising settler had undertaken an irrigation system. In this kiln sand melted and left the lime, which was used for plaster.

"Clam shells were raked up from along the river and burned in a kiln and made into lime, also. Old rope, picked to pieces and chopped into short lengths, was used in the preparation of the plaster to form a binder. Crayon was made from pieces of stone broken from the bluffs."

On a 1905 Rand, McNally & Co. map, the Columbia River country between the Tri-Cities' area and the Great Northern line in the Trinidad - Quincy area appears an untrammelled wilderness, devoid of populated settlements, with a good share of the streams in the desert hinterland meandering out of no place to dead ends in the sagebrush.

The labels "Sand Hills" and "Sage Brush Plain" were used to describe the terrain that is now the north end of the Hanford Atomic Works, between Priest Rapids and White Bluffs.

The nearest river towns of any importance to the south were Pasco and Kennewick (populations 254 and 183 respectively in the 1900 official figures listed with the map, although the towns were being favored with little booms by 1905).

Despite the empty appearance on the map, however, plans had been shaping up for some years to develop the potentials of the Priest Rapids area, and that section was on the verge of an important rendezvous with des

EARLY as 1895, a Priest

The Franklin Recorder (Pasco) March 12, 1897

Vancouver, Wash.

4 April 1966

Dear Click:

Here are a couple of items for Tom Heuterman if he's still around and doing research on Legh Freeman. I ran across them recently.

Incidentally, does the Herald still have a book review column? I got a book on grizzly bears--a review copy--and probably should find some paper that would be interested in a story on the volume.

Sincerely

Ted

Dear Click

Enclosed is article for the Spokesman. If you could shoot it back as soon as you ^{check} ~~read~~ it over, I'll send it on immediately to Joe Baily with the pictures.

Your book came today. Looks darn good. Voorhees has it in his office at the present time looking it over. I plan to read it in the next 2 or 3 days, so we should be carrying a review sometime in the middle of the week.

Ted V.A.

I will send you Oregon Journal article this week, and later one aimed at Fortnight or another magazine.