

STATE OF WASHINGTON
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE

May 22, 1953

The Honorable William A. Purtell
United States Senator
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Purtell:

It is with both joy and humility that I, the Governor of the State of Washington, on this day present to the Government of the United States of America in behalf of the people of the State of Washington a statue of the beloved patriot of the Pacific Northwest --- Dr. Marcus Whitman.

One-hundred and ten years ago this stalwart pioneer medical missionary heard his calling in the rugged reaches of the northwest, saw there a great new frontier and advanced westward to fulfill his mission. He and his wife, Narcissa Whitman, led a wagon train of more than 1,000 emigrants across the plains, the first to break a wagon trail over the imposing Rockies. Dr. Whitman encouraged them on, through the wilderness, insisting they continue when some would have turned back, a decision which was the turning point in the history of western migration.

Finally they reached their destination, beyond the Blue Mountains of Washington. He sustained the spirit of his following and gave them courage to stay together, to build homes, a church, a school and a center of industry. It was in this adventure, devoted to God and given to his fellowmen, that Dr. Whitman died a martyr --- a story which has emblazoned the pages of history with its tragedy, its sacrifice and its courage.

America honors herself by honoring him. It is a privilege, therefore, for the citizens of Washington during this Territorial Centennial to offer to the people of the United States this visible monument to one who lived humbly and died nobly in the pursuit of happiness and freedom for his fellowmen.

Sincerely,

ARTHUR B. LANGLIE
G o v e r n o r