

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

CHIEF LESCHI

Chief Leschi represents perhaps the most controversial of all Indian figures in Washington history. The battle of opinion still wages as to whether he actually committed many of the acts for which he was condemned.

Leschi was a Nisqually Chief, prominent in the war which involved all the tribes from Washington and adjacent regions in 1855-58. While Kamiakin headed the Yakima and their confederates east of the mountains, Leschi took command west of the Cascades. His most notable exploit was an attack on the new town of Seattle, January 29, 1856, at the head of about 1,000 warriors of several tribes. The assailants were driven off by the naval warship Decatur.

On the collapse of this outbreak Leschi fled to the Yakimas, who refused to shelter him. A reward was then offered for his capture. He was betrayed by a nephew for a price of thirty blankets, somewhat reminiscent of the biblical story of Judas and the thirty pieces of silver. In any event he was captured in November of 1856 and delivered for trial.

Leschi's trial is an exciting story in itself. He pleaded his innocence, offering to cut off his right hand as proof and insurance that he would never raise it against the white man again. The first trial ended in a deadlock.

However, in the second trial he was sentenced to hang. From Ralph Chaplin's Only the Drums Remembered comes this poetic verse; "Two things leave lethal silence in their wake, A tightening noose, a quieting earthquake... The clouds close in, the throbbing wardrums cease.. Leschi has died to bring his people peace..Died with such dignity, the sentries said...That when they left him hanging stark and dead...Even the hired hangman bowed his head."

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

CHIEF JOSEPH

Chief Joseph was one of the more prominent and exciting leaders of the Nez Perce Indians. During the war of the 1850's he continually exerted his influence in keeping the Nez Perce off the Warpath.

Nevertheless, in the 1870's Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce, backed against the wall, showed their claws. In 1863 a treaty was presented that was to take away the home of the Nez Perce. Joseph didn't sign. Others did, however, and it was decided that the majority ruled. Chief Joseph and his followers were told to go to the Lapwai Reservation. Although Joseph did not want this for his people he also didn't want war.

The younger Nez Perce were resenting more and more the encroachment of the white man upon their land and finally decided for war. Chief Joseph, being outnumbered and recognizing the inevitable, joined forces with his people against the whites.

It has been said he proved to be the greatest of war chiefs. Some historians even consider him one of the most capable of North American commanders; leading his people in a classic retreat and falling only some fifty miles short of his destination, the Canadian Border. At this point surrounded by American troops he was forced to surrender, and it is at this time also that Joseph made his famous speech: "I am tired of fighting...The Old men are dead...He who led the young men is dead...It is cold and the little children are freezing to death...My people have no food, no blankets... I want time to look for my children...My heart is sick and sad...From where the sun now stands I will fight no more forever."

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Chief Spokan Garry was born in 1811 about nine miles northwest from the present city of Spokane, Washington. His father was the head chief of the middle Spokanes and was named Chief Illim-Spokanee, (Child of the Sun and Moon). The first explorers and furtraders in this area named the tribe, the river and the surrounding country after Chief Illim-Spokanee.

Garry as a young boy of 14 was educated at the Northwest American Mission of the Church of England at the Red River, now Winnipeg, Canada. Here he learned the English language and the rudiments of Christianity. Upon his return to Spokan County in 1830, after an absence of some five years, Garry became the first Christian missionary among his people as well as the first school teacher. Through these activities Garry became henceforth a prominent and influential figure who spoke for the Spokan Tribe in their dealings with representatives of the United States.

Garry was an honored guest in the treaty making at Walla Walla in May of 1855. And in December of 1855 as speaker for the Spokanes, Couer d' Alenes and Colvilles Garry through arbitration prevented Governor Stevens from seizing the Indian's best lands for white settlement. Garry at this time was at the zenith of his influence. See Thomas E. Jessett's biography entitled Chief Spokan Garry.

Although the wars through 1856-58 brought much confusion and injustice on both sides Garry remained the friend of the whites and continued to exert his influence against war. However, Garry was forcibly deprived of his own little farm by the white man and finally died in abject poverty and relative obscurity in 1892.

RELEASE DURING WEEK OF NOVEMBER 12 - 18:

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series I - Territorial officers
A. "an insignificant small boy"

Governor ISAAC INGALLS STEVENS arrived in Olympia on November 26, 1853 to put into motion the rough wheels of a new territorial government. He was well educated for the task and he proved himself superbly capable. Stevens received his preparatory education at Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts where he was described as "an insignificant small boy, carrying in his arms a load of books nearly as large as himself". At the age of 16 he was appointed as a cadet to West Point, and in scholarship was ranked the head of his class. After graduation he entered the Corps of Engineers; was in the Mexican War as an aide to General Scott; and at the close of the war he was placed in charge of the Coast Survey office in Washington D. C. In 1853 he was appointed first governor of Washington Territory by President Pierce, and supervised the survey of the Northern Pacific Railroad. At the outbreak of the Civil War he offered his services to the government. His death on September 1, 1862 was as melodramatic as any Hollywood production. It was during the battle at Chantilly, just as the Union Army was facing certain disaster, that Stevens seized the Stars and Stripes and dashed forward at the head of his troops. At that moment a heavy wind and rain storm broke over the field, and just as the lightning glared, Stevens fell, the flag shrouding his head and shoulders. A dramatic close to a heroic life.

RELEASE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 19 - 25, 1961:

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series I- Territorial officers

B. a judge in jail

EDWARD LANDER was a native of Salem, Massachusetts. He was graduated at Harvard in 1836 and soon after entered the law school at Cambridge. In 1841 he moved to Indiana where he was appointed prosecuting attorney for several counties, and in September of 1853 he arrived in Olympia to serve as Chief Justice of the new territory. His habits were correct, his manners dignified and polished, and his legal and literary attainments of a high order. Despite these sterling qualities, he became the central figure in a preposterous battle between the territory's civil and martial law. Ignoring Governor Stevens' 1856 martial law proclamation, Lander held court at Steilacoom, and was promptly arrested. Declining parole, he was sent to Camp Montgomery where he was retained for only a few days. During the following year he was involved in a series of writs, contempts, restrictions, bitter wrangling and stubborn persistency on both sides, which eventually received the unfavorable attention of President Pierce. The situation was finally relieved when Stevens was sent as a delegate to Congress and Lander turned his attention to promoting a new univeristy, now the University of Washington.

RELEASE WEEK OF NOVEMBER 26 - DECEMBER 2, 1961:

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series I - Territorial officers

C. A sensational murder trial

Following the appointment of Edward Lander as Chief Justice of Washington Territory three nominations were submitted before it was possible to fill the first of the subordinate judiciary posts. Finally OBADIAH B. MCFADDEN of Pennsylvania, who had previously been appointed through some mistake to an already filled post in Oregon, was assigned the position. He became the First Associate Justice of Washington Territory and his district included the counties of Walla Walla, Skamania, Clark, Cowlitz, Wahkiakum and Pacific.

Probably the most famous case heard by McFadden was the review of the trial of the Indian Chief Leschi who was charged with complicity in the murders of A. Benton Moses and Joseph Miles during the Indian uprising of 1856. The opinion, written by Judge McFadden supported the verdict of the lower court, found Leschi guilty, and ordered his execution on January 22, 1858. Public opinion was so strongly divided over the decision, that the execution was delayed until February 19, and due to these sensational circumstances, controversy still exists over the justice of the final sentence.

McFadden lived 22 years in the territory, during which he was a member of the legislature and delegate to Congress. He died at the age of 58 at the home of his son-in-law, ex-surveyor general, W. W. Miller of Olympia, and was buried with elaborate ceremonies on June 5, 1875.

RELEASE WEEK OF DECEMBER 3 - 9, 1961:

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series I - Territorial Officers

D. An abrupt dismissal

VICTOR MONROE, distinguished Kentucky lawyer, came to Washington Territory in 1853 as one of the two federally appointed Associate Justices of the Supreme Court. His jurisdiction included the counties of Lewis, Chehalis, Thurston and Sawamish (Mason), each of these being considerable larger than the present counties which bear the names. For unexplained reasons, Monroe was permitted to serve this area, designated as the Second District, for only a few months. He was said to be one of the best, most courteous, and dignified of the federal judges. The legislature had selected him as one of three commissioners to prepare a code of laws. He had the honor of presiding over the first Federal Court held in Washington after the organization of the Territory, that court convening on January 2, 1854 at Cowlitz Landing. During the next 10 months he held regular terms in all of the counties in his district apparently to the satisfaction of the people. Never the less, in October of 1854 he was removed from office by President Pierce, presumably because he had absented himself from the territory. Following his dismissal he remained in Olympia and died there only a year and a half later at the age of 40. He was buried on the point at Budd Inlet near the capitol. Fifteen years later his body was reinterred in the Masonic cemetery.

RELEASE WEEK OF DECEMBER 10 -16, 1961:

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series I - Territorial Officers

E. An unknown man

One of the first duties of Franklin Pierce as the President of the United States was to appoint the territorial officers for Washington. Among those chosen was JOHN S. CLENDENIN of Louisiana, who became the first U. S. District Attorney of Washington Territory.

The history books tell very little about Clendenin, listing only that he arrived in Olympia with his family during September of 1853 and, in name at least, held office until 1856. Even his home state is given occasionally as Mississippi or Tennessee, and his initials as J. V., showing a hazy uncertainty about the man's existence. Allen Weir, in a 1910 address, at Olympia enumerated the first federally appointed officers but said bluntly of Clendenin, "I have no data for further mention of his career." Probably the best clue to his anonymity is a latter day statement by General James Clark Strong in which he reminisced, "Not long after the first legislature adjourned, John S. Clendenin, Esquire, appointed me the Assistant U. S. Attorney for the territory and placing me in charge of all his business, left for the States."

It seems probable that the poor man, having survived a long damp Washington winter, lost hope of it ever being warm and dry again, and in desperation he gathered his family together, packed his bags, and fled home to the deep south. Had he remained just long enough to see a summer sun sweep the clouds from the great peak of Mount Rainier he would have stayed forever.

RELEASE WEEK OF DECEMBER 17 TO 23, 1961:

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series I - Territorial Officers

F. A Rebel General

The first of the territorial officers to arrive in Olympia was United States Marshall JAMES PATTON ANDERSON. He came with instructions to take a census, which he did, announcing upon completion of that task in December of 1853, that the total population was only 3,965. (Of this number, only 1,682 were voters). His records showed this limited population was distributed among the eight existing

counties as follows:

Pacific	152
Lewis	616
Clark	1,134
King	170
Jefferson	189
Island	195
Thurston	996
Pierce	513

After serving as the territory's first U. S. Marshall, Anderson became its second delegate to Congress, having been nominated by the strong pro-slavery element of the Democratic party. He had been raised in the south and he retained his southern sympathies, supporting vigorously the cause of the slave holding aristocracy. After serving one term in Congress he settled in the south and never returned to the territory he had represented. When war broke out he joined the Confederate army as a Brigadier General and was killed during the Rebellion.

RELEASE WEEK OF DECEMBER 24 - 30, 1961:

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series I - Territorial Officers

G. Beloved by the people

CHARLES H. MASON, appointed first secretary of the Territory of Washington in 1853, was born at Fort Washington, on the Potomac, but moved to Providence, Rhode Island, where he was graduated with distinction from Brown University and was admitted to the bar. As a young man of twenty-three he sought, through friends, an appointment as district attorney in Rhode Island, but received instead the assignment to the new territory on Puget Sound.

Due to the fact that Governor Stevens was frequently away from Olympia during the Indian Wars, it fell to Mason's lot to act as chief executive, during 1855- and 1856. Despite his lack of experience he was an able man who selected his counselors wisely, used discretion in his acts and was universally esteemed by those who knew him. After Stevens was sent to Congress Fayette McMullen was chosen to be his successor, but in July of 1858 he returned to Virginia, and Mason again served as governor until the close of McMullen's term.

On July 18, 1859 Secretary Mason died, after a illness of only three days. He had served his territory for nearly six years, half of which time he had been acting governor. Although but twenty-nine years old, he had met all the grave responsibilities of that high office with ability and promptness and discharged its duties with such fidelity as to meet the approval of those for whom he acted, as well as of the people generally. His funeral was held in the capitol, and Governor Stevens, who was then in the territory, pronounced his funeral oration. In January, 1864, the legislature changed the name of Sawamish to Mason County in his honor.

RELEASE WEEK OF APRIL 1 - 7, 1962

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series III WESTERN WOMEN

Number E - MARY RICHARDSON WALKER

Humorous, quick-witted, and sharp tongued, Mary Richardson seemed an unlikely prospect for a sober missionary's wife. However, single women were not permitted to work among the savages, and Mary was convinced that she wanted to spend her life serving God through the Congregational Church. Her marriage to Elkanah Walker was promoted by the Board of American Missions and her honeymoon was the long slow trip from Maine to the Oregon Country. In 1838 she arrived on the west coast and settled down with her husband among the Spokane Indians in a little valley called Tshimakain. She was a woman of tireless energy, often working 16 hours a day washing, ironing, milking cows, making soap and butter, as well as helping her husband teach the natives about the white man's religion. Besides these tasks she raised 8 children, made all of their clothes including their shoes, and still she felt a need for subjects to occupy and interest her keen mind. She collected rocks, flowers, birds nests and eggs. She studied taxidermy, botany, geology, and mineralogy. She won the respect of the traveling artist Paul Kane because of her knowledge of plant life. John Mix Stanley also visited her little cabin, painted a portrait of Elkanah and their daughter Abigail, and stayed to discuss with Mary the habits and colors of the birds of the region. When she was forced to leave her mission home because of Indian unrest, the guide who escorted her to the Willamette Valley was startled by her knowledge of the natural history of the region as well as the character, manners and customs of the natives. Her last years were spent rocking in a little chair on the front porch of her home in Forest Grove, Oregon. But her heart always remained at the Tshimakian mission where she had dared solitude and hardship to carve out for her family a new life in the primitive northwest.

RELEASE WEEK OF APRIL 8 - 14, 1962

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series III WESTERN WOMEN

Number F-MATHILDA COONTZ JACKSON

The hardships of the Oregon Trail left many widows to face the strange new country without the help of the men who had enthusiastically encouraged them to set out on the journey. Mathilda Glover Coontz was one of these. She had travelled as far as the Snake River with her husband Nicholas and her four small boys filling the long, slow days with good companionship and cheerful anticipation of the journey's end. At the crossing of that river, however, she stood a helpless witness as Nicholas drowned in the treacherous waters while trying to save his oxen. Nothing could console her, and the saddened company halted until she was able to travel again. Her fifth child was born at this campsite and was buried only a few days later near the spot which marked the tragic drowning. At last she and her four sons arrived in Oregon City, exhausted and nearly helpless in a forbidding country. It was here, late in the fall of 1847, that Mathilda met John R. Jackson, a quiet, educated Englishman. She married him in 1848 and her new home was a crude log cabin without windows, with one door, a mud fireplace and chimney. This was the family home until 1850, when a new, and more pretentious log house was built on the same site. That new home became the first Lewis County court house. It is located about 11 miles south east of Chehalis and is a historical landmark preserved by the Washington State Historical Society. Mathilda became known far and wide as "Grandma Jackson, the best cook, housekeeper, and hostess in the territory". The Jackson home, called "The Highlands" became a stopping place for travelers. Ulysses S. Grant, George B. McClelland and Phil Sheridan accepted the genial hospitality of this home. Mathilda and her husband became distinguished examples of the finest quality of pioneer character.

RELEASE WEEK OF APRIL 15 - 21, 1962

PEOPLE IN WASHINGTON HISTORY

Series III WESTERN WOMEN

Number G PRINCESS ANGELINE

There are too few biographies of the Indian women of the Northwest. Some white settlers, when they moved into this area, married the Indian women but seemed to consider them inferior to white women. Because of this attitude, many incidents of unusual kindness, braveness, and sacrifice among these women have been lost to written history. One of the few Indian women whose story is familiar to modern readers is Princess Angeline, daughter of Chief Seattle. Angeline probably does not deserve this bit of fame any more than many other women of her people whose names have been completely forgotten. But Angeline was in the fortunate position of being the favorite daughter of a famous old chief. She was also a very attractive young woman and was a sweet and likable person. There are stories which indicate she may have been the one who warned the early residents of Seattle of the impending attack by hostile Indians on January 25, 1856. But there are some sources which refute this story. Whatever the facts may be concerning this episode, no one contradicts the statement that Angeline was always a friend to the white people. When she was a young woman she supported her children by washing, ironing and scrubbing in the homes of the white settlers. As she grew older she depended upon others for her food, clothing, and small household needs, and she was seldom refused. She enjoyed talking about the early days when Seattle was only a few log cabins. To the people of the 1890's she represented a direct link with the pioneer history of the area. Souvenir spoons and photographs of her were eagerly bought by tourists. Although she enjoyed the fame, she never sought it, but lived out her life in a little shanty on the water front. She died on May 31, 1896 and was buried, according to her wishes, in the cemetery of her friends, the pioneers of Seattle.