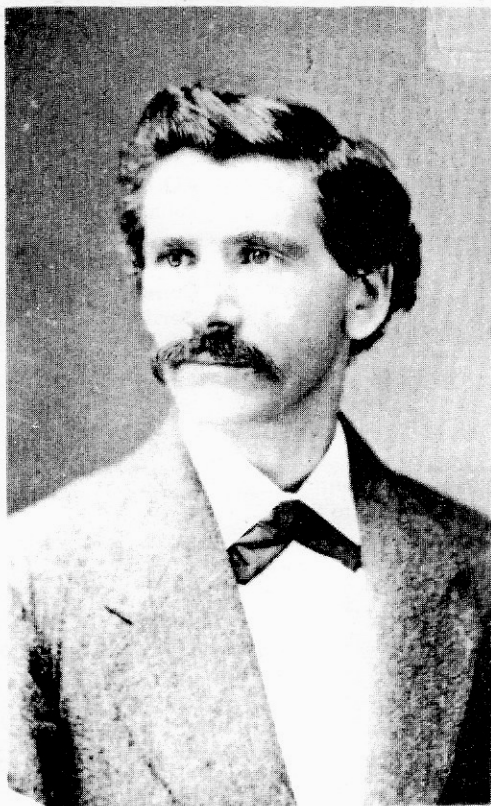


# Bunchgrass Historian



Whitman County Historical Society  
Colfax, Washington

Volume 22  
Number 1  
1995



- Lachlan Taylor, Photographer
- Electricity
- Athenaeum Club

# Whitman County Historical Society

---

The **Bunchgrass Historian** is published by the Whitman County Historical Society. Its purpose is to further interest in the rich past of Whitman County.

## OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President .....John Simpson  
Vice-President .....Douglas Blake  
Secretary.....Margo Balzarini  
Treasurer.....Robert Neill

## PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

Editor .....Lawrence Stark  
Subscriptions .....Jill Whelchel  
Circulation Editor .....Margo Balzarini

## MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

Contribution Range

Basic Membership.....\$10.00-\$15.00  
Contribution or Family  
Membership.....\$15.00-\$25.00  
Sustaining Membership.....\$25.00-\$50.00  
Sponsor.....\$50.00-\$100.00  
Patron.....\$100.00 and up  
Life Membership.....\$500.00  
Business Membership.....\$25.00 or more

Membership in the Whitman County Historical Society is tax deductible to the extent permitted by law.

## SOCIETY ADDRESSES

### Society Business:

Whitman County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 67  
Colfax, WA. 99111

### Memberships and Subscriptions

Jill Whelchel  
SE 305 Derby St.  
Pullman, WA 99163

### Articles for Publication:

Lawrence R. Stark, Editor  
**The Bunchgrass Historian**  
P.O. Box 2371 C.S.  
Pullman, WA. 99163

### Current and Back Issues:

(Send \$2.50 per issue)  
Whitman County Historical Society  
P.O. Box 67  
Colfax, WA. 99111





Whitman County Historical Society  
Colfax, Washington

Volume 22  
Number 1  
1995

### CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Lachlan Taylor: Pullman Photographer, 1887-1902<br>By Robert E. King .....   | 4  |
| A Historical Sketch Describing the Growth of the<br>Generation and Use of Electricity in Pullman and the Inland Empire<br>By Homer J. Dana (1958)..... | 14 |
| History of Athenaeum<br>By Lenore Steffan (1985) .....   | 21 |
| Athenaeum – 100 Years<br>By Katie Schmick .....  | 24 |

### AUTHORS

Robert King is a Pullman native who now lives in Anchorage, Alaska. He has continuing interests in the history of his home town, photography, antiques and genealogy.

Homer Jackson Dana, d. 1970, was a research engineer with Washington State University for over four decades.

Lenore Steffan and Katie Schmick, Colfax area residents, write about the history of Athenaeum, a Colfax womens' club, in which they have been active.

### COVER

Lachlan Taylor, portrait photographed about 1875.  
(L. Taylor photos from personal collection of Robert E. King.)

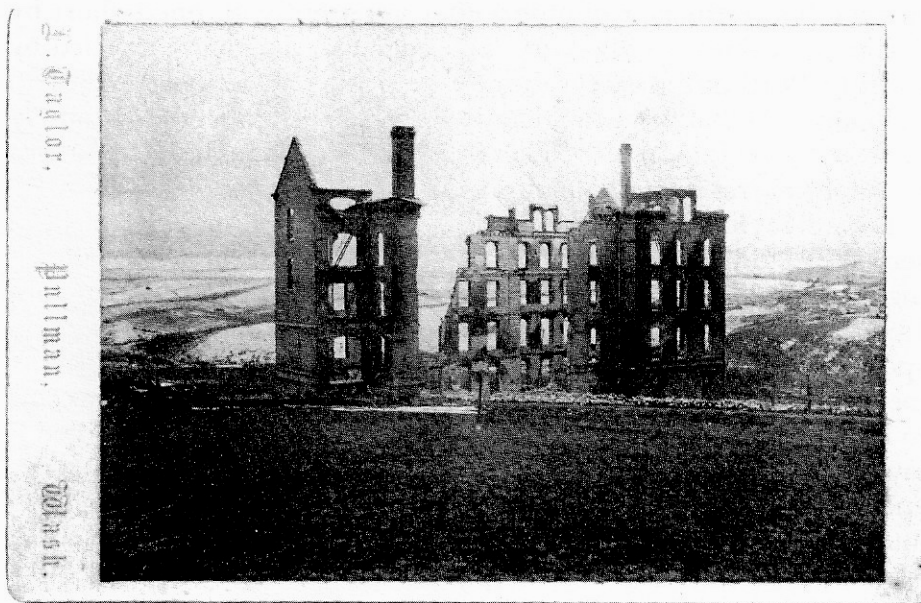
**Lachlan Taylor:  
Pullman Photographer, 1887-1902  
by Robert E. King**

**Lachlan Taylor**, Pullman's first resident photographer,<sup>1</sup> was born May 24, 1839 in Nova Scotia, Canada, of Scottish emigrant parentage. As a young man, he moved to the United States becoming a naturalized citizen in 1865.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently, in the late 1860's, he began a career in photography. By the mid-1870's, he had moved to Carthage, Missouri, eventually opening his own studio on the east side of the main square, in the Parkell Block.<sup>3</sup> Earlier, he may have been employed by the Caster and Casey photo studio of Carthage.<sup>4</sup> His work primarily was as a portrait photographer, and included copy and enlargement work as well as crayon tinting which he continued doing in Pullman years later. Also, by the mid-1880's, Taylor took stereo photos, called stereographs, but apparently did not continue long with 3-D photography. Further, Taylor occasionally did oil paintings, such as fruits and vegetables arranged with game bird trophies, as was popular in the late 19th century.<sup>5</sup>

Taylor's initial training as a photographer occurred before the invention of dry plate photography in the 1870's. The earlier, "wet-plate" process of photography involved the cumbersome mixing of chemicals to coat and sensitize glass plates which were then inserted in a camera wet followed by rapid exposure and development before the plate dried out. Years later in 1889 in Pullman, Taylor would advertise that he had had "twenty years' experience in all the old and new processes of photography."<sup>6</sup>

While in Carthage, Missouri, Lachlan Taylor married in 1875 to Aravesta Lambert, a native of Pennsylvania, born February 4, 1849. She was a daughter of David Lambert (1822-1901) and his wife Catherine (Unangst) Lambert (1826-1891), and had left her home to live with a cousin, Florence Walsh, in Carthage. There, in the earlier





*Ruining Old Ferry Hall, WSU, by Taylor, 1897*

1870's, she met Lachlan Taylor, the young bachelor photographer in this bustling town of a few thousand.

After their marriage, Lachlan and Aravesta set up housekeeping in Carthage, with their first three children born there between 1876 and 1880. Their home was on South Main street.<sup>7</sup> A fourth child, their youngest, was born in nearby Sarcoxie, Missouri in 1883, where Taylor may have moved his business briefly.<sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Lachlan continued supporting his growing family by his photographic work.

In 1886, an amusing article, entitled "A Sarcoxie Strike," was printed in the Sarcoxie, Missouri newspaper. It noted that Lachlan was then working as a painter in "Merwin's carriage shops in this city." The story was that Taylor had left his ten-year-old son, William "at home to look after the family, on a salary of five cents a day," but then received from the boy a mailed postcard stating: "L. Taylor-Dear Sir-I am numbered with the strikers, I want you to raise my salary to six cents per day instead of five cents, or I will stop work Friday. Yours truly, Willie Taylor."<sup>9</sup> It is unknown if young Willie got his 20% salary increase, but it is quite certain that his parents were highly amused at the stunt. And through the newspaper, so was the entire community.

In later 1886, the Taylors, like many others in their region of southwestern Missouri, moved west. In Lachlan's case, it may have been to

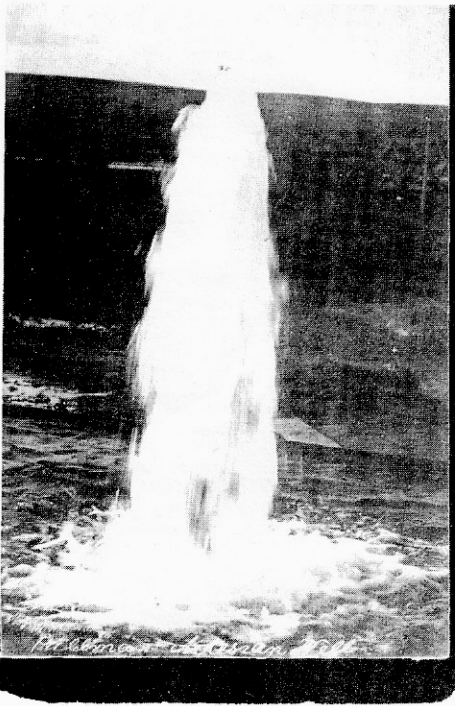
resume his trade as a photographer apparently stopped short by declining business in Missouri. Subsequently, the family traveled by train to Portland staying about a year, then resettled in 1887 in Pullman.<sup>10</sup> At that time, Pullman was a small but growing community of around five hundred individuals,<sup>11</sup> just large enough to support its first full-time resident photographer.

Before Taylor's arrival, Pullman's photographic needs had been served by studios in nearby communities, such as Colfax, or by traveling photographers. After the construction of the railroads in the mid-1880's, these included itinerant photographers who would travel in specially equipped photograph train cars. Even after Taylor's settlement in Pullman, these train-car photographers still occasionally came to Pullman. One of the last occurrences was on May 27, 1889, when F. Jay Haynes, the official photographer of the Northern Pacific Railroad, and also noted for his work in Yellowstone Park, came in his "Palace Studio Car" for a 3-day stay.<sup>12</sup> His traveling studio was let off on a railroad siding at Pullman, and then picked up afterwards.<sup>13</sup>

By this time, however, Lachlan Taylor's business in Pullman was secure, and such occasional competition was more of an annoyance than a real threat. Indeed, at the time of Haynes' visit in 1889, Taylor had just finished construction of his new photographic studio on the north side of Main street, on Lot 5 in Block 14, as recorded in the City Plat of Pullman. He had purchased this land for \$200 from Eugene H. Boyer on September 5, 1888,<sup>14</sup> and apparently built the two-story, wooden frame studio building in the spring of 1889. It stood approximately across from today's Audian Theater, on part of the land occupied presently by the White Drug Store.

Taylor's new studio was a success, and may have been one of the few Pullman businesses to have survived the disastrous 1890 fire, being just east of the city's core business district at the time. Records are unclear on this matter, but it appears that he was occupying the same building in January 1891, with True's Palace hotel having been moved from Paradise Street northward to the south side of Main street opposite his studio by that time.<sup>15</sup> By then, the town had around 900 for its population,<sup>16</sup> and was set to grow even more rapidly with the opening for classes of the agricultural college, now Washington State University, a year later in early 1892.

The location of Taylor's earlier studio during 1887 to 1889, is unclear. However, it apparently was in a rented structure which may have included his residence. With the opening of his new photographic "gallery" on Main street in early 1889, Taylor moved in with his family, apparently settling in quarters on the second floor. Lachlan also probably used some of the upstairs for his photographic work, with his ads



*Artesian Fountain at Pullman, by  
Taylor, about 1890.*

for the new studio proclaiming his use of the "best of light and improved lenses."<sup>17</sup>

On October 1, 1894, Lachlan Taylor leased his Pullman studio to W. G. Emery and his wife, both former Portland photographers. Their intent was to continue Taylor's general line of work, but also to add "a fine line of fancy posings in Grecian robe and draperies" to be "kept on hand for the use of . . . lady patrons." Mrs. Emery was stated as having "experience in posing and draping."<sup>18</sup> Just after this, a second Portland photographer, Gilman L. Eastman, opened a rival photograph studio on Grand street, in the building formerly occupied by the Pullman Hotel.<sup>19</sup> Eastman, never to stay long in one place, subsequently would be involved before 1900 in various studios in Colfax, Dayton, Chehalis, and Olympia in Washington, and in The Dalles and Oregon City in Oregon.<sup>20</sup>

Both Eastman and the Emerys served Pullman's photographic needs but apparently only for a short time. By the fall of 1896, Lachlan Taylor was heralded in the local paper as once again "the only photographer in Pullman," being back in business at this studio he built in 1889.<sup>21</sup> Subsequently, Taylor continued his photographic work until selling his gallery, lot, and equipment for \$1,600 to Mr. L. K. Luce.<sup>22</sup>



*Mabel Taylor, about 1875*

Within days of the sale, W. G. Emery and another Portland photographer, again seeing a potential opening in Pullman's photographic trade, opened a rival studio. The May 6, 1899 issue of the Pullman paper reported that a Mr. Koerner "opened a photograph gallery in a tent on Main street, just east of the bottling works, W. G. Emery being his assistant operator and retoucher." Later, Emery would go on to operate studios in Corvallis, Oregon and Vancouver, Washington in the early 1900's.<sup>23</sup>

In 1899, still another photographer, Katherine O. Smith, was sometimes operating in Pullman. She may not have been a Pullman resident, however, instead conducting an itinerant business based elsewhere. She is thought to have taken some of the earliest known photographs of Pullman, in the mid- to later 1880s, but is not otherwise documented to have been a long-term resident.<sup>24</sup>

In Pullman, it is unclear if Mr. Luce actually operated the former Taylor studio, though he did continue ownership of the building into 1906. In any case, by early June of 1900, Taylor's former studio was leased by Luce to the Burns Photo Company, operated by Robert Burns of neighboring Moscow, Idaho.<sup>25</sup> Burns, born in California in 1871, and sometimes in partnership with a brother, later had studios in Lewiston, Grangeville, and Kendrick in Idaho, and also in Colfax, Washington.<sup>26</sup>



*Aravesta Lambert Taylor,  
about 1875*

The Burns' entry into Pullman's business trade subsequently was to last for over a decade. It included not only the continuing production of pictures of Pullman and its residents, but also the sale of photo post-cards of college events and buildings. These became particularly popular in the early 1900's.

Following the sale of his photograph studio in 1899, Lachlan Taylor remained in Pullman with his family for about three more years. During this time, Taylor, in his early 60's, continued working as a photographer, perhaps free-lancing out of his later home on college hill,<sup>27</sup> or working in a partnership basis with the later occupants of his former studio. Taylor also may have pursued his interest in painting at this time, though not finding it lucrative enough to abandon his photographic work.<sup>28</sup> Further, during this period, his wife, Aravesta Taylor, ran a boarding house in their home, renting out rooms to college students.<sup>29</sup>

At one point in mid-1901, the local paper reported that Taylor was resuming management of his former gallery on July 1st, 1901.<sup>30</sup> This may have been when Burns was establishing additional branch studios outside Pullman. In any case, about a year later, Lachlan and his family left for Seattle, finally departing his Pullman studio which was once again in the hands of Robert Burns.

Four years later, in the late winter of 1906, Taylor's old Pullman studio was destroyed by fire. The Pullman paper reported that "it was





*Lachlan Taylor Family, about 1887*

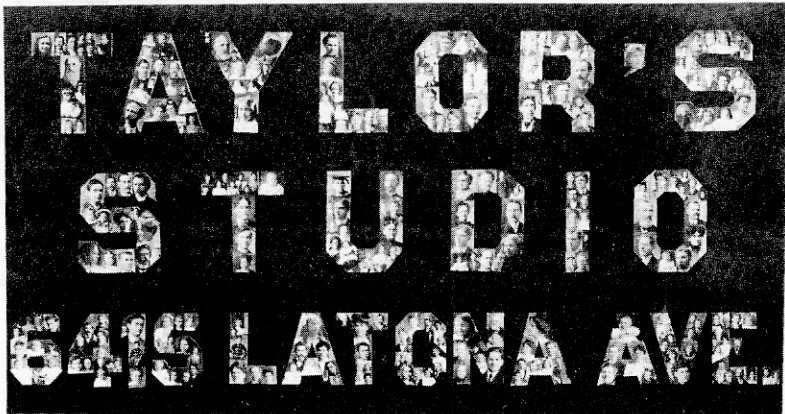
supposed that the flue stopper blew out, scattering fire over the room filled with more or less inflammable material."<sup>31</sup> Fortunately, a woman working in the dark room escaped from the burning building but only after the "front room was in flames." The structure was a total loss estimated at \$1,600, with only \$700 covered by insurance. Likely, this was for the partial coverage of the building itself which was still owned by Mr. L. K. Luce.<sup>32</sup> Robert Burn's equipment apparently was uninsured, but he was able to absorb the loss and continue on as a Pullman photographer into the 1910's.

As to Lachlan Taylor in Seattle, the 1902 Seattle city directory reported that he and his family settled in a residence near the corner of Latona Avenue and East 65th. Subsequently, the 1903 directory reported his studio nearby at 215 East 65th. By 1905, the Taylor's address was 219 E. 65th. Later, by 1910, Lachlan Taylor was listed with a photographic studio at 6415 Latona Avenue. His home in 1910 was located at 239 East 65th, and the Federal census of that year reported that he was living on his "own income," apparently in semi-retirement.<sup>33</sup>

As late as 1914, the Seattle city directory listed Lachlan Taylor as a photographer, though by that time he actually had ceased such work due to declining health. Subsequently, he died at his Seattle home at 239 East 65th, on April 29, 1915, less than a month short of his 76th birthday. A public funeral ceremony involving his Masonic brothers of

Green Lake Lodge No. 149 preceded private cremation.<sup>34</sup> Afterwards, under his will dated December 9, 1910, his estate, worth \$5,000, went to his widow, Aravesta. This included the family home, worth \$3,500, and also a building lot elsewhere in Seattle valued at \$1,500.<sup>35</sup> On December 21, 1925, just over 10 years later, his widow, Aravesta, passed away in Oakland, California, at the home of their daughter, Mabel.

As to Taylor's family, as noted, Lachlan and Aravesta had 4 children. They were: 1) William M. Taylor (1876-ca. 1934), 2) Frederick Lachlan Taylor (1878-1954), 3) Mabel Lambert (Taylor) McCamman (1880-1959), and 4) Miss Verne Taylor (1883-1950s). Of these, only the second and third children had children, with each having three daughters and one son. Of the eight grandchildren, including seven born before Lachlan Taylor's death, four are surviving in mid-1994, currently in their 70's and 80's.<sup>36</sup> To them, Lachlan Taylor was "Grandpa"; to early Pullman he was the man who helped document the community's people and businesses during its period of rapid growth from 1887 to 1902.



*Sign for Taylor Studio in Seattle*

#### END NOTES

- 1 The 1883 Territorial census of Whitman County lists then 22-year-old, Oregon-born, John N. Shanks, as a photographer at Pullman. His stay in Pullman, however, probably was very brief as the community was too small to support full-time work. Later, Shanks was a photographer in Garfield and Pomeroy, Washington in the mid- to later 1880's. (From the 1885 and 1887 Garfield county Territorial census returns, and Polk's *Oregon, Washington and Idaho Gazetteer* for Pomeroy, for 1886/87 (p. 934), and for 1889/90 (p. 1307).)

- 2 Reported in the 1910 Federal census of Seattle, King County, Washington.
- 3 The location of his Carthage studio was listed on the back of a carte de viste portrait photograph he made there about 1881. It is owned by the author.
- 4 From August 4, 1992 letter of Mabel (McCamman) Winkelman to author.
- 5 Descendants own examples of his stereographs and oil paintings.
- 6 The Pullman Herald, May 18, 1889, p. 2
- 7 Noted on the 1880 Federal census of Carthage, Jasper county, Missouri, p. 463.
- 8 From August 4, 1992 letter of Mabel (McCamman) Winkelman to author.
- 9 Newspaper clipping in the possession of family descendants.
- 10 Noted in the 1899 entry for Mabel Taylor in the "Chinook," the student yearbook of what is now Washington State University (unnumbered page listing graduates).
- 11 Sanborn company Fire Atlas of Pullman, May 1889 edition.
- 12 The Pullman Herald, May 18, 1889, p.3.
- 13 Further information on F. Jay Haynes (1853-1921) and his railroad studio car which he operated from 1885 to 1905, is found in: *F. Jay Haynes, Photographer*, by the Montana Historical Society Press, 1981, ISBN 0-917298-04-7.
- 14 Deed recorded in Whitman county, Wash. Deed Book Y, pp. 179-180.
- 15 Sanborn Company Fire Atlas of Pullman, January 1891 edition.
- 16 Ibid.
- 17 The Pullman Herald, May 18, 1889, pp. 2, 4.
- 18 The Pullman Herald, Sept. 28, 1894, p. 1.
- 19 The Pullman Herald, Dec. 7, 1894, p. 1.
- 20 These locations appear on various pre-1900 photographs made by Eastman owned by the author. Also, the various city and regional directories of the late 1880's and 1890's include Eastman at some of these places.
- 21 The Pullman Herald, Oct. 31, 1896, p.7.
- 22 The Pullman Herald, April 15, 1899, p. 1. The deed for this sale is recorded in Whitman County, Wash. Deed Book 91, p. 34. (Note: The deed reported only the price of the lot as \$1,000. The other \$600 for studio equipment apparently was by an additional separate agreement.)
- 23 Polk's Oregon and Washington Directory of 1905/06 for Corvallis (p. 1572), and the same for 1909/10 for Vancouver (p. 2116).



- 24 Copies of the early Pullman photographs attributed to Katherine O. Smith are located in the Washington State University Archives. Otherwise, the author has seen examples of her photographs of local people, with studio markings identifying the "Eureka Studio" in Pullman as her business location. One is dated 1899. Katherine is not listed in the 1900 Federal census of Pullman. Regional business directories surveyed do not include her name among listings of photographers.
- 25 The Pullman Herald, June 2, 1900, p. 1.
- 26 His studios in these places are indicated on early 1900's photos owned by the author. His age and birthplace are from the 1910 Federal census of Pullman, Whitman County, Washington, p. 290b, where he and his wife, Lucille, also a photographer, were reported as living on Main street.
- 27 Lachlan Taylor and his family were listed in the North Pullman Precinct in the 1900 Federal census of Whitman County, Washington (p. 232).
- 28 From Jan. 30, 1994 letter of Mrs. Mabel (McCamman) Winkelman to author.
- 29 From Aug. 4, 1992 letter of Mrs. Mabel (McCamman) Winkelman to author.
- 30 The Pullman Herald, June 29, 1901, p. 1.
- 31 The Pullman Herald, March 17, 1906, p. 1.
- 32 Ibid.
- 33 This is their address given in the 1910 Federal census of Seattle, King county, Washington (microfilm roll #1662, pp. 38b and 39).
- 34 Obituary of Lachlan Taylor, the *Post-Intelligencer* newspaper, Seattle, Wash., May 1, 1915, p. 14.
- 35 King County, Washington Probate File for Lachlan Taylor, #18549.



# **A Historical Sketch Describing the Growth of the Generation and Use of Electricity in Pullman<sup>1</sup> and the Inland Empire**

**by Homer J. Dana<sup>2</sup>  
February 6, 1958**

This paper<sup>3</sup> represents an attempt to trace the growth of the generation and use of electrical energy in the Inland Empire during the past seven or eight decades.

Events which take place from day to day often command only passing interest and then are forgotten. Years later those events begin to assume considerable historical significance, and too often the record is buried in some forgotten file or in the memory of a witness who has since passed on. As a consequence, there occur various gaps or blanks in the story which cannot be filled in.

Such is the case in the story of the generation and use of electricity in the Inland Empire. However, attempt has been made to establish sufficient "mile post" dates down through the years to afford a fairly good picture of the development we wish to describe.

More particularly we are interested in describing the growth in the use of electricity in Pullman. However, this growth has been so closely related to the origin of the industry in Spokane that it seems necessary to start to weave our historical thread beginning at Spokane Falls.

1885. The use of electricity in the Inland Empire had its origin in Spokane Falls in September when George A. Fitch obtained a franchise to generate and distribute electricity in the village. From the dismantled steamship "Columbia" which had plied between San Francisco and Portland, he had obtained an arc machine and drove it with a waterwheel. Fitch installed ten carbon arc lights, most of them for

street lighting and some for store lighting.

1886. The Spokane Falls Water Power Company was organized and bought out Fitch. They installed a 30 KW Edison Bi-polar D.C. generator.

1887. The Spokane Falls Water Power Company was re-organized and named the Edison Electric Illuminating Company of Spokane Falls. The reason for change of name was that the Edison Company in the East was furnishing a new generator mostly on credit. This year marked the start of twenty-four hour electric service in the city.

1888. The first electric motor was used by Mr. Bailey of the Windsor House Hotel to saw wood. Shortly thereafter, the Spokane Chronicle hitched a motor to their printing press. In the same year the first electric lighting service to a residence in Spokane was installed.

1889. An effort was made to interest eastern capital in the purchase of the lower Spokane Falls so that the generating capacity could be increased to meet the increasing demand for electricity. When the easterners refused, on March 13 local people organized the Washington Water Power Company which absorbed the existing company. A 130 KW power station was started.

1890. On November 12 the newly built Monroe Street Station was "put on the line." All generation was D.C. The rate for electricity was \$1.65 per month flat rate for a 16 candle power lamp. That was the era of the carbon filament lamp.

1892. The first A.C. generator was installed in the Monroe Street Station and was operated until 1895 when it was sold "to someone in the Inland Empire." It is believed this machine was a 133 cycle generator, 60 KW capacity at 1150 volts, and that the purchaser may have been the College at Pullman. The following information seems to support the above statement.

In 1911 the author and another student at WSC discovered an old dry core 1150-115-230 volt 133 cycle transformer in a laboratory store room. We were told it had been part of the College lighting plant which at one time had also furnished current to the city of Pullman. In 1911 the College was then using a 60 cycle generator.

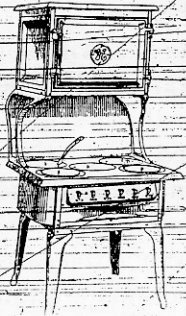
In 1922 the author was building the new College radio station, KFAE, and needed a filter choke for the 2000 volt tube supply. The frame and coils of a long since discarded 133 cycle A.C. generator were used for this filter choke.

Judging from the size of the frame, the capacity of the generator was probably in the order of 60 KW. It is quite possible that the Monroe Street generator later served the College and the City of Pullman for a period of time as will be related later.

1897. On July 17, the Spokane chronicle stated that Prof. Darrow,

**SAVE  
COAL**

By doing your Cooking by Wire  
Order your Range now as an ad-  
vance in prices takes effect the  
first of the year



The Washington  
Water Power Company

*Electric Appliance Advertisement, 1917*

Head of the Department of Mechanic Arts at the college at Pullman advised the City of Spokane against building a generating plant to run its own street arc lights. In all probability the basis of his argument was that the city could buy the street lighting service cheaper than they could run a plant to furnish their own.

**1901.** The first "high voltage" line was built in Spokane. It extended to Hillyard and carried 6600 volts.

**1902.** The peak load for the year was 3368 KW. The total plant capacity was 3649 KW.

**1903.** A high voltage line was built to Burke, Idaho to serve the Coeur d'Alene mines. It was the second line in the world to operate at 60,000 volts and was the longest line in the world of that voltage.

**1906.** The Washington Water Power Company built a 60,000 volt line to Palouse to serve the area between Palouse and Spokane.

**1913.** The Washington Water Power Company bought the Idaho-Washington Light & Power Company and extended its transmission line from Palouse to Moscow. The new acquisition included the electric light systems at Moscow, Genesee, Troy, St. Maries, Tekoa, Garfield, Colton, Uniontown, Palouse, Farmington, Oakesdale, and Pullman. The consideration was \$450,000.

While the above development was being made starting at Spokane Falls in 1885 and finally reaching Pullman in 1913, there was a prior development going on in Pullman and in the area to the east and the south. Following is the thread of that story.

**1897.** On February 17, H. J. Jackson presented a request to the Pullman City Council requesting a franchise to build and operate an electric light plant and a distribution system to serve Pullman.

On July 2, Ordinance No. 33-C gave H. J. Jackson the right to install and operate such an electric light and power system.

**1900.** On December 21, the council authorized the payment "to the Electric Light Company" of a bill for \$70.00. However, it is apparent from later minutes of the City Council that the electric service being rendered by Mr. Jackson was not satisfactory.

**1901.** On March 15, the City Council requested the Regents "to continue to furnish current until such time as the city may be able to install a plant."

On April 10, the City Council voted "to provide for the powerhouse and installation of an electric light and power system for furnishing the City of Pullman, the inhabitants thereof, and any other persons with electric light and power."

On April 19, the Electric Light Committee of the Council was authorized "to employ an expert electrician to be paid out of the C. E. Fund to make an estimate of the cost of installing a plant, and what would be the best system for the city." We can only infer that the question was being raised as to whether the new plant should be 133 cycles or 60 cycles.

**1903.** On January 15, the College notified the Council that it was raising the price of current to \$300.00. On February 9, the Council received a bill from WAC for current for the month of February for \$341.54. At the Council meeting on February 19, they considered an offer from Mr. Wilder to install the city electric light plant.

On February 24, the Council considered a proposition to sell the electric light system to Mr. Wilder. On March 5, Mr. A. Welch wrote the Council offering to buy the electric light plant.

March 19, the Council authorized the buying of testing tools for the meters. May 21, W. H. Harvey advised the Council that at this time he was "unable to submit a proposition to install a light plant."

July 21, the Council authorized the committee to lease the light system. November 19, the council considered the question: "Shall the City vote to sell its Electric Light Works."

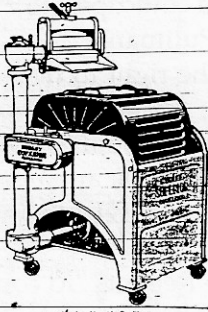
When the author came to Pullman to attend college the fall of 1911, he fell in with several local freshmen students also in electrical engineering,

# ANNOUNCEMENT!

SPECIAL SALE ON

## *Thor* Electric Washing Machines

For a Short Time Only, Beginning Oct. 19



Thor No. 25



The Thor Electric Washing Machine

There are also the Regular Thor, No. 25, Machine, in both the copper body and the galvanized body, and the New Hurley Superior Vacuum Cup Machine.

FOUR—STYLES TO CHOOSE FROM—FOUR

Special Terms

**The Washington Water Power Co.**

Telephone 300

WASH BY WIRE

PULLMAN, WASH.

*Electric Washer  
Advertisement, 1925*

including Lloyd Baird, Wesley Brock, Arnold Schusman, Claire Fulmer and Gordon Klemgard. At that time there was visible an old concrete foundation on the south bank of the Palouse River just east of the present Union Pacific section man's residence at the east end of town. This concrete block, since covered with a fill, had several anchor bolts indicating that at some time some machinery had been mounted on it. The local boys informed the author that this was the site of the "old electric light plant." Formerly there had been a building on the site, but gossip has it that it "burned down following the night that two tramps slept there."

1906. Apparently the past two and a half years had not seen a perfect solution to the problem of municipal ownership and operation of the Pullman Electric Light and Power System. We read further in the minutes of the Council: On March 1, the Council passed Ordinance No. 109 granting a franchise to the Moscow Electric Light and Power Company to do business in Pullman.

On June 7, the Council voted to enter into a contract with the Moscow Electric Light and Power Company "to install and use a substation in the boiler room of the pumping plant for a period of two years at a price of \$75.00 per year." On August 2, a report was made to the Council that "the Moscow Electric Light and Power Company had taken charge of the electric light system of Pullman as of August 1, 1906."



**1888.** The M. J. Shields Company, a lumber milling firm in Moscow, set up a generating plant in the mill and started furnishing electricity to the city of Moscow. Another authority states that the date of this event was 1894.

**1892.** On April 27, the Moscow Electric Light and Power Company was organized by M. J. Shields and associates, and took over the Moscow system except for the engine and boiler which belonged to the mill.

**1904.** The Moscow Company contracted with the Lewiston Water and Power Company (forerunner of the Lewiston-Clarkston Improvement Company) for transmission and delivery of power to Moscow, Pullman, Genesee, and Uniontown. The transmission line voltage was 22,000.

**1905-06.** The Moscow Company purchased the Pullman municipally owned and operated steam-driven electric plant for the sum of \$6,000. It seems they had leased the plant for a short time prior to the purchase.

The Moscow Company promptly extended a transmission line to Pullman and thereupon dismantled the steam plant.

**1907.** On April 27, under the guidance of M. J. Shields, the Moscow Electric Light and Power Company re-organized to form the Idaho-Washington Light and Power Company. The new company set about to acquire the electric light systems in Genesee, St. Maries, Troy, and Palouse.

**1913.** On July 1, the Washington Water Power Company purchased the Idaho-Washington Light and Power Company and took over all of its operating system in this area. The Washington Water Power Company also maintained the connection with the Lewiston Water and Power Company as a source of supply of electric energy in addition to that supplied over their lines from Spokane to Palouse and Moscow.

**1958.** From 1897 to 1913, a period of sixteen years, the City of Pullman was more or less constantly beset with problems of acquiring and maintaining electrical service in the city. This included a short period of municipal ownership.

And incidently, as a matter of history, the City of Pullman in the early 1920's again considered municipal ownership and operation of its own electric light. However, the idea was abandoned promptly following a study of the economics involved.

From 1913 to 1958, a period of forty-five years, the problems of electric service to the City of Pullman have been assumed by the Washington Water Power Company with practically no worries to the City Fathers.

The history of electric service to Pullman, we find, is intimately connected not only with its own growing experiences but also with the birth of the electric power industry at Spokane Falls and with the separate developments at Moscow.

Today, the City of Pullman runs its electric clocks and turns on its TV sets with scarcely a thought about the electric service it enjoys. Perhaps that unconcern in itself is the highest possible praise from its citizens for the reliable service they enjoy as a matter of course.

#### END NOTES

- 1 The information on which this paper is based was derived from various sources. These include historical notes from the files of the Washington Water Power Company, from the Files of the Pullman Herald, from the minutes of the Pullman City Council, and from personal contact with various old-timers in Pullman some of which are no longer living.
- 2 A 1915 graduate in E. E. from WSC, post graduate in 1916, past Director of the Engineering Experiment Station, presently Professor of E. E. and Research Engineer.
- 3 A paper prepared for presentation to the Pullman Chamber of Commerce February 11, 1958 in connection with the celebration of National Electricity Week.



# History of Athenaeum

## (On Its 90th Anniversary - April 19, 1985

### by Lenore Steffan

Athenaeum club of Colfax was organized on April 20, 1895, making it the oldest or one of the oldest women's clubs in the State of Washington.

What was Colfax like in the 1890's? There were quite a few large buildings in town including a new court house, a college on the west hill, the new Masonic building or Fraternity Block which still stands, St. Ignatius Hospital just finished in 1893, 7 churches, 3 banks, a high school, 16 regular trains steamed in and out of town daily. The population in 1891 was 1644 and by the next year had more than doubled to 3500 as many immigrants were moving into the area. Colfax was booming.

However, 1893 was a bad year. Several of the large buildings in town, including the large hotel and opera house, burned down. The country was in the midst of an economic depression and some banks had to close their doors. That fall rain fell day after day in the Palouse Country so crops could not be harvested and there was almost a complete crop failure. Many families pulled up stakes and left. That year they also had a serious flood. The next year in 1894 wheat dropped to 28¢ a bushel - then down to 21¢, the lowest it had ever been. Land sold for \$25 to \$29 an acre.

There were many large homes in Colfax, and people lived and dressed more formally than we do today. Families were often large. Streets were dusty and unpaved with mud axel deep when it rained. What sidewalks there were were wooden or brick. No electric lights, telephones, radios, automobiles, and even the finest mansions had no inside plumbing.

In 1895 Athenaeum was organized at the home of Mrs. Leon Kuhn. Her home was on Lake Street just about where the Marcus or Franz Apts. are today - or maybe just north of there. There were 18 charter members.

In 1931 Mrs. Ivan Chase, a charter member, wrote the following for the club: "It was on an April day 36 years ago, in my home in Colfax, that I had as callers two of my dearest friends, Mrs. Leon Kuhn and Mrs. Alfred Collidge, the object of their visit being to interest me in starting a women's club, of which there were few at that time, especially in the far west. 'And why have you waited till I am so busy with my first baby?' I asked. 'We have babies, too,' they answered and the matter was further discussed. And it was through the efforts of these two that the Athenaeum Club became a reality."

"The name chosen for the club was suggested by Capt. James Ewart, the father of Mrs. James Perkins. With two daughters and two granddaughters, Minnie and Myrtle Perkins, as charter members, he was very interested in the new venture. He was a student of the classics and he paid our new club a high compliment when he suggested the name Athenaeum, the name the ancient Greeks gave to their places of learning in honor of the goddess Athena."

Athenaeum was strictly a literary society, as all women's clubs were in those days. The meetings were devoted first to one author and then another with music and readings by the members interspersed throughout. For years no thought was given to venture into another field. All members seemed to be very talented and performed - with vocal numbers, on various musical instruments, or with readings.

Mrs. Chase mentioned in her memoirs that the charter members of the club were not women from the larger cities of the East, as would be expected, but were young women born and bred in this area with the exception of four members. Their fathers or husbands raised sheep, were pioneer merchants, carpenters, bankers, farmers and early homesteaders.

Down through the years the members spent a great deal of time and effort on their programs and entertained very elegantly each anniversary of the club with dinners where they included their husbands and other guests. In 1896 at the first anniversary they met at the Perkins home where three long tables were set up seating 60 persons. The program displayed the various talents of the members in music and poetry in a dimly lit room with special lighting on the performers.

In the early years the club gave elaborate plays, operettas, and had a glee club. An annual event was a picnic in the country, an all day affair, filled with games and humor. They loved having fun without any men around to boss them, they said. An October, 1912, Colfax Gazette article gave a detailed account of one of their fun picnics.

When the club was 10 years old, they had their first venture into civic activity. There was a triangular piece of property on the corner of Island and Main Streets, about where LeMaster and Daniels, or Don Deen's office now stands, and the ladies wanted it for a public park or plaza. On it stood a dreadful structure occupied by a Chinese laundry. They found out the land belonged to two pioneer bankers in town, and after correspondence the bankers deeded the land to Athenaeum Club. However, before a park could be formed, the electric railroad wished the land as they wanted to come into Colfax. As every citizen was supposed to do everything they could to get the much coveted railroad into town, the club gave the ground to the railroad. The railroad people, not to be outdone, gave the club \$1,000 to spend as they wished.

Part was given to the town toward the purchase of the present city park, some for the purchase of the first equipment for the domestic science class and manual training rooms in the high school, some for library books and for furnishing the school rest rooms.

Other civic activities included sponsoring the first swimming pool in Colfax, paying \$500 for the entrance pillars to Schmuck Park in the 20's, joining with Kiwanis Club in building the local tennis courts, planting of 30 trees in the park in 1932, and from 1935 to 1939 sponsoring large flower shows in to high school building every year, along with the Chamber of Commerce.

To raise money for these projects, the club members worked hard. In 1916 they sold thousands of lead pencils which they obtained at a very cheap price to raise money towards the ball parks, several years they had paper drives and became well acquainted with the railroad yards as they packed the old magazines of the town into the box cars of the train. They gave public cards parties and dances for park benefits and sponsored a minstrel show. Athenaeum's outstanding achievement was that the members were instrumental in getting the county's first public health nurse at the time when tuberculosis was very prevalent.

In later years we have been involved in various civic programs - in beautification by planting trees and for years had the hanging flower baskets on Main Street as a project, sponsor contests in sewing, poetry or art each year at the high school, sponsor a camp fire group, have sponsored girls' state participants, and have taken part in many community benefits.

Atheneum has scrapbooks covering these entire 90 years, and they make fascinating reading and reflect the history of Colfax. The club has met continuously every year except the 1918-1919 period when all public gatherings were asked to disband meetings because of the great influenza epidemic during World War I. Money normally spent during the year was given to the war effort and the Red Cross.

Our club has not changed a great deal. We still meet on Friday afternoons twice a month at members' homes and still have the same type of yearbooks and the same constitution. We are less formal than we were in former years when members came dressed with hat and gloves and referred to one another as Mrs. So and So. Athenaeum Club never served refreshments at their regular meetings until a cold January day in 1960 when the hostess brought out her coffee pot and Christmas cookies, and we found out it was so much fun that we've been doing it ever since.

## Athenaeum – 100 Years by Katie Schmick

Celebrating 100 years, the members of Athenaeum Club of Colfax, their husbands, former members and guests will gather April 23rd, 1995 at St. Patricks Catholic Church Parish Hall in Colfax.

Organized in 1895, the group still follows many of the same procedures. It is a group made up of women of all ages, interests and talents and enjoy sharing programs of current interests. It is because of the dedicated, outstanding individuals that the club can celebrate 100 years of meetings and activities.

The history of the club is closely woven with the history of Colfax. Since early pioneer days the members have promoted, worked on or raised money for Parks, Schools, City, Swim Pool and beautification of their town. We have supported Camp Fire, High School Projects and for years have sponsored Sewing, Art and Poetry Contests for youth. A book is purchased each year and donated to the Public Library. In recent years they have helped with Perkins Ice Cream Social, Colfax Christmas Lighting Contest and First Baby of the Year Fund.

In this day in age with many women working, some have maintained their membership and we are proud that the first woman Mayor of Colfax was one of our members.

Athenaeum is a Charter member of the Whitman Co. Historical Society. Four members of the Perkins family were Charter members of Athenaeum so we are happy to support the restitution of the Perkins home.

This year, in commemoration of 100 years the members of Athenaeum presented the Perkins House a beautiful Cranberry Glass Bridal Basket. The glass bowl sets in a silver plated basket holder and there is a decorative enamel design on the side of the bowl increasing the value of this early collectable item.

Minutes, Scrapbooks and Year Books starting with 1895 have been preserved and are kept in the vault at Colfax Security Co. providing a valuable insight into historical life in Colfax and 100 years of Club life for Athenaeum. In 1908 Athenaeum joined the Washington State Federation of Women's Clubs and maintained this membership until early 1950's.

We have looked to our past and are proud of our accomplishments, we are working hard on the present and look to the future with the enthusiasm that is the backbone of many Community Women's Clubs.