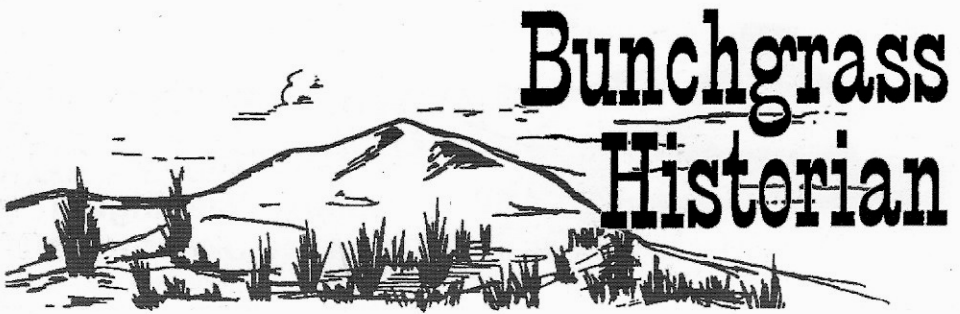
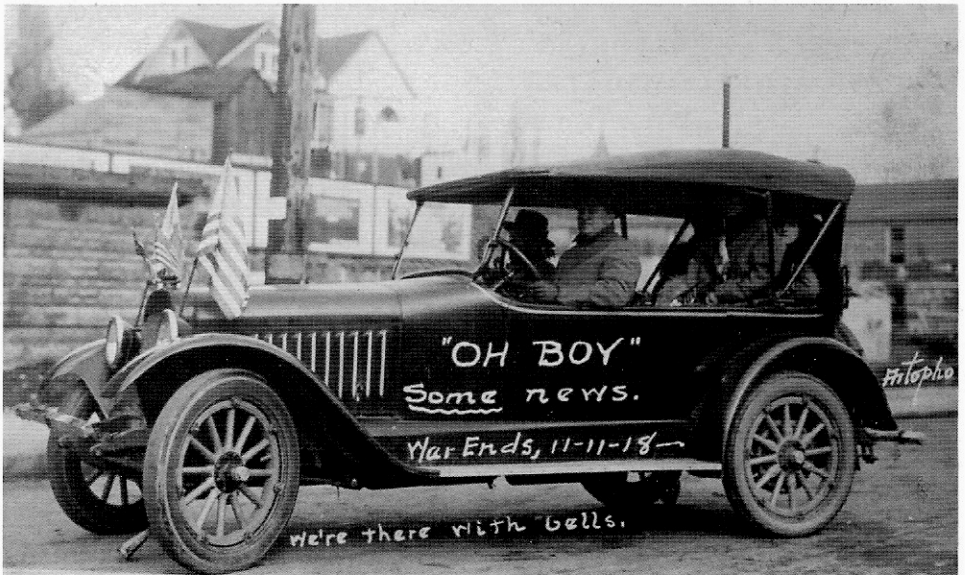


# Bunchgrass Historian



Whitman County Historical Society  
Colfax, Washington

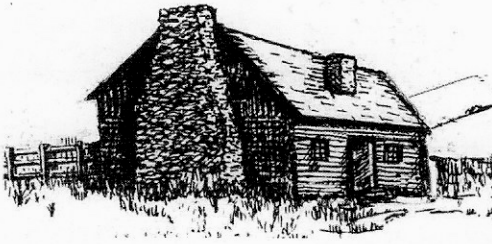
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2018



**WHITMAN COUNTY CELEBRATES  
THE END OF WORLD WAR I**

**THE FOUNDING OF THE  
FORTNIGHTLY CLUB OF PULLMAN**

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# Whitman County Historical Society Colfax, Washington

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

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## COVER

*Car decorated with flags joins the parade on north Grand Avenue, Pullman. To this postcard image, Pullman's Artopho Studio added the celebratory words: "Oh Boy" "Some news" and "We're there with Bells." Artopho made a series of images that capture the celebration in Pullman on November 11, 1918.*

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### FROM THE EDITOR

In this article on the Armistice of 1918, **Robert King** continues the story of WWI that we published in Vol. 43, No. 3 (2017). He has based this account of the celebrations on November 11, 1918, upon the published reports in the extant local papers.

**Karen Kiessling** is a long-time Pullman resident and has always taken a most active role in promoting and improving all aspects of life in Pullman. We are pleased she has shared this piece on one of Pullman's women's organizations. This article adds to the story of the founding of Pullman's oldest women's club some wonderful descriptions of the quality of life in Pullman in 1893.



*Birthplace of the Fortnightly Club, October 13, 1893. The house was on the 300 block of SW State Street in Pullman where President Enoch and Hattie Bryan lived when they first arrived in Pullman.*



The hanged effigy of the Kaiser was burned on Pullman's Main Street, with Uncle Sam, a sailor and a soldier leading the crowd of onlookers. This Artopho postcard image has the words: War Ends. Kaiser Bills Introduction to his future home.

## WHITMAN COUNTY CELEBRATES THE END OF WORLD WAR I

By Robert E. King

What transpired in Whitman County on November 11, 1918, when Germany formally surrendered in World War I, was the largest celebration in the county's history. On that day, Whitman County residents joined the nation and much of the world in an unprecedented display of relief and joy that the "Great War" was finally over.

Although Monday, November 11, 1918, was the day of Germany's surrender, a series of events starting the previous month set the stage for this momentous event. On October 17, 1918, Allied forces began their final advance toward the German border, with other Allied troops attacking elsewhere against Germany's weakened allies. By late October, Turkey signed terms of surrender, with the Austro-Hungarian Empire following suit on November 3. By this time, Germany was collapsing and revolution had broken out. On November 9, the German Kaiser abdicated and fled into exile in the Netherlands. Swiftly, a German republic was declared and soon sent peace feelers to the Allied forces. The result was the signing of surrender terms on the 11<sup>th</sup> hour of the 11<sup>th</sup> day of November in a railroad car parked in a French forest near the front lines. With that, the war was finally over!

In Whitman County, just days before the signing, stories were circulating that peace was imminent. For example, in its regular Friday issue on November 8, 1918, the *Pullman Herald* reported on its front page that "rumors are reported to have been spread in Spokane by the Irving-Whitehouse Brokerage Company, and many messages were received in Pullman, telling of the alleged capitulation of the Kaiser." Also, "One telegram was received direct from Washington by a member of the college faculty to the effect that the armistice had been signed." That and the other unverified reports were so encouraging that a pre-Armistice celebration erupted throughout much of Whitman County on November 7, after another rumor "flashed over the wires that Germany had signed the allied armistice terms."<sup>1</sup>

In Pullman, according to the local paper, on the morning of November 7, 1918, pandemonium broke loose. Reportedly, "whistles shrieked, bells rang incessantly and crowds gathered quickly to shout their happiness." Further, the entire Students Army Training Corps (S.A.T.C.) consisting of 1,200 young men at the State college (now WSU) paraded through several streets of the town. They were preceded by a flag bearer with the Stars and Stripes and the training corps band.



*The Pullman parade on Main Street*

Residents of Pullman joined the parade and assisted the soldier-students in “making the old town ring with patriotic songs.” This was despite an ongoing temporary shut-down of the college since October 23, 1918, due to the influenza epidemic. All classes had been suspended on that day, local movie theaters had been shut down, and all dances cancelled. Further, on October 24, it was also decreed that no S.A.T.C. student soldiers could go off the campus and no other students could go on the campus.<sup>2</sup> But all this was ignored in light of the wonderful news that the war had ended.

When word reached Pullman on November 7, that Germany had not yet signed surrender terms, the news failed to detract from the happiness of local residents. The general remark was: “Well, if it has not already come it is a certainty within a few days, so we might as well celebrate today anyway.” That sentiment was true throughout Whitman County. The November 7 celebrations in Palouse, Garfield, Endicott, Oakesdale, and elsewhere were equally exuberant and did not detract from a second celebration on the real Armistice Day. Or as the Tekoa paper called the restaged celebration, the “Second Peace Jubilee.”<sup>3</sup>

In retrospect, the impressive county-wide celebrations of November 7 were just a rehearsal of an even grander celebration to come four days later. And the intervening four days provided more time for planning even more impressive events, as well as allowing several towns (including Tekoa) to take advantage of supplies ordered for November 7 that had arrived too late for use that day.



Uncle Sam on a float in the Pullman Parade on N Grand Ave., near the intersection with Olsen St.

## Parade and Street Dance in Pullman

Of all the Armistice Day celebrations throughout Whitman County, the one involving the most people was held in Pullman. The story of what happened on November 11, 1918, in Pullman made front page news in both of the city's weekly papers: the November 14 edition of the *Pullman Tribune* and the November 15 edition of the *Pullman Herald*. The latter paper ran the story under the headline "Pullman Wild With Joy When Huns Sign Allies' Terms – Biggest Celebration in History of Town Marks Close of World War – Kaiser Burned in Effigy."

The *Pullman Herald* reported that word from the Associated Press was flashed to Pullman by the *Spokesman-Review*, which had received it within 15 minutes after it had become known in Washington, DC. Due to the time zone difference, Pullman received the thrilling news around midnight, Sunday, November 10, just as Monday, November 11 was breaking. According to the *Pullman Herald's* account, within minutes long blasts on the college siren and the clanging of the city fire bell awoke Pullman's 4,000 residents, and "as if by magic every one of those inhabitants became at once aware that the great world struggle of democracy versus autocracy was at an end and that democracy had triumphed." Within another 15 minutes, the main streets of the city were a seething mass of humanity and every bell in the city was ringing. Horns were blasting, cans clattering, and "every pair of lungs was being put to the crucial test."

On college hill, the piercing blast of the college siren soon sounded and continued for an hour. When it finally ended, the first round of celebrating mostly quieted down, although shouts of happiness could be heard throughout the night. Meanwhile, news spread by telephone that the town would stage a major event at 10:00 am that morning, thus enabling nearby farmers to join the celebration. All local Pullman businesses were closed for the day, and a holiday was declared for every resident of the community. By 8:30 am, the college siren again blasted loudly and was joined by the clanging of the city's fire bell for over an hour.

At 10:00 am, November 11, the official celebration began in Pullman. The main event was a parade led by a flat-bed truck on Grand Avenue (then called Grand Street). On the truck were fluttering American flags and an effigy of the Kaiser, all tarred and feathered, hanging on a scaffold. Guarding the Kaiser was "Uncle Sam," impersonated by Frank E. Sanger, a local Pullman lawyer. Two other Pullman residents portrayed a soldier and sailor in uniform. Along the side of the truck was a big sign saying "End of Autocracy," with "Uncle Sam" carrying another placard saying "Square Deal for All."

Next came the WSC Students Army Training Corps (S.A.T.C.) band in military uniform playing patriotic songs. After that, officers of the Training Corps trooped, followed by seven platoons of young men bearing arms from what was described as the "vocational section" of the S.A.T.C. After them, another 14 platoons of the "collegiate section" of the same Training Corps followed, with 80 men





Courtesy of WSU-MASC

The Artopho photo of Uncle Sam on the float with the hanged effigy of the Kaiser, who is guarded by a soldier and a sailor at each side. This effigy was later burned on Main Street.



"Our Italian Allies take part in Celebration," an entry in Pullman's parade

of the naval training unit next in line.

After the S.A.T.C., 150 Red Cross workers in uniform marched in the parade. Behind them was Lenore Emerson,<sup>4</sup> clad in glittering armor and mounted on a white horse, representing Joan of Arc. Next was a float featuring 11 young women dressed in the national costumes of the victorious allied countries, including Joy Morse<sup>5</sup> as America, Ella Ross as France, Mabel Henry<sup>6</sup> as Great Britain, Pauline Smawley<sup>7</sup> as Belgium, Ruth Coffman<sup>8</sup> as Italy, Grace Douglas Leonard as Japan, Mildred Klossner as Russia, Ruth Adams as Siam, Bessie Clark<sup>9</sup> as Romania, Elizabeth George<sup>10</sup> as Serbia, and Carrie Morse as Panama.

Another float featured a German-oppressed Belgian mother with two small children accepting the protection of an American soldier and Red Cross nurse. According to the *Pullman Tribune*, "Belgium was represented by Mrs. Brackney; the Red Cross nurse by Mrs. H. M. Beck;<sup>11</sup> the soldier by O. L. Howell, a member of the training detachment; and the Belgian orphans by Carl and Josephine Brewster."<sup>12</sup>

The *Pullman Herald's* account described another float that depicted an American soldier firing a United States 77-mm cannon with a copy of the *Spokesman-Review* newspaper placed in front of him "containing the latest news from home." The *Pullman Tribune* identified it as a 75-mm cannon manned by a "diminutive figure in khaki" with smoke belching from the muzzle of the weapon. Other prominent features of the parade were automobiles transporting elderly Grand Army of the Republic Civil War veterans and, as the *Pullman Herald* reported,



*The eleven Pullman young women dressed in the national costumes of the victorious allied countries.*

“hundreds of machines bearing Red Cross workers and civilians joined in the caravan which wended its way through the principal business and residential districts.”

The highlight of the parade was a planned ceremony at the corner of Main and Kamiaken Streets (the latter called Alder Street at the time). There, according to the *Pullman Herald*, the parade halted and “Uncle Sam” pledged “justice and liberty to all,” then touched a torch to the effigy of the Kaiser. At the same moment a mammoth Grand Army of the Republic Civil War flag was unfurled while the band played “The Star Spangled Banner.” A photo of the burning of the Kaiser’s effigy was labeled: “Kaiser Bill’s Introduction to his future home,” implying it would be in a place of eternal fire!

By 1:30 pm, three hours and thirty minutes after the parade started, the continuing celebration included the start of a large free dance on Main Street. Both old and young participated. The *Pullman Tribune’s* account reported that a section of Main Street was cleared, swept, roped off, and the dancing started shortly after noon. Meanwhile, those in cars drove throughout Pullman making noise by dragging tin cans or beating wash tubs or pieces of stove pipe. That and other joyous revelry continued throughout the town well into the evening. For all Pullman inhabitants, especially those who never went to bed after the glorious news of the Armistice first arrived in the town around midnight, it was an exhilarating but exhausting day – and one of the most memorable in all of Pullman’s history.

### **Parade and Barbeque in Colfax**

On November 15, 1918, the *Pullman Herald* commented, “Colfax people came over in goodly numbers to see how Pullman does things and certainly got their eyes full.” But Colfax, like the other county towns, held a major celebration of its own for Armistice Day, and its citizens who came to Pullman did so in between impressive events held in their town. According to the *Colfax Gazette* (November 15, 1918), after word of the armistice was received in Colfax “Screeching of the fire siren, clanging of bells, booming of cannon, blare of horns, popping of fire crackers and every other kind of noise imaginable announced to the people of Colfax that the peace terms had been signed by Germany.” Consequently, very little business was done that day in Colfax. Even the courthouse was closed, as Governor Ernest Lister had declared the day a holiday. The post office remained open but with few workers.

The main Colfax event was a parade organized to start at 1:00 pm. But before that, local bandmaster Allen and his men marched through town for much of the morning and played on every corner in the business district and at many other locations. Meanwhile, later in the morning, many people arrived from the surrounding countryside in automobiles. By noon the streets were crowded. Compared to Pullman’s parade, Colfax’s parade was much shorter. Of course, it did not contain 1,200 college military students who had swelled the size of Pullman’s pa-

rade to amazing proportions. Instead, former Mayor F. B. Rogers, who had been appointed marshal, led the shorter Colfax parade. He rode on horseback and was followed down Colfax's Main Street by bandmaster Allen and his musicians, who by that time had been playing for some hours. Next came the Civil War G.A.R. veterans, followed by a company of the National Guard, the Red Cross, the "Patriotic League," and members of the Woodmen of the World. The latter were adorned with their lodge badges and regalia. After them, representatives of other organizations joined the march, as well as hundreds of area residents.

Similar to Pullman, an effigy of Kaiser Wilhelm was created but it was used in a different way that led to a curious accident. The *Colfax Gazette* reported the story: "The Kaiser was hanged early in the morning and his body was suspended at the corner of Main and Wall streets all day. Before the police knew what was going on the straw dummy was riddled with [gun] shot and incidentally a telephone cable in range was riddled with the shot and about 50 telephones were put out of commission for a day." Another unintended result of the celebration was the cracking, due to blast concussion, of a big plate glass window in the Dreifus & Company store, when the town's Fourth of July cannon had boomed a salute in front of the store window earlier that morning.<sup>13</sup>

Unique to Colfax was a huge barbeque that fed the crowds the evening of November 11th. The following vivid account comes again from the *Colfax Gazette*:

A big steer, donated by Bloom & Sanders, was driven in from the country and slaughtered on Wall Street between the Colfax State bank and the Chadwick hardware store. A brick firebox was built and covered with big sheets of corrugated iron. Hugh chunks of beef were tossed on the iron with pitchforks and were covered with more big sheets of corrugated iron. The fire was kept roaring all the afternoon and at 5 o'clock Chef James Ryan uncovered the



*Courtesy of WSU-MASC*  
*Boy holding an American flag on side of Grand Avenue in Pullman.*



*The Colfax celebration with the Kaiser being strung up.*



*Colfax crowds on Main Street watching the hanging of the Kaiser.*

big roasts and started serving. Hundreds of loaves of bread went into the beef sandwiches and the sandwiches went into the stomachs of the hungry throng.

During the Colfax celebration, as elsewhere, many American flags were flown, but one was particularly special. It was described as a large flag purchased by the citizens of Colfax in 1889 to celebrate the achievement of statehood that year. The historic flag was draped over the entrance of the Pioneer block on Main Street and reportedly added to the patriotic event.

The Colfax paper mentioned one other significant detail that had a bearing on the nature of Colfax's Armistice Day celebration and also on others throughout the county and the nation. That was concern about the still raging, though declining, influenza pandemic that had killed millions. The paper reported that stringent regulations by health officers, who were closely watching the waning influenza epidemic, prevented public speaking in many places, including Colfax. With no public speaking and no dancing, the crowd contented itself with a noisy out-of-doors celebration. (Apparently, Pullman's afternoon street dancing on Armistice Day was more of a spontaneous event, which, if it did worry local health officials, was probably deemed uncontrollable.)

### **Speeches and Parade in Garfield**

After word of the Armistice was received in Garfield, a formal celebration was planned, as reported in the November 15 issue of the *Garfield Enterprise*. Preceding the event, Marshal Plummer fired up the steam engine of the pumping plant and equipped it with a couple of whistles, which caused much noise that the paper called "commendable." Garfield's celebration was an open-air program held on the school grounds at 2:00 pm.

Local pastor Richard E. Jope had been given charge of the program and began it with the singing of the doxology. A prayer by another Garfield minister, Rev. A. A. Palmer, followed. The first speaker was the town's mayor, Clayton H. Bently, who was also the town dentist for many years. He reflected on the service of young men of Garfield who had fought in the conflict, including one who had died. After the singing of "America," a local resident, Sergeant Rollo McDaniel, who was home on furlough, spoke on the good work of the Young Men's Christian Association (Y.M.C.A.) and the Red Cross. After his comments, "Dixie" was sung and the program turned to a speech by Robert C. McCroskey, a local businessman, retired farmer, and respected State Senator. His theme was reconciliation, and he began his talk reflecting on how the country had become one nation again after the Civil War. Accordingly, he called for similar measures of mercy toward former enemies. The paper reported that his appeal drew applause, though it is likely that a feeling of mercy for the Germans and their European allies was not universal. A "patriotic solo" was sung by Miss Vivian Whistler<sup>14</sup> and a "witty and telling





*Courtesy of WSU-MASC*

*Red Cross nurses wearing their face masks due to the Spanish Influenza. They are standing by the New Model Bakery on Main Street, Pullman.*

speech” was given by W. M. Anderson, who was the local Representative elect. Finally, “The Star Spangled Banner” was sung and Reverend Joep closed the formal meeting with a few patriotic remarks.

The Garfield Fife and Drum Corps then led a parade through town. Accompanying them were the loud sounds of bells, horns, drums, and cymbals, “both regular and improvised.” That night, a second celebration took place, with noise again a central part of the event. The paper reported, “The whistles blew, tin cans were severely man-handled, and a big fire was built on California Street.” Perhaps in the spirit of McCroskey’s speech for reconciliation with the enemy, no effigy of the Kaiser was reported as being part of the event.

### **Parade and Fireworks in Tekoa**

At Tekoa, word of the Armistice did not arrive until 7:00 am Monday morning, November 11; but once notified, the *Tekoa Blade* (November 15) reported that, “engine whistles, ringing of bells and shouts of approval from many throats proclaimed the glad tidings to those who were rubbing sleepy eyes and wondering what the fuss was about.” Thus, in contrast to other towns that had learned about the end of the war earlier in the day, Tekoa’s main celebration was scheduled for the evening.

In preparation, stores closed at 4:00 pm, and a stand was erected in the downtown area for speeches. Also, fireworks that had arrived too late for the November 7 false Armistice celebration were prepared for use at the restaged celebration that began at 7:00 pm. By that time, every whistle in town was sounding at full blast, with bells ringing, tin horns and automobile horns all shrieking, and “every possible noise-making device working overtime.”

The evening celebration began with a parade starting at the Oregon and Washington Railroad and Navigation Company’s depot. It was led by the Tekoa military band. Members marched up and down the main street past the town’s band stand while playing. Following the band were local G.A.R. Civil War veterans, Red Cross workers in uniform, and several floats and banners prepared by the shop men of the O.W.R. & N. Company’s roundhouse. One was described by the *Tekoa Blade* as “the Statue of Liberty holding in her hand the scales of justice, while before her crouched the miserable and forlorn effigy of the German Kaiser. Having been weighed in the balance against democracy and found wanting, he slouched low amidst the derisive shouts of hundreds of onlookers.” The Kaiser’s effigy was “hoisted up by the neck and hung in full view of the vast crowd assembled.”

The evening concluded with a great bonfire burning in the center of the street. The *Tekoa Blade* told of “a real Indian war dance [that] was staged around the great bonfire.” While the fire was still burning, Tekoa residents were entertained for thirty minutes with giant sky-rockets, firecrackers, and other types of fireworks. All and all, the Tekoa paper concluded that the crowd at the Armistice

celebration “was the largest ever seen on the streets of Tekoa at one time, and they voiced their approval of the ‘peace by victory’ in the heartiest manner possible.”

### **Concert and Parade in Oakesdale**

On November 15 the *Oakesdale Tribune* reported that at 2:00 pm, the local band assembled in the bandstand and gave a concert, after which its members led a parade. The paper, however, gave no details of its length or of those who had participated. But it did note that the parade was followed by an invocation by Reverend Steinhoff of the Baptist church and an address by Reverend William A. Spalding of the Methodist Episcopal church, as well as singing by a church chorus.

That evening, Oakesdale celebrants reassembled, and the band again played several selections as a bonfire was lit. The highlight came when an effigy of the Kaiser was brought in on a stretcher and, amidst applause, it was “consigned to the flames.” Overall, as with other Whitman County towns, there was much noise and general rejoicing that the end of the war had come. Unlike other local newspapers in Whitman County, Oakesdale’s paper printed the full Armistice agreement on its front page along with all its terms.

### **Private Joy and Somber Reflection in Palouse**

As in other Whitman County papers, Armistice Day was reported on the front-page of the next edition of the *Palouse Republic* (November 15). Word of Germany’s surrender had reached the town about 6:00 am and quickly spread throughout the city and surrounding country. Subsequently, much of the day and night were given over to private celebration. In contrast to other Whitman County towns’ local papers, Palouse’s gave no details of a parade or speeches. It did, however, comment that the Armistice was “the greatest piece of news that the wires had ever carried, and brought universal joy.”

While its coverage of the local celebration was minimal, the Palouse paper devoted a great deal of analysis to what peace would bring locally: “To Palouse it meant that 165 brave boys who went from this neighborhood were no longer in danger from the enemy’s guns, and that they would within a reasonable time return to their homes.” Additionally, the paper noted that while no deaths of Palouse soldiers in combat had yet been reported, two who had been injured in battle were recovering. However, no recent report had been received about the condition of a third wounded soldier. Sadly, the paper also reported that two Palouse soldiers had died in the influenza epidemic while in service.

### **Noise and Fireworks in Endicott**

Endicott’s celebration was one that also featured considerable noise. According to the *Endicott Index* (November 15), “All the bells were rung, fireworks set off, and much cheering indulged in.” Amusingly, the paper also noted that dur-

ing the morning the fire bell was rung so vigorously that the knocker was broken and had to be repaired. As in most other Whitman County towns, an effigy of the Kaiser figured in the celebration. In the morning, local resident Jay S. Rockwell drove his car around the town with the Kaiser positioned "on his back with Uncle Sam sitting astride." Reportedly, that caused much applause. The same rather bizarre scene was repeated later in the day when Frank D. Teal made the same drive. The paper noted that at noon all local businesses closed, and that many Endicott citizens later drove to Colfax to attend that town's celebration and barbeque.

Unlike reports in other Whitman County papers, the story of Endicott's Armistice Day celebration was placed on the seventh page in the local paper, with the first page devoted to national and international news about the Armistice. It included pictures of five American representatives in Europe participating in the international conference to determine the terms of the Armistice. It also had other stories including ones about the Kaiser and the work of future President Herbert Hoover directing aid to starving people in Europe whose livelihood had been devastated by the war. (Hoover's fine work would later help propel him into the White House in the later 1920s.)

### **Bonfire, Dynamite, and Parades in Winona**

A short account of Winona's Armistice Day celebration appeared in the November 12, 1918, issue of the *Spokesman-Review* (p. 11). It stated: "All business in Winona was suspended and the town has been holding a genuine celebration over the news of the signing of the armistice. Bonfires, dynamite explosions, ringing cheers and the remnants of the Winona band together with parades in which all joined, showed that folks were rejoicing over the good news which, being put out by the Associated Press, we know to be true."

### **Dynamite and Parade in LaCrosse**

Lacrosse's revelry for the German surrender also involved dynamite, and it nearly cost a life. On November 15, the *LaCrosse Clipper* told this curious story: John Neiertz<sup>15</sup> had a quantity of dynamite sticks and these were turned loose and buildings shook, windows rattled, ears ached, but no one cared. Mr. Neiertz, after exploding a quantity of dynamite, held one stick a little too long. He had just dropped the stick, scraped a little earth and gravel over it and turned half way around when it went off. Mr. Neiertz was considerably scratched about the right side of his face and his right hand stopped considerable of the gravel. As for his trousers, they looked like the pair put on Kaiser Bill after the boys got through bombarding him. It was a close call for Mr. Neiertz and incidentally it put an end to the dynamite as part of the celebration.

As indicated, an effigy of the Kaiser also played a role in LaCrosse's Armistice Day events that started early in the morning with "a few shouts" and the "ringing of a bell." Later, stores closed and flags and bunting appeared "almost as if by magic." By 8:30 every noise-making device possible was "announcing the downfall of kaiserism." Before the celebration was an hour old, the Kaiser Bill effigy was hanged on Main Street. But it didn't last long. Similar to the fate of the Kaiser's effigy in Colfax, the LaCrosse paper reported that: "Revolvers and shotguns were soon popping hilariously at the stuffed figure and the bombardment brought his majesty to the ground. LaCrosse, like the rest of the world wanted none of him." The noise level increased with whistles from railroad engines, steam-driven blasts from the flour mill, and anvils from the Guske blacksmith shop making "their terrible boom heard for miles."

As more crowds gathered, Red Cross ladies, assisted by Rev. Randall, organized what became an impressive parade scheduled for 2:30 pm. To lead the parade, the women of the Red Cross secured the "large touring car of Al Camp," which they hastily decorated. Also impromptu, musicians assembled and "men who hadn't tooted for years" offered themselves. The *LaCrosse Clipper* wryly reported: "By working diligently on one piece over the entire route of the parade [the musicians] were able to hit it off [and] by the time the procession ended ... some of the crowd thought they recognized what the brave musicians were trying to play." In all, over 80 cars drove in the parade that wound all through town.

After the parade ended, Rev. Randall headed an open-air program in LaCrosse. It included a musical selection by the amateur band, the singing of "The Star Spangled Banner" and speeches by Rev. Carlson of the local Norwegian church; Mr. Nolan, Superintendent of the LaCrosse schools; and Rev. Randall. That night the townspeople again assembled for a huge bonfire on Main Street. The LaCrosse paper concluded its report on the day's events by saying: "This closed the celebration of the most momentous event in history, the first international holiday, marking the beginning of a new era for the world, and the end for all time of despotism and monarchy."

### Conclusion

Sadly the hopeful words of the LaCrosse paper about the war's end and the new era to come proved untrue. A generation later, the world would be fighting again. What had been called "the Great War" or "the war to end all wars" became "World War I." It was renamed to distinguish it from the new second world conflict that began in Europe in 1939. Yet, the LaCrosse paper was correct in predicting that the "momentous event" of the Great War's end on November 11, 1918, would be remembered. A year later, in November 1919, President Woodrow Wilson proclaimed November 11<sup>th</sup> as the first national commemoration of Armistice Day. In 1926, a joint resolution of Congress recommended that the annual com-

memoration of November 11<sup>th</sup> should include thanksgiving and prayer exercises designed to perpetuate peace through good will and mutual understanding between nations. In 1938, a federal law made Armistice Day a federal holiday; and in 1954, following World War II, November 11 was renamed Veterans Day to honor all American veterans of all wars.

In Whitman County most, if not all, towns began commemorating Armistice Day a year later and many continued to do so annually as part of today's Veterans Day ceremonies. For example, on November 11, 1919, Pullman organized another impressive parade with college military cadets and war veterans marching through the town. Local businesses closed from 10:30 am until noon and WSC students were dismissed early from their morning classes to attend and witness a downtown flag-raising ceremony.<sup>16</sup>

Similarly, other Whitman County towns also staged public commemorative events on that same day in 1919, and some would eventually erect public monuments to remember their local soldiers who served in the Great War. (Many of these monuments later added the names of more local soldiers who served and died in other wars.) But the impressive outpouring of joy and the intensity of the celebrations of November 11, 1918, marking the end of World War I, were never again matched throughout Whitman County. They deserve remembering as we approach the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Veteran's Day

1 A week later on Nov. 15, 1918, the *Pullman Herald*, p. 1 described that report as a "United Press hoax."

2 1920 W.S.C. "Chinook" yearbook, p. 382. The flu ban wasn't officially lifted until November 16, 1918.

3 11/15/1918 The *Tekoa Blade*, Tekoa, Wash., p. 1.

4 Lenore Emerson, born in Ohio about 1898, was a daughter of Rufus and Ellen Emerson of Pullman.

5 Joy C. Morse, born about 1897 in Washington State, was living in Pullman with her mother Maxine Morse.

6 Mabel M. Henry, born about 1901 in Oregon, was a daughter of Murray and Lois Henry, Pullman.

7 Pauline Smawley, born about 1902, was the daughter of Joseph and Davie Smawley, Pullman.

8 Ruth Coffman, born about 1898, was a daughter of Marion and Eliza Jane Coffman, Pullman.

9 Bessie Clark, born about 1896, was later a public school teacher in Pullman in 1920.

10 Elizabeth George, born about 1902, was living with her parents Harry H. & Elizabeth C. H. George.

11 H. M. Beck operated a silent movie theater in Pullman and also ran the Model Bakery.

12 Carl N. Brewster born about 1914, and his sister Josephine, about a year younger, were children of Dr. Carl Brewster, a long-time Chemistry Professor at WSC, and his wife Alfhild.

13 Simon Dreifus, born about 1873 in Germany, operated a hardware store in Colfax for several years. He and his wife Betty and their 3 children lived on Perkins Avenue in Colfax in 1920.

14 Vivian Whistler, born about 1901, was a daughter of Ameda C. & Adelaide M. Whistler, of Garfield.

15 John P. Neiertz, born about 1873 in Luxembourg, was married and living at Lacrosse where he was employed a road foreman. His work in road construction may explain his penchant for using dynamite and his ability to acquire some at short notice.

16 11/7/1919 *Pullman Herald*, Pullman, Wash., p. 1

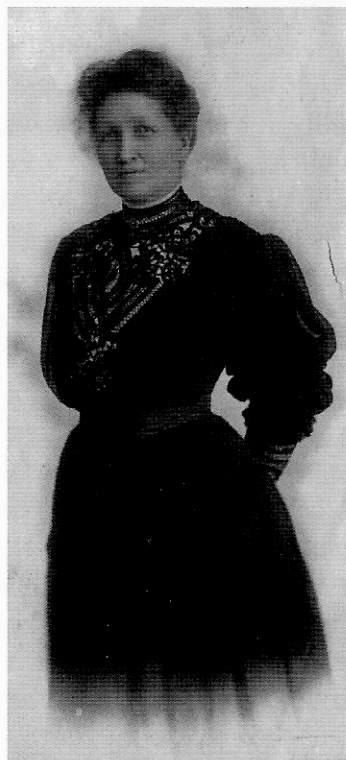
# THE FOUNDING OF THE FORTNIGHTLY CLUB OF PULLMAN

By Karen Kiessling

Soon after her arrival in Pullman, Harriet E. Bryan, wife of the second president of Washington State College, Enoch A. Bryan, founded the Fortnightly Club of Pullman, the oldest women's study group in Pullman. It was 1893, a terrible year in American history. The Panic of 1893 had destroyed thousands of fortunes, closed banks, and plunged tens of thousands of Americans into poverty. Locally, excessive rains all but destroyed grain harvest in the Palouse region. But despite the rigors of the weather and the grim economic times, "Hattie" Bryan sought to lift the spirits of a small number of women interested in literature and learning, and—by forming a literary society—to set an example for the entire town. This year, 2018, the club celebrates 125 years of unbroken life, meeting every fortnight during the academic year from 1893 to the present.

Enoch and Hattie Bryan came to Pullman from Vincennes, Indiana, where Enoch had served as president of Vincennes College. They brought with them on the train a seedling elm tree from the garden of the American poet, James Russell Lowell, whose home was called Elmwood. Today, that seedling stands proudly on the grounds of Bryan Hall on the campus of Washington State University. A plaque describes its arrival 125 years ago. The tree is watched carefully by groundskeepers, and seedlings from it are in place should "The Lowell Elm" succumb to disease.

In a paper she wrote in 1908 for the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration of the Fortnightly Club, Hattie Bryan recalled her arrival in Pullman. The very first night she and her husband spent in Pullman, a murder was committed in the Artesian Hotel. At the time, she said, she wondered if that was a western custom and noted that wood stoves and coal oil lamps were



*Courtesy of WSU-MASC  
Harriet E. Bryan, an Artopho  
photo taken in 1906*

the universal rule, as the electric plant had winked out with the Panic. As she noted “There were three telephones in town, one at the college and one at each railway station.” “The campus was a corn field,” she complained. “In trying to orient myself,” she added, “I inquired the way down town and was directed to ‘follow the trail’ over the hill, for most Pullman streets were then guiltless of walks” (WSU MASC Fortnightly Club Papers MS2004-04, Box 1).

The “unusual weather,” however, was the biggest problem of all. “I well remember the day we landed in the village at the old Northern Pacific station... Raining!” she wrote. “I think I never saw it rain harder, and the mud! How the struggling horses ever managed to get us through it, up to our rented home on ‘Sunnyside,’ named in jest I thought, to the house... Sunnyside indeed! The sun did not appear for a month, and then came snow and more mud.”

The rain had a disastrous effect on the local economy, especially agriculture, which was the main industry of the Palouse. When the Bryans arrived, Hattie noted that it had already been raining for a month and tried to explain the effect it had on local residents. “The earth yields so bountifully, it would seem that want could not dwell. But those who came to make their fortunes did not bring much money with them, and so borrowed, at ruinous rates, and when the panic came were able to pay neither principal nor interest.” In particular, the poor farmers were “in despair,” she said. “They had always counted on harvesting in September and October and on leaving the sacks of wheat piled in the fields,” but that fall “half of the crop was standing in the field ruined, and the other half was in the fields piled in sacks rotting.”

Yet Hattie was resilient and battled possible depression by taking action. “Gloom and despair had settled down upon many homes, where a few months before there had been bright expectations and fond hopes. Yet here we were, and some of us at least felt the responsibilities upon a college community, of literary development.” Hattie thus decided to call together “a few choice spirits to chat over the tea-cups the possibilities of an organized effort in this direction.”

Twelve women responded to Hattie’s idea to form a literary society and chose the name Fortnightly. “Largely,” wrote Hattie, “because we spent some time looking over the program or year book of the Fortnightly Club of Old Vincennes”—to which she had belonged.



From that day to this, the goal of the club has been the reading and discussion of works having literary merit. A member is assigned a topic, book, or author and produces a paper or program on that topic. Active membership is limited to 25 because meetings take place in members' homes. Describing the early days of the group, Hattie said: "In the study of literature as a rule only virile authors have been pursued, - Shakespeare, Browning, Ruskin, Emerson, Carlyle, Goethe, Ibsen, Tolstoy, Dante - and some have plunged headlong into Greek tragedy. The ethical rather than the philosophical aspects have as a rule received greater attention. Not very often have we wandered into the mysteries of religion, or the vagueries of politics, or the profundities of economics." Her oblique reference to gender and her use of the word "virile" meant that women writers were not chosen. Today that has changed, and countless women authors have been the topic of programs throughout the years.

Hattie closed her reminiscence with this comment: "The discussions have been lively, and I can only say that there are many of us who love 'Fortnightly' and who have found in it a source of strength, and light, and a better intellectual life."

An enduring tradition of Fortnightly, which today meets on Tuesday in the daytime, is to hold a dinner every fifth year as a special celebration. Each member may bring one guest to this evening banquet and program. The fourth such dinner, in 1913, was a banquet in the newly completed President's Residence on campus, hosted by President and Mrs. Bryan. One hundred years later, in 2013, the dinner was held there again, with President and Mrs. Elson Floyd hosting the club. This year the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Dinner will be held at the Black Cypress Restaurant, which is housed in the Webb Block on Main Street in Pullman. Since the red brick building was erected in 1891, Enoch and Hattie Bryan may well have been in the room in which Fortnightly members will gather. In the past it was the home of a barbershop, a jewelry store, and the *Pullman Herald* newspaper, as well as a number of other businesses over the decades since the Bryans lived in Pullman.

Members of Fortnightly have scored a number of firsts for Pullman over the years. Ruth Tousley, a lifelong member, was the first woman to be elected to the Pullman City Council, in 1951. Mary Stevens, another member of the City Council, served for many decades. Barbara Rayburn, councilmember in the 1980's, created the capital improvement program for

the city. I, myself (Karen Kiessling), was the first woman mayor of Pullman.

I have been a member of the Fortnightly Club for nearly 50 years. I value my membership, as it has been the activity that has most stretched me intellectually throughout the years. I have met writers I would never have found on my own, and I have read and talked about stories that gave me new ideas and challenged settled notions. Fortnightly is work, it is fun, and it is worthwhile. It is a treasured part of my life.

I think of Hattie Bryan, riding that train in 1893 from Indiana to the wilds of the fledgling Washington State College, and carrying that elm seedling. What she planted in Pullman was a far greater gift to the 277 women whose lives have since been enriched by membership in Fortnightly—and all because she chose to combat “gloom and despair” by gathering together “a few choice spirits” to talk “of literary development.”

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The charter members of Fortnightly—those twelve “choice spirits”—were:

Harriet E. Bryan, founder, who believed women needed to enjoy reviews and discussions of scholarly literary subjects.

Bessie Williams, Hattie’s sister.

Belle Waller, wife of Osmer Waller, vice president of WSC. Waller Hall is named for him.

Nancy van Doren, an English teacher and librarian at the college. Van Doren Hall is named for her.

Helen Fulmer, wife of Elton Fulmer, the head of the Department of Chemistry. Fulmer Hall is named for him. Dr. Fulmer authored the Pure Food Law of Washington.

Rowena Windus, wife of Pullman businessman and former mayor Walter Windus. Windus Street on Military Hill is named for him.

Annie Mattoon Watt, wife of pharmacy professor George Watt (later owner of Watt’s Pharmacy in downtown Pullman).

Catherine Wallis, wife of townsman William Wallis. She was the mother of Fortnightly member Serena Wallis Mathews, a distinguished political activist. Catherine was also the grandmother of Fortnightly member Catherine Mathews Friel, who died at the age of 101, while still active in the club. Catherine named her son, Wallis Friel, a lawyer and eminent judge, after his great-grandfather.

Adelaide Lilley, wife of George Lilley, the first president of WSC

(1890-1892). Mr. Lilley was removed as president, but much to the consternation of his replacement, President Bryan, Lilley stayed on campus as a teaching professor for a year (*Historical Sketch of the State College of Washington*, E.A. Bryan).

Annie Howard, assistant professor of English at WSC.

Margaret Morrell, wife of Chas. O. Morrell, a clerk at A. T. Ferris & Co., General Merchandise, in downtown Pullman.

Ella Watt Jackson, wife of Henry James Jackson, a druggist and dealer in books, stationery, fancy and toilet articles (*Pullman City Directory*, 1891).



Courtesy of WSU-MASC

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*Armistice Day parade float on Pullman's Grand Avenue*