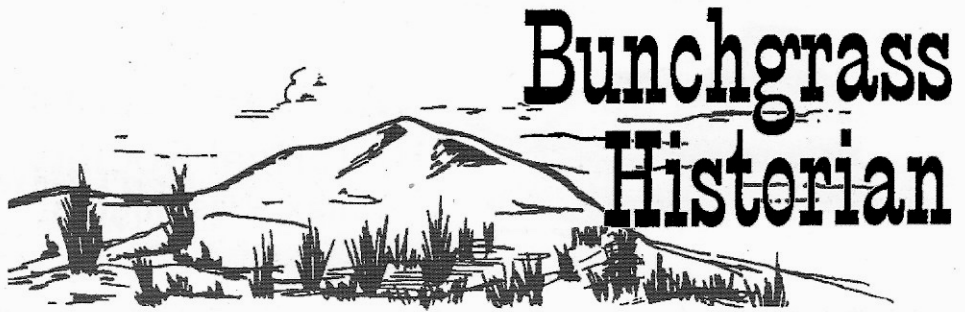


# Bunchgrass Historian



**Whitman County Historical Society  
Colfax, Washington**

Volume 44  
Number 3  
2018



**THE MOORAGE**

**PRESIDENT TAFT VISITS PULLMAN**

**THE HARVEST OF 1893**

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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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*The Moorage was constructed from salvaged material in 1968 by Victor Moore for his MFA Thesis from WSU. It is located on private property on Armstrong Road west of Pullman and is not accessible to the public.*

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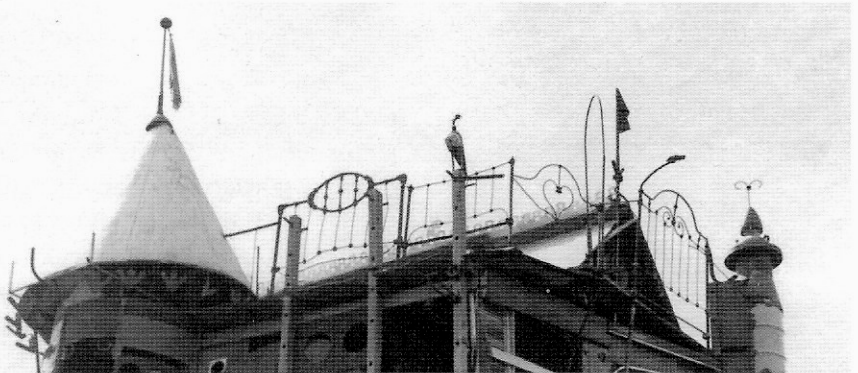
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### FROM THE EDITOR

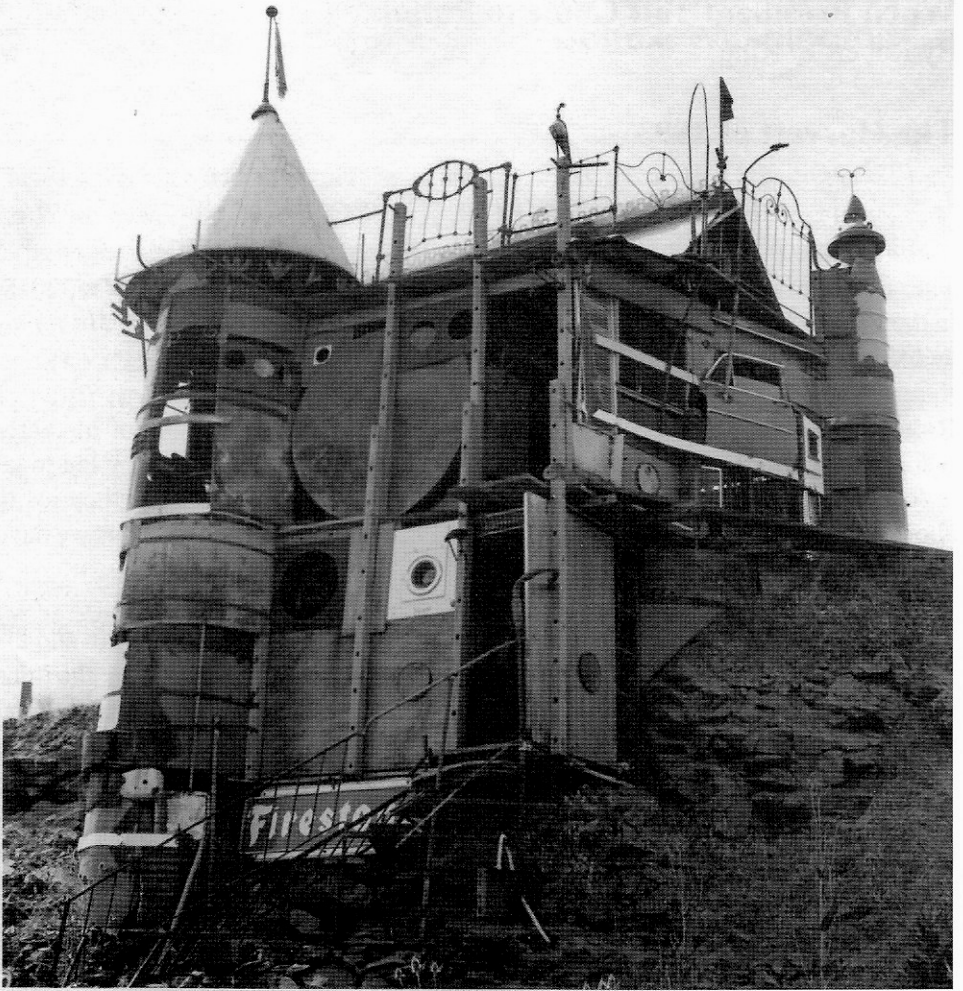
This article on the Moorage first appeared in the *Daily News* of October 25, 2018, in the Nearby History column. It is based upon a 1971 article in the *WSU Hilltopics* and Vic's own words taken from his thesis.

**Robert King's** article on Taft's two visits to Pullman is a spinoff of his early memory of John F. Kennedy's visit to Pullman in 1960. That memory led to an article on the Kennedy visit (*Bunchgrass Historian*, Vol. 33, No. 2) and curiosity about other notable people who have visited Pullman over the years. Thus we have this account of the Taft visits.

The Harvest of 1893 is based entirely upon the writings of Enoch E. Bryan and his wife Hattie Bryan. He had arrived in August 1893, before the rains began; the rains started on the first day of classes at the college. Hattie arrived later in October and was shocked by all the mud. Both had no familiarity or expectations about Palouse weather. This article appeared in the *Daily News* on August 29, 2018.



*A detail of the Moorage roofline showing the elaborate railings*



*The Moorage looking west*

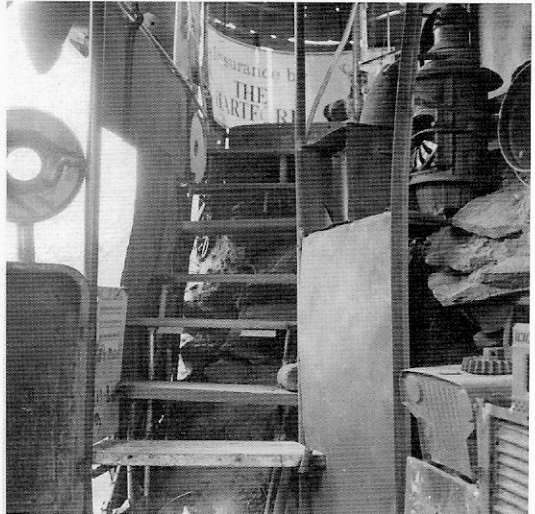
## THE MOORAGE

A Castle on the Palouse? Yes, we have our own light-hearted version just outside of Pullman. It is a sculpture made by Victor Wayne Moore from an assemblage of discarded materials. Vic was known and loved as the art teacher in Pullman where he taught in the Public schools from 1954 to 1979. He led his students to see the world as art.

The Moorage was built in 1968 as his thesis for a master's degree in art from WSU. Although he worked from a small sketch showing just where the main tower was to be and where he would place the winding staircase, it did not turn out that way. As he put it: "I tried to make it more visually pleasing. Visually the whole northeast side was weak, so I put up another tower," (*WSU Hilltopics*, February, 1971). He explained that his intent was to build a structure in which the traditional forms, functions, and materials of practical architects would be replaced by impractical and capricious arrangement and choices. The materials came from county garbage dumps within a 20-mile radius of Pullman and were collected over a number of years: parts of car bodies, household appliances, farm machinery, and other cast-off objects.

Rusted and weather-beaten this now 50 year old assemblage stands on the edge of a rock quarry about four miles west of Pullman. It is an imposing three-stories-high structure, with towers, winding staircase, windows that really aren't, and a cone-shaped dome. And it has absolutely no practical, utilitarian function. It is a celebration; it is an absurd labor of love. As Vic would say: It is something impractical in a practical world. The site is impractical. The material is impractical. And the size is impractical.

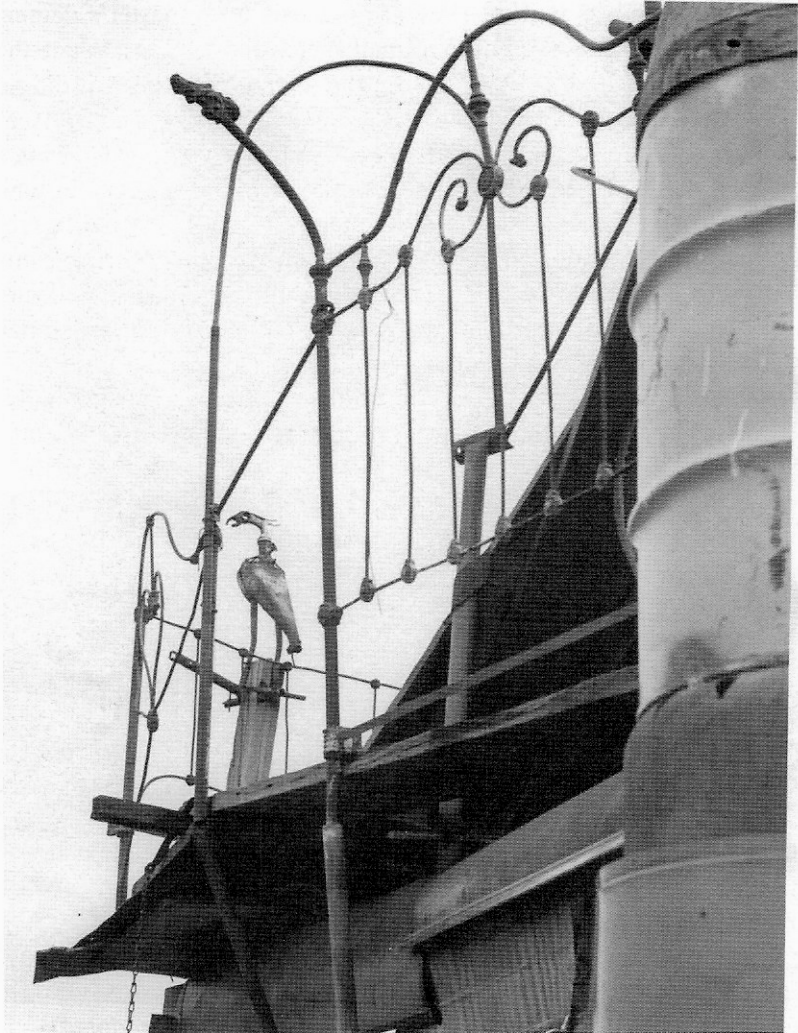
The materials arrived piecemeal. They were carried in by Moore to their final resting place and then welded into position. Thus these parts retain their integrity. For example, a car door welded into a tower wall still retains a car door appearance and the window glass raises and lowers. One sees bent



*Interior stairway detail*

and faded road signs, creaky bed springs, rusty chains from dead combines, grain augers, and old wrought-iron bedsteads with elaborate curlicues. Things just kept getting added to the project.

If one looks just right, the top of the castle is visible from Highway 195 at Armstrong Road. Please remember that the “Junk Castle” is located on private land and the site ought not to be entered without permission. Catching a glimpse through the trees is something that might have caused Vic to smile.



*Roof railing detail*



*Tower detail*



*The Moorage looking southwest*



# WHEN PRESIDENT WILLIAM HOWARD TAFT CAME TO PULLMAN (TWICE!)

By Robert E. King

In the fall of 1911, President William Howard Taft made an extensive train trip through the nation that brought him to Pullman for a brief appearance. He spoke for only a few minutes from the back of his train car at the Northern Pacific Railway Depot, now owned by the Whitman County Historical Society. Then he was off to Spokane. Over eight years later, in the spring of 1920, Taft visited Pullman again, gave a talk on the Washington State College campus, and spent the night.

William Howard Taft (1857-1930), a former state judge from Ohio, served as Secretary of War in President Theodore Roosevelt's cabinet starting in 1904. With Roosevelt's support, Taft ran for the presidency in 1908 and was inaugurated president in March of 1909. However, he served only a single term (1909-1913) as Roosevelt opposed him in the next election. Roosevelt ran as a progressive on his Bull Moose Party ticket, splitting the Republican vote. Consequently, Democrat Woodrow Wilson was elected president in November of 1912.

Just over a year before the 1912 election, Taft spent 46 days touring the country by train. The purpose was to connect to the American people, but the trip, coming so close to the next election, also had its political overtones. If Taft could make himself and his views better known to the public, it might help his prospects for re-election.

It was on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of his extensive cross-country train trip that Taft came to Pullman. He arrived on Saturday, October 7, 1911, at 6:17 pm, as daylight was fading. Before 7:00 pm he was gone. His brief appearance in the town was just from the back platform of



*President William Howard Taft*

his train car, from which he gave a brief speech lasting about 10 minutes. So, why such a short time in Pullman?

In a front-page story the day before the visit, the *Pullman Tribune* explained what happened. Pullman had not been on Taft's original schedule; his visit occurred from a change made only a few days prior to his arrival. The *Pullman Tribune* explained how Pullman got on the president's schedule. The president's train, coming through Moscow from Salt Lake City, had a scheduled stop in Pullman to pick up the Gonzaga College football team for its return to Spokane after a "practice game" with the Washington State College team.<sup>1</sup> When he learned this in early October, Rev. Charles H. Harrison,<sup>2</sup> secretary for the Pullman Chamber of Commerce, sent a telegram to Charles D. Hillis, private secretary of the president, at Salt Lake City. The message said that "one thousand students of the State College of Washington, representing all parts of the state, and five thousand citizens of Pullman and vicinity join to request that the president's train stop at Pullman five or ten minutes" and that the president deliver a short address from the train podium.<sup>3</sup> Soon word came back that the president agreed to the unscheduled stop in Pullman.

Certain conditions were placed on the visit related to security for the president and management of the expected crowd. It was only 10 years after a sitting United States president, William McKinley, had been assassinated while making a public appearance. So keeping the current president safe was a prime consideration. Indeed, in 1912, a year after Taft's visit to Pullman, former president Theodore Roosevelt was shot and wounded while giving a speech in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The telegraph message confirming the president's brief stop warned that "unless a clear space of 30 feet was provided the train would not stop"<sup>4</sup> at the Northern Pacific Depot. To help ensure the space and manage the crowd, and also to provide security for the president, the Pullman papers reported that Lieutenant Claire Bennett would lead WSC military student cadets who would serve as a guard for the president while he spoke from the rear platform of the train. These would augment the small Pullman police force. Since it would be twilight when the president arrived, special lighting was planned. Strings of hundreds of incandescent light bulbs were placed around the Pullman depot, with two gas lights in addition.

On October 7, 1911, all went according to plan. The presidential train left Moscow and at 6:17 pm was in Pullman, where it was met at the Northern Pacific depot by a large crowd estimated at 3,000-5,000 people.<sup>5</sup> The crowd had been told to keep 30 feet back from the train and complied. But when the president appeared, he motioned people to come closer for his talk, which delighted those already close to the train, although it didn't help those at a distance. The crowd probably spilled into the town center and back up onto the edge of College Hill.



Drawing of Taft in the 1913 *Chinook*, p. 265

Indeed, the majority of college students and townspeople enthusiastically witnessed the brief visit by the first (and still only) sitting United States president to come to Pullman.<sup>6</sup> All three local Pullman newspapers, the *Pullman Herald*, the *Pullman Tribune*, and the *Evergreen*, carried the story of his visit after it occurred, with each quoting some or all of the president's speech. The *Evergreen* also noted that Taft was in "excellent" voice, so that his "ringing sentences could be heard by the entire throng who had assembled to pay tribute to the first man of the land."<sup>7</sup>

Introducing Taft was Congressman William L. LaFollette, who had joined the president's train in Moscow and accompanied it to Spokane. LaFollette was a

member of Congress from March 1911 to March 1919. He was a Whitman County farmer, stock raiser, and orchardist, with an extensive orchard at Wawawai. As the president began speaking, his words quickly found approval. He spoke of the trip's value for him, saying that he needed to learn "the needs of the country as viewed from the standpoint of the different parts of the country." Then, seeing many young men in the crowd, Taft turned his brief talk into one encouraging young men to become farmers, as agriculture was so important to the nation.

Particularly appealing to those listening from the college's agricultural department were Taft's complimentary words about progress being rapidly made in Washington State for improving crop yields, which was in part a result of research being done at Washington State College. The President noted: "There is no branch in which it is more important than in the agricultural field, for upon agriculture we depend entirely. I hope many of the young men I see before me will become farmers. Farming is a profession, and unless we learn how to take out of the soil double the amount per acre that we now take out of it in fifty years we are going to be dependent on other countries for our food. I don't think that time will ever come. I have confidence in the American farmer, and especially in the embryo farmers [WSC students] who are studying the principles and the scientific rules that apply to agriculture."<sup>8</sup>

President Taft's speech was warmly received and was followed by a gesture of appreciation organized by the Pullman Chamber of Commerce under its president, Frank M. Slagle (1855-1934). Two boxes of Jefferies variety apples were placed on the train—a small box of select apples for the president and a bigger box for the enjoyment of others in his party and the train crew.

While still on the train headed for Tacoma by way of Spokane, President Taft had his personal secretary write a letter of gratitude to the Pullman Chamber of Commerce, as follows:

"Gentlemen — The president wishes me to thank you cordially for your courtesy in sending the delicious apples to his car while in Pullman this afternoon. He very greatly appreciates your thoughtfulness.

It gave him a great deal of pleasure to have the opportunity to greet your citizens today, and he is most appreciative of the cordial welcome extended to him. Sincerely yours, Charles D. Hillis, Secretary to the President."<sup>9</sup>

Several days after the president's brief visit, the *Pullman Herald* provided more insight as to why the sitting president was making such a lengthy trip throughout the country in late summer and fall of 1911, listing four reasons:

"In the first place, he is very anxious to explain to the people his reasons for vetoing the recent tariff bills; secondly, he hopes to find out by personal observation what the political feelings of the people are; third, he desires to overcome the western dislike for the public land policies of his administration; and fourth, he wishes to strengthen public sentiment in favor of his arbitration treaties. The

middle west heard his tariff speeches while the states of Colorado, Wyoming and Idaho were favored with his views on conservation and the disposal of the public lands.”<sup>10</sup>

The November 1912 presidential election occurred just over a year after Taft’s visit to Pullman. After leaving office, Taft became professor of law at Yale University on March 2, 1913, and in 1921 he was appointed by President Warren G. Harding to become Chief Justice of the Supreme Court. Taft held the position until a month before his death on March 8, 1930, at age 72. But between his term as president and appointment to the Supreme Court, Taft also gave occasional public lectures throughout the country. In 1920, the Ellison-White Lyceum Bureau arranged for Taft a series of paid public talks. The first, on May 17, 1920, was in Great Falls, Montana, followed by one in Helena, and then in Missoula. Two days later he was in Pullman for an overnight visit from May 21 to 22, 1920. Interestingly, none of the printed stories about his 1920 visit to Pullman mentioned that it was his second time in the town.

On April 19, 1920, the *Evergreen* was again the first Pullman paper to announce the former president’s upcoming visit. It reported on its front page that Taft would give an evening lecture in the WSC auditorium in just over a month as part of his current lecture tour. The article also commented: “That ex-President William Howard Taft has lost none of his former popularity has been evidenced throughout the trip as he has spoken before crowded houses and his lectures are given eager attention and he is heartily applauded. While Mr. Taft’s addresses are primarily a discussion of the world problems of the day, at the same time he takes occasion to dabble just a little in the present political situation.”

Another topic briefly covered in the same story was the former president’s interest in the League of Nations proposed by President Wilson, but snarled in politics and personalities so much that the United States had not yet joined (and never did): “The former president is still intensely interested in the League of Nations and treaty, but feels that both sides are culpable in the delay. He believes compromise could be easily obtained if the proper methods were used in bringing it about.”

The *Evergreen’s* initial story was followed by more information in the next issue on April 22, and the April 23, *Pullman Herald* reprinted the prior day’s *Evergreen* story and picture. But the first detailed plans for Taft’s upcoming visit to Pullman appeared on May 3 in the *Evergreen* as part of the slate of events scheduled for May 21, the college’s annual Campus Day. The plan was that the former president would give an afternoon address before his evening speech, and that the governor of Washington, Louis B. Hart, was invited to attend. It noted that “arrangements have been made with one of the aviation companies of Spokane to have a plane here for the day. Passengers will be carried and aerial picture[s] of Pullman and the campus will [be] taken.” However, it also noted that the latter

event would occur only with a guarantee that at least 20 passenger flights would be made by the company.

More plans were revealed in the May 7, *Pullman Herald* (p. 9) article entitled: "Taft To Eat Lunch At Campus Day Feed." The former president would arrive May 21 by automobile from Spokane and would be a guest of WSC President Ernest O. Holland during his stay. Taft would be hosted by the college student body for lunch, after which he would address the students in the college auditorium at 2:00 pm. To help cover costs, a 50-cent admission was to be charged. Students from the University of Idaho in Moscow might also be invited. After the lecture, Taft was to witness track events at Rogers Field.<sup>11</sup> Finally, at 8:15 pm after dinner, Taft would address Pullman townspeople in the college auditorium for a \$1 admission charge.

On May 10, the *Evergreen* announced the titles of both his upcoming talks. The afternoon lecture was entitled "Americanism and Bolshevism," and the evening speech was called "Capital, Labor and the Soviet." Both directly connected to the situation in Russia, where the Bolsheviks had come to power after great turmoil and loss of life, including the execution of the tsar of Russia and his family. The world was watching with apprehension about what was happening and what might come next. Taft would present his views. Tickets for these events were on sale at Watt's Pharmacy in downtown Pullman and in the student bookstore on campus.

On May 13, the *Evergreen* printed more details about the upcoming visit. The article noted that Taft has "delighted audiences throughout the East and Middle West on his present tour." It elaborated on Taft's opinion that the United States should join the League of Nations, and that the Senate and president needed to compromise and make it happen. It also recounted the former president's views "against a big military policy" and said that he had "emphatically stated that a big army and navy were not essential to the welfare of America." Importantly, it revealed that former President Taft would arrive in Pullman from Spokane on May 21 at 11:30 am, at the Northern Pacific Depot in downtown Pullman.

The week before the former president's visit, the *Pullman Herald* noted the following on the front page: "While not a candidate for the presidency, Mr. Taft is one of the outstanding personalities of the country and is an authority on national and international questions. The subject on which he will speak is one of intense interest throughout the world and it will be a privilege for the people of Pullman and other towns in the Inland Empire to have the opportunity of hearing him."

The paper reported that a committee making arrangements was preparing "to accommodate at least 2000 people" at the evening lecture. It predicted: "Many prominent republicans of the Inland Empire will be present for these lectures." In an effort to make the day less complicated, the Campus Day track meet events that Taft would have witnessed were postponed a week.

The *Evergreen* on May 20, the day before the former president's arrival

in Pullman, reported that there would be a change in plans. A terse, three-sentence summary statement on its front page announced that Taft would speak only once in Pullman that day – just at 8:00 pm and not in the afternoon. It also stated: “All students are requested to be in their seats before 8 o’clock in order that the lecture may start promptly.” It added that the “Campus Day dance” would not start until after the speech.

The next issue of the *Evergreen*, printed on May 24, 1920, three days after Taft’s appearance, focused on both what occurred and the nature of Taft’s evening speech to a “well filled auditorium.” The event went off as planned with the former president arriving by train at the downtown Northern Pacific Depot (just as he had done in 1911, although that was not mentioned). He was greeted there by school children and townspeople who were lined up on both sides of the street to see him. Taft was immediately taken to the WSC president’s mansion on campus and then to Bryan Hall, where he appeared with Washington State Governor Louis B. Hart for the luncheon. They were the guests of College President Holland and his wife and were joined by a number of other state and local dignitaries. Following the luncheon, Taft delivered a short talk after an introduction by President Holland. The *Evergreen* quoted Taft’s words: “I am delighted to be here on your ‘undressed day.’<sup>12</sup> That brings me closer to you. We can talk about things of an intimate character. You have all lived through the war, many of you have taken part in it, which has inspired you to great things, to lift you out, to give you to know what your spirits and souls are capable of. I am proud to know that the first of the sacrifices was the college men and women of this country. It was the strong patriotism of



Courtesy WSU MASC

President Taft addressing the campus from Bryan Hall in 1920

your youth when the crisis came, the same expression that carried the revolution and put the civil war through and restored this country to its normal unity. A successful life will be founded on what you are capable of under such a test. We turn the country over to you, young people, to continue the high ideals which actuated our ancestors. You are to be congratulated upon your rare advantages of education. God Bless You.”

An amusing incident occurred soon after the luncheon that was not reported in any newspaper accounts of this visit. Instead, it surfaced years later in a story told by a local Pullman woman, Catherine Matthews (1901-2003), a Pullman native who later became a Pullman High School teacher and wife of long-time WSU basketball coach, Jack Friel (1898-1995). Matthews, at the time of President Taft’s visit, was a freshman at Washington State College and was elected by her class to receive from Taft a silver trophy cup as winner of the annual Campus Day activity contest.<sup>13</sup> A photograph of the event shows Taft handing a silver cup to her, while behind her stand four other women who had served as coaches for the freshman girls. But the photograph doesn’t reveal what had happened only moments earlier. It was something that baffled both Catherine Matthews and President Taft, but both played along as if nothing was wrong.

While much planning had gone into all aspects of Taft’s visit, one thing had been forgotten: the silver cup that would be presented by the former president. Athletic Director “Doc” Bohler, in charge of ordering it, admitted he had forgotten to do so. A later Pullman history told what happened next: “In desperation, he [Bohler] told a male student, ‘Run up to the Agriculture Building, and take a silver cup out of the trophy case, and we will use it.’” Neither the former president



*Taft presenting the award to Catherine Matthews*



nor Matthews knew what was inscribed on the substitute cup. Taft asked her why the trophy was being awarded. She explained that the freshman girls' team had been victorious in the class competition. Taft started to read the wording on the trophy, looked at the recipient, and kept shaking his head in puzzlement. The cup was inscribed, "Prize Bull Segu Pontiac Acme" [the name of a prize-winning bull steer].<sup>14</sup> While never mentioning this minor (and amusing) problem, the newspapers reported that the event went off mostly as planned. The exception was that the plane coming for the planned airplane rides was postponed for a day due to weather.

As for Taft's evening speech on "Capital, Labor, and the Soviet," the *Evergreen* presented lengthy quotations, with the former president touting the superiority and benefits of American capitalism versus the socialist bolshevism and the "deplorable conditions" in Russia. Taft argued that man "is a selfish animal" and works for his own benefit, which then leads to capitalism, including the accumulation of wealth, progress, and liberty. Thus, in Russia, the socialistic Bolsheviks were going against human nature, as were people in the United States, like Eugene Debs, who saw socialism as a key to end economic inequality. Taft, however, did concede that "large accumulations [of wealth] are not good for a nation because men may exercise too great power." Taft ended on a note of optimism, that Americans would "not stand for the starving and freezing of its people," which some might claim would be the logical outcome of capitalism. Instead, Taft believed that the "rule of the people, of an intelligent people like the Americans" would not allow that to happen, adding: "I am sure that the American people will not desert the basic principles or give up the constitution of the United States of America as

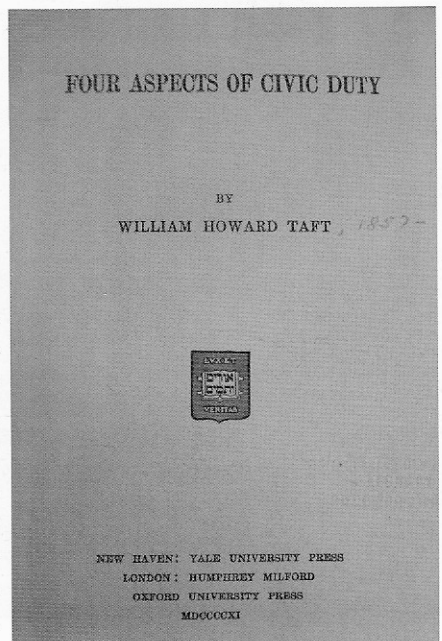


we know it.”

The *Pullman Herald* of May 28, 1920, a week after Taft’s appearance, covered his evening speech but included no details of Taft’s departure from Pullman by train after staying overnight as a guest of President Holland in the president’s mansion, nor where Taft was headed. However, among President Holland’s papers in the Washington State Archives is a letter from Taft written in Eugene, Oregon, on May 28, 1920. He expressed gratitude to Holland for the hospitality provided to him and his private secretary and stenographer, Wendell W. Mischler, who also stayed at the president’s mansion on Campus Avenue. Taft stated: “We enjoyed much the very great comfort you gave us in your home, the pleasure of meeting the interesting gentlemen whom you gathered about your board [dinner table], and the delightful contact that we had with the students at the unique cafeteria [luncheon outside Bryan Hall], at the athletic games in the afternoon, and the lecture and bonfire in the evening.”

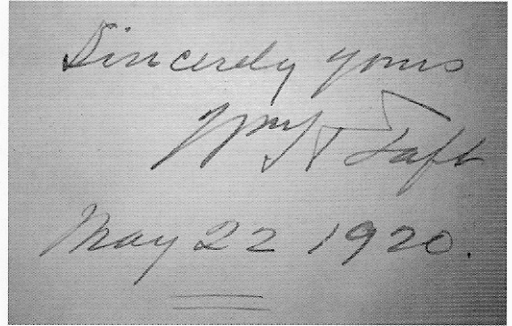
Prior to leaving Pullman, President Taft gave the college an autographed copy of one of his own publications as a souvenir of his stay in Pullman. This was revealed in the June 4, 1920 issue of the *Pullman Herald*, which was the paper’s last mention of his visit. And that was it. President Taft’s successful visit to Pullman in 1920 would slowly fade from memory. As to the fate of Taft’s inscribed publication, it was soon forgotten until being rediscovered many decades later on the regular book shelves at the WSU library. Entitled, *Four Aspects of Civic Duty*, it had been published in 1906 by Yale University Press. Inscribed inside the book was only: “Sincerely Yours, Wm. H. Taft, May 22, 1920.” Today, this volume is in the WSU Archives as a unique souvenir of the former president’s visit.

Over three years later, there was one final development related to Taft’s second visit to Pullman. On November 12, 1923, President Ernest O. Holland’s secretary, Miss Ivy Lewellen, wrote to Taft, who was then the Chief Justice of the United States Supreme Court. The letter was a request for a letter of introduction. Her request explained: “President Holland is planning to make a trip of two or three months duration to England, Germany, France, and Russia. He asked me to say that he would be most grateful if you would write a brief “To Whom It May Concern” letter about him in order that he may present it to certain peo-



ple in Europe and thereby expedite his investigations of social and economic conditions in those countries.”

Then, to provide information on President Holland’s background, the letter added: “May I state that President Holland has been here at the State College for the last eight years, and has been in educational work for the past twenty-eight years. In the event you would like to know some-



*Taft's signature*

thing more about him, you will find a brief record of his academic preparation and professional experience in Who’s Who in America. President Holland feels that a brief note from you would be helpful to him in obtaining the information he desires in the investigation he is planning to undertake. He hopes the message he will bring back will be of help and service to the Northwest.”

The letter ended with a request that Taft’s letter for President Holland be sent to the McAlpin Hotel in New York City, where Holland would be staying about November 20 or 21, 1923, just prior to beginning his overseas trip.

Taft complied promptly, and on November 19, 1923, sent the requested letter of introduction to the McAlpin Hotel. Taft also added a cover letter using letterhead from the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C., stating: “My dear



*Courtesy WSU MASC*

*WSC Pres. Holland, Dr. Bohler, and Pres. Taft, at 1920 Campus Day*

President Holland – I send you herewith the kind of letter that your Secretary, Mr. Lewellen,<sup>15</sup> said you wished to secure from me. I hope you will have a successful trip. Sincerely yours, [signed] Wm. H. Taft.”<sup>16</sup>

Following the 1923 correspondence between Holland and Taft, there were no known later events that connect Pullman to Taft’s two visits, except the slowly fading memories of the people who were there or who read about the two events. Catherine Matthews Friel, the college freshman who received the amusing stand-in trophy from Taft on May 21, 1920, died at age 101 in 2003. She was perhaps the last surviving witness to Taft’s 1920 visit. With all others now gone, these two intriguing episodes in Pullman’s history in 1911 and 1920 are still worth remembering a century later.

1 The *Pullman Herald*, Pullman, Wash.(10/6/1911): 1. This paper mentions the Gonzaga game but has no mention Taft’s visit the next day. Its rival Pullman paper, *The Pullman Tribune*, published the same day, included a lot of coverage of the upcoming event.

2 Rev. C. H. Harrison, born ca. 1871 in Canada, came to the United States in 1897. He served as a minister for the Pullman Congregational Church during most of the 1910s.

3 The *Pullman Tribune*, (10/6/1911): 1.

4 The *Pullman Tribune*, (10/13/1911): 1.

5 The *Pullman Herald*, (10/13/1911): 1.

6 Two other American Presidents, John F. Kennedy and Gerald R. Ford, visited Pullman in later years. Both came before becoming President. The story of Kennedy’s overnight stay in Pullman is found in “When John F. Kennedy Came to Pullman,” Robert E. King, *Bunchgrass Historian*, Vol. 33, No.2, (2007): pp. 19-23.

7 The *Evergreen*, Pullman, (10/11/1911): 1.

8 The *Pullman Herald*, (10/13/1911): 1.

9 The *Pullman Herald*, (10/13/1911): 1.

10 The *Pullman Herald*, (10/13/1911): 2.

11 Rogers Field was the college’s first athletic field. It was created out of the sloping hillside where Martin Stadium is now located. It was named in honor of Washington’s third governor, John R. Rogers (1897-1901), who had presented diplomas to the first college graduating class in 1897.

12 He was referring to students wearing old work clothes for the annual clean-up on Campus Day.

13 This was how the award was remembered by Catherine Matthews and recorded by her on the back of a photograph of the event. This annotated picture was given to Pullman historian Esther Pond Smith and is in the collection of the Whitman County Historical Society.

14 *Images of America: Pullman*, Robert Luedeking, (Charleston: Arcadia Publishing, 2010), p. 101.

15 Chief Justice Taft apparently just assumed that the secretary was a man as he had employed many male secretaries, including Wendell W. Mischler, who came with him to Pullman in 1920. However, President Holland’s secretary was Miss Ivy Ione Lewellen (1879-1963), who served as the private secretary for three WSC Presidents: Dr. Enoch A. Bryan 1913-15, Dr. Ernest O. Holland 1916-1944, and Dr. Wilson Compton 1945-1950. Her obituary (March 28, 1963) in the *Pullman Herald* included her picture and described her long career at Washington State College.

16 The cover letter, signed by Supreme Court Justice Taft, and a carbon copy of Lewellen’s letter requesting it, are in the WSU Archives. The fate of the requested letter of introduction is uncertain.





1920 Campus Day award ceremony

Pres. Taft is about to present a Cup to the representatives of the freshmen women, who had won the day's Activity Contest.

## THE HARVEST OF 1893

In a harvest season when new records might be set for the bountiful Palouse, we might pause to remember that records of another sort are also part of history. Local lore has it that there has been only one crop failure and that was the harvest of 125 years ago. It did indeed set a record for the Palouse. Certainly there have been other bad years, with crops lost due to weather, disease, and other localized issues, and thus some farmers have suffered crop failure. But the farmers of this region have for the last 125 years not seen the disastrous conditions of 1893.

One of the best accounts of this disaster is the account given by Enoch E. Bryan, who arrived in August 1893 to assume duties as president of the state college. He was faced with many problems at the college and only noted that the farmers, who he realized were the economic base of the region, were pleased with the bounty and fertility of the Palouse. His description of the situation begins on the day of college registration, September 13, 1893, and well describes the situation, the methods of farming, and rains that destroyed the crops:



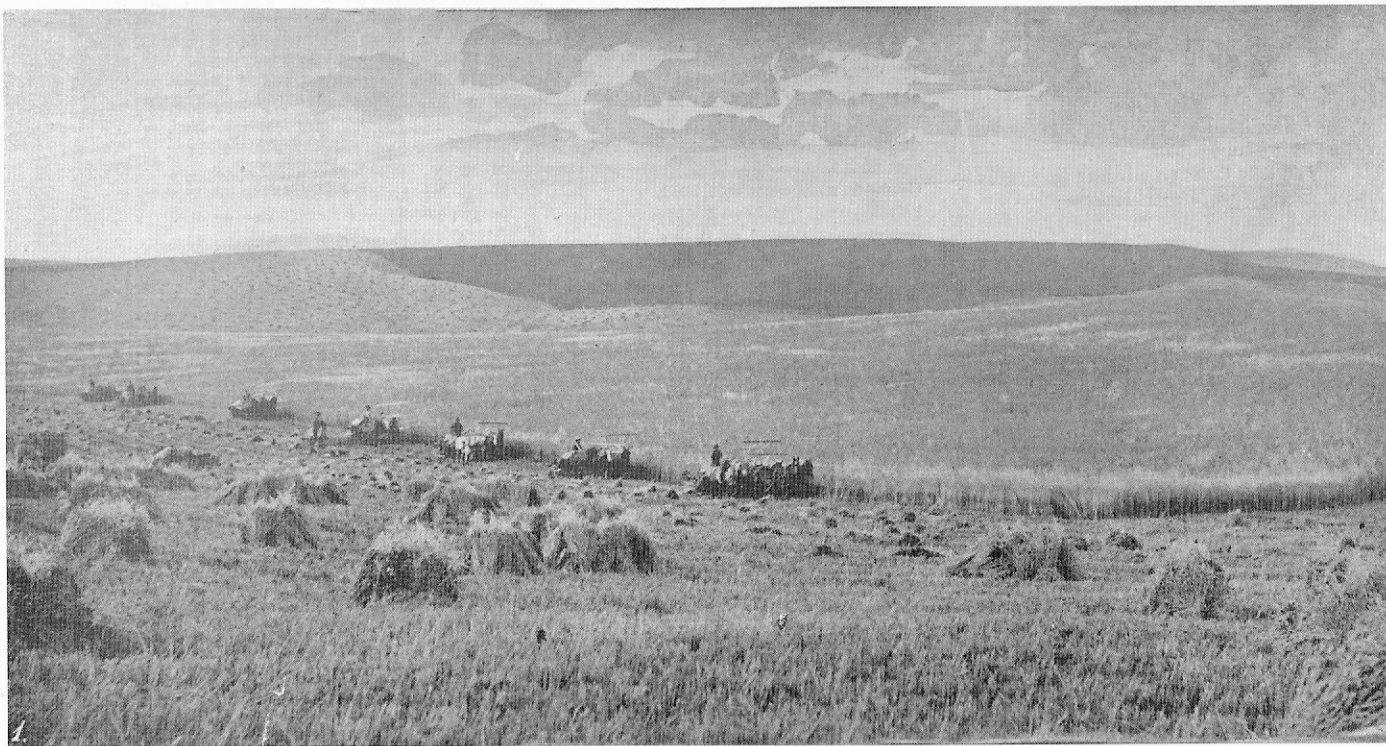
*Matson crew during harvest*



*Separator and sacked wheat during harvest*

“On the very day of the opening, the hot, dry spell gave way to a general rain. Very refreshing indeed was this to a newcomer to have cool weather and a clear atmosphere, and even the farmers accepted with equanimity the pause in the harvest which had just gotten well started. However, this rain was followed by another and all work was stopped. Day after day, week after week, as had never happened before, intermittent rains continued. After a few days of clear weather, work would start again only to be stopped by another shower. Grain sacks lying in the field burst with swollen wheat; stacks of headed grain were soaked through and through and spoiling; standing grain was bleaching and becoming worthless; the expense account of the farmer was mounting day by day and the price of wheat sinking lower and lower—now 35 cents a bushel, now 32, now 30, now no sale at all.”

“To understand the effect of this disaster, it must be explained to those of a later day that under the wheat growing system of that day, with vast areas of spring grain, the harvest began late—from the middle of August to the first of September. The grain was cut with a header, which clipped the upper half or third of the standing grain, ran it into header beds as they were driven along side of the header, hauled away and stacked in long loose stacks to await the thresher. This threshed grain was put into two-bushel manila bags, and these were piled in great piles to



*Harvesting wheat with cut wheat in shocks in the field*





*Sack Sewers*

be hauled away later after the harvesting was over to the warehouses or platforms along the newly built Northern Pacific or Union Pacific railway lines.”

“The grain must be very ripe and dry when cut, which made harvest later. The rains did not usually come until October, and it had been with perfect safety hitherto that the stacks of headed grain and piles of sacks had remained in the field. But now the crop was being ruined more and more every day. The rains continued until the snow came and some harvesting and threshing were done as late as Christmas and even after that date, and some was never done. With bankruptcy staring them in the face, both from this and from the great financial panic, the gloom in the community increased. The little group of teachers and students at the college claimed very little of the public attention—every man was too deeply concerned with his own impending fate.”

President Bryan’s wife and family arrived in Pullman in mid-October and Hattie Bryan was to later record her memories of that fall of 1893. She wrote a few years later: “I well remember the day we landed in the village at the old Northern Pacific station...Raining! 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 ...Sunnyside indeed! The sun did not appear for a month, and then came snow and more mud.” And in further summary, she wrote “half of the crop was standing in the fields ruined, and the other half was in the fields piled in sacks rotting.”



*Threshing on the Palouse 1890s*



*Higgins harvest crew on Union Flat c 1890-95*

# Bunchgrass Historian



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*The Moys family on their wagon loaded with sacked grain*