

Bunchgrass Historian

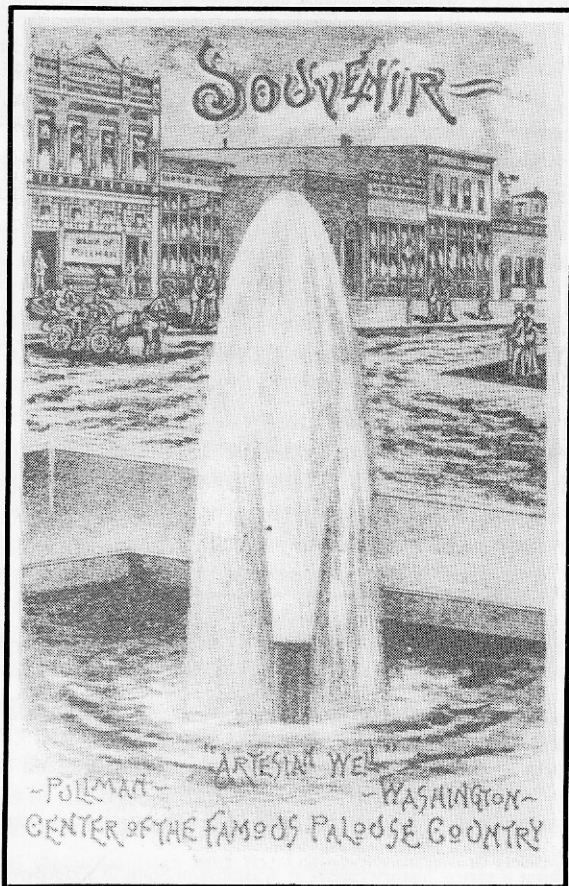
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Pullman's First Hundred Years

Happy Birthday Pullman

The *Bunchgrass Historian* salutes the city of Pullman on its one hundredth anniversary. A century ago this summer work began on the first of Pullman's stores, the initial steps were taken to establish a post office, and Pullman's "founding fathers" made the first attempts to create a community. Most local historians agree upon these generalities. But to venture further, a novice in these matters is warned to proceed at his or her peril. There are long-held and finely-honed traditions that outline in great detail the variations on the founding legend. These stories frequently contradict one another. The editor, not wishing to conjure a maelstrom makes no pretense to understanding such delicate matters of faith and reason. Instead we leave it to those who have studied with care the corpus of "Pullman" literature. They can sort out the details.

Two such historians, Esther Pond Smith and Lawrence Stark, have each spent years studying Pullman's past. Both have read the memoirs, studied the documents, and listened to the stories. Yet, as might be expected, they have come to essentially different conclusions about certain of the details that relate to the town's beginnings. Instead of choosing one or the other, we will let you, the reader, decide. We also believe that both need to be read on their own merit. The one provides a detailed critical discussion of the important early writing about the Pullman community. The other is the first concise history of the town's early postal system. Because the post office was a most visible symbol of an expanding community, such a discussion is essential to any understanding of early Pullman.

This issue also contains two other articles of significance. Evelyn Rodewald and Suzanne Myklebust give us an excellent look at an early piece of Pullman architecture, the Squires House. The history of this house shows the expanding nature of the community in the early twentieth century. Finally, in Roger Bjerk's fine essay on turn-of-the century social life we see that Pullman was typical in many ways of a thousand other communities in the west. But because of special circumstances, such as the presence of the agricultural school, Pullman was also unique. To understand these things—the special circumstances and the commonplaces—is crucial to the study of Pullman's past.

Fred C. Bohm
Editor

The Founding of Pullman: A Local Folktale

by Lawrence R. Stark

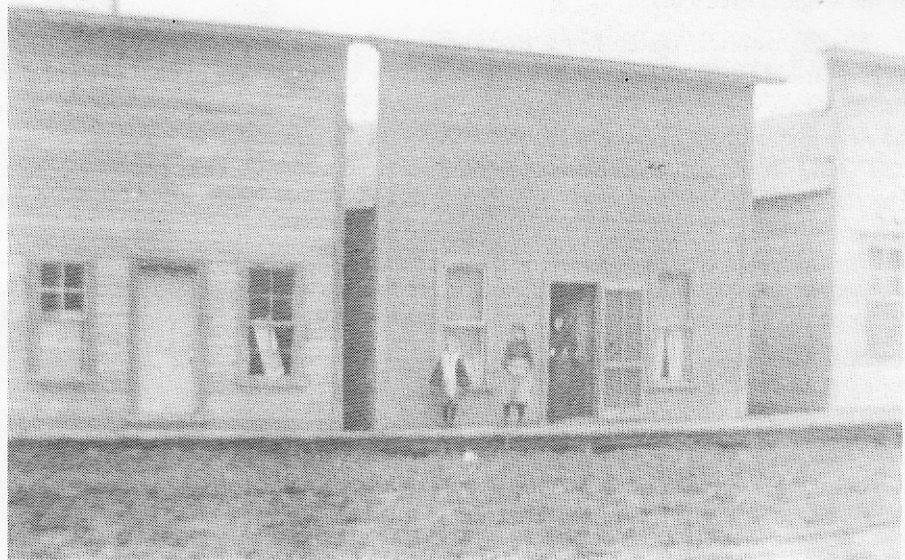
Beginnings create legitimacy, to paraphrase Hanna Arendt. Accordingly, little attracts the attention of residents more than stories about the beginnings of their community.¹ Beginnings, in fact, are important symbols of community and consequently are discussed at length in local history. Everywhere one hears certain questions posed. When was this place started? Who was the first settler? How did this town happen to come by the name it has? Arguments about the first settler—the most visible personification of community—are usually raised. Yet the historical reality of a town's origin remains obscure. In many cases all the attention only serves to obscure historical reality. As a result a form of folklore comes into being, encouraged by civic pride and the desire to exaggerate.

Few places have a founding legend so notable, or so well-developed, as the university town of Pullman, Washington. For many years the common story has been that the town was originally founded as the village of Three Forks in 1876 by Bolin Farr. Later, so the story goes, he and others platted a city, enlarged the village, and renamed it Pullman. The name was the result of Chicago industrialist George Pullman's gift of fifty dollars for a civic celebration on July 4, 1881, at which time a grateful citizenry adopted his name according to the legend. Variations and more details appear in other accounts, but the core of the story always contains three elements: Bolin Farr, Three Forks, and George Pullman.

Unfortunately, little of this story can be verified. Claims that Farr was the first settler are weak. There never was a village named Three Forks, and the Chicago Railroad car manufacturer had nothing to do with the place in 1881 or at any other time. The picture of the town's founding which emerges from the few extant documents of the period is more prosaic; at first glance it hardly appears worthy of attention.

The first appearance of a history of Pullman occurred just as the town was being organized. It did not really constitute a history so much as contemporary reporting. Frank T. Gilbert, in *Historic Sketches of Walla Walla, Whitman, Columbia and Garfield Counties, Washington Territory, and Umatilla County, Oregon* (1882), commented simply, "Pullman was laid out on the South Palouse in 1881. It now contains two stores, a blacksmith shop, hotel and post office." This account agrees with the first

¹This is a revised version of an article that appeared in *The Record* 38 (1977), published by the Friends of the Library, Washington State University. It appears here with the consent of that publication and the permission of the author.



—*Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections, Washington State University*
Wooden “store-front” buildings on early Main Street in Pullman.

newspaper history that appeared a few months later in the *Northwest Tribune* of August 14, 1882. No predecessor village was mentioned in either story, nor were any noteworthy events (such as Fourth of July Celebration) associated with the beginnings of the town.

Seven years would pass before the next attempt to write Pullman’s history. This particular essay should be accounted the first historical sketch of Pullman and is of interest because its author was the same man whose later writings form the basis for the modern founding legend. This was Thomas Neill, who arrived in Pullman in late 1888 and founded a newspaper, the *Pullman Herald*. A few months later, on February 9, 1889, he published an historical sketch of Pullman in his paper. Entitled “Pullman in the Past,” it was compiled after conversations with various local residents, particularly D. G. McKenzie, who had been identified to Neill as the pioneer settler of the area and the founder of the town. Neill’s story centered on McKenzie.

McKenzie arrived on the south Palouse in 1878 according to Neill. He went on to say that McKenzie saw possibilities that some day a town would exist at this natural meeting place of transportation routes. Accordingly, he platted a town and gave it the name “Three Forks.” In this, the earliest known reference to that name, Three Forks was identified as the site at which three streams met and the site on which McKenzie later platted the town of Pullman. Nothing was said about the selection of the name Pullman. The essay also listed several business foundings, such as Stewart and Lee’s, the first store, subsequent sales and reorganizations, as well as some railroad history. The details presented do not agree with other accounts of early businesses, leading one to suspect that the story was written hastily under pressure of a newspaper deadline.

Nevertheless the Neill account is significant because it marks the beginning, in print, of the name Three Forks.

Neill's historical sketch had a town-boomer flavor and was designed to give the seven-year-old city the appearance of having a long, continuous, and firmly established history, to say nothing of the promise of a glowing future. The same attitude prevailed the next major history of Pullman; this appeared two years later in an article entitled "the Gem City" in the supplement section of the January 31, 1891 *Spokane Review*. The *Review* discussed the town founding and depicted D. G. McKenzie as the first settler as had Neill. Obviously having interviewed McKenzie, the reporter determined that the settler's arrival was September 1877, a date which came to be repeated in later years. The reporter asked McKenzie how he felt about the establishment of the town. In contradiction to what was reported in Neill's 1889 version, McKenzie expressed pessimism about the future possibilities of the town site as it sat next to his farmland. Three Forks as a geographic expression or as a settlement was not mentioned even though the beginnings of the town were discussed at length. The founding occurred in May 1881 according to the story, when Orville Stewart arrived and began construction of his store. A name was necessary and "Pullman" was selected, following the suggestion made by Stewart and with the approval of the other residents—McKenzie and the mysterious Boland Farr (who later become the first settler of popular legend). They selected the name of "the great sleeping-car king," Pullman, and requested that name for a post office. However, the postal service responded slowly and for six months Stewart used his own money to pay for the delivery of mail to his store.

Many of these same details appeared in the next town-booster history; this one published in the September-October 1892 issue of *Northwest Magazine*, a railroad publicity periodical. This item, entitled "Pullman, Palouse City, and Colfax," should not be taken too seriously. Composed from a distance by someone who apparently relied on railroad information files and imagination, it described the evolution of Pullman from its beginnings as a single store and included a sawmill among the first buildings, a highly doubtful claim. "Three Forks" was mentioned as a geographic expression, only this time as a three-way fork in the road. No date for the founding was given, although the use of the name Pullman was dated incorrectly from 1884. Again the name was explained as commemorating George Pullman, but no local inhabitants were mentioned and no effort was made to identify the first settler because such a matter would have been of little interest to prospective readers, few of whom would have been Pullman residents.

The *Northwest Magazine* article was the last of the town-boomer accounts. The next local history appeared in the subscription history of 1901, entitled *An Illustrated History of Whitman County, State of Washington*. Its more somber mood reflected the experience of the town in the 1890's, when several founders suffered business failure. It also reflects the changes after the establishment and expansion of the parent institution of the present Washington State University. The piece concentrated upon the difficulties of getting the Northern Pacific Railroad to build into Pullman, as well as details of the fires which twice destroyed the commercial section. The account of the founding seems to reflect Neill's 1889 version. In it, Three Forks was identified as a geographic expression and D. G. McKenzie was the first settler. The September 1877 date of his arrival reappeared. This is followed by a complicated story of land transfers up to the spring of 1882, when it has McKenzie plat part of the town. The story also notes that the town was replatted in November, adding an area owned by Charles C.

Moore of Moscow, Idaho.² It correctly dated the formal dedication of the townsite in that month.

An Illustrated History also explained that the town had a form of existence prior to these transactions. Stewart's store and 1881 are mentioned; it was noted that it occupied a one-acre lot donated jointly by McKenzie and Farr (whose name was spelled "Bolen" here). No account of the inspiration for the name Pullman appeared, but was simply implied that McKenzie and Moore used the name. The rest of the history concerned railroad matters, the founding of various businesses, and other details.

From 1901 to the early 1920's no local history of significance appeared. While various oral versions undoubtedly existed during this time, this was a twenty-year dark age in the writing of local history. The writing which finally appeared in 1921 was in sharp contrast to earlier works. Consequently, it represented something of a new beginning. The 1921 account is significant because it was written by Judge Thomas Neill, who had begun the tradition of Pullman history in the 1880's. Now, thirty years later, he returned to the subject and began a series of articles in the *Pullman Herald*.

In 1922 these articles were drawn together and published as *Incidents in the Early History of Pullman and the State College of Washington*. This pamphlet had a vast influence on local history and is usually cited as the authoritative source. Yet there are problems with some of the critical portions concerning Pullman's early years, notwithstanding the fact that Neill undertook documentary research before writing. *Incidents*, as we shall see, may not have even been wholly the product of Judge Neill.

Neill's 1922 publication is largely responsible for the elements of the founding legend in its present form. It was Neill's 1922 *Incidents* which made Farr, whose name was modified by this time to "Bolin", the first settler; spoke of Three Forks as a village; made the change of name a formal matter and brought the story of the gift from George Pullman into prominence. In short, it was a story different from any that had preceded it. It was more colorful, more attention-getting, and from all indications, less based on historical evidence. How did this happen? Was it just playful inventiveness or tampering with the historical record? Apparently it was neither. Rather, it was a series of misunderstandings which, despite the intentions of local historians, produced the result. To illustrate this, comparative texts (a folklorist's device) are examined—first Neill's 1921 serialized account and his 1922 *Incidents*.

Neill, 1921

Bolin Farr settled on the northeast quarter of section 6, township 14 north, range 45 E.W.M. in April 1880. Daniel McKenzie settled on the southwest quarter of the northwest quarter of section 5 on May 7, 1881, and William Ellsworth settled on the west half of the northwest quarter of section 5 in November 1881. It is on these lands that the main part of the town site of Pullman is located.

Neill, 1922

In the spring of 1876 Bolin Farr took a homestead on the northeast quarter of section 6, township 14 range 45 E.W.M.

In September, 1877, Daniel McKenzie took a homestead on the southeast quarter of section 5, and about the same time William Ellsworth took a homestead on the west half of the northwest quarter of section 5.

It is on these lands that the main part of the town site of Pullman is located.

The first post office . . .

²Charles Moore was a mysterious figure to many who wrote local histories. Some versions have him as an early resident, others have him purchasing land on the townsite from various local residents. In truth he was an absentee investor from Walla Walla, the partner in a trading firm at nearby Moscow, Idaho. He was apparently a business associate in other investments of his brother, Miles C. Moore, the last Territorial Governor of Washington.

It is a significant fact that these men took the land under the pre-emption law, which required only six months residence and the payment of \$1.25 per acre to acquire title. It was evident that they did not intend making this a permanent home, but were imbued with the idea then quite common that the Palouse country was a stock country and was of no great value for farming, but they lived to see the land produce crops in greater abundance than in the states from which they came.

The first post office . . .

Neill apparently used land title documents as his guide to the activities of the early settlers. Consequently he incorrectly placed the dates of settlement by the dates on the title instruments. The detail of his account, and his comments on pre-emption titles in the second paragraph of the 1921 version confirms the use of this source. Moreover, the dates given are really the dates when Pullman's landsite came out of public ownership. Neill's use of this source created problems for his editor, as the greatly changed version of 1922 indicates. First, the settlement dates were several years later than the traditional September of 1877. Second, they placed Farr on the site ahead of McKenzie—the traditional first settler. Third, the title descriptions contradict each other. If the survey directions are read carefully, the 1921 account has McKenzie and Ellsworth located on the same tract of land. Finally, Judge Neill had insulted the pioneer settlers in his second paragraph by suggesting that they were not particularly interested in staying.

Neill's observant editor could not let these things pass in the reprinted version. Accordingly things were made consistent, probably by the *Pullman Herald* editor, or possibly Neill himself. First, Daniel McKenzie's settlement was placed at the traditional date of September 1877, but that left Farr unresolved. Following the logic which suggested that, if Farr's title was from the spring before McKenzie's, the editor placed Farr on the site in Early 1876. Ellsworth's settlement was passed over with an "about the same time." The editor further improved the story by changing McKenzie's tract from the southwest quarter to the southeast quarter of the northwest quarter of section 5, thereby getting him out of Ellsworth's tract, and actually outside the original town of Pullman. To smooth it all down the derogatory second paragraph was removed and the term homestead was substituted for "settled".

A combination of circumstances—Neill's research methods and editorial changes—re-arranged the first settlers, depriving D. G. McKenzie of the distinction he had long held. At the same time, the chronology of events prior to 1881 were restructured. As for the founding of Pullman, Neill's two editions are consistent, both making Farr the founder of Pullman and including the fifty dollar gift from George Pullman as part of the story. How this came into Neill's history is more complicated than the editorial circumstances which made Bolin Farr into the first settler of 1876.

A variant of the story of George Pullman's involvement appeared in print about the same time as Neill's 1921 article; it was included in Edmond Meany's "Origins of Washington Geographic Names", appearing in the 1921 *Washington Historical Quarterly*. But Meany told the story differently. As he had it, George Pullman was solicited for a gift but did not give one. The source for Meany's story was Lou E.

Wenham, Pullman newspaper editor and publisher. Wenham came to Pullman in 1906, the same year he bought the *Tribune*. He likely passed the story on to Meany many years before 1921—probably before 1917 when Meany printed the first installment of his list of name origins.³ Thus Wenham is the earliest traceable teller of this story and the date at which he told it appears to have been about 1915. Undoubtedly it represented the oral tradition of that time.

Thomas Neill's 1921 and 1922 histories had a more elaborate version of the story than the one Wenham told Meany, but basically the same. Where did Wenham and Neill get such a story? Certainly it was too unusual to have been overlooked for thirty years. The slip into thinking that the name Three Forks had applied to a village rather than an unoccupied geographic locality is easily enough understood. The other matters—the renaming, the intervention of George Pullman, and the matter of the gift—are harder to explain. But again, the comparative text method proves suggestive. Three texts must be examined in this case: Meany/Wenham, Neill, and surprisingly, the 1892 article on Pullman in the *Spokane Review*.

Review, 1892

These three gentlemen (McKenzie, Farr and Steward) held a session one day to decide on a name for their trading post, and after a lively discussion the decision was made unanimous that it should be Pullman, which name was suggested by Mr. Steward, and named for the great sleeping-car king. The next matter of importance was the establishment of a post office. The government caused the mail to be carried from Almota to Palouse City via Guy, a small station now lying between the towns of Pullman and Colfax. Mr. Steward paid \$100 out of his own pocket to have the Pullman mail left at his store for six months. After this a post office was established at Pullman with Mr. Steward as postmaster.

Meany/Wenham, 1921 or earlier

The place was first named "Three Forks," being the junction of three small streams. The town adopted the name in the hope that George M. Pullman, car manufacturer would endow it, which hope was never realized.

Neill, 1921 and 1922

The first post office was named "Three Forks" from the fact that Dry Fork from the south, and Missouri Flat from the north, join the south Palouse River here.

In the spring of 1881 Orrville Stewart opened a general store, and Bolin Farr platted about 10 acres of his land for a townsite and named it Pullman, after George Pullman of the Pullman Car Company, who gave \$50 towards the first celebration of July 4th held here.

Despite the apparent differences the accounts are, in many ways, the same story. All the elements of the later stories are present in the *Review* article, except that they are in a different order. The place was named Pullman in hope of getting something—mail delivery. But nothing arrives—no mail for a time and no post office for six months. But a gift to the community appears anyway—Stewart's \$100. The date is close to the legen-

³Meany listed a letter from Wenham as Letter No. 115, Names MSS. Apparently he numbered his letters in a chronological sequence according to the date he received them. His 1917 list included numbers greater than 115, suggesting that the Wenham letter was in his possession at that time. Meany tried to preserve his correspondence, as he explained in the introduction of his book on place names, but unfortunately these letters are not among the Meany papers at the University of Washington Library.

dary date of the adoption of the name Pullman, assuming Stewart began informal mail distribution in June of 1881. Perhaps his first delivery even coincided with July 4, 1881.

Could Stewart's experience with the post office have been the origin of the story Wenham told Meany, and on which Neill elaborated? Did the transposition of characters and events, despite the retention of basic themes, occur in the oral versions of the town's history after 1901? The similarities of the story elements are too striking to avoid the temptation to think otherwise. Thus, the town was named Pullman to get the attention of someone, not George Pullman, but officials at the Post Office Department. The civic gift came from within the community, not from the Chicago industrialist. Somehow the dollar figure was reduced from \$100 to \$50. Much of this analysis is based on supposition, of course. It depends on the validity of the 1892 article, as well as the assumption that some version of it was told in the streets, somehow garbled, and somehow made into folk legend. This legend, then, came to be printed in two separate places in 1921. All that followed merely elaborated on these simple changes.

Even the reminiscences of the early settlers were colored by these legends. More significantly, local writers brought their imagination into play. An article entitled "They Named it Pullman . . ." in the September 27, 1950 *Daily Evergreen* went into great detail about a pioneer picnic that supposedly took place in 1878—particulars on the construction of the picnic tables was even included. It told of a "scholarly looking man" who conducted a name-changing ceremony. George Pullman's gift arrived later, according to this story. *Facts About Pullman*, (1952) tells of Bolin Farr camped beside one of the streams in the area in 1875 listening to the waters and, apparently, having some sort of vision of the future of the place, which he then named "Three Forks Ranch." The story also speaks of Farr clearing the land, being a friend of George



—*Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections, Washington State University*

A view looking West down Main Street about 1889.

Pullman, and even quotes supposed statements he made in 1875! Another recent story, "The Farr Family—Early Settlers," in the Summer 1974 *Bunchgrass Historian*, identifies George Pullman as a friend of Farr's brother-in-law, Dr. Henry J. Webb. Pullman, according to this story, visited Pullman in 1887, leaving a gift of \$1,000 on the occasion. A story in the July 1, 1976 *Pullman Herald* repeated all of the founding legend, including a characterization of Farr as a "quiet man of vision." It of course places him on the site in 1876 founding the village of Three Forks. The story had such influence that in 1976 local residents, including city officials, seriously considered observing the town's centennial, assuming that a village of Three Forks had actually come into existence 100 years before.

If these accounts of Pullman's beginnings are questionable on grounds of textual criticism, what can be said of the actual events? Unfortunately, with no documentary evidence prior to 1880 and with little for the next few years, much of what can be said must be prefaced with a good many probabilities. There is a rude description of the area in the federal census prepared in the spring of 1880. It tells us that the McKenzie family was present, as was the Farr family. Farr's name is given as Boland, the common early spelling, and the list of birthplaces given for his children suggest that he was in Missouri until at least 1877. For a discussion of anything prior to the 1880 census memoirs must be used.

There are three memoirs of relevance. All date from the 1920's and 1930's. Two are written by persons connected with traditional accounts of pioneer settlers, while the third is from outside the community and discloses a new candidate for the distinction of being the first settler. The first memoir, that of May Squires, appeared in various places and in various forms, including the November 2, 1928 *Pullman Herald*, a WPA Federal Writers Project publication, and the 1938 work, *Told by the Pioneers*. Mrs. Squires, the daughter of D. G. McKenzie, was 12 years old in 1880. Consequently she was not involved in legal matters like the registering of plats for towns. She was, however, an observant person not easily swayed by popular beliefs. This is demonstrated by her denial that the name Three Forks was ever used for the post office. Her account is probably the best of the reminiscences and from it we can conclude that the McKenzies were the first settlers to locate near the area known as Three Forks, a name which predated their arrival. Mrs. Squires dated the arrival of the McKenzie family in the area in mid-September 1877, consistent with other accounts. The second reminiscence is that of Robert Andrew Farr, brother of Boland. Appearing in the 1938 *Told by the Pioneers*, it suggests that Boland Farr arrived in the area around 1877, but the chronology is confused. Implications of the account are against the possibility that he had been in the area in 1876. The account makes no mention of any village of Three Forks, though it makes many references to Pullman.

The most surprising reminiscence is the third. It came to light in Pullman in 1976. As it is indirect—a son's re-telling of what his father told him—it is more suspect than the other two. But, again, it should not be dismissed out of hand. The account is that of Joseph Franklin Huff, as told by his son, Rolland Huff. Huff, probably the same one who appeared on the 1880 census for La Grande, Oregon, said he crossed the plains in the early 1870's. The first place he settled, and tried to acquire land, was at the present site of Pullman, the account maintains. He stayed only a short while before moving to Dayton, then to the Wallowa region in eastern Oregon. His chronology suggests he was at the site of Pullman in 1875 or 1876, or possibly even 1874. Whichever date is selected, Joseph Franklin Huff emerges as the first settler, though not the first

permanent settler. The account says nothing of Pullman, but it does say that Huff tried to secure a land title here. Like McKenzie, Farr, and others he probably had trouble doing so. But unlike them, he was not content to “squat” on government land and wait, so he moved on. His presence, if it occurred, was transitory. As a result, he knew nothing of Three Forks and no place-name references appear in his account. But he does emerge as the strongest candidate for first settler; certainly the character of the evidence for this claim is no weaker than the reminiscence on which other claims have been made. It is certainly a good deal stronger than those on which “Bolin” Farr was identified as the first to arrive. Of course, Huff could not serve as a symbol of community, for his own experience was just the opposite of any sense of community. But knowledge of his presence unfortunately destroyed the claims of the others—McKenzie and Farr—and leaves Pullman without a “first settler.”

Other recollections include Lulu Laney Downen’s *Covered Wagon Days in the Palouse*, first serialized, then published in 1937. It added little to the founding legend but the testimony of someone, who was a small child, remembered that Oriville Stewart named the place Pullman. There are others, such as the story of a salesman who drove through Pullman when the first store was under construction. It, however, gives no dates.

Exhausting reminiscences and early documents, we know that Joseph Franklin Huff probably lived on the Pullman site briefly. The McKenzie family settled adjacent to the site in September 1877. Boland Farr arrived a short time later. The area was known as Three Forks, although no one lived at an actual site named “Three Forks.” There was never a village by that name. Still, the actual founding of Pullman is not clarified. Surviving documents, land title instruments and abstracts of them, are of little help. They only tell of land coming out of public ownership in 1880 and 1881 and of the platting of the town in 1881 and 1882. The informal real estate transactions which constituted the founding, of course, went unrecorded, or were recorded long after they had been arranged. Oriville Stewart set up an informal post office in his general store in June of 1881, named it Pullman, and ran it at his own expense as a gift to the community, undoubtedly with the added intention of attracting business. At the same time several others were surveying streets and planning for a townsite, though when they began is hard to say.

In conclusion, little can be said about Pullman’s creation; much can be said about the creation of the town’s founding legend. The actual events were simple, though the town development was likely a little more halting than the average development project in Washington in the 1880’s. But such a story would never do as a visible historic account in which local residents could take pride. So the founding legend came into being, almost by accident. Once started its appeal proved irresistible. Perhaps because the town had a shifting population and relatively few permanent residents, such an account was almost necessary if there was to be anything to serve as a focal point for community identification. Consequently almost everyone in the constantly shifting population of the university town is aware of the story. One can only guess what the effect of challenging the historical accuracy of the story might have under such conditions. The safest guess appears to be that the founding legend will continue to be told and believed.



The Development of the Postal Service in Pullman

by Esther Pond Smith

Homesteaders in the Palouse country had been settling along the creeks since the 1860's. But it was not until 1876 that anyone settled in the little valley known as Three Forks. This valley, later to become the townsite of Pullman, Washington, was formed by four hills that now divide the town into its four districts. Between the hills run three creeks which join on the west side of the valley to give it the name, Three Forks. This was a favorite watering and camping place for Indians and for the first homesteaders. The three creeks were Tinatpanup (the South Fork of the Palouse River), extending through the valley from east to west, Dry Creek up from the south, and Missouri Flat Creek from the north.

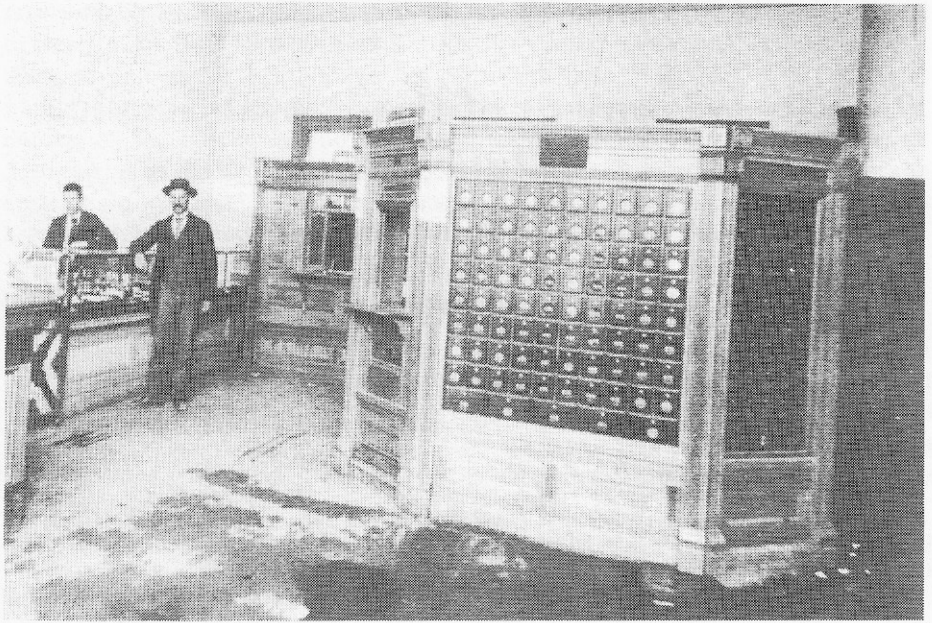
In 1876 Bolin Farr and family claimed the northeast quarter of section six in Township 14, Range 45, a spot where the three creeks came together. The house they built still stands on Park Street. The next year, 1877, Daniel McKenzie came with his family and chose land adjoining Farr on section five. They built a log cabin to the east, along the road that went through the valley. The William and Edson Ellsworth families came the same year, settling along the North and East sides of what is now Reany Park. Others, mostly relatives, came in the next few years.

These early families in the Three Forks Valley, as well as the farmers of the surrounding area, depended upon the settlement of Almota for their mail. At that time mail was brought up the Snake River to Almota by boat. About three times a week a carrier on horseback brought it over a star route via Colfax to the Moscow post office. Moscow was also on the Lewiston-Spokane pony mail route. Settlers along Union Flat Creek also had a post office at Ewartsville and Owensburgh as early as 1873. But by 1876 the Owensburgh site was moved to Leitchville and a new office also opened at Clinton. These offices were in farmers' homes and were named for the various families. When the stage coach traveled along Union Flat, it also carried mail from Colfax to Lewiston and to all the post offices in between.

Seeing the need for a trade center at Three Forks, in 1881 Daniel McKenzie offered his friend Orville Stewart land for a store site along the road through the valley. Stewart was interested and accepted the offer. Records show that, on May 17, 1881, McKenzie transferred one-half acre at the west edge of his farm to Stewart. Here Stewart built his store facing the road—the road that would later become Pullman's Main Street. Today the half-acre is occupied by Saunders, Pullman Motor Supply, and the Needle and Eye.

Stewart took in a partner, M. D. Lee, and decided to include a post office in his store. To do this he made application to the U. S. Postal Service through the Moscow postmaster. In return he received an application which stated, "A short name should

¹Most of the information for this article was obtained from research in the *Pullman Herald*, 1888-1981.



John T. Lobaugh, postmaster from 1889-1896, owned these lock boxes and ran a stationery store in the post office lobby. He also rented space to the telegraph office, a cigar and news stand, and a jeweler's bench.

be selected for the proposed office, which when written, will not resemble the name of any other post office in the United States.” Since there were already several Three Forks post offices, the local settlers were forced to select a different name. They gathered at the new store as it was being built to discuss the problem. They decided on the name “Pullman” since they knew that George Pullman, railroad sleeping car magnate, was about to build a model town for his workers. They offered to name the new town after him if he would endow it. He sent them a letter thanking them for the honor and included a check for fifty dollars. They spent it on a Fourth-of-July celebration, fireworks, and a dance in the unfinished store building. People came from miles around and the new town started off with a bang, if not much money.

When Stewart finished the store he put a few pigeon-holes to one side of the door; that was the first Pullman post office. He returned his application to Washington, D.C. on November 8, 1881. A letter from the National Archives and Records Service states, “The records of the Post Office Department in the National Archives show that a post office was established at Pullman, Whitman County, Washington on December 5, 1881. The records do not indicate that this office was known by any other name.” The Three Forks community, *never* a town or post office, had become Pullman; in 1888 it formally organized into the village of Pullman.

When the railroads came—the O R & N in 1885 and the Northern Pacific in 1887—Pullman no longer depended on the star route for its mail, which now arrived regularly on the trains. It was the job of the local postmaster to carry it to and from the depot—this he did on foot, generally using a mail pouch. As the population increased and the amount of mail grew, a team of horses and buggy, and later a hack, became the means of transportation. Eventually local residents were contacted for the job as hauler. People who missed the pick-up at the post office took their out-going letters to

the depot letter-drop box, or simply handed them to the clerk on the baggage or mail car.

The term of a postmaster corresponded to the terms of the American presidents, since they were an administrative appointment. Orville Stewart was postmaster until 1885 when Eugene W. Downen was appointed. This meant that the post office had to be moved, since the postmaster was required to furnish room, equipment, and delivery boxes. Downen was a dealer in dry goods and clothing, as well as an insurance agent. His place of business was a frame building located at what is now 115 North Grand; this location became Pullman's second post office.

When John T. Lobaugh became Pullman's third postmaster in 1889 the office was moved back to Main Street. It was combined with a stationery store. Lobaugh purchased some lock boxes and the establishment began to be recognizable as a post office. To get more room for the growing mail service he moved into the Nodine Building on the north side of Main Street in 1890. When this building was completely destroyed in the fire of 1890 the facilities were moved into the Prather Building where they shared space with other businesses. In the fall of 1890 they were again moved, this time to the Prentice Building. In 1891, Lobaugh added fifty-one lock boxes for postal customers because business had increased seventy-five per cent over the previous year. Pullman was promoted from a fourth to a third class post office as a result.

King P. Allen, the sixth postmaster, was the first to hold the position full time. With this change the Postal Department raised his salary, began paying building rent, fuel and lighting bills, and began paying the salaries of the postal clerks. The office was in the Rupley Building, next door on the west side of the Webb Building—this was the last of the locations on Main Street. In 1905 it was moved to Kamiaken Street where Pullman Appliance is located today; in 1916 the post office was moved to a frame building at the present location of the Washington Water Power offices. In 1931 the U.S. Postal Department purchased property at the corner of Paradise and Kamiaken Streets. There they built the brick building which served as the post office until 1976.

Lock Boxes and the Post Office Lobby

Before there were post office lock boxes patrons received their mail at the general delivery window. Sometimes this meant visiting with friends while standing in the lobby waiting for the mail to be distributed, or reading the signs and notices tacked to the walls. Frequently people came to get a weather report. A *Pullman Herald* of March 1894 announced, "Postmaster Lobaugh receives daily a forecast of the weather for the twenty-four hours to follow, from the weather department. The card containing the forecast is displayed in the window in the front of the post office, and if you want to know whether or not it is going to rain all you have to do is inspect the card, and if it says rain, then carry your umbrella."

As the population of the town increased the demand for lock boxes also increased, so that there were never enough. In 1903 postmaster Allen purchased ninety-five additional combination boxes. But when the post office relocated at 135 Kamiaken Street in 1905, these were sold to the postmaster in Garfield. Because Pullman now became a second class post office, the government equipped it with new fixtures and furnishings. Prior to this, the postmaster had to purchase his own equipment. The new furnishings included desks for the lobby on which people could write and address letters, pen and ink holders, and calenders.

In the early years the lobby of the post office had been a store of some kind, either owned by the postmaster or rented to a businessman. In such lobbies one might find a

confectionery, ice cream parlor, stationery or book store, the local telephone and telegraph office, or even a homemade candy kitchen.

Star Routes

Before Rural Free Delivery, contracts were made by the Postal Department for the transportation of mail between small towns along a mail route. This was how Pullman received its mail—from Almota via Colfax to Moscow—until 1885 when the O R & N Railroad came through. After that, the Ewartsville post office was served by a star route from Pullman until rural delivery was established. Other towns in the area were served in a similar manner. Wawawai, for example, had a post office in 1889 to which mail would arrive from Colton once a week. A tri-weekly route was established from Pullman to Wawawai in 1890. This route, contracted by W. S. Shaw, went to the river community via Ewartsville and Ontario. Shaw agreed to carry the mail over this route on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays and be back in Pullman the following day at four o'clock.

For years Maple Street in Pullman was known as “Star Route Street,” leading many to conclude that it must have been a star route. However, no evidence can be found that there was a road on the hill when the town was platted in 1882 and the streets were named. At that time the only road north of town ran along the east side of Missouri Flat Creek. There was, however a star route that provided mail service between Pullman and Genesee after train service between the two communities ceased. This route was discontinued when mail service began coming to the Palouse area directly from Spokane in special mail trucks.



The Pullman post office moved often from 1889 to 1905. At one time or another it occupied each of these store spaces on the south side of Main Street.



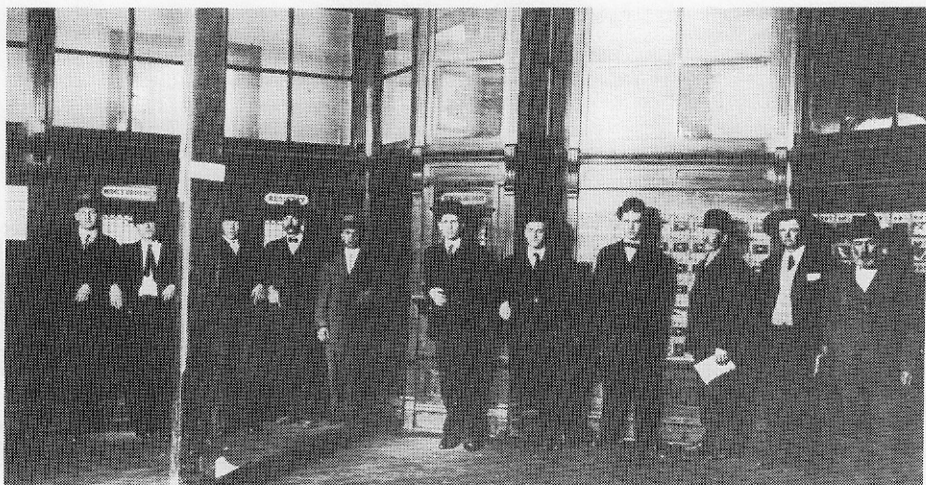
William H. Tapp, one of the three rural mail carriers starting the service from Pullman in 1902. His twenty-five mile route led him up Union Flat Creek, over the hills to Chambers and Busby, and back to Pullman. When the roads were bad, the trip took two days. This meant an overnight stop somewhere along the route.

Rural Free Delivery

Rural Free Delivery was established out of the Pullman post office in 1902. Three routes were originally established, each twenty to thirty miles long. Route one extended north of town through the Whelan and Guy (Albion) areas. Route two served the Union Flat country, while route three covered the area east of Pullman. Petitions were circulated for signatures of those wishing the service. Each patron had to provide a mail box or pouch on a post at the entrance of his farm. In addition, patrons had to keep roads passable in summer *and* winter. When roads were good the mail carriers traveled in light buggies or carts, but much of the time they rode on horseback. If the snow was deep carriers had to wrap their legs to the knees in burlap or canvas to keep them dry and from getting cut as their horses sank deep in crusty snow. Until roads were hard-surfaced in the 1930's, summer roads were extremely dusty when it was dry and extremely muddy when it rained. Since the advent of good roads and automobiles, the three routes have been combined into two and lengthened to serve more rural families. The first three rural carriers were William H. Tapp, B. A. Davis, and W. C. Campbell.

City Free Delivery

As early as 1907 the citizens of Pullman began to think about the possibility of city delivery. They were told that, before they could have this service, streets would have to be labeled and improved, then homes and businesses would have to be numbered. The city went so far as to furnish house numbers if home owners did not cooperate by putting them up. The City Service Club volunteered to do the work. When all was approved by the U. S. Postal Department Postmaster K. P. Allen was notified that he could go ahead with city delivery service. The town was laid out in two sections and



Postal workers in the post office lobby at 135 Kamiaken Street in 1909. Left to right: Will Waller, R. M. Van Doren, Clarke Nye, W. H. Latta, A. R. Moore, H. W. Sampson, Ira Allen, Vern Foster, W. H. Tapp, Cliff Parr, and K. P. Allen.

service began on August 1, 1908. Pullman's first mail carriers—the two men who scored highest on the examination—were W. H. Latta and Will Wallis. These carriers travelled about town on foot with heavy pouches slung over their shoulders. They were permitted to pick up stamped articles for mailing, sell postage stamps and stamped envelopes, and deliver the mail. Patrons were required to provide delivery boxes at their own expense. By the time parcel post service started, loads became so heavy that packages could no longer be delivered by the carriers. As a result parcel post wagons and automobiles were used for home delivery. Until that time, carrier Latta brought his load to College Hill in a wheel barrow or sled. He placed a locked box on Maiden Lane near G. A. Street's grocery store where he could leave part of his load while he delivered the rest.

For years city delivery was made both in the morning and afternoon. As the town grew this service was cut to once each day. The number of routes also increased from two to twelve, with three substitute carriers. Today each carrier has a jeep to make his rounds.

Another change affecting city mail delivery came in 1972 when the residential numbering system was changed. The town was divided into four districts, with the dividing lines being Main and Grand Streets. The quadrants N. E., N. W., S. E., and S. W. indicated to which district the new numbers belonged.

Parcel Post Service

The U. S. Postal Department did not deliver packages until 1912. By way of the *Pullman Herald* the local office issued orders as to how parcels were to be sent. The service itself actually began in Pullman in January 1913. Ordinary postage stamps could not be used on packages. Special parcel post stamps were required. College students were by far the greatest users of the early parcel post service. Once a week nearly every student would pack his or her dirty clothes in a brown canvas-covered box, tighten the straps and address it to mother. For fifteen cents each way, the box would be returned in a few days with clean clothes and a few cookies and goodies tucked in with them.

Postal Boxes and Substations

The first letter drop box in Pullman was placed on Main Street shortly after the fire of 1890 destroyed the post office building. In 1914 Postmaster K. P. Allen installed letter boxes at the Northern Pacific and O R & N depots. In addition, a large box for letters and packages was placed on the sidewalk in front of the post office, then located on Kamiaken Street. In recent years mail boxes have been located throughout the town. Until city carriers began using automobiles for delivery, relay boxes—which look very much like a mail box—were placed at strategic places in residential areas. Mail was left in these for the carrier to deliver.

When the present post office on South Grand Street opened in November 1976, there was ample space for distribution of the mail and for parking. However, the distance from the business district made it difficult for many persons to use. Therefore, most grocery stores began providing services like the sale of postage stamps. Drop boxes were provided at additional locations for outgoing mail. Recently the Postal Service announced the establishment of a substation in the Corner Drug Store. Dissmore's grocery store has also provided space for mail and accepts packages to be sent. No mail is delivered to either location. These conveniences, along with College Station, are now providing adequate mail service to the Pullman community.

The College Station

When the parent institution of Washington State University was established at Pullman in 1892 the volume of mail coming into the community increased dramatically. By 1901 the college was trying to have a separate post office established on campus. Late in 1908 a post office inspector visited the school and gave a favorable report regarding the possibility of establishing a post office in one of the existing buildings. This, however, did not happen until September 17, 1915. The *Pullman Herald* reported, "After many long delays the substation of the Pullman post office is to locate on the college campus. It was opened today by Vern Foster, the popular and efficient delivery clerk in the local office for the past seven years, as superintendent. All college mail will be sent to the substation, as well as mail for students and members of the faculty who wish it." The substation was located on the northwest corner of the ground floor of Bryan Hall. More than five hundred boxes with key or automatic locks were installed. One of the problems that delayed the establishment of the college station for nearly a decade was a formality; a portion of Bryan Hall had to be incorporated into the city *before* a substation could be set up.

The college employed a carrier who, twice each day, delivered mail to the various college departments. He also picked up outgoing mail, in addition to carrying interdepartmental mail in special unstamped envelopes. Today four carriers use trucks to make one delivery each day from the post office to the more than one hundred campus buildings.

Today, the college station still serves the students, faculty, and staff of Washington State University, as well as the community as a substation of the Pullman post office. The location of this substation has, however, changed locations several times. About 1927 a two story frame building next to the student book store housed the facilities. In 1952 the college substation was moved to a new location in the recently completed Compton Union Building at the west end on the main floor. When the Union was remodeled in 1968 the post office substation known as "College Station" was moved to the east end on the ground level. Vern Foster, Hiram W. Sampson, Hal Hunt, Eric Klossner, and Lowell Hubbard have all served as supervisor of the college station.

Zip Codes

When the U. S. Post Office established the practice of using zip codes, Pullman was given the number 99163. This distinguished the community from all other towns, making it easier to sort and direct the flow of mail. Washington State University, having a Pullman address, used the 99163 zip code until 1976. In that year it received its own code, 99164. This change did not, however, apply to second class publications mailed by the university. Nor did it apply to residence halls or group houses. Their addresses are considered to be Pullman residences.

Postmasters and Post Office Locations

Office Location

Dates	Postmaster	Present Street No.	Dates
1881-1885	Oriville Stewart	223 E. Main	1881-1885
1885-1889	Eugene W. Downen	115 N. Grand	1885-1889
1889-1896	John T. Lobaugh	East Main Nodine Building Prather Building Prentice Building East Room, Webb Bldg.	1889-1890 Feb. 8, 1890 Aug. 12, 1890 Nov. 22, 1890 Jan. 5, 1894-1896
1896-1898	George W. Ford	"R" Building	1896-1898
1894-1902	A. A. Miller	209 E. Main	1898-1902
1902-1914	King P. Allen (1st fulltime postmaster)	209 E. Main 135 Kamiaken	1902-1905 1905-1914
1914-1921	George W. Reed	135 Kamiaken 155 Kamiaken	1914-1916 1916-1921
1921-1922	Ira G. Allen (acting PM)	155 Kamiaken	1921-1922
1922-1933	Ira G. Allen	155 Kamiaken 245 Paradise	1922-1931 1931-1933
1934-1953	J. O. Patterson	245 Paradise	1934-1953
1953-1954	James T. Roberts (acting PM)	245 Paradise	1953-1954
1954-1968	James T. Roberts	245 Paradise	1954-1968
1968-1977	Paul Slusser	245 Paradise 1135 S. Grand	1968-1976 1976-1977
1977-1978	Kenneth McNeilly (in charge)	1135 S. Grand	1977-1978
1978-1980	Leonard Persons (in charge)	1135 S. Grand	1978-1980
1980-	Dan Cosper	1135 S. Grand	1980-



—Photo courtesy of Mrs. Irma Bayfus

The Squires house appears in the lower left-hand corner of this 1920 photograph of Pullman.

The Squires House: A Pullman Landmark

By

**Evelyn Rodewald &
Suzanne Myklebust**

The Squires house, located at S. E. 235 Daniel Street in Pullman, was built for John and Ida May Squires in 1906. They owned the property until 1956 when it was purchased and converted into apartments by Loren McCroskey. Today the house is owned by Mr. C. Perryman of Colfax. Typical of houses built by successful business and professional men at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, the Squires house is a kind of symbol of that “age of elegance.” Once Pullman had many such residences in the various styles that were popular at the turn-of-the-century. Subsequently, many have been torn down, while a few, such as the Squires house, have managed to survive as apartment buildings.



—Photo Courtesy of Esther Ford Smith

The organ originally shipped to Pullman for Daniel McKenzie ultimately came to be owned by May McKenzie Squires.



—Photo courtesy of Esther Pond Smith

A photograph of the interior of the Squires house about 1915. The somber occasion on which it was taken was a "Basket ball banquet."

Ida May McKenzie

Ida May McKenzie was born in Iowa on May 6, 1867 to Daniel and Sarah McKenzie. In 1877, they left and crossed the plains with mule teams to Washington Territory. May was 10 years old when she moved into her "new home," a log cabin near where the Manor Lodge Motel is located today.

She remembered roaming the Palouse hills, always being careful not to wander near the Indian trails. Trees and heavy shrubbery lined the Palouse River and there was a large pond where the east end of Main Street is now. Traffic to Moscow, Idaho, was ferried across the river at this point.

May grew up in a home that was a gathering place and community center for the infant town of Pullman. Her parents fed and sheltered many newcomers arriving in this area.

She married John Squires and they moved into their first home on Pioneer Heights, on what is now Hill Street. Later they built the home at S. E. 235 Daniel Street on a lot purchased from her father.

Mrs. Squires was very active in the Methodist Church which her mother had helped start. She was a charter member of W.S.C.S., a Methodist womens group. A member of the W.C.T.U., she opposed saloon-building in Pullman.

Mrs. Squires was a tall, attractive woman who wore her long hair tied in a knot on the top of her head. A good mother and homemaker, she devoted much of her life to her husband, five children and their friends. May continued to visit her mother every day and cared for her during her illness. Mrs. McKenzie's funeral was held in the Squires home in 1910. When John died in a rest home in Spokane in 1941, May continued to live in the house they had built together until she could no longer care for

herself. She entered a rest home in Spokane. There she died in October 1959. At the age of 92, she was the last of Pullman's original settlers.

John Squires

John Squires came to Washington from Linn County, Iowa in 1877 and homesteaded near Whelan. He farmed for seven years before selling out and moving to Pullman. Once in the new community he started a real estate and insurance business with Mr. C. Gaddis. Together they built the Flat Iron Building and established offices there. On July 3, 1887, John married Ida May McKenzie, daughter of Daniel McKenzie, one of Pullman's founders. Squires was elected and served as Pullman's first City Marshal. He held the post for five years. In 1895 his fellow citizens elected him Mayor of Pullman. During his term laws were passed limiting saloon hours and requiring saloons to remain closed on Sunday.

Squires was one of the organizers of the Pullman State Bank in 1892. This bank was only one of six in Whitman County that managed to survive the panic of 1893-1895. It was later absorbed by Seattle-First National Bank.

A substantial member of the community, John Squires was considered a public spirited, progressive citizen; efficient and conscientious in his public service. One Pullman resident remembered him as being "rather aloof and very English." He was tall and slender, always wearing a suit, vest, and tie. In later years he walked with a cane or walking stick.

The Squires house is significant to the city of Pullman because it is one of the few remaining homes built by the early pioneers and lived in by the family for a long period of time. The source of the structural plans for the building is not known. However, tradition suggests that a Pullman architect, William Swain, may have been the designer. Charles Parrish, a carpenter and life-long resident of Pullman, helped in the construction.

The house itself is neo-classical, a style popular at the turn-of-the-century. There are four Tuscan columns across the front of the structure. These columns are set on simple bases which have subsequently been encased in concrete. The foundation of the three story structure is of native basalt rock. There is a balcony leading from the windows on the second floor which has a Victorian style railing and balusters.

The chimney is on the south exterior wall, a red brick with a vertical design providing strong corners and a pattern of shadow and light. The house was first heated with a coal furnace. The flue for the furnace and the fireplace were both included in the single chimney. The doorway at the main entrance has a rectangular transom and side lights. Flanking the door on either side is a large sash window. Many of the original windows containing leaded glass remain in the house.



—Photo courtesy of Esther Pond Smith

The Squires house as it is today—a boarding house for college students.

The interior was a typical late nineteenth century classic floor plan. There was a central entry and a large hall extending the length of the house. The music room and dining room were on the left of the hall and two parlors were on the right with the kitchen and pantry at the rear. The house featured a large entrance hall with columns four feet from the door which were draped to provide privacy to the rest of the house. About ten feet from the entrance was a grand stairway leading to the second floor.

The living room, or music room, to the left of the entrance hall contained the first organ in Pullman. Daniel McKenzie had ordered it for his wife. It was used many times for church services and as a source of entertainment for the new settlers. This room also contained a fireplace of basalt rock and a large wooden mantel. The second floor had five bedrooms and a bath and the third floor was left open for recreation and dancing.

Between 1920 and 1940 dormers were added to the roof on the north and south sides. The design of the dormers corresponds with the existing roof design. This allowed the third floor to be divided into four bedrooms and a storage area. As their family left home, the rooms were rented to students attending Washington State College.

A membership in the Whitman County Historical Society makes a wonderful gift! Subscription rates are: \$6.00 per year for an individual, \$12 for a family, \$15 for sustaining members, and \$25 for businesses. Write to:

*Gwenlee Riedel
S. W. 220 Blaine
Pullman, Washington 99163*

Pullman—From Farming Frontier To Urban Center, 1881-1910

by Roger Bjerck

The Foundations: Home, School, and Church

It was no small matter to secure a shelter for one's family in early Pullman. The Palouse was not Ohio, where timber stood thick. Here a job called for a forty-mile trek into the mountains for timber which had to be hauled back by wagon, with the help of one's neighbors. In the meantime the settler often was dependent for shelter upon the hospitality of those who had come earlier. Although the first housing might have been nothing more than a crude log hut, often with a lean-to at one side, it was the center of the pioneer's universe. In the absence of public institutions, the settlers conducted their social, religious, and educational activities in their home. These included such diverse activities as spelldowns, dances, parties, Sunday school, and religious services. Usually one home in each of the communities in the Palouse stood out above the rest, becoming in effect the community center. In Albion, for example, it was the John Rice home, whereas in Pullman it was "Uncle" Dan McKenzie's home. One suspects that the traits of hospitality, friendliness, and piousness, the good fortune of possessing musical instruments, and the fame of Mrs. McKenzie's cooking brought the honor.

Schools were built soon after the houses. In 1882, a year after the town was founded, a log cabin school was constructed on Sunnyside Hill where the old high school is now located. By modern standards the school of the frontier was primitive. In the 1880's the school term rarely lasted four or five months. Teachers were hired either because they were available, could pass the simple examination for certification, or because of their talent for discipline. The teacher's education generally was narrow and shallow. Stokley Roberts, one-time Superintendent of Schools in Whitman County, read a few books on arithmetic, civil government, anatomy and physiology, bookkeeping and natural philosophy. This was the extent of his formal secondary education. With that preparation he secured a certificate and taught. It should be said, however, that by 1890 Pullman's school curriculum had been improved sufficiently so that it was quite in step with modern education trends within the state and throughout the nation. Pullmanites supported their educational program by providing suitable facilities. As a result of the increasing enrollment, a new and larger school was built in 1888, at the cost of \$4,000. And just three years later, the community again improved facilities by constructing a brick building which cost \$30,000 and gratified community pride.

Besides the task of education, many of the activities formerly associated with the home were encompassed by the school. That institution, in fact, became the new community center where church, Sunday school, dances, and "literaries" were conducted. The literary society appears to have been an organization which devoted itself to

literature, but with innovations fitting the style and tastes of an agrarian society. It encouraged neighborhood gatherings of families and friends, being partly social, partly political, and only nominally literary in purpose. Charles Kincaid remembers attending “literaries” as a young lad in Ewartsville school where youngsters played outdoors in good weather and indoors in the anteroom in bad weather. The adults staged plays, presented readings, sang songs, held debates, and discussed current affairs.

The *Pullman Herald* disclosed the activities of a “Povertyville Literary Society,” which met at the Pullman school during the depression years of the 1890’s. Its members favored a variety of activities, such as music, humor, readings, debates, and discussion of current problems—especially the economic problems of the times. In one instance, the evening’s highlight was reached with a debate on the proposition: “Resolved that money should not bear interest.” More over, a resolution was passed to the effect that a debate on the “silver question” would headline next month’s regular meeting.

Churches provided stable foundations that were necessary to a frontier society. Stokley Roberts stated:

It is impossible to portray the development of our social and institutional life without taking the church into account . . . There is scarcely an exception to the rule, that wherever a new settlement began, the church took its place along side the school to exert its steadying and softening influence upon the people.

Churches looked upon the frontier as a challenge to missionary work, a place where the minister, girded in the armor of righteousness, battled with evil. It was a duel between the Devil and God for supremacy in the new communities. The Reverend R. W. Hill, a Presbyterian leader in the Palouse, wrote of the struggle in 1884:

If a community starts under the auspices of the saloon, the gambling table, the brothel, the tendency is downward, and these influences are hard to eradicate. What the Northwest needs is a systematic seizure of all available points for Christ. The Church ought to precede rather than follow the tide of immigrants pouring over the mountains. It is far easier to keep in advance than to over take.

In the 1870’s and 1880’s most denominations were active in the Inland Empire and the Palouse country. The Baptists by 1883 established a church at Colfax which acted as the headquarters for the Palouse, including Pullman. The Reverend George Campbell, then serving at Colfax, wrote in 1883:

My work here grows more and more encouraging. I am just beginning to get into my work. I consider my bishopric to take in the country around Colfax within a radius of twenty miles. I preached at Endicott, seventeen miles west of here, last Sunday morning . . . I serve the Baptist church in Garfield, seventeen miles northeast, on the first Sunday in each month, the Baptist church in Pullman, seventeen miles southeast, the third Sunday in each month.

It is probable that the Baptists were the first to enter Pullman, although they did not erect a church structure until 1892. Close behind were the Congregationalists, although they had entered the Palouse earlier. In 1877 the Reverend Cushing Eells established the Congregational Church in Colfax which became the mother church for the sect in the Palouse. By 1886 the Congregationalists had organized and built a church in Pullman. In the 1880’s and 1890’s the Presbyterians and the Episcopalians extended their influences into the region, the first of the two establishing a church in Moscow in 1880, but not until 1899 in Pullman. An Episcopal Church was built in Pullman about 1891. Meanwhile, the First Christian Church was planted in Pullman in 1892, but it is probable, as with all other denominations, that this congregation was active some years before they constructed a building.

The importance of churches was underscored in an editorial in the *Pullman Herald* of June 1, 1901, which stated that religious institutions were organizations of social life

as well as agencies for the preparation for the “society of Heaven.” For many citizens churches were bulwarks of social and cultural activity. The Bible and the sermon were chief sources of intellectual stimuli. Consequently, the churches had heavy schedules, ranging from Sunday worship, midweek prayer meetings, non-religious lectures, readings, song fests, and elocutions. Guest speakers occasionally discussed the distant, improbable, romantic, and exotic outside world. “A trip around the world” was a Bostonian’s subject. “Life in India” was presented by a man from Tacoma.

Amusements

Frontier living did not provide a wide variety of commercial entertainment. Pullman people looked to themselves for diversion from a life devoted to hard work. Dancing became a popular activity, at home, at school, and at the grange hall. Those seeking an evening of celebration ventured to “Cashup” Davis’s roadhouse at the base of Steptoe Butte, twenty-five miles north of Pullman. Winter invited skating and sleighing, while in summer riding horseback was a popular activity, especially for couples in courtship. Card playing enabled many the opportunity to while away evening hours. It also had the advantage of appealing to all—men, women, children, gamblers, and even preachers. Throughout the 1890’s and past the turn-of-the-century, the most popular card game in Pullman was Pedro, a game similar to Whist.

The most widely practiced diversion, however, was visiting with family and friends. At home, school, or on the sidewalks, people enjoyed commenting on the weather, crops, politics, and their neighbors. Some people found amusement in the saloon and at the gambling table. Saloons brought drunkenness, illegal gambling, as well as occasional fist fights, and shooting affrays. On Sundays the churches frequently had to compete with the popular sport of horseracing. On Saturday nights a cock fight occasionally added its morbid thrills to the routine of everyday life.



—From the Barkhuff Collection, Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections, Washington State University

A circa 1910 photograph of the interior of the Henry Store in downtown Pullman. Pictured are: Lucinda Clark Henry, Mabel Marle Henry, an unidentified child, and an unidentified man.

New Values of the Town

The culture which rested at first on an agrarian society changed with the growth of the town. It was from businessmen and professional men that the push for growth, the spirit of progress originated. They presented their values in the press and pamphlets. They lauded and magnified the attributes of the town, promoted it with money and organization, and in general took it upon themselves to protect community interests. They made up the Board of Trade, the Chamber of Commerce, and the City Council. If sheer numbers had been required to determine Pullman's future, then the town might have floundered in its infancy. Six men, however, secured Pullman's future. Speaking at Pullman on July 4, 1892 Seattle politician Edmond S. Meany singled out the "Big Six," the "generals" who led Pullman's host onward to great victories. Notwithstanding Meany's glowing praise, Pullman's leaders did bring permanent advantages to the community. They spearheaded the drive for the college, they fought for and secured the railroads, and they speculated in real estate, and act of faith in the future of the community.

The *Pullman Herald*, a barometer of commercial spirit, often went to extreme lengths to boost the town. Once its editor predicted that within four years the population and wealth of the community would increase fivefold. The annexation of territory to the town, an August 2, 1890 editorial declared, would allow Pullman to "keep up with her rival cities—Chicago, Spokane, and Tacoma . . ." The tone and spirit of Board of Trade literature was more cautious, but nonetheless steeped in the faith that Pullman was worth advertising. The Board prepared pamphlets on "Pullman and the Palouse Country," fully expecting to attract many settlers. In 1892 the Board also tried to engage the interest of Middlewesterners with a full-page advertisement in *Northwest Magazine*, published in St. Paul, Minnesota.

The commercial spirit could be seen in community projects. In 1893, at the beginning of the depression, the business leaders had to decide whether or not to celebrate the Fourth-of-July. Some believed the celebration might stimulate trade, but the majority disagreed. Pullman did *not* celebrate that year. In 1891 the *Herald* editor, always an interpreter of the business mind, suggested that a fountain be erected, not only for the purpose of beautifying the town, but also because it would become another means of promoting growth. Without a doubt it made business sense for the "Artesian City" to advertise itself with a fountain.

New Institutions

With the town came new institutions. Secret societies and their lodges developed quickly and offered not only intimate friendships among members, but presented social events including dances, box socials, and card playing. In 1884 the Odd Fellows established the first lodge in Pullman. In rapid succession other groups were formed: the Masons in 1886, the Knights of Pythias in 1888, the Grand Army of the Republic in 1891, the Woodmen of the World and the Order of Chosen Friends in 1892, the Order of the Eastern Star and the Organization of Red Men in 1897.

Businessmen also discovered that recreation could mean profits. As a result, a roller rink—the latest fad—was opened in the early 1890's. A bowling alley soon followed. But the largest venture was the building of the Pullman Auditorium, or Opera House, in 1893 with a seating capacity of 900, and costing \$9,000. The Opera House—the name is a misnomer since everything *but* opera played there—displayed both amateur and professional talent. The Pullman Dramatic Company staged a show a month, later college plays were presented there. Pullman's Opera House did manage

to open with a professional touch. The relatively well known French actress, Madeline Merli, just happened to be in the Northwest on tour doing "one night stands" at the time. Pullman was able to secure her talent for the occasion because of its railroad connections. Although the Opera House was popular for a time it was, according to Enoch Bryan, "far beyond the ability of the town to support." Its popularity died out shortly after the turn-of-the-century.

Music was a popular form of entertainment in Pullman. As early as 1892 a Citizen's Band was playing nearly every evening of the summer. On Saturday nights, the Pullman Kid Band, composed of youngsters, gave its concerts. In the late 1890's the Pullman Military Band was created. By the beginning of the twentieth century a college band also performed in town.

Amateur baseball supplied community thrills and heartbreaks in the course of doing battle with rival towns. Pullman unveiled its baseball team in 1891. If the *Pullman Herald* is indicative of the feelings of the community, then Pullmanites followed the fortunes and misfortunes of their team with enthusiasm. The newspaper always informed its readers of the next game, provided results of the previous one (especially if Pullman won), and frequently disclosed the details of an exciting contest.

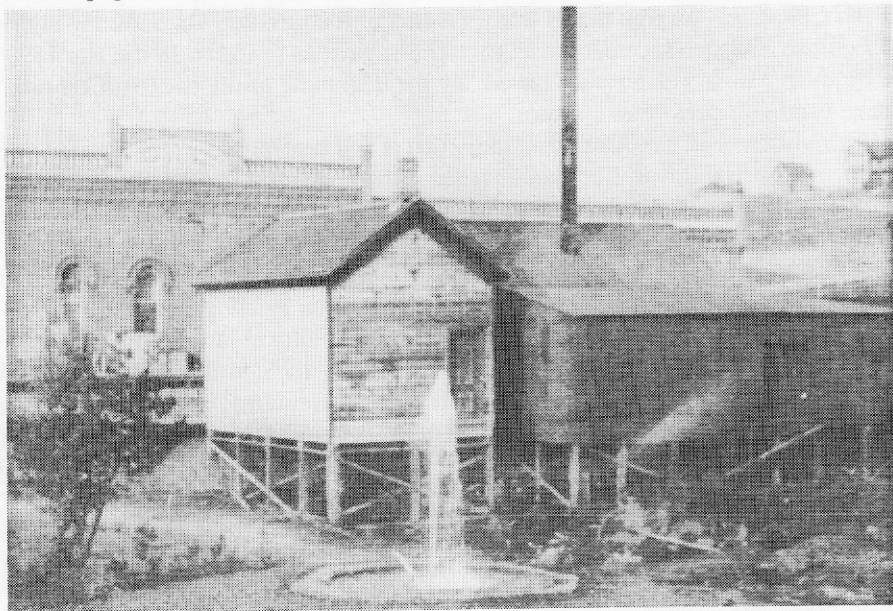
Saturday was *the* shopping day for the farm community around Pullman; it was a day to be spent in town by the entire family. Commercially Saturday was important to businessmen. Socially it was important to the whole community, as Pullman's streets, sidewalks, and stores were settings for much of the community's social intercourse. All of the institutions spawned by the town were integrated into the social and cultural life of the community, providing links between the town and the country. Farmers, as well as townsmen, enjoyed the amusement centers, the saloons, Opera House, and roller rink. Together, farmers and townsmen solemnly worshipped in Pullman's churches. Lodge night beckoned to the country, as well as to the town.

Naturally, the community was not without the stress present in any culture that has diverse "interests." A tug-of-war produced by the creditor status of the town, and the debtor status of the country, elicited some ill-feeling. Town and country also confronted each other over the counters of Pullman's stores. The farmers' intent was to buy cheaply, the merchant's to sell dearly and still maintain the farmer's patronage. Nothing serious grew out of this, despite the fact that farmers often purchased goods from other towns, or from itinerant merchants. It is certain that the business community was aware of these problems. In the *Pullman Herald* (October 24, and June 13, 1896) the traveling salesman was castigated as a bandit and a leech who sucked the economic vitality from a community. Because of frequent attacks on traveling salesmen it can be surmised that farmers often did business with them.

The *Pullman Herald*

Not until 1888, when Thomas Neill set up shop, did Pullman have a newspaper. The *Pullman Herald* came to a community starved for contact with the outside world. On the initial day of its publication men bid large sums of money for the first copy, with John M. Hill paying fifty dollars for the honor. The *Herald* became an almost indispensable part of community life. The newspaper broke in upon the isolation of the Palouse with news of territorial (later state), national, and international importance. The latest news of Washington's advancement towards statehood could be found in its pages, together with tales of America's burgeoning growth, and descriptions of the problems in international relations.

The *Herald* invited readers to become interested in science, psychology, religion, literature, and history. Its articles were, however, diluted to suit popular tastes. Above all, the primary role of the paper was to present local news. Established in an era when rural weeklies made local news paramount, Pullman's journal merely conformed to the standards of the day. The technique employed offered the readers local affairs and headlines on the front page, while national and international stories were relegated to the back pages.



—*Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections, Washington State University*

The actual artesian well in Pullman, Washington. Compare the actual setting with the idealized portrayal of the location on an 1891 Board of Trade propaganda card (illustrated on the cover of this issue).

Local news, by the *Pullman Herald's* definition, stretched beyond the borders of the community to the surrounding towns. "Special correspondents" gathered these far-flung items under such alliterate headings as "Colton Callings," "Staley Scratchings," "Genessee Get-ups," "Lewiston Locals," "Tekoa Talk," "Colfax Chatter," and "Rosalia Rustlings."

The editorial page of the *Herald* deserves attention since it reflected assumptions held by the community. Among many themes present in the hundreds of editorials published, the idea of progress appeared most often. Progress did not always mean physical or economic expansion, for the editor also recognized moral and cultural achievement. But the trumpets of economic boosterism reverberated the loudest. Growth, actual or potential, was editorially received with glowing optimism. In point of fact, the editor was in the position in the community to shout the loudest, reach the most listeners, and generate the most enthusiasm.

Politically, the *Herald* usually stood in the camp of moderate to conservative Republicanism. For example, it supported the political and economic philosophy of William McKinley and William H. Taft. A slight drift toward liberalism was predictable on issues that affected farmers, such as freight rate questions. Understandably, the *Herald* never became a spokesman for "big business," for railroads, trusts, or financial houses. Indirectly the newspaper was at odds with *the interests* because its

farmer constituency participated in the Populist “revolt,” thus declaring war on “big business.” The paper also demanded clean and efficient government at the local level. Frequently Editor Neill trod the reform trail to support his principles. He was, in fact, one of the leading voices of Pullman’s reform politics.

Thomas Neill was also important because he promoted community-mindedness. To him the community was a composite of various groups and interests—a *synthesis* of economic, social, cultural, moral, and educational institutions. Editorially he championed the entire community, never sacrificing the whole for one part. He extended support to businessmen, to the college, and to the farmers. His support was often cloaked in the praise he gave. Pullman’s stores, for example, were complimented because they presented “so metropolitan an appearance.” The college, he said, was a dispenser of modern, progressive, liberal, and political education. He flattered the college by declaring that the town would not be the same without the institution. To the clergy he gave recognition by crediting them with filling Pullman’s churches, and for carrying its society to higher moral plateaus. The pastors were, in his estimation, men of high character, “strong, forceful, and interesting speakers.”

Neill saw in the area farmers a prime example to illustrate success and progress. They were the “new breed,” the ones who added brain to their brawn. Some have even gone to college! Obviously, the old stereotypes—rube, hayseed, or podunk—no longer applied to them. Furthermore, he glorified rustic life, but not in an idealistic or mystical sense. He praised it on the grounds of economic security. He hoped to “prove” to farmers that they fared better than their city cousins. Neill asserted that it was utter foolishness which prompted rural folk to migrate to the city with all its problems and evils.

The College and Cultural Development

Aside from lectures in church, literaries, open air concerts, and a small library established in the town in 1891, the center of Pullman’s cultural life proved to be the college. From the college were thrown seeds which produced such literary societies as the Washingtonian, the Jeffersonian, and the Websterian. Was this high-brow culture? It is doubtful, for Enoch Bryan confessed that these societies were as much for amusement as for anything else. In fact, with the deepening of the depression in 1893 the feeling of amusement faded, and with it the three societies.

The Fortnightly Club, founded in 1893 on the inspiration of Mrs. Enoch Bryan, wife of the college President, lived on. Today it is the oldest study group in Pullman. The women who joined Mrs. Bryan took literary and cultural studies seriously, for anyone failing to carry out an assignment was immediately dismissed. Mrs. Bryan must have shared her husband’s feeling that it was a difficult task to bring culture to the “wild and woolly” West. If the society proposed to study the classics, modern authors, and philosophy, then strict discipline would prove necessary.

In 1904 the Pullman Historical Club was formed with a membership from both town and college. The subjects discussed and the papers read disclosed a cosmopolitan view as well as a spirit of nationalism. Of the two, nationalism proved the stronger, for the printed programs reveal an overwhelming interest in the United States, its great events, and its artistic and scientific development. Surviving evidence suggests that the purpose of the club was more for the enjoyment of academic pursuit than for light amusement.

The college supported music in the community, especially through its annual May Festival. It also brought in organizations and artists that the town would otherwise

have missed. In 1908 the Chicago Symphony performed; in 1910 the New York Symphony; in 1911 the Russian Symphony. Individual artists such as Olga Steeb, pianist, the Great Gadske, Paude Powell, singer, and Fritz Kreisler, violin virtuoso all performed in Pullman. Then, of course the college band, chorus, and orchestra performed regularly for the community.

Intellectual stimulus from the college included frequent evening lectures and occasional guest speakers. But not to be overlooked for its power to mold minds was the annual commencement address. Words spoken on such an occasion took on special meaning. For example, in 1903 the topic was "American imperialism," and in 1905 the "Monroe Doctrine" gave added significance to the meaning of commencement day.

The college did usurp the town's place as provider of athletic entertainment through the regular rhythm of seasonal sports—football, basketball, baseball, and track. Although the State College did not join the Pacific Coast Conference until after 1910, Idaho, Gonzaga, Whitman, and the University of Washington provided ample and exciting competition. But it was the University of Idaho that sparked the strongest rivalry with the State College. The football contests between the two schools became known as the "battle of the Palouse." The State College won the inaugural contest in 1893 by a score of 10 to 0. The oddest contest in the recently-ended rivalry occurred in 1897. Early in the game Pullman's lads became suspicious of an Idaho student who repeatedly kicked the ball eighty to ninety yards. They finally concluded that he had played for Carlisle Indian School, where he had gained national reputation as a kicker. The Pullman players protested, refused to play, and forfeited the game to Idaho. As a climax to the contest the Idaho quarterback, who realized that all the Washingtonians would demand their money be returned, whisked up the gate receipts and made the longest run of the day—500 yards straight to the bank in downtown Moscow.

Publications of Note

With the Colors from Whitman County, 1917-1919, Lou Wenham editor,
Pullman, Washington 1920, 258 pp., \$17.00

With the Colors from Whitman County, 1917-1919, a book containing military records, photographs, and stories about Whitman County servicemen and women in World War I, was recently found in quantity stored in the home of the wife of the original publisher. The books have been stored, unbound, in boxes for more than sixty years. They were recently saved when Stella Wenham of Kent, Washington discovered them. Her husband, Lou Wenham, a Pullman printer collected the material for this historically valuable book which includes a large number of photographs, summaries of service records, and of anecdotes of soldiers, sailors, nurses, and private citizens who contributed to the war effort from 1917 to 1919. When he published the material Wenham made an effort to include a record of everyone who had served. Only those who could not be located in 1919 were omitted.

Since their discovery, the books have been purchased by the *Rosalia Citizen-Journal* and Roy M. Chatters of Pullman, who had them bound by master bookbinder Bill Boch of Oakesdale using the original covers that were stored with the books.

These items may be obtained from Roy Chatters, SW 240 Blaine, Pullman, Washington 99163 (Mail orders, please include \$1.40 for postage and handling. Washington residents include 85¢ for state sales tax).