

Bunchgrass Historian

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HUN OR HOME?

BUY MORE
LIBERTY
BONDS



WSC GOES TO WAR

Also: Eastern Washington according to Zane Grey

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ARTICLES FOR PUBLICATION

Contributors should send copies of their manuscripts to the editor (at the above listed address). All stories dealing with topics related to Whitman County history will be considered for publication.

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The Authors

Harold Helton is a native of Michigan and a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of History at Washington State University. He became interested in the topic of WSU during World War I while doing research in the Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections at Washington State University.

Ron Szabo has spent many years in the Palouse region. An amateur historian and an avid outdoorsman, he is acquainted with the natural splendor and rich tradition of the Pacific Northwest. At present, Ron lives in Valencia, California with his wife and two sons.

Bon Voyage!

William F. Wilbert, Contributing Editor for the *Bunchgrass Historian* for the past two years, will be leaving the staff with the publication of this issue. In addition to his outstanding editorial work, Bill has contributed several fine articles and book reviews to our publication. After sixteen years in the Palouse, Bill will now seek his fortune "in the East," as he calls it, in places like Boston and New York. We wish him well and hope that he continues his interest in writing western history.

WAZZU At War: Washington State College During The Great War

by
Harold E. Helton

These few years in which we are now living are the most wonderful from the standpoint of the student of any that could be imagined. Never before in all history has so many epoch-making changes been packed into such a short time. Fortunate indeed will be the man in the future who can say that he was a student in those wonderful years of the great world war.¹

In April 1917, the United States of America declared war on Germany. This hardly came as a complete surprise, since relations between the two countries long since had deteriorated, but most Americans nevertheless were shocked and very bitter about the turn of events, and were fervent in their resolve to win the war. Few sacrifices were considered too severe for the sake of victory. Anyone not demonstrating proper patriotic support for the war ran the risk of being branded a “slacker,” which was tantamount to being accused of disloyalty. For the sake of victory, all national resources, including the nation’s colleges and universities, had to be placed at the disposal of the federal government. One college that made an important contribution to the war effort was Washington State College. Recognized nationally before the war as a center for agricultural research, Washington State College not only would help farmers meet war-time demands for more productive agriculture, but also would perform the important service of teaching vocational skills to servicemen and preparing young men to receive officers’ commissions. These achievements would earn the college much praise. They also would place considerable strain on the school’s financial and material resources, as well as challenge the ability of students, faculty and administrators to adjust to sudden, often drastic, changes in their personal and academic lives.

Washington State College, founded in March 1890 and located at Pullman, was a land-grant school. Its curriculum emphasized education in applied science and technology, including the agricultural, biological and veterinary sciences, chemistry, pharmacy, mathematics, geology, forestry, and various fields of engineering. The college also offered a number of liberal arts disciplines, including economic science and history, home economics, English, various foreign languages and literatures, public education, and music and fine arts.² The institution grew rapidly during its first quarter century. New curricula and educational extension services were added to

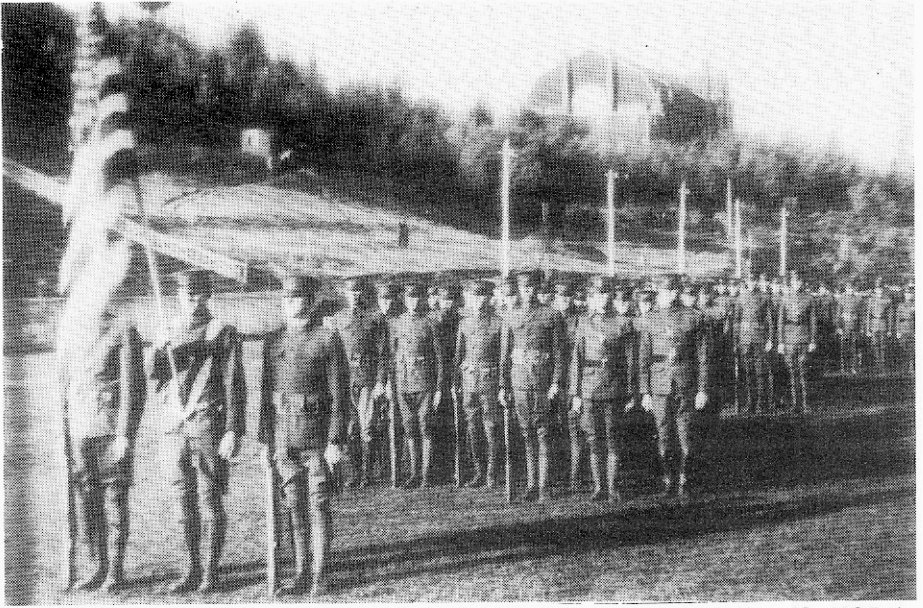
meet the growing needs of the state. In June 1917, the State College's twenty-one departments were organized into five colleges and four schools. New buildings almost constantly were under construction. Enrollment for the 1916-1917 school year surpassed a record 1300 students. The student body consisted largely of men between the ages of seventeen and twenty-three, most of whom majored in one of the agricultural or biological sciences, veterinary medicine, or engineering. In addition, a few hundred women were enrolled at the college, majoring in English, home economics, or public education. The students' social schedule that year was very full. Besides the usual dances, athletic events, and local charity drives which filled much of their leisure time, the students were involved with raising funds for the relief of European war refugees and prisoners of war.

School days began with the blaring of bugles and the barking of orders as the Cadet Training Corps turned out for morning drill at the athletic field.³ Since the sinking of the *Lusitania* and subsequent passage of the National Defense Act, many American colleges and universities had scrambled to keep up with the nation's broadening military policy either by inaugurating cadet training programs where there were none, or by expanding existing programs to include more students and give them more professional training. Unfortunately, federal funding for these programs too often did not keep pace with growth. Such was the case at the State College at the beginning of the 1916-1917 school year. In September 1916, 600 freshmen enrolled in the cadet corps and turned out for morning drill. But, due to late Congressional funding, the college had been unable to procure enough uniforms and other military equipment for all of the cadets. For the first three months of the fall semester, therefore, many cadets had to drill in overalls and use shoulder sticks instead of rifles.

Classroom instruction for the cadets was given in College Hall. Course-work that year concentrated more on acquisition of skills necessary for field command and less on the study of military history and theory. Instruction was given in topographical analysis, map reading, field engineering, entrenching, fire direction and control, rules of military discipline and command, and first aid. In addition, cadets took instruction in international law, foreign relations and political science, and a foreign language, which usually was French.

ROTC at WSC

These efforts to "professionalize" the cadet program paid off. In November, the War Department announced that Washington State College had been admitted to the Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) program. Because of this, shortages of weapons, uniforms, and classroom supplies were eliminated almost overnight. Cadets with good academic records could, if they wished, enter the ROTC program directly. Juniors and seniors who had completed two years of cadet training and who had been recommended for further training both by the Department of Military Science and Tactics and by President Ernest Holland could enter the program with advanced standing. All ROTC cadets attended morning drill, took five hours of military class work weekly, and participated in annual four week ROTC summer training camps. In return, the federal government subsidized their tuition and paid them an annual living allowance of seventy-five dollars. Upon graduation, they were eligible for temporary commissions in the Army as second lieutenants. In addition, one ROTC graduate was selected each year for a second lieutenant's commission in the Marine Corps. Washington State College was one of only eighteen American colleges and universities allowed to appoint ROTC graduates to the Marines.



—Manuscripts, Archives and Special Collections
Washington State University Libraries

“School days began with the blaring of bugles and the barking of orders as the Cadet Training Corps turned out for morning drill on the athletic fields.”

To ensure an adequate supply of ROTC candidates, and to make certain that all male students remained in good physical condition in case war should come, the college announced in January that in the future all male students would be required to enroll in the Cadet Training Corps for two full years. Some students grumbled about this, but most took it in stride and considered it the patriotic thing to do. Patriotism soon was put to a greater test. That same month, January 1917, Germany announced its intention to resume unrestricted submarine warfare. The United States immediately severed diplomatic relations with Germany. In March came news of the Zimmerman telegram in which Germany invited Mexico to declare war on the United States and reconquer Texas, Arizona and New Mexico. The American people were outraged by Germany's aggression and demonstrated their anger publicly. By comparison, the reaction of students at the State College was subdued. A few students staged anti-German demonstrations, but the majority quietly went about their work, awaiting the next turn of events. On April 2, the waiting ended. President Wilson's war message was relayed by telegraph from Washington to Spokane and then to the Associated Press office in Pullman. What long had been feared now was reality.

E. O. Holland's Martial Spirit

Shortly after war was declared, both the regents and the faculty convened meetings to decide what they should do. Major C. B. Smith, district military inspector for the War Department, submitted a report to the college recommending that all male students, faculty and staff workers wear military uniforms at all times in order to promote proper martial spirit at the college. Captain Frederick J. Osterman, commandant of the Department of Military Science and Tactics, urged the regents to create a volunteer regiment of students and alumni. Such a unit, he argued, “backed by the spirit and tradition of the college,” would, through military discipline and careful

scrutiny of the recruits' activities, protect the members "from the evils that confront young men."⁴ Neither Holland nor the regents were impressed with Osterman's moral argument. That sort of appeal was exactly what they most feared. They were worried that the college might be driven by the passions of the moment to make extreme decisions it later would regret. They opposed any measure that might turn the college into a military academy, even only if by appearance, and therefore they declined to act on either Major Smith's or Captain Osterman's recommendations.

President Holland often used the minutes of faculty committee meetings to give informal expression to his formal opinions. By including his remarks in the minutes, he made known his point of view, but left open the possibility of later modifying his position since it was not an official statement. This gave him leverage in dealing with opposition groups. At the same time, he was well known as a man who did not change his mind capriciously. Therefore, his faculty committee statements had the practical effect of being official, but not final, policy. On April 13, after lengthy discussion of viable policy options by Holland and the faculty, the faculty committee issued the following recommendations:

It is the opinion of the college authorities that the greatest military service which the students of the State College can render to their country at this time is by fitting themselves to be commissioned officers, and to continue their technical training . . . in order that they may be of the greatest service to the nation.⁵

To drive the point home even more, undergraduates were reminded that since students under the draft age of twenty-one were not eligible for commissions, it would be unwise for them to enlist until such time as the War Department recommended their enlistment.

Generally, the students responded favorably to the directive. Fewer than a dozen students enlisted during the first month of the war, but a large number of seniors, faculty members and staff workers applied for membership in the ROTC. To qualify for membership, they had to pass a physical examination and present three letters of recommendation.

More often, patriotism at the State College was expressed collectively. The Associated Students organization drafted a resolution of common student opinion which stated that they give their unqualified support to the government and pledged to do "whatever the government may deem it advisable to do," including "to mobilize the resources of the college for national service in war or in peace." They also proposed that school officials take an annual census of every man and woman at the college to determine whether or not they were doing the most they could to achieve victory. Finally, they transferred \$250.00 from their debating club/guest lecturer fund to the Red Cross. A motion, offered by a representative of the Cadet Training Corps, to have the students pass a resolution urging Congress to establish permanent universal conscription was defeated after a heated four hour debate.

The Women's War Effort

Women students convened separate meetings at the college chapel. The Home Economics department provided information about food and energy conservation procedures, and Red Cross volunteer work. Representatives from the National League for Women's Service helped organize the women into committees to discuss how they could assist the government in meeting anticipated manpower shortages in agriculture, commerce, industry, public transportation, and medicine. Many of the women signed volunteer pledge cards at the Red Cross table which committed them to roll bandages

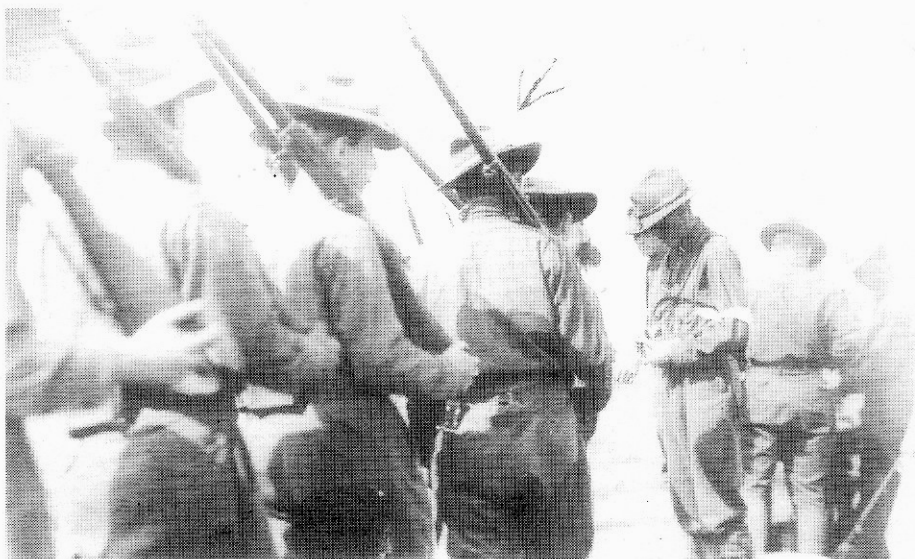


—Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections
Washington State University Libraries

W. J. Spillman, head of the Bureau of Farm Management and former WSC professor, (above left) was offered the position as head of the Agriculture Experiment Station but declined. E. O. Holland, inaugurated President of WSC in 1916, did not favor turning the institution into a bastion of militarism.

and make gauze surgical dressings. Red Cross volunteer work proved popular among the coeds as a war time activity. Each women's residence hall and sorority house tried to outdo the other in total volunteer work. The women of Stevens Hall consistently led all rivals. During the war they worked at the local Red Cross office an average of forty-seven hours weekly. In the spring of 1918, when the Germans launched their final offensive of the war, the Americans and Allies suffered so many casualties that the women had to double, then triple, then quadruple their productivity. In every case, they met or exceeded the demands made of them. The Red Cross also put them to work knitting scores of scarves, sweaters and socks for patients, sewing service flags, actively recruiting new Red Cross members and volunteer workers, and maintaining an updated list of the latest government-approved war literature for the benefit of the community.

Another common method of demonstrating one's patriotism was to "Hooverize." Government demands of the nation's food supply during the war considerably reduced the amount of food available to civilians. Herbert Hoover, the national food administrator, requested that all Americans voluntarily reduce their consumption of meat, wheat flour and sugar, eat one meal per day minus those commodities, and go one day each week without consuming them. Such do-without meals were called "Hoover" meals, and "Hooverizing" meant practicing self-sacrifice. The extension services of the departments of Home Economics and Agriculture cooperated with the government in publishing lists of substitutes for beef, poultry and pork, wheat flour,



—Suzanne Myklebust

“In September 1916, 700 freshmen enrolled in the cadet corps and turned out for morning drill. But due to late Congressional funding, the college had been unable to procure enough uniforms and other military equipment . . . many cadets had to drill in overalls and use shoulder sticks instead of rifles.”

and sugar, plus recipes for their use. In addition, the College of Agriculture worked closely with Northwest farmers to increase their production of wheat, poultry and beef.⁶

Finding palatable food substitutes was a major concern of the departments of Agriculture and Home Economics. High on the government’s list of protein substitutes for meat was cottage cheese. The agricultural extension service of the college encouraged farmers to increase production of the curd. Home Economics workers extolled the virtues of cottage cheese across the campus and helped dining hall chefs plan menus around the dairy product. Try as school officials might, however, to convince students that cottage cheese was both nutritious and patriotic, the students quickly tired of the “creamy glop.”

“Hooverizing” extended to the students’ social activities. In March 1918, the Women’s League at Washington State College decreed that for the duration of the war, patriotic college women should not allow their dates to buy them meals when going out for the evening, in order to conserve food. This delighted college men whose incomes had been diminished seriously by war time inflation. Coeds obeyed the directive, albeit with a discernable lack of enthusiasm. Restauranters were dismayed: they did not like the idea, but they did not want to appear unpatriotic by complaining too loudly. At any rate, dating at the State College became a more Spartan undertaking.

College students did more for victory than sacrifice a few meals and roll bandages. Students joined faculty, staff and college administrators, including Holland, in taking on the responsibilities of foster parenthood. Fifty-four Belgian and French children were provided food, clothing, medical aid, and a steady flow of caring letters. Sorority houses in particular were active in caring for war orphans and other distressed children.⁷ Care of the waifs continued after the war until the childrens’ governments

once more could afford their care, or until the children were old enough to fend for themselves.

In addition to being foster parents, the women of Kappa Alpha Theta sorority participated in a drive by their national organization to raise enough money to equip a French base hospital. Elsewhere, a number of college women took up victory gardening. Several hundred fallow field garden plots were made available on Military and Methodist hills. A plow and a team of horses were provided, for a small fee, by a local farmer and city hydrants were opened for irrigation. A special effort was made to entice "city girls" to farm the gardens, since they constituted a large proportion of the war time coed population, and since many rural women already were involved with regional farming, leaving school every autumn and spring to assist farmers with the planting and harvesting of their crops. College administrators, recognized the acute manpower shortage in agriculture and granted holiday leaves, with adjustment of credit hours, to college women who helped farmers, once they provided written proof of their employment.

The war also affected the scholastic activities of college women. Just as war time manpower shortages forced many women into factories, so, too, were college women moved toward new academic pursuits. Prior to the declaration of war, coeds at the college primarily were enrolled in liberal arts and primary education courses. One year after the declaration of war, nearly fifty women were studying agricultural science, five studied gasoline engine operation and repair, another studied farm machinery maintenance, two were in animal husbandry, three in forestry, twelve in horticulture, twelve more in poultry husbandry, and five were preparing for careers as high school instructors in agriculture and agronomy. Other women took condensed courses in accounting, drafting, office management, carpentry, blacksmithing and metal work.⁸ When not in class learning these skills, they often were attending extra-curricular war courses. The Home Economics department organized a number of war emergency courses held periodically the two hours preceding the first class of the day. In them, the women were taught methods of food substitution and conservation, and first aid. In the evening, the women faced an endless procession of visiting war lecturers who spoke on topics ranging from post-war economic and political objectives to more mundane topics, such as "Posture and Its Relationship to Efficiency" and "The Relation of the Eye to General Health."

The Four-Minute Men

Even when students were away from campus, they constantly were reminded of their patriotic duty. Beginning in November 1917, the Pullman Committee on Public Information, chaired by Judge Neill, scheduled brief, four minute war addresses to be given by local dignitaries, so-called Four-Minute Men, at both Pullman movie houses. Their mission was to impress upon their audiences the need to conserve food and energy, to perform volunteer work for the Red Cross and, above all else, to purchase Liberty bonds and stamps.

Liberty bond and stamp drives always brought a large number of government spokesmen to town. A very popular speaker was Congressman Richard P. Hobson of Alabama. A noted temperance lecturer, Hobson combined animated pleas for Liberty bond and stamp purchases with thundering demands for tight control of liquor sales on military bases and passage of national temperance legislation. Another popular speaker was Dr. Frank A. Golder from the History department at the college. He gave a series of popular war lectures describing conditions in revolutionary Russia as he had seen



WORLD WAR ONE POSTER ART

Vivid, sometimes lurid, posters were an everpresent reminder to Whitman County residents that their nation had entered into the bloody life or death struggle known to posterity as World War I. Massive wall-sized posters, some of them over five feet on a side, were distributed by a variety of wartime governmental agencies. They encouraged Americans to do everything from eating more meatless meals, to buying more war bonds, to donating books to victory libraries. But the posters did more than make simple appeals to patriotism; they also tried to convince Americans that they must hate, even despise, the German enemy. Government propoganda artists, following the example set by their British counterparts after 1914, began to portray Germans, “the Huns,” as carnal, in-human beasts. The poster on this issue’s cover, as well as those illustrated above, come from the outstanding collection of war poster art housed in Manuscripts, Archives, and Special Collections, Washington State University Libraries.

them first hand on a recent tour of that country. Unfortunately, not all speakers were as well received, and in time their popularity diminished. William Goodyear, owner-editor of the *Pullman Herald*, and a fire brand patriot, became so tired of the endless procession of speakers that he urged the government, in an editorial on May 13, 1918, to send them somewhere else for a few months in order to give the people of Pullman a much needed rest. Patriotism, he warned, wore thin when overdone.⁹

Tests of patriotism

Sometimes it was difficult to determine where heartfelt patriotism ended and response to coercion began. In Pullman, patriotism was monitored and coaxed where found lacking. For the most part, such instances were few and usually involved charges of hoarding food or failing to follow government conservation guidelines. A small number of people also were charged with not purchasing their full quota of Liberty bonds as determined by the gross income they reported to the Internal Revenue Service. In all cases described, the violations proved to be not a matter of disloyalty, but rather one of confusion about government requirements. Every attempt was made to permit the accused to correct his or her behavior. Those who refused ran the risk of being branded a "slacker" by the community. One woman charged with hoarding admitted her guilt to the local county food administration board, then signed a home conservation card and promised to try to follow government guidelines better in the future. Having restrained her annoyance with the proceedings up to that point, as she was about to leave she turned around and told the committee what she thought of them questioning her loyalty and supposing that they could guarantee it by having her sign a pledge card. She also described the government's recommended substitutes for wheat flour as not being "fit for hog feed."¹⁰

Accusations of disloyalty among the students at the State College were rare. One reason was the absence of investigatory agencies on campus. Besides, there was little apparent need to investigate student loyalty. Patriotism ran high at the college. Furthermore, the student body underwent considerable change during the war, giving students little time to know each other well enough to judge character. Very few cases were reported of students taking action against suspected "slackers." When they did, the results seldom were satisfactory. In April 1918, for instance, Charles H. Oberg, reputedly a member of the Industrial Workers of the World "of the socialistic type," was confronted by a group of angry male students who accused him of making "remarks derogatory to the best interest of the government," that is, he was reported to have vowed not to fight in a war he considered to be a struggle between capitalist states. When he refused his tormentors' demand that he salute the American flag, he was paddled publicly for several minutes and then thrown into Lake de Puddles, a pond just north of the athletic field. The cheering crowd that had gathered fell silent when they realized that their victim could not swim. Half drowned, Oberg was pulled from the pond, whereupon he saluted and kissed the flag. Some of the spectators cheered, but most of them quietly dispersed, having lost their enthusiasm for the ordeal.¹¹

As the war progressed, the federal government's need for men in the military and in industry reduced the male student population of the college. Since most upper classmen were at or near the draft age (twenty-one) when war broke out, some of them enlisted immediately in order to improve their chances of receiving commissions. The remaining juniors and seniors continued their studies until they received their induc-

tion orders. Only those upper classmen learning professional skills badly needed by the military, such as engineering and veterinary medicine, were granted draft deferments. As for under classmen, freshmen enrollments declined steadily through 1917 and the spring of 1918, as many eighteen year olds decided to serve their country by wearing khaki green instead of the green emblematic cap of a freshman.

Despite changes in the student body, food restrictions, war time inflation, and a never-ending procession of often boring war speakers, student moral remained high and student volunteer service never waned. Throughout the war, students at the State College attained or surpassed every war-related task set for them. Fund raising was their most persistent challenge. The college earned four Liberty Bond honor flags during the war by exceeding each of its subscription quotas. Students were responsible for canvassing dormitories, fraternities and sorority houses, and the academic departments for subscriptions. Fraternities and sororities actively raised money for the YMCA and YMCA-sponsored programs designed to help war refugees, to maintain hostess houses near military installations (including one in Pullman), to provide shelter, food and day care centers for women working in defense-related occupations, and to underwrite the "Big Sister" movement which was dedicated to "saving girls from men and soldiers from girls." The associated Students organization collected books and magazines for servicemen and clothing for war refugees and prisoners of war, organized charity bake-offs and auctions, and helped the Pullman community lead all of Whitman county in enlisting new Red Cross members.

Raising Money

A very popular war time fund raiser was the sale of "smileage" books and subscriptions to the "two bit club." "Smileage" books were purchased by civilians and sent to servicemen. They contained coupons admitting the bearer to "wholesome" camp entertainments. One dollar books contained twenty coupons; five dollar books contained one hundred coupons. The "two bit club" pledged members to purchase at least one twenty-five cent Liberty stamp each week. Liberty stamps often served as admission tickets for dances, movies and other social activities at the school and in town.

Like the students, college faculty members made their own contributions to the war effort. Professor Frank Golder of the History department, besides being a popular war lecturer, served as chairman of Pullman's food conservation program. Professor Herbert Kimbrough, chairman of the Music and Art department, headed the "smileage" book sale committee. G. E. Thornton, of the department of Mechanical Engineering, purchased an old Curtis bi-plane (Pullman's first airplane) which he used to teach aerodynamic design and construction to students and servicemen. And, chemistry professor George A. Olson made this contribution to food production and conservation by inventing a concentrated breakfast food made of corn, wheat, flax, and fruit, "some of it made up in strings resembling macaroni; other kinds resembling flakes and small globules."¹² Public response was restrained.

The Home Economics Department's Agnes Houston Craig was perhaps the most active faculty member during the war. Besides teaching courses and chairing her department, she served both as Federal Director of Home Economics for Washington and as State Chairman of the Food Administration Committee of the National Council of Defense. In these capacities she was responsible for home conservation programs in the state of Washington, including educational programs. She initiated war emergency

extension courses throughout the state to teach homemakers gardening, canning, garment making, diet and hygiene, and food conservation. Instructions also was offered in Red Cross first aid. Students passing final examinations in advanced first aid were certified as competent to work as nursing assistants in Red Cross base hospitals.

“Lonestar” Dietz

Not all faculty members gained reputations as patriotic war workers. Most colorful, and notorious, member of the faculty was football coach William H. “Lonestar” Dietz. Dietz was a man who seemed destined for greatness. Intelligent, witty, a foppish dresser, he boasted of his half-Indian heritage and accomplished nearly every task he set for himself. At Carlisle College he had been a key factor in that school’s football team winning a national championship. After graduating from college he quickly established an impressive reputation as a grid iron strategist. He was hired by Washington State College as football coach in 1915 and led the Cougars to a championship season and victory over Brown University at Pasadena in January 1916. Pacific Coast and Northwest Conference championship seasons followed that remarkable first year, but such success was not enough for “Lonestar” Dietz.

Dietz always fancied the bright lights of show business. Prior to his arrival at Pullman he had portrayed Indians in two American Motion Picture Corporation films, *The Torch* and *The Carving*, and had become hooked on making movies. In February 1918 he purchased a large block of shares in the Washington Motion Picture Corporation located near Minnehaha Park, Spokane, and became production director. The studio specialized in western movies filmed in eastern Washington and northern Idaho. Dietz immediately set to work reorganizing the company. This took considerable time. That time was afforded him when in the spring of 1918 Washington State college cancelled its athletic schedule for the 1918-1919 school year due to scarcity of men to fill the teams. It was indicative of his popularity that the student body immediately petitioned the regents and the athletic council to retain his services regardless of the future of the football program. Touched by this gesture, Dietz vowed to return to the college as soon as the football program was reinstated. He then went to New York to star in a vaudeville Indian comedy skit he had written called *Back to the Blanket*. In June 1918, he returned to Spokane to participate in a Liberty Loan rally and parade. In the parade, he rode atop his movie company’s float dressed as “Bill, the Kaiser.” He portrayed the German emperor with such evil bravado that Spokane police had to surround the float to protect him from some agitated spectators. The following November, when the war’s end was in sight, he began mapping plans for the 1919 football season and the resumption of a brilliant coaching career. He never would have the opportunity to put his plans into operation.

In December 1918, William Dietz’s world began to crumble when his name surprisingly was withdrawn by the athletic council from consideration as football coach. A shocked student body was jolted severely when it learned the reason for his dismissal: in February 1919, William Dietz was indicted by a Spokane grand jury on the charge of false draft registration. Since June 1917, it was alleged, he had claimed exemption from the draft on the basis of all of the following: being a full-blooded American Indian, being the head of an industrial establishment, a ward of the government, and both an alien, a white Indian, and a non-voting resident of the United States. Although he later argued that he had made his statements under advice of counsel, his reputation had been ruined and his career at Washington State college ended.¹³

Faculty Efforts

Approximately one year earlier, another scandal had been disposed of more quietly. Dr. Ira Cardiff, who worked at the Agriculture Experiment Station, was persuaded to resign after being charged with presenting misleading budget figures to the state legislature and having conspired to help defeat appropriation bills beneficial to the college in favor of a marketing bill that would have given him the important political power to appoint the director of the state bureau of markets. After accepting Cardiff's resignation the regents offered his job to W. J. Spillman, a former WSU agriculture professor who at the time was head of the Bureau of Farm Management of the Department of Agriculture. When Spillman declined the offer due to the responsibilities of his federal job, the position was offered to Edward C. Johnson who was teaching at the Kansas Agriculture College. Johnson arrived in November 1918, becoming dean of the College of Agriculture and head of the Experimental Station.¹⁴

Many other faculty members left the college during the war, but for far different reasons. A small number of faculty enlisted in the armed forces shortly after war was declared. Other teachers and researchers were hired by the federal government in a civilian capacity. For example, Daniel R. Hull, assistant professor of floriculture and landscape architecture, was hired by the War Department to design Army camps and aviation fields. Mathematics professor Charles A. Isaacs became assistant supervisor of the Army's college training program in district twelve (Washington, Oregon, Idaho and Montana), superintending instruction of mathematics, physics, and engineering. And, J. Fred Bohler, college athletic director, was summoned by the government at the end of the war to report to Princeton University to help organize Army physical training programs. Whenever possible, the regents granted these individuals extended academic leaves for the duration of the war.

While many young people left Washington State College during the war to in or for the military, those who remained also faced a form of military service. Beginning in September 1918, the college required all male students to enlist in a student reserve military program, the activities of which were coordinated with those of the ROTC program. This development coincided with the lowering of the draft age to eighteen by Congress and provided draft deferments for freshmen. Its purpose was to prepare draft age students for military service through physical fitness, the learning of military rules and regulations, and the acquisition of skills needed by the military. All participating students were furnished free uniforms, weapons and other personal equipment. They drilled every morning and were classified as soldiers on inactive duty. Each summer they performed six weeks active duty (receiving private's pay of thirty dollars per month) at Army training camps where they underwent regular military training. While they remained in college and maintained good academic standing they would not be called to permanent active duty. At age twenty-one, they would be classified by the Army as being suitable either for line duty as privates, as candidates for officers' commissions, or as technicians, in which case they received vocational training either at Washington State College or elsewhere.

Military Image

WSC soon took on an even more military image. In May 1918, the college announced that President Holland had signed contracts with the War Department, on a per cost basis, to give vocational training to soldiers. Officially, the soldier-students were called the United States Army Training Detachment, but most commonly they

were referred to as the Student Army Training Corps (SATC). 300 soldiers arrived at the college June 15 for two months, followed by another 300 on August 15, and another 600 on October 15.¹⁵

SATC cadets were divided into two sections. Section A consisted of high school graduates and men with limited college experience who were given training to make them officers. Section B consisted of non-high school graduates who were taught vocational skills needed by the Army. These skills included carpentry, automotive mechanics, blacksmithing, typing, shorthand, wire and wireless communications and repair, gasoline engine repair, and various machine shop skills. Every spring, both sections participated in a one week field exercise designed to teach the cadets practical problems they could expect to encounter in the field. At week's end they marched with full field packs to and from Moscow, Idaho (home of the University of Idaho): a total distance of sixteen miles.

It was necessary for the college to hire temporary vocational instructors and military specialists to teach the SATC cadets. An important addition to the faculty at this time was Canadian Major P.P. Acland who was hired as assistant commandant of the College of Military Science and Tactics to teach modern tactics and to instill greater discipline among the 500 students of the cadet battalion. An honor graduate (1913) of the University of Toronto, Acland had fought in France from 1914 to 1917 and received battlefield promotions from subaltern to major. His bravery was attested to both by the medals he wore on his tunic and by the many bullet and shrapnel wounds that scarred his chest and face. The college had urgent need of his services. Qualifying examinations for ROTC candidacy had been given early in 1917 and only fifty percent of the cadets had passed, with another eighteen percent earning low Cs.¹⁶ The Army concluded that the primary reason for the poor performance was lack of proper military discipline, poor elocution training, and insufficient mental and physical training, as measured by Army standards.

Acland made changes immediately. He organized the drill companies into combat-size units, imposed strict discipline, and de-emphasized close-order drill in favor of instruction in techniques of combat infiltration, entrenching, and assault. He always emphasized practical experience over text book knowledge. The results of his efforts soon showed. The college gained high marks in its next inspection by the Army and thereafter the battalion's reputation never slipped. In January 1918, the college was selected to send qualified students to the third Reserve Officer Training Camp for advanced instruction. Washington State College was one of only eighteen colleges nationally to be so honored. In May, approximately fifty cadets and instructors were invited to attend a three month summer training camp at the Presidio Army base in California. There they learned approved Army methods for the training of new recruits.¹⁷

While the SATC program staved off serious financial hardship for the college, caused by declining student enrollments, it also created numerous problems. The first problem to be solved was finding living space for the soldiers. The Army demanded considerable office space and furniture, both of which had to be borrowed from other departments (usually the ROTC), a full-time secretary, and several classrooms. In addition, the War Department insisted that the soldiers be housed separately from civilian students. Given a large number of entering freshmen arriving in the fall, plus returning upper classmen in draft-deferred curricula, and several hundred women, housing was at a premium. Added to that the Army's requirement for separate facilities, and a crisis was likely. At first the soldiers were billeted in the men's gym-



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In December 1918, William "Lonestar" Dietz's world began to crumble when his name was withdrawn by the athletic council from consideration as football coach. In February 1919, William Dietz was indicted by a Spokane grand jury on the charge of false draft registration.

nasium and in the partially complete Mechanical Arts building, but that arrangement quickly proved to be insufficient and some of the soldiers were moved to the third floor of Wilson Hall. Construction of James Wilson Hall, intended to be the home of the College of Agriculture, had begun several years earlier, but war time inflation had dried up construction funds before the building could be completed. By 1918, only the outer shell of the U-shaped building was complete. Except for plumbing and heating pipes, and the erection of a few make-shift stairways and partially completed floors, the interior of the building was unfinished. Since for the moment the building was not good for any other purpose, the board of regents decided that it was good enough to serve as a temporary Army barracks. The dining room at Ferry hall, a men's residence hall, was designated as the soldiers' temporary mess.

Military and Civilian Authority

If, as most college and government administrators believed, the war lasted well into 1919 or even 1920, the regents knew that different housing arrangements would



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In a scene that was repeated thousands and thousands of times, this photo captures the excitement of a community sending its first recruits to war. Here, a group of Pullman and WSC men are being sent off in grand style by the ROTC band. This contingent departed on April 12, 1918, just ten days after Wilson declared war on Germany.

have to be made. They therefore authorized the construction of temporary barracks, an Army mess hall, a large drill hall, and several vocational shop buildings and classrooms. To reduce construction costs, Holland and the regents persuaded local lumber yards and hardware stores to donate construction materials. The SATC trainees would supply most of the physical labor, and furniture was to be donated by Pullman residents. Construction would get underway in earnest in the spring of 1919.

Administrative problems were no less easy to solve. A major problem was obtaining enough food for everyone. For example, the State Food Administration (SFA) allotted the entire college 675 pounds a sugar per month, based on the school's consumption rate the previous school year. The Army, on the other hand, required that each of its men receive 5.85 pounds per month, increasing the college's total monthly need to more than 4,000 pounds per month. The SFA refused to increase the allowance to more than 2,000 pounds per month, forcing school administrators to reduce sugar usage and rely heavily on substitutes. To serve the soldiers their meals, the college conscripted the entire Home Economics department (including students) plus three extension service nutrition specialists, and hired two home economics teachers from Spokane. They also raised a small army of volunteer women students to serve as waitresses.

Another administrative problem was dividing authority between civilian and military administrators. The Army insisted that the campus commandant of ROTC cadets also be a member of the SATC military discipline committee, in order to maintain continuity of discipline among the college's various military programs. They also demanded that all temporary instructors hired by the college to teach vocational skills

to the servicemen be paid by the college instead of by the War Department in order to raise the morale—and thus enhance the performance—of the instructors by giving them the status of college faculty. The latter demand was difficult for the college. Regular faculty members already were grumbling about fixed salaries during a period of high inflation. To add instructors to the payroll with little prospect of reimbursement by the government until after the war placed a severe strain on the budget while aggravating the faculty. As serious as that problem was, however, it was the Army's administrative demands that most upset the regents. As it was, the college had very little control over the military. By combining the disciplinary authorities of the various military programs as the Army wanted, the college relinquished an important part of its control over at least some of these programs. Still, they had little choice but to reach an agreement with the military if they wanted to keep the Army program at the college.

If relations between military and college administrators were strained, relations between the soldiers and the students and residents of Pullman could not have been better. The soldiers quickly became an integral part of the community's social life, honoring the college and town with dances, participating in charity activities, and organizing picnics and challenge baseball games. Most popular of all the services they performed were their amateur talent shows. To everyone's surprise, including their own, the soldiers displayed a considerable array of talents. Their acts included clog dancers, singers, comedians, musicians and acrobats. Pullmanites reciprocated by putting on their own talent shows for the servicemen.

When each SATC detachment arrived in Pullman, and when it departed, it was greeted at the train station by large, enthusiastic crowds of well-wishers who gave the men flowers and boxed lunches. When the third detachment arrived in October, some of the spectators welcoming the men were suffering the early symptoms of Spanish influenza. Despite their discomfort, they considered it important to greet the men. As they stood in the cold rain, cheering the soldiers, they did not realize that death was riding the train.

More than 600 soldiers arrived in Pullman on October 15. Despite the cold, damp weather, most of the men were wearing summer-weight uniforms, few of them had blankets or overcoats, and many already had contracted the flu. Although the Army routinely quarantined its men for two weeks upon their arrival, in order to protect them from local infections, the quarantine did not protect the men from each other. By the end of the quarantine period, seventy-five percent of the soldiers and their instructors, some 800 men, had contracted the disease.

The Army had only one doctor on campus, a Captain J. S. Collins, to treat the servicemen. Pullman area doctors helped when they could, but they, too, had patients, approximately 100 on campus and as many in town, who had contracted the disease. When the Army finally sent a second doctor to the college, he wasted several days quarreling with Collins about who had seniority of rank. Collins eventually settled the matter by producing his commission which showed that he had twenty-four hours seniority over his colleague.

By October 25, eleven people had died of the flu. The disease spared no one. Hoping to contain the virus, both the college and the town were placed under rigid quarantine. Armed soldiers patrolled the campus to enforce the order. Nobody was allowed to leave the college without official permission, and then only for specific reasons and for limited periods of time. Public gatherings of more than ten people were forbidden, forcing cancellation of classes. In the town, St. James Episcopal Church, the Federated Church, and the Congregational church were turned into convalescent hospitals. At

the college, the lower floor of the men's gymnasium and Sigma Phi Epsilon house were converted to emergency hospitals for servicemen, while the Alpha Tau Omega house was fitted as a hospital for students, faculty and staff. The most critically ill patients were sent to the college hospital.

The Home Economics department took on the Herculean task of organizing volunteers to prepare meals for patients both on campus and in town. Many workers collapsed from exhaustion, but there always were other volunteers to replace them. The Red Cross provided medicine, beds and volunteer nurses. The board of regents hired as many professional nurses as they could from surrounding communities. President Holland visited as many invalid students as he could, comforting them, seeing to their needs, and writing letters to the parents of critically ill or deceased students. The parents themselves helped by providing in-home nursing care. They flocked to Pullman as soon as they realized the severity of the epidemic. Since highway traffic in and out of Pullman was severely restricted during the emergency, most parents arrived aboard specially run trains. At the station they were met by Red Cross workers or by Boy Scouts who escorted them through the deserted streets of the town to the Palace Hotel where an information exchange had been established. There they learned the location and condition of their children.

In many cases, the parents received good news. Only about 100 of the 800 civilian students at the college had contracted the flu, owing largely to strict enforcement of the quarantine. By the first week of November, the number of new influenza cases reported had declined considerably, and many patients had been released from the hospital. Until the quarantine was lifted on November 18, non-hospitalized students were expected to continue their course work by correspondence. Assignments for all classes were posted on the bulletin board at the music conservatory (popularly known as Agony Hall in mock tribute to the quality of music produced there). Homework was deposited in departmental drop boxes at the conservatory on the day it was due. In accordance with quarantine rules, only one student from each residence building was allowed to deposit homework papers and pick up new assignments. Tests were given as soon as school reopened to make sure that no one had cheated on their assignments.

Although brief quarantines again would be imposed in December and January, the greatest danger from the epidemic ended by mid-November. In all, forty-nine people died, including Mary Buckingham, the college nurse, and E. L. Overman, assistant professor of English. Forty-two of those who died were SATC students. This equalled less than five percent of the total number of people afflicted (the national average was ten percent.)¹⁸ Not everyone, however was completely satisfied by this achievement. Charges were made against the college by the parents of a deceased student who blamed their son's death on administrative incompetence. Wanting to resolve this issue quickly, Governor Ernest Lister was invited to investigate the charge. The Army also conducted an investigation. Both inquiries not only exonerated the college, but they also praised the conduct of the school during the emergency.¹⁹

The War Ends

The passing of the epidemic in mid-November coincided with the end of the war. The people of Pullman and the college were anxious to celebrate both the nation's victory over autocracy and their personal victory over the epidemic. In the early hours of the morning of November 11 they were awakened by the clanging of fire bells and an hour long blast of the college siren. Within thirty minutes downtown Pullman was "a seething mass of humanity: every bell in the city was ringing, horns were blowing, cans

rattling, and every pair of lungs was being put to the crucial test.”²⁰ Town and college officials read wire service bulletins announcing the German capitulation. False news of an armistice had set off demonstrations several days before and this time officials wanted there to be no doubt that the news was real.

Formal celebration began at 10:00 a.m., although a large number of people celebrated all through the night. All businesses were closed for the holiday. Volunteers spent the early morning hours phoning families living on farms and in neighboring communities to invite them to the ceremonies. The festivities began with a parade down Grand Street. It was a sunny, cold day, and a large crowd assembled to watch the parade. Leading the procession were town and college officials, followed by a flag-draped truck made up as a float on which were depicted a tar-and-feathered Kaiser guarded by an American soldier and sailor and Uncle Sam. On both sides of the float were large signs which read “The End of Autocracy.” Behind the float marched the SATC band, followed by seven platoons of vocational and fourteen platoons of collegiate SATC students, all of whom were excused from quarantine long enough to participate in the parade. Following them marched 150 Red Cross workers led by one member dressed as Joan of Arc in glittering armor and mounted on a large white horse. They received a thunderous ovation both for their war work and for their tireless efforts in combatting the influenza epidemic. Behind them came a float on which Pullman citizens were dressed in native costumes representing all the Allied countries and the United States, and a float entitled “God Bless America,” on which were depicted a Belgian mother and her two children accepting protection from an American soldier and an American Red Cross worker. Trailing that float was yet another, sponsored by the Spokane *Spokesman-Review*, which depicted an American soldier firing a 77mm cannon. At the soldier’s feet lay a copy of the *Spokesman-Review*, informing him of news at home. Bringing up the rear of the parade marched several hundred members of the Grand Army of the Republic.

The parade wound round many of the main business and residential streets so that people still quarantined in their homes could see the procession. The parade stopped at Main and Alden streets where Uncle Sam, pledging “Justice and liberty to all,” burned the Kaiser’s effigy while a large G. A. A. American flag was unfurled and the SATC band played “The Star Spangled Banner.” As the Kaiser burned, victory addresses were read. Afterwards, a victory street dance was held. Many people attended, but others spent their afternoon driving around town dragging cans, pipes, cow bells, even wash tubs behind their cars as noise makers. The celebrating lasted into the night.

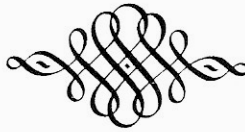
With victory came rapid demobilization of the armed forces. The War Department ordered disbandment of the entire SATC unit by December 21, which coincided with the beginning of the Christmas recess at the State College. Army physicians did not arrive until December 20 to administer discharge physicals, but nevertheless they completed their work by the deadline. The ROTC program would remain at the college, but lose its mandatory status. By the beginning of the fall semester, 1919, Washington State College largely had returned to its pre-war routine. Enrollment that semester topped 2,000 students who actively got on with the business of peace time college life. College administrators turned their attention from war-time building and administrative problems with the Army to more mundane tasks like solving a post-war housing shortage and persuading the state legislature to appropriate funds for expansion programs and salary adjustments against inflation.

Plaques, monuments and Armistice Day ceremonies commemorated those alumni who had made the supreme sacrifice for the cause of freedom, but the struggles of the

college during the war years soon were forgotten. The sense of common purpose, the pride of defeating the common foe, the comradeship of shared sacrifices that typified college life during the war years: these experiences soon faded from memory. How difficult it was for the students of the 1920s to understand William Goodyear's beatific description of the war:

*It is a glorious cause, the noblest cause in which men have ever offered their lives and possessions.*²¹

But for those who lived and worked at Washington State College during the moment of national crisis the meaning was clear. They had made the noble effort and achieved more than was thought possible. They may not have been the most wonderful years for students, but they were indeed years of accomplishment and pride.



NOTES

¹*Washington State College Evergreen*, April 9, 1917, p. 5: letter to the editor from "H.W."

²For several years, Washington State College and the University of Washington were locked in a bitter dispute over WSC's continuation as a liberal arts college. For discussion of the controversy, see Enoch A. Bryan, *Historical Sketch of the State College of Washington, 1890-1925* (Pullman: Alumni and Associated Students, 1928), pp. 278-88, 420-27; William M. Landeen, *E. O. Holland and the State college of Washington, 1916-1944* (Pullman: State College of Washington, 1958, pp. 34-58.

³As a state land-grant college, Washington State College was required to offer students a voluntary two year military training program wherein the government subsidized the college expenses of participating students.

⁴State College of Washington, *Regents' Records* 5: 299, 306.

⁵Landeen, p. 114.

⁶*The Pow Wow: A Digest of News for the Alumnus* 8, no. 1 (August 1917): 22; Landeen, pp. 120-32.

⁷*Pow Wow* 8, no. 2 (November 1917): 3; no. 4 (June 1918): 26.

⁸*Pullman Herald*, April 26, 1918, p. 4.

⁹*Pullman Herald*, May 13, 1918, p. 3.

¹⁰*Pullman Herald*, March 29, 1918, p. 1.

¹¹*Pow Wow* 8, no. 4 (June 1918): 24.

¹²*Pullman Herald*, November 16, 1917, p. 3.

¹³*Pow Wow* 1, no. 3 (February 1918): 21, no. 4 (June 1918): *Evergreen* January 10, 1919, p. 2, February 7, 1919, p. 1, May 2, 1919, p. 1.

¹⁴*Regents' Records* 5: 295, 304, 307-09, 323.

¹⁵State of Washington, *Thirteenth Biennial Report of the Board of Regents of the State College of Washington* (Olympia, 1918), pp. 5-7, 24; *Pullman Herald*, August 23, 1918, p. 1.

¹⁶*Evergreen*, February 22, 1917, p. 5.

¹⁷*Pow Wow* 8, No. 2 (November 1917): 8.

¹⁸*Thirteenth Biennial Report*, p. 8; *Regents' Records* 5: 415.

¹⁹*Pullman Herald*, November 22, 1918, p. 1, November 29, 1918, pp. 1, 6, January 31, 1919, p. 1; *Regents' Records* 5: 397-98, 403-09, 415.

²⁰*Pullman Herald*, November 15, 1918, pp. 1, 4.

²¹*Evergreen*, September 14, 1917, p. 3.

THE
DESERT OF WHEAT

A NOVEL

BY
ZANE GREY

AUTHOR OF
THE U. P. TRAIL, WILDFIRE,
THE BORDER LEGION, ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY
W. H. D. KOERNER



NEW YORK
GROSSET & DUNLAP
PUBLISHERS

Eastern Washington According to Zane Grey

by
Ron Szabo

Written in 1918 and published by Grossett and Dunlap in 1919, *Desert of Wheat* is set in southeastern Washington. The story deals with issues which created high emotion in this area after the United States declared War on Germany in April 1917; among them, the loyalty of German immigrant families, as well as the hottest issue of the time, the rise of Industrial Workers of the World in the Pacific Northwest. This radical labor organization, led by Big Bill Haywood and others, was active in Everett and Spokane, as well as in the lumber and mining camps of the region. Although the IWW is not specifically mentioned, labor confrontation forms one of the basic themes of the novel. Finally Grey touched upon the subject of war—how it sometimes seems right, how horrible it is, and how war leads people to do things they would otherwise think twice about. Together, these themes form the basis for a very political novel unlike any other that Zane Grey wrote.

The central characters in *Desert of Wheat* are Kurt Dorn, a twenty-four-year-old son of a German immigrant, Kurt's father, Chris, a deceased "American" mother, Mr. Anderson the classic man-of-the-West who has fought Indians, outlaws, and the land. Anderson has tamed a tiny chunk of the Northwest where he has created a wonderful ranch called "Many Waters." Finally, there is his daughter, Lenore, the heroic female whose steady strength surpasses that of any man.

Unlike the main protagonists in Grey's other novels, Kurt Dorn is not an eastern innocent who has come west to become a man by measuring himself against a harsh and unforgiving land. Kurt's whole being is, instead, tied to the land, the Big Bend Country, his desert of wheat. Born a farmer, Dorn attended the University of California and the State Agricultural Experiment Station (i.e., Washington State College). At WSC he studied under professors Heald and Woolman. Kurt apparently learned his lessons well. For early in the novel he delivers a rather pat speech, which reads suspiciously like an agricultural extension bulletin, on the causes of smut in wheat and the virtues of bluestem wheat in a dry climate.

As the novel begins, it is just three months since the United States has entered World War I. Kurt and his father, Chris Dorn, have already had many arguments over

Zane Grey, A Profile

Zane Grey was born Pearl Zane Gray at Zaneville, Ohio in the year 1875. One of four children, he was the son of Lewis and Josephine Gray. After graduation from high school Pearl helped his dentist father by becoming a traveling tooth-puller. Later, he accepted a scholarship from the University of Pennsylvania Dental School, graduating in 1896. But even after opening a dental office in New York City, Gray knew that pulling teeth and making dentures was not what he wanted to do for the rest of his life. The desire to write had always been strong and he submitted a number of articles on hunting and fishing to outdoor magazines. In 1903 he wrote his first novel, a story about one of his ancestors, *Betty Zane*. That year he also changed the spelling of his last name from Gray to Grey. After being rejected by several publishers, Grey's work began to sell and in 1904 he finally abandoned dentistry.

Grey had strong convictions about life and incorporated them into his writing. He believed that a writer should discuss what is positive in society, but should also point out what was wrong. He was profoundly affected by World War I. Being beyond the age for military service, he used his pen to provide inspiration and entertainment for the soldiers in army camps and in the trenches in France and Belgium. Grey deplored the human destruction caused by war and held a bitter resentment toward the German nation, which he believed to be the cause of it all. This anti-German sentiment is plainly visible in his major wartime novel, *Desert of Wheat*.

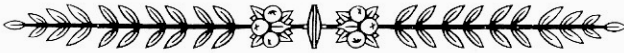
Grey traveled a great deal, making frequent trips to the American West, Mexico, Tahiti, Fiji, New Zealand, and Australia. In 1918 he moved his family permanently to the town of Altadena, California, where he lived until his death in 1939. During his life he produced numerous magazine articles and eighty-nine books, including fifty-four novels. Among the westerns, *Riders of the Purple Sage* (1912), which sold more than two million copies, *The Lone Star Ranger* (1915), *The Thundering Herd* (1925), and *The Vanishing American* (1926) stand out. An astonishing forty-six Zane Grey stories have been made into motion pictures and a television series, *Zane Grey Western Theater*, ran for five years beginning in 1956. Zane Grey can legitimately be called the "father" of modern western fiction.



"After Kurt's departure, the struggle with the IWW reaches a climax when Anderson learns of a plot against his own life and the lives of others. Being a man of decision and independent action he organizes a vigilante group which clears the inland empire of all Wobblies and other "foreign" types."



“Hands up!” He discharged the revolver right in the faces of the stunned plotters and, snatching up the money, was gone.”



the young man's plans to enlist in the U.S. Army. When Kurt's father forbids the youth from taking such an action, it creates a desire within this son of an immigrant to purge himself of his "barbarian" German blood. But just then, Mr. Anderson arrives on the scene to warn Kurt, once convinced of the young man's loyalty, about an invasion of the Wobblies (members of the Industrial Workers of the World) into the Pacific Northwest. The Wobblies were, in fact, making strong and successful efforts to organize farm hands and lumberjacks in the region in 1917. Anderson and his supporters see the IWW only as agents of the Kaiser, agents intent upon sabotaging America's war effort. Anderson's disclosures only add to Kurt's inner conflict because he discovers his father's sympathies rest with the Wobblies. Kurt's inner torment becomes an obsession when Anderson warns him that his father, Chris, is dealing with IWW and is about to hand over \$80,000 advance money on the year's harvest to the ring leaders. Kurt follows his father to the midnight rail yard meeting where the transaction is slated to take place. There, Kurt steals the money at gunpoint and escapes into the darkness. In retaliation, agents of the IWW set fire to wheat fields in the region. But with the help of neighboring farmers, Kurt Dorn manages to save the section of the much-heralded bluestem, the richest stand of wheat in the region. After a harrowing night-harvest the farmers learn that the Wobblies have burned all the wheat stored in the rail yard awaiting shipment. A gunfight ensues amid the flames; Chris Dorn dies broken-hearted when he learns that his farm has been destroyed.

Having nothing left, and deeply in debt to Mr. Anderson, Kurt goes to "Many Waters" to sell the farm, as well as to declare his intention to enlist in the army. Ander-

son, realizing that Kurt is a natural farmer and that Lenore loves the young man, tries to convince Kurt that the production of wheat is a major war weapon and that he would be of more value as a farmer than a soldier. This line of reasoning fails and Anderson goes to his daughter, Lenore, to tell her that only the strength of her love and her power as a woman can save Kurt from himself. In a moving sequence she declares her love for Kurt, struggles with his inner torment, and almost succeeds. But in the end, she is left to wait for her man. Kurt *must* go to war.

After Kurt's departure, the struggle with the IWW reaches a climax when Anderson learns of a plot against his own life and the lives of others. Being a man of decision and independent action he organizes a vigilante group which clears the Inland Empire of all Wobblies and other "foreign" types. One of the IWW leaders, a man named Glidden, is tried in a kangaroo court where he confesses to foreign connections. He is hanged from a railroad trestle over which a train carrying other IWW members passes. This segment of the novel is patterned after the actual hanging of IWW organizer, Frank Little, in Montana in 1917.

Meanwhile, Kurt Dorn gets all the way to France where he experiences the horrors of war. Among other things, he encounters a veteran squad of French soldiers, called the "Blue Devils." This gives Grey an excellent opportunity to discuss the impact of war upon individuals. Huron, a French officer, declares, "Actual fighting is to me a relief, a forgetfulness . . . each and every one of us who has served long bears in his mind a particular horror that haunts him. For a man who hopes to escape alive this war is indeed the ninth circle of Hell."

Dorn's search for his personal enemy reaches a climax in one of those endless attacks between the trenches. Almost singlehandedly he thwarts a German advance. Grey's description of the hand-to-hand combat is bloody and gruesome, complete with the hero, Kurt Dorn, falling severely wounded into a heap of German soldiers. Near death, he is transported to New York, found by Mr. Anderson, and brought back to "Many Waters." All, except Lenore, expect him to die, not only from his wounds, but because he continues to be haunted by the "last battle." Now Lenore, the embodiment of mother nature, womanhood, and life, has her moment of triumph. Sustained, as Grey saw it, by the strength of being a woman, "the strength to endure," she continues to believe in Kurt's recovery. It is Lenore alone who understands the soul and spirit of humanity. "If we poor creatures must fight," she says in a prayer, "let the women fight eternally against violence, and let the men forever fight their destructive instincts." When Kurt's physical recovery finally begins, Lenore patiently tries to calm his nightmares of the last battle. After a severe fit, she tells Kurt Dorn that he must free himself of his own ghosts. "They must go," Lenore declares, "or you will lose me. If you go on killing your Huns—over and over—it'll be I who will die."

To discover if Kurt Dorn abandons his ghosts and stops killing his Huns, read *Desert of Wheat* yourself. The accuracy of the historical setting, as well as the attention to detail in this 378 page classic, shows that Zane Grey did his research well. His descriptive passages are excellent. The dialog is stodgy and the characters are overstated, but they are genuine. Mr. Anderson in particular has some surprises toward the end of the work. There are few works of fiction dealing with eastern Washington during this time. Among them, *Desert of Wheat* stands alone as a successful portrayal of the confused issues and emotional tangles that accompanied America's entry into World War I. □

Publications of Note

(Works reviewed in "Publications of Note" are not sold by the Editor of the *Bunchgrass Historian*. When possible mail order addresses are included for privately printed and locally produced items. We suggest you contact your local book store, or write to: Edith Erickson, Chairman of Publication Sales, Whitman County Historical Society, P.O. Box 67, Colfax, Washington 99111.)

A Guide to Architecture in Washington State: An Environmental Perspective

by Sally B. Woodbridge and Roger Montgomery

University of Washington Press, 1980, 483 pp.

In a style that is informative and interesting, Sally Woodbridge and Roger Montgomery have compiled a practical guide to Washington architecture. Their work contains an introduction, summarizing state architectural history, an article dealing with landscape design, a photo history, and a systematic examination of architecture by geographic area. *A Guide to Architecture in Washington State* includes a fascinating array of photographs, maps, and drawings, as well as a glossary of terms relating to architectural styles. This book is intended for professionals and for use in the field, but is also written to be easily understood by the general public.

The disciplines of architecture and history have been combined to create a unique perspective; architecture is explained in terms of cultural, economic, and environmental influences and is placed in a social context. In their introduction, Woodbridge and Montgomery have actually created an architectural "mini-history." Here, they show how structures in Washington State are related to national architectural trends and how the local environment shaped development and fostered changes in traditional design. Landscape design is also explored in detail in David C. Streatfield's essay that follows the introduction. With an eye for creative adaptations to local needs, Streatfield considers the entire scale of man-made environments, from residential landscaping, to small parks such as Chetzemoka Park in Port Townsend, to grand schemes like the Columbia Basin Project.

The photo history section of *A Guide to Architecture* has representative examples of period styles from the pioneer days through the 1970's. Organized geographically, Washington is divided into the east and the west. The actual discussion of notable structures begins in Seattle and then follows a geographic spiral outwards.

A second spiral starts at Spokane and ends in Walla Walla. In the photo history section Washington's major styles and structures are shown, town by town. Extensive coverage is given to the greater Seattle metropolitan area and the western side of the state. But the authors seem to have been aware of a possible bias in this respect and have made a conscious attempt to include all of the state's geographic areas, listing outstanding buildings and architectural styles in each area. As a result, the major towns in eastern Washington are well-represented. Spokane, Cheney, Pullman, including Washington State University, are all dealt with in separate sections; the Palouse is also treated separately. The authors discuss such notable locations as the Spokane Public

Library, River Front Park in Spokane, the James A. Perkins House in Colfax, Thompson Hall on the WSU campus, the Whitman Mission site, and many more. *A Guide to Architecture* is a well-documented and balanced survey, combining an informative, well-written text with an abundance of photographs and maps to create an attractive and valuable reference work for anyone interested in the architecture of Washington. □

—Jill Whelchel

Country Boy: Story of a Palouse Farm

by Harriet Ann Crawford

Puyallup: Valley Press, 1982, 101 pp.

Harriet Ann Crawford's fictional account of a turn-of-the-century Palouse farm is an exciting new literary work. Set in the turbulent times following the Panic of 1893, *Country boy* shows us eastern Washington through the eyes of a growing boy, Andy MacKenna. But *Country Boy* is much more than this; it is also the story of a family and a community caught in the crosscurrents of "tough times." Harriet Crawford's novel is not just a mere story; it is a piece of literature. It is a great deal more than a collection of colorful anecdotes correct in detail, though they are present in sufficient quantity to set you down in the front row of Ulysses Tecumseh Short's one-room country school, or to bring you creeping to the kitchen door to listen to an assembled group of farmers discussing the Populist platform of the Farmer's Alliance.

Country Boy is a tale of the "good old days," but it is a tale told without romantic Hollywood notions. The book is filled with human emotion and the details of growing up on a farm. The MacKenna family and their neighbors saw their way of life threatened from every side, by blizzards in the winter, epidemics in the spring, and 365 days a year by railroad interests and the big grain companies. Harriet Crawford has told a story of a way of life that was both incredibly hard and incredibly fragile. At the end of the novel, Andy MacKenna, at the ripe old age of sixteen, looks back over his life and concludes that he loves the country. Faced with the prospect of Pa's "selling out" and moving to town, the boy recalls,

... the first day he ever went to school when Mr. Short got him so tangled up it looked for a while as if he didn't know his name. Some people could do that. It was because you tried to give a straight answer to crooked questions; they didn't seem able to know they were the ones short on gumption. But for that other kind, the ones who always had to gang up before they made a move, he'd never be afraid of them, on account of something he'd never told a living soul: no matter how bull-ragging town people might be, he knew something about them a person would never guess—underneath, they were the scariest sissies in the world. That, he knew for a fact.

Bankers, grainbrokers, railroad tycoons were all town people. These were the people that made it impossible for Andy to stay in the country. While it is dangerous to make predictions about a book's place in literature, it is certainly safe to say that *Country Boy* is one of the most important pieces of fiction yet written about Whitman County. Its delicate handling of the theme of "growing up in the Palouse" places it alongside the great classic, Carol Ryrie Brink's story of growing up in Moscow, Idaho, *Buffalo Coat*. For information regarding the purchase of *Country Boy* write to: Valley Press, 207 West Stewart, Puyallup, Washington 98371. □

—Fred C. Bohm