

## PIONEER EXPERIENCES\*

George Lawrence of Ohio was my father and Lucretia Montgomery my mother. Both were of Revolutionary stock, although I have the record of my father's side only, being descended from John Lawrence of Capt. Jack's Company, Pennsylvania Militia. His son John was the father of my grandfather, Charles Lawrence. My father is buried at Selma, Illinois; my mother in a country graveyard in Linn County, Oregon. Recently, when visiting her grave, I found near it the grave of Joaquin Miller's father. Near this locality was the home of the "Oregon Poet," as he was then known. I knew both father and mother, having harvested at their home. His mother is buried in California, where she made her home in later years. I never saw Joaquin—"Hiner," as he was called at home. He was then in London, having just made himself famous there. The Oregon papers, particularly the *Oregonian*, had always poked fun at him. I knew many of his school mates, as he was only a boy on coming to Oregon. His mother thought he inherited the poetic talent from her, and to prove it tried to write poetry herself after his success. The father had been a teacher. I taught my first term of school in 1877, in the district where the elder Miller had taught.

I came from a family of pioneers, the first John Lawrence of record settling in Western Pennsylvania at the close of the Revolutionary war. My grandfather, Charles Lawrence, moved to Ohio over a hundred years ago, when that country was new. My father set his face to the west, and as a child I remember the covered wagon in which we moved from Ohio through Indiana to Illinois, and then on to Missouri across level prairies covered with grass and not a building in sight. After his death we moved to Oregon, when travel by train across the plains was new. I went from The Dalles by team to Pendleton when only a few houses were seen in all that distance, and they were on the creeks, with a day's travel by team between. There were a few settlers

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\* This article comprises two letters written to me by John C. Lawrence, of Winlock, Wash., under dates of May 26 and June 27, 1925. In consolidating these letters I have necessarily made some slight re-arrangements and have omitted from the second letter one or two short paragraphs, which merely repeated what Mr. Lawrence had said in the first letter. I have, however, preserved the exact language of the writer, and herewith offer the article for publication in the belief that it will prove to be as interesting to others as it has been to me. The footnotes are mine.—J. ORIN OLIPHANT.

between Pendleton and Walla Walla. The whole country north of Snake River had but few inhabitants.

Mother, with the family, reached the Willamette Valley, Oregon, April 10, 1876, where she died August 17th of the same year. I reached Colfax, Washington Territory, November 11, 1878, at the age of 17, having been born near Mt. Gilead, Ohio, January 22, 1861. I belong to the W.O.W., K. of P., and F. & A. M., and , while a Presbyterian by faith, am at present a member of the Methodist Episcopal church at Winlock.

I selected Garfield as my home from the time it was laid out as a town, made it my home for nearly forty years, and there two of my children were born: Zola L., born January 22, 1884, who married H. P. Fisher, now postmaster at Garfield, and Bessie A., born February 19, 1886, who married John F. Camp of Napavine. Hugh M. was born on April 13, 1891, at Waterville, and Perry W., September 21, 1892, at Waterville.

The time of one's arrival in a new country does not make a deep impression on the country itself, however deep is the impression made on the new arrival. Mine was made in 1878, and Colfax was the place reached, when the stage from Walla Walla, after an all-night ride, reached the top of the hill toward evening [?], and I saw the hamlet strung out along the bottom of what seemed a canyon a few hundred feet below along the South Palouse River, the impression made was not favorable. But I grew to like Colfax and the splendid people who made up its pioneers.

I suppose as many people reached the Palouse country in 1878 as there were inhabitants prior to that year, and that this was a duplication of the previous year, making a doubling of population for each of the two years.<sup>1</sup> The oldest resident commonly met in 1878 came in 1873. There were very few people in the Palouse country prior to that year, and it seems to me now, from the remembrance of the oldest settlers, nearly all of whom I knew personally, that there were only a few score dating back to

<sup>1</sup> The population of Whitman County, according to the Territorial census of 1878, was 3,709, and in the following year it was 5,290. The Federal census of 1880 gave the County a population of 7,014. Whitman County had not been created when the Federal census of 1870 was taken. According to the *Palouse Gazette* (Colfax, Wash.) of September 29, 1877, "Whitman County was organized in 1871, and now has a population of 2,247; assessable property, \$460,000; increase in population in two years, 742; increase in valuation, \$102,000. The County is out of debt." For some account of the early settlers in Whitman County see Frank T. Gilbert, *Historic Sketches of Walla Walla, Whitman, Columbia and Garfield Counties, W. T.* (Portland, 1882), pp. 432 *et seq.*

1873.<sup>2</sup> I knew a few who came in 1871. Prior to that date, there were fewer than a half-dozen I knew. Five years then seemed a very long time for anyone to have lived in that new country of a seeming million hills.

The old Territorial road ran from Walla Walla through Colfax and on to Fort Couer d'Alene, and along the timber line skirting the northern boundary of the Palouse country was the Mullan road, running to Spokane Falls and on east to Montana.<sup>3</sup> Beside these were the Indian trails over which I later saw many thousand Indians travel on their annual journeys to the Coeur d'Alene Mission, east of the present town of Farmington.

Indian trails led from Lewiston northerly through Palouse City and north to Pine creek, thence down to the present site of Rosalia and north to Spokane Falls. Other trails led from the Coeur d'Alene Mission down Hangman Creek and on to the Falls. The locations of these trails are now almost forgotten. The trails from Colfax led northerly over the hills, then turned eastwardly to Dry Creek, past what was the well known Dutch Henry place,

<sup>2</sup> In 1872 there was a considerable migration from the Willamette Valley into the country north of Snake River. With respect to this movement the *Walla Walla Union* of April 6, 1872, says: "Almost every day we see from one to half a dozen wagons loaded with farming impelments, household goods, and women and children, bound for either Stevens or Whitman County. On last Tuesday one train of five wagons, with about 150 head of cattle, passed here on their way to this new country. They had come all the way from the Willamette Valley and the cattle look a little the worse for their journey, but seem to be doing well now. Most of those that are going there have more or less stock, and are attracted thither by the well merited reputation of the country for stock raising. But it is not a stock range only; it is one of the finest agricultural countries in the Territory. A few years will find Stevens and Whitman among the most populous as well as the most wealthy of our Counties."

Through the summer and the autumn of 1872 the *Walla Walla Union* was impressed by the numbers of people moving into the "upper country." In the *Union* of July 13, 1872, appears the following: "The number of immigrants going through this place on their way to the Palouse country is not at all diminished. Every day we see from one to half a dozen wagons filled with women, children and 'other household furniture,' headed in the direction of the Palouse. There is also large numbers of horses and cattle being driven through, and it would seem that the new country would soon be fully peopled and stocked." On November 9 of that year the *Union* stated that the "immigration from the Willamette Valley has not yet ceased, but on the contrary, there seems to be more stock coming in, in our valley now than at any time since the early part of summer. They are anxious to get their stock on bunch grass pasture before winter sets in." In the spring of 1873, according to the *Union* of March 29, this migration into the northeastern part of Washington was resumed, and it was noted that the immigrants were "almost exclusively from the Willamette Valley. They say that there will be a heavier emigration from that section this year than ever before. 'Webfoot' is becoming too old a country for them."

<sup>3</sup> The Celebrated Mullan Military Road, which was built for the government by Captain John Mullan, United States Army, between 1858 and 1862, ran in a northeasterly direction through Eastern Washington and connected old Fort Walla Walla, on the Columbia River, with Fort Benton, on the Missouri. This road was six hundred and twenty-four miles long and was constructed at a cost of \$230,000. "That it will subserve the many purposes claimed for it by its friends I can only sincerely hope that time may eventually prove," wrote Captain Mullan in 1863. *Report of Captain John Mullan* (Washington, 1863), p. 36. The importance of this road to the early settlers in Washington is indicated by the memorial passed by the Legislative Assembly in December, 1866, asking the Congress to appropriate the sum of \$100,000 for its repair. *Statutes of the Territory of Washington, 1866-1867* (Olympia, 1867), pp. 233-239. In December, 1860, Acting Governor McGill of Washington Territory informed the Legislative Assembly that a military detachment had arrived over this road from Fort Benton, making the trip in fifty-seven days. *Washington Standard*, December 15, 1860. On the 14th of the following January the Legislative Assembly, by resolution, thanked Captain Mullan (then a lieutenant) for "his industry, energy and ability in constructing the military road from Walla Walla to Fort Benton." *Laws of Washington, 1860-61*, p. 168. The Mullan Road has, in recent years, been marked by small monuments at several places in Washington and in Idaho.

up on Dry Creek past Seven-Mile Spring near the old Joe Hill place, long the home of Tommy Dobbins; then on *via* Farmington to the mission. These trails were several parallel paths and were deepened by the wind blowing out the dust cut by the feet of thousands of ponies, or cayuses, as they were called. In some places the trails would be a foot or more deep.

The settlers in the early days followed the Indian trails until the wagon tracks deepened into roads. Later railroads in many cases followed what had been the Indian trails in their general course across the country.

Spokane Falls was laid out as a town in the spring of 1878 and was generally referred to as the Falls. Palouse City and Farmington were laid out the same year. Moscow and Colfax had been laid out a few years before.<sup>4</sup>

Many towns have come into existence in the Palouse country since then. I watched their birth and was a kind of midwife to Garfield, having written up the first account of its existence, and was afterward a wet nurse for many years.

I have seen many people come and go, into and out of the Palouse country. While the Walla Walla Valley is the oldest in point of settlement, Colfax was the principal gateway in the early days of the Palouse and Big Bend countries. The early settlers came *via* Portland, Oregon, up the Columbia and Snake Rivers by boat to Almota, then by stage across to Colfax.<sup>5</sup> The larger number came by team, many from the Willamette Valley, and others by team across the continent *via* Walla Walla. Later they traveled north from the Palouse country in search of land, on out into the Big Bend Country,<sup>6</sup> and then, on the completion of the Great Northern, in the early nineties, across the mountains into Western Washington. Nearly every town in Western Washington has one or more former residents of the Palouse or Big Bend

<sup>4</sup> The populations of these towns in 1880, according to the Federal census of that year, were as follows: Colfax, 444; Farmington, 76; Palouse City, 148; Spokane Falls, 350. For contemporaneous accounts of the growth of these towns see the correspondence therefrom in the *Palouse Gazette*, volumes one and two *passim*. Also, see Gilbert, *op. cit.*

<sup>5</sup> In *The Spokane Times* of June 5, 1879, immigrants were given the following instructions to reach Washington: "There are three routes which Eastern people may take in coming hither. If a person wants to save time, and desires to bring stock, wagons, etc., the quickest and most direct route would be to come from Omaha to Ogden; thence by wagon road to this new country; traversing the distance from Ogden in two or three weeks, when roads are good—say in the months of June, July or August. Those having neither wagons nor teams can come by rail to Kelton, at a cost of about \$50 in emigrant car, thence by stage to Walla Walla, at an expense of \$75, exclusive of meals, and on to Colfax or Spokane Falls, at an additional expense of ten and seven dollars, respectively. The remaining route is *via* San Francisco, by rail, thence to Portland, Oregon, by ocean steamer, thence to Almota, by boat."

<sup>6</sup> On May 23, 1884, *The North-West Tribune* (Cheney, Wash.) stated that "emigrants are flocking into the Big Bend Country at the rate of one hundred a week." Following the completion of the Northern Pacific Railroad in 1883, travel into the Pacific Northwest was made relatively easy, and during the decade of the eighties the population of the Territory increased tremendously. Compare the Federal census reports for 1880 and 1890.

countries, and in the larger towns several of them. In the cities there are scores, and no place I have found on the west side without at least one former resident of the Palouse or Big Bend countries.

The early inhabitants of the Palouse came from all over the United States. The first settlers, as a rule, came from the Willamette Valley. Many of the very first were stockmen from the Walla Walla country, seeking new grazing lands for their growing herds. I came from the Willamette Valley, where I had spent two years.

Recently I read L. E. Kellogg's story of pioneer days in the Palouse country.<sup>7</sup> My name was not mentioned, as I was only a boy, but it was all a part of my life. I was a printer's devil in the office of the *North-West Tribune*, which he established there in 1880.<sup>8</sup> In the fall of that year I listened to a conversation between Mr. Kellogg and D. C. [D. F.] Percival,<sup>9</sup> which took place at the end of the case where I was setting type. Percival owned land at what was called Depot Springs,<sup>10</sup> west of Spokane Falls, and proposed to lay out a town, as it was on the line of survey of the Northern Pacific Railroad, then under construction from Ainsworth, near the mouth of Snake River, toward an eastern connection.<sup>11</sup> Percival hoped to interest the railroad officials to make it a division point and then put up a fight against Spokane

7 L. E. Kellogg and C. B. Hopkins started in Colfax, on September 29, 1877, the *Palouse Gazette*, the first newspaper published in Eastern Washington north of Snake River. Mr. Kellogg withdrew from this partnership in 1879, and in the following June started in Colfax *The North-West Tribune*. This newspaper was moved to Cheney, Washington, in October, 1880, to further the candidacy of Cheney for the seat of government of Spokane County. In 1884 *The Tribune* was sold by Mr. Keellogg to George F. Schorr, and in 1886 Mr. Schorr moved the plant to Spokane Falls, where *The Tribune* was published for several years. For some account of the life of Mr. Kellogg see my *History of the State Normal School at Cheney, Wash.*, chapter I; also see *Washington Historical Quarterly*, XVI, 132 et seq., for an account of *The North-West Tribune*.

8 Vol. I, No. 1, of *The North-West Tribune* is dated June 16, 1880.

9 D. F. Percival was one of the early settlers in what is now Spokane County. He served as County Commissioner in Stevens County in the seventies and, in 1879, as a member of the House of Representatives, introduced into the Territorial Assembly the bill which provided for the organization of Spokane County. He came to Cheney in the infancy of that town and was for some two decades one of its leading citizens. He was five times mayor of the town. For a more extended life sketch see my *History of the State Normal School at Cheney, Wash.*, p. 9.

10 Depot Springs was an early name of the present town of Cheney, Washington. For a short while in 1880 the town was called Billings, in honor of Frederick Billings, then president of the Northern Pacific; but in the late summer or the early autumn of that year the name was changed to Cheney, honoring Benjamin P. Cheney, of Boston, a director of the Northern Pacific. Mr. Cheney gave the community the sum of \$10,000 to be used in founding an academy. The Benjamin P. Cheney Academy was opened to students on April 10, 1882. On the admission of Washington into the Union this institution was donated to the state on condition that it be made a State Normal School. This academy thus proved to be the forerunner of the present State Normal School at Cheney. See *Washington Historical Quarterly*, XV, No. 2, "The Benjamin P. Cheney Academy." The files of *The Spokan Times* and *The North-West Tribune* contain much of interest in relation to the county-seat contest in 1880 between Cheney and Spokane Falls. The State Normal School at Cheney has the publisher's file of *The Spokan Times* and the publisher's file of *The North-West Tribune* is preserved in the Spokane Public Library.

11 The construction of the Pend Oreille division of the Northern Pacific was begun at Ainsworth, "the new town at the mouth of the Snake River," on October 2, 1879. See *The Spokan Times*, October 16, 1879; also, E. V. Smalley, *History of the Northern Pacific*, for a history of the entire road up to 1883.

Falls for a county seat. It was a glowing picture he painted, and, as there was no apparent prospect of a railroad ever coming to Colfax, Mr. Kellogg agreed to go to Cheney, and Percival agreed to give a lot, furnish a suitable building and move the plant.<sup>12</sup> Mr. Kellogg asked me to go with him, but I had made up my mind to stay with the Palouse country, which I did for forty years, except for intervals while holding official positions. Ten years later, when I went to Waterville as Register of the United States Land Office at that point, I found my old friend Kellogg had preceded me and had founded the *Big Bend Empire*, the pioneer newspaper of that great region.<sup>13</sup>

For a time in 1882, in an interval between terms of school I was teaching, I acted as clerk at the Baldwin House,<sup>14</sup> then the leading hotel north of Snake River, and the headquarters for stages running in many directions. One line came in from Texas Ferry on Snake River, the upper landing of steamers at low water. Another from Penawawa,<sup>15</sup> the ferry crossing from Walla Walla. Another from Lewiston, one to Spokane, one to Palouse and one to Farmington. The Lewiston stage covered Pullman and Moscow. Colfax was the hub of transportation, and getting passengers off on the stages and meeting them as they came in from a long stage ride was one of the interesting duties of a clerk.<sup>16</sup>

One evening two slender young men got off the stage from Penawawa. When I looked over the register I saw the auto-

<sup>12</sup> The first number of *The North-West Tribune* issued in Cheney was Vol. 1, No. 18, dated October 13, 1880.

<sup>13</sup> *The Big Bend Empire* was established in Waterville by Lucien E. Kellogg. The first number appeared on February 16, 1888. For an account of the difficulties connected with the establishing of this newspaper see *History of the Big Bend Country* (1904), pp. 989-990; for some account of Mr. Kellogg's activities as a pioneer journalist see *ibid.*, p. 698. A discrepancy respecting the length of time Mr. Kellogg continued as the publisher of this newspaper will be observed in the accounts cited herein.

<sup>14</sup> The initial number of the *Palouse Gazette*, September 29, 1877, stated that the foundation of the Baldwin House had been laid. "It is to be 40x64 feet, two stories high, and well furnished." On February 2, 1878, the *Gazette* announced: "This hotel is now opened and ready to accommodate the traveling public." E. Baldwin was at this time proprietor. In the spring of 1881 the Baldwin House was advertised in *The Spokane Times* as an establishment having "good accommodations and prices to suit the times." E. N. Beach was then proprietor. At the same time A. A. Newberry, proprietor of the Ewart House, in Colfax, advertised his hotel as "the largest and best kept north of Walla Walla."

<sup>15</sup> In 1880 Penawawa had a population of 43 and Texas City had also a population of 43. For brief historical sketches of these "ferry" towns see Gilbert, *op. cit.*, pp. 445-446.

<sup>16</sup> "In 1871 an extensive stage line began to operate throughout this region. This was the Northwestern Stage Company. It connected the Central Pacific Railroad at Kelton, Utah, with The Dalles, Pendleton, Walla Walla, Colfax, Dayton, Lewiston, Pomeroy, and 'all points north and west.' To illustrate the extent of its operations it may be said that it used three hundred horses, twenty-two stages, one hundred and fifty employes, and annually fed three hundred and sixty-five tons of grain and four hundred and twelve tons of hay. Local stage lines also operated in all directions, connecting with each other all the principal points of the county and transporting passengers and freight to Snake River landings, to be there loaded on the boats." *History of Whitman County* (W. H. Lever, 1901), p. 170. For an interesting account of the experiences of a pioneer stage driver in Eastern Washington see William S. Lewis's interview with Louis J. Yale, in *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, May 24, 1925.

graphs of Jno. L. Wilson<sup>17</sup> and Chas. S. Voorhees<sup>18</sup> for the first time. They asked for a room with a stove. I told them we had none, at which they expressed great surprise. I felt a disgust for grown men who wanted a stove in a bed room, something I had never at that time seen and doubt if there was one in the country, unless in a sick room. However, neither of these talented men needed a fire to warm them up politically. Wilson then came to relieve Judge E. N. Sweet as Receiver of the United States Land Office.<sup>19</sup> At statehood, seven years later, he was elected to Congress and later to the United States Senate, and his name became a household word. Voorhees, son of the "Tall Sycamore of the Wabash," was first elected prosecuting attorney of Whitman County and at the next election representative in Congress, where he served in the same Congress with his father.

I have seen many people come and go in both the Palouse and the Big Bend countries. It is not in harmony with the present article to give a list of them. I cannot, however, help mentioning two who made the largest impression on my life. Father Eells, the missionary and co-laborer with Dr. Whitman, in whose honor he founded Whitman College. I was his protege when he was superintendent of schools of Whitman County. Miss L. L. West was a pioneer teacher who came to Colfax from Iowa in 1877 and established the Colfax Seminary, where I attended school. She is still teaching, and, in her 75th year, seems as hale and hearty as at fifty. She will retire from active teaching with the present year, after fifty-nine years' experience.<sup>20</sup>

17 John L. Wilson was United States Senator from Washington from 1895 to 1899. His term was limited to four years owing to the fact that the State Legislature, on the expiration of the four-year term of John B. Allen, failed in 1893 to choose a successor. The State was deprived of one senator for a period of two years. See the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* for January, February, and March, 1893; also, see Barton's *Legislative Manual* for that session of the State Legislature.

18 Charles S. Voorhees, a Democrat, represented Washington Territory in Congress from 1885 to 1889. He was first chosen in 1884 and was re-elected in 1886. He succeeded in getting passed, in 1887, a measure providing for the annexation to Washington of the panhandle of Idaho. This bill was killed by President Cleveland's pocket veto. There was much disappointment in the Northwest at the failure of this measure, for an agitation for the annexation of Northern Idaho to Washington Territory had been under way for fully twenty years.

19 The bill to create the Colfax Land Office, introduced by Delegate Orange Jacobs, was approved on August 15, 1876. *Cong. Record*, 44 Cong., 1st Sess., p. 5698. The office was not opened, however, until April 5, 1878. The first Register of this office was William James, a former governor of Nebraska, and E. N. Sweet, also of Nebraska, was the first Receiver. See *Palouse Gazette*, October 27, December 15, December 22, 1877; March 30 and April 6, 1878.

20 Miss Leoti L. West, who is said to be the oldest active public school teacher in the State of Washington, was born in Iowa on March 18, 1852. She was educated in the Iowa schools and in Mount Carroll Seminary, Illinois. On August 20, 1878, she arrived at Colfax, Washington, and began her long teaching career in the Pacific Northwest. In 1922 she prepared for me a statement wherein she declared that she had taught for forty years, thirty years in Washington; that she had for twenty-five years been a teachers' examiner; that she wrote the first graded school course in Eastern Washington. For two years she was Deputy County Superintendent of Schools in Whitman County, serving under the Reverend Cushing Eells. She was at one time a member of the Territorial Board of Education.

In 1878 the schools of Washington Territory were just coming under a general system. A recent law<sup>21</sup> provided for a Board of Education for the Territory<sup>22</sup> and the adoption of a uniform series of text books. This adoption was made with the promise that there should be a free exchange of the new series for the books then in use.

I taught that winter where the town of Garfield was afterward located, and when the day came to exchange text books I was prepared with all the books in use in the school room and about all the school books to be found in the homes. There were five families and fourteen boys and girls. The books were put into a seamless sack. I was given a saddle mare to ride the eighteen miles to Colfax to make the exchange. The books made a pretty good pack back of the saddle. I had some difficulty in grading the books, as some pupils with a second reader brought advanced arithmetics from home.

Baxter Renshaw,<sup>23</sup> a pioneer merchant in Colfax, was the exchange agent. He smiled at the array of illy-graded books, but made the exchange. With the sack filled with books, I made the return trip in pleased anticipation of giving out the new books in place of the old ones. On Silver Creek,<sup>24</sup> just below Garfield, the mare threw up her head with a snort, and there stood a deer, ears forward, looking us over. For a moment we stood so close together I could have hit it with a stone, then it quietly leaped aside and disappeared among the trees.

A short time later a drove of five deer came down from the mountains and the scholars watched them running over the present townsite of Garfield. The next day we heard that all were killed on the Palouse River near the old Chase mill pond.

21 Reference is here made to the law of 1877, a brief synopsis of which may be read in the *Report*, United States Commissioner of Education, 1880, p. 388. According to this same authority, the various school laws of Washington Territory had been enacted in the following years: 1854, 1871, 1873 and 1877.

22 The Territorial Board of Education, created by the act of 1877, met for the first time in Olympia on April 1, 1878. For a brief historical sketch of this board, as well as for a brief history of the office of Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction, see *Twenty-Fourth Biennial Report of the Superintendent of Public Instruction* (Olympia, 1919), pp. 7-8, 27-28.

23 W. B. Renshaw, who died in Kamiah, Idaho, December 1, 1924, was a pioneer of Whitman County. He went to that region in 1871, while it was still a part of Stevens County. He was born in Cave Spring, Missouri, February 11, 1847, went to Oregon in 1851, to Walla Walla in 1867, and four years later went into the "upper country." He was a pioneer mail carrier for some time, his route being from Union Flat, in Whitman County, to Spokane via Colfax, Cottonwood, Rosalia, Wells Station, and Spangle, a distance of seventy-five miles. He served as postmaster in Colfax for eight years and for six years he was Treasurer of Whitman County. Mr. Renshaw, notwithstanding he declared his education to be limited, taught school for one year near the present site of Spangle. In order to get a teacher's certificate, it was necessary for him to travel to Colville. For Mr. Renshaw's amusing account of the manner in which he obtained a certificate see the *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, July 2, 1922. This account was given to me by Mr. Renshaw and was by me prepared for publication in the above-mentioned newspaper.

24 Silver Creek is a small stream which empties into the North Palouse River at Elberton.



The school house was a crude affair, and was succeeded by a new building the next year. This second building is still standing and is used as a dwelling, having later been moved to the Main street of the town. The next school building was a much more pretentious affair and was built on a hill in the western part of the town, where it later burned. It was followed by the brick building in the center of town, used as a grade school. Some years later the present high school was built on the hill north of town.

The first teachers' institute<sup>25</sup> in Whitman County was held

<sup>25</sup> The official announcement of this institute, which was scheduled for May 29 and 30, 1879, was made by Superintendent Cushing Bells in the *Palouse Gazette* of May 16, 1879. In an editorial note in the same issue the following "gentle suggestion" was offered: "In two weeks the first teachers' institute ever held in Whitman County will convene at Colfax. The object of these institutes is for teachers to meet together for mutual instruction and improvement in their noble profession. School directors also attend these conventions to engage teachers. It is generally known that school teachers, like printers, are rich in everything but that which is said to be the 'root of all evil'—money. It is generally the custom for private families to entertain teachers during the institute, free of charge. The people of Colfax and vicinity should make arrangement to receive and entertain these teachers and make their visit with us as pleasant as possible." The secretary's report of this institute is printed in the *Palouse Gazette* of June 6, 1879. For a copy of the program and a brief history of the early public schools of Whitman County see *History of Whitman County*, pp. 110, 161 *et seq.*

Facilities for the training of teachers in Washington Territory at this time were indeed meager. There was, according to the *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1880*, p. 389. In the University of Washington a normal course of two years, which included "the higher English branches, methods of instruction, and pedagogics. There were twenty-one students attending in 1879-80 and three were graduated." The principal method employed in the Territory for the training of teachers was the teachers' institute. According to the *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1879*, p. 288: "Institutes have been organized in most of the counties of the Territory; and, as a result of the new law establishing uniformity in the examinations of teachers, the sessions were generally well attended, teachers seeing the necessity of embracing every opportunity for improvement. Still, many of the younger teachers held aloof, fearing that they might be required to take a part in the proceedings, for which they were not prepared, such as delivering addresses or reading essays. Partly from this cause the work at the institutes held was confined to the interchange of opinions as to the best methods of imparting instruction, maintaining order, and securing regularity of attendance."

The proceedings of a teachers' institute, held in Cheney, Washington, on June 7, 8, 9 and 10, 1881, may be read in *The North-West Tribune* of June 10 and 17 of that year. In a letter from J. S. Houghton, Superintendent of Public Instruction for Washington Territory, dated at Goldendale on May 31, 1881, to A. J. Stevens, superintendent for Spokane County, Mr. Houghton expressed pleasure that the institute was to be held and urged that it "confine itself mostly to genuine Institute work: that is, to class work adapted to the wants of the common school district. Lectures are all very fine in their way, but they furnish the inexperienced teacher with very little indeed that can be carried to the school room." The program indicates that the wishes of the Territorial Superintendent were complied with. In resolutions adopted the teachers in attendance at this institute indorsed the teachers' institute "as a valuable mode of awakening the public mind to a just appreciation of good schools and qualified teachers" and further urged "the teachers of each county in Eastern Washington to organize and promote institutes."

The first teachers' institute in Spokane County, according to contemporaneous newspaper accounts, was held in Spokane Falls in November, 1880. The editor of *The Spokane Times* (October 23, 1880) was "pleased to learn" that this meeting was to be held and expressed the opinion that there were "now enough teachers and scholarly friends of education in Spokane County to make the institute a success." A rival editor in Cheney wrote of this institute in *The North-West Tribune* of November 12, 1880, as follows: "The institute, though not so well attended as it should have been, was an entire success. Teachers should attend these institutes and lend their assistance to make them useful and valuable aids in the advancement and improvement of our common schools." Five teachers, four women and one man, attended this institute.

In the *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1880*, p. 389, it is said with respect to Washington Territory: "According to law, institutes must be held annually in all counties containing ten or more organized school districts and must remain in session from one to five days. It is made the duty of all teachers employed in the county to attend and to take part in the proceedings, and all having charge of schools must adjourn them for the purpose."

At the time Mr. Lawrence was serving as Territorial Superintendent the plan for the training of teachers in Washington was summarized as follows: "The professional prepa-

in Colfax during May, 1879, with Rev. Cushing Eells,<sup>26</sup> superintendent, and Miss Leoti L. West, who was conducting the Colfax Academy, assistant.<sup>27</sup> There was a report of a previous institute but no record was kept, and I think it no more than a teachers' meeting of a day's duration. This institute was preceded by an examination of teachers, the first under a uniform series of questions propounded by the Board of Education. There were thirty-four applicants present at this examination, and three first-grade certificates granted, of which one was to me.<sup>28</sup>

As this is measurably a personal narrative, I will recite an incident of this examination: Miss West came into the room during the afternoon and after looking around, as she told me

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ration of teachers in this Territory is provided for by teachers' institutes, which are established by law, and attendance made compulsory, with a penalty for absence. An annual Territorial institute is held by the Territorial Superintendent of Public Instruction; and county superintendents are required to hold yearly institutes in counties whenever the number of school children is five hundred or more. The county commissioners are empowered to make appropriations for this purpose. The institutes of the past year are reported to have excited more than usual interest among the teachers. Teachers' certificates, valid for five years, and diplomas for life, are issued upon examination by the Territorial Board of Education. The board of county examiners issues county certificates of three grades." *Report, United States Commissioner of Education, 1886-87, p. 449.*

For an account of the meeting of the eastern division of the Washington Territorial Teachers' Institute in 1882, together with editorial comment thereon, see the *Medical Lake Press* of August 26, 1882.

<sup>26</sup> The Reverend Cushing Eells was one of the early Protestant missionaries sent into the Pacific Northwest. In 1838, after crossing the continent, he, with Elkanah Walker as associate, laid out at Tshimakain, in the Spokane country, the site of a mission. For ten years this mission was maintained. It was abandoned in the spring of 1848, following the outbreak of the Cayuse War, which was caused by the Whitman massacre of the preceding November. Cushing Eells led an active life in the Northwest almost to the day of his death. He founded many Congregational churches in the Inland Empire and did much for education. He was the founder of Whitman College. He was one of the early Superintendents of Schools in Whitman County. His death occurred on February 16, 1893. A complete account of his life was written by his son Myron and published in 1894.

<sup>27</sup> The Colfax Academy and Business Institute, with Miss Leoti L. West as principal and Miss Flora Stough as assistant, was opened on September 11, 1878. *Palouse Gazette*, May 4, June 8, August 2, August 23, August 30, September 13, 1878.

<sup>28</sup> This examination was held on May 7, 1879, with results as follows: "Three teachers received a first grade certificate; three a second grade and seven a third grade." *Palouse Gazette*, May 16, 1879. An examination of teachers was held in Colfax on May 1, 1878, but the *Palouse Gazette* of May 4, 1878, makes no mention of the institute.

A set of teachers' examination questions used in Spokane County in the spring of 1880 was printed in *The Spokan Times* of May 15, 1880. The questions covered the following subjects: Spelling, arithmetic, reading, grammar, history, theory and practice of teaching, constitution and school law, physiology, and geography. Four persons, as a result of this examination, were awarded second grade certificates and three persons third grade certificates. According to a ruling of the Territorial Board of Education, herein quoted, the requirements to obtain the various certificates were as follows:

"For first grade certificates, applicants must receive 900 credits . . . and not fall below 90 per cent in arithmetic and grammar. For second grade certificates, the applicants must receive 750 credits and not fall below 75 per cent in arithmetic and grammar. For third grade certificates, the applicants must receive 600 credits, and not fall below 60 per cent in arithmetic and grammar."

Before this time it would appear that the practice of issuing "permits" to teachers without certificates had been common in Spokane County. On this subject the editor of *The Spokan Times* wrote on May 15, 1880, as follows:

"It will be an interesting matter when absentees apply to Miss Windsor [County Superintendent] for 'permits' to continue their schools; for she will undoubtedly inform them that it was their duty to be present at the examinations. Teachers who will claim that they did not know when and where the superintendent was to meet them will learn that it was their business to find out. The notice was duly published. Those who claim the right to positions as public instructors should read the county paper thoroughly enough to become acquainted with published notices pertaining to their profession. If they do not, we have no hesitancy whatever in saying that they have mistaken their calling, and are not entitled to 'permits' which will entitle them to fill positions for which they certainly are not qualified. Sickness should be the only excuse allowed. No one should blame the superintendent if she follows this lawful and just rule in the discharge of her official duties."

afterward, asked Father Eells, as the superintendent was called, the name of the green-looking boy who was trying the examination. The applicants were numbered, so Father Eells concealed his identity. When the papers were being passed on the next day the most foolish of all the answers Miss West attributed to the green country boy. Some papers were running high, and one particularly high. Miss West was trying to identify not only the papers of the green boy, but of the one running so high. Finally all were done. "Now, who is No.—, the one with the high grade?" "The green country boy," was Father Eells's smiling reply.

Miss West and Father Eells told this story over and over. The result was to make me County Superintendent of Schools at twenty-one. Two years later I was made a member of the Territorial Board of Education and then later Superintendent of Public Instruction for the Territory of Washington.<sup>29</sup>

While the school houses were crude and the seats generally home-made and equipment lacking, the pioneer conditions produced an intensity of work that gave nearly as much advancement in the few months of school during the year as the present year's work. It was a customary sight to see several cayuses staked about a country school house. Those ponies had been ridden several miles in the sparsely settled districts. Now you see autos instead of cayuses. The schools were not graded. I made an effort along that line when County Superintendent and used the first written examinations. When Superintendent of Public Instruction I held the first Normal Institute in the Territory at Colfax, of two weeks' duration. At that time there was no high school in the state [Territory] and few graded schools.<sup>30</sup>

Looking over a copy of my report<sup>31</sup> as Superintendent of Public Instruction, 1885 to 1887, I find there were only six members of the faculty of the University of Washington and some

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29 Mr. Lawrence was Territorial Superintendent from 1885 to 1887. When he was appointed to the Territorial Board, in 1883, the *Palouse Gazette* of November 30, 1883, remarked: "Among the appointments of the members of the Territorial Board of Education we are gratified to notice the name of J. C. Lawrence, of this county. Johnnie has always taken a deep interest in matters educational and a short time ago was appointed school superintendent of this county. The new honor just received is fittingly bestowed upon a worthy gentleman."

30 High schools had no legal status in Washington before 1895. *Twenty-Sixth Biennial Report of State Superintendent of Public Instruction*, p. 294. In 1879 Cushing Eells reported that there were no graded schools in Whitman County, and in 1881 the County Superintendent was "ashamed to admit" that there were no graded schools in Walla Walla County.

31 A fragment of a special report made by Mr. Lawrence to the Governor of Washington was printed in the *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1886-87*, pp. 168-169. It contains much interesting information in relation to educational conditions in Washington forty years ago.

sixty-five students enrolled.<sup>32</sup> The frame building stood on about the present location of the Post Office at Seattle. There were only a half-dozen graded schools in the state [Territory]. The average length of school in all the country districts was a little over three months out of the year. Teachers' wages, not salary, ran from \$30 to \$40 per month.<sup>33</sup>

In 1889, on admission to Statehood, I was elected a member of the State Senate<sup>34</sup> which, under the Constitution adopted, had no limit to its session, being the first and having the responsibility of reorganizing the laws of the Territory to fit the new State of Washington. It was in session five months instead of the sixty days allowed all subsequent sessions.<sup>35</sup> I was Chairman of the Committee on Education and drafted the first school law of the State of Washington.<sup>36</sup>

In 1890, I was appointed Register of the new Land Office to be established at Waterville,<sup>37</sup> with Frank M. Dallam, founder of the *Spokane Review*,<sup>38</sup> as Receiver. I held the position nearly four years, being removed by Grover Cleveland before the expiration of my term to make room for a Democrat.

<sup>32</sup> An official report on the University of Washington for 1880 gives the following: "The University of Washington Territory, Seattle, is a part of the public school system and receives an annual legislative appropriation of \$1,500. This affords free tuition to thirty pupils, who are appointed by members of the legislature. The courses of study are classical, scientific, normal, and commercial, the first and second covering four years and the others two. There were one hundred and sixty students attending during 1879-80, of whom eighty-three were in preparatory studies, nineteen in a commercial course, twenty-one in normal, twenty-five in scientific, and twelve in classical. Women are admitted on equal terms with men and are also members of the faculty." *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1880*, p. 389.

<sup>33</sup> In 1876-77 there were in Washington Territory one hundred and twenty-six male and one hundred and forty-three female teachers. The average monthly pay for male teachers was \$40 and for female teachers \$30. In the following year the number of male teachers had increased to two hundred and thirty-six and the number of female teachers to three hundred and twenty-four. The average monthly pay for men had increased to \$41.14 and for women \$33.34. *Report of the United States Commissioner of Education for 1880*, p. 387.

<sup>34</sup> John C. Lawrence represented the Fifth Senatorial District in the first State Legislature. He was chairman of the Senate Committee on Education. The other two members of the Committee were W. J. Parkinson of Whatcom County and Henry Drumm of Pierce County. See *Senate Journal*, 1889-90, p. 5, and Barton's *Legislative Manual of Washington*, 1889-90, *passim*.

<sup>35</sup> The first State Legislature of Washington was in session for one hundred and forty-three days. It convened on November 6, 1889, and adjourned *sine die* on March 28, 1890.

<sup>36</sup> This measure was Senate Bill No. 222: "To establish a uniform system of public schools in the State of Washington." It was introduced by the Senate Committee on Education. The bill was passed by the Senate on March 14, 1890, with two dissenting votes. On March 19 it was passed by the House with certain amendments. These differences were compromised in conference, and on March 27, 1890, the bill was approved by the Governor. For the text of this law see *Session Laws*, 1889-90, chapter xii, pp. 348 *et seq.*

<sup>37</sup> The United States Land Office in Waterville was permanently closed on May 1, 1925. A dispatch from Waterville to the *Spokane Spokesman-Review* of May 4, 1925, reads as follows: "This office was established in November, 1890. The first registrar was John C. Lawrence of Winlock, since prominent in political and business circles of the State. The receiver was Frank W. Dallow [Dallam], pioneer newspaper man of the State. He founded the *Spokane Review* and is now a newspaper publisher at Kelso. The books and records were sent to Washington, D. C., and Spokane. Much of the office furniture also was sent to Spokane. The last homestead application received was that of Ebba E. Doyle of Wauconda, April 29. The last final proof was made by Henry Baker of Omak. When the office closed more than 260,000 acres were open to settlement."

<sup>38</sup> In a letter to me, dated at Kelso on September 12, 1924, Mr. Dallam gave the following account of the founding of the *Review*: "I shipped the *Review* plant from San Francisco in April, 1883, expecting to issue the first number of the *Review* early in May,

On my return to Garfield I was appointed United States Court Commissioner by Judge Hanford of the United States District Court, a position I held until appointed a member of the Railroad Commission upon its establishment in 1905.<sup>39</sup> I resigned, effective January 1, 1912, which terminated my public service after nearly thirty years in various positions.

I have given incidents of personal experiences as a pioneer. To tell all that throng to memory would fill a volume. Only a score of years later than the Steptoe Battle I talked with many Indians who participated.<sup>40</sup> They were very talkative about the Steptoe Battle, but when I would ask them about Col. Wright the conversation ended. He corraled and killed thousands of Indian ponies on the river above Spokane, where the bones were then bleaching, and hanged six of the chiefs held responsible for the war. This painful subject the Indians would not discuss.<sup>41</sup>

I knew Saltice,<sup>42</sup> chief of the Coeur d'Alenes, and saw Chief

but those were the days of slow freight, and what was more aggravating was uncertainty of delivery. By some means part of the press was lost in transit and I was in a deuce of a fix. The type for the first issue was all up and no press to print the paper. It was the days of the old Washington hand press. I was rather ambitious at the start. Most papers in those days were seven-column, but I introduced the eight-column paper. Presses made to accommodate only seven columns could not take on an eight-column form. Such was the Spokane *Chronicle* press and so I had to try out the Cheney papers, each of which had kindly offered assistance in the dilemma. There were two papers at Cheney, the *Tribune* and the *Sentinel*. Loading the forms on a spring wagon, I started for Cheney. Being a tenderfoot in the country, not knowing the roads and driving in the dark, I missed the way and about daylight found myself near Spangle. Backtracking I eventually found Cheney. Neither the *Tribune* nor *Sentinel* press would take on the forms. However, necessity is the mother of ideas. We removed the iron side pieces on the *Sentinel* press, and by using caution to prevent the forms slipping, managed to print the first issue of the *Spokane Falls Review*. Before time for the second issue the lost piece of machinery came to light."

39 The Railroad Commission of Washington was established by Chapter 81, Washington Laws of 1905. This law was amended in 1907. The members of the first commission were H. A. Fairchild, chairman; John S. McMillin, and J. C. Lawrence. Mr. Lawrence's term expired on June 23, 1907, and he was re-appointed. *The First Annual Report of the Railroad Commission of Washington* was published by the State in 1907. This is a valuable historical document. Appendix V. is a brief history of the first railroad projects in Washington, and Appendix VI is a brief history of railroads in Washington.

40 Steptoe's fight with the Indians occurred near the present site of Rosalia. On June 15, 1908, the site of a Steptoe memorial park in Rosalia was dedicated.

41 Two books which treat satisfactorily of the Steptoe and the Wright campaigns are Lawrence Kip's *Army Life on the Pacific* and B. F. Manring's *Conquest of the Spokane, Coeur d'Alenes and Palouses*. Lieutenant Kip was with Colonel Wright in his campaign against the northern Indians in 1858, and, consequently, his book must be regarded as a source. Mr. Manring's book was published in 1912. It is especially valuable because of the large number of documents reproduced therein. Both books are now out of print.

42 This Chief, whose name is spelled in a variety of ways, was Head Chief of the Coeur d'Alenes. During the Nez Perce war of 1877 he sent to the settlers in Whitman County the following expression of good will: "St. Mary's Church, Hangman Creek, June 19, 1877: The bearer of this is sent by Chief Seltis to let all the whites around know that he and all his tribe of Indians, viz: the Cour d'Alene [sic] are always friendly disposed towards all the whites, and will help them as much as they can, if any help will be necessary. In testimony thereof he signed this paper.

his  
Andrew X Seltis  
mark

Head Chief of the Coeur d'Alenes.

"I testify that the above is truly from Andrew Seltis, Cour d'Alene Chief, and I believe that they are truly friendly towards the whites.

J. M. Cataldo, Catholic Priest."

This letter was published in the *Walla Walla Union* of June 23, 1877.

This Coeur d'Alene Chief was evidently a public-spirited man, for the *Palouse Gazette* of September 29, 1877, states that he contributed five dollars to the building of a bridge across the Palouse River at Colfax.

A station on the O.-W. R. & N., near Tekoa, has been fittingly named Seltice as a memorial to the Head Chief of the Coeur d'Alenes.

Moses of the Colvilles, who led an outbreak of that tribe. For many years I regretted that I had never seen the celebrated Chief Joseph, who is credited with being the greatest Indian warrior in the history of the United States.<sup>43</sup> However, I later found that he was the big Indian who, with the agent of the Colville Indian reservation, took dinner at Courtright, near the present town of Mondovi, April 2, 1883, when my wife, Jessie M. Rogers, and I ate our first dinner together on our wedding trip. We were on our way to Garfield from her father's home near Davenport, where we had been married just after breakfast that morning.

I sat on a hill overlooking Colfax when first a resident there and tried to draw a mental vision of the future of the Palouse country as it would be fifty years later if I lived that length of time, which has nearly expired. I glimpsed a promising picture of grain fields, fenced roads and farm houses, instead of hills and bunch grass.

We did not expect to grow fruit, as the frost came all months of the summer. It was a novelty when the lanes first appeared making a fenced road. Suddenly, it seemed, the bunch grass disappeared. Then fruit trees came, the frosts lessened as settlers located the air drainage and knew where to plant fruit trees. No one could foresee the development of the telephone, then a new invention. By the way, the sixth telephone in use in the State was put in my office at Garfield when C. B. Hopkins started the first long-distance service in the State, in 1884, as I remember.

The Palouse country and Eastern Washington, as well as the entire State, developed beyond my dream of the future in every way. This development, of course, kept pace with the advance in all lines everywhere in modern improvements, due to the inventive geniuses of the age.

Altogether it has been a happy life and, if given a choice to live a pioneer or take up existence in the haunts of men, I would choose the former for its happiness and richness of experience.

JOHN C. LAWRENCE.

<sup>43</sup> The flight of Chief Joseph through the Lo-Lo trail in his effort to escape to Canada was praised by his pursuer, General O. O. Howard, as a great military exploit. Joseph was forced to surrender at the Bear Paw Mountain on October 5, 1877. After a few years of exile in Indian Territory he was brought back to the Pacific Northwest and died on the Colville reservation in 1904.