

‘THE PALOUSE – JEWEL OF THE INLAND NORTHWEST’ A Photographer’s Guide

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“THE PALOUSE” – What does it mean?

“*Palus*”, meaning “*Standing Rock in the River*” was a large sacred basalt rock in the Snake River, (now covered by water) which tribal cosmology considered to be the “*Heart of Beaver*”, and was of religious significance to the tribe of native Americans who inhabited the southwest one-fourth of the area. The tribe came to be called by that name. “*Palouse*” is also a French term for “short, thick grasslands.”

Before 1850, any direction from Steptoe Butte would have seen peaceful rolling grassland of three-foot-high bunch grass, speckled with roaming herds of antelope. The sod was virgin, never farmed, the sole domain of nomadic Native American Indians, who were hunters & gatherers. There were no trees, except along creeks and rivers. The only Caucasians were occasional fur trappers and gold prospectors.

Now, with vast rolling fields of wheat, barley, peas and lentils, the Palouse produces 40% of Washington wheat, and 95% of U.S. lentils and dry peas. The Palouse has been described as one of the two best landscape photography areas in the U.S. The people have many ethnic backgrounds (mostly German), and are very ambitious, hard-working, honest, and very friendly. Get off U.S. Hwy. #195 in Washington, and off U.S. Hwy. #95 in Idaho, onto the farm-to-market roads, and always take a DeLorme Atlas or Washington/Idaho Road Atlas with you. The roads curve around those rolling hills, and it is easy to get lost. Few of the original fence lines that used to enclose each ½ mile square quarter section of homestead land remain for orientation of directions. Take it slow and view the panoramas.

Our camera club members have a rule of courtesy. *Park safely off the roads to give the “right-of-way” to the 18-wheel trucks hauling grain and to farm implements being transported between fields, and don’t trespass onto the croplands and farmyards. Stay on the edges of the roads and use a stronger lens on our cameras! Please help us to maintain our excellent rapport with Palouse residents by NOT entering a farmyard without prior permission.* Whatever your interests are, you will be pleased to experience the peacefulness and simple beauty of the Palouse!

GEOLOGY

Geologists tells us that: About 100 million years ago, islands & small continents in the Pacific Ocean began crashing into the westward moving North American continent. The collisions, about 17.5 to 6 million years ago, caused major fractures along zones of weakness in the earth’s crust in the areas of what is now southwestern Idaho, northeastern Oregon and southeastern Washington.

Hot molten Columbia River Basalt lava flowed out of linear faults, over the present Columbia Plateau and westward down the ancestral Columbia River to the Pacific Ocean. These lava flows filled the basin over 10,000’ deep in some areas, entered mountain valleys to the east & north of the Palouse and lapped up against the Northern Rocky Mountains. The lava also flowed against the rising Cascade Mountains to the West. The 60,000 square mile lava field sank, tilting to the southwest, accompanied by folding, faulting & stream erosion. The Columbia Plateau is near 2500’ on Pleasant Prairie, and is now 2800’ above sea level in the northeast foothills of the Rocky Mountains in Idaho, and sloping to a level below 400’ above sea level at Pasco, Washington.

Steptoe Butte looks like a volcanic cone, but it is NOT volcanic. Steptoe Butte, Kamiak Butte, Moscow Mountain, Tekoa Mountain and Skyline Drive are all made up of hard quartzite and other Precambrian rock, formed at the bottom of the ocean, and raised up as foothills of the Rocky Mountains. Molten lava flowed in around these 3600'+ mountains, and "**steptoe**" is now an internationally used term to describe that geologic phenomenon of lava surrounding a hill or mountain top of older rock.

Climatic warming and cooling created lakes that left silt in huge lake beds near Pasco. Silt, along with volcanic ash from Oregon & Washington Cascade Mountain volcanoes, blew in the prevailing southwest winds for more than 1 1/2 million years to form the loess Palouse hills. They are among the most fertile, high producing agricultural dry land farms in the world, with rich soil as much as 200' to 300' deep, especially in the area west of Colfax and Pullman, Washington. The wind blown "loess" hills are gigantic earthen dunes connected by twisting benches, north-facing amphitheaters, saddles, swales, ridges & slopes.

Northwest China has thick, yellow deposits of loess, forming loess hills up to 1000' thick, created by dust blown by winter winds from the Gobi Desert – the only place in the world with thicker loess hills. Note the shape of many of the loess hills, similar to snow drifts – nearly vertical on the northeast side because the dust blew in on southwest winds, leaving bare "eyebrows" on the northeast side that are too steep to farm.

Geologists also tell us that: The continental ice sheet never reached the Palouse, but a Canadian glacial ice sheet repeatedly blocked the Clark Fork River where it flows into Lake Pend Oreille, near the north end of the Montana-Idaho border, about 15,000 years ago. The ice dam created a huge lake, 3000 square miles, larger than all of New England. The lake was 2000' deep, twice as deep as Lake Superior, backing water more than 1400' deep over the city of Missoula, Montana.

The ice dam repeatedly **floated upwards** and released 10 times the total volume of all the rivers in the world within a few days time. Geologists tell us that a wall of water 700' high flowed through Spokane with a force shaking the earth like an earthquake of 8.0 on the Richter scale. Soil & glacial debris were washed down the Columbia River and west to the Pacific Ocean with such force that the water also flowed upstream, south, through the Willamette River Valley of Oregon, leaving our fertile topsoil, and glacial rock "erratics" native to northwestern Montana in the Willamette Valley. The "Great Missoula Floods", perhaps as many as 100 during a 2500 year period, 17,000 to 13,000 years ago, eroded the land to bare "scabrock", and cavitating currents plucked huge columns of basalt, leaving deep, dramatic canyons. The "**Great Missoula Floods**" created the "channeled scablands" which are the **west** boundary of the Palouse.

Glacial Lake Spokane was formed by the Columbia Lobe of the Cordilleran glacial ice sheet blocking the Columbia River at its confluence with the Spokane River, and **Glacial Lake Columbia** (40 miles downstream) was blocked by the Okanogan Lobe of the Cordilleran glacier, near Grand Coulee. One or both of these glacial lakes were already in place, covering the Spokane valley, during most of the Glacial Lake Missoula floods. These lakes minimized the depth of erosion in the Spokane valley, and caused the deposition of up to 600' depth of sand & gravel upstream from Spokane to form the Spokane-Rathdrum aquifer.

The highest elevation of **Glacial Lake Missoula** floodwaters over the area that is now the City of Spokane was at least 2400', and perhaps as high as 2450'. The floodwaters reached at least as high as Hamblen School (37th and Crestline) on the South Hill (2401'), and covered at least 15', and possibly 65' above 5 Mile Prairie (2385'). The earth shaking forces of the slurry of ice, rock, and mud within the flood-waters travelling 60-70 miles per hour, during **at least 40** (and possibly as many as 100) **Great Missoula Floods**, shattered a 500 foot depth of basalt rock to form the Spokane Falls in downtown Spokane. The rolling loess hills of "The Palouse" were **NOT** caused

by flood-waters. Those hills were created by southwest winds blowing dust and volcanic ash over a million and a half years.

GEOGRAPHY

“The Palouse country” is a triangular shaped 3000 square miles of land in Spokane, Whitman and Adams Counties of Washington and Latah County of Idaho. Spokane is at the north end of the triangle, with approximately Pasco at the southwest corner, and Walla Walla at the southeast corner. The “Channeled Scablands” form the west boundaries, although higher elevation “loess islands” that were not inundated by the floods remain. The Snake River is the south boundary, and the Blue Mountains, Clearwater Mountains and Bitterroot Mountains in Idaho form the east boundary.

3612’ Steptoe Butte is near the center of “The Palouse”, and provides a 360 degree viewpoint, 1300’ higher than the surrounding farmland, that is outstanding. The shadows which accentuate the rolling hills and contour farms are most visible early in the morning and late in the evening. Although the view from the summit is a must, and the circling two lane road is paved to the top and easily accessible with any sedan, photography is more spectacular from half way up Steptoe Butte. One annual Discovery Pass is required per vehicle.

Annual Discovery Pass is also required to visit Palouse Falls State Park, 107 miles Southwest of Spokane, via Ritzville on I-90, and Washtucna. Park provides excellent viewpoints of the dramatic, **190’ Palouse Falls** and 6.4 mile Palouse Canyon to the Snake River. A daring kayaker set a new world’s record in 2011 by living without injury, paddling over Palouse Falls.

The “southwest tilt” of the Palouse gives photographers an opportunity to see many stages of maturity and color of the wheat, lentils, peas, and barley crops during one trip from west to east. The western edge of the Palouse has an average altitude of 1200’ and annual precipitation of 14”, while the eastern edge of the Palouse in the foothills of Idaho has an average altitude of 2600’ and annual precipitation of 22”. The mid-Palouse Colfax area receives about 18” of annual precipitation. Consequently, August 1 will usually see the wheat golden ripe and harvest completed on the western edge near Rosalia, while canola and lentils are still partially green in the area of the Freeze Church, north of Potlatch, Idaho.

MIGRATION AND IMMIGRATION

A succession of incentives led to the settling of the West, generally fur trading > trappers > gold prospectors > cattlemen > farmers. Famine, religious persecution and overpopulation in Europe provided the stimuli to seek a better life by immigrating to America. Native Americans were nomadic in nature, so were not considered to own the land. The call to “Go West, young man” was heeded, with wagon trains migrating west over the Oregon Trail, starting in 1843, and latecomers began looking north to the Palouse after the best farmland in Oregon had been settled.

The border with Canada was agreed upon by treaty with England as the 49th parallel, in 1846, giving legitimacy to the U.S. claims to what is now Washington and Idaho. Native American populations had been decimated by white man’s diseases, especially smallpox and measles, to which the Indians had no natural resistance. Col. George Wright defeated the four tribes of Indians who had lived as hunters, gatherers and fishermen in the Palouse in 1858, and they were moved to reservations. Gold was discovered in 1860 in Washington, Oregon, Idaho, & British Columbia, and prospectors with “gold fever” infringed upon Indian territories, created crises, and then demanded protection by the U.S. Army.

In 1862, President Lincoln signed the Homestead Act, stating: *“I am in favor of settling the wild lands into small parcels so that every poor man may have a home.”* This gave a land deed for

160 acres to settlers who filed a claim and then lived on the land for 5 years and improved it by farming at least half of that land. The Homestead Act rendered all eligible citizens potential economic equals on the unclaimed frontier. No longer was one confined to a level of society on the basis of birth

In 1864, President Lincoln signed the Northern Pacific Act to encourage construction of a transcontinental railroad to the Pacific Ocean. Land grants to the Northern Pacific railway amounted to 25,000 acres of adjacent land per mile of track laid.

Free Homestead land and cheap railroad land were advertised throughout Europe, eastern, mid-western and southern U.S. The U.S. Civil War ended in 1865, and both Union and Confederate veterans grasped the opportunity to own their own farms. Immigrants flocked from Europe, with large numbers of Volga River and Black Sea Germans leaving Russia when, in 1871, Tsar Alexander II abrogated all privileges that had been given to German colonists by Catherine the Great in 1762.

The reasons for the German's mass exodus to the U.S were: 1) Fear of being drafted into the Russian army. 2) Economics – lack of land per person as German population in these colonies increased. 3) Discrimination – Religious and Russification (Russian language required in schools, where they had formerly been autonomous & continued to live and speak as Germans). 4) Effective advertising campaigns by steamship & railroad companies, e.g. U.S. is the “*land of milk and honey*.” The German immigrants to the U.S. and to the Palouse made a wise choice. Many of those who stayed in Russia died in Siberian gulags.

TRANSPORTATION

Towns close by, with a “grist mill” to grind wheat to flour were crucial to the earliest farmers, who depended on teams of horses to haul wagon loads of wheat to the mill. The Ole Dybdal grist mill at Chapman Lake, WA has deteriorated, but the Pataha Flour Mill, 2 miles east of Pomeroy, WA operated from 1879 until 1940, and has maintained the original equipment in excellent condition, conducts tours, and serves meals by reservation. It is listed in the National Register of Historic Places.

As wheat production increased beyond local consumption, steamboat transportation on the Snake River to the Columbia River, transferring the 140 pound sacks of wheat across the Cascade Rapids via portage railway to another steamboat, and proceeding downstream to Portland, Oregon, allowed export throughout the world. Horse drawn wagon loads of grain could be eased down moderate canyons on the north side of the Snake River by dragging logs as brakes, but the south side of the Snake River was too steep for safe descent.

At Mayview, a few miles upstream from Almota, WA a gigantic slide was constructed from the plateau 1800' above the Snake River, but it created so much friction that much of the grain was shattered, scarred and scorched before reaching the bottom. The **Mayview Tramway** was built in 1890 & used until 1941, 4600' long, with an 1800' drop in elevation. A double rail track bypass in the center to allow an up-bound rail car to bypass a car loaded with 40 sacks of wheat going down the side of the canyon helped to balance each other. Rails were salvaged for scrap iron during World War II, when powerful motor trucks allowed bulk handling of grain, instead of sacking it as it was threshed. Remnants of the ties and loading dock remain. With construction of dams and locks on the Snake and Columbia River, 18-wheel semis haul wheat to the huge Almota grain terminal from as far away as Montana, to be loaded onto barges to Portland, as the most economical alternative to rail freight.

Completion of the transcontinental Northern Pacific Railway connection in 1883 was a tremendous stimulus for export of wheat and cattle, and for provision of supplies to the people. Spur lines of railway were built during the 1880's, with railroad stations and grain elevators

spaced approximately 12 miles apart. Northern Pacific ran “immigrant cars” furnished with tables and beds, with curtains separating family groups. A phenomenal pace of population growth occurred in the 1880’s, a 29% increase in the white population in the 1890’s, and another 26% increase by 1910, with this simplification of transportation to and from the Palouse. By 1920, the Palouse was intensely farmed & produced more wheat per acre than any place its size in the world.

PIONEER BUILDINGS

I will describe some of the buildings that I feel to be particularly photogenic and significant, historically. The Columbia County Courthouse in Dayton, WA, built in 1887, is the oldest court house in the State of Washington. It’s cupola and “Scales of Justice” are beautifully maintained. The Dayton Railroad Depot, 1881, is also the oldest railroad depot in the state

Oakesdale, WA – The Barron Flour Mill, built in 1890, closed in 1960. 800 people toured the milling machinery on July 4, 2009, when it was opened to the public for the first time since 2002. The adjacent granary was dismantled in 2012. Mary Jane Butters, of Paradise Farm Organics, Moscow, ID is the current owner of the building.

The Hanford Castle is a 3 ½ story brick mansion with cupola and seven chimneys that was built 1892-1896, by Mr. Edwin Hanford, a wealthy fish and grocery market owner from Chicago. Hanford moved West to enjoy the fresh air, planted an apple and pear orchard and founded the Commercial State Bank. Two delightful Hanford grand-daughters live in Oakesdale and Spokane. The warm personalities of the new owners of this private home shine through the authentic Victorian furnishings of the 1890’s. They have 24 years of restoring the “Castle” with perfection.

Rosalia, WA – the 1903 R. S. Howard House has a unique “widow’s walk” (usually seen in New England coastal towns for the wife to watch for the Captain’s ship to return). Mr. Howard was a cattle broker & shipper, and liked to “sit in the sun” and watch his cattle yards down the hill by the railroad tracks.

Romanesque Bridge visible at Steptoe Battle marker on Hwy. #195 is an abandoned rail line of Milwaukee Road & now part of the John Wayne Trail for hikers, bicycles & horses, from Tekoa to Cle Elem, WA.

Churches were dominant influences, helping to maintain the cultural heritage of each ethnic nationality. Sprague: 1902 Catholic Mary Queen of Heaven Church. Parish began in 1882

Uniontown: 1904 St. Boniface Catholic Church, 1st Catholic church consecrated in WA state. Benedictine Sisters arrived in 1884. “Wheel Fence” surrounding Art Gallery Barn.

Endicott: 1894 Congregational Church, one of oldest in WA state.

1950’s Trinity Lutheran Church, built like a Viking ship. Beautiful, for a town of 350 people. Germans were the ethnic majority in Endicott & were usually either members of the Congregational or Lutheran denominations.

Ritzville: Philadelphia-Zion Congregational Church, nicely preserved pioneer homes, Art Deco Theater, pioneer farm machinery. Volga German heritage.

Freeze, Idaho: Community Church, 1889, with graveyard. Oldest tombstone is for Maggie Freeze, died 1881 at age 21, and infant son died in 1884. Surrounded by canola fields in bloom on the first of July. Never locked, beautiful organ. A retired Pastor told me that since there was no place but the outhouses for bridesmaids to change clothes, he would vacate the sanctuary to let them change in a “proper” place.

Genesee Valley Lutheran Church, 1878 (Norwegian), claimed to be the most photographed church in Idaho.

Cordelia Lutheran Church, 1883, (Oldest Swedish Lutheran Church in Idaho). Simple sanctuary, 18' X 24' X 10' high. Rev. Carlson founded 33 Swedish Lutheran congregations in the Northwest, and at its dedication, asked the Swedes to have a "*Peaceful attitude toward the Norwegian congregations in the community.*" (I can't imagine anyone not being "peaceful" towards us Norwegians.)

One room Skeens School on Fugate Road, 1885, had 28 pupils. Teacher received \$45 a month for three months, and students had to spend the rest of the year working on their parents' farms.

One room, 1904 Prairie View School, at intersection of Fenn Road & Waverly-Plaza Road closed in 1936 (the year that I started 1st through 8th grades of a 1-room country school in north central Montana, and had an excellent primary education, with no deficiencies for high school.) Hopes of Fairfield Historical Society are to move it to Latah in 2013 and restore the building completely.

Manning Covered Bridge over the Palouse River, 6 miles west of Colfax. Only "pony truss", "open-top-boxed" type bridge in the U.S., 162' long. Open top, so sparks from wood-burning stacks would not set it on fire. Wood siding protects trusses from weather deterioration. Great Northern Railway removed the tracks in 1982, and it is now used as a private motor vehicle road.

BARNS

Barns were very important. Cattle-grazing on un-fenced open range on the lush 3' bunch grass came before land was divided into farm homesteads. Also, the steep hills of Palouse farms took 33 horses or mules to pull a combine & stock needed winter protection and stored hay for feed.

T.A. Leonard Barn, 1911, 2 miles East of Pullman, on Old Moscow highway. 12-sided, 30 windows. New roof placed & barn painted in 2001. On National Register of Historic Places.

Unique "patchwork" Western Barn on Idaho's Lovell Valley Road, 3 ½ miles northeast of Tekoa, is sheathed in various patinas of sheet iron.

Max Steinke, 1916, 12-sided "round" barn, 16' on each side. Roof companiform (bell-shaped), 5 miles west of St. John on S.R. #23. Efficient for feeding, with all mangers faced toward the center, and less distance to carry the manure out, when cleaning the barn.

1888 Draper red gable barn, 80' by 100', with 1912 "poured concrete silo", oldest WA Heritage barn in Whitman County, on Draper-Brown Road, south of Elberton.

1909 Heidenreich Dairy barn, 1751 S.R. 272, Colfax, is the **ICON of the WA State Heritage Barn Registry**. Now owned by David & Becky Buri, they restored the barn with their own labor, June-October 2010, including painting and new cedar shingles on the huge Gothic roof.

Camp Dairy barn, green Gothic roof, on Cheney-Spangle Road.

Painter, 1916 red Dutch Gambrel roof, WA Heritage barn, on Cheney-Plaza Road.

Norman Paulson's red & white 1927 Gothic WA Heritage barn with windmill, on Babb Road. Weight of record 100" snowfall during winter of 2009 broke 5 supporting wood arches, so the roof sagged until it collapsed in 2012. (It was almost identical to my parent's barn & windmill in Montana, so was very dear to my heart. Don't wait to photograph them). Purist photo judge

critiqued my having two points of interest, but to me the barn & windmill were complementary & necessary to tell the complete story of the requirements of raising cattle in a dry-land area.

Red, candy-striped gable barn with hay hood & ventilator, near Troy, ID. Cupolas (ventilators) could be designed to taste by the rancher, or ordered from Sears Roebuck or Montgomery Ward catalog.

At least 10 photogenic barns in the northern Palouse are gone, among the “vanishing pioneer prairie buildings” in the 20 years that I have been photographing in the Palouse, so record their unique architecture & beauty while they stand.

FARMSTEADS

Pioneer Centennial Homestead, N. of Cheney-Plaza Road. S-curve slough as leading line.

Genesee Valley, Idaho – gable barns/high lean-tos. Traditional red barns of Swedes & Norwegians, who homesteaded in this area of Idaho Palouse, attracted by nearby Rocky Mountains and heavy timber that reminded them of home in Scandinavia.

Farmington, WA – As beautifully landscaped as any city home, the Paul & Ellen Wagner farmyard is typical of the beauty, pride and neatness of Palouse farms. Beautiful views of farmlands & Steptoe Butte from Skyline Drive, above Farmington.

FOUR SEASONS

Winter brings frost on fence lines and trees, stubble patterns, and grain drill furrows accentuating the “contour” farming around the hills, to conserve tractor energy and minimize erosion.

Spring: Bright yellow spray planes, varying shades of green fields, balsam root on south exposures of the buttes in May, lupine by June 1.

Summer: Canola in bloom, swathed lentils with shadows accentuated at early morning or late afternoon, windrows & bales of hay, light green color of peas to golden color of ripened wheat in a mosaic pattern like a jig-saw puzzle of shapes of fields, and hill-side combines on 30 degree slopes harvesting 100 bushel-to-the acre white wheat.

Fall: Golden aspen, red-orange maples & willows along creeks & rivers. Contours & textures of plowed fields & seeding winter wheat. A quiescent time to repair machinery to prepare for another year’s cycle of growth.

PALOUSE AREA TIME LINE

1618-1648 – “30 Years War” – Germany’s population decreased from 21 million to 13.5 million. Peasants reduced to eating rats & grass, cannibalism.

1756-1763 – “Seven Years War” – Hessian states bankrupt. Immigration to U.S., Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Canada, Algeria, Russia.

1762 & 1763 – Czarina Catherine II manifesto to Germans to settle Volga River area. Jews were forbidden to colonize Russia.

1763-1766 – 8000 families (27,000 persons) from Germany settled Volga River area.

1767 – Yagada, in Saratov area, founded by 80 German families (Smick).

1790-1804 – Foreign settlement in Russia suspended until Alexander I brought thousands of Germans to Black Sea area.

1803 – President Thomas Jefferson’s “Louisiana Purchase” from Napoleon’s France added 830,000 square miles to the U.S., for \$15 million, nearly doubling the nation’s size.

- Letter from President Jefferson to Captain Meriwether Lewis: *“The object of your mission is to explore the Missouri River, and such principal stream of it, as, by its course and communication with the waters of the Pacific Ocean ... may offer the most direct and practicable water communication across this continent for the purposes of commerce.”*

1805 – Lewis & Clark reached mouth of Palouse River on Oct. 13 (Snake River confluence). They stopped to smoke peace pipes with 4 chiefs of the Wallawalla tribe.

1810 – Spokane House, Spokane River, opened by Canadian North West Co., for fur trading.

1836 – Missionaries Marcus & Narcissa Whitman settled @ Walla Walla.

1843 – Oregon Trail began use.

1846 – “Old Oregon”, which included Oregon, Wash., Idaho, N.W. Montana & British Columbia, was divided by treaty with England, at 49th parallel.

1847 – Fort Benton was 1st permanent settlement in Montana. Head of steamboat navigation on the Missouri River. (All 8 of us siblings rented apartments, or “roomed & boarded” in Fort Benton while we went to high school. Our trusting parents never left the dry-land farm, 25 miles away from Fort Benton, with no phone connection, since they had cattle, pigs, chickens & horses to care for. My youngest sister and I had our own apartment when I was 12 and she was 15. My Dad would pick us up on Friday and return us to town on Sunday evening, after Mom had washed our clothes, baked bread, & chosen home-canned food for the coming week. Early reliability!)

- Measles, small pox, & dysentery epidemic blamed on Dr. Whitman, led to Whitman Massacre. Indians had no natural immunity to “white” diseases.

1850 – Oregon Donation Land Law, 3 years before treaties liquidated tribal land titles. Prior to 1852, settlers received 320 acres. 1852-1855, 160 acres were given.

1853 – Washington Territory formed, included the north 2/5 of former Oregon Territory. Few whites East of Cascades. Lt. Mullan accompanied General Isaac Stevens (no relation of mine) to Montana on “railroad survey,” looking for Northern transcontinental route.

- Sept. 4 – first Daguerreotype photographs in Montana taken of Indians at Fort Benton, MT.
- Sept 21 – Washington Territory Governor Isaac Stevens’ council with Piegans, Bloods & Blackfeet @ Ft. Benton, MT.
- Gold discovered in Yakima Valley of Washington.

1855 – Old Fort Walla Walla established.

Gov. Isaac Stevens’ treaty with Blackfeet @ Judith River in Montana made possible the building of the Mullan Road. Gov. Isaac Stevens’ council with Indians @ Walla Walla.

1857 – Fort Colville established as fur trading post by Hudson’s Bay Co.

1858 – Mullan Road authorized by Secretary of War, 624 miles from Ft. Benton, MT to Walla Walla, WA.

- Col. Steptoe violated promises by Gov. Isaac Stevens, by crossing Indian land in April, & with 159 soldiers, was defeated near Rosalia by 600-1000 mounted warriors of Palouse, Spokane, Coeur d'Alene & Yakima tribes. Escaped to Ft. Walla Walla at night. Defeat of Col. Steptoe delayed start of Mullan Road by 1 year.

- Mullan Road, begun in 1859, re-routed in 1861, and forest areas were widened to allow snow melt until 1862. Travel time of 35-40 days from St. Louis to Ft. Benton, MT & equal time from Ft. Benton to Walla Walla, WA. Crossed Spokane River near Idaho State Line, and intersects U.S. Hwy #195 six miles south of I-90, at Mileage Marker #88. Same route as Texas Road to north of Rock Lake & then went further west. Crossed Snake River at Lyons Ferry.

- Gold discovered in Colville Valley, Washington.

- August, 1858: Col. George Wright, with 570 troops, defeated Indians near Four Lakes & on Spokane Plains. Army slaughtered 900 Palouse horses @ Washington-Idaho State line. Col. Wright hanged Chief Qualchan & other Indians @ Latah Creek (Hangman Creek) near Spangle.

1859 – Oregon became a State. Washington Territory included Idaho, N.W. Montana & Central Wyoming.

- Lt. Mullan reported at The Dalles on May 15. Started construction June 25. August 18, had completed 199 miles to Coeur d'Alene Mission, Idaho. Learned that Steamboat Chippewa had arrived 12 miles downstream from Ft. Benton, Montana with 24,000 rations for his workforce, and Steamboat Col. Wright had butted its way up Snake River to mouth of Tucannon. Road would provide continuous & easy(?) transportation from St. Louis to the Northwest. This was the connection (although by land trail) envisioned by Thomas Jefferson between the two great river systems in North America – the Mississippi-Missouri to Fort Benton, Montana with Old Fort Walla Walla, WA at Wallula on the Columbia River. Tremendous saving in time & money compared to ocean route around Cape Horn, South America.

- December 4 – Road built just inside Montana. Mullan wintered in St. Regis.

1860 – Gold discovered in Idaho, Oregon & British Columbia.

- 1st steamboats reached Fort Benton MT, July 2 – Chippewa & Key West, with 300 soldiers.

- August 1 – Mullan reached Ft. Benton. Rested 4 days, then took wagon train with the 300 soldiers to Walla Walla in 57 days.

1860-1920 – Palouse country settled by whites. Transformed from open prairie into one of nation's premier dryland farming & ranching districts. "The Palouse" includes 3000 square miles in Washington's Whitman, Adams & Spokane Counties & Idaho's Latah County.

1861-1865 – Civil War. Army diverted to fight Civil War. Gen. Isaac I. Stevens, 1st Washington Territorial Governor, was killed @ 2nd Battle of Bull Run.

1861-1862 – Mullan & men improved road. 624 miles of wilderness. 120 miles through dense forest where road was 25' wide (later, widened forested areas to 50' to allow sunlight to melt more snow). 30 miles of earth & rock excavation, 15' to 20' wide. 146 river crossings in one 100-mile stretch.

1862 – Homestead Act signed by President Lincoln. 160 acres, lived on for 5 years & improved, earned land deed. (We will celebrate my parents' perseverance this 4th of July. Dad's Centennial Year from 1913 Homesteading in North Central Montana, & Mom's in 1916! Dad's Homestead is still owned by nieces & a nephew in our family.) Later, "Timber culture" – 160 acres to any settler who planted 40 acres of trees (reduced to 10 acres in 1878). Later, "Desert Land Act" gave title to 640 acres @ \$1.25 per acre, if placed under irrigation within 3 years of filing date.

- Gold discovered @ Bannack, Montana.

1863 – Washington became a Territory with current size & shape the State has.

- Mullan Road completed, & Mullan resigned his Army Commission. He wrote a guide book for immigrants, suggesting 47 days for ox drawn wagons from Fort Benton, Montana to Walla Walla, WA. 29 days to Idaho-Montana border, from Fort Benton.

1864 – Northern Pacific Act signed by President Lincoln on July 4, 1864, but construction delayed by Civil War. Land grants to N.P. amounted to 25,000 acres of adjacent land per mile of track – “every other” section of land for 20 miles on either side of the Main Line, to encourage construction, and, most importantly, to tie East U.S. & West U.S. together.

- No construction progress until 1870 – then, from both Lake Superior & Puget Sound.
- 1873 financial panic led to Northern Pacific bankruptcy in 1875. Meanwhile, Villard’s manipulation of several heavily indebted concerns led him to the presidency of 3 transportation companies: Oregon & California R.R., Oregon Central R.R., and Oregon Steamship Co. Later, purchased Oregon Steam Navigation Co., with their portage roads at the Cascades, The Dalles, & Celilo Falls. Villard gained complete control of transportation from Wallula, Washington to Portland, Oregon & from there by steamer to San Francisco, California.
- Gold discovered at Last Chance Gulch (Helena, Montana, where my wife grew up).

1870-1871 – First immigrant surge to Palouse by Americans, to Colfax, Union & Rebel Flats, from East & Mid-West.

- Turkey Red, hard red winter wheat, introduced by Mennonites who immigrated from Russia to Kansas.

1871 – James A. “Cashup” Davis began large cattle herd near St. John.

- Tsar Alexander II abrogated all privileges given to German colonists in Volga & Black Sea areas that had been granted in 1763 by Catherine the Great (immunity from taxes & draft exemption), and between 1803 & 1857 by Tsar Alexander I. Over 100,000 Volga Germans immigrated to North America. Both Volga & Black Sea colony farms were communally owned.

1872 – Walla Walla was nearest source of household supplies for Rosalia. Walla Walla was the largest city in Washington Territory, due to 1860’s gold rush.

1873 – Northern Pacific built short “Kalama to Tacoma line”, 10 years before trans-continental completion, to reach salt water, or lose its generous land grant from the public domain.

1875 – “Cashup” Davis moved to base of Steptoe Butte, large home & general store, way station for stage coaches. Built hotel on top of Steptoe Butte, later, which failed for lack of business.

1876 – Sioux Indians defeated Custer @ Battle of Little Big Horn.

1887 - Chief Joseph/Nez Perce Indian battles with U.S. Army.

1879 – Telegraph from Spokane Falls through Rosalia to Colfax.

- Endicott founded, on Texas Ferry Road, ½ mile West of present townsite.
- Billings, as President of Northern Pacific, resumed rails from both ends.

1880-1881 – Bitter winter on Palouse. Some cattle herd losses of 50%.

1881 – Villard bought Northern Pacific Railroad. Work on both ends resumed. Villard’s Oregon Improvement Co. purchased 150,000 acres (odd sections in 14 townships) from Northern Pacific, in center of present Whitman County & sold the land for \$5 to \$10 per acre, @ 7% interest on a 6-year installment plan.

- Union Pacific reduced fares for immigrants & railroads provided jobs. Volga Germans began move to Endicott-St. John area & Black Sea Germans to Dusty area.

1882 – Congress enacted the Chinese Exclusion Act, which prohibited further importation of Chinese laborers & forbade Chinese naturalization. Repealed during World War II by Warren Magnuson sponsored bill.

1883 – Northern Pacific Railroad completed transcontinental connection at Gold Creek, Montana, (near Drummond). Completed rails to Endicott. R.R. transformed Washington from an economic backwater to the leading state in the Northwest. 1880 to 1890, population grew 380%.

1884 – Main Line of Northern Pacific completed. Grain hauled to Cheney.

1886 – Northern Pacific Line to Rosalia.

1887 – Severe Montana winter devastated cattle herds. “Last of the 5000” painting by Charles M. Russell.

1890’s – Northern Pacific aggressively promoted sales of their large land holdings @ \$1.50/acre.

1891 – Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church, Endicott, founded. LCMS.

1892 – Yagada “Volga Germans” immigrated to Kansas for 1 year & then to Endicott, WA, after 126 years in Yagada Colony, Russia. Katherine Morasch (Bob Smick’s mother) was born in the original “Palouse Colony” in 1894, one mile north of Endicott, WA.

- Great Northern Railway was completed, into the Big Bend country.

1900 – Barbed wire telephone system started – 40 instruments on 43 miles of wire.

1908 – Electricity line from Spokane to Rosalia, purchased by Wash. Water Power in 1929. R.E.A. began rural supply in 1938, stopped by World War II.

1913 – Dr. C.R. Bailey and Dr. A.E. Crouse both had newspaper ads “Registered Veterinary Surgeon & Dentist. 35 years Practical Experience.” (Dentistry had progressed by the time that I graduated from Northwestern University Dental School in Chicago, in 1954).

1914 – World War I suspended European immigration to Palouse.

1916 – First lentils planted, near Farmington. Palouse grows 95% of U.S. lentils.

1917 – U.S. Government took over ownership & operation of railroads. Returned to private ownership in March, 1920. Nationwide railroad strikes in 1919 & 1922.

- Bolshevik Revolution – Famine & persecution, starvation, executions, “resettlement” of many Germans in Russia to Gulags in Siberia, 1914-1921. Few Gulag Germans survived.

1921-1923 – Great Russian famine! Volga Relief Society, in cooperation with future President Hoover’s “American Relief Administration” (A.R.A.) distributed \$61.5 million of food, clothing & medicine in Russia. (1200 children fed in American kitchens on the Volga).

The above information is an abstract of books and articles that I have read, conversations with residents of the Palouse, observations, and photography during the last 20 years, since taking the time to understand the uniqueness of the land, appreciate its beauty, and admire the people who are residents of “The Palouse”. I hope that my notes will help you to enjoy this “jewel”,

RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

PALOUSE COUNTRY – A Land and its People.

- Richard Scheuerman, with photography by John Clement. 1994, Color Press, College Place, WA. Also a 2nd Edition, “*Oral History Edition*”, 2003, Color Press.

FINDING CHIEF KAMIAKIN –The Life & Legacy of a Northwest Patriot.

- Richard Scheuerman & Michael Finley, with photography by John Clement. 2008, WSU Press, Pullman, WA.

HARVEST HOME: HERITAGE CROPS and AGRICULTURAL ORIGINS in the PACIFIC NORTHWEST. – Richard D. Scheuerman and Alexander McGregor, Pullman: Washington State University Press, 2013 (forthcoming.)

On the Trail of the ICE AGE FLOODS – The Northern Reaches.

- Bruce Bjornstad & Eugene Kiver, 2012 Keokee Books.

LONG AGO IN THE NORTHERN PALOUSE – An Anthology of Pioneer People: Places and Events. – Compiled & Edited by Glenn Leitz, 2005. Marquette Books. Spokane, WA.

PALOUSE COUNTRY, Washington State University Press, 2002.

- George Bedirian, black & white historical photographs.

THIS WAS WHEAT FARMING

- Kirby Brumfield, Bonanza Books.

-

WHEAT LIFE – The Art of Scratching Dirt,

- Ryan & Kara Rowe, Washington Association of Wheat Growers, 2012.

EXPLORING WASHINGTON’S PAST – A Road Guide to History.

- Ruth Kirk & Carmela Alexander, University of Washington Press, 1995, 2001.

GATEWAY TO THE PALOUSE, 5th Edition – Nona Hengen, Artist & Author.

- www.icehouse.net/spangletown/nona.html

-

COMPANY TOWN – Potlatch, Idaho, and the Potlatch Lumber Company.

- Keith C. Peterson. Washington State University Press, Pullman, WA and Latah County Historical Society, Moscow, Idaho. 1987

PALOUSE PERSPECTIVE. Alison Meyer. Flying Color Press, 2008. 150 beautiful color photographs of the Palouse.

- www.alisonmeyerphotography.com

“O PALOUSE – A Tale of the Palouse Region of Eastern Washington & Northern Idaho”

- Dan Walker Productions, Lewiston, Idaho. 75 minute CD.
- www.dwproductions.com

I recommend that you take one of the following Atlases with you if you drive off U.S. & State Highways in the Palouse. It is easy to get lost in the rolling hills that no longer have fences every half mile. The following multi-page Atlases show every square mile in the State of Washington, and show every road, for your safety:

WASHINGTON ROAD & RECREATION ATLAS, Benchmark Maps 2004, 3rd Edition.

WASHINGTON ATLAS & GAZETTEER, DeLorme, frequent reprints.

IDAHO ATLAS & GAZETTEER, DeLorme, frequent reprints

WHITMAN COUNTY COLOR ROAD MAP, \$6.00 prepaid, Whitman County Department of Public Work, P.O. Box 430, Colfax, WA 99111-0430. (509) 397-6206

LATAH COUNTY ROAD MAP, \$2.50 prepaid. Latah County Courthouse, Moscow, ID..

ACCOMMODATIONS & INFORMATION

BANK LEFT GALLERY & TEA ROOM, 100 S. Bridge St., Palouse, WA – (509) 878-8425.

GREEN FROG, 100 E. Main, Palouse, WA - (509) 878-1490. Closed on Sundays..
HARVESTER RESTAURANT, Spangle, WA – (509) 245-3552.

EDDY’S CHINESE & AMERICAN RESTAURANT, Colfax, WA (509) 397-2180, 702 So. Main St.

RUEVO VALLARTA (Mexican) RESTAURANT, Colfax, WA (509) 397-6762, 205 N. Main St.

HILL RAY PLAZA (Group meals with prior Reservation), Colfax, WA (509) 397-4668, “Simply Relative” catering, Almota Road, across from Hospital.

HILLTOP RESTAURANT, Pullman, WA (509) 334-2555.

BEST WESTERN WHEATLAND INN, (509) 397-0397, 701 North Main St., Colfax, WA 99111 quite new, very nice, group rates.

SIESTA MOTEL, (509) 397-3416, South Main St., Colfax, WA. 1940’s, inexpensive.

PATAHA FLOUR MILL, Pomeroy, WA. (509) 843-3799. Restaurant by prior reservations, Grist mill, Camera Museum. www.patahafLOURmills.com

Other Websites:

Inland Empire Chapter, Photographic Society of America www.psainlandempire.org
Annual Spring Seminar in Spokane, with nationally known speakers, is open to the public.

Spokane Camera Club www.spokanecameraclub.org

Spokane Valley Camera Club www.SVCCWA.org

The Palouse www.palouse.com or www.palouse.org

Ice Age Floods Institute www.iceagefloodsinstitute.org (Cheney-Palouse Chapter). IAFI lectures at Eastern Washington University, Cheney, and annual all-day Spring Field Trips.

Washington State University www.wsu.edu

WA Heritage Barn Register, Michael Houser, Architectural Historian www.dahp.wa.gov

Tourism, Pullman Chamber of Commerce www.pullmanchamber.com

Whitman County Library www.whiteco.lib.wa.us has accepted my gift of a collection of 1593 color slides of the Palouse & Channeled Scablands. Contact Library for copy information.

“May you enjoy this interesting area, with its wonderful people!” - Otto O. Stevens, D.D.S.