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Playing West
Performances of War and Empire in Pacific Northwest Pageantry

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by

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

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In April 1917 the United States officially entered a war that it had hoped to avoid. To sway popular sentiment, the U.S. government launched a propaganda campaign that rivaled their armed mobilization. Though many came to support the war effort, isolationist tendencies and the ready embrace of social distractions that followed the Armistice suggest a more complicated reaction to the United States' participation in the First World War. As we approach the centennial anniversary of the nation's entrance into WWI, it is essential that we reexamine that war's legacy and question our understanding of the United States' domestic responses. My dissertation, "Playing West: Performances of War and Empire in Pacific Northwest Pageantry," does this through a close examination of the historical pageants staged in the Pacific Northwest during the five-year period immediately following the war. These large-scale civic spectacles found

widespread appeal during the Progressive Era in the eastern United States and Midwest only to wane in popularity in the war's aftermath, yet in Oregon and Washington, pageantry enjoyed its greatest successes between 1919 and 1924 with shows that overwhelmingly employed themes of violence, sacrifice, and empire building, and that occasionally recreated the war itself.

Table of Contents

List of Illustrations

Introduction

The unprecedented violence of the First World War forever changed the trajectory of Western art, literature, and performance. It accelerated the development of artistic movements operating under the modernist umbrella, with the collective cultural critique of Dadaism emerging amid the war itself. Participation in the Great War generated a body of anti-war tracts written by those who had witnessed the conflict firsthand that challenged the notion of war as a heroic endeavor. This carnage ultimately led to a broader questioning of European cultural superiority that facilitated an acceptance of uniquely American art forms in both Europe and the United States. In the far northwest corner of the United States, the war's traumas played out across historical pageantry stages, as the popular art form found new regional relevance in the Armistice's aftermath.

Contextualized against the broader cultural changes associated with the First World War, the popular embrace of historical pageantry by communities throughout Oregon and Washington can appear quaint. The form itself grew out of a prior era's romanticization of a prior era—that is the Arts and Crafts movement's antimodernist interest in medieval pageantry and masques.[1] Appropriated by Progressive Era reformers, pageants served as tools to relay historical lessons across vast audiences through the apparatus of pre-amplification: pantomime, easily understood allegory, and song.[2] The use of pageantry in the wake of WWI appeared antithetical enough to the forward

[1] David Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry: The Uses of Tradition in the Early Twentieth Century* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1990), 35.
[2] Ibid., 118-120.

momentum otherwise dominating art and culture that even pageantry's one-time advocates were increasingly rejecting the form.[3]

So, why study pageantry? Particularly productions that occurred in a culturally remote corner of the country well after the larger trend had already passed? What claims to relevance can a study of historical pageantry make when juxtaposed against the period's larger cultural and artistic movements? What does a study of pageantry offer to our understanding of World War I and its aftermath?

First, these were not minor affairs. As both a Progressive Era phenomenon and amid its Pacific Northwest height, historical pageants represented a massive mobilization of people on the stage, in the choir, behind the scenes, and in the audience.[4] Among the first large-scale pageants to emerge in the early-interwar era, the *Pageant of Portland* staged in its namesake city— Portland, Oregon, on August 21, 1919—included a cast of over 2,500 performers, represented a joint effort between the national organization War Camp Community Service and the city's parks department, and attracted an estimated 50,000 to its single showing.[5] The first major pageant to grace a Seattle stage, *The Wayfarer*, held over six nights each during the summers of 1921, 1922, and 1925, had a

[3] Ibid., 286.
[4] Ibid., 1.
[5] Adah Losh Rose, "A Historical Pageant of Oregon" (nd), unpaged, in Walter Meacham Papers [hereafter Meacham Papers]., AX 065, box 8, folder 1, University of Oregon Special Collections, Eugene [hereafter U of O Special Collections]. These numbers are based on figures provided by the pageant's author and director, Adah Losh Rose, in promotion of a subsequent pageant staged fourteen years later. Newspaper accounts of the *Pageant of Portland* support Losh's cast estimate, but describe the audience attendance simply as "thousands." This was a free event held in a city park without established seating. Based on existing information, it is difficult to determine if Rose is exaggerating this number and if so by how much. For further information please see, "Portland Rises in Fairyland's Glory," *Oregonian*, (August 22, 1919).

combined cast, choir, and crew in excess of 5,500 people for each of its iterations. [6] This show drew a paying audience of 88,385 people throughout its first season, another 70,257 to its second run, and finally 82,829 for the third.[7] *The Wayfarer's* 1923 replacement pageant, *Americanus*, advertised a cast and choir of 10,000 people, stared a female lead from the New York Metropolitan Opera Company, and was witnessed by more than 42,000 people over its six-night run.[8] In the rural portions of the two states, the eastern Washington town of Walla Walla hired a nationally renowned director to lead 2,400 performers before a two-night audience of 30,000 in the summer of 1923.[9] This pageant, titled *How the West was Won*, repeated the following spring with the same director and an expanded cast of 3,200."[10] Across the Columbia River the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, a 1923 production staged over two days in the nearly-nonexistent town of Meacham, Oregon, drew upon the efforts of three surrounding cities and the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation in creating an event that brought some 35,000 people to this remote mountain location, including then president of the United States Warren G. Harding and first lady Florence Harding.[11]

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[6] Dora Dean, "Behind Scenes of Wayfarer Lies Tent City as Large as Centralia," *Seattle Sunday Times*, July 24, 1921.
[7] "Summary of Auditor's Reports of The Wayfarer Pageant" University of Washington Associated Students Activities Records, 1900-1975, Accession No. 82-110[hereafter UW ASUW] box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant, 1921-1922, 1925," University of Washington Special Collections, Seattle [hereafter UW Special Collections].
[8] "Americanus," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 15, 1923, and "Stadium Attractions Statistics: 1922-23," UW ASUW, box 17, Stadium Attraction Statistics 1920-1927. Though the claim of 10,000 performers appeared across multiple media, including the pageant's official program, the actual number was probably closer to those enlisted for *The Wayfarer*.
[9] "3200 to Take Part in Pioneer Pageant," *Sunday Oregonian*, May 18, 1924.
[10] Ibid.
[11] "Harding Popular at Big Trail Gathering," *East Oregonian*, July 4, 1923.

The significance of these participation numbers is reinforced by the area's population numbers. In the early 1920s the 315,000 people living in Seattle represented nearly a quarter of Washington State's total population, while one in three Oregonians comprised Portland's population of 258,000.[12] These were small cities surrounded by even smaller towns and sparsely populated rural regions. Comparatively, Walla Walla's population numbered just over 15,000, while the unincorporated community of Meacham did not warrant mention in the 1920 census. In *How the West was Won*'s second season more than one-fifth of Walla Walla's residents crowded onto the stage for the finale before audiences that exceeded the total population of the town. Both this and the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*'s attendance numbers signal a major influx of people into these rural regions. Even in the more populous Portland and Seattle, each pageant's participation and attendance numbers are striking. Nearly one percent of all Portlanders appeared onstage in the *Pageant of Portland,* and even if the audience estimates are off by half—that is if only 25,000 people saw the event—this viewership represents one-tenth of Portland's population. In Seattle, *Americanus*'s advertised 10,000 performers would comprise three percent of the city's population. Even *The Wayfarer*'s more modest claim of 5,000 participants represents a significant portion of Seattle, while the audience numbers for these two productions have between thirteen and twenty-eight percent of Seattleites witnessing a pageant in any of the four summers in which they were staged.[13] These numbers demonstrate the importance of historical pageantry to the civic

[12] All population data is based off the 1920 National Census.
[13] The audience of *Americanus* represented approximately 13% of Seattle's population, while *The Wayfarer's* first season attendance exceeded 28% of the city's population.

promoters who sought to organize such events, the myriad of volunteer cast, crew, and choir who sacrificed their time toward these performances, and the enormous audiences who paid admission to witness these shows.

A study of pageantry then is a study of community. Where an investigation of the inter-war artistic vanguard offers an education in the auteur and self-selecting cliques, pageantry allows us to understand communal need and communal response. As explored throughout the two foundational texts on Progressive Era pageants, historian David Glassberg's *American Historical Pageantry* and performance scholar Naima Previts's *American Pageantry*, historical pageants were intended as community-based events that brought people together in an exploration and celebration of shared local identity and that ultimately addressed particular communal concerns.[14] Northwest pageants in the early 1920s had similar objectives but were much more likely than their pre-war predecessors to situate themselves within a larger national or international narrative. The *Pageant of Portland* developed as a tribute to returned servicewomen and men with scenes of the recent World War dominating the latter portion of the show. *The Wayfarer* gave purpose to WWI by attaching a millennialist outcome to the Armistice. More than the proposed second coming, *The Wayfarer* and its follow-up, the nationalistic spectacle *Americanus*, offered an alternate image of Seattle away from the 1919 General Strike. *How the West*

[14] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, and Naima Prevots, *American Pageantry: A Movement for Art and Democracy* (Ann Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1990). Glassberg and Prevots' texts were the first to treat historical pageantry as an academic topic and serve as the foundational works for all subsequent discussions of pageants. Both Glassberg and Prevots rely heavily upon the Progressive Era organization the American Pageantry Association (APA) records for their research. Accordingly, both scholars—and those who have picked up the topic since—focus upon APA approved pageants. These occurred overwhelmingly in the Northeast and Midwest, 1905-1916. Though dealing in the same subject both scholars treat historical pageantry quite differently dependent upon their particular field of study. Thus, Glassberg explores how pageants were used to disseminate ideas about history to a broad audience, while Prevots explores the artistic merits of these works.

was Won and the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* celebrated the colonization of the region by U.S. settlers but also betrayed multiple anxieties about the passing of this era; that the colonists' sacrifices would be forgotten as they increasingly passed away and that with their passing so too went the relevance of Oregon and Washington to the larger nation.

In examining the sudden rise of pageantry in the Pacific Northwest—particularly as the form had begun its decline elsewhere—it is tempting to get caught on the question of *why?* Why pageantry? Why in this place? Why at this time? Certainly my work addresses these questions and tries to locate a more satisfying answer than the tired idea that the Pacific Northwest was simply behind the rest of the nation. While there are entire academic works dedicated to the assumption of Washington and Oregon's cultural backwardness and artistic impoverishment, this simplified accounting of the region fails to address the larger significance of these shows.[15] The pageants I discuss over the following pages were not trite knockoffs of their eastern counterparts (or even earnest knockoffs). Rather, these productions responded to regionally specific concerns and were rewarded for their local relevance through massive audience turnout.

Because of the importance applied to pageantry on a community level (and because this idea of community engaged significant portions of the respective populations) I am less concerned with the question of why than with the question of how. How did communities utilize pageantry as a means of shared expression? Specific to the interwar pageants in the Pacific Northwest, how does a community address the shock and violence of war? How does a community deal with a local event—such as the Seattle

[15] See for example, Raymond D. Gastil and Barnett Singer, *The Pacific Northwest: Growth of a Regional Identity* (Jefferson, North Carolina: McFarland and Company, 2010).

General Strike—receiving negative national attention? How does a community confront a sense that they no longer matter within a rapidly changing world? Each of these questions appeared readily in the historical pageants performed in Oregon and Washington during the early interwar period. Yet, they also beget other, less obvious questions. How, for example, did issues of gender and race ultimately shape pageant portrayals? Just as these productions responded to specific anxieties of their time, they also reflected ideas about gender and race at a moment when women's national suffrage had finally become a reality and the second Ku Klux Klan attempted to maintain a myopic status quo. Further, these questions are not limited to the1920s. Amid the centennial of the First World War these quandaries still persist. The particulars have shifted, but the anxieties generated by unending war, localized social justice movements gaining negative national attention, and a segment of the population uncomfortable with change have emerged anew. The civic rituals and performances that now surround these concerns have changed, but importantly such apprehensions still demand public treatment.

Over the following chapters I utilize the sudden emergence of large-scale historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest, and its equally rapid decline, as a means to examine broader community concerns as enacted through grand civic performances. Doing so requires a clarification of terms. First is my use of the phrase Pacific Northwest as a geographic descriptive. Though this designation can be broadly applied to include Idaho and the western edge of Montana, over the following pages it refers only to Oregon and Washington. I limit my geographic scope as the major sites of pageantry that

constitute my study occurred within these two state's borders.[16] I place a similar limitation upon the timeframe that I cover. Excepting the 1911 pageant *The Bridge of the Gods* that I discuss as an anomaly, all of the major pageants that I consider appeared between 1919 and 1925, with three premiering over a two-month period in 1923. I often refer to this brief window of years as the early-interwar period as an acknowledgement of the war's continued relevance and to distinguish it from the latter 1920s. By the end of the decade the trauma of the war had become increasingly remote, and the rise of mass entertainments, particularly cinema, had diminished pageantry's popularity nationwide.[17]

Talking about pageantry as a study of community also demands a clarification of what constitutes a community. Loosely, I am using the term to describe an amassing of people around particular historical pageants as these were self-consciously designed as community-centered events. Doing so requires an acknowledgement that those partaking in the pageants were far from the unified group touted in the productions' promotional materials. The content of these pageants was ultimately controlled by a handful of writers, directors, designers, and producers. How a volunteer cast member or a person in the audience understood the pageant's importance may have differed significantly from what the show's creators intended. Further, though these productions incorporated a large number of people, they did not necessarily represent the entirety of a city or town. The massive audiences depended upon tourists from throughout Oregon and Washington as well as visitors from Idaho and beyond (a factor that problematizes my narrow

[16] That does not mean that there were not pageants staged in Idaho or Montana. For example, the one-time mining town Boise, Idaho, staged a pageant in 1920 depicting fifty years of the community's history. See, for example, "Boise to Stage Pageant," *Morning Oregonian*, May 2, 1920.
[17] Glassberg, 287.

geographic description offered above). Even within the host cities there were dissenting voices about the form that the various pageants should take; there were those that were excluded from the pageant making process; and there were those who were dismissive of pageantry's relevance. Throughout the following chapters I attempt to tease out these instances of dissent, exclusion, and dismissal often masked by the promoted exuberance of highly orchestrated civic events.

Finally, the theme of violence pervades my work through a myriad of iterations and concerns, as it did for the Northwest pageant planners working a century prior. These productions grew out of the recent violence of the First World War and as a means to disguise the implied violence of the Seattle General Strike, an event that was ultimately peaceful yet equated with more radical movements in the local press.[18] They also commemorated the initial violence of colonization that brought U.S. settlers and Native American tribes into armed conflict with one another and were confronted by the lingering violence of subjugation, that the conclusion of the area's Indian wars generated a new set of tensions.[19] *The Pageant of Portland*, *The Wayfarer*, and *Americanus* presumed to recreate scenes of WWI as tribute to the war's legacy, yet a similar need to honor patriotic sacrifice also influenced the content of *How the West was Won* and the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*. *The Wayfarer*'s religiosity and *Americanus*'s patriotism distracted from the city's pro-labor sentiments. *How the West was Won* and the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* were initially developed to commemorate the anniversaries of a

[18] Victoria Johnson, *How Many Machine Guns does it Take to Cook One Meal? The Seattle and San Francisco General Strikes* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008), 58.
[19] Ronald J. Pond and Daniel W. Hester, "Through Change and Transition: Treaty Commitments Made and Broken," in *As Days Go By: Our History, Our Land, and Our People, The Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla*, ed. Jennifer Karson (Pendleton: Tamástlikt Institute, 2006), 111.

murder of Protestant missionaries and the arrival to the region of the first significant wagon train, respectively, two of the foundational events in the U.S. colonization of Oregon and Washington. Both of these productions engaged local Native American actors in portrayals of their ancestors, performers who, to the pageant producers' surprise and dismay, openly challenged the validity of the shows' pro-expansionist narratives. How historic instances of violence were recreated, perpetuated, celebrated, and critiqued within these productions forms an important through line to the following chapters.

Chapter 1, "Staging a War," examines both the existing examples of historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest prior to WWI and the form's rapid embrace in the immediate aftermath of the war. I open with a consideration of *The Bridge of the Gods*, a pageant staged across three separate events and witnessed by more than 100,000 people in the summers of 1911 and 1912, as an exemplar of and challenge to the Northwest pageantry's pre-war status. Undertaken by a women's organization and depicting a regional myth rather than local historical events, *The Bridge of the Gods* demonstrates pageantry's marginalization as a feminized form unfit for historic commemoration. At the same time, this diminished status left many unprepared for both the show's phenomenal success and its female director's nimble navigation of that success. A pageant on the scale that *The Bridge of the Gods* eventually assumed would not emerge again until after the First World War, yet multiple works appeared in the interim. Four of these garnered mention in the APA's official literature. By comparing and contextualizing these four pageants, I next tease out the regional specificity of pageants that appeared in Oregon and Washington, 1912-1918. Finally, I examine the *Pageant of Portland* as an early indicator

of pageantry's post-WWI rise. Importantly, this production not only responded to the recent world war, it existed for the purpose of commemorating the local men and women who served abroad, making the correlation between the First World War and the new importance placed upon historical pageantry explicit.

Chapter 2, "The Pageant City," explores Seattleites' use of pageantry to redefine the city's public image away from the 1919 General Strike with a focus upon three specific pageants. The first of these, the *Pageant of Democracy* staged as part of the city's July 4, 1919 celebration, enacted patriotic themes akin to *Americanus*, though to a significantly different end. Both the director and many of the performers in the *Pageant of Democracy* came from Seattle's labor leadership, making the pageant both a way to amend relations between the unions and the general populous and to legitimize the labor movement as an appropriately American endeavor.[20] Next, I examine *The Wayfarer*, a religiously themed pageant that directly confronted the violence of WWI and was originally created for the 1919 Methodist Centenary Celebration in Columbus, Ohio. In its path from Columbus to Seattle, via New York City's Madison Square Garden, *The Wayfarer* continually morphed to serve the needs of its host community. In Seattle, *The Wayfarer* represented the city's potential spiritual rebirth, yet charges of corruption by the show's producers ultimately undermined its value. Finally, I look at *The Wayfarer's* replacement pageant, *Americanus*; a great, patriotic spectacle intended to fulfill Seattle's

[20] Johnson, *How Many Machine Guns does it Take to Cook One Meal?* 68. Johnson cites multiple reasons for Seattleites' increasingly poor opinion of organized labor, including its poor representation within the larger press, the association with Bolshevism, and job losses being blamed upon union activities.

promise as the would-be Pageant City that ultimately became a bloated failure marred by infighting.

Chapters 3 and 4 move away from Oregon and Washington's population hubs and focus instead on the more rural eastern portions of each state. The first of these, Chapter 3, "Killing Narcissa: Race, Gender, and Violence in Recreations of the Whitman Incident," examines both the use of violent histories toward the purpose of regional boosterism and how portrayals of violence change depending upon the race and gender of both the victim and the perpetrator. In particular, representations of the 1847 murder of white, Protestant missionary Narcissa Prentiss Whitman by members of the Cayuse tribe is often obscured while the deaths of the multiple white men who died with her are recounted in graphic detail. This chapter opens with a discussion of Whitman's cultural significance in both Oregon and Washington histories and an examination of treatments of her demise in the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. I then compare two stagings of her death in the immediate aftermath of WWI: the historical pageant *How the West was Won* and a never-released film from 1919 titled *Martyrs of Yesterday*. Both productions emphasize Whitman's death, as well as that of her husband, as a model of patriotic sacrifice. At the same time, both productions struggled with the darker aspects of Whitman's legacy; that her death led to the regional persecution of Native Americans and Catholics.

Chapter 4, "'The Road that Won an Empire:' Commemoration, Commercialization, and the Promise of Auto Tourism at the 'Top o' Blue Mountains,'" considers the larger celebration held in Meacham in July 3rd for the benefit of President

Harding. As part of the day's events, the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant,* served as an important addition to the large number of historical pageants staged in the summer of 1923. Yet amid this very celebration a sense arises that pageantry is already in decline, to be surpassed by new means of memorialization and commemoration, in particular the historical cinematic epic. This day also brought other tensions to the fore: the president of the state's historical society would publically chastise Harding for his repeating of myth as fact; the President of the United States would apply a voyeuristic gaze to the celebration's Native American performers; and the leadership among these same performers would use this opportunity to confront Harding about U.S. Indian policy.

Historical pageantry enjoyed a remarkably brief period of relevance in the Pacific Northwest. At its height in 1923 it was already, arguably, in decline. Yet, amid its fleeting tenure, proponents of historical pageantry used the form to confront national and local concerns. Oregon and Washington's pageant stages served as venues to address issues ranging from violence—including the very real violence of the recent war, the longer violence of settler colonialism and displacement, or the implied violence of the General Strike—to regional tensions—whether between urban and rural communities or between the region's majority white, Protestant population and those marginalized by this same group—to the growing sense that the Pacific Northwest failed to matter within the larger national narrative. Throughout the following pages historical pageantry serves as a means to understanding the broader culture of the Pacific Northwest at a moment when much of the western world was struggling to move forward, and in which people in

Oregon and Washington both felt the weight of these international issues and that of a regionally specific anxiety about their proper place within them.

Chapter 1

Staging a War: The First World War and the Rise of Historical Pageantry in the Pacific Northwest

On July 10, 1912, more than 15,000 spectator's crowded into Multnomah Field' small grandstand until even "the banks behind the bleachers were black with people," all to witness the colonial fantasia *The Bridge of the Gods*, a pageant organized "on the lines of a gigantic circus," that vowed to, "be by far the greatest spectacle the people of Oregon have ever seen."[21] The show's press promised its overwhelmingly white audience such fiery displays as the near-by, "Mt. Hood in eruption, the crashing of the great stone bridge," from which the production derived its title, "the Indian torture fire, and the passing of Chief Multnomah in his flaming death canoe," the last a figure of oral tradition and a central character of the show. [22] This should have been the historical pageant's final performance, but with another 4,000-5,000 persons denied entry to the Portland stadium, directors of the Bridge of the Gods Company, the Multnomah Club who owned the field, and the annual Rose Festival of which the pageant was a featured attraction called an emergency meeting to discuss extending the production's brief run.[23] Already, *The Bridge of the Gods* had surpassed expectations, with ticket sales necessitating the construction of 300 additional seats prior to its Rose Festival opening.[24] The show had met similar acclaim the previous year amid its debut at the city of Astoria's Centennial Celebration in the northwest corner of the state. Staged there in an open air stadium the

[21]" Drama Near Ready: 'Bridge of the Gods' Production to be Elaborate," *Morning Oregonian*, June 3, 1912.
[22] "Indian Legend Play to Cost $25,000 to Give," *Morning Oregonian*, May 12, 1912, and "Indian Legend of Great Stone Arch to be Told with Panoramic Pictures," *Morning Oregonian*, June 2, 1912.
[23] "Two More Shows Crowds' Demand," *Morning Oregonian*, June 11, 1912.
[24] "More Seats Necessary," *Morning Oregonian*, June 7, 1912.

production's first night ticket sales totaled "6,487 paid admissions," far exceeding the venue's expected capacity and leading Centennial planners to double the number of scheduled performances to eight.[25] The Rose Festival would add two more nights and the local Elks lodge offered two additional evenings of the production at Multnomah Field during the fraternal organization's national convention later that summer.[26] All told, over 100,000 tickets were sold to *The Bridge of the Gods* during its three runs in the summers of 1911 and 1912, making this production the most significant foray into historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest to this point and foretelling the form's regional rise a decade later.[27]

In the early 1910s, while historical pageantry enjoyed the height of its relevance and popularity in the eastern United States and Midwest, in Oregon and Washington State the form remained a minor phenomenon. Historian David Glassberg, in his extensive study of Progressive Era pageantry describes this performative type as an important form of community expression that, at its best, combined the efforts of hundreds, and sometimes thousands, of volunteers while attracting several thousand more as spectators

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[25] "Programme is Fine," *Sunday Oregonian*, June 4, 1911, "Astoria Centennial Amusements Varied," *Morning Oregonian*, July 16, 1911, "'Kuhnals' Reign at Astoria," *Morning Oregonian*, August 16, 1911, and "Astor Library Seeks Local History: Written Exclusively for the Columbia Press, 12-12-75," Local History File: Ferris, Astoriana Collection, Astoria Public Library. Estimates for the stadium's seating capacity range, depending on source, from 3,500-6,000 audience members.

[26] "Two More Shows Crowds' Demand," and "Great Drama Tonight," *Morning Oregonian*, July 8, 1912. The number of attendees for the three runs suggests both a high rate of viewers from outside the region and repeat viewership. The estimated 100,000 tickets sold in Astoria and Portland represented nearly half of the two cities' combined population according to the 1910 U.S. Census.

[27] In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century civic planners and the press throughout the Northwest abused the phrase "historical pageant" to refer to a variety of events, particularly historically themed parades. Unless noted otherwise, I use the term historical pageant to describe scripted and staged productions with a clear connection to the larger historical pageantry trend occurring throughout the United States. For an explanation of the disparities between the national pageantry movement and (mis)employments of the term on a local level please see, Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 64-67.

in a reenactment of local history, and that, though men held many of the prominent roles, women enjoyed a similar professional status.[28] In Oregon and Washington during this same period, performer and audience numbers remained comparatively low and, rather than afford women opportunities comparable to their male counterparts, men in the Pacific Northwest rarely participated in pageantry making the form the purview of women and children. This feminization diminished the perceived value of historical pageantry as a mode of public tribute, a fact exemplified by the rarity with which such productions actually engaged area history. While other modes of local historical commemoration abounded in the Pacific Northwest during the first two decades of the twentieth century, the region's pageants overwhelming portrayed mythical or exterior historical narratives. Pageantry, though enjoyed as a mode of public celebration, appeared incompatible with the burgeoning interest in the area's past.

The Bridge of the Gods successes rarely repeated in the ensuing pageants of the 1910s, with the United States' entrance into World War I all but halting the practice. Yet, in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, historical pageantry emerged on a grand scale in Oregon and Washington as both the centerpieces of larger communal celebrations and as a means through which viewers might understand the social and political circumstances of the early inter-war period. In this chapter I utilize the various stagings of the *Bridge of the Gods* as a means into understanding the pre-war mindset, how those in the Pacific Northwest considered themselves as regionally distinct while aspiring toward the successes of their eastern counterparts. I then examine the early

[28] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 109, 159-160.

development of regional pageantry. While World War I provided an important break in how people engaged historical pageantry, the currents that allowed this rupture evolved over the decade prior and drew upon trends from the eastern United States and California. Finally, I analyze recreations of the war within Pacific Northwest pageantry, with an emphasis upon the *Pageant of Portland* (Portland, 1919), as these productions sought simultaneously to make sense of the recent violence, to celebrate patriotic sacrifice, and to align the region with the United States' new global position. Through this conflation of aspiration and recovery, the historical pageantry that appeared on Northwest stages following the Armistice and into the 1920s attempted to rectify the previously unknown levels of violence of the preceding years and did so, at a time when others interpreted the same bloodshed as necessitating an unequivocal split from the past, by looking decidedly backward.

The Bridge of the Gods

The appearance of *The Bridge of the Gods* disrupted existing understandings of historical pageantry as a relevant medium in the Pacific Northwest. Civic leaders in Portland had actively rejected staging a theatrical pageant of Oregon history in conjunction with Astoria's 1911 centennial celebration. Oregon's two largest cities had previously collaborated on similar celebrations—including the centennials of Captain Robert Gray's entrance into and naming of the Columbia River and Meriwether Lewis and William Clark's exploration of the same river from the East—and that they might

continue to do so seemed natural to members of both communities.[29] Even outside observers described the establishment of the first U.S. settlement west of the Rockies, founded as a fur trading outpost at the behest and financing of John Jacob Astor, as an aspect of state rather than city history.[30] To this, Oregon Historical Society (OHS) secretary Frederic G. Young issued an impassioned plea, via a letter to the editor of the *Oregonian*, arguing that, "interest in the celebration at Astoria would only be re-enforced if an observance were planned at Portland to give expression to the Oregon sentiment that this centennial should inspire and provoke."[31] Following the example of the recent Boston pageant *From Cave Life to City Life: The Pageant of a Perfect City* by the progressive reform organization Boston—1915, Young imagined a production in which:

> The golden thread of the Oregon story [would] be shown in the best light that the poet, musician, and the dramatist could put it, from the first ages of the search for a northwest passage to the Indies, the Straits of Anian, and the River of the West, through the heroic age of overland migration on the Oregon trail…Not only a long and unique past would be popularized by a pageant, but the strategic position of Oregon on the western sea would be brought home to the thought of her people.[32]

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[29] See for example, "Coming Centennial: Discovery of the Columbia River," *Morning Oregonian*, February 26, 1892, "Astoria's Gala Day: Continuation of the Columbia River Celebration," *Morning Oregonian*, May 12, 1892, "Red Letter Day: Portland Welcomes the Baltimore and Charleston to her Harbor," *Sunday Oregonian*, May 15, 1892, "Pageant is Unique: Canoes Bring Guide and Explorers to Astoria," *Morning Oregonian*, August 30, 1905, "Hunt's Centennial," *Sunday Oregonian*, June 5, 1910, "Astoria will Celebrate: Portland Promises to Co-operate to make Centennial Memorial," *Morning Oregonian*, November 12, 1910.

[30] "Shall there be an Astor Centennial?" *Morning Oregonian*, August 7, 1910.

[31] "Pageant Would Aid Centennial: Portland Could Re-enforce Celebration of Astoria's Founding," *Morning Oregonian*, December 3, 1910. Though Young identified himself as the "sec'y Oregon Historical Society" at the close of the letter his reach in the reproduction of Oregon history went well beyond this role. Young founded the *Oregon Historical Quarterly* and served as its editor 1900-1928, was a faculty member at the University of Oregon in Eugene, and served on the Oregon Commission of the 1905 Lewis and Clark Exposition.

[32] Ibid.

Young's proposed pageant equated Oregon's value with mythical trade routes that actual European and U.S. exploration of the one-day state dispelled. It also closely resembled its Boston counterpart with a simultaneous emphasis upon both what Oregonians might learn through an examination of their shared past and the region's potential future prosperity.[33] While Boston—1915 concerned themselves with addressing various societal ills toward creating the "perfect city" within five years, Young imagined Oregonians flourishing through an acknowledgement of the state's access to the Pacific and Southeast Asia, a sense made more acute by the promise of the Panama Canal.

The idea of a historical pageant, as first broached by Young, garnered enough interest to involve Harvard drama professor and prominent pageant maker George P. Baker.[34] As presented by Young before the OHS annual meeting held at Portland's city hall, Baker's pageant of Oregon included the state's prehistory but focused the majority of its content on just over a century of time and included:

> Nature and the wilderness, to be portrayed in music, dance, and drama, dealing with a period between the receding of the glaciers and the exploration of the Pacific Coast; the discovery of the Columbia River and the coming of the Caucasian races; the era of discovery and the struggle between the British and the Americans for control of the Oregon country; industrial production and growth in population, bringing the subject down to the present day.[35]

Baker's consideration of area history positioned its eventual overtaking by Europeans and European Americans as inevitable and even situated the region's major conflict as one between an old and new colonial power with general disregard for the

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[33] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 80, and Prevots, *American Pageantry*, 29.
[34]For an extended discussion of Baker's contribution to U.S. historical pageantry see Prevots, *American Pageantry*, 105-119.
[35] "Region History Pageant to Wait: Society After Discussion, Decides not to Endorse Plan of Easterner," *Morning Oregonian*, December 18, 1910.

indigenous inhabitants. This further made the celebration's purpose—Astoria's founding—a national rather than regional concern, as within a year of the fort's establishment it became a casualty of the War of 1812, thus beginning "the struggle between the British and the Americans." It also bespoke the concern of how to honor a venture that suffered great difficulties and that ultimately failed. While Baker placed it within a grand international conflict and Centennial promoters would praise Astor's vision, describing it as foundational to establishing U.S. territorial claims alongside Gray's locating of the Columbia and the Lewis and Clark expedition, others were less convinced of the actual value of Astoria in persuading federal lawmakers of the value of Oregon to the United States.[36] Both the overland and seafaring missions were haunted by privations and, what one journalist writing on the centennial described as, "unintermittent calamity," that included lost wandering in an unknown wilderness, high mortality, insanity, and a sunken supply ship.[37] Despite an agreed upon "joint occupation" following the war's end, Britain remained decidedly in control of the territory for three decades following Astoria's surrender with its center of operations moving just north of present-day Portland in 1825. Accidents of the overland trip, such as locating the fertile Willamette Valley that became the state's major population hub and pursuing the route that became the Oregon Trail, facilitated the eventual U.S. territorial conquest, but a lingering sentiment remained that, as one *Oregonian* editorial explained, "[Astor's] name and his colonial enterprise belong to the romance of the Oregon country rather than its

[36] "How John Jacob Astor Saved Oregon is Now Told," *Morning Oregonian*, March 26, 1911, and "Astoria's Centennial," *Morning Oregonian*, April 2, 1911.
[37] "Hunt's Centennial."

political history."[38] Ultimately Astoria, despite its historical claims, appeared minor to many in the overall founding of the state, such that its actual history assumed the contours of legend rather than fact.

For reasons beyond the city's ill-fated founding, those present at the OHS meeting, following "considerable discussion," rejected the proposed pageant. Opposition appeared under several guises but ultimately reflected financial concerns. The three main dissenting voices, William D. Fenton, Esq., Col. Robert A. Miller, and Dr. Joseph R. Wilson, represented Portland's elite. Fenton expressed concern over the cost of staging such a production, Miller thought the state lacked sufficient history to attract an outside audience, and Wilson suggested that a historical pageant of Oregon history might better serve the community five to ten years in the future (though without indication of what the doctor expected to occur within the coming decade to make the history of Oregon suddenly relevant to a larger audience).[39] Perhaps more tellingly, each speaker discussed the potential financial impact upon the city's Rose Festival—an annual civic celebration that grew out of the 1905 Lewis and Clark exposition. With its official beginning in 1907, civic planners in Portland aggressively sought to legitimize the self-proclaimed title "Rose City," planting a quarter of a million rose bushes within three years of the festival's inception.[40] The unknown quotient of staging a potentially expensive and unsuccessful historical pageant seemed an unnecessary risk for a city that had already begun the work of establishing a different sort of yearly festival.

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[38] "Astoria's Centennial."
[39] "Region History Pageant to Wait."
[40] W. P. Stranborg, "Portland and the Coming Rose Festival," *Better Fruit* 4, no. 11 (May 1910): 21.

The drive to stage *The Bridge of the Gods* as a part of the Astoria Centennial occurred under the auspices of the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Astoria Centennial Committee; the female-led division whose centennial planning contributions included such class and gender appropriate tasks as beautifying the cityscape for would-be visitors, securing enough asters—the official Centennial flower—for the event, and arguing (unsuccessfully) that the funds earmarked for erecting a statue of John Jacob Astor instead create a community space that include a library and museum.[41] Many of the wealthy, white women involved had previously engaged in Progressive Era reform activities concerned with the area's parks, schools, and libraries with the organization's president Emily Stokes holding the latter particularly dear.[42] It was also Stokes's efforts that secured *The Bridge of the Gods*.[43] Based upon a proposal by then Portland resident Mabel Ferris to dramatize a popular novel, the Ladies' Auxiliary endorsed the pageant in early May 1911, a mere three months before its Centennial premiere.[44] Ferris later commented upon this abbreviated timeframe, noting that she was better able to achieve the full scope of her artistic vision through the Rose Festival production.[45] That the Ladies' Auxiliary rather than the male led Centennial Committee undertook a historical pageant among their Centennial contributions fit well within the pre-war gender associations of Northwest pageantry. Despite pageantry's association as a feminized pursuit, *The Bridge of the Gods* became a major feature of Astoria's Centennial

[41] "Auxiliary was Enthusiastic," *Astoria Daily Budget*, March 17, 1911, and "Astor Statue Opposed," *Morning Oregonian*, April 16, 1911.
[42] *Astoria Daily Budget*, February 6, 1900.
[43] "Final Meeting of Auxiliary," *Astoria Daily Budget*, September 13,1911
[44] "Local News," *Astoria Daily Budget*, May 10, 1911.
[45] "'Bridge of the Gods' Comes in New Version: Miss Mabel Ferris Dramatist of Spectacular Production," *Morning Oregonian*, May 26, 1912.

Celebration with its first night's attendance allowing a doubling of scheduled performances and these same numbers encouraging the Centennial Committee within the first few days of celebration to make all associated events free excepting the pageant.[46]

Though *The Bridge of the Gods* quickly proved itself as an important draw—and was well promoted within the Centennial press—initially Centennial promoters looked elsewhere for its historical content, proposing instead to display the area's past through pyrotechnics, parade, and opera.[47] The first of these focused upon the sinking of the *Tonquin*—Astor's seafaring vessel that brought the initial people and supplies to his fur-trading outpost. The boat's detonation by a member or its own crew as an outcome of a conflict with the Nuu-chah-nulth of modern-day Vancouver Island was recreated twelve times during the celebration in a fiery spectacle over the river.[48] The Seattle company charged with this production also contributed to *The Bridge of the Gods* recreating in pyrotechnic terror the sequence in which a volcanic explosion caused the title bridge to collapse.[49] Live performance supplemented the initial imagining of the Tonquin's sinking with, "two hundred ballet dancers, four bands of Indians, European artists and local talent," performing various components of the first meetings between fur traders and local Native American tribes.[50] The parade and opera as originally planned further

[46] "No More Charge for Admission," *Astoria Daily Budget,* August 14, 1911.
[47] "In Social Circles," *Astoria Daily Budget,* March 25, 1911, and "How John Jacob Astor Saved Oregon is Now Told."
[48] "Astoria and its Centennial, Aug. 10 to Sep. 9, 1911," (Portland: Sunset Magazine Homeseekers Bureau, 1911), 10-15.
[49] "'Bridge of Gods,' Centennial Play, Artistic Success," *Oregon Daily Journal,* August 12, 1911.
[50] "Ship to be Sunk," *Morning Oregonian,* April 9, 1911.Though the article recounting these broad aspirations for the performance fails to explain how a state whose establishment of an official ballet company still remained some seventy years out might attract so many dancers as well as European artists, the idea of depending upon "Indians…and local talent," for such productions became increasingly frequent. Northwest productions in the early twentieth century both expected the paid participation of Native

enhanced this rendering of early Astoria history. While the parade offered rolling vignettes of significant events, the opera presumed to reenact their tragic glory. With a story assembled by Ladies' Auxiliary member Fredda Gratcke and music composed by the increasingly prestigious Portland transplant Dr. Emil Enna, the proposed opera included such local dramatics as a marriage between a head fur trader and potential Indian princess, the daughter of Chinook Chief Concomly, the selling and surrender of the fort, and its restoration under the U.S. flag.[51] The historical parade proposed many of these same scenes with the additional preamble of Astor and the Tonquin's captain meeting upon a float depicting New York City.[52] Despite these grandiose plans only the parade emerged nearing its original intentions. The pyrotechnic display confined itself to exploded scenes in the evening sky and, as the celebration wore on, increasingly featured additional historical events recreated in fire.[53] The opera disappeared entirely from the Centennial schedule. Though Enna offered previews of his efforts in Portland throughout April and May 1911(just as *The Bridge of the Gods* received initial approvals) and continued to seek Native American participation well into the end of May, the program released in early June failed to mention a historical opera as part of the month's events.[54]

In approving *The Bridge of the Gods* the Ladies' Auxiliary and the larger Centennial Committee engaged a markedly different pageant than that imagined by either Baker or Young. Where the would-be Portland pageant makers confined at least 10,000

American performers and cast white actors in red face in the lead roles. The introduction of the Pendleton Round-Up in 1910 marked the beginning of an assumed set of Native American performers for hire associated with the annual rodeo.

[51] "In Social Circles."

[52] "Parade Wins Favor," *Morning Oregonian,* August 15, 1911.

[53] "Last Night at the Grand Stand," *Astoria Daily Budget*, August 17,1911.

[54] "Musician Seeks Motif," *Morning Oregonian,* May 31, 1911, and "Programme is Fine."

years of Native American existence to a single episode of "Nature and wilderness," emphasizing instead the past century of Anglo interests, *The Bridge of the Gods* overwhelmingly concerned itself with pre-contact Native Americans. Based upon the late Frederic Homer Balch's 1890 novel *The Bridge of the Gods: A Romance of Old Oregon*, the Astoria production blended history, myth, and outright fabrication in a story of a great Indian confederacy that dominated the lower Columbia and Willamette Rivers in the late seventeenth century. Under the rule of Chief Multnomah, according to Balch, "over sixty or seventy petty tribes stretched the wild empire, welded together by the pressure of common foes and held in the grasp of the hereditary war-chief of the Willamettes."[55] Balch added a Caucasian character to this narrative in the form of New England Puritan Cecil Gray who left his community to proselytize among the Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest only to engage Multnomah's mixed-race daughter with a shipwrecked "Asiatic princess," Wallulah, in an impossible romance.[56] While Gray offers an improbable point of contact to the text's predominately white audience, much of Balch's work had a historical basis. Balch, in creating *The Bridge of the Gods*, conducted extensive research among Native Americans of the lower Columbia and, though as the use of "romantic" in the subtitle indicates, the book is ultimately a work of fiction, Balch embraced and recorded Pacific Northwest Indian culture and tradition with less prejudice

[55] Fredric H. Balch, *The Bridge of the Gods: A Romance of Indian Oregon* (Chicago: A.C. McClurg & Company, 1890), 56.

[56] "'Bridge of the Gods' Admired by 10,000," *Morning Oregonian*, June 9, 1912. Later literature about Balch's novel and descriptions within the work itself suggest that the so-called "Asiatic princess" hailed from somewhere within the Ottoman Empire. Within the text itself, Wallulah's ancestry places her within the Victorian literary tradition of the so-called tragic mullata—a construction that allowed Wallulah to have the appearance and sexual desirability of a white woman with the sexual availability ascribed to women of color. For an extended discussion of this phenomenon, please see Daphne A. Brooks, "Our Bodies, Our/Selves," in *Bodies in Dissent: Spectacular Performances of Race and Freedom, 1850-1910* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 14-65.

Figure 1.1 Emma Wooten as Wallulah and Leo Wise as Multnomah in the Astoria Centennial version of *The Bridge of the Gods*. Wise donned heavy make up for his role as would other white actors cast as Native American characters. (Centennial Collection, Clatsop County Historical Society, Astoria, Oregon)

and disregard than many of his contemporaries to the degree that his work continues to serve as a valuable bit of ethnological research.[57] Balch's commitment to the historical nature of his narrative caused him, in a later preface, to insist that even the seventeenth-century shipwreck of an Asian vessel was "an altogether probable historic incident."[58]

Though Balch sought historical accuracy in a story whose title betrays it as a myth—and many contemporaneous pageants romanticized regional histories—*The Bridge of the Gods* differed not only from Baker's proposed pageant but the larger trend of historical pageantry that sought to recreate site specific histories.[59] *The Bridge of the Gods* could be understood as an aspect of Oregon history but not that of Astoria, as geographically Multnomah's great confederacy became the Portland Metropolitan Area some ninety miles east of Astor's one-time fort. At a celebration intended to honor the founding and growth of Astoria electing *The Bridge of the Gods* over a production akin to that offered by Baker seems strange. The decision to recreate Balch's tale rather than the century of development in Astoria further defied the larger rendering of area significance evident elsewhere throughout the month-long event. The previous centennial celebrations of Gray's entrance into and naming of the Columbia River and Lewis and Clark's residence in the area focused specifically upon the regional significance of the occasions with staged reenactments at their centers. The 1892 celebration floated a reproduction of Gray's ship into the mouth of the Columbia, while in 1905 the city's eleventh annual regatta opened with the appearance of "Captains Clark and Lewis and Princess

[57] Ann Fulton, "The Restoration of Ilkák'mana: A Chief Called Multnomah," *American Indian Quarterly* 31, no. 1 (Winter 2007): 112, and Stephen L. Harris, "Frederic Homer Balch and the Romance of Oregon History," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 97, no. 4 (Winter 1996/1997): 396-398.
[58] Balch, *The Bridge of the Gods*, x.
[59] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 139-146.

Sacajawea, accompanied by fully 100 Red Men in Indian costume"—the latter referencing the Improved Order of the Red Men, a fraternal organization of white men centered on the appropriation of Native American culture and clothes.[60] The Astoria Centennial similarly offered reverence to the city's origins, including a recreation of Ft. Astoria on the Centennial grounds, the sinking of the Tonquin in pyrotechnic spectacle, and a parade (if not a full opera) depicting early exchanges. Given the troubled nature of this early history perhaps it was best celebrated through an unoccupied structure, a fiery display, and historical vignettes reenacted upon parade floats. *The Bridge of the Gods*, though bucking national pageantry trends, proved a surprising success.

If *The Bridge of the Gods* neglected Astoria's founding in the nineteenth century, it aligned easily with how promoters sought to portray the city in the twentieth. As described in an early press release, the Centennial Celebration intended, "to bring out the historical significance of the time by showing what the Oregon Country was in the beginning and what…great progress has been."[61] The Celebration's purpose, then, becomes less a veneration of the past and more a display of the development beyond these earlier days. Besides being the first U.S. settlement on the western seaboard, Astoria also boasted the first U.S. post office and customs house west of the Rocky Mountains, constructed in 1847 and 1852 respectively; yet the celebration program showcases an image of these early structures in dilapidated states juxtaposed against images of the current post office and customs house as "an illustrative lesson of a

[60] "Coming Centennial,", and "Pageant is Unique."
[61] "Astoria to Draw World Attention," *Morning Oregonian*, January 29, 1911.

hundred years' growth," though both structures were approximately sixty years old.[62] Rather than mark the passage of chronological time, the creation and disintegration of these two buildings demonstrated Astoria's transition from a frontier community to an established city. A similar disjunction occurred in the program's portrayals of Native Americans. Photos of contemporary indigenous individuals donning traditional regalia appeared without name or tribal affiliation, but with such unspecific and arguably inaccurate descriptives as, "an Indian Squaw," and, "an Indian Chief."[63] Lest Centennial attendees miss the purpose of this display further captions offer the humorous reminder that, "the old Indian Chief ruled without fear of a recall or review by a Supreme Court," and the more solemn explanation accompanying a young woman's photo that, "this is an Indian Queen whose domain is greatly diminished by the Caucasian's progressiveness."[64] Historian Philip J. Deloria discusses this phenomenon of using contemporary Native Americans as an archaic counterpoint to Anglo notions of modernity as an outgrowth of the then emerging field of ethnography, noting that:

> The salvaging of disappearing native cultures required imagining them in a precontact "ethnographic present" always temporally outside of modernity. A key mechanism of this temporal dislocation was the notion of progressive cultural evolution: human societies progressed through stages—hunter / gatherer, pastoralist, trader, manufacturer. Indian people necessarily existed in a different stage and thus, in relation to modern white Americans, in a different temporal zone.[65]

This hierarchy of humanity allowed for the continued presence of Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest while denying their agency as contemporary actors.

[62] "Astoria and its Centennial, Aug. 10 to Sep.9, 1911," 28-29.
[63] Ibid.,6-7.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Philip J. Deloria, *Playing Indian* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 105-106.

Thus the images offered in the Centennial Celebration's official program could be understood by the event's overwhelmingly white viewership as representing people that could be captured by instruments of modernity—here the camera—while simultaneously existing outside of it.[66] *The Bridge of the Gods* pageant supplemented these static images by enacting an idealized Indian past before audiences who could, in turn, use this to judge the modern Astoria against. Further, where the program might describe the idea of Native American decline as an inevitable outcome of "Caucasian's progressiveness," the pageant could create it in fiery spectacle, with the title bridge's collapse signifying the end of Multnomah's great confederacy and, by extension, Native American regional domination.

That *The Bridge of the Gods* might appear as a counter-narrative to the region's rapid growth did more than display Astoria's progress as an emerging U.S. community. It also demonstrated the region's distance from its frontier period by appealing to the sense of primitive exoticism pursued by white urbanites in the early twentieth century. As Deloria and other historians have documented, upper- and middle-class white Americans of the Progressive Era increasingly sought to engage "a more authentic primitive past" through travel and the acquisition of experiences and souvenirs.[67] Historian Phoebe S. Kropp in her examination of the Pained Desert, an expansive display of traditional Southwest Indian cultures associated with the 1915 Panama-California Exposition in San

[66] Though no demographic breakdown of Centennial attendance is available, the demographics of Astoria and Oregon, the omission of any Centennial events representing the city's Asian population, the existence of state "sundowner laws" prohibiting African Americans from moving permanently to Oregon, and the lack of a special day set aside for persons of color to attend (as was common elsewhere) suggests that Centennial attendees were overwhelmingly white.

[67] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 115. See also, Leah Dilworth, *Imagingn Indians in the Southwest: Persistent Visions of a Primitive Past* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Scholarly Press, 1997), Phoebe S. Kropp, *California Vieja: Culture and Memory in a Modern American Place* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), and Marguerite S. Shaffer, *See America First: Tourism and National Identity, 1880-1940* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Books, 2001).

Diego that employed Native American performers and artisans, suggests how such experiential tourism might apply to *The Bridge of the Gods*. Noting the necessity of white audiences to rectify the actual presence of Native Americans in the Painted Desert with the vanishing Indian ideology the exhibit sought to perpetuate Kropp explains, "Though Indian individuals might physically remain, their traditional ways of life were disappearing and thus required preservation."[68] That Balch ostensibly based his work on local Native American legend and tradition positioned it for white audiences as an authentic accounting of pre-contact Indian life, an authenticity that translated to the pageant. Thus, those viewing *The Bridge of the Gods* might interpret this spectacle that depended overwhelmingly on white performers in redface as more faithfully representing Northwest Indian culture—thereby simultaneously preserving the area's Native American past and allowing white actors and audiences to participate within it—than the actual Native Americans living throughout the region.

The touristic embrace of Native Americanism came later to the Pacific Northwest than elsewhere with a significant change in local perception vis-à-vis Native Americans occurring between the 1870s and 1880s when Balch initially researched *The Bridge of the Gods* and its transformation into a pageant some thirty years later. Born just two years after Oregon achieved statehood, Balch grew up among adults who had actively undertaken the work of regional colonization and in a period and a place where Indian wars still raged. Balch's interest in local Native American cultures and traditions made

[68] Kropp, *California Vieja*, 145.

him an outlier among his contemporaries.[69] As the endpoint of Frederick Jackson Turner's closing frontier, however, shifts in attitude were already underway by *The Bridge of the Gods'* 1890 publication—the same year upon which Turner's thesis rests—as evidenced by the texts' success. When Ferris dramatized Balch's work twenty-one years after its publication, the era of his parents had passed and subsequent waves of immigration had made the state's pioneer period increasingly remote. [70] The emerging sense of Native Americans as objects of fascination rather than threat transformed Sacagawea—commonly referred to as a "squaw" in nineteenth-century literature—into a princess by 1905 and audiences eagerly received *The Bridge of the Gods* in 1911 and 1912.[71]

Ironically, the same distance that allowed Oregonians to appreciate an Indian narrative undid the ethnological value of Balch's work, most tellingly through treatments of Chief Multnomah. Historian Ann Fulton cites Balch's narrative as an important, if romanticized, tool in preserving the chief's legacy, one that by the early twentieth century was overwhelmingly denied with some among the OHS leadership actually crediting Balch with Multnomah's creation.[72] As Multnomah was transformed to a figure of myth, his name became ubiquitous throughout the Portland area, including in the county that encompasses the burgeoning metropolis and the field in which Ferris's *Bridge of the Gods* eventually appeared. This combination of appropriation and denial has a long

[69] Harris, "Frederic Homer Balch and the Romance of Oregon History," 398, and Delia M. Koon, "Frederick Homer Balch," *Washington Historical Quarterly*, v. 15, n 1 (January 1924), 34. Harris cites Balch's interest in Native American mores as a probable reason for his early isolation from his peers.
[70] Gastil and Singer, *The Pacific Northwest*, " 87.
[71] Donna J. Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea: A Euro-American Legend* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 1996), 65.
[72] Fulton, "The Restoration of Ilkák'mana: A Chief Called Multnomah," 121.

history in the U.S. conquest of the continent that served as an effective means in illegitimating Native American claims to place. Many of the thousands who attended *The Bridge of the Gods* did so with the understanding of Multnomah as a mythical rather than historical figure. When newspapers promised before the show's Portland premiere that, "Multnomah's voice of war will once again thunder," they did so insecure in the knowledge that he ever had a voice at all.[73]

The temporal space audiences afforded between themselves and Balch's *Romance of Indian Oregon* was enhanced by Native American participation in each of *The Bridge of the Gods* productions. Approximately thirty Yakima performed in the show's Astoria iteration, with nearly double that number of actors from the Warm Springs Reservation appearing in the Portland pageants.[74] In each instance the Native American performers reportedly added, "an air of realism," with a similar description afforded the importation of twenty-five train cars worth of trees from Mt. Hood.[75] The easy conflation of Native American performers with the production's scenic elements is indicative of the space afforded Native Americans within the pageant. While their presence added an archaic authenticity—just as several hundred trees might revert Portland's urban center to a sort of primordial landscape—they remained tertiary figures. In both Astoria and Portland,

[73] "Indian Legends of Great Stone Arch to be told with Panoramic Pictures."
[74] "Indian War Veterans are Here," *Astoria Daily Budget*, August 21, 1911, and "'Bridge of Gods' Admired by 10,000." Participation numbers are difficult to determine as press releases often state hoped for rather than actual recruitment figures. Early press for the Rose Festival production, for example, promised 500 performers culled from reservations throughout Oregon and Washington. See, "Legend to be Staged," *Morning Oregonian*, May 5, 1912.
[75] "Indian Legend Play to Cost $25,000 to Give," and "Indian Legend of Great Stone Arch to be Told with Panoramic Pictures."

Figure 1.2 Nez Perce and Yakima performers that appeared in *The Bridge of the Gods* at the Astoria Centennial. (Clatsop County Historical Society)

white actors appeared in all principal and secondary roles—often in startling amounts of bronze face and body makeup—with the latter location employing professional performers from the Baker Stock Co, a locally renowned acting troupe. Native Americans might fill up the stage, but they were not the primary actors in a story of Indian Oregon. Despite the limited authority afforded them, Native American performers associated with *The Bridge of the Gods* repeatedly challenged expectations of them as both anachronistic and complacent, whether using their time in Portland to purchase automobiles or suing when the promised pay for their participation failed to materialize.[76] These dynamics of expectations and defiance would repeat in the coming decade as Native American participation became a hallmark of Northwest historical pageantry.

When Ferris undertook *The Bridge of the Gods* for the Astoria Centennial she also challenged the existing structure of authority, undertaking a leadership role in a celebration otherwise governed by men. The gendered distinction between Ferris and her

[76] "More Seats Necessary," and "Suit May Succeed Show," *Morning Oregonian*, June 16, 1912.

Centennial peers becomes evident through repeated newspaper references to her as a "Los Angeles society girl," a diminutive description that positions her life as one of leisure—therefore having time to dabble in drama—and situates her as an outsider—though she had been living in Portland prior to the Centennial.[77] Following her graduation from Cornell College in Mount Vernon, Iowa, Ferris found employment in Los Angeles as a drama instructor at Whittier High School and at the Cumnock School of Expression, where she had previously been a student.[78] She also performed regularly, offering both dramatic readings and song, as part of the Chautauqua movement and for other Progressive reform organizations such as the Women's Christian Temperance Union.[79] In Portland, were she lived with her brother, Ferris continued her reform-minded performances and developed an association with the Baker Stock Company, named for founder George L. Baker.[80] Following the Centennial and her work on the *Bridge of the Gods*, Ferris moved to New York and wrote a well-received Broadway play.[81] If Oregon papers diminished Ferris's personhood, she herself did not. When the Ladies' Auxiliary to the Astoria Centennial Committee attempted to purchase exclusive

[77] See, for example, "Comely Society Girl who is to Direct Presentation of Spectacular Astoria Play," *Sunday Oregonian*, August 20, 1911.
[78] "News of Society—Gossip of Men and Women—Weddings, Parties, Dinners…" *Los Angeles Sunday Times*, February 24, 1907, and "Seniors at Whittier High Present Drama," *Los Angeles Herald*, June 16, 1909.
[79] "W.C.T.U. Arranges a Big Program," *Los Angeles Herald*, April 14, 1907, and "Chautauqua to Open," *Los Angeles Herald*, July 15, 1907.
[80] "Famous Entertainers to Enliven Columbia Beach Chautauqua Days," *Morning Oregonian*, July 10, 1910, and "Ad Men Attend Benefit: Performance at Baker Adds $600 to Convention Fund," *Morning Oregonian*, March 12, 1911.
[81] "Mabel Ferris Author: 'Another Man's Shoes is Title of Latest Comedy," *Oregonian*, July 14, 1918.

rights to the *Bridge of the Gods,* Ferris responded with a $25,000 price for permanent ownership of her work; a sum exceeding twelve times her initial commission.[82]

The cost Ferris afforded her work presumably shocked the Ladies' Auxiliary. Their dealings to this point had been overwhelmingly complimentary, with the women's organization offering Ferris official accommodation for *The Bridge of the Gods* and Ferris returning their kindness, writing, "we have been more than co-workers, we have been friends."[83] Further, the press around the attempted acquisition proceeded as though it were a guaranteed arrangement before negotiations had begun.[84] Ferris's price tag created what one reporter angrily described as a "revulsion of feeling" and a general frustration that the pageant would not belong to Astoria.[85] While the small city of Astoria was unable to contemplate meeting Ferris's price, a private interest in Portland could and did—a factor Ferris may have known about when entering into negotiations with the Ladies' auxiliary as the purchasing organization, "The Bridge of the Gods" Company, included her brother among its ranks.[86] This assemblage of prominent Portland business men secured the pageant for the 1912 Rose Festival, demonstrating an embrace of pageantry markedly different from the previous seasons in which the possibility of such a production appeared as a threat rather than compliment to the annual event.

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[82]"Finances of Centennial," *Astoria Daily Budget*, December 27, 1911, and "Astoria Won't Purchase Drama," *Morning Oregonian*, November 2, 1911.
[83] Letter offering official accommodation from the Ladies Auxiliary to the Centennial Committee to Mabel Ferris, Local History File: Ferris, Astoria Public Library Astoriana Collection, and "Miss Ferris is Most Grateful," *Astoria Daily Budget*, September 13, 1911.
[84] "Astoria Wants Drama: Purchase of "Bridge of Gods" is Considered," *Morning Oregonian*, October 18, 1911.
[85] "Amount Asked is Exorbitant," *Astoria Daily Budget*, October 25, 1911.
[86] "Indian Legend Play to Cost $25,000 to Give."

The pageant was also significantly different, not only from what Young and Baker envisioned, but also from *The Bridge of the Gods*' Centennial iteration. In Portland the production appeared on a bigger scale with a significant shift in focus toward the show's more spectacular components, with scenes of war and destruction overwhelming the quieter dramatics.[87] Some alterations occurred with Ferris as she reworked the script for the second run, yet the majority of changes resulted from an increased number of people involved in the show's production, where Ferris had overseen all aspects of the Centennial performances in Portland she found herself among a multitude of men who had undertaken aspects ranging from the show's direction to its pyrotechnics and capacity for staging destruction.[88] This production's emphasis upon grandeur and masculine displays of hostility caused one reviewer to compliment a dance of Indian maidens with the caveat that, "this was one of the few daintier touches that relieved the strong notes of tragedy that pervades the play," while another attempted to reassure the production's performers that though the various spectacles would presumably predominate, "it is planned that every actor shall do justice in the delineation of his or her part."[89]

In selling *The Bridge of the Gods* to Portland audiences, promoters had depended upon sensationalizing the story's violent components. Yet, in a demonstration of malleability, when the San Francisco Fair Commission of Oklahoma commissioned Ferris in August 1914 to undertake a multi-city remount of the production, the violent appeals all but disappeared. As the production unfurled against the initial battles of the

[87] "Legend to be Staged."
[88] More Seats Necessary."
[89] ""Bridge of Gods' Admired by 10,000," and "' Bridge of the Gods' Comes in New Version."

Figure 1.3 White actresses portraying "Indian Maidens" (here from the Astoria Centennial Celebration) proved a popular component of *The Bridge of the Gods* pageant in both Astoria and Portland. (Clatsop County Historical Society)

First World War its purpose shifted from a bold display of Indian warriors to a show ultimately about peace to the degree that prominent Methodist preacher and president of the International Peace Forum, Dr. John Wesley Hill, praised *The Bridge of the Gods* as "the most inspirational and instructive presentation of the cause of peace ever offered the public."[90] To confirm this new interpretation, "A Prayer of Peace," complete with the releasing of doves, now concluded the show; an addition approved of but not created by Ferris.[91] This shift in purpose to placate audience desire—that, in the case of *The Bridge*

[90] "'Bridge of Gods' Given: Spectacular Pageant Drama Presented at Oklahoma City," *Morning Oregonian*, September 6, 1914.
[91] Ibid.

of the Gods, spectators might be less interested in witnessing virtual warfare as actual bloodshed transpired in Europe—afflicted historical pageantry generally during this period. Though few productions undertook the cause of war as directly as *The Bridge of the Gods*, the relevance of historical pageantry in the sites where it had previously found its greatest expression—the eastern United States and Midwest—came heavily into question and following the war ceased to be a cohesive movement.[92] In the Pacific Northwest historical pageantry pursed a different trajectory. Where before the war, with limited exceptions such as *The Bridge of the Gods*, historical pageantry was a relatively marginalized and feminized field; in its aftermath, historical pageantry enjoyed its greatest regional significance and became a means through which northwest audiences engaged the recent war and its repercussions, a development I explore in greater depth below and in subsequent chapters.

The Tradition of Historical Pageantry in the Pacific Northwest

The Bridge of the Gods' successes did little to sway those charged with preserving and presenting Northwest history toward the value of pageantry. Despite suggestions that *The Bridge of the Gods* or a similar production become an annual feature within the Rose Festival celebration, planners for the following year's festivities confined their spectacular displays to parades, water and pyrotechnic shows, and the coronation of

[92] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 231.

festival king "Rex Oregonus."[93] Staged dramas—no matter how impressive—were no longer an aspect of the annual event. Following the financially disappointing 1913 season, however, Frederick Young again endeavored to introduce educational components into the annual fête that would reflect upon the region's past while embracing pre-Industrial performative and celebratory customs. Citing pre-Christian European holidays and traditions as antecedents, Young envisioned transforming the entire Rose Festival into a sort of folk festival that would provide "an experience rather than a show."[94] The retooled 1914 Rose Festival continued as a show rather than an experience, but also appreciated the emphasis upon area history advocated by Young and others. The primary feature of the annual fête was a parade—labeled a historical pageant—"with floats portraying the most memorable events in the life of the Beaver commonwealth."[95]

Throughout the 1910s interest in regional history increased in Oregon and Washington, but rarely translated into historical pageantry. Planners for Seattle's Golden Potlatch, an annual celebration akin to Portland's Rose Festival, following one poorly received pageant came out decidedly against the practice, declaring in 1914 that, "what Seattle wants is real entertainment, not historical or mystic pageantry."[96] Of the major Northwest cities, only Tacoma, Washington regularly included a pageant (historical or otherwise) as part of its annual celebration, the Montamara Festo, yet this inclusion was

[93] "Official Programme of Events for the Seventh Annual Rose Festival which Opens Tomorrow Morning," *Morning Oregonian*, June 8, 1913.
[94] "Folk Festival is Urged by Young: Professor Advises Change in Portland's Annual Rose Celebration," *Morning Oregonian*, August 31, 1913.
[95] "Festival to Flash History of Oregon," *Morning Oregonian*, October 16, 1913.
[96] "Seattle to have a Real Potlatch," *Seattle Star*, May 30, 1914.

specifically understood as a means through which women and children could contribute to the larger event.[97] Elsewhere in the two states, historical pageants continued to emerge on a small scale often associated with women's and children's educational programs or resulting from the efforts of women's organizations akin to the work conducted by the Ladies' Auxiliary of the Astoria Centennial Celebration to bring *The Bridge of the Gods* to fruition. *The Bridge of the Gods*, in its anomaly of scale, betrays the very smallness of pageantry in the Northwest at the time of its creation. To host a pageant of *The Bridge of the Gods'* magnitude, the Ladies' Auxiliary sought assistance from a dramaturg trained in California and familiar with that state's burgeoning pageantry tradition. Similarly, Young in envisioning a pageant of Oregon turned to a director experienced in the Progressive Era pageantry of the eastern United States and Midwest.

In the East, historical pageantry grew both consciously from arts and crafts organizations' interest in Medieval and Renaissance revivalism and organically from existing currents of commemoration and entertainment. Glassberg places their origins in the "Renaissance pageants" staged in Great Britain at the turn of the century, first as private affairs depicting pastoral triumph over industrial society and later as large-scale civic celebrations that emphasized community participation at all stages of production.[98] Adherents of the arts and crafts mode of historical pageantry soon appeared in the eastern

[97] "Montmara Festo is on," *Morning Oregonian*, July 3, 1914, and "Is Alhambra's Name in the Pot?" *Sunset, The Pacific Monthly*, v.31, n.2 (August, 1913), 389. Cities throughout the western United States attempted to create a circuit of annual fests for tourists to visit during the first decades of the twentieth century. Of the three that I discuss only the Rose Festival is still in existence.

[98] For extended discussions of historical pageantry during the Progressive Era, please see Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, Annelise K. Madsen, "Private Tribute, Public Art: *The Masque of the Golden Bowl* and the Artistic Beginnings of American Pageantry," in *Pageants and Processions: Images and Idioms as Spectacle*, Herman du Toit, ed. (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2009), H.V. Nelles, *The Art of Nation-Building: Pageantry and Spectacle at Quebec's Tercentenary* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), and Prevots, *American Pageantry*.

United States and began spreading their influence throughout the nation. That historical pageantry easily appealed to those charged with creating civic celebrations reflected both the form's compatibility with existing modes of public tribute and the desires of event organizers to create a disciplined affair. Hallmarks of historical pageantry, including a reliance upon allegory and pantomime to convey a lesson of history, had antecedents in tableaux vivants and historical processions, while the controlled nature of pageantry countered the vexing raucousness often associated with public celebration.[99]

This first wave of pageantry accommodated some non-dramatic productions under the banner of "historical pageantry"—even allowing certain parades a place in the pageantry genealogy—often citing intent over actual creation, yet as others increasingly appropriated the term historical pageant, pageantry leadership narrowed what might constitute a pageant.[100] Based upon what dance scholar Naima Prevots described as, "several years of concern about potential corruption of pageant goals and ideals," a 1913 conference of pageant masters held in Boston resulted in the formation of a professional pageant organization, the American Pageantry Association (APA).[101] Including George Baker among its foundational members, the APA existed to share information and ideas among pageant makers while also hoping to control the scope of historical pageantry in the United States. To this end the group produced a heavy body of literature, including the *American Pageantry Association Bulletin*. As Glassberg explains:

> From 1913 through 1916, the association published forty-three one-page bulletins, an average of nearly one per month, on the technical aspects of

[99] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry,* 16.
[100] Ibid., 47.
[101] Prevots, *American Pageantry*, 90.

> pageantry such as writing, costuming, dance, and music. The bulletins also contained an annotated chronological list of "recognized" pageants…The lists not only informed members of their colleagues' past and upcoming activities, but also attempted to define the term "pageant" by restricting its use, retroactively, only to certain types of civic events.[102]

Despite the APA's attempts to dictate the terms of historical pageantry on a national level, variations emerged and, at least in the western United States, assumed regionally specific contours. In California, for example, pageantry proponents, though mindful of their eastern antecedents, frequently traced their origin to local outdoor theatre efforts that dated to the late nineteenth century rather than to the Renaissance revivalism touted in the East. Promoters of California pageantry cited examples such as the Grove Play staged annually beginning in 1902 by San Francisco's all-male Bohemian Club, the Forest Theatre founded in 1910 in Carmel-by-the-Sea, and the Mountain Play begun in 1913 atop Mount Tamlpais in Marin County as evidence of a unique California outdoor drama tradition that easily incorporated, while setting itself apart from, the pageantry put forward by the APA.[103] Similar to their eastern counterparts, California pageants romanticized bygone eras, recreating quaint renderings of Native American and Spanish domination of the land. Yet, where eastern productions minimized similar periods of Native American and European colonial control, California pageants dwelled upon the indigenous and Spanish experiences, comfortable in the understanding that both cultures were ultimately doomed, destined to be overtaken by a superior Anglo culture, and

[102] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 108.
[103] "California Creates Age of Outdoor Drama," *Los Angeles Times*, Oct. 14, 1928. The relationship between APA and California pageantry betrays the nepotism within the APA. The Grove Play which shared membership with the APA, for example, was included in the *APA Bulletin* though the Bohemian Club's exclusivity contradicted the APA's democratic intentions.

Figure 1.4 Historical pageants originating in California tended to romanticize the Spanish colonial aspects of the state's past. The long-running *Mission Play* (pictured above) served as an important means to both celebrate and perpetuate what has been termed the "Spanish fantasy past." (Collection of the author)

therefore easily the subject of romanticization.[104] This rendering of area history served a particular end in California as the anti-modern efforts underway often recalled a very specific and recent past; that of the *Californio*, those Spanish-identified elite who retained their European identity amid Mexican regional control. Still others would move backward beyond the era of Spanish colonialism to create a fabricated indigenous world in which the promise of California as a true return to nature might find its greatest expression.

[104] For extended discussion of how Anglo Californians appropriated indigenous and Californio cultures for performance purposes see Dydia DeLyser, *Ramona Memories: Tourism and the Shaping of Southern California* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2005), and William Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe: The Rise of Los Angeles and the Remaking of its Mexican Past* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

Ferris, as a drama student and later teacher in Los Angeles, drew heavily upon the burgeoning California pageantry tradition when dramatizing *The Bridge of the Gods*. Her work fit comfortably among productions such as Mary Austin's *The Arrow Maker* (1911) and *Fire* (1913), both fabricated tales of Native American California and both favorites at the Forest Theatre and later as the annual Desert Play outside Palm Springs, California.[105] Garnet Holme served as the director of the school where Ferris initially received her dramatic training and eventually taught during her student years. Holme proved a regular contributor to the Grove Play, the Forest Theatre, and the Mountain Play and would become the foremost figure of California pageantry in the 1920s, serving as the first, and only, ever designated Pageant Master of the National Parks, before his untimely death in 1927.[106] Holme's protégé Dan Totheroh, through his work on the Mountain Play, enjoyed a career that spanned the extended period of relevance afforded California pageantry. Though penning multiple pageants performed on Mount Tamalpais, his first, *Tamalpa* (1921) fabricated an Indian legend that Bay Area residents continue to conflate with local Native American (Coast Miwok) history and which was last staged in 1971.[107] Like Ferris, Austin and Totheroh created Native American-themed pageants that supplanted local tribes' historical and geographical claims, while Holme's most enduring work, the *Ramona Pageant* later *Ramona Outdoor Drama*, dramatized a nineteenth-

[105] Phil Brigandi, *Garnet Holme: California's Pageant Master* (Hemet, California: Ramona Pageant Association, 1991), 30, and Wendell Cole, "Myth Makers and the Early Years of the Carmel Forest Theatre," in Dunbar H. Ogden, ed., *Theatre West: Image and Impact* (Atlanta: Rodopi, 1990), 48.
[106] For a complete description of Holme's work see, Brigandi, *Garnet Holme.*
[107] Paul Liberatore, "Writing the Book on 100 Years of Marin's Mountain Play," *Marin Independent Journal*, May 12, 2013.

century novel that depicted California's indigenous and Spanish populations as ultimately ill-fated to the encroaching U.S. settlements.[108]

These outside currents shaped the pre-war pageantry in the Pacific Northwest, yet pageants in Oregon and Washington displayed certain attributes distinct from their eastern and California counterparts: they were smaller in scale, avoided local history, and were feminized and infantilized as the domain of women and children.[109] *The Bridge of the Gods* followed this general pattern before its appeal was established. Centennial Planners initially limited the number of performances. The story of *The Bridge of the Gods* depicted a history so remote to its viewership that it assumed the contours of myth, and the production's creation by Ferris at the behest of the Ladies' Auxiliary placed it firmly within women's domain—though the pageant itself emphasized the more masculine components of Balch's work. The ready embrace of *The Bridge of the Gods* by an all-male leadership occurred only after its establishment elsewhere.

The minimal cultural space afforded pageantry in the Northwest appears readily through the *APA Bulletin's* pageant lists. Of nearly three-hundred pageants recorded in the paper only four occurred in Oregon or Washington: *The Trail Breakers Pageant* staged on July 5, 1912, in Baker City, Oregon; the *Pageant of May* 22 and 23, 1914, in Walla Walla, Washington; the *Pageant of Universal Peace* held June 1, 1914, at the State Normal School in Bellingham, Washington; and the *Pageant of Industries* performed July

[108] Brigandi, *Garnet Holme*, 35-49.
[109] As Glassberg clarifies, local pageants throughout the country frequently failed to meet the scale, scope, and ambitions of the APA and were often undertaken by women. In the Northwest these tendencies are significant, because they are the standard rather than the exception.

4, 1916, as part of Tacoma's annual Montmara Festo.[110] Of these, only *The Trail Breakers Pageant* was atypical of Pacific Northwest pageantry during the Progressive Era. Written and directed by local historian Rev. J. Neilson Barry, "the pageant showed the coming of the white man to this part of the country, and the subsequent development of the country."[111] Barry's pageant typified the productions that followed the First World War with an emphasis upon U.S. regional conquest and the accompanying growth that followed. A comparison between one of the listed shows, *A Pageant of May* in Walla Walla, Washington, and the *Pageant and Masque of St. Louis* in St. Louis, Missouri, both staged in May 1914, reveals these differences. Though both attracted directors associated with the AHA, and were well received beyond their immediate communities, the *Pageant and Masque of St. Louis* represented the pinnacle of the eastern United States and Midwest pageantry while *A Pageant of May* exemplified the Progressive Era pageantry of the Pacific Northwest.[112]

The *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* exceeded all prior U.S. historical pageants in levels of community participation and audience attendance. Among civic celebrations that preceded the St. Louis production, Glassberg describes pageant enthusiasts' reluctance to attempt a historical pageant within a larger, urban environment, that "the limit on the number of performers a pageant director could manage effectively worked against efforts…to reach out to the population as a whole and recruit participants

[110] Reproduced in Prevots, *American Pageantry*, "Appendix A: Chronology of American Pageants, 1908-1917," 177-199.
[111] "Eastern Oregon's Greatest Celebration held at Baker," *Morning Oregonian*, July 14, 1912.
[112] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 160, and W.D. Lyman, *Lyman'sHistory of Old Walla Walla Embracing Walla Walla, Columbia, Garfield, and Asotin Counties, Volume 1* (Chicago: S.J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1918), 206.

from more than one class or section."[113] Yet, the *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* commandeered several thousand St. Louis volunteers as performers and production staff and upwards of 100,000 audience members to each of the four performances.[114] This pageant's success and subsequent interest in its process warranted the publication two years later of a booklet of reports from each of the production's thirty-plus committees, "as the most thorough and effective way," of responding to the multiple inquires pageant organizers received from others wanting to duplicate their achievement.[115]

Conversely, participation in *A Pageant of May* numbered less than 300 with viewership comparatively limited.[116] Such counting positioned *A Pageant of May* among the smaller of the east coast and Midwest productions yet typical among the early Oregon or Washington State pageants, a trend that continued in the Northwest through the end of the First World War. A local historian who witnessed *A Pageant of May* later described the production as achieving a level of "spectacle [that] must ever remain as incomparably the most beautiful and poetical exhibition ever given in Walla Walla."[117] The success of this production anticipated Walla Walla's emergence in the 1920s as an important site of historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest, as nine years after *A Pageant of May's* premiere the town's citizenry attempted to stage a pageant that might rival the *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* in both scope and participation.

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[113] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 159.
[114] Ibid., 191. Estimates for each of the four nights of performance range from 75,000-100,000. The city boasted a population of approximately 700,000 people in 1914. Even accounting for repeat viewership and attendees from out of town, this number still represents an incredible mobilization of people to the event.
[115] St. Louis Drama Association, *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis, 1914, Reports from the chairmen of committees* (St. Louis: St. Louis Pageant Drama Association, 1916), 4.
[116] Lyman, *Lyman'sHistory of Old Walla Walla*, 206.
[117] Ibid.

The scripts' contents similarly reveal discrepancies between the two productions and how the historical pageantry phenomenon differed in the eastern United States and Midwest from that of the Pacific Northwest during the first two decades of the twentieth century. The *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* consisted of two parts—appropriately a pageant and a masque—each conceived of and carried out by separate creative parties. Importantly, both chose to emphasize the history of St. Louis—with the excessive levels of romanticization surrounding the two renderings not negating the dual productions' original intent—so that allegorical scenes of the masque or those replacing lived Native American experience in the region with Anglo-fabricated myths within the pageant still presume to present the history of St. Louis.[118]

Also conceived as two separate parts, *A Pageant of May* delves into Roman myth and English folk traditions yet omits Walla Walla history entirely. As created by pageant director Porter Garnett, *A Pageant of May* opens with "The Masque of Proserpine"—the Roman goddess of the underworld—that Garnett selected for its "peculiar appropriateness" in celebrating spring as "the season of rebirth."[119] Garnett distinguished his telling from other renderings of the myth as his "free use of comedy [was] entirely original."[120] The second portion of the pageant, "The Revels of May," imagines characters from Robin Hood performing a May Day celebration based upon English custom.[121] Garnett connected ancient Rome and Medieval England to twentieth-century Walla Walla not through a singular characteristic of the eastern Washington town, but

[118] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 184. And Prevots, *American Pageantry*, 21-25.
[119] Porter Garnett, *A Pageant of May: I. The Masque of Prosperpine II. The Revels of May* (Walla Walla: Walla Walla Union, 1914), v.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid., vi.

through an understanding of Walla Walla as representative of agricultural communities generally and the ideal of a preindustrial landscape. To Garnett, it is in such communities with their "vicinage of fertile acres, that the celebration of spring…is most appropriate," leading to his admonishment within the pageant's program that:

> The real purpose of the pageant is to remind the people of Walla Walla that since they owe their existence to the soil, spring should be for them a season of sincere and spontaneous rejoicing. It should not be necessary to cajole them into celebrating this season which brings in the bud and the blossom an earnest of the harvest to come. They should not only be willing but eager to make merry on the Green and to dance around the May-poles. They should remember that the earth which gives them sustenance is not their servant but their mistress and that without her generous gifts they would be poor indeed.[122]

It is unclear if people in Walla Walla understood Garnett's subject selections as a call to frolic. Rather the use of myth and distant history aligned *A Pageant of May* with other pageants of the region, as civic leaders and those charged with the preservation and perpetuation of local memory throughout the Pacific Northwest repeatedly elected against using historical pageantry as a means of commemorating Oregon or Washington State history.

That the overwhelmingly male managers of city affairs failed to see value in a historical pageant with a local focus may have resulted from the gender associations of pageantry in the Pacific Northwest. On a national level pageantry concerned both men and women, and those studying pageantry more commonly comment on the opportunities afforded women through participation in the form than on any notion that the form itself was feminized. Discussing the AHA's elite as evidenced through their 1914 publication

[122] Ibid., v.

Who's Who in Pageantry, Glassberg notes that, "significantly, in an age when women were often restricted to the lower rungs of their chosen professions, women and men appeared in [the pamphlet] in approximately equal numbers both as technical experts and as supervisory pageant-masters."[123] *The Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* overwhelmingly employed men in prominent positions, including the pageant director, the masque director, and the majority of the committee chairman, but also included approximately a half-dozen women among their top ranks.[124] *A Pageant of May* employed a male director from outside the region and a handful of men appeared among its cast. The show's planning and production, however, ultimately occurred under the auspices of the Women's Park Club and an Executive Committee consisting entirely of prominent Walla Walla women.[125] One member of the five-person committee, Mary Shipman Penrose's husband Stephen would pen a grand pageant in the 1920s that celebrated the history of Walla Walla Valley. Despite his later inclinations and the participation of many of his family members in *A Pageant of May*—including his six-year old son as Cupid—the family patriarch was absent from the 1914 production.[126]

Comparisons between the *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis* and *A Pageant of May* are necessarily influenced by differences between the communities that staged them. St. Louis was a large city and an important transportation hub, while the population of

[123] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 109.
[124] St. Louis Drama Association, *Pageant and Masque of Saint Louis, 1914.*
[125] Garnett, *A Pageant of May,* iv.
[126] Frances Copeland Stickles, *Another Sort of Pioneer, Mary Shipman Penrose* (Portland: Castle Island Publishing, 2007), 156.

Walla Walla actually contracted between 1910 and 1920.[127] Yet major cities in the Pacific Northwest dealt similarly with historical pageantry, either rejecting it outright or relegating it to a female realm. Of the final two Northwest pageants listed in the *AHA Bulletin* one, *The Pageant of Industries*, exemplified pageantry's position as a female endeavor within a larger civic celebration, while the final production, the *Pageant of Universal Peace*, demonstrated pageantry's role in women's education.

Staged four weeks before Archduke Franz Ferdinand's assassination, the *Pageant of Universal Peace* celebrated, "the great forces that have worked toward peace throughout the ages," including the First and Second Hague Conferences whose capacities for maintaining peace (or even dictating a more just mode of war) would fail over the coming years.[128] The institutional purpose of Washington's State Normal School, to prepare elementary educators, produced a female majority among the student body. The pageant's creation under the leadership of faculty member Frances Hays served to both inform students of peace efforts and to provide them with tools for teaching their own students. Pageantry also played an important role in women's physical education as with the Oregon Agricultural College's (OAC, later Oregon State University) annual "nature pageant," which promised such features as "esthetic

[127] *Fourteenth Census of the United States*, 312, and Campbell Gibson, "Population of the 100 Largest Cities and Other Urban Places in the United States: 1790 to 1990," Population Division Working Paper no. 27 (Washington D.C.: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1998). Though smaller than St. Louis, both Seattle and Portland ranked among the thirty largest U.S. cities in the early twentieth century. In 1910 Seattle was number 21 with a population of 237,194 and Portland was number 28 with a population of 207,214. The rankings improved for both cities in the next decade. In 1920 Seattle was number 20 with a population of 315,312 and Portland was number 24 with a population of 258,288. Comparatively, St. Louis was ranked number 4 in 1910 with a population of 687,029 and number 6 in 1920 with a population of 772,897. Between 1910 and 1920 the population of Walla Walla decreased by almost 4,000 people, form 19,364 to 15,503.

[128] Helen C. Boucher, ed., *Klipsun, 1914* (Bellingham: Washington State Normal School, 1914), 65.

dancing"—an appropriation of the form pioneered by modern dancer Isadora Duncan.[129] While this production became an important school tradition for a time it was decidedly a female affair. The third iteration held in June 1916 as part of the larger campus-wide commencement celebration excluded male participation so that a depiction of a Russian peasant wedding cast women in the roles of bridegroom and groomsmen.[130]

Though few productions went as far as to invert Elizabethan casting traditions, women continued to dominate Northwest pageantry through the end of World War I. The *Pageant of Industries* staged the following month included a cast and crew numbering in the thousands, employed Maude J. Jackson, a professional pageant master from Chicago, and was part of a larger civic fête.[131] It was also an entirely female-centric endeavor. Billed as the "contribution of Tacoma women" to the upcoming festivities and created under the auspices of the Mary Ball Chapter of D.A.R. and the Women's Club House association, the *Pageant of Industries* overtly shifted fields long associated with masculinity—industrial development and technological innovation—into the realm of women.[132] Describing this transformation, journalist Mabel Abbott contextualized it against the demonstrations of patriotism and wartime preparedness that made up much of the festival's content.[133] According to Abbott:

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[129] "300 Students to Act: Agricultural College to put on Nature Pageant," *Morning Oregonian*, May 24, 1913, "Pageant is Postponed: Dancing by Women, Part of Carnival, Given Tomorrow," *Morning Oregonian*, May 24, 1914, "2000 See Greek Pantomime Given by the Co-Eds on Campus," *Morning Oregonian*, June 7, 1914, and Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 84.
[130] "Oregon Agricultural College Girl's Pageant Beautiful Affair," *Sunday Oregonian*, June 11, 1916.
[131] "Dancers will put on only Twenty Skirts for Industrial Pageant," *Tacoma Times*, July 1, 1916.
[132] Ibid. As the first D.A.R. chapter in Washington State the women of Tacoma selected George Washington's mother Mary Ball Washington as their namesake.
[133] The 1916 Montamara Festo also contained entertainments that were not explicitly patriotic. See, "Immense Crowd Enjoying Festo," *Tacoma Times*, July 4, 1916.

> Women know that though nations rise or fall, families must [be] clothed, fed, and house [*sic*.].
>
> And so into the midst of marching troops and the patriotic whirl of excitement the women's Pageant of Industry will bring the steady throb of the forces that underlie all patriotism—the factories, the inventions, the resources, the toilers in obscure places, and greatest of all, the advancing host of children who are to take up the work and carry the country forward another generation. [134]

Abbott's feminization of industrial production as a site of stability against the tumult of war serves the WWI propaganda that argued for women's necessary entrance into fields such as manufacturing. Yet it also applies a frivolity to the larger war effort, that the masculine realm of politics is ultimately more fragile (and therefore subject to "rise or fall") than the consistent demands of maintaining a family. This critique of the war was not unique to the *Pageant of Industries*. Between the onset of World War I and the United States' entrance into the conflict, Pacific Northwest pageantry, as a largely female endeavor, repeatedly served as a counter to the masculine war abroad.[135]

U.S. entrance into WWI stalled the development of historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest—causing annual celebrations such as that held by the Women at OAC to enter a hiatus and new productions underway to halt their plans. The most public derailment perhaps occurred with the University of Oregon's *Oregon Pageant* scheduled to premiere at the schools' 1917 commencement. Planning for the *Oregon Pageant* had begun the year prior at the behest of university regent Irene H. Gerlinger and was well underway when the

[134] Mabel Abbott, "The Women get Results—Their Way," *Tacoma Times,* July 3, 1916.
[135] See, for example, "Rosedalians to Observe Peace Day on Tuesday," *Tacoma Times,* May 14, 1915, "Pageant of Peace Staged at School," *Morning Oregonian,* June 23, 1915, and "Women Prepare Peace Pageant," *Morning Oregonian,* November 10, 1915.

Figure 1.5 Emma Wooten (seen here as Wallulah in the Astoria Centennial version of *The Bridge of the Gods*) was cast as the female lead in the *Oregon Pageant*, scheduled to accompany the University of Oregon's 1917 commencement. The United States' entrance into WWI derailed the pageant and led to its cancelation. (Clatsop County Historical Society)

announcement of cancelation came in the spring of 1917.[136] The proposed pageant incorporated scenes from the entirety of Oregon's history from imagined pre-contact Native American traditions, through U.S. territorial conquest, and onto hopes for future prosperity. This large-scale production expected to attract viewers from throughout the state and included enough male faculty members and students among its participants to warrant its indefinite postponement because of military obligations. According to the University's president, "So much of the students' time now is being taken up with this military work that they could not be expected to devote the time necessary to rehearsing for the pageant."[137]

This production would have provided a marked change in who involved themselves in pageant production and in how people regarded Oregon history within pageantry; yet it also reflected existing currents. U of O faculty member and OHS secretary Frederick Young had advocated for the creation of an Oregon pageant as early as 1911 and continued his call for such a show in the following years. By at least 1912, the earliest pageants depicting town history appeared in Oregon with *The Trail Breakers Pageant* staged in Baker City. Though dealing with a smaller swath of historical importance, these productions engaged many of the themes and subject matter of the *Oregon Pageant*, particularly the veneration of the first U.S. colonists to the Oregon Territory, an idea that would grow in importance over the coming decade, as the settlers themselves past away. Arguably, without the U.S. involvement in WWI, pageantry in the Pacific

[136] "Pageant to Depict History of Oregon," *Oregonian* , January 28, 1917.
[137] "Pageant is Called Off," *Oregonian*, April 23, 1917.

Northwest would have continued to grow in popularity, eventually assuming the contours of pageants staged elsewhere before slipping from public consciousness in favor of newer entertainments. Instead the First World War occurred exactly as historical pageantry had begun its assent as a relevant form in the Pacific Northwest. This delay and the very real need to address the lingering concerns of the recent war significantly altered the trajectory of Oregon and Washington pageantry.

World War I in Pageant Form

World War I provided an important rupture in how people throughout the Pacific Northwest engaged historical pageantry. One of the first pageants to appear in the post-war era, the *Pageant of Portland*, is indicative of these changes. Staged on a single evening in August 1919, the *Pageant of Portland* engaged a large number of people as both performers and audience members. The pageant directly engaged the history of its namesake, the city of Portland, Oregon. As an effort of the War Camp Community Service (WCCS) the production engaged both men and women in leadership roles, and, as a commemoration of the recent war, the pageant concerned a more masculine narrative than that seen previously in Northwest pageantry. The narrative put forward in the *Pageant of Portland* also demonstrated the popular desire to forgo further participation in international affairs in pursuit of domestic pleasures. This differed from other renderings of the

war that emerged in the coming decade and depended in part on the interests of the WCCS.

Growing out of a Progressive Era organization, the Playground and Recreation Association of America, the WCCS sought to serve the communities around training camps and to provide leisure activities for soldiers and sailors on leave.[138] Describing the organization's intentions, Glassberg notes how it sought "above all to create a 'home-like' atmosphere in hundreds of communities near training camps for the soldiers on leave," and that it accomplished this by "sponsoring athletics, motion pictures, and regular plays [as opposed to pageants] for trainees and their hosts' amusement."[139] The decision by WSSC leadership against pageants during wartime reflected the form's association with educational endeavors attempting to inspire both pride and participation in civic life—an arguably unnecessary lesson for those who had volunteered to join the nation's armed services. Following the war the group retooled again, becoming Community Service, Incorporated, to provide for the needs of a peacetime populace, though many of their endeavors concerned the status of returning veterans and with maintaining public memory of the war. In particular, the organization undertook a campaign to construct community centers as war memorials.[140] A WCCS report published in the months following the *Pageant of*

[138] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 212.
[139] Ibid., 214.
[140] Ibid., 231-232. Though Glassberg dates the transition from WCCS to Community Service, Inc., to 1919, the publicity materials for the *Pageant of Portland* uniformly call the organization the War Camp Community Service, implying that either the name change had yet to reach the Northwest offices or that the press had not been informed of the change.

Portland's premiere estimated that nearly 300 such structures were in some phase of planning or construction in cities throughout the United States—including Portland and Seattle, with the latter's threatening to be, "the largest memorial building ever erected."[141] The proposed "living memorials" would create a new form of interaction between the general public and the recent past, one in which community members were engaged participants rather than passive spectators growing increasingly removed from the commemorated event. At the same time, to make these sites vital community centers they would largely house popular amusements such as "community singing…community drama…moving pictures and lyceum or Chautauqua programs."[142] To remain relevant living memorials, then, centers such as those proposed in Seattle and Portland would need to acknowledge the service of returning veterans without dwelling on their experiences. This is the model used in the *Pageant of Portland*.

In creating the *Pageant of Portland* the WCCS partnered with the City Park Board of Portland, an organization well acquainted with the demands of pageant production and whose expertise reflected earlier tendencies of the form as it appeared in the Pacific Northwest. Overwhelmingly, Park Board pageants were small in scale, relied upon mythical narratives, and were the work of female park's employees as taught to the

[141] Jessie Henderson, "Progress in the Memorial Building Movement," *The Playground* 13, no.10 (January 1920), 483. The Seattle Civic Center completed between 1925-1928 included a doughboy memorial among its structures though lost all other reference to the ambitious memorial building proposal. Instead the compound's legacy rested in a more localized narrative and a promise of funding that preceded the First World War. See, Walt Crowley, *National Trust Guide: Seattle* (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1998), 126.

[142] Cecil Fanning, "Recent Progress in Community Music and Drama," *Music and Musicians: Devoted Principally to the Interests of the Pacific West* v.6 n.9 (October 1920), 20.

Figure 1.6 View in Laurelhurst Park (ca. 1920). The park that provided the staging grounds for the *Pageant of Portland* grew out of the Progressive Era City Beautiful Movement. (Collection of the author)

city's children. The *Pageant of Portland*, while assuming a grander reach, retained many of these inclinations. Written and directed by local dramatist Ada Losh Rose, the *Pageant of Portland* premiered amid, and in concert with, a series of pageants staged at various Portland parks and performed by children who had participated in the respective park's summer program, attaching a large-scale effort to honor veterans of WWI onto what was ostensibly an end of season children's recital. Under the guidance of a primarily female staff, these productions marked the completion of such programs for the year and offered the participating children an opportunity to display their summer lessons in which a young girl in amateur ballet pose became "a miniature Pavlowa [*sic.*] in fancy dance,"

and a boy replete with brimmed hat and toy gun garnered the title "Bill Hart Jr."[143] Staged annually beginning in 1912, these children's pageants employed historic and mythical narratives to frame a series of athletic displays and costumed dances.[144] The 1918 Laurelhurst Park pageant, for example, in a nod to circumstances abroad, portrayed "the spirit of war," among "tennis drills" and other competitive activities and concluded with an avowal of patriotism as all the participating children—including boys in clown costumes—marched in formation behind the figure of Uncle Sam.[145] The *Pageant of Portland* followed many of these same approaches in its employment of children, though under Rose's guidance perhaps achieved a greater level of artistry and incorporated a scope that exceeded all previous productions.

Employing language that became commonplace in the promotion of subsequent Pacific Northwest pageantry, the *Pageant of Portland* promised to be the "most elaborate of all out-door events planned in honor of Oregon service men,"[146] In creating this great Laurelhurst spectacle, the Park Board used its "machinery of directors, teachers, and community houses," the WCCS leadership provided performers with additional training in singing and dance, and the city's

[143] "Historical Pageant and Folk Dancing Close Summer Session at Columbia Park," *Oregonian*, August 31, 1919. The article's references are to Anna Pavlova, an internationally renowned ballerina, and William S. Hart, a silent film star who specialized in Westerns.
[144] "2000 Elfin 'Kids' Merry in Dances," *Morning Oregonian*, August 23, 1914. This early example of pageantry as a means of displaying the value of summer playground programs included scenes from the *Bridge of the Gods* as part of its larger program.
[145] "Patriotic Pageant Given," *Oregonian*, August 11, 1918. Costuming young boys as clowns appears to be a common practice among the park board shows, perhaps as a means of separating their performances from the more feminine endeavor of dance.
[146] "Pageant to Honor City's Ex-Soldiers," *Oregonian*, August 17, 1919.

Library Association volunteered their services.[147] Rose oversaw the completed *Pageant of Portland,* but the work of training thousands of children in dance ultimately occurred through a central committee and forty-two supervisors charged with running each of the represented parks' summer programs. Adding to the largely juvenile cast were adult performers that included prominent Portlanders in the leading roles, a "fisherman's chorus," representative "persons of all nationalities living in Portland," and approximately 100 recently returned servicemen, placing upwards of 3000 people on the stage at various points throughout the pageant.[148] The enormous task of creating "fantastic and mystic costumes of every hue and fashion" for this massive cast fell to the Director of City Playgrounds' wife, who, with her all volunteer staff encamped in a community center succeeded in costuming the complete spectrum of Rose's script. [149]

Rose, in creating the *Pageant of Portland,* also undertook a grandness of scale, stretching the history of a city less than seventy years old to incorporate eons within the first act. The pageant opens upon a land of fairies that purportedly preceded the first humans in the region (a common practice in historical pageantry that demonstrated practitioners of the form's interest in mythology and provided a

[147] "Children Plan Pageant," *Oregonian*, July 16, 1919, and "2000 Children will Appear in Pageant," *Oregonian*, August 3, 1919.
[148] "Pageant Rehearsed Daily," *Oregonian*, August 10, 1919, and "Pageant Plans Finished," *Oregonian*, August 14, 1919. Reports of the actual numbers of performers vary from 1,500 to 3,000 people, with most accounts placing the final number between 2,000 and 3,000.
[149] "Pageant is Rehearsed, *Oregonian*, August 19, 1919.

strategic means of including more of the city's children into the production). [150] Humanity arrives in the form of Boy Scouts and grown men donning redface with "Indian headdresses and other bits of wearing apparel" provided by Major Lee Moorhouse—onetime Indian Agent for the Umatilla Reservation and perceived expert on Native Americans of the Columbia Plateau who's offering of artifacts and outfits provided a sense of authenticity to the scene.[151] Importantly, Moorhouse's position as an authority on local Native American groups allowed him to transform a collection of Caucasian men and boys into "Indian impersonators" without necessitating the engagement of actual Indians, an act that might expose the degree of fraud in this portrayal.[152]

Though a common practice in the Progressive Era pageantry of the Midwest and East, the decision to exclusively engage white actors in copper body paint rather than recruit performers from an area reservation actually distinguished the *Pageant of Portland* from many contemporary Northwest productions. As Glassberg clarifies, the over reliance upon white performers in the East often resulted from the thorough and complete displacement of Native Americans from the pageant-staging communities rather than a lack of interest in

[150] "Pageant to Honor City's Ex-Soldiers."
[151] "Pageant is Rehearsed," and "Pageant Tonight to have 1500 Actors," *Oregonian*, August 21, 1919. Moorhouse's perceived expertise stemmed, in part, from his extensive collection of artifacts and his work as an Indian agent, but Moorhouse is perhaps best known for his work as an amateur photographer who documented Indians of the Columbia Plateau through both staged studio shots and candid reservation scenes. Between 1897 and the mid-1920s Moorhouse created nearly 9000 glass negatives. See, Steven L. Grafe and Paula Richardson Fleming, *People's of the Plateau: The Indian Photographs of Lee Moorhouse, 1898-1915* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 2006).
[152] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 121.

casting Native Americans.[153] Pageant planners in the Pacific Northwest faced a different conundrum. There were a large number of experienced Native American performers in the region, many of them associated with the annual Pendleton Round-up. Few shows that assumed the size and scope of the *Pageant of Portland* depended solely upon white actors in redface, rather most productions employed a combination of redfaced and Native American performers. Both the Astoria and Portland stagings of *Bridge of the Gods* had used white actors in the lead roles but included Native American performers among their casts (if in a limited capacity). Other productions, such as *How the West was Won* staged in Walla Walla, Washington in 1923 and 1924, resorted to using more redfaced white actors than originally planned after reservation recruitment efforts failed.[154] This latter dynamic—the increasing selectivity with which local Native American performers elected to participate in the region's pageants and other festivities—challenged the presumptions of the pageant planners and on multiple occasions created scenarios that Native American performers would work to their advantage[155].

The act's conclusion further evidenced the emerging relations between Native American identity and recreations of the area's past through the portrayal

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[153] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 114-115, 178-179.
[154] "Special Meeting: Commercial Club Rooms, April 3, 1923," Walla Walla Pioneer Pageant Records [hereafter Pioneer Pageant Records], WCMSS 293, Whitman College Penrose Library, Walla Walla [hereafter Penrose Library].
[155] Pageant planners frequently presumed the participation of Native American performers associated with the Pendleton Round-Up, often treating these performers in the local press as wards of the Round-Up's leadership. See for example, "Plans Completed for Celebration of Trail Affair," *Walla Walla Bulletin*, April 23, 1923.

of Lewis, Clark, and Sacagawea—a scene reinterpreted on multiple stages in the Pacific Northwest pageantry that followed.[156] Regional boosters attempting to attach Oregon and Washington to the United States' growing global position frequently utilized the travels of Lewis and Clark. This story provided an important national narrative that directly concerned Oregon and Washington and that served as a foundational event in the establishment of an American empire in the Pacific, one in which Portland and Seattle were uniquely positioned as gateways. The interest in Lewis and Clark as promotional tools coincided with a reconsideration of their Shoshone guide, Sacagawea, as an important facilitator of their journey.[157] Popularized around the expedition's centennial through works such as Oregon author Eva Emery Dye's *The Conquest*, this interpretation of Sacagawea implicates her in the U.S. subjugation of the West and, as a representative of Native American womanhood, positions Native Americans as complicit in their own undoing, thereby erasing the violence of colonialism. The habitual casting of white actresses in the role, including Jane Burns Albert in the *Pageant of Portland*, erased Sacagawea.[158] In a final irony of casting Albert reemerged in the *Pageant of Portland's* second act as the toga-clad Columbia, thereby completing the final act of conquest: replacing the Indian princess as a representation of a conquered landscape with her more civilized counterpart.[159]

[156] "Pageant to Honor City's Ex-Soldiers."
[157] Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea*, 97.
[158] "Pageant to Honor City's Ex-Soldiers."
[159] Deloria, *Playing Indian*, 53.

The pageant's second act abandoned all historical pretence and moved comfortably into a symbolic representation of Portland's development. Drawing upon a tradition of allegory within historical pageantry in which women draped in cloth represented everything from complex ideals, to institutions within cities, to the city itself, Portland was portrayed within the pageant by Josephine Frost, an amateur actress and wife of a prominent local businessman. To demonstrate Portland's growth and development, Frost sat upon a thrown as an increasing number of dancers appeared before her, beginning with the fairies that once haunted the territory, then adding "dairy maids, apple girls, fishermen and the Arts," and finally some 350 small girls clad in rose costumes.[160] The specter of war follows this sequence as the Roman god Mars—portrayed by Lieutenant-Colonel Edward C. Sammons, a prominent banker before and after the war—thunders onto the stage in a chariot, seizes Frost's Portland, and forcefully removes her from the scene. The U.S. response to this aggression appears as "Soldiers, real ones, Red Cross, Knights of Columbus, Salvation Army, Y. M. C. A., Jewish Welfare board, Library association, home guards, and the canteen girls of the Red Cross," pursue Mars across the stage "to give aid to stricken Portland in her time of war."[161] Thus closes the act and any further depictions of conflict. The pageant's program written by Rose describes the action that follows as:

> Peace and Victory with Portland return,
> While off in the dusk we soon discern,
> The forms of our soldiers now homeward bound,

[160] "Pageant to Honor City's Ex-Soldiers."
[161] "Portland Rises in Fairyland's Glory," *Oregonian*, August 22, 1919.

And up from the city songs of victory sound,
For Kultur is dead and Democracy free,
With our allies we all join hands over sea,
And sweet freedom's song then rings through the trees,
While the Star Spangled Banner floats out to the breeze.[162]

The action accompanying Rose's verse includes Frost's Portland returning safely to the stage flanked on either side by the figures of Victory and Peace, also performed by prominent Portland women in Grecian gowns. The "real" soldiers also return to the stage and, led by WCCS music director Walter Jenkins, perform as their victory song "Don't Let Us Sing Anymore About War, Just Let Us Sing Of Love," Scottish singer and comedian Harry Lauder's popular tune of the era that celebrated the war's end and a return to peace-time endeavors.[163]

The use of Lauder's song betrays the complexities of simultaneously celebrating those who participate in a war and turning away from the war itself. Lauder was a popular performer on the Vaudeville circuit in the United States and Europe before the war, yet the loss of his only son, Captain John Lauder, in late 1916 initially compelled the elder Lauder to retire from entertaining, as he could not understand how in his state of personal grief he could "tak [sic.] up again with that old mummery."[164] Persuaded to return to the stage, Lauder rededicated his career to the war effort, touring incessantly to garner financial support for the war and entertaining soldiers, even journeying to the French front. In doing so, Lauder overwhelmingly depended upon his vaudevillian persona rather than that of a bereaved parent—though on the latter he would write a

[162] Ibid.
[163] "Pageant to Honor City's Ex-Soldiers."
[164] Harry Lauder, *A Minstrel in France* (New York: Cosmopolotin Book Corporation, 1918), 80.

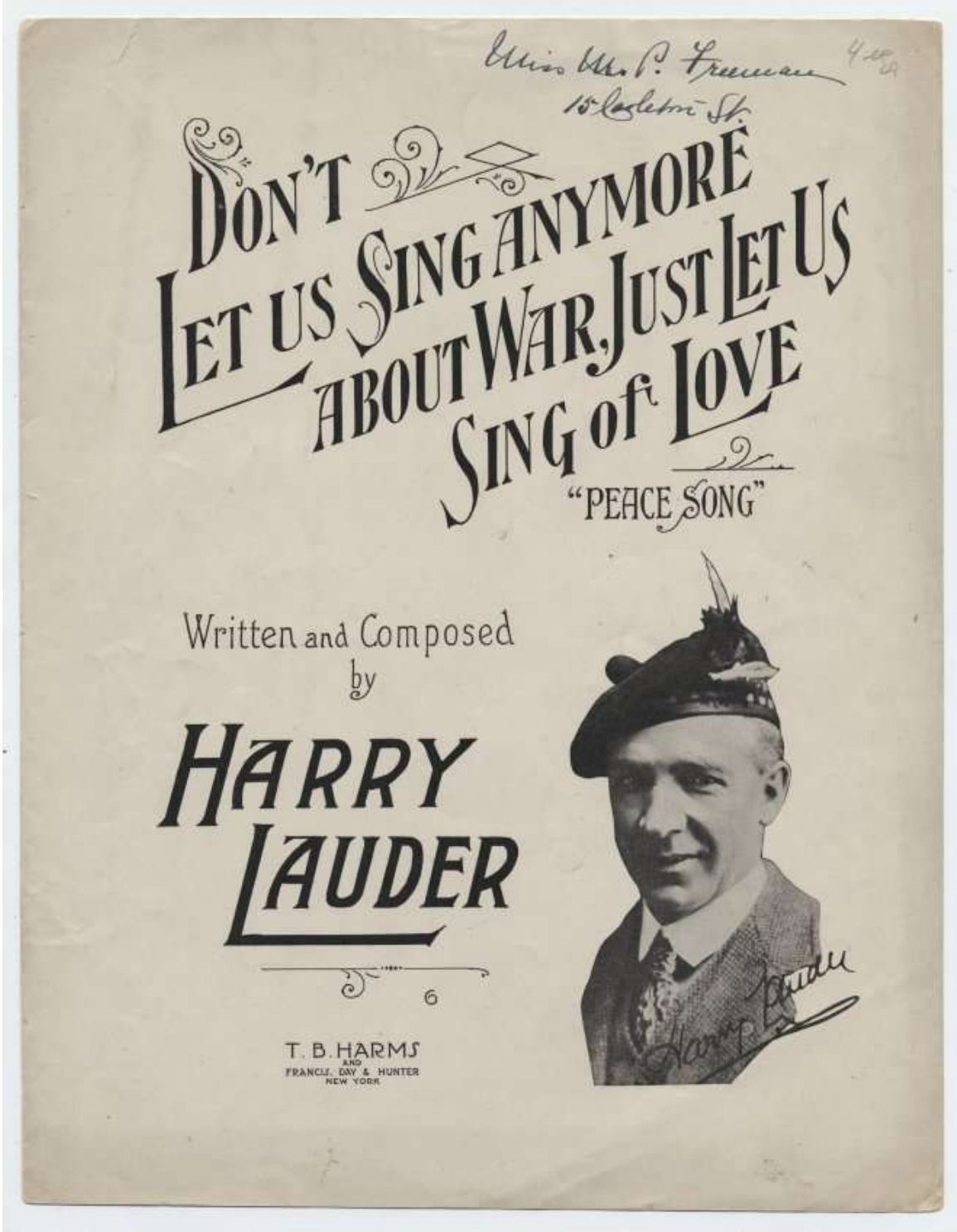

Figure 1.7 The use of Scottish performer Harry Lauder's song *Don't Let Us Sing Anymore About War, Just Let Us Sing About Love* demonstrated the *Pageant of Portland's* emphasis away from the actual experiences of war. (Irish Sheet Music Archives, Ward Irish Music Archives, Milwaukie, Wisconsin)

memoir about how his son's death transformed his career and pen a novel "dedicated to the Fathers and Mothers of the Boys" who fought in the First World War.[165] His creation of a song, then, that celebrates the Armistice and the return home of enlisted soldiers and sailors is bittersweet, as it represents a joy he himself cannot fully participate in.

Press for the pageant overwhelmingly emphasized the show's role as a means of thanking the returned soldiers rather than memorializing the dead, making Lauder's song—and its allegiance with his comedic persona rather than his personal grief—an appropriate selection for the *Pageant of Portland*.[166] This emphasis on the present created a celebration of war veterans detached from the actual war—a dynamic made stranger by the "real" soldiers' participation. The idea of war in the *Pageant of Portland* never moves beyond the abstraction of having a defunct god imperil an allegorical Portland. Essentially, the First World Was is reduced to a damsel in distress scenario in which the truly endangered damsel (Europe) is absent from the scene, the heroic recue occurs offstage, and it is the New rather than the Old World that is saved. The accompanying verse framed the U.S. involvement through the common rhetoric of the nation's moral duty to defend democratic ideals, ensuring that "Kultur is dead and Democracy free." On the stage, however, the action remains regionally centric, so that even the depiction of a foreign war never moves beyond the Northwest. This creative choice further abstracted the actual war and foretold the isolationist sentiments that defined the coming years.

While simultaneously celebrating the war's end and obscuring its occurrence, the *Pageant of Portland* marked an important change in how people in the Pacific Northwest

[165] Harry Lauder, *Between You and Me* (New York: James A. McCann Company, 1919), 9.
[166] "Pageant to Honor City's Ex-Soldiers," and "2000 Children will Appear in Pageant."

interacted with and understood the value of historical pageantry. Where prior to WWI historical pageantry had been a relatively marginalized and feminized form in the Pacific Northwest, after the war people who had not previously embraced it came to see historical pageantry as an appropriate and legitimate means to address the incredibly masculine endeavor of war and to celebrate the area's past. The *Pageant of Portland* further assumed a grander scope and scale than most previous regional pageantry. Though sharing similarities with the other end-of-season public park productions, the *Pageant of Portland* had one of the largest casts of any historical pageant in the Pacific Northwest to that point and a single-night's an audience in the tens of thousands. Subsequent works would attempt to best the *Pageant of Portland's* success rather than returning to pre-war pageantry practices.

The decade following the creation of the *Pageant of Portland* experienced a historical pageantry boom, with productions staged, particularly, in the early 1920s attempting a scale and scope to rival the form's Progressive Era height. During these years, both urban and rural communities engaged historical pageantry for a variety of civic purposes, from the restoration of reputation, to the assertion of historical importance, to the collection of tourist dollars. At the same time, many of these shows maintained an awareness of WWI. Some included recreations of the war. *The Wayfarer* (Seattle, 1921) opened with a depiction of a war-torn Flanders village.[167] Its successor, *Americanus* (Seattle, 1923), while

[167] James E. Crowther, *The Wayfarer: A Pageant of the Kingdom* (c.1919), 6.

omitting all scenes of violence, portrayed the President reluctantly making a declaration of war, a recruiting station, General Pershing before Lafayette's tomb, and the announcement of Armistice.[168] Moreover, the entire production provided a nationalistic spectacle that championed U.S. foreign policy and concluded with the declaration that "Old Glory stands as the emblem of freedom, peace, and progress."[169] Even pageants not directly referencing the war explored themes of violence, sacrifice, and peace while attempting to align the U.S. colonial acquisition of the Oregon Territory with the emergence of the United States as a global power. *How the West was Won* (Walla Walla, Washington, 1923, 1924) celebrated patriotic sacrifice through a commemoration of the deaths of missionaries Narcissa and Marcus Whitman, whose colonial efforts came to overshadow their evangelical work, while the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* (Meacham, Oregon, 1923) explicitly connected the settlement of the Oregon Territory with the larger task of empire building.[170] That these large-scale civic events maintained an awareness of the recent world war, the lingering uncertainties of its greater significance, and the shifting position of the United States on the world stage indicates that these were still points of concern for the pageant producers and the larger communities for whom they were created.

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[168] Edmond S. Meany, "*Americanus" Produced in the University of Washington Stadium, Seattle, July 23-28, 1923* (Seattle: University of Washington, 1923), unpaged.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Stephen B. L. Penrose, *The Pioneer Pageant "How the West was Won," A Community Drama in Four Historical and Symbolic Movements*, (Walla Walla: Inland Printing & Publishing Company, 1923), and Walter E. Meacham, *The Old Oregon Trail: The Road that Won an Empire* (Baker: Old Oregon Trail Association, 1924), 31.

Chapter 2

The Pageant City: Saving Seattle's Civic Image

The Wayfarer's Seattle premier—two years after the *Pageant of Portland's* single showing—further transformed how people in the Northwest understood and connected with historical pageantry. Where the *Pageant of Portland* marked an important shift in the popular embrace of pageantry, post-WWI, *The Wayfarer* threatened to redefine its host city. Seattle boosters boldly declared their town "The Pageant City," with the expectation that this mode of outdoor performance would offer both civic uplift and tourist dollars to a city more commonly associated with high levels of precipitation and labor unrest.[171] George E. M. Pratt, a prominent Seattle businessman and leader of the citizen's movement to acquire the pageant, explained its significance:

> The spectacle will make Seattle the spiritual capital of America…Up to now, our less attractive side, such as our labor troubles, has been given national prominence. We will now become known in a different light.
>
> The effect on the religious life of the city will be most stimulating. It is equivalent to a spiritual regeneration.[172]

Cognizant of the notoriety gained from the 1919 General Strike, Pratt saw in *The Wayfarer* the ability to reinterpret his city to outsiders. Nationally, anti-communist sentiment abounded following the Bolshevik Revolution, and Seattle with its "labor troubles" became a target of this fear. As the "spiritual capital of America," Seattle might be recast as both a pilgrimage site and home to pilgrims bearing tourist dollars. The "spiritual regeneration" Pratt envisioned, then, combined the era's evangelical, Protestant

[171] "America's Pageant City," *Seattle Daily Times,* June 9, 1922.
[172] "Wayfarer is Coming: Seattle to be Oberammergau of America," *Seattle Daily Times,* January 20, 1921.

revivals with Seattle's potential rebirth as an attractive, modern city on par with its eastern counterparts.

Pratt was not unique in his assessment of *The Wayfarer*. Multiple Seattle interests converged in securing the show, assembling and staging the production, and finally witnessing it as an audience. Businessmen such as Pratt came together under the Wayfarer Society, Inc., to purchase and finance the pageant.[173] They—along with the Associated Students of the University of Washington (ASUW)—further operated as show producers, ensuring all components of the pageant.[174] The local press aggressively promoted *The Wayfarer* beyond the nearly ten thousand dollars spent on advertising space.[175] Over five thousand volunteers graced *The Wayfarer's* stage, and ticket sales totaled 88,285 during the show's initial Seattle run, numbers exceeding one quarter of Seattle's 1920 population.[176] Many, like Pratt, ascribed meaning and purpose to *The Wayfarer* beyond that readily available in the script or on the stage. Yet, where Pratt imagined *The Wayfarer* simultaneously countering the city's Bolshevik image, providing a central religious rallying point, and attracting tourism as a nonconflicting ideal, in practice the meeting of spiritual, civic, and business interests in a town still smarting from the General Strike proved incompatible. The close of its first Seattle season saw *The*

[173] "The Wayfarer Society Certificate of Incorporation," UW ASUW box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant, 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections.
[174] "Funds Obtained for 'Wayfarer'," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 1, 1921.
[175] "The Wayfarer Pageant 1921 Production Financial Statements," UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant, 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections. The Wayfarer Society, Inc., spent $21,510.32 total on advertising and general publicity in support of the 1921 production. Of this $9,673.46 went to newspapers.
[176] Dean, "Behind Scenes of Wayfarer Lies Tent City as Large as Centralia," "The Wayfarer Pageant 1921 Production Financial Statements," and *Fourteenth Census of the United States*. In 1920 Seattle had a population of 315,312. Even accounting for out of town viewership and repeat attendees, the participation and attendance numbers represent a significant portion of the city's citizens.

Wayfarer mired in scandal with the Wayfarer Society disavowing further interest in the show.[177]

As Pratt's comments indicate, Seattleites saw great promise in *The Wayfarer,* proffering upon it potentially transformative powers. This same faith allowed *The Wayfarer* to serve as a proxy for lingering tensions, creating a public space where a pageant—a staged spectacle heavily employing pantomime, allegory, and song—stirred emotions warranting both public debate and corporate retraction. This chapter explores *The Wayfarer* and its replacement pageant *Americanus* to comprehend how those living in the Northwest's largest city understood themselves, their city's institutions, and their larger global place in the early inter-war period. Taken together these pageants betray civic ambitions that positioned the city as both an international hub and national destination unique among its Northwest contemporaries.

I begin beyond the region with the initial creation and stagings of *The Wayfarer*. While these occurred exterior to Seattle, they existed with both connections and references to the city. Leader of Seattle's First Methodist Episcopal Church—an important institution within the city beyond its religious outreach—Reverend James E. Crowther penned *The Wayfarer* while still a Seattle resident and during the same month of the General Strike, facts that became inextricably linked by the show's Seattle

[177] See, "Big Pageant Brings Gross of $125,00," and "Commercialism!" both *Seattle Daily Times,* August 1, 1921, and "Pageant to be Staged Every Year," *Seattle Daily Times,* August 2, 1921. Though in the wake of the scandal the Wayfarer Society offered "to turn the pageant over to any responsible organization that would produce it annually in Seattle," the Society would remain directly involved in the production of both *The Wayfarer* and *Americanus*.

premiere.[178] I then examine *The Wayfarer's* Seattle run. Overwhelmed with expectation and controversy, the show's multi-year turn revealed deeper city strife that *The Wayfarer* exacerbated rather than overcame. Finally, I look closely at *Americanus*. Planned as *The Wayfarer's* secular successor, *Americanus* recreated scenes of national import in patriotic spectacle, thereby aligning Seattle with federal rather than regional concerns. In embracing *The Wayfarer* and *Americanus*, Seattleites sought to distinguish themselves among Northwest communities. Yet, as historical pageants these two productions represented a form enjoying a particular moment of significance throughout Washington and Oregon, making Seattle both regionally distinct and of the region.

The Wayfarer

The Wayfarer began as a vision. Crowther, on leave from his Seattle congregation and charged with securing an appropriate historical pageant for the upcoming Methodist Centenary Celebration in Columbus, Ohio, laid awake in New York's Savoy Hotel contemplating what he later described as "a rather desperate situation."[179] Preparations for two historical pageants intended to serve as the centerpieces of the multi-day gathering had begun the year prior, including the engagement of professional dramatic writers to create these works. Crowther became involved in the pageants' production four months shy of their June 1919 premieres. Still merely manuscripts, Crowther described the intended pageants as, "inadequate in scope and impractical of production."[180] A

[178] W. A. Lowenberg, "Fighting Bolshevism with the Bible," *Theatre Magazine* 31, no. 2 (February 1920), 84, 136, and "Wayfarer was Inspiration Born," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 23, 1922.
[179] "Wayfarer was Inspiration Born."
[180] Ibid.

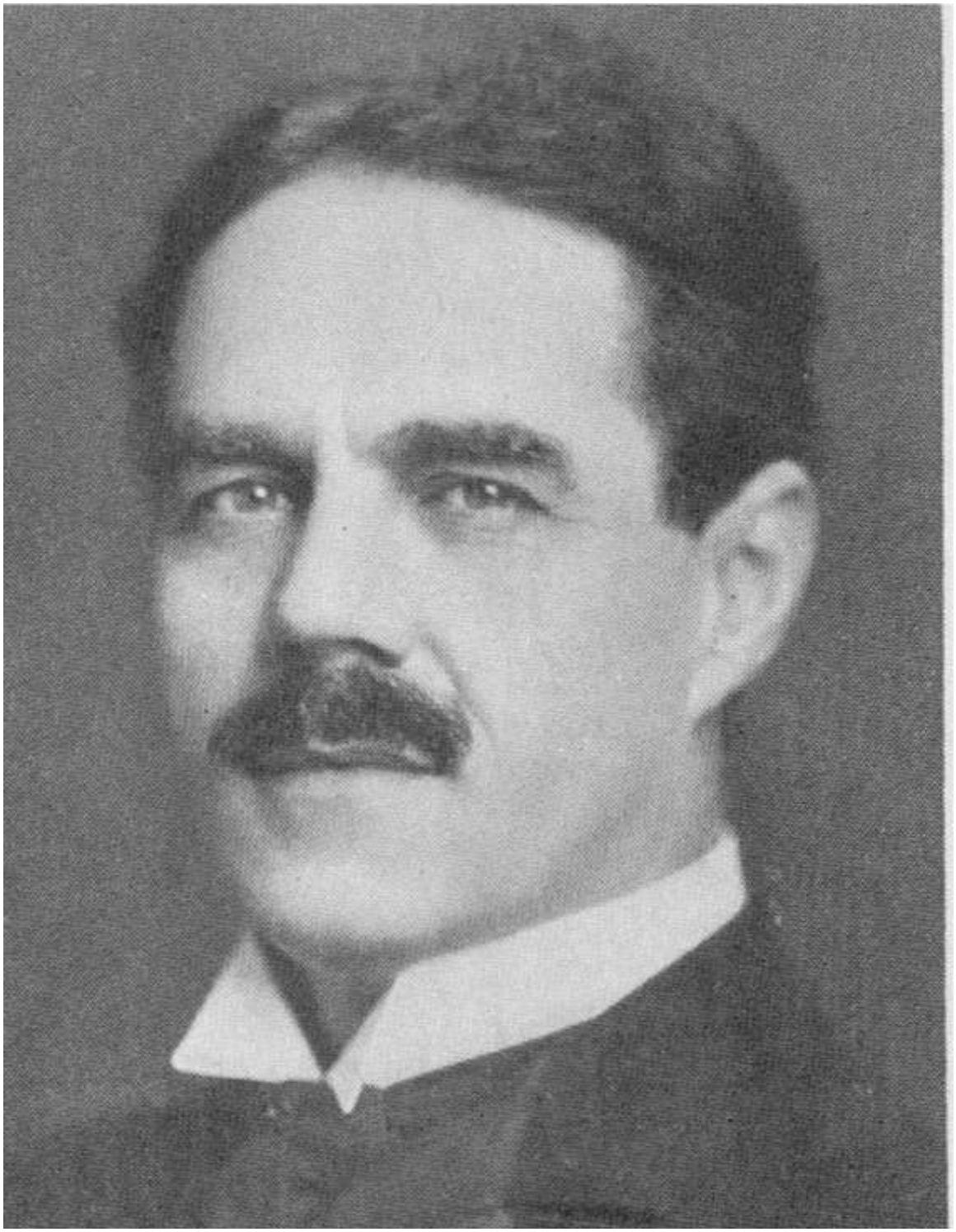

Figure 2.1 Reverend James E. Crowther, D.D., author of *The Wayfarer*. Crowther would claim divine inspiration in composing *The Wayfarer* (from "The Wayfarer" Seattle: Wayfarer Pageant Society, 1925, collection of the author)

solution occurred to the Reverend, one that he would place outside of himself, of dramatizing Handel's 1741 oratorio "The Messiah." In the language of divine inspiration, Crowther described working "under the spell of illumination," as "scene after scene passed before [his] vision," and how, with the completion of this process and the transformation of Heaven back into a hotel room, he "had tumbled from the skies without even the kindly resistence [sic] of a parachute."[181] Crowther's purported assent and return yielded a historical pageant whose significance would extend well beyond its initial Centenary production. *The Wayfarer* followed its Columbus premiere with a successful five-week run in New York's Madison Square Garden before enjoying three seasons in Seattle and a fourth in Los Angeles.[182] Each iteration brought large attendance numbers and critical acclaim. They also demonstrated the production's malleability of appeal, as separate locations ascribed new meaning to *The Wayfarer*, changing its purpose, its scope, and occasionally its content.

Afforded an important role in the formation of northwest pageantry, *The Wayfarer's* subject matter notably occurs beyond the geographic confines of the Pacific Northwest. As a dramatization of "The Messiah," Crowther's fevered night of creation brought about a series of biblical scenes depicting the Jewish Babylonian captivity, Christ's birth, his reception in Jerusalem, crucifixion, and eventual resurrection, preceded by an imagined golden age in which international conflict has surrendered to universal Christianity, the last set to Handel's "Hallelujah Chorus."[183] To this Crowther eventually

[181] Ibid.
[182] The New York run occurred in the second structure garnering the name Madison Square Garden.
[183] *"The Wayfarer" Produced in the University of Washington Stadium, Seattle, July 27 to August 1, 1925* (Seattle: Wayfarer Pageant Society, 1925), unpaged. For an extended discussion of *The Wayfarer's*

added a prologue that recreated the destruction of the First World War on a small community in Flanders, a region that suffered prolonged devastation from this stagnated warfare, as "a point of contact with our present-day problems."[184] The inclusion of this carnage, and the title character's questioning of its meaning, provided a purpose for the Wayfarer, as a personification of "doubting, wondering humanity," to embark on a dual-directional travel through time to witness both the life and sacrifice of Christ and Crowther's proposed Christian triumph as justification for the recent violence.[185]

The following day, Crowther sought council with Centenary General Director, Dr. S. Earl Taylor, to seek assurance that the work amounted to more than "a mirage, born of weariness."[186] Reportedly, Taylor offered enthusiastic endorsement of *The Wayfarer* and went on to play a prominent role in the pageant's production.[187] Taylor's ready embrace of *The Wayfarer* may have derived from the show's alignment with the global missionizing objectives he had articulated in his organizational role for the Centenary and that he would pursue as a founder and leader of the Interchurch World Movement.[188] The two pageants originally slotted for the Centenary Celebration, that Crowther had deemed "inadequate in scope and impractical of production," each explored an aspect of Methodist missionary work from the century prior, with one focused upon the church's domestic concerns and the other portraying its efforts abroad.[189] Replacing these with *The*

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religious components, please see, Nancye Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary," *Methodist History* 35, no. 2 (January 1997), 106-118.
[184] "Wayfarer was Inspiration Born."
[185] "Seattle, Home of the Wayfarer, Passion Pageant of America, *Satisfaction* 11, no. 1 (1922), unpaged.
[186] J. E.Crowther, "The Birth of 'The Wayfarer," *Christian Advocate* (January 15, 1920), 89.
[187] Crowther, *The Wayfarer* (c. 1919), 5.
[188] "One Element of Failure Only," *The Continent* 52, no. 25 (June 23, 1921), 740.
[189]Crowther, "The Birth of 'The Wayfarer," 89, and "Wayfarer was Inspiration Born."

Wayfarer shifted the featured pageant's subject matter from Methodism's missionary history to the larger, potential role of Christianity in the world, and by extension repositioned the church's significance from the work already accomplished to the work yet to come. Doing so also aligned the pageant with the prevailing rhetoric and efforts of the Centenary Movement.

Intended to honor a century of U.S. Methodist missionary work that began when John Stewart, a free, African American emboldened by the Second Great Awakening, proselytized as a Methodist minister among the Wyandot Indians in Ohio, the Centenary Movement and accompanying celebration used the anniversary to develop and fundraise for an ambitious set of foreign and domestic missionary objectives whose outcome would be no less than "a world-wide revival."[190] An overtly millennial vision, the final sequences of *The Wayfarer* perform a realization of this goal as a procession of nations led by the United States demonstrates "that not only are people Christianized but the whole order of society has been brought under the principles of the Gospel," and in which even the scenery might be "representative of [a] new order when the whole [of] creation shall have been redeemed."[191]

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[190] D. D. Forsyth and S. Earl Taylor, "The Centenary of Methodist Missions: A Report Submitted to the Board of Foreign Missions and the Board of Home Missions and Church Extension By the Joint Centenary Committee of the Methodist Episcopal Church," *Annual Report of The Board of Home Missions and Church Extension of the Methodist Episcopal Church: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, November 11-13, 1918*, 95, 99. Notably, one of the authors of this report, S. Earl Taylor as the Centenary's general director, also consulted on *The Wayfarer*, earning a place on the initial script's "Acknowledgement" page for offering Crowther, "the first and last word of encouragement in the difficult enterprise."

[191] Crowther, *The Wayfarer* (ca. 1919), 102, and Mark R. Teasdale, *Methodist Evangelism, American Salvation: The Home Missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, 1860-1920* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 238. Teasdale describes *The Wayfarer* as enacting, "the hopes of pure American evangelism."

Figure 2.2 "Representatives of all Nations in Final Scene," *The Wayfarer* concluded with a millennial fantasy sequence in which all the world's nations join together under the banner of Christianity. (from "The Wayfarer," collection of the author)

The proposed means of creating this new order involved the formation of a "world program," first approved at the MEC's 1916 General Conference, that would "prepare the church to enter upon a second hundred years of work on an efficiency basis, by underwriting every department of the work with the assurance of adequate support both in men and money."[192] Employing Progressive Era ideas of "efficiency," or that existing wasteful practices could be eliminated from their missionary efforts, church leaders sought to create a system that might guide the dual MEC missionary wings—the Boards of Foreign Missions and the Home Missions and Church Extension—to the next

[192] Oliver S. Baketel, ed., *Methodist Yearbook, 1919* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1919), 105.

centenary. Despite these lofty intentions, Centenary leadership focused their fundraising goals on a more manageable five-year timeframe. The so-called "five-year plans" that outlined the MEC's domestic and foreign missionary efforts amid the opening of their second century of work initially carried a proposed budget of eighty million dollars, with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South's (MECS) inclusion in the efforts increasing the perceived financial need by an additional thirty-five million dollars. [193] The United States' entrance into WWI and the expected demands of post-war reconstruction raised this sum by another twenty-five million dollars, an amount that Centenary leaders deemed necessary "if Methodism were to even her minimum share in rebuilding the world."[194]

Amid the escalation of WWI the MEC's leadership increasingly felt the responsibility placed upon them to aid in both the war effort and the reconstruction that would necessarily follow—an obligation that repeated onstage in *The Wayfarer*. At the same time, prominent church members, in planning out the Centenary Celebration, drew inspiration from the federal government's mobilization campaign and its associated propaganda machines. During the war, the church formulated the National War Council—reconfigured as War Emergency and Reconstruction prior to the Centenary—that initially provided chaplains to the army and navy. In its later form, the church-based organization also proposed domestic and foreign programs that closely mirrored those

[193] Ibid., though the MEC the MECS and had not yet officially reunited (and would not do so for another twenty years), the Centenary Movement coincided with the initial meetings of the Joint Commission on the Unification (1916-1919) and followed years of communication and cooperation between the two churches, particularly around missionary efforts. For an extensive discussion of this process, please see Morris L. Davis, *The Methodist Unification: Christianity and the Politics of Race in the Jim Crow Era* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).
[194] Oliver S. Baketel, ed., *Methodist Yearbook, 1920* (New York: Methodist Book Concern, 1920), 121.

already underway by the Boards of Foreign Missions and the Home Missions and Church Extension but that responded to circumstances specific to the fighting, such as caring for children made orphans by the war.[195] To fund these expanded demands created by the war, MEC leadership borrowed a technique perfected by the federal government in rallying support for the war. Their so-called four-minute men provided brief pro-war presentations in communities throughout the nation and inspired the Methodist minute men whose five-minute talks encouraged church members' financial and spiritual contributions to the Centenary efforts. [196]

While WWI increased the church's perceived obligations, it also created a sense of opportunity for the expansion of Methodism worldwide. An article penned by the Joint Centenary Committee's Publicity Secretary and reproduced in multiple missionary and Methodist publications indelicately described this accumulation of events as, "Happily the Centenary comes at the time when the history of the world is being punctuated by the great European War."[197] Justifying this gleeful stance toward unprecedented warfare the text continues:

> The world is now standing at the portals of a new age in which the spiritual, economic, political and social conditions of the last century cannot continue without great modifications, so that every religious organization will have to readjust its program or suffer the penalties of failing leadership. The Methodist World Program comes, therefore, at a time when it is possible to render unique patriotic and international service. The future peace of the world is bound up in the ability of the backward nations to discharge worthily the responsibilities of self-determination which they are demanding. The American ideal of democracy and of republican institutions, as illustrated by the American

[195] Baketel, *Methodist Yearbook, 1919*, 111.
[196] Baketel, *Methodist Yearbook, 1920*, 124
[197] Tyler Dennett, "The Centenary of Methodist Missions," *Missionary Review of the World* (August 1918), 574 and Baketel, *Methodist Yearbook, 1919*, 108.

> policy in the Philippines and in the definition of our war aims by President Wilson, has stirred the Orient mightily. It is now a matter of transcendent importance to the welfare of the world that the working out of those ideals shall be accompanied by such demonstrations of the power of Christianity as will safeguard the results."[198]

According to this assessment, the benefit of the "great European War" lay beyond its ravaged battlefields and, instead, in European nations' weakened international grasp over "backward nations." Compounded by Wilson's fourteen-point inclusion of the self-determination of all nations—and the audacity of many colonized countries to seriously consider this proposal—the prospect of an emerging native, often non-Christian, leadership across the globe threatened the new world order proposed by *The Wayfarer* and the Centenary Movement generally. At the same time, this potential power shift afforded new opportunities for the United States to direct the world's course with MEC and MECS missionaries serving as the ground troops in a struggle that conflated democratic and Christian ideals and that ultimately, as with *The Wayfarer's* final two scenes, would result in a "New Jerusalem on Earth," and "Emmanuel's Coronation"—what the show's script described as, "the culmination of the Pageant, the Kingdom of *this world* is become the Kingdom of our Christ."[199] WWI, rather than impeding the Centenary Movement's objectives, potentially accelerated their outcome.

This worldview pervaded *The Wayfarer* as it appeared at the Centenary Celebration, from the opening sequence in which the title character's questioning of the war's purpose is met with a series of biblical lessons about the importance of self-sacrifice toward the ideal of the greater good to the concluding movements that

[198] Ibid.
[199] Crowther, *The Wayfarer*, (ca. 1919), 102.

increasingly blurred the distinctions between U.S. patriotism and Methodist practice and exemplified the idea of civil religion.[200] A portion of the finally titled "The Messengers," for example, presents a procession of historical figures that moves seamlessly between Christian pioneers to U.S. presidents. Thus, this depiction shifts from a selection of Methodist missionaries—John Stewart among them—to the ever-popular George Washington and Abraham Lincoln, before an actor portraying Woodrow Wilson garners praise from the symbolic figure of Columbia:

> Hail to the man whom God hath called
> To voice the cry of a weary world
> For peace that is born of right
> For justice in place of might.
> He stands mid the ruin of sacred things,
> And all the welter that warfare brings,
> The graves of a myriad uncrowned kings.
> Come, let us found a world emprise
> After the fashion of Christ, he cries;
> An order wherein every ill shall die
> That threatens the world's goodwill.
>
> PRESIDENT WILSON![201]

While offering a weak rhyme scheme, the passage displays a clear sense of what Wilson's peace proposals ultimately meant regarding the role of Christianity in the post-war world and positions the President himself as, "the man whom God hath called." The excessive confidence that Crowther placed in Wilsonian policy found further expression

[200] Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary,"116. Van Brunt describes the appearance of civil religion within *The Wayfarer*, noting, "The text of this pageant makes no direct reference to civil religion. However, probably due to the tenor of the times, the final scene makes visual obeisance to this other faith. It is implied by the presence of George Washington, Abraham Lincoln, representatives of the branches of the military, Union and Confederate soldiers and the figure of Columbia that this message is both addressed to and fulfilled by the United States. The framing of the religious message between scenes of military destruction and representatives of the armed forces carrying national flags fuses the two beliefs. It is interesting to note from the photographs of this final scene that all of the national flags are on poles topped with crosses."

[201] Crowther, *The Wayfarer*, (ca. 1919), 112-114.

in a sequence titled "The League of Nations" in which Wilson's proposed league served as the device for achieving universal Christianity and Christ's return.[202] Whether or not the President actually intended his foreign policy to bring about the Second Coming, his interest in creating a lasting peace arguably derived from his personal religious practice. A devout Presbyterian, Wilson's religious convictions frequently influenced his political actions. According to a recent biographer, "Wilson did not often preach Christianity from his bully pulpit, but he ardently practiced it, infusing all his decisions with a piety and morality that were never lost on his constituents."[203] The perceived religious motivations behind Wilson's call for global harmony made the President a strong representative of Centenary ideology upon *The Wayfarer's* stage, a connection strengthened by the presence of presidential son-in-law William G. McAdoo speaking at the Centenary in support of the league.[204] Yet, just as the actual President's policies (particularly the League of Nations) waned in popularity, subsequent productions of *The Wayfarer* minimized Wilson's role, omitted all mention of the League, and shifted the praise to the United States as an exemplar of the pan-Protestant movement that grew out of the Methodist Centenary and as, "the land which God has called to voice the cry of a weary world."[205]

The Wayfarer's capacity to appeal to audiences beyond the immediate concerns of its creation—and the production's willingness to jettison those components that no longer

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[202] Ibid., 139.
[203] A. Scott Berg, *Wilson* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 2013), 9.
[204] William McAdoo, *A League to Prevent War* (New York: League to Enforce Peace, ca.1919), and Christopher Anderson, *The Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions: The 1919 World's Fair of Evangelical Americanism* (Lewiston, New York: Edwin Mellen Press, 2012), 59.
[205] J. E. Crowther, *The Wayfarer* (New York: The H. W. Gray Co., 1919), 97-98 and "The Wayfarer ," (1925), unpaged.

held relevance or potentially alienated its viewership—were revealing of both show producers' aspirations and audience desires. Within each of the show's three iterations those charged with staging *The Wayfarer* utilized the pageant toward specific ends—whether religious, political, or financial—while at each, audiences responded with enthusiastic attendance. Crowther's initial consideration of *The Wayfarer* perpetuated the larger objectives of the MEC's missionary wings but also succeeded in stirring a sense of belonging amongst its viewership that would compel many toward religion—overwhelmingly on a personal rather than world-concerning, missionary level—in the coming decade. This effort to appeal beyond the immediacy of the Centenary's stated intentions had further precedents in the larger celebration as organizers sought to demonstrate the continued relevance of and the ongoing need for the MEC's missionary works. Described as both, "a religious world's fair," and, "a thoroughly organized educational propaganda," the Centenary Celebration, over a period of twenty-four days, demonstrated the church's purposes through expositions, featured lecturers, smaller pageant productions, and a series of pieces billed as "life plays," which were positioned as especially pertinent within the MEC literature.[206] These included foreign scenes of missionary work either, "participated in by natives," or, "enacted by American stewards so well trained that they understood perfectly the significance of what they were doing," and domestic concerns, "such as the labor strike before the sweat shop, the activity of the I. W. W. in a rural industrial region, [and] the landing of a company of immigrants at

[206] Baketel, Methodist year book 1920, 126, and Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary,"116 .

Ellis Island," thereby, "demonstrating the problem of Americanization."[207] Writing on the Centenary, religious historians Nancye Van Brunt and Christopher Anderson separately expressed surprise at the prominence of performance amid the Celebration, as the Methodist *Doctrines and Discipline* restricted theatre viewership except in the exhalation of Christ.[208] Yet, the Centenary planners' embraced performance to make their appeals—and the employment of popular concerns to make their causes more appealing—demonstrating the perceived power of physically enacting a scenario before an audience, an approach utilized most effectively by *The Wayfarer*.

Later reports on the Centenary Celebration considered the event a success, attracting an estimated 300,000 people, many of whom attended multiple days of the three and half week festival, and resulting in an excess of one million tickets sold.[209] The occasion brought notables from both politics and entertainment. Besides McAdoo, former President William H. Taft and filmmaker D. W. Griffith made appearances.[210] Of these three, at least Griffith attended *The Wayfarer* and was stirred enough by the spectacle to commit it to film.[211] The pageant reemerged in celluloid amid Griffith's six-reel documentary of the Centenary celebration, *The World at Columbus*.[212] Overall, nearly 150,000 people purchased tickets to *The Wayfarer* in Columbus with untold others

[207] Baketel, Methodist year book 1920, 128.
[208] Anderson, *The Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions*, 50, and Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary," 111.
[209] Ibid., 131.
[210] Ibid.,129.
[211] Terry Lindvall, *Sanctuary Cinema: Origins of the Christian Film Industry* (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 112.
[212] "Perpetuating Religious Milestones," *Christian Advocate* 95, no. 11 (March 11, 1920), 363.

viewing its cinematic recording.[213] Despite this success, Crowther—in keeping with his earlier divine attribution—credited otherworldly sources with this accomplishment, frequently emphasizing the amateurish enthusiasm and supernatural guidance that allowed for the rapid creation of a large-scale pageant, yet an actual accounting of the production proves this assessment disingenuous. The scale of *The Wayfarer* necessitated the participation of several thousand people, approximately three thousand of whom appeared on the pageant stage.[214] While most volunteered their efforts, Centenary officials deemed it prudent to employ professional actors and singers in the lead roles and to hire out the bulk of the scenic and costume construction.[215] Finally, Centenary planners outfitted the coliseum, which housed *The Wayfarer* and other productions with expensive features including a grand pipe organ and sky cyclorama.[216]

While others would use *The Wayfarer's* success toward inflated self promotion, Crowther's deflection of credit also led him to disavow the exterior claims that he had prepared the pageant "to present dramatics as an educational medium," or to "reform the stage."[217] Many, however, saw *The Wayfarer* as doing exactly this, particularly as it moved to the center of American theater. As one reviewer remarked, after noting the

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[213] Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary,"109, and Anderson, *The Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions*, 62. According to Van Brunt there were 140,800 paid admissions to *The Wayfarer's* twenty-three show Columbus run. Though the overall reception of *The Wayfarer* appears positive, both Van Brunt and Anderson recount audience complaints about the production. Most bothersome appears to have been the lack of reserved seating and the daily selling of nearly 7,000 tickets on a first come first served basis. This process saw prospective audience members lining up before 5am, rampant abuses by scalpers, and thousands turned away each day.

[214] Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary,"108-109.

[215] Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary,"108-109, and Anderson, *The Centenary Celebration of American Methodist Missions*, 56. Anderson speculates that the opportunity to see professional actors increased the pageant's appeal amongst Methodists whose church policies forbid theater viewership in other circumstances.

[216] Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary,"109.

[217] Crowther, "The Birth of 'The Wayfarer.'"

scale of *The Wayfarer*, the prominence of Madison Square Garden, and the ambition of the Interchurch World Movement, the pageant offered "the end of a long decaying tradition—the tradition that theater is necessarily an agency of sin."[218] *The Wayfarer's* five-week New York run in December 1919 and January 1920 occurred amid the transition between Progressive Era and Inter-war approaches to theater reform, with the former electing to elevate respectable productions while ignoring their more tawdry counterparts—lest unwanted attention be brought to these shows—and the later embracing outright censorship.[219] *The Wayfarer's* explicitly religious content fit well with both approaches, causing many (as with the above reviewer) to champion the production while positioning it as a counter to the perceived degeneracy of modern theater. It also foretold the increased efforts of the clergy to directly affect theater reform rather than the complete rejection of the stage that defined the pre-war period, with the emergence of church driven dramas, à la *The Wayfarer* appearing by the decade's end.[220] The above reviewer anticipated this shift in approach, noting that, "To its multitude of other responsibilities in this new age the church, by voluntarily proving that the drama can be employed to the highest ends, has added the obligation to reclaim the drama from its modern debasement."[221]

Perhaps more important than *The Wayfarer's* position in the larger theater reform movement, was the pageant's perceived potential to redeem New York audiences and

[218] "Christian Theatricals," *The Continent* 51, n. 2 (January 8, 1920), 37.
[219] Susan Duffy and Bernard K. Duffy, "Watchdogs of the American Theatre, 1910-1940," *Journal of American Culture* 6, no. 1 (Spring 1983), 52.
[220] Ibid., 57.
[221] "Christian Theatricals," 37.

even the city itself.[222] Religious press across Protestant denominations lauded the production as a means of converting the worldly and reviving the already faithful. A writer for the Seventh Day Baptist publication, the *Sabbath Recorder* questioned, "how anyone could witness this wonderful portrayal of God's hand in history and his promises for the future without being revived in spirit and becoming more hopeful for the world."[223] Similarly, an article in the Congregationalist tract, the *Congregationalist and Advance,* argued that the show provided "many a needed lesson…to the non-churchgoers who in a large number were present."[224] Such conversations might be expected among publications concerned with the perpetuation of evangelical Christianity, but the secular press also pondered *The Wayfarer's* redemptive capacities. A commentator in the weekly *Outlook* hoped for more productions akin to *The Wayfarer* for what such shows might indicate to outsiders about New York and New York audiences. Identifying *The Wayfarer's* viewership "as a representative part of New York City's 'home folks,'" the writer went on to argue that the city, "popular opinion west of the Hudson to the contrary, had as large a proportion of this genuinely American element as any section of the country."[225] Following the ultra-nationalism that accompanied WWI and appearing amid the anti-Bolshevik and anti-immigrant sensibilities of the early-Interwar period, *The Wayfarer* in New York represented a claim to untainted Americanism for a city whose urban demographics often met counter allegations.

[222] "The Wayfarer," *Outlook* 124 (January 7, 1920), 8.
[223] "The Wonderful Lesson of the Wayfarer," *Sabbath Recorder* 88, no. 1 (January 5, 1920), 100.
[224] "What the Christian World is Doing," *Congregationalist and Advance* 105, no. 1 (January 1, 1920), 104.
[225] "The Wayfarer," 8.

The move to Madison Square Garden occurred under the auspices of the IWM and the direction of Laurence H. Rich, assistant director of the Centenary's *Wayfarer* and a photographer by trade.[226] Rich's production altered Crowther's original script, increasing the allegorical employments but shortening the overall runtime. It also reconfigured the pageant's purpose toward countering communism. As Rich opined:

> It is in my opinion, the best cure for Bolshevism I know anything about. The pageant is strictly a community proposition, for the great majority of the cast are church people principally who serve for the glory of it. The principals who are paid for their service number slightly more than a hundred.[227]

Touting the production as a communal endeavor lacking capitalist interests may seem an odd way to describe *The Wayfarer's* anti-communist intentions, yet with the show's New York run this very quality reached near mythic proportions as at least one reviewer situated *The Wayfarer's* origins in Seattle's counter-labor movements. An article appropriately titled "Fighting Bolshevism with the Bible," offered the following tale of *The Wayfarer's* inspiration:

> [Seattle] was full of labor propaganda of the most vicious sort; the streets full of labor agitators who spread their destructive gospel. The ministers of the churches tried to meet the situation by preaching long sermons. This didn't work. The people were up at high tension. The sermons bored them. So the clergymen turned to the stage. The plan won out. The ministers began by staging answers to the questions, 'What was the war all about?' 'Where is this labor unrest going to bring us?' The little pageants were taken out of Bible history to show that from time immemorial human beings have had problems similar to the ones we have today.[228]

The Seattle press makes no mention of such performances, and Crowther's own accounting of the show's creation contradicts this assessment. Similarly themed

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[226] Van Brunt, "Pageantry at the Methodist Centenary," 108.
[227] "3,000 Actors to be Seen in Big Religious Play," *Seattle Sunday Times*, February 1, 1920 .
[228]Lowenberg, "Fighting Bolshevism with the Bible," 84.

productions did appear among the smaller Centenary theatrical pieces, particularly the life plays, though these occurred contemporary to rather than preceding *The Wayfarer*. The above writer, working for *Theatre Magazine*, was invested in promoting and perpetuating theater and may be inclined to repeat a story of pageants proving more powerful than the pulpit based solely on the long-contentious relationship between the two. At the same time, scholars Susan Duffy and Bernard K. Duffy see an analogy between the condemnation of popular theater in the early 1920s and the first Red Scare, that the simultaneous suppression of socialist thought and artistic expression demonstrated a larger desire for stability, "in a rapidly changing social environment."[229] *The Wayfarer*, with its familiar promise of Christian salvation as a corrective to current events, offered this very sense of permanence and in this way acquired meaning beyond that readily available in the script.[230]

The anti-Bolshevik interpretation of *The Wayfarer* appears unique to the Rich production. When Seattle businessman G. E. M. Pratt discussed the pageant's value he saw it as providing the city with a point of interest away from the General Strike. Importantly, Pratt also did not define the labor movement as necessarily socialist, as both Rich and the writer for *Theatre* Review had. Even the IWM—who Rich represented in his capacity as *The Wayfarer's* director and producer—displayed a more nuanced relationship with the labor movement than that presented by Rich. The IWM's Interchurch Department of Industrial Relations, for example, conducted an extensive

[229] Duffy and Duffy, "Watchdogs of the American Theatre," 57.
[230] Importantly, not all reviewers were convinced that *The Wayfarer* accomplished its stated goals. See, for example, J. DE V., "The Wayfarer," *Music News* 12, no, 1 (January 2, 1920), 27. The author describes *The Wayfarer* as, "good as an allegory for the stage, but from a practical point of view it does not solve the problems involved."

investigation of the Great Steel Strike that occurred between September 1919 and January 1920 and provided a backdrop for *The Wayfarer's* New York run. The department's findings generally countered popular understandings of the strike, arguing against the idea of outside radical influences, describing the long hours and poor pay steel workers confronted, and critiquing the pervasive misinformation that unquestionably favored business over worker interests.[231] Though many among the Interchurch Executive Committee felt trepidatious about the content (and plenty among the organization's membership shared Rich's anti-labor sensibilities), the IWM published the *Report on the Steel Strike of 1919* in July 1920, and ensured that distribution reached all the way to President Wilson. Religious studies scholar Eldon G. Ernst, describes the report's reception as causing, "a sensation, for it countered the most widely held view of the strike and disclosed working conditions and wages below American standards."[232] The competing stances on labor proved just one point of discord among the IWM.[233] The IWM's ambitious undertakings combined with increased conflict over its direction ultimately brought about the organization's demise. The fate of *The Wayfarer*, as an IWM property, seemed initially to be determined by the health of the IWM.

Rich had ambitious goals for *The Wayfarer.* Following the Madison Square Garden run, he began arranging a West Coast tour and the translation of the pageant into a feature film. Within this formulation *The Wayfarer* was originally slotted to make its Seattle premiere. Speaking with the Seattle press in February 1920, Rich envisioned

[231] Eldon G. Ernst, "The Interchurch World Movement and the Great Steel Strike of 1919-1920," *Church History* 39, no. 2 (June 1970), 217.
[232] Ibid., 221.
[233] Ibid., 223. Ernst argues that though the *Report on the Steel Strike of 1919* was not the deciding factor in the IWM's collapse it certainly contributed to the discord among its membership.

bringing a pared down production to Seattle, Portland, San Francisco, and Los Angeles the following summer.[234] By March, the plan was moved back to early fall but also expanded to include several Midwest cities. In anticipation of the tour's Los Angeles inauguration, *The Wayfarer's* scenery and costumes had already journeyed west.[235] Here, Rich also began negotiations for the creation of a cinematic rendition of *The Wayfarer*, an endeavor which S. Earl Taylor hoped would bring the pageant to "the smaller centers of population."[236] Before any of these ventures came to fruition the IWM fell apart and *The Wayfarer's* ownership became open for purchase.[237] The ensuing battle over *The Wayfarer* rights fueled Seattle interests in securing the production and also foreshadowed its conflicted Seattle run.

The Wayfarer in Seattle

The IWM's increasing collapse delayed *The Wayfarer's* official Seattle premiere by an entire year. The spectacle that appeared in the summer of 1921 occurred under the auspices of the Wayfarer Society, Inc.—a corporation established specifically for purchasing the pageant's rights and properties—in a version free of Rich's revisions and closer to Crowther's original vision. In the interim, Crowther rallied his fellow Seattleites' toward the prospect of securing the pageant's rights, generating a general

[234] "3,000 Actors to be seen in Big Religious Play." Rich used his discussion of the potential Seattle run to chastise the city for not having a large auditorium, requiring the utilization of the University of Washington's Denny Field. Ironically, the same summer in which *The Wayfarer* was originally intended to premiere the University of Washington Associated Student Body undertook the construction of a new stadium that would eventually become the permanent home of *The Wayfarer*.
[235] Edwin Schllert, "Bible Pageant Comes Direct," *Los Angeles Times*, March 5, 1920.
[236] "The Future of 'The Wayfarer,'"*Christian Advocate* 95, no. 8 (February 19, 1920), 270.
[237] "Interchurch Move to be Abandoned," *Los Angeles Times*, June 30, 1920, and "Wayfarer is Coming."

shift from accepting a scaled down version as part of a larger national tour to wanting exclusive ownership of *The Wayfarer* with the production staged on a level that exceeded all prior iterations.[238] Seattle interest in *The Wayfarer* dated to its inception with the local press proudly touting Crowther's accomplishment.[239] The Reverend's recruitment of his church's music director and organist, Mr. and Mrs. Montgomery Lynch respectively, for the Columbus production furthered this sense of civic pride in a production few in the Northwest had seen.[240] The growing anticipation allowed many in Seattle to share the expectations articulated by Pratt, that *The Wayfarer's* Seattle staging could provide the city with a sort of "regeneration."[241] What this regeneration might mean however varied greatly among the city's citizenry.

When Pratt spoke of the transformative potential of pageantry to reframe the city away from the strife of the General Strike he was not alone in his assessment, nor was it only business interests who viewed pageantry as potentially mending the city. Prominent members of the labor movement utilized pageantry to positively affect their public image. Local Chair of the National Women's Trade Union League (NWTUL), Lorene Wiswell Wilson, describes realizing, "thoroughly the great possibilities in dramatizing the

[238] "3,000 Actors to be seen in Big Religious Play," "Wayfarer is Coming," and "Wanted 5,000 Performers," *Seattle Sunday Times*, May 1, 1921.
[239] "Interest is Growing in Religious Pageant," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 5, 1919.
[240] Ibid. Some in Seattle were afforded a glimpse of the pageant when, on September 10, 1919, between the Columbus and New York runs, a large chorus directed and accompanied by the Lynch's performed the pageant's music at Seattle's First Methodist Episcopal Church while Crowther narrated the pageant's story. See, "Seattle Notes," *Music and Musicians* 5, no. 9 (October 1919), 19.
[241] "Wayfarer is Coming."

Figure 2.3 Scene from *Pageant for Democracy* or *Democracy for all Humanity* (1920). This pageant reiterated patriotic themes as a means of demonstrating Seattle's labor organizations' loyalty to the nation, including this temporally incongruous sequence in which Abraham Lincoln speaks before a stage full of founding fathers. (Museum of History and Industry, Seattle, Washington)

standards of the NWTUL through pageantry."[242] Wilson's employment of pageantry as a means of communicating a political message to a mass audience is not in and of itself significant. The use of historical pageantry by organized labor dated back at least to 1913 and within the particular pageantry tradition of the Pacific Northwest, such productions

[242] Lorene Wiswell Wilson, "Adventuring with Labor in the Far West," *Life and Labor* 11, no. 6 (June 1921), 167.

offered a gender appropriate mode of political expression for Wilson and the NWTUL.[243] Further, Wilson had previous experience overseeing large civic pageantry efforts including the *Pageant of Democracy* (1918) planned and distributed by the federal government's pro-WWI propaganda machine, the Committee on Public Information (CPI). Seattle's 1918 July Fourth celebrations included five separate stagings of the pageant throughout the city's parks.[244] Yet, her pageantry work acquired new importance in the summer of 1920—the same season in which the IWM had planned *The Wayfarer's* western tour.

For that year's July Fourth celebration Wilson remounted the *Pageant of Democracy* as a pageant titled *World Democracy* or *Democracy for all Humanity*.[245] Similarly themed but differently intentioned than its CPI predecessor, Wilson's new pageant reportedly reflected the efforts of the First International Congress of Working Women convened in 1919, a meeting of female labor leaders that sought to address women's paid and unpaid work as a global rather than national concern.[246] It also brought together Seattle's Central Labor Council that had overseen the General Strike and the Mayor's office in creating holiday entertainment.[247] Retaining the title *Pageant of Democracy* in the local press, Wilson's work followed the same, general narrative

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[243] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 128. In June 1913 the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) staged *The Pageant of the Paterson Strike* at Madison Square Garden under the direction of John Reed and engaging the then striking silk mill workers from Patterson, New Jersey, as the performers.
[244] "Pageant of Democracy to be seen July 4 in Five Parks in Seattle," *Seattle Daily Times*, June 28, 1918.
[245] Wilson, "Adventuring with Labor in the Far West," 167.
[246] Ibid. See *The Resolutions Adopted by First International Congress of Working Women, Washington, U.S.A., October 28 to November 6, 1919* (Chicago: NWTUL, 1919).
[247] Though this celebration represented a reconciliation between organized labor and the mayor's office it occurred under a different mayor than the General Strike. The mayor at the time of the strike, Ole Hanson, retired from the position six months after the event. The July 4, 1920 celebration occurred under the auspices of the next elected mayor Hugh M. Caldwell.

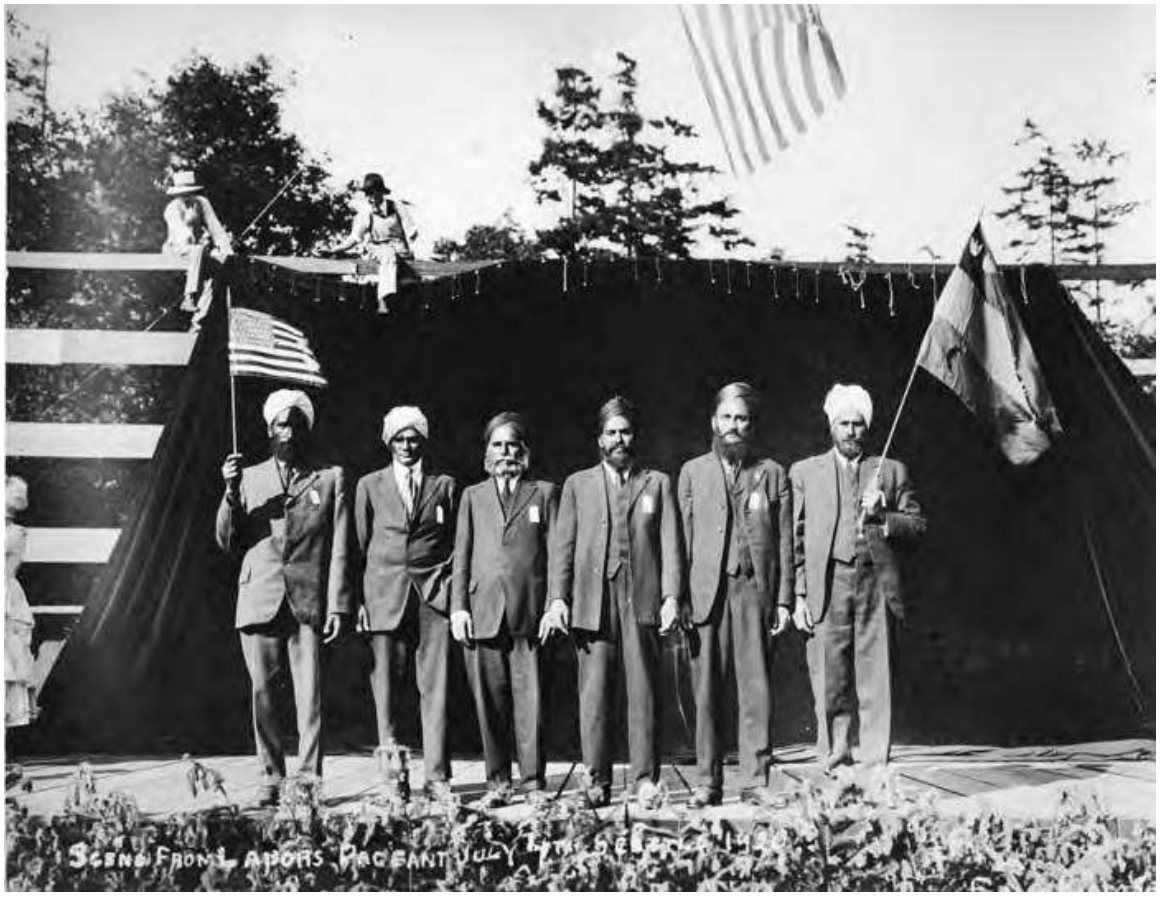

Figure 2.4 Scene from *Pageant for Democracy* or *Democracy for all Humanity* (1920). The pageant challenged ideas of U.S. national belonging beyond organized labor. In the above image, six men from Seattle's Sikh community wave both the U.S. flag and the first national flag of India. (Museum of History and Industry)

development as the earlier pageant, progressing from the signing of the Declaration of Independence, to the Emancipation Proclamation, to the world-wide spreading of U.S. style democratic ideals, but was refined toward the cause of organized labor. The performer that represented Russia as a U.S. ally in the 1918 production, for example, now carried a sign reading, "Recognize Russia."[248] Produced by the Central Labor Council,

[248] "Women in Traditional Russian Clothing, with a Sign Reading 'Recognize Russia,'" Photograph album (July 5, 1920), 12, "Pageant of Democracy" photographs, Museum of History and Industry, Seattle [hereafter MOHAI].

Figure 2.5 Uncle Sam poses with other cast members from the pageant *Democracy for all Humanity*. The woman on the far left wears a sign that reads "Recognize Russia." (Museum of History and Science)

the 1920 production utilized union members and their families for nearly all the roles.[249] It also provided the primary entertainment for the city's July Fourth celebration.[250] Witnessed by an estimated 10,000 people, Wilson thought the effort worthwhile, noting, "This event seemed to change the attitude of many persons toward labor, and the backbone of the false propaganda was broken."[251]

[249] Wilson, "Adventuring with Labor in the Far West," 167.
[250] " Fireworks Show ends Celebration," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 6, 1920.
[251] Wilson, "Adventuring with Labor in the Far West," 167.

For Wilson, participation in pageantry redeemed both an unpopular political cause and its advocates. Importantly the redemptive capacity of the *Pageant of Democracy* come *Democracy for all Humanity* depended upon its specific content, that it provided a declaration of patriotism for those whose loyalties were perceived as in question. Labor leaders donning powdered wigs and enacting an endorsement of the nation's foundational document proved the Central Labor Council's intentions as pro-American enough that they might also openly support revolutionary Russia.[252] Similarly, *The Wayfarer's* narrative offered a particular absolution to post-strike Seattle, but for business rather than labor. Though the pageant's Christian themes could provide a counter to organized labor's irreligious associations (an approach that formed *The Wayfarer's* central purpose under Rich and the IWM), in Seattle this same religiosity appeared as a corrective to rampant consumerism and commercialism. Pratt and his cohort valued *The Wayfarer*, at least in part, for its commercial capacities, yet they also appreciated how sponsoring a large-scale venture aimed at public uplift might improve the standing of business interests in the community by demonstrating individual businessmen's civic mindedness.

The Seattle acquisition of *The Wayfarer* had depended upon a sense that the pageant's content precluded its employment as a for-profit venture—a sentiment that carried into audience expectations of the actual production. When the IWM initially forfeited interest in *The Wayfarer,* Crowther retained an option to acquire the production's rights and properties for $20,000.[253] Though this sum appeared modest

[252] "Men in Colonial Period Dress Near Table," Photograph album (July 5, 1920), 2, "Pageant of Democracy" photographs, MOHAI.
[253] "Wayfarer is Coming."

compared to the pageant's estimated worth, Crowther's inability to raise this quantity before his option expired allowed an IWM representative to negotiate *The Wayfarer's* sale to a private Los Angeles firm at a significant profit.[254] Crowther protested this move to the IWM executive board through a telegram "objecting to the commercialization of the pageant."[255] Importantly, both the Columbus and Madison Square Garden iterations of *The Wayfarer* had enjoyed ticket sales in excess of expenses, yet these profits were intended to fund the spiritual ventures of the Methodist Centenary Movement and the IWM. Conceivably, the private L.A. firm, without such godly interests, would degenerate *The Wayfarer* into a purely capitalist venture. Based upon this argument, the L.A. deal was voided, Crowther's option was extended, and Seattle businessmen were able to raise the necessary funds to purchase and support the production.[256] Ironically, the effort to acquire *The Wayfarer* for Seattle ultimately generated a scenario akin to that imagined in Los Angeles as the Wayfarer Society, the private corporation responsible for the production, sought profit over public interest.

From its inception, the Wayfarer Society demonstrated the pro-profit sensibilities of its founders. Originating with five prominent Seattleites, William L. Rhodes, Benjamin L. Gates, Edgar L. Webster, Robert M. Dryer, and Ralph H. MacMichael, these managers of business and brokerage elected to incorporate their society in Delaware, a state whose

[254] Ibid.
[255] Ibid.
[256] The initial financing company established by Crowther failed and was replaced by the Wayfarer Society, Co. See, "Will Finance 'Wayfarer,'" *Seattle Daily Times,* February 15, 1921, and "Funds Obtained for 'Wayfarer,'" S*eattle Daily Times*, May 1, 1921.

reputation as a tax shelter exceeded all others by 1920.[257] Doing so necessitated the securing of Dover-based representation through the United States Corporation Company and registration in Washington—site of the company's primary offices—as a foreign corporation.[258] It also betrayed the Wayfarer Society's ultimate intent. While the company's founding documents included the altruistic expectation that they would, "produce [*The Wayfarer*] for the patronage of the public and for educational and charitable purposes," the same paperwork clarified that this would occur, "with all the powers and privileges necessary to conduct the same as a business enterprise."[259] A similar muddling of public and self interest characterized the Wayfarer Society's efforts toward generating the pageant's first Seattle season. Propositions such as maintaining inexpensive share prices so that a larger swath of Seattle's representative communities could invest in *The Wayfarer* emerged only to disappear in favor of fewer people retaining primary control of the production.[260] Crowther himself surrendered financial interest in *The Wayfarer* prior to its premiere when undertaking an assignment in Philadelphia to, what Crowther described as, "one of the historic churches of

[257] "The Wayfarer Society Certificate of Incorporation," and "1921 Annual Report of the Wayfarer Society," UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant, 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections. For a discussion of Delaware corporate tax law in the early twentieth century please see, "Law for Sale: A Study of the Delaware Corporation Law of 1967," *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 117, no. 6 (April 1969), 862-863. The author describes the existing law as designed to competitively attract business incorporation to the state through incentives such as low corporate taxes. In the Wayfarer Society's 1921 annual report, for example, the company was able to claim tax exemption, "Because none of its capital invested in Delaware." Delaware's primary competition in attracting out of state business incorporation, New Jersey, had been subject to tax reforms under Governor Woodrow Wilson which pushed many businesses to Delaware.

[258] "The Wayfarer Society Certificate of Incorporation," and "Foreign Corporation Form, State of Washington Secretary of State," UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant, 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections.

[259] "The Wayfarer Society Certificate of Incorporation."

[260] "Pageant Will Profit by Great Open Air Setting," *Seattle Daily Times*, March 8, 1921, and "Funds Obtained for 'Wayfarer'."

Methodism."[261] He departed with the promise that, "there will be no break in the continuity of the administration of the enterprise."[262] Yet, when "the administration of the enterprise," proved itself faulty at the close of *The Wayfarer's* initial Seattle run, Crowther's absence became a focal point for those justifying the Wayfarer Society's actions and for those rallying against them.[263]

The capacity for *The Wayfarer's* 1921 season to conclude in scandal reflected the broader scope of people involved in the pageant and the greater significance attributed to its content. Though the majority of Seattleites were unable to buy shares of *The Wayfarer*, a large number of them volunteered their services toward its creation and staging. Cast recruitment began in May 1921 with a call for, "3,000 singers to make up the great trained choruses," and notice of a subsequent drive for, "2,000 other participants to make up the great scenes of this magnificent pageant."[264] The campaign to attract five thousand volunteer performers—or approximately one out of every sixty-three Seattleites—appeared in multiple guises. Certainly, the Wayfarer Society employed religious appeals, recruiting heavily from the city's churches, and boldly declaring in an enlistment advertisement that:

> The soul of a world in agony and in tears but facing a radiant day of hope and triumph—the soul of a world seeking glorified expression through 5,000 men, women and children in a superb pageant of divine passion—that is THE WAYFARER.

[261] "Crowther Going East," *Seattle Sunday Times*, March 27, 1921.
[262] Ibid.
[263] "Big Pageant Brings Gross of $125,000," and "Commercialism!"
[264] "Wanted 5,000 Performers."

> Never, perhaps, in the 1921 years since was born the Babe 'that in a manger lay,' has humanity witnessed such a spectacle of reverential grandeur as will be presented in THE WAYFARER…[265]

This text shifts *The Wayfarer* pageant from its previous iterations as a representation of Christian triumph to a realization of this very accomplishment, thereby obligating the devout to volunteer their services toward this global transformation. Yet, underlying the religious purposes there was also an appeal to individual glory, that participation in *The Wayfarer* provided an opportunity to be part of something singular. The ad's fine print clarified this point that it would, "be the event of a lifetime in musical training and inspiration," and that this, "was the universal verdict of the thousands who already have had the privilege."[266] These tactics succeeded in recruiting several thousand more to *The Wayfarer's* purpose. Fifteen-hundred choir members committed themselves within the first week of enlistment.[267] The pageant's premiere two and an half months later featured the hoped for five-thousand performers, necessitating the erection of multiple circus size tents in lieu of a backstage. Hundreds of people worked behind the scenes, performing expected tasks such as moving scenery and caring for costumes and serving in the less common theatrical positions of police officer and firefighter.[268]

This sense that *The Wayfarer* offered something heretofore unseen in the Pacific Northwest also appears to have enticed a broader audience than that suggested by the pageant's overwhelmingly religious subject matter. Echoing the recruitment ad language, at least one critic proclaimed, "that the opportunity of a lifetime may be lost if the

[265] Ibid.
[266] Ibid.
[267] "1,500 Singers Enrolled," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 10, 1921.
[268] Dean, "Behind Scenes of Wayfarer Lies Tent City as Large as Centralia."

pageant is not seen."[269] Multiple write-ups emphasized the pageant's spectacular rather than the Christian components and that it enjoyed high attendance among the nonreligious.[270] The above reviewer described the "enormity and solemnity," of *The Wayfarer* as reason for its "vital interest [to] persons of all ages, sects, and races."[271] Another clarified that the sense of "inspired reverence," that overtook the audience did not imply that, "the impressive music-drama is depressing: nor is its appeal merely for the religious."[272] Where the pageant's first two iterations depended upon its religious themes to attract audience interest, the notion that these might provide *The Wayfarer's* sole appeal now proved a liability. The awe created through Crowther's message of Christian triumph, for many, became secondary to the production's extravagance. The effort to surpass the Columbus and New York productions effectively undid Crowther's original intent. For many in Seattle, the religious framework offered evidence of the pageant's unsullied nature—thereby increasing its appeal as a civic enterprise—but *The Wayfarer's* specific purpose became increasingly abstract. As articulated by *Seattle Times* reporter Dora Dean:

> The great success of the Wayfarer, many say, lies in its ability to take every one completely out of the things of daily life. There is no point of contact with the sordid, commonplace, uninspiring, and unlovely.[273]

In creating *The Wayfarer,* Crowther included the carnage of WWI specifically as a "point of contact with…present-day problems."[274] Similarly, Rich's anti-Bolshevik

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[269] "Pageant Overwhelms," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 25, 1921.
[270] "Audience is Spellbound at Pageant," *Seattle Sunday Times*, July 24, 1921, Dora Dean, "The Wayfarer, Undefinable [*sic.*], Draws to it all Walks of Everyday Life," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 25, 1921, and "Pageant Overwhelms."
[271] "Pageant Overwhelms."
[272] "Audience is Spellbound at Pageant."
[273] Dean, ""The Wayfarer, Undefinable, Draws to it all Walks of Everyday Life."

interpretation directly connected *The Wayfarer's* content with current concerns. Dean, in contrast, divorces the pageant's narrative from its contemporary context. In an assessment that Dean claims as representative of broader audience views, she has transformed *The Wayfarer* into an escapist pleasure unburdened by the "unlovely." This shift reflected the larger trend underway in the United States of moving from global awareness to personal self interest and isolationism. This move away from the pageant's initial purpose continued with each iteration. The planning committee for the second Seattle run fretted over portraying the enemy soldiers in the opening sequence as German, lest they be viewed as perpetuating the discord created by the First World War.[275] Press for the production's 1923 Los Angeles premiere openly disavowed any anti-German currents in *The Wayfarer*.[276] Even Crowther, in reconsidering his script for the pageant's Seattle premiere succumbed to this transition, removing all emphasis from the portrayal of President Wilson and praise of the League of Nations.

Though the Seattle version purported a broader appeal than its Columbus and New York predecessors, promotional materials did not negate the pageant's overwhelmingly Christian content. Rather, *The Wayfarer's* publicity directly linked the production to an existing icon of religious tourism, the *Passion Play* in Oberammergau, Germany. Staged approximately every ten years beginning in 1634, the Oberammergau production proved popular with both the curious and the devout. Its 1910 run was widely attended and included an international audience base, while the play's 1922 post-war

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[274] "Wayfarer was Inspiration Born."
[275] "Wayfarer Executive Committee, Third Meeting," UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant, 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections.
[276] "Wayfarer to Offend None," *Los Angeles Times*, September 1, 1923.

Figure 2.6 Angel announcing the resurrection to the two Marys, Episode V. Promoters of *The Wayfarer* would attempt to align the pageant's religious themes with those of the centuries old *Passion Play* in Oberammergau, Germany. ("The Wayfarer, collection of the author)

reemergence would attract an unprecedented 311,127 spectators, approximately one third of whom journeyed from the United States.[277] Hoping to capitalize on the *Pageant Play's* success, the Seattle press drew explicit connections between it and *The Wayfarer*, boldly declaring, "Seattle to be Oberammergau of America."[278] Though the association between *The Wayfarer* and the Oberammergau *Passion Play* always explicitly acknowledged the role of such productions in attracting tourists—and more implicitly in attracting tourist

[277] Adelina O'Connor Thomason, "Oberammergau's Passion Play: 100,000 Americans See World's Greatest Religious Spectacle," *Theatre Magazine* (June 1922), 378, and "Chronicle," www.passionplay-oberammergau.com (accessed July 17, 2015). The 1922 *Passion Play* was originally scheduled for 1920 but was delayed due to post-war reconstruction.

[278] "Wayfarer is Coming." Significantly, Seattle was not the only city in the United States hoping to attract tourists through an association with Oberammergau. A decade prior to *The Wayfarer's* Seattle premiere promoters in San Gabriel, California were hoping to establish a similar regional reputation through *The Mission Play*. See, Deverell, *Whitewashed Adobe,* 210.

dollars—the larger value placed upon *The Wayfarer* appears to have been its capacity to distinguish Seattle as a city of international importance, just as its three-century old predecessor had for a small German village, with the production's monetary potential afforded secondary consideration. This sense of civic pride over financial concern would, in turn, lead many Seattleites to react in shock and anger when at the close of the 1921 season the Wayfarer Society clarified their for-profit intentions.

On the Monday immediately following *The Wayfarer's* close, the Wayfarer Society's general manager Edgar L. Webster announced both the run's success and *The Wayfarer's* potential future, with the latter overwhelming the former. In a section of the quote that garnered particular attention Webster stated:

> It is strictly a business proposition and the people of Seattle have nothing to say about where it shall be produced. It is the property of "The Wayfarer" Society. The society can produce it for any charity on any proposition as to the division of profits that the society may make. I do not mean to say by this that we have decided to take the pageant to any other city or that we will take it to any other city: I do not mean that we are contemplating taking it to any other city, but I do mean that the society has the right to do so if it chooses.[279]

The *Seattle Daily Times*, in both its reporting of Webster's statement and in an accompanying editorial, decried the Society's intentions. The issues at stake included how Webster's interpretation of the Wayfarer Society's rights contradicted Crowther's presentation of the pageant's purposes to the city, how Webster's for-profit stance insulted the volunteer efforts of the thousands of show participants, and how the potential to remove the pageant from Seattle represented a breech in civic trust. In convincing Seattleites of *The Wayfarer's* value, Crowther reportedly proffered Seattle exclusivity

[279] "Big Pageant Brings Gross of $125,000," "Pageant Profits Split," *Morning Oregonian,* August 1, 1921, and "Pageant to be Staged Every Year."

and that any profits be dedicated toward charitable purposes, thereby making the pageant special to Seattle and devoid of commercial corruptions.[280] Webster, and subsequent Wayfarer Society defenders, countered with a reminder of Crowther's failed financial efforts and that the pageant's acquisition occurred under the Society's leadership.[281] Yet in his assertion of ownership, Webster miscalculated the public value applied to the pageant, particularly as his own fumbled comments indicated the prematurity of discussing out-of-town engagements. Subsequently, Wayfarer Society statements easily disavowed any intentions to appear elsewhere.

The utilization of volunteer labor on a commercial enterprise proved harder to rectify. In a later defense of Webster's statement, Wayfarer Society president William L. Rhodes conceded that, "to have paid the chorus and the cast would have made the pageant impossible from a financial standpoint."[282] While this indicated some appreciation of the show's grandiose nature depending upon unpaid labor, Rhodes quickly followed with the notion that paying the pageant's performers would have been, "equally impossible from the standpoint of heart interest upon the part of the participants—their weeks of work and intense interest could not have been purchased with money."[283] Grossly underestimating the power of financial compensation, that performers might not dedicate "weeks of work" or express "intense interest" in the project with money as their motivation, Rhodes's statement further betrayed the hypocrisy in *The Wayfarer's* management. If, by management's expectations, the

[280] "Big Pageant Brings Gross of $125,000," and "Commercialism!"
[281] "Big Pageant Brings Gross of $125,000," and "Pageant to be Staged Every Year."
[282] "Pageant to be Staged Every Year."
[283] Ibid.

performer's motivation lay outside financial interests, thereby confirming the pageant's religious and civic rather than commercial role, the show's backers should also not expect financial gain, that people might pursue "heart interest" at all levels of pageantry.

The *Times* editorial on this—angrily titled "Commercialism!"—appreciated the reliance upon unpaid labor but also placed a clear limit upon people's capacity to volunteer for a seemingly unjust purpose. As the editorial staff complained:

> The whole transaction is unspeakably disappointing
>
> The "Wayfarer" never can be presented in Seattle again under the circumstances and conditions revealed today.
>
> Neither, despite the contrary opinion held by those who are endeavoring to commercialize this great spectacle, can it be presented ANYWHERE ELSE.
>
> Nothing but RELIGION and CIVIC PRIDE can bring out the thousands of men and women needed to make the production a success and without whose faithful, unpaid labors it never can be made a success, here or elsewhere.
>
> If the men who now claim to own the rights to the "Wayfarer" are solicitous as to the future of the production, have any civic pride or are responsive in any way to the inspiration the "Wayfarer" typifies, they will PUT THE RIGHTS TO IT IN TRUST FOR THE CITY OF SEATTLE, relinquishing all hope of personal gain from it.[284]

The Wayfarer Society officially acquiesced the following day. The outrage over Weber's Monday morning comments brought about an emergency meeting that evening and an announcement in Tuesday's press potentially removing the Wayfarer Society's further interests in the pageant. Speaking on the corporation's behalf, President Rhodes offered to, "deed the production to any responsible Seattle organization," willing to annually remount *The Wayfarer* with the caveat that all proceeds be applied toward philanthropic purposes.[285] Within twenty-four hours, the Society had moved from an

[284] "Commercialism!"
[285] "Pageant to be Staged Every Year."

assertion of unquestioned ownership over the pageant to one of surrender. Within his public statement, Rhodes betrayed his own bitterness at this outcome, declaring that he, "personally would prefer to have nothing further to do with," *The Wayfarer*.[286] These stated removals—that Rhodes and the Wayfarer Society were willing to disinvest themselves in the production—did not actually preclude either's future participation on the pageant. Rather, Rhodes left space for both he and the Society to retain control of *The Wayfarer*. According to Rhodes, the Wayfarer Society stood, "willing and ready to manage the great pageant…if the public seems disposed to continue this burden on the society members as a civic duty," and that, "if necessary [Rhodes] will continue to serve as best [he] can."[287] In meeting the scandal that accompanied their handling of the pageant, the Wayfarer Society offered a public declaration that they would do whatever best served the greater good while clearly establishing that they themselves might provide that very thing—a proposition that came to pass in subsequent productions of *The Wayfarer* and *Americanus.*

Amid this fallout, the strongest voices in favor of the Wayfarer Society (besides those of the Society) arose from people that benefitted from the 1921 run. Show producer and director Montgomery Lynch offered an open letter to his cast and crew denying rumors of the pageant's staging elsewhere or that anyone, including himself, stood to gain from the venture. Lynch further demonstrated continuity by announcing the first rehearsals for the 1922 season to begin the following month.[288] Similarly, Darin

[286] Ibid.
[287] Ibid.
[288] Ibid.

Meisnest, graduate manager of the Associated Students of the University of Washington (ASUW) and overseer of the school's newly constructed Husky Stadium, championed the standing financial agreement between the ASUW and the Wayfarer Society that elsewhere had created charges of corruption.[289] The combination of rental fees and the agreed upon split of profits netted nearly $20,000 for the stadium.[290] Though other events enjoyed greater single day attendance and admission fees than *The Wayfarer*, the pageant's proceeds represented a significant source of revenue that allowed for the early repayment of stadium debts.[291] Notably, both Meisnest and Lynch were or would become members of the Wayfarer Society. Meisnest served as the corporation's secretary while both men are listed among the Society's board of directors on the 1921 annual report issued in December of that year.[292]

Both men also continued their association with *The Wayfarer* and the Wayfarer Society into the 1922 season. Lynch again served as the pageant's producer and director, though the prior year's scandal gave cause to circumscribe these roles. In the interest of, "avoiding trouble and protecting the producer as much as possible," the 1922 governing body restricted Lynch's access to the press, limited his participation in executive and financial meetings, and shifted significant casting decisions to a committee.[293] Conversely, Meisnest enjoyed an expanded presence on the production as the two

[289] Ibid.
[290] "The Wayfarer Pageant 1921 Production Financial Statements," UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant, 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections.
[291] "Stadium Attractions Statistics 1920-21," UW ASUW, box 17, "Stadium Attraction Statistics 1920-1927," UW Special Collections, and "Varsity Loses on Athletics," *Seattle Daily Times,* February 5, 1922.
[292] "1921 Annual Report of the Wayfarer Society," and "Pageant to be Staged Every Year." Meisnest's name also appears on the list of Wayfarer Society members provided by Rhodes in August 1921, but Lynch's does not.
[293] "Wayfarer Executive Committee, Fourth Meeting," UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections.

organizations that afforded him leadership positions—the Wayfarer Society and the ASUW—colluded for *The Wayfarer's* second Seattle run.

Despite the Wayfarer Society's offer to deed the production to "any responsible party" at the close of the first season, no such group had manifested by February 1922 when planning for that year's pageant officially began. Accordingly, the ASUW agreed to assume this responsibility as, according to Meisnest at the first meeting of the pageant's 1922 guarantors, "the Associated Students felt it would be a misfortune not to have the Wayfarer produced."[294] Besides overseeing that summer's staging of *The Wayfarer*, the ASUW agreed to pay maintenance and storage fees to the Wayfarer Society for use of the pageant's accouterments while allowing many among the 1921 leadership to serve on the newly formulated Wayfarer Committee.[295] This included Rhodes' return as committee president and Meisnest continuing in the dual roles of ASUW manager and Wayfarer Committee executive secretary as well as assuming the position of executive agent.[296] This overlap of interests may have led the ASUW to assert, and reassert, their fitness for this role. In a public statement the ASUW president clarified that "the student body of the University of Washington has always cooperated to the utmost in all civic and community enterprises."[297] Specifically discussing *The Wayfarer*, he continued, "We feel that we are peculiarly fitted to administer the pageant for the community in a manner not subject to criticism, for we are nonpartisan, and the

[294] "Minutes of First Meeting of 1922 Guarantors of The Wayfarer Pageant," UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections.
[295] "The Wayfarer will be Presented," *Seattle Daily Times*, March 5, 1922.
[296] "Minutes of First Meeting of 1922 Guarantors of The Wayfarer Pageant."
[297] "The Wayfarer will be Presented."

proceeds will go towards reducing the Stadium debt."[298] The ASUW avoided accusations of profiteering by being their own charitable cause.

Publicity for *The Wayfarer's* 1922 run simultaneously employed three approaches to draw audiences back. The first of these involved rectifying the perceived wrongs of the prior season, which the ASUW's undertaking of the pageant went a long way toward correcting. The second means easily blended into the first and involved, according to Meisnest, making, "the entire city feel its duty to *The Wayfarer*."[299] Simultaneously demonstrating their civic minded intentions and allowing the general populace to assert ownership of the pageant, the Wayfarer Committee, having already secured sufficient investors to ensure the upcoming season, opened the process to popular subscription and invited all interested parties to participate. [300] This drive resembled one suggested but not pursued for the 1921 run to make *The Wayfarer* a more communal endeavor. The final 1922 public appeal also referenced the prior season by reminding Seattleite's that the show was an undeniable success. As specified in an early advertisement, people "from all parts of the United States," upon witnessing the pageant had, "pronounced *The Wayfarer* the most gorgeous, most fascinating, most profoundly religious combination of grand opera, drama and oratorio ever staged."[301] The ad further encouraged Seattleites to, "again proclaim to the world: 'Seattle, the Pageant City—the Oberammergau of America!'"[302] Similarly Rhodes, in reasserting his presidential role, touted the prior year's performance and the probability that this year would exceed it in both level of

[298] Ibid.
[299] "Minutes of First Meeting of 1922 Guarantors of The Wayfarer Pageant."
[300] "The Wayfarer 1922 Production," *Seattle Daily Times*, March 5, 1922.
[301] Ibid.
[302] Ibid.

spectacle and in audience attendance. He further transformed the Oberammergau association into one of competition in which he described the German production as, "small in comparison with the great show we have here in Seattle."[303]

Despite Rhodes's bold claims, the Oberammergau comparison had significant limitations, confining Seattle to staging *The Wayfarer* or another grandiose, religious pageant as its summer tourist attraction. Accordingly, the Wayfarer Committee and other Seattle boosters adopted a second civic moniker, that of the "Pageant City." Though these same promoters used *The Wayfarer* as evidence to justify their claim, adopting this new identity allowed the city to adjust its summer offerings to accommodate shifting tastes. *The Wayfarer's* second season demonstrated the importance of this capacity as attendance numbers fell shy of expectations. The net profit was less than half of the previous season, and, after accounting for the estimated depreciation of properties, the final balance sheet offered a deficit of almost $8,000.[304] Publically, the ASUW declined to commit to a third season of *The Wayfarer* and would ultimately elect to stage a different pageant in 1923.

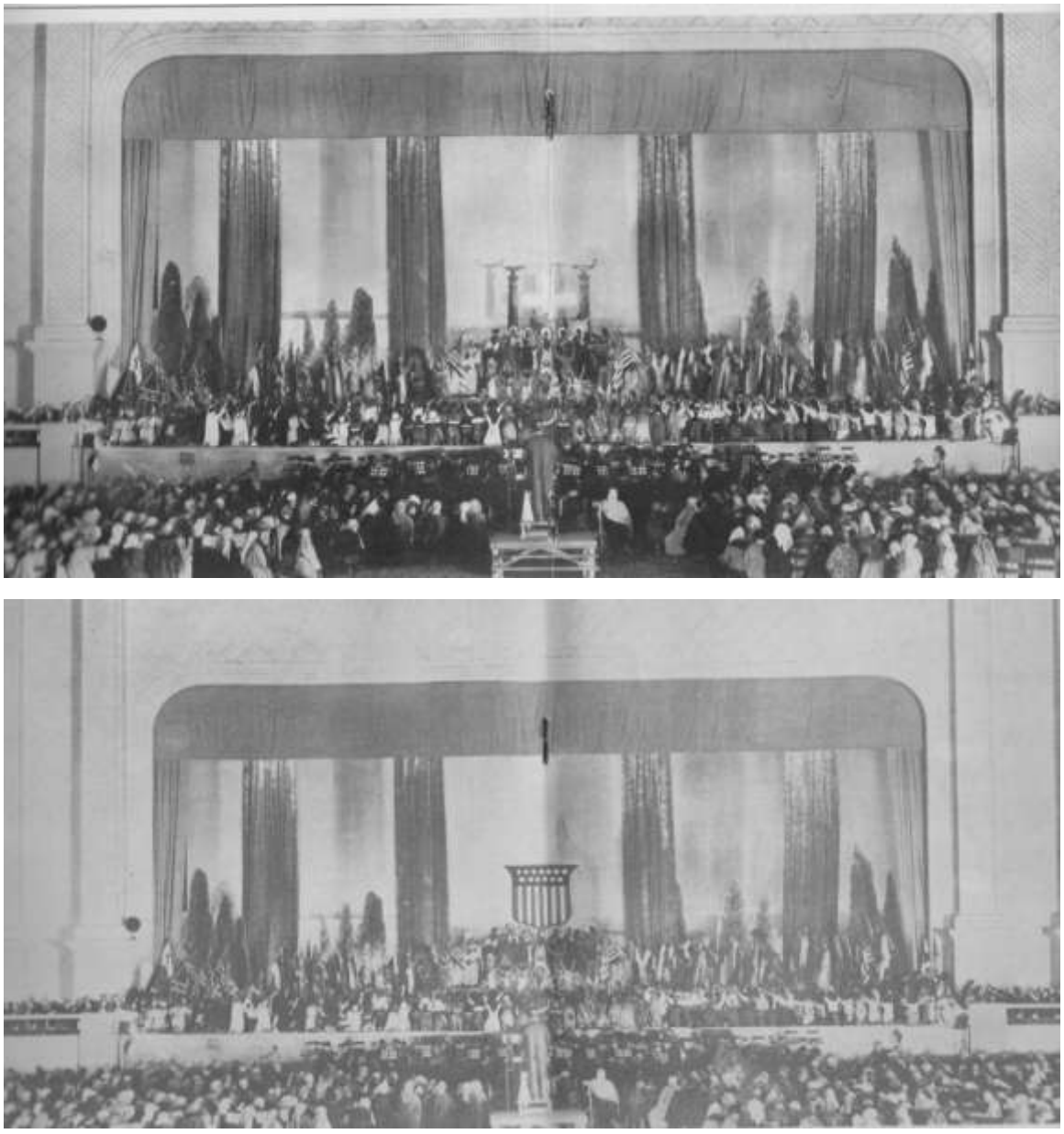
Americanus

For 1923, the ASUW selected the nationalistic extravaganza *Americanus* as their featured pageant. Written by Edmond S. Meany, the head of the university's History Department and an important figure in the development of Washington State historical

[303] "The Wayfarer will be Presented."
[304] "The Wayfarer Society, Inc. Balance Sheet June 30, 1922." UW ASUW, box 17, "The Wayfarer Pageant 1921-1922, 1925," UW Special Collections.

study, this production reportedly prevailed over, "a large number of spectacular festivals submitted from every part of the country," and would perpetuate the city's reliance upon pageantry as a summer tourist draw.[305] The decision to pursue *Americanus* rather than remount *The Wayfarer* ostensibly occurred under the presumption that the former appealed to a broader public, yet the specific selection of *Americanus* over the other available options—including another pageant put forward by Meany—betrayed grander ambitions for the would-be Pageant City.[306] Describing the importance of *Americanus*, Lynch—again in the roles of director and producer—noted, "Seattle people have an opportunity with 'Americanus' to turn the eyes of the world toward this city as the center of pageantry, patriotism and music."[307] If the self-imposed title "Oberammergau of America," had proved limiting, the appeal to patriotism now appeared boundless, and the pageant *Americanus* exuded a sense of nationalistic loyalty that might both elevate Seattle's status and cater to the increasingly isolationist attitudes influencing U.S culture. *Americanus's* producers furthered this appeal by promising a show whose grandeur challenged not only its predecessor, but all other pageants in the United States and the more significant examples of cinema, expressly drawing upon D.W. Griffith's *Birth of a Nation* and his apologetic follow-up *Intolerance* for comparison.[308] Despite these ambitions, the actual outcomes of *Americanus* demonstrated the limitations of the medium, and the rise and fall of pageantry in the Northwest's most populous city

[305] "Student Body to Decide on Stadium Pageant Tonight," *Seattle Daily Times*, March 21, 1923, and "Students O. K. Pageant," *Seattle Daily Times*, March 22, 1923.
[306] "Wayfarer will not be Given, Substitute Pageant Planned," *Seattle Daily Times*, January 27, 1923.
[307] "Cast of 10,000 in 'Americanus,' Two More Executives Chosen," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 6, 1923.
[308] "Americanus, Colossal, Spectacular, Educational," *Seattle Daily Times*, March 25, 1923.



Figures 2.7 and 2.8 *The Wayfarer* (top) and *Americanus* (bottom) finales. The center page of both pageants' programs featured a depiction of each pageant's concluding scene. Significantly, the same photo is used for both. The image for *Americanus* simply reproduces that of *The Wayfarer*, but replaces the central cross with a shield version of the U.S. flag. ("The Wayfarer," and "Americanus," Seattle: Americanus Pageant Society, 1923, collection of the author)

ultimately indicated the direction of the form in the region as well as foretelling pageantry's larger usurpation by film.

In selecting *Americanus,* the AWSU aligned themselves with a particular rendering of U.S. History dependent upon that of the pageant's author. A stringent adherent to the Great Man theory of history, Meany offered a pageant anchored by U.S. Presidents and other political figures. [309] As at least one advertisement excitedly promised, "Washington, Jefferson, Monroe, Madison, Taylor, Lincoln, Robert E. Lee, Grant, Roosevelt, Wilson, Pershing, will live their parts again in 'Americanus.'"[310] Even those scenes untethered from the executive branch or the nation's military might displayed Meany's particular sense of historical importance, that the United State's nearly one hundred and fifty years of history represented an unparalleled level of progress wrought through the overwhelming patriotic dedication of the U.S. citizenry. Moreover, Meany's vision offered an unquestioning acceptance of U.S. domestic and foreign policy, framing all instances of conflict as a burden that the U.S. citizenry collectively bore (and never inflicted). According to Meany, the pageant depicted, "The patriotism of a great peace-loving nation whose ideal of peace has lived through the six wars of its history."[311] Thus, within *Americanus,* when members of a California mining camp learn of the Mexican-American War's conclusion, the miners' interests shift

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[309] *"Americanus," Produced in the University of Washington Stadium, Seattle, July 23-28, 1923* (Seattle: Pioneer Printing Co., 1923) unpaged. Of the pageant's thirty-four main characters, twenty-nine were men. Of these, twenty were historical figures who served in the highest levels of the federal government or the U.S. military. The remaining male roles included depictions of the French ambassador Edmond-Charles Genêt, French-Canadian explorer Toussaint Charbonneau, three "southern gentlemen," two California miners, a tenor soloist, and the symbolic title character Americanus.
[310] "10,000 Singers Wanted for 'Americanus,'" *Seattle Daily Times,* May 9, 1923.
[311] "Americanus to be Spectacular, Stadium Pageant Plans Given," *Seattle Daily Times,* March 25, 1923.

immediately from profit making to state building, all the while an American flag waves in the background.[312] Meany's biographer, George A. Frykman, offered a more critical assessment of the pageant as a reflection of Meany's general historical approach. According to Frykamn, with *Americanus* Meany's worldview generated a narrative of U.S. history as a march toward the ideals of progress and civilization unimpeded, even, by a depiction of the Spanish-American War, as "it permitted America to become a world power and brought, in Meany's view, the nation's benign influence upon world affairs."[313]

Guiding Meany's great men, the title character "Americanus" appeared throughout the pageant as, "a mythical spirit [unseen] by those on the stage, his words representing thoughts in the minds of leading characters."[314] First introducing himself to George Washington at Valley Forge, the character boldly declares, "I am Americanus, a spirit from the people and the soil of the new world, come to help those who would seek the way to freedom and peace."[315] While adhering to Meany's assertion that even amid a war the American public and its leaders ultimately vie for peace, this statement of abstract citizenship also reiterates a connection between the budding nation's democratic intentions and the landscape it would overtake, thereby justifying the subsequent sequences of conquest that occurred throughout the nineteenth century and that were repeated on the pageant stage. The responsibility for this formidable role befell Rev.

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[312] Edmond S. Meany, "Americanus Script," Edmond S. Meany Papers, Accession No. 106-2-75-10 [hereafter cited as Meany MSS] box 10, folder 18, UW Special Collections.
[313] George A. Frykman, *Seattle's Historian and Promoter: The Life of Edmond Stephen Meany* (Pullman: Washington State University Press, 1998), 182.
[314] *"Americanus,"* unpaged.
[315] Meany, "Americanus Script," 2.

Cleveland Kleihauer, a pastor for the Disciples of Christ church near UW.[316] The press described the selection of Kleihauer as a reward for his turn as *The Wayfarer's* title character in both of the earlier pageant's Seattle seasons, but he also served on *Americanus's* Cast Committee, allowing him an important role in deciding the pageant's casting.[317] As the production's lead, Kleihauer's Americanus advised each of the featured presidents—or in the case of Washington and Theodore Roosevelt, would-be presidents—toward expanding the nation's power, whether through territorial acquisition, political maneuvering, or the reluctant declaration of war. At each epoch, though invisible to his advisees, Americanus donned a costume indicative of the period while also demonstrating the character's virility. Accordingly, when meeting Washington Americanus appears as an appropriation of the Noble Savage, "clad in buckskin, with an eagle feather headdress."[318] Advising Thomas Jefferson to acquire Louisiana, Americanus emerges as a frontiersman, decked in the crude cloth of "homespun with coon-skin cap," signally a perceived shift in national character and concerns from rebellion to expansion.[319] Speaking to Roosevelt on the eve of the Cuban Campaign the stage notes describe Americanus simply as a "cowboy."[320] Only when addressing Woodrow Wilson does Americanus's attire assume that of "an ordinary citizen, in street

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[316] *The American Home Missionary Containing the Year Book of Churches of Christ (Disciples)* (Cincinnati: American Christian Missionary Society, 1918), 324.
[317] "Kleihauer Gets Role," *Seattle Daily Times*, May 22, 1923, and "Minutes of the First Meeting of the Guarantors of the Americanus at the Pig 'n Whistle, Tuesday, April 24, 1923," UW ASUW, box 17, folder "1923," UW Special Collections.
[318] Meany, "Americanus Script," 1.
[319] Ibid., 3. Though the pageant's script describes Americanus in these outfits, publicity photos of Kleihauer show him in buckskin garments with a coonskin cap. See for example, "Veterans to Reenact San Juan, Will Stage Battle for Pageant," *Seattle Daily Times*, June 10, 1923, and "Americanus, Some of the Leading Characters in Seattle's Great Spctacle to Open July 23," *Seattle Daily Times,* July 15, 1923.
[320] Meany, "Americanus Script," 10.

Figure 2.9 Reverend Cleveland Kleihauer appeared in the title role of both *Americanus* and the *Wayfarer*. ("Americanus," collection of the author)

clothes," marking the nation's (and Seattle's) assent toward civilization as complete with the United States' entrance into the First World War.[321]

Meany's emphasis upon U.S. political and military figures guided by a symbolic title character outfitted in a burlesque of manhood marked the nation's foundation and growth as a decidedly masculine affair. Indeed, the purely historical components of the pageant only feature two female figures: Sacagawea and Lydia Bixby, icons of colonial conquest and Republican Motherhood, respectively.[322] The latter's significance depended upon her association with President Lincoln, as she appears briefly onstage to read the letter credited to the President consoling her for the loss of multiple sons in the Civil War.[323] The inclusion of Sacagawea similarly elevated the actions of Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, though it also reflected the character's immense popularity and the importance of the person cast to play her.[324] Still, the pageant's larger framework attempts a broader inclusion of women. The muses Clio and Euterpe introduce each era through a historical accounting and poem, respectively, and are flanked by women representing the particular period.[325] This use of women in representational roles reaches its fantastic extreme amid a tableau celebrating the Monroe Doctrine. Here, the symbolic figure of Columbia is escorted by President Monroe to stand atop a pyramid made-up of fifteen other women representing various Latin American republics. This dynamic between the tropes of white women as bearers of civilization and women of color as representatives of colonized geographies was then augmented by two-hundred young

[321] Ibid., 11.
[322] *"Americanus,"* unpaged.
[323] Meany, "Americanus Script," 9.
[324] "Operatic Star in Americanus," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 22, 1923.
[325] Meany, "Americanus Script," 1.

Figure 2.10 Sophie Braslau's turn as Sacagawea made multiple references to her performance as the title character in the opera *Shanewis* at the New York Met, including wearing the same or an identical costume. ("Americanus," collection of the author)

women dancing to express, "the joy of Spanish America over the freedom assured by the Monroe Doctrine."[326]

Rather than disrupt *Americanus's* masculinist narrative, the limited inclusion of women in the pageant overwhelmingly reinforced Meany's sense of U.S. History as one of dedicated patriotism and benign expansionism. The Monroe Doctrine tableau, in particular, disavowed any unhappiness that Latin American nations might feel toward an increasingly aggressive U.S. foreign policy through spectacle and dance. Yet, Meany saw his inclusion of women as offering a significant statement about their elevating status. As he wrote in a newspaper article describing *Americanus's* larger value and appeals, "One important phase of the pageant shows the progress of American womanhood since the birth of the Republic."[327] Describing the scenes centered upon Clio and Euterpe, the women that framed the muses began the pageant holding a spinning wheel and hand loom, but, through a progression of professional opportunities, became a doctor and a lawyer by the show's end.[328] Meany's sense of this aspect's importance may have derived from its unusualness. Progressive Era pageantry, though affording a number of women prominent positions within the field, rarely featured women's professional advancement upon the stage.[329] Examining a similar employment of female professionalization by W.E.B. Du Bois in his 1915 pageant, *The Star of Ethiopia*, against the standard presentation of women in historical pageantry, scholar Susan Gillman notes:

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[326] Ibid., 6.
[327] Edmond S. Meany, "Author Interprets 'Americanus,' Play Depicts Nation's Growth, Spirit Voices Craving for Peace," *Seattle Post Intelligencer*, July 24, 1924.
[328] *"Americanus,"* unpaged.
[329] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 39.

> The six episodes of the pageant, dramatizing the history of blacks in Africa and the Americas, culminated in a finale, which portrays African American history from Reconstruction to the present with groups of "symbolic figures" representing various kinds of work, from teachers and ministers, to businessmen, doctors and nurses… [It was not] unusual to foreground a pageant woman in classical garb, who reappears throughout the pageant and symbolizes the community. But it was not the norm to depict women either in scenes of historical turning points or of work outside the home.[330]

Within Gillman's assessment, *Americanus's* Clio and Euterpe—while, perhaps, enjoying a more authoritative role than their allegorical sisters that populated much of the historical pageantry field at its height—fit well within historical pageantry's precepts. The women who stood silently beside them within each tableau, however, provided a strange challenge to the form's expectations. Though the roles celebrated women's professional advancement, the actresses, both unmoving and unspeaking, became passive recipients to this progress.[331]

Meany's treatment of female professionalization had an antecedent upon the Seattle stage twenty-six years prior through *Columbia*, a production that, if not witnessed by Meany firsthand, would certainly be within his purview.[332] *Columbia*, as staged by the

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[330] Susan Gillman, "Pageantry, Maternity, and World History," in *Next to the Color Line: Gender Sexuality, and W. E. B. Du Bois* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), 393.

[331] See also Mary P. Ryan, *Women in Public: Between Banners and Ballots, 1825-1880* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990), 28. Ryan, in her extensive study of the representational use of women in public celebrations and ceremonies, similarly describes the inclusion of women's labor as unusual. According to Ryan, "female civic allegories…rarely made reference to the actual social roles and cultural values assigned to females."

[332] Many of Seattle's elite witnessed this performance or participated in it. The cast included "250 Society People in Costume," while the audience was reportedly near capacity in the Seattle Theatre's 1,600 seat auditorium. The total of nearly 1,850 represented a significant portion of Seattle's 1900 population of 80,671. If Meany was not among the audience presumably an associate would have discussed the show with him as its topic would have seemed of particular interest to Meany. In August 1897, when *Columbia* was performed in Seattle, Meany was studying for his appointment as professor of US History at UW, a position Meany had no formal training for at that point. Please see, *"Columbia," The Historical Pageant* (Seattle: Children's Home Society, 1897), unpaged, "'Columbia' at the Seattle Theater," *Seattle Post-*

Seattle chapter of the Children's Home Society—a women's charitable organization dedicated to the care and betterment of abandoned children—recreated scenes of national importance, yet, dependent upon a largely female cast, feminized traditionally masculine scenarios.[333] Thus, the signing of the Declaration of Independence appears through female representations of the first thirteen states rather than the usual assortment of powdered wigs, and the rendering of the Civil War dedicates as much time to the hospital room as the battlefield.[334] The pageant culminates in a final tableau documenting the period 1865-1900 and titled, "A Peaceful Revolution."[335] Here, women pose as marble statues, "representing the Professions and Trades, the Arts and Sciences of Women to-day."[336] There are clear correlations between the closing sequence of *Columbia* and Meany's demonstrations of female professional advancement in *Americanus,* including the sense that women's entrance into the public sphere accelerated following the Civil War and that women's advancement serves as a symbol of peace. Each of the tableaux with Clio and Euterpe featured women in the domestic sphere prior to and through *Americanus's* depictions of the Civil War, save a single depiction of a school teacher.[337] Beginning with a depiction of 1897 (the same year *Columbia* made its Seattle premiere), all the women in *Americanus* assume public positions, advancing from typist and

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Intelligencer, August 18, 1897, *Polk's Seattle Directory* (Seattle: R. L. Polk & Co., 1901), 1051, and Frykman, *Seattle's Historian and Promoter*, 75.

[333] "Columbia," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, August 16, 1897. Based upon a traveling script and staged in multiple cities prior to its Seattle premiere, members of the Children's Home Society presumably selected this production for its gender appropriate cast requirements as well as its existing popularity.

[334] *"Columbia," The Historical Pageant*, unpaged.

[335] Ibid.

[336] Ibid.

[337] Meany, "Americanus Script,"1, 4, 6, 7, 9.

telephone operator, to a Red Cross nurse and a naval yeomanette, to finally graduating to the fields of law and medicine—the last marking the end of the First World War.[338]

Regardless of Meany's actual attendance at *Columbia*, the pageant resembled both the sort of event Meany frequented and those that he increasingly participated in. The pageant format struck Frykman as such a natural outgrowth of Meany's sentimentalized approach to history as well as the historian's efforts toward public commemoration and memorialization that Meany's biographer wondered on the page why Meany had not embraced historical pageantry at an earlier date.[339] When writing *Americanus*, Meany's prior pageantry work consisted of two turns as *The Wayfarer's* Prolocutor—explaining each scene's significance to the audience—and penning the never produced "Washingtonia: A Pageant in Ten Scenes."[340] All undertaken in the early 1920s, Meany's entrance into historical pageantry occurred nearly two decades after the form's initial U.S. rise and well beyond such Northwest hallmarks as the *Bridge of the Gods.* Much of this delay may be attributed to the nature of Northwest pageantry, including its gendered associations and the region's belated embrace of the form. At the same time, Meany's efforts with *The Wayfarer*, "Washingtonia," and *Americanus* also demonstrate his own sense of importance, that in each pageant he served as the voice of authority and was afforded greater prestige than other pageant participants. A perceived

[338] Ibid., 9, 11, 13. The use of 1897 as a featured year appears to be coincidence as the scene sets up the Spanish-American War begun in 1898.
[339] Frykman, *Seattle's Historian and Promoter*, 180.
[340] *The Wayfarer, Produced in the University of Washington Stadium Seattle, July 23 to July 30, 1921* (Seattle: Pierson & Co., 1921), unpaged, *"The Wayfarer," Produced in the University of Washington Stadium Seattle, July 24th to 29th, 1922* (Seattle: Associated Students of the University of Washington, 1922), unpaged, and Edmond S. Meany, "Washingtonia: A Pageant in Ten Scenes," (ca. 1923), Meany MSS, box 68, folder 10, UW Special Collections.

threat to this authority, in turn, appears to have soured Meany on the pageantry experience.

Frykman described Meany at *Americanus's* close as suffering, "the tortures of an author who feels his work is slighted."[341] At issue, were changes made to the pageant without Meany's consent, the failure of a promised author's box seat in the audience to emerge, and animosity arising from Montgomery Lynch's claims of co-authoring *Americanus*. Writing to Meisnest on the first two insults, Meany complained that, "As the glorious fruitage came into view I suddenly became an outsider and was asked to take a back seat," and that, "The opportunity for fervent appreciation of authorship by the audience is gone forever.[342] The final incident—Lynch's usurpation of authorship—appears to have disturbed Meany the most, possibly due to the constant reminders of Lynch's assertion appearing in the press, on the pageant's publicity, and even in the letterhead Meisnest used when responding to Meany's letter.[343] Publically Meany remained cordial, actually praising, "the genius of Mr. Montgomery Lynch," for expanding *Americanus*, "into something more than a pageant."[344] Meany maintained this affability enough to earn a feature in the regular *Seattle Daily Times* column, "The Happiest Man I Know."[345] Even privately, though expressing bitter disappointment,

[341] Frykman, *Seattle's Historian and Promoter*, 183.
[342] "Meany letter to Meisnest (draft)," July 28, 1923, Meany MSS, box 10, folder 11, UW Special Collections. Meany actually wrote multiple letters to Meisnest expressing his frustration over the pageant's outcome that are reproduced in the Meany Letterpress Book (1922-1923).
[343]See, for example "Meinnest letter to Meany," July 28, 1923, Meany MSS, box 10, folder 11, UW Special Collections.
[344] Meany, "Author Interprets 'Americanus.'"
[345] "The Happiest Man I Know," *Seattle Daily Times*, June 29, 1923.

Meany acknowledged Lynch's actions as motivated by the desire to retire from teaching music and to embark upon a new career of pageantry production.[346]

Amid his work on *Americanus*, Lynch attempted to do just this. In December 1922—before the ASUW had decided against a third staging of *The Wayfarer*—Lynch submitted himself for consideration to direct the Walla Walla pioneer pageant, *How the West was Won*.[347] Staged in June 1923, this production chronicled the major developments in and around this small, Eastern Washington town and would have expanded both Lynch's repertoire and his reputation.[348] His bid for *How the West was Won* failed, but Lynch succeeded in directing and producing *Americanus* in July 1923, and the Los Angeles run of *The Wayfarer* the following month. The latter assignment manifested through arrangements undertaken by Edgar L. Webster—the onetime general manager of the Wayfarer Society, who had set off the earlier scandal now relocated to Southern California.[349] That Webster might recreate the very scenario that consumed the 1921 production of *The Wayfarer* in controversy produced consternation among *Americanus's* Executive Committee and caused an unscheduled meeting among the pageant's leadership to discuss potential alternatives.[350] The primary resolution, aimed at keeping Lynch from working on another pageant, particularly another *Wayfarer*, restricted the capacity for *Americanus* employees to take a leave of absence for any

[346] "Meany letter to Meisnest (draft)," July 28, 1923.
[347] "Montgomery Lynch to O. J. Keating," December 29, 1922, Walla Walla Pioneer Pageant Records, Penrose Library.
[348] Penrose, *How the West was Won*, (1923), unpaged.
[349] "Cast of Thousands Sought for Pageant," *Los Angeles Times*, June 24, 1923.
[350] "Minutes of Special Meeting of Executive Committee of the Americanus Pageant Society," May 18, 1923, WU AASUW, box 17, folder 1923, UW Special Collections.

purpose before the pageant's conclusion.[351] A subsequent resolution "seconded and carried that a copy of this motion be sent to Mr. Webster."[352] If designed to prevent Lynch from participating in the LA iteration of *The Wayfarer*, the measures only succeeded in ensuring that no scheduling conflicts existed between the two productions.[353]

Lynch claimed co-authorship of *Americanus* on the premise that he had initially suggested the pageant's final subject matter. To this Meany offered the bitter riposte that as a history professor he had, "to suggest themes for essays and theses almost every day of [his] life," but that he, "would put [his] hand in fire before [he] would claim co-authorship in that product whatever its importance."[354] Yet, despite Meany's minimization of Lynch's contribution, the import affixed to *Americanus* depended heavily upon its theme and the decision to pursue a national rather than regional narrative. Had, for example, the ASUW selected Meany's "Washingtonia" instead they would be promoting a pageant that more closely reflected Meany's academic work but that failed to express the grandeur and scope necessitated by the advertising of Seattle as the Pageant City.[355] "Washingtonia's" decidedly local emphasis, in which even a

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[351] Ibid.
[352] Ibid.
[353] "Minutes of the 8th Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Americanus," May 31, 1923, UW ASUW, box 17, folder "1923," UW Special Collections. Given the different climates between Seattle and Los Angeles the decision for Seattleites to stage *Americanus* in July and Angelinos to offer *The Wayfarer* in August arguably depended more upon the best month to hold an outdoor production than upon any maneuverings by *Americanus's* Executive Committee.
[354] "Meany letter to Meisnest (draft)," July 28, 1923.
[355] Meany appears to have generated "Washingtonia" at Meisnest's behest, though Meisnest wanted a pageant that contextualized Seattle history within that of the United States rather than interpreting U.S. History through Washington State. See, "Meisnest letter to Meany," May 28, 1921, Meany MSS, box 36, folder 23, UW Special Collections. While Meany's historical approach employed the Great Man theory and an unwavering sense of patriotism, his academic contributions, including penning the first significant

portrayal of the U.S. Civil War is confined to the Washington Territory, offered a perceivably limited appeal. [356] With *Americanus*, Meany inverted his "Washingtonia" approach, deemphasizing the region to the degree that Lewis and Clark—mainstays of Pacific Northwest pageantry—only travel as far west as the Dakotas.[357]

The primary purpose of this scene—to introduce New York Metropolitan Opera Singer Sophie Braslau as Sacagawea—reiterated the pageant's claims to national rather than regional importance.[358] The casting of Braslau in *Americanus* depended upon her originating the title role of *Shanewis*, an opera created by noted composer Charles Wakefield Cadman for the New York Metropolitan Opera and based upon the life of Native American singer Tsianina Redfeather.[359] Show producers for *Americanus* made multiple references to Braslau's work in *Shanewis*. As Sacagawea, Braslau wore a costume matching that of Shanewis, she sang the production's signature piece, "Robin Woman's Song," and the photo of Braslau in the program for *Americanus* was a promotional image from *Shanewis*.[360] With these multiple points of reference, Braslau's

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history of Washington State and founding the *Washington Historical Quarterly*, focused overwhelmingly on the Pacific Northwest and Washington in particular. Historian John M. Findley describes Meany's work as, "a pioneer version of the Great Man school of history," in which, "Northwest history was a succession of leading individuals spearheading regional development." John M. Findlay, "Closing the Frontier in Washington: Edmond S. Meany and Frederick Jackson Turner," *Pacific Northwest Quarterly* 82 (April 1991), 66.

[356] Meany, "Washingtonia," 3,7. Meany connected Washington Territorial history to the U.S. Civil War through the regional manufacture of medical supplies for the Union Army and prominent citizens' involvement on both sides of the conflict. While Washington's first territorial governor, Issac Stevens, did serve and die in the Union Army, Meany's Confederate claims are tenuous and depend upon Virginian George E. Pickett being stationed in Washington Territory at the war's outbreak.

[357] Meany, *Americanus*, unpaged.

[358] "Operatic Star in Americanus."

[359] For an extended discussion of *Shanewis's* significance within the development of American opera and for its use of Native American themes, see Philip J. Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2004), 210-218, and Beth E. Levy, *Frontier Figures: American Music and the Mythology of the American West* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012), 107-123.

[360] *Americanus*, unpaged.

portrayal of two Native American women overlapped to become Shanewis playing Sacagawea and connected the western narrative of Lewis and Clark to the cultural center of New York.

Americanus's antecedents on the Seattle stage, including *Columbia*, Lorene Wiswelll Wilson's CPI sponsored venture *Pageant of Democracy*, and her follow-up *Democracy for all Humanity*, similarly favored a national rather than regional narrative. Each pageant's purpose for doing so, however, varied from *Americanus* in significant ways that situated the various productions within particular historical moments and that betrayed Seattleites' sense of themselves in relation to the larger nation. *Columbia*, for example, demonstrates the emerging public woman of the late-nineteenth century through those involved, its particular charitable purpose, and the portrayal of female professionals.[361] As a show that previously premiered elsewhere, it also allowed the small city of Seattle to emulate its more established counterparts.[362] The *Pageant of Democracy*, as a CPI creation, represented WWI era propaganda as well as Seattle's participation in the war effort exemplified by the city's ship building boom.[363] The reframed patriotism of *Democracy for all Humanity* understood Seattle's bruised national image, but more than Columbia, *Pageant of Democracy*, or *Americanus*, the show's concerns were primarily civic—the repairing of Seattleites' feelings toward one another rather than improving outside opinions.

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[361] Ryan, *Women in Public*, 53.
[362] Prior to Seattle, *Columbia* was produced in Boston, Chicago, and Los Angeles and would be produced in San Francisco following its Seattle showing. See, "America's History in Tableaux," *San Francisco Call*, December, 12, 1897.
[363] Dana Frank, *Purchasing Power: Consumer Organizing, Gender, and the Seattle Labor Movement, 1919-1929* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 22.

Americanus emerged amid the xenophobia, Americanization drives, and conformity that came to define the early inter-war period, a moment when *The Wayfarer* and its message of universal peace through Christian triumph rather than American valor appeared undesirably radical.[364] Exemplifying these sentiments, an organization heavily invested in the creation and promotion of *Americanus*—and in which Meany was a charter member—the Seattle Seven League Club described itself as, "neither factional or political, radical or visionary."[365] This self-imposed blandness served Seattle interests in promoting a patriotic spectacle divorced from the city's concerns, thereby implying that Seattle's history does not vary significantly from that of the larger nation. Seattle could appear as a great American city by displaying its lack of uniqueness. Kleihauer, when accepting the title role, clarified the pageant's appeal and purpose, proclaiming *Americanus* a, "great drama of American life and progress…upon which can be built a remarkable lesson in patriotism and loyalty to country and the institutions which every real American holds dear."[366]

As an education in "real" Americanism, Meany's unquestioning acceptance of U.S. motives both domestically and abroad appears particularly apt. Yet, his heavy emphasis upon U.S. foreign policy served an additional purpose, one specific to Seattle. *Columbia,* created prior to the Spanish-American War and focusing upon women's spheres, could emphasize multiple ideas of domesticity at the expense of any examination of foreign involvement.[367] Similarly, the *Pageant of Democracy* and *Democracy for all*

[364] "World Peace is High Motif of Americanus," *Seattle Post-Intelligencer,* April 29, 1923.
[365] "Seattle Seven League Club," Meany Papers, box 27, folder 6, UW Special Collections.
[366] "Kleihauer Gets Role."
[367] "*Columbia*," unpaged.

Humanity both positioned the United States as a refuge for persecuted foreigners but omitted any sense of global engagement prior to WWI.[368] Written at the height of U.S. isolationism, Meany's decision to include George Washington's farewell entreatment to avoid foreign entanglements made sense within the current mood. Meany, however, followed this first declaration of foreign policy with a justification of Jefferson's undertaking the Louisiana Purchase, a celebration of the Monroe Doctrine, mention of the oft-forgotten Mexican-American War, and depictions of the Spanish-American War and WWI, all instances of U.S. foreign involvement. In Meany's rendering, only the U.S. Civil War appears without reference to U.S. foreign policy.[369] Though this approach presumably reflects the proclivities of the author—that these incidents grew the nation and spread its benign influences globally—it also signified Seattle's particular national value as the major Northwest port.[370] Seattle's civically-concerned Seven League Club, acknowledging the value of U.S. foreign involvement and treaty making to the city amid its treatise on self-imposed banality, called upon its membership to remember, "that great treasure house, Alaska, whose interests and development are an obligation that rests chiefly on the shoulders of Seattle."[371] Seattle's importance and past prosperity depended upon its access to the Pacific Ocean. True isolationism threatened this position.

Americanus's commerce friendly approach to U.S. History signaled a larger shift in sentiments toward the city's business community—one that reflected emerging

[368] "Pageant of Democracy to be seen July 4 in Five Parks in Seattle," and Wilson, "Adventuring with Labor in the Far West," 167.
[369] *Americanus*, unpaged.
[370] "Seattle is Key City," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 23, 1922.
[371] "Seattle Seven League Club."

attitudes of the early-interwar period and the city's own growing prosperity.[372] Where charges of commercialization plagued *The Wayfarer*, the same prominent businessmen now openly led *Americanus*. Explaining the heavy presence of local merchants on the pageant's various planning committees, Meisnest boldly proclaimed, "Business men of the Northwest recognize the value of a production of this sort."[373]The public collapsing of business and civic interests had begun the prior year when *The Wayfarer* occurred simultaneous with the Pacific Northwest Merchants' Convention, an annual event representing the manufacturing and trade communities in Oregon, Washington, Idaho, and Western Montana.[374] The sense that this double draw benefited the success of both pageant and convention led to an expansion of activities around *Americanus*. In addition to the Merchants' Convention, the week of *Americanus* featured naval races, the appearance of the U.S. battle fleet, and the President and First Lady on their return trip from Alaska, including a talk at Husky Stadium that utilized the *Americanus* stage.[375]

Pageant producer's used the Hardings' visit as a recruiting tool, promising potential performers the opportunity to:

> Sing before the President of the United States [and] enjoy the assurance and comfort of a front seat, where you can hear every word he utters. Members of the cast and chorus will be sure of a close-up of the Chief Executive.[376]

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[372] "Seattle's 1923 Trade Beats War Boom Year!" *Seattle Daily Times*, July 22, 1923.
[373] "World Peace is High Motif of Americanus."
[374] "Greatest Show Ever," *Seattle Daily Times*, June 11, 1922. Though Seattle hosted the annual event for several years in the mid-1920s, it appears to have been previously hosted in cities throughout the Northwest. See, for example, "Merchants to Convene," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 27, 1920.
[375] "Our Big Week," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 22, 1923.
[376] "*Americanus*, Colossal, Spectacular, Educational."

This appeal exceeded that made for *The Wayfarer* as what had been lauded as "the event of a lifetime" in the previous production now included proximity to the President.[377] It also assumed Harding's attendance at the pageant. At a meeting of the Americanus Executive Committee, held a full month after the above text appeared in an ad, members were still contemplating the invitation they intended to extend to the President.[378]

If *Americanus's* Executive Committee publically utilized Harding's presence to generate interest in the production, within their meeting minutes he overwhelmingly appears amid logistical concerns. These included hiring additional cleaning staff following his speech to ready the stadium for *Americanus*, the probability that the Elks could not use the stadium on the same day, and a resolution rejecting a proposal from the citizen's group charged with arranging Harding's visit to cancel *Americanus* on the eve of the Presidential sojourn.[379] Meany's hopes and frustrations appeared more immediately personal, with his dashed desire to engage a U.S. president intermingled with the additional slight that Harding would not be witnessing *Americanus* nor was there any hope that he might participate in the production. In an unsent letter to the President, Meany complained, "As the author of the Pageant Americanus, I am grievously disappointed that you will miss that [July 27, 1923] evening's performance," before

[377] "Wanted 5,000 Performers."
[378] "Minutes of the 11th Meeting of the Americanus Executive Committee held at the Elks Club, Tuesday, June 26th," UW ASUW, box 17, folder "1923," UW Special Collections. Notably, the President's schedule remained in flux through his arrival in Seattle with last minute changes occurring due the Presidents' feeling ill. Harding gave his last major public appearance before the *Americanus* audience on July 27, 1923. His final public appearance occurred later that evening before a smaller audience at the Seattle Press Club. He died later that week in San Francisco.
[379] "Minutes of the 12th Meeting of the Americanus Executive Committee held at the Elks Club, Tuesday Noon, July 3rd," and "Minutes of Special Meeting of Americanus Pageant Society Executive Committee, held at 11 o'clock A.M., July 6th 1923," both UW ASUW, box 17, folder "1923," UW Special Collections.

adding, "We hoped you could be persuaded to personally lead Miss Columbia to the apex of the pyramid representing the forty eight states in the great finale."[380] Describing a scene reminiscent of the earlier Monroe Doctrine celebration with the Latin American nations replaced by representations of the U.S. states, Meany and his associates imagined Harding stepping into a portrayal of himself as a "thrill" to the pageant's audience and their own self-satisfaction.[381]

The potential involvement of President Harding proved one of many ambitious plans set forward by *Americanus's* producers. Intended to outdo *The Wayfarer*, early press for the pageant excitedly promised, "the most spectacular production of its kind the world has ever seen!"[382] Among the pledged features Lynch sought a combined cast and chorus of 10,000 people, including 500 of the city's African American citizenry to appear as freed slaves before the figure of Lincoln.[383] The production's program went to the printer before recruiting efforts were completed.[384] Consequently, only the names of the thirty-four principal performers appear in the in the program, leaving the remaining 9, 966 people unnamed.[385] Similarly, newspaper features consistently touted the 10,000 number, even while running other articles calling for more participants.[386] The final numbers for *Americanus* are ultimately unknowable. Realistically, given the continued call for recruits within a week of the pageant's opening, that many in the cast and chorus

[380] "Meany letter to Warren Harding (draft)," Meany MSS, box 10, folder 11, UW Special Collections. Meany does not clarify who the "we" is in the above statement, though presumably most people associated with *Americanus* would be pleased by the publicity and prestige brought by Harding's participation.
[381] Ibid.
[382] "Americanus to be Spectacular, Stadium Pageant Plans Given."
[383] Ibid.
[384] "Minutes of the 11th Meeting of the Americanus Executive Committee."
[385] *Americanus*, unpaged.
[386] See, for example, "Americanus Production Ready, Final Rehearsals this Week," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 15, 1923, and "Seeks 48 Girls to Represent States," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 18, 1923.

failed to attend all rehearsals making their exact numbers difficult to compute, and that the recruitment goal called upon the participation of one out of every thirty-two Seattleites, less than 10,000 people performed in *Americanus*.[387] Nonetheless, the pageant still represented a major mobilization of people that—particularly during the final sequence featuring the entire cast—reportedly overwhelmed the audience.[388]

Also, unknowable is whether Lynch succeeded in casting 500 members of Seattle's black community. More than the overall 10,000 person goal, this would have involved engaging nearly one-fifth of the city's African American residents.[389]A lack of outreach to this particular population, a general unwillingness encountered by civic planners elsewhere of African Americans to perform as slaves (emancipated or not), and the past examples of Seattle pageants recreating scenes of Lincoln all suggest that Lynch fell well short of his intentions, possibly failing to entice any of the city's black community to the *Americanus* stage.[390] The idea that Lynch might so readily cast from the approximately 3,000 African Americans living in Seattle only emerges in the early

[387] Ibid.
[388] "Great Audience Greets Opening of Americanus," *Seattle Daily Times*, July 24, 1923.
[389] The 1920 U.S. Census counted 2,894 people identified as black living in Seattle. As reproduced in Quintard Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870 through the Civil Rights Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994), 52.
[390] Glassberg, in discussing precursors to historical pageantry, describes a parade associated with Philadelphia's Constitution centennial celebration in which local African Americans appeared on a float depicting them as artisans but refused to ride on the float depicting slavery even for pay. See, Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 23. The pageant's precursors *Columbia*, the *Pageant of Democracy*, and *Democracy for all Humanity* all contained scenes of Lincoln and Emancipation, to varyingly problematic degrees. *Columbia* featured three performers in black face with names out of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. The newspaper accountings of the *Pageant of Democracy* all describe a "procession of emancipated slaves" following Lincoln's address, yet without further information it is difficult to determine the racial make-up of this scene. Finally, there are a few African Americans in the cast photos of *Democracy for all Humanity.* They appear dressed in fashions from 1919 rather antebellum outfits, while the image of Lincoln appears before white performers in colonial garb. Wilson, in the second iteration of the pageant apparently elected to forgo a depiction of American slavery, suggesting some sort of difficulty with this scene in the *Pageant of Democracy*.

press without further mention in either the local papers or the Executive Committee meeting minutes.[391] Whether or not Lynch succeeded in his efforts to cast such a large swath of Seattle's African American community, his desire to do so reflected a particular sense that white Seattleites had of themselves as racially progressive.[392] Within historical pageantry—a field that frequently neglected African Americans and their history—such a display would provide a bold proclamation of Seattle as a thoroughly modern city among the nationally perceived hinterlands of the Northwest, potentially attracting both business and residents.

Americanus represented the pinnacle of what Seattle, as the Pageant City, might offer both its citizens and interested outsiders. For the former this included comprehending their city's national worth and their capacity to participate in its promotion. For the latter, *Americanus* proffered an enticement to conduct business within Seattle and, for a city still expecting to expand, an attempt to draw new immigrants to its hilly shores. Despite these intentions *Americanus* ultimately proved to be a financial failure. The ticket sales for *Americanus* were less than half that of *The Wayfarer's* first Seattle season and only slightly better when compared to *The Wayfarer's* second Seattle turn.[393] At the same time, the expectation that *Americanus* would generate greater profits

[391] Unfortunately, issues of Seattle's primary black paper during this period, the *Northwest Enterprise*, that would have discussed *Americanus* are missing. The primary black paper based out of Portland during this period, *The Advocate*, does not mention the pageant.
[392] Historian Quintard Taylor describes the prevalent racial dynamic in Seattle as, "Since the arrival of the first African American resident in 1858, the ideal of racial toleration and egalitarianism proudly espoused by the vast majority of the city's residents has been precariously juxtaposed against a background of racial fear, prejudice, and discrimination." Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community*, 3-4.
[393] "Americanus 1923 Production Analysis of Ticket Sales," and, "Summary of Auditor's Reports of the Wayfarer Pageant, Owned by Associated Students, University of Washington," both WU ASUW, box 17, folder "1921-22, 25," UW Special Collections.

than *The Wayfarer* allowed an increase in expenditures.[394] In the end, *Americanus* netted a meager $27.61, a sum that at least one newspaper article attempted to spin as a success, noting that:

> …despite the great cost of the production, "Americanus" yielded a net profit of $27.61. It was declared that this showing was possible because of the cooperation of the Seattle newspapers, business concerns and public spirited individuals.[395]

Though by this estimation, no one stood accountable for *Americanus's* failure. That instead, many should be commended for creating a slight profit despite their own self-imposed challenges, ultimately *Americanus* signaled both the promise of historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest and its decline.

In Seattle, *Americanus's* failure to meet expectations resulted in a pageantry hiatus in 1924 followed by a final run of *The Wayfarer* in '25. Ultimately, Seattle would not become the proposed Pageant City. Instead, as elsewhere in the nation, Seattle and the Northwest would see pageantry replaced by newer modes of entertainment, particularly the cinema. Though pageants continued to be produced after *Americanus*, their popularity and significance declined, suffering the same fate as historical pageantry in general. Yet during pageantry's Pacific Northwest height in the early 1920s, the productions that emerged exhibited a sense of local and national history unique to the region, one that attempted to reconcile the region's fading pioneer legacy with its potential as contemporary site of agriculture, manufacturing, and international trade. The following chapters examine individual pageants that exemplify the larger trend in the

[394] "Wayfarer 1922 Production," and "Americanus 1923 Production Analysis of Expenditures," both WU ASUW, box 17, folder "1921-22, 25," UW Special Collections.
[395] "'Americanus' Yielded Net Profit of $27.61," *Seattle Daily Times,* August 23, 1923.

Northwest, questioning both how these productions responded to the particular moment of their creation and how, as self-proclaimed history lessons, they influenced local understandings of the past.

Chapter 3

Killing Narcissa: Race, Gender, and Violence in Recreations of the Whitman Incident

Audiences at the June 1923 premiere of *How the West was Won*, a historical pageant staged in Walla Walla, Washington arrived well versed in the spectacles before them. An aggressive publicity campaign preceding the pageant informed the city's citizenry that the "history of [Walla Walla] Valley [was] truly epochal."[396] It also alerted them to what they would not see—namely, a recreation of the 1847 murders of missionaries Narcissa and Marcus Whitman along with eleven others at the nearby Waíiletpu mission, generally referred to as the Whitman massacre or, more obliquely, the Whitman incident.[397] According to a pamphlet created in anticipation of the show, this aspect of local history would "be portrayed by symbolism" as an "impressive and beautiful scene that will tell the sad story in a manner that will make the vision more poignant and graphic than the blood and horror of actual reproduction of this climatic scene would be."[398] Show producers had a black-cloaked "Shadow of Death," portrayed by Grace Dunn, descend on hundreds of young dancers representing "Mountains, Waters,

[396] "Pioneer Pageant: How the West Was Won," (1923), 3, Manners and Customs Collection, Mss 1522, box 23, file 7, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland [hereafter OHS Research Library].
[397] Antone Minthorn, "Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life," *As Days Go By*, 64. Although historically this event has been labeled the "Whitman massacre," Minthorn argues: "The use of 'massacre' prejudges and freezes the even in time, ignoring the context from both sides of the account, including the hundreds of people who died in the epidemic that [Dr. Marcus] Whitman could not cure." Minthorn and other scholars instead employ the phrase "Whitman incident" to describe the event. Except where quoting from a source, I will use the latter phrase. The death count of the Whitman incident also varies between sources, as some count only those murdered at the mission while others include deaths that arguably occurred as a result of the Whitman incident, such as that of Peter Hall. Although he escaped the violence of the Whitman incident he disappeared shortly after and presumably was either murdered or drowned. I use the more conservative count.
[398] "Pioneer Pageant," 7.

Fields, Flowers, [and] Butterflies."[399] The dancers collapsed as Dunn's dance conveyed the tragic event extending the trauma of the Whitman incident to the landscape, while burying the event's complexities. Producers promoted this allegorical dance as a "more poignant and graphic" means of conveying the historical importance of the Whitman incident than a literal reenactment, further betraying a detachment between the actual historical event and the various layers of meaning ascribed to it. That disconnect had emerged decades before, in the immediate aftermath of the incident and influenced people's understanding of the conflict, the historic value placed on those killed, and subsequent recreations of the event.

The use of symbolism to recreate the Whitman incident distinguished the scene from the remainder of the pageant. Alternately titled the *Pioneer Pageant*, all other historical episodes within the production claimed to faithfully recreate the events portrayed. Only the final sequence, which imagined the region's future prosperity, employed a similar level of allegory and dance as narrative devices.[400] Such modes of storytelling appeared regularly in the historical pageantry tradition, although most pageant creators avoided representing important local occurrences only through abstraction.[401] Of the scenes that comprised *How the West was Won*, the Whitman incident arguably held the greatest significance, with its seventy-fifth anniversary providing the initial impetus for creating the pageant, and its relegation to allegory was

[399] "Official Program, 1923, Pioneer Pageant: How the West Was Won," (Walla Walla: Inland Printing & Publishing Company, 1923), 17, Pioneer Pageant Records, Penrose Library.
[400] Ibid., 23.
[401] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 120–121.

therefore especially unusual.[402] A later unproduced version of the script suggests the necessity for obscuring the violence of this particular scene to protect children in the audience; yet subsequent vignettes depict warfare between Native Americans and the U.S. Calvary, show a man shot down in the street as part of a drunken dispute, and recreate a lynching.[403] That some deaths could be reproduced without regard to audience sensitivities—and, in the case of the shooting and the lynching, actually appear as humorous incidents—reflects the varied spaces occupied by bloodshed in early-twentieth-century considerations of the West. The victims' and perpetrators' race and gender matter deeply in what counted—and counts—as violence. While particular brutal acts appeared as necessary components of the myth of U.S. westward expansion, others disrupted the ideals of the colonial project, preventing their full reveal seventy-five years after the fact. One death in particular troubled renderings of the Whitman incident beyond *How the West was Won*—that of Narcissa Prentiss Whitman, the only woman killed.

This chapter examines two renderings of the Whitman incident, with an emphasis on portrayals of Narcissa Whitman and her demise. Besides *How the West was Won*, I investigate the never released silent film *Martyrs of Yesterday*. As conceived and created in early 1919 by Raymond Wells, a successful Hollywood writer and director with long standing connections to Portland's burgeoning theater scene, this movie focused on the Whitman's lives at Waíiletpu and included an extensive reenactment of their deaths. Although Well's professional experience differed from that of the author of *How the*

[402] Stephen B. L. Penrose, *How the West was Won: As Produced at Walla Walla, Washington June 6 and 7, 1923* (Walla Walla: Inland Printing & Publishing Company, 1923), unpaged, Pioneer Pageant Records, WCMSS 293, Penrose Library.
[403] Stephen B. L. Penrose, *How the West was Won: An Historical Pageant* (Walla Walla: Inland Printing & Publishing Company, 1927), 23.

West was Won, Whitman College president Stephen Penrose, the two men had overlapping intentions in creating their respective works that understood the narratives of the Waíiletpu mission and Whitman incident as relevant to contemporary audiences. Beyond Wells and Penrose, both productions engaged people central to the preservation and dissemination of early Oregon history including members of the Oregon and Washington Historical Societies and survivors of the Whitman incident. Accordingly, these productions offer important insights into the continued significance of the Whitman incident to early twentieth-century understandings of Oregon's territorial era as well as the often complicated relationship between race, gender, and violence in recounting the early history of the state.

Created just four years apart, *How the West was Won* and *Martyrs of Yesterday* overwhelmingly repeated a popular rhetoric that celebrated the Whitmans as key participants in the U.S. colonial efforts, yet both works maintained an awareness of the negative aspects of this legacy—that there were far-reaching repercussions of the Whitmans' entrance into the region. This awareness allowed treatments of race and ethnicity within both *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won* that broke from prior representations of the Whitman incident. Still, the two productions presented idealized depictions of Marcus and Narcissa Whitman that conflated their race and genders with their respective importance to the U.S. colonial project. This interpretation of the Whitmans had a basis in nineteenth-century renderings of the missionaries while also reflecting an understanding of violence, sacrifice, and patriotism particular to the post-World War I era in which these shows appeared. Finally, as performances, *Martyrs*

of Yesterday and *How the West was Won* offered physical embodiments of the historical people that contained a different resonance for audiences than written accounts. How this event was reenacted within both productions betrays the cultural importance placed not just on the incident, but also on particular components of it.

Narcissa

Born in upstate New York in 1808, Whitman entered the annals of Oregon history at the age of twenty-eight as an appointee of the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Missions (ABCFM). Founded in 1810 by New England Congregationalists, the ABCFM's organizers employed "foreign" within their organizational title as both a cultural and regional signifier. In the early years of its existence, the ABCFM sent nearly as many Protestant missionaries to work among Native American tribes in the southeastern United States as to various locals throughout Southeast Asia. The perception of the Oregon Country as "foreign" space in the 1830s and Whitman's willingness to enter it became an important component in the lore that developed around her. Whitman made the long trek west with her new husband Marcus, who intended to serve the region as a doctor and a missionary, fellow missionaries Henry and Eliza Hart Spalding, and layman William H. Gray. Doing so distinguished Narcissa and Eliza as the first two white women to cross the Rocky Mountains and enter the Pacific Northwest.[404] In both *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won*, as elsewhere, this act manifested in the

[404] Some accounts describe Narcissa Whitman and Eliza Spalding as the first white women to enter what would become the entire western United States. Importantly, this assessment depends on a construction of white ethnicity that excluded Spanish women living in Alta California prior to Whitman and Spalding's arrival in the Oregon Territory.

Figure 3.1 Scene from *How the West was Won* (1924). The character of Narcissa Whitman, as played by Audrey Speer, stands second from the left. (Pioneer Pageant Collection, Penrose Library, Whitman College, Walla Walla, Washington)

conflation between the arrival of Whitman in the Pacific Northwest and that of white women as the carrier of European-style civilization or, as described within the historical pageant, "the home, the school, the flag…and children, arbiters of destiny."[405]

Many components of Whitman's experiences in the West support the conception of her as a purveyor of U.S. culture in a territory understood by most Americans as otherwise devoid of its influence. Along with her husband Marcus, she established the Waíiletpu mission near present-day Walla Walla and attempted to minister to members of the Cayuse tribe and convert them to Protestantism. Whitman also operated the first U.S.-style school in the region, serving both Native American and white children**.** Early

[405] Penrose, *How the West Was Won*, (1927) 16.

portrayals of the Whitmans often described them as successful in their endeavors and, although some critiqued Marcus's grander exploits, at the time of *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won* few depictions questioned the couple's missionary efforts. In contrast, recent examinations of Narcissa describe her as ambivalent in her responsibilities as a missionary, unprepared for the difficulty of the task, and disheartened by the Cayuses' cool reception. Some accounts suggest that the tragic drowning of her two-year-old daughter left her generally depressed. Whitman biographer Julie Roy Jeffrey, for example, offers a portrait of her as disillusioned with her marriage and missionary work within the first year of both, uncomfortable among those she was assigned to convert, and less adept at meeting the demands of missionary life than many of her contemporaries.[406] By most accounts, Whitman turned her attention away from the Cayuses, placing her energies instead in educating the children of fellow U.S. colonists residing in the mission and adopting a family of siblings whose parents had perished on the overland trek.[407] Evidence supporting this assessment appears in the earliest histories discussing Whitman and in the extensive collections of her surviving correspondence.[408] Writing on the Whitman's missionary efforts, Cayuse tribal member and one-time Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) Antone Minthorn places the missionaries' interests in serving the U.S. immigrants rather than the Cayuses and that "a more important plan of Marcus

[406] Julie Roy Jeffrey, *Converting the West: A Biography of Narcissa Whitman* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991).
[407] Ibid., 182, 186.
[408] William Henry Gray, *A History of Oregon, 1792-1849, Drawn from Personal Observation and Authentic Information* (Portland: Harris & Holman, 1870), 123.

Whitman's [than proselytizing to the Cayuses] was to actively promote the colonization of the Oregon Country."[409]

On November 29 and 30, 1847, members of the Cayuse tribe attacked the Waíiletpu mission. Whitman died during the two-day siege, and the Cayuse held survivors for an additional thirty days. Whitman's husband Marcus was set upon first, receiving a mortal head wound that killed him later that day. Soon after the initial assault, Narcissa was shot in either the shoulder or the arm. She survived for several hours, bleeding out and growing weaker before surrendering when she was shot several more times. While lying on the ground, witnesses reported, she was picked up by the hair and struck repeatedly in the face with either a whip or a club.[410] For months, and possibly years, prior to the incident, the Cayuse warned the Whitmans that they were unwelcome in the region and urged them to leave, as their mission increasingly served incoming U.S. colonists at the expense of their tribe. The violence also followed a measles epidemic in which a majority of white children survived while many of the afflicted Cayuse children died.[411] Finally, the attack began a war between U.S. colonists and the Cayuses that spanned two and a half years and only concluded with the conviction and execution of five prominent Cayuse for the crimes associated with the Whitman incident. Uncertainty about the accused's guilt, their terms of surrender, and the possibility that they took

[409] Minthorn, "Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life," 63.
[410] Clifford M. Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, and the Opening of Old Oregon*, v. 2, (Glendale, California: A. H. Clark and Co., 1972), 237.
[411] Minthorn, "Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life," 63–65.

Figure 3.2 In *How the West was Won* the Whitman incident was rendered through allegory and dance rather than a literal reenactment of the event. Grace Dunn (center) appeared as the black-cloaked figure of death. (Penrose Library)

responsibility for the murders to prevent further bloodshed emerged during the trial and persists to this day.[412]

The earliest published histories of the Whitman incident often refrained from providing the full details of Whitman's death, even as other murders at the Waíiletpu mission were described in full lurid detail, reflecting an idealization of her race, gender, religion, and role as a missionary in a frontier region of the United States. To champions of her efforts, Whitman's position as a white, Protestant woman partaking in a U.S. colonial project represented an important introduction of U.S.-style civilization into what became the western United States, with symbolic importance placed on Whitman

[412] Ronald B. Lansing, *Juggernaut: The Whitman Massacre Trial 1850* (Pasadena: Ninth Judicial Circuit Historical Society, 1993), 10.

frequently overwhelming recollections of the historical person. Similarly, her arrival in the region signified multiple levels of violence, from the forceful overtaking of Native American lands to the coerced erasure of Native culture, and her death often obscured these other implications of her missionary work, allowing popular chroniclers of her life and death to describe Whitman as innocent in the events that led to her tragic end.

Written by the Whitman's former traveling companion William H. Gray in 1870, *A History of Oregon, 1792–1849,* for example, provides a comprehensive description of each male death—including two teenage boys—but only implies Whitman's death, deflecting it through a detailed discussion of Andrew Rogers's murder. Rogers fell to a series of fatal gunshot wounds simultaneous to Whitman's death, but readers are informed that "a volley of guns was fired…part at Mrs. Whitman and part at [Rogers]," while only Rogers' body makes contact with the bullets.[413] Importantly, Gray's accounting was not neutral. Beyond his association with the Whitmans, Gray was a prominent proponent of the United States' annexation of the Oregon Territory and frequently vilified competing territorial interests. His description of events, as well as his treatment of Whitman in both life and death, served those political ends.[414] Thus, Gray interpreted the "rough veteran mountain hunter[s']" eagerness to greet Whitman during her passage across the Rocky Mountains as a desire for U.S. culture and civilization, because she represented the "form and white features of [each man's] mother," rather

[413] Gray, *A History of Oregon*, 470.
[414] Charles W. Smith in "A Contribution Toward a Bibliography of Marcus Whitman," described Gray's work as "Inaccurate. Should be used with extreme caution. Gray's main purpose seems to have been to throw all possible censure upon the Catholics and the Hudson Bay Co." *The Washington Historical Quarterly* 3, no. 1 (1908): 15.

than having more sinister intentions.[415] Similarly, Gray saw an international conspiracy in the outcome of the Whitman incident, noting that those associated with British or French interests all emerged unscathed. Gray's treatment of Whitman's life and death preconfigured how subsequent authors would invoke her legacy to serve myriad agendas. By the turn of the twentieth century, Whitman would stand within a single statement as both a symbol of woman suffrage and U.S. colonial expansion, both equations tied closely to her race and gender.[416]

Those who engaged the figure of Whitman toward particular political ends employed existing tropes of white womanhood. In written accounts such as Gray's, Whitman assumed an abstract quality devoid of physicality save those few descriptives that reinforced her whiteness, with more than one author transforming her auburn hair to blonde.[417] Analyzing similar treatments of white womanhood, historian Mary P. Ryan describes an important shift that occurred in the late nineteenth century when actual women began participating in such representations and public celebrations, including parades and pageants. "Women," she writes, "were no longer allegorical, hardly even symbolic; their bodies in themselves were ceremoniously presented for public view."[418] Although written accounts continued to document Whitman's experience (and, at least into the 1950s, certain writings portrayed her life and death in idealized terms almost

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[415] Gray, *A History of Oregon,* 123.
[416] Eva Emery Dye, "Remarks," Eva Emery Dye Papers, Mss 1089 [hereafter Dye Papers], box 10, folder 3, OHS Research Library.
[417] See for example, Eva Emery Dye, *McLoughlin and Old Oregon: A Chronicle* (Chicago: A. C. McClurg and Company, 1900) and O. W. Nixon, *Whitman's Ride Through Savage Lands with Sketches of Indian Life* (Winona Publishing Company, 1905). The association of Whitman as a blond even extends to a life-size figure of her on display at the Whitman National Historical Park Museum which features golden locks.
[418] Ryan, *Women in Public*, 46.

unrecognizable when compared to the historical events), actresses portrayed her for the first time on the stage and screen in the early twentieth century.[419] Productions such as *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won* easily exploited her malleability as a historical figure but struggled with how to portray her violent demise, just as written accounts had often failed to convey that aspect of her story with accuracy.

The tendency to obscure the details of Whitman's death resulted, in part, from the value many placed on it. Beginning with the earliest chroniclers of the Whitman incident, the Whitmans' murders transformed them into martyrs for their missionary work, but perhaps more significantly the couple became martyrs to the cause of U.S. territorial expansion into the Pacific Northwest.[420] Historical novelist Eva Emery Dye, whose work *McLoughlin and Old Oregon* served as the source material for at least two dramatizations of Whitman's life and death, made explicit the connection between colonialism and martyrdom, concluding her account of the Whitman incident with:

> Narcissa, the snowy Joan, led all the host of women to the conquest of the West, an innumerable train that is following yet to this day. The snowy Joan led her hosts; and, at last, like Joan of old, she ascended to God with the crown of a martyr.[421]

Dye's repeated use of "snowy" in describing Whitman places the murdered missionary within an extreme idealization of white womanhood, erasing such

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[419] See for example, Paul Cranston, *To Heaven on Horseback: The Romantic Story of Narcissa Whitman* (New York: Julian Messner, Inc., 1952).

[420] The Whitmans appeared frequently in the latter half of the nineteenth century in written materials whose authors included survivors of the Whitman incident, historians, propagandists, journalists, and novelists. According to historian Clifford Drury, "An extensive literature has grown out of the Whitman-Saved-Oregon controversy. The October 1908 issue of the *Washington Historical Quarterly* carried an article, 'A Contribution towards a Bibliography of Marcus Whitman' by Charles W. Smith, the late librarian of the University of Washington at Seattle. It took fifty-nine pages to carry the list of titles, with annotations, of books, pamphlets, magazine articles, and manuscripts bearing on the subject." Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, and the Opening of Old Oregon*, v. 2, 441.

[421] Dye, *McLoughlin and Old Oregon*, 346.

distinguishing features as Whitman's auburn hair and ascribing an ethereal quality to the historical person. For Dye's biographer, the above passage did more than equate Whitman's legacy with Joan of Arc. It also exemplified Dye's emphasis, in this and subsequent texts, on women's contributions to the United States' colonization of the West—an approach that both reflected Dye's suffrage work and appeared within her public statements arguing for white women's entitlement to the vote.[422] In a 1905 speech before an audience that included Susan B. Anthony, for example, Dye described the particular contributions of Whitman and Spalding: "With women and wagons Oregon was taken. The Indians expected to see an army with banners when the white men came, but no, the mother and child took Oregon."[423]

Emphasizing Narcissa over Marcus, Dye anticipated a shift in interpretations of the Whitman legacy that occurred during the first decades of the twentieth century, but the highly gendered attributes Dye ascribed to the couple had their basis in earlier ideals. As with other authors who contemplated the Whitmans in the second half of the nineteenth century, Dye's estimation of Marcus was based on his actions while that of Narcissa relied on her physicality. Within the mythology that swelled during the period, Marcus became a hero who argued the case for the U.S. annexation of the Oregon Territory before President Zachary Tyler and Secretary of State Daniel Webster, then led the first great wagon train of U.S. colonists into the Pacific Northwest in 1843. This idea culminated in Rev. Oliver. W. Nixon's 1895 *How Marcus Whitman Saved Oregon.* [424]

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[422] Sheri Bartlett Browne, *Eva Emery Dye: Romance with the West* (Corvallis: Oregon State University Press, 2004), 64.
[423] Dye, "Remarks."
[424] Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman*, v. 2, 442.

Written concurrently with *McLoughlin and Old Oregon,* Nixon imagined the power of Marcus's presence before Tyler and Webster, stating that "no man of discernment could look into his honest eyes and upon his manly bearing, without acknowledging that they were in the presence of the very best specimen of American Christian manhood."[425]

Those same assessments burdened Narcissa with the expectation that her presence signaled something greater. As in the passage from *How the West was Won,* her arrival to the frontier brought domesticated comforts abstracted into "the home" and "the school," with the establishment of a nation suggested by "the flag" following in close succession. Writing on gendered representations—particularly white women's—author Marina Warner notes: "The female form tends to be perceived as generic and universal, with symbolic overtones; the male as individual, even when it is being used to express a generalized idea."[426] Thus, Marcus might exemplify "the very best specimen American Christian manhood," making him representative of a particular group while also distinguishing him from others; in contrast, Narcissa vanishes behind notions of domesticity, including the idea that she foretold the arrival of children as "arbiters of destiny." Because the Whitman's only child died tragically at a young age, the association between Narcissa and children depended on the offspring of other women—and presumably the women themselves—following her to the Pacific Northwest. The Whitmans' eventual adoption of a family of orphans, a significant event in the mythology surrounding Narcissa, resulted from another woman dying en route to the region. The

[425] Oliver W. Nixon, *How Marcus Whitman Saved Oregon: A True Romance of Patriotic Heroism, Christian Devotion and Final Martyrdom…* (Chicago: Star Publishing Company, 1895), 125.
[426] Marina Warner, *Monuments and Maidens: The Allegory of the Female Form* (New York: Atheneum, 1985), 12.

Figure 3.3 *Martyrs of Yesterday* film still. Narcissa Whitman, as portrayed by Grace Lord, sits beside the young actress playing her ill-fated daughter Alice. (Martyrs of Yesterday Film Stills, Oregon Historical Society Research Library, Portland, Oregon)

domestic qualities attributed to Whitman, then, became a stand-in for all white women and children entering the Oregon Territory from the United States, thereby softening the colonial endeavor.

Such sentiments appear readily in other descriptions of nineteenth-century U.S. conquest. As Amy Kaplan brilliantly explores in "Manifest Domesticity," a clear—if uneasy—correlation exists between the domestic ideals prominent in the United States in the nineteenth century and the nation's colonial efforts. Analyzing an article describing

the arrival of U.S. white women in Texas from *Godey's Lady's Book* published seven months prior to the Whitman incident, Kaplan contests an idea of the domestic spaces associated with women in the nineteenth century as static; rather, she argues "that 'woman's true sphere' was in fact a mobile and mobilizing outpost that transformed conquered foreign lands into the domestic sphere of the family and nation." Kaplan further notes the capacity for such endeavors to conceal violence: "the focus on domesticity could work to efface all traces of violent conflict, as the foreign qualities…magically disappeared into the familiar landscape of New England."[427] Whitman represented the ideal of recreating a domestic space recognizable to U.S. citizens that both promised a familiar home front and erased homes and families that already occupied the space. Elevating Whitman necessarily functioned on exclusion. In the Pacific Northwest, that process included white men who had preceded Whitman into the territory, Native American men and women whose people had lived there for millennia, and the growing population of children born through marriages between British and French fur trappers and Native American women. Following her untimely death, Whitman's exaltation also limited Spalding's claims to the status afforded white womanhood, and in certain instances darkened her legacy. Where Dye described Whitman's auburn hair as "snowy," for example, blue-eyed Spalding became Narcissa's "dark-eyed devotee."[428]

[427] Amy Kaplan, *The Anarchy of Empire in the Making of U.S. Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2002), 25.
[428] Dye, *McLoughlin and Old Oregon*, 19, Browne also discusses Dye's treatment of the two women in *Eva Emery Dye*, 61–65.

From the first significant dramatization of the Whitman incident that appeared in the Pacific Northwest—Mary Carr Moore's 1912 Seattle opera *Narcissa* or *The Cost of Empire*—staged recreations of the event overwhelmingly emphasized the domestic realm associated with Narcissa over the exploits attributed to Marcus, a pattern followed by both *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won*.[429] Importantly, *Narcissa* had close ties to the later productions—as well as to other pageants and performances staged in Oregon and Washington, with many of the same people involved in creating those multiple renderings of the Whitman incident.[430] The story of *Narcissa* demonstrates the Whitmans' initial trek across the continent yet, once they establish the Waíiletpu mission, the action remains focused on the home Narcissa managed.[431] Similarly, both *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won* included episodes that occurred outside the region or that involved grand demonstrations of travel beyond Oregon's territorial boundaries

[429] There may have been smaller reenactments of the Whitman incident prior to the premiere of Moore's opera, but that seems unlikely. The Whitman incident was a popular topic in the Pacific Northwest throughout the sixty-five years period between its occurrence and the first staging of *Narcissa*. Activities associated with the Whitman incident generally received a good deal of press coverage, yet none of the major newspapers in Portland, Seattle, or Walla Walla describe a stage production depicting the Whitman incident before *Narcissa*. Further, stagings of Oregon history in general were not common practice in Oregon or Washington before the early 1900s, with *Narcissa* representing one of the first major examples of this trend. The Whitman incident did inspire productions elsewhere, including *The Pageant of Darkness and Light*, although this work did not include the Whitmans, their mission, nor their murders. See, Hamish Maccunn, Hugh Moss, and John Oxenham, *The Pageant of Darkness and Light* (New York: Young People's Missionary Movement of the United States and Canada, 1911).

[430] Although composed by Moore with her mother Sarah Pratt Carr writing the libretto, publicity cited as inspiration the works of Edmond Meany (actor in *The Wayfarer* and author of *Americanus*), Lee Morehouse (an important photographer of Native American culture and mores in the Pacific Northwest at the turn of the century who also contributed costumes and expertise to several historical pageants), Stephen Penrose (author of *How the West was Won*), and Eva Emery Dye (author of *McLoughlin and Old Oregon* and consultant on *Martyrs of Yesterday*). Moreover, Montgomery Lynch, an associate of Moore's and director of the Seattle pageants *The Wayfarer* and *Americanus*, proposed to Penrose the potential for transforming *Narcissa* into a historical pageant during the planning stages of *How the West was Won*, while Dye, following the failure of *Martyrs of Yesterday*, suggested employing the opera's script in the creation of a new silent film based upon the Whitman incident.

[431] Mary Carr Moore, *The Cost of Empire: Libretto for the Opera Narcissa* (Seattle: Stuff Printing Concern, 1912), 5.

but limited their portrayals of the Whitmans to the Waíiletpu mission once the couple arrived in the Pacific Northwest. *Martyrs*, for example, featured an extended prologue depicting the 1831 St. Louis, Missouri, meeting between Nez Perce tribal members Black Eagle, Speaking Eagle, Rabbit Skin Leggings, and No Horns on His Head and one-time Corps of Discovery leader General William Clark—an encounter that supposedly inspired the missionary movement into the Pacific Northwest—while limiting the Whitmans' portrayal to their work in what would become eastern Washington.[432] In the staging of *How the West was Won* an actual locomotive was driven onto the stage, but Marcus's reported travels east were confined to verse.[433] Each production represented an important shift away from the exploits attributed to Marcus and toward the domestic front associated with Narcissa, particularly *How the West was Won*.

Marcus had dominated retellings of the Whitmans' lives at the Waíiletpu mission throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century, with Narcissa relegated to a secondary position as a supportive missionary wife. The emphasis on Marcus, however, also provided the impetus for others to question his significance, and the inflated mythology that surrounded the doctor led historians, beginning with those in the Pacific Northwest, to investigate the veracity of his supposed actions.[434] Tensions surrounding this topic emerged in 1900 with an organized assault on the Whitman legacy as two academics, Yale Professor Edward Bourne and Chicago grammar school Principal

[432] "Oregon's Scenic Beauty used in Whitman Massacre Film," *Oregonian*, August 17, 1919. The intentions of the four Nez Perce men remain a matter of debate. See, for example Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman*, v. 2, 380–382.
[433] Penrose, *How the West was Won*, (1927), 13–22.
[434] Francis Fuller Victor, for example, largely repeated the actions attributed to Marcus as they appeared elsewhere in her 1870 text of Oregon history, *River of the West*. She took a more critical stance when writing much of H. H. Bancroft's *History of Oregon*, published sixteen years later.

William I. Marshal, began to publicly denounce many of the activities associated with Marcus Whitman, thereby drawing intellectual interest from beyond Oregon and Washington.[435] At the same time, others continued to virulently defend his legacy. Describing the vitriol that surrounded this subject in his *History of the State of Washington*, Edmond Meany wrote: "The wrangle over the causes of the massacre…bears no comparison to the dispute that has raged in recent years over the purposes of Whitman's winter ride over the mountains in 1842."[436] Meany, along with other commentators, positioned Penrose as the primary defender of Marcus Whitman, often pulling quotes from public addresses in which he suggested that the doctor deserved "a place in the Scriptures as an addition to the Acts of the Apostles" or that "the red of [the American] flag may well stand for the outpoured blood with which [Marcus] baptized this country in the name of God and of the United States." [437] Penrose significantly chastened his advocacy for Marcus Whitman in the final drafting of *How the West was Won*, perhaps in appeasement of this very conflict.

Weariness and disdain over the Marcus Whitman debate provided one reason for Whitman chroniclers to emphasize his wife instead. Still, other uglier purposes existed for shifting the focus to Narcissa's domestic realm and the safety it presumably proffered. While Meany asserted that the controversy surrounding Marcus's deeds while alive—particularly his winter journey eastward—overwhelmed all other aspects of the

[435] For a longer discussion of the literature surrounding this debate see, Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman*, 441–445, and Smith, "A Contribution Toward a Bibliography of Marcus Whitman," 3–62.
[436] Edmond S. Meany, *History of the State of Washington* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1924), 122.
[437] From a public address in Olympia, WA, reprinted in Meany, *History of the State of Washington*, 122, and Penrose's inaugural address at Whitman College, June 11, 1895, reprinted in Smith, "A Contribution Toward a Bibliography of Marcus Whitman," 22.

Whitmans' legacy, their deaths were called upon repeatedly throughout the latter half of the nineteenth century to justify violence and exclusion. Two groups in particular suffered as a result of the Whitman incident: the Cayuse (though ultimately the violence afflicted upon Native American communities exceeded tribal identification) and Catholics through a condemnation of the missionaries that preceded lay practitioners to the region. This legacy troubled renderings of the couple during the first decade of the twentieth century and influenced the content of *Narcissa*, *Martyrs of Yesterday*, and *How the West was Won*.

For the Cayuse, the Whitman incident led to two and a half years of war with U.S. colonists. During that time all Cayuse were pursued under the pretence of locating those guilty of the attack on the Waíiletpu mission. The surrender of five Cayuse—Clokomas, Kiamasumkin, Isiaashelukas, Tomahas, and Tiloukaikt—near what is now The Dalles, Oregon, ended the fighting but began a new phase of relations between the Cayuses and the U.S. colonists in which the Oregon territorial government acted outside its allowable jurisdiction.[438] CTUIR tribal judge William Johnson describes the trial as "the first gross violation of our inherent sovereignty." As Johnson clarifies, the Whitman incident occurred within Indian, rather than Oregon, territory, yet U.S. colonists proceeded as though the area belonged to the United States, an assumption that influenced all subsequent interactions between the United States and Native Americans of the Pacific Northwest.[439] Treaties that actually changed the colonial boundaries would not emerge

[438] Minthorn, "Wars, Treaties, and the Beginning of Reservation Life," 64–65.
[439] Charles F. Luce and William Johnson, "The Beginning of Modern Tribal Governance and Enacting Sovereignty," in *As Days Go By*, 172–173.

for another five years. At the trial, the accused had to communicate with their lawyers via an interpreter. The charges against them ignored Cayuse tribal practice of killing ineffectual medicine men—which Marcus Whitman became when the medicine he offered failed to quell the measles epidemic among the Cayuse. Their case was decided before an all-white jury, and prosecutors repeatedly referred to Tomahas as "the murderer."[440] The five men's attorneys raised many of these issues in their appeal. When the appeal was denied, the lawyers did not file a second; the men had already been executed.[441] The devastation of the Cayuse War and the trial's disregard of tribal sovereignty foreshadowed later tribal displacement to the Umatilla Reservation.

As other scholars have noted, Moore, along with her mother Sarah Pratt Carr who wrote the libretto, attempted to address this tension within her opera *Narcissa* by creating sympathetic Native American characters and framing the Whitman incident as a demand for justice rather than an unwarranted attack. The show's program, for example, included the explanation that "the Whitmans least of all people deserved their martyrdom; yet according to Indian ethics—probably as good as any in the sight of God—their lives paid only a just debt."[442] This passage simultaneously provides justification for the Whitman incident from a Native American perspective and removes all culpability from the Whitmans for their fate. Moore contextualizes the violence of the Whitman incident within a nineteenth-century Cayuse understanding of justice, one which framed Marcus as a failed medical practitioner (for his inability to cure measles among the Cayuse

[440] Ibid.
[441] Ibid.
[442] Moore, *The Cost of Empire*, 3. This passage is also considered in Levy, *Frontier Figures*, 135, and Catherine P. Smith and Cynthia S. Richardson, *Mary Carr Moore: American Composer* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1987), 71.

children) and in which death was the prescribed punishment. The assertion that the Whitmans were undeserving of their fate depends upon an unquestioning evaluation of their ultimate purpose. Though Moore and Pratt strived to create sympathetic Native American characters, these same characters' successes depended upon their acceptance of U.S. territorial conquest. As the alternate title *The Cost of Empire* suggests, the "debt" paid by the Whitmans served the larger endeavor of empire building rather than represent a punishment for the couple's personal failings.

Musicologist Beth E. Levy describes the limited treatment within *Narcissa* of Native American characters, writing that although Moore sought to create a compassionate portrayal of Native American life, as with many of her contemporaries, she "walked a fine line between [doing so] and propagating racial stereotypes."[443] Levy further comments that "perhaps predictably, the Christian Indians sing differently from the non-Christian ones," a delineation that also indicated which characters were friendly toward the Whitmans and which were hostile.[444] On the stage set by Moore, the majority of the Native American characters moved beyond friendliness to sentiments closer to cherishing the missionaries, particularly Narcissa, who was described alternately within the show as a "golden singing bird" and "the daughter of the sun."[445]

To Moore's biographers, Catherine Parsons Smith and Cynthia S. Richardson, the emphasis on Narcissa offered the most interesting aspect of the production, particularly

[443] Levy, *Frontier Figures*, 15.
[444] Ibid., 135.
[445] Moore, *The Cost of Empire*, 5, 23.

as it related to the U.S. colonial project in the Pacific Northwest. According to Smith and Richardson:

> The point of view from which the story is told is really the most unique and original thing about *Narcissa*. Here, after all, is a grand opera in which the winning of the American West is seen through the sensibility of a female protagonist sympathetically and accurately portrayed in her historical role … Moore's richest and most insightful musical portrayal is reserved for Narcissa, the character both librettist and composer understood best. It is Narcissa who is the most human and compelling character in the opera, and thus it is her view of the events portrayed that inevitably colors the unfolding of the drama.[446]

Smith and Richardson saw Moore's emphasis on Whitman as revolutionary, but, as with Dye before her, that work was in line with a shifting focus from Marcus to Narcissa. Centering the narrative around Narcissa leaves the couple innocent at their deaths (which, for Narcissa, occurred behind a set piece) while creating sympathetic Native American characters and exploring elements of U.S. empire. If the actions of those who carried out the Whitman incident are justified because Marcus failed to cure a measles epidemic, centering the story on Narcissa avoids that admission of fault. Similarly, if the incident's perpetrators were responding to the increased influx of Americans—as the opera more directly suggests—then Marcus is again at fault for leading the first great wagon train across the continent. In both scenarios the emphasis on Narcissa puts the fault off-stage.

Concentrating on Narcissa also offered relief to other tensions associated with the incident, including the scapegoating of recently arrived Catholic missionaries—often associated with the Hudson's Bay Company—for inciting the incident in their efforts to

[446] Smith and Richardson, *Mary Carr Moore*, 81–82.

gain land and converts under the control of the Waíiletpu mission.[447] This anti-Catholic sentiment first emerged in the writings of Henry Spalding, whose life was arguably saved during the Whitman incident by Father John Baptist A. Brouillet, the same priest Spalding later engaged in a public debate over the Catholic role in the incident. Between June 1848 and May 1849, Spalding assisted fellow Protestant, Reverend John S. Griffin, in publishing the anti-Catholic paper *Oregon American and Evangelical Unionist*. There, Spalding created seven articles implicating Catholic missionaries in the Whitman incident. The conflict between Spalding and Brouillet ultimately rose to the federal level in executive documents and, perhaps most grossly, appeared on Eliza Hart Spalding's headstone, marking her 1851 death with the sentiment: "She always felt that the Jesuit missionaries were the leading cause of the massacre."[448]

Besides saddling a dead woman with an eternity of anti-Catholic feeling, the Whitman incident legacy haunted Catholics in the region through at least the end of the nineteenth century. Idahoan Miles Cannon, active in the Pacific Northwest historical community, encountered the presence of anti-Catholic ideas associated with the Whitman incident during the event's fiftieth anniversary. Attending various commemorative acts in Walla Walla during the week of November 29, 1897, Cannon found complaint among members of the Catholic community about the anti-Catholic sentiment created in the Whitman incident portrayals. Witnessing this conflict inspired Cannon to investigate the

[447] Although this critique often extended to both the Catholic missionaries and the Hudson's Bay Company (HBC), only the former was persecuted under the pretence of inciting the Whitman incident. The boundary dispute between the United States and Britain, as represented by the HBC, was in the process of being resolved at the time of the Whitman incident, while practitioners of the Catholic religion continue to migrate to the Pacific Northwest through to the modern day.
[448] Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman*, v. 2, 433–34, 438–39. Spalding's body has since been moved and this headstone no longer exists.

specifics of the incident and to locate a more neutral means of recounting this history that he published in *Waiilatpu, Its Rise and Fall, 1836–1847*. Cannon found relief in researching Narcissa Whitman, writing:

> In searching through the darkened corridors of the past, it has been a source of much gratification to the author to find in Narcissa Prentiss Whitman a character well intended to exemplify the higher and nobler qualities of our race. It was her great privilege to be the first American woman to cross the continent and look upon the waters of the Columbia River, and that alone should entitled [sic] her to distinction. But when, moreover, the records of the past reveal in her the beautiful personality we so much admire, and the womanly qualities we would perpetuate, it would be strange indeed if her followers, actuated by her untimely death and the serene and courageous manner in which she faced it, failed to confer upon her, in love and in memory, the mystic crown of martyrdom." [449]

Cannon's assessment of Whitman as demonstrating "the womanly qualities we would perpetuate" created for him, and others, a removal from the controversies associated with the Whitman incident.

Unlike the debates that mired the legacy of Marcus's actions while alive, the uses of the Whitman incident to perpetuate violence and exclusion should have implicated Narcissa, who both worked beside her husband in their colonial project and suffered his same fate. Yet Cannon understood Narcissa as transcending those concerns: her character was of a sort that disallowed using her death to create conflict or strife. Again, that interpretation of Narcissa depended on the idea that she embodied the ideals of both her race and gender. In making this argument, Cannon articulated a larger purpose for the shift in attention from Marcus to Narcissa. At the time of Cannon's research and writing, Narcissa had been subject to a similar level of mythologizing as her husband, but she had

[449] Miles Cannon, *Waiilatpu: Its Rise and Fall, 1836–1847: A Story of Pioneer Days in the Pacific Northwest Based Entirely upon Historical Research* (Boise: Capital News Job Rooms, 1915), viii.

not met the same level of critique—nor would she until the late twentieth century.[450] She similarly avoided the controversies associated with her death. Where Marcus came to represent all the negativity associated with the Whitmans, their mission, and their deaths, Narcissa offered proponents of U.S. colonization a safe way to recall this legacy.

Martyrs of Yesterday

Martyrs of Yesterday's Narcissa, as portrayed by Hollywood actress Grace Lord, emulated the idealization long associated with the historical figure yet defied typical renderings of Whitman by depicting her death. Surviving stills show Lord's Whitman suffering a great loss at the death of her only daughter, resuming her domestic (colonial) obligations by caring for other immigrants' children, and valiantly meeting her own demise—perhaps more so than the historical person.[451] In *Martyrs*, Narcissa survives the initial attack on the mission physically unscathed and, confronted with the imminent deaths of her husband and one of the teenage boys in her care, becomes a central point of strength for other frightened hostages to draw upon.[452] Here, the fictional Whitman seemingly exceeds the capacities of her real life counterpart who, shot early in the attack, reportedly spent her remaining hours seeking comfort from those around her. In the film Whitman suffers a single gunshot wound to the chest and, embraced by a fellow

[450] See Jeffrey, *Converting the West*.
[451] "*Martyrs of Yesterday* Film Stills Photograph Collection," Org. Lot 976, OHS Research Library. Forty-seven films stills survive of the original eight-reel movie. The original footage was probably lost through either a 1923 studio fire that destroyed American Lifeograph Studios located in Northeast Portland or through the disintegration of the fragile nitrate film that by 1950 had destroyed most of the studio's remaining movies. See David L. Moomaw, "Interview Tape Prepared for Ellen S. Thomas," (3/18/1988), Lewis Moomaw Papers Mss 2789 [hereafter Moomaw Papers], OHS Libraries," for a description of both events.
[452] "*Martyrs of Yesterday* Film Stills Photograph Collection."

Figure 3.4 *Martyrs of Yesterday* film still. Lord's Whitman served as a central point of strength in scenes depicting the attack on the mission. (Oregon Historical Society)

immigrant, bravely faces the tragedy of her mortality before joining her family in heaven.[453] This rendering breaks with nineteenth-century treatments of Whitman's demise but remains well within that century's notions of sentimentality and the so-called "Good Death."[454] Accordingly, though remarkable in its willingness to depict Whitman's death, the levels of inaccuracy, exaggeration, and romanticization in that particular scene

[453] Ibid.
[454] For extended discussion of the nineteenth-century conception the Good Death please see, Drew Gilpin Faust, "Dying: 'To Lay Down My Life'," in *This Republic of Suffering: Death and the American Civil War* (New York: Vintage Books, 2008), 3-31.

Figure 3.5 *Martyrs of Yesterday* film still. The melodramatic depiction of Whitman's death obscured the brutality of the event. (Oregon Historical Society)

further obscured the brutality of the event. This treatment of Whitman—as well as all representations of violence in *Martyrs*—reflects both cinematic conventions and the particular interests of those involved in the film's creation.

A hopeful contender in the emerging cinematic genre of historical epics—for which Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* served as the standard-bearer—*Martyrs of Yesterday* held the dual purposes of committing the Whitman legacy to film and launching a Portland-based movie industry. The film's production occurred under the auspices of the previously established American Lifeograph Company and the newly

formulated Multnomah Film Corporation.[455] The former, under *Martyrs'* cinematographer Lewis Moomaw, was in process of shifting corporate focus from producing newsreels to feature films.[456] The latter group represented local investors' $25,000 interest in the movie.[457] According to historian Ellen S. Thomas, this interest derived from a sense among local businessmen that the appearance of Northwest scenes in playing throughout the nation would promote both the region and its industries.[458] Portland's potential as a film center quickly drew the involvement of the city's Chamber of Commerce who dispatched representatives to Los Angeles in an effort to assess how Portland might better accommodate the needs of the movie industry.[459] Yet, investors also had a clear sense of the movies themselves as a profit-making venture with the expectation of a rapid financial turnaround occasionally hindering Portland's cinematic growth, particularly as the initial investors frequently sold their stock to secondary interests who were ignorant of the industry's intricacies. Moomaw's son David recalled this as a constant frustration to his father, that:

> People would invest in my Dad's productions and let's say they had maybe a 6 month note, alright, instead of keeping that note themselves, they would then sell the note to other investors who knew nothing about the making of motion pictures. If there was the slightest delay at the end of 6 months, like distributorship or weather or editing or any of the hundred things that are associated with the making of movies, why the investors who had bought the stock from the original investors they knew nothing

[455] "Massacre Film Setting," *Sunday Oregonian*, May 11, 1919.
[456] Ellen S. Thomas, "'Scooping the Field': Oregon's Newsreel Industry, 1911-1933," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 90, no. 3 (Fall 1989), 241.
[457] "Film will Show History," *Morning Oregonian*, April 29, 1919.
[458] Thomas, "'Scooping the Field,'" 241-242.
[459] "Portland May be Made Film Center," *Sunday Oregonian*, June 27, 1920.

about this. All they wanted was their money and immediately was lawsuit, lawsuit, lawsuit.[460]

The younger Moomaw also viewed Portland's cinematic potential through a more cynical lens than that of the city's boosters. Explaining his father's decision to locate in the Northwest in the 1910s, David offered the facetious descriptive that, "Portland at that time was becoming the theatre and filmmaking capitol of the United States. There was alittle [sic.] bit going on in New York and there was alittle bit going on in what was then to be called Hollywood."[461]

Jesting aside, *Martyrs of Yesterday* represented one of the first attempts to create a large-scale, narrative picture in the Pacific Northwest.[462] In doing so, the movie utilized existing regional talent as well as others imported from "what was then to be called Hollywood." Director Raymond Wells straddled these two positions, gaining his early acting experience through the Baker Stock Company, which had, among other area achievements, furnished the lead performers and much of the production staff in the Portland rendition of the *Bridge of the Gods*.[463] In Southern California, Wells found work with the Triangle Film Corporation—the cinematic production company founded by D.W. Griffith and fellow filmmakers Thomas Ince and Mack Sennett.[464] When casting *Martyrs*, Wells utilized his Triangle associations. Besides Lord—who was also a onetime Baker performer and Wells' wife—the Triangle alumni in *Martyrs* included:

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[460] Moomaw, "Interview Tape Prepared for Ellen S. Thomas," 7.
[461] Ibid., 6-7.
[462] The Oregon Governor's Office of Film and Television documents four movies filmed in Oregon prior to *Martyrs of Yesterday*: the narrative films *The Fisherman's Bride* (1908), *Grace's Visit to the Rogue Valley* (1915), and *The Stolen Pie* (1916), and the documentary *Where Cowboy is King* (1915).
[463] "Whipping a Stage Company into Line," *Sunday Oregonian*, December 7, 1913.
[464] "Martyrs of Yesterday Filmed in Portland, Tells Massacre Story," *East Oregonian*, June 11, 1919.

Ralph Lewis, who had previously starred in *The Birth of a Nation* among other Griffith projects, as Marcus Whitman; noted character actor and frequent Ince collaborator, J. Barney Sherry as Chief Tiloukaiakt; Misao Seki, a Japanese transplant who regularly performed both Asian and Native American roles, as the chief's son Ed Tiloukaikt; and renowned Danish actor turned burgeoning Hollywood star Jean Hersholt as one of the four Nez Perce in the film's opening sequence, the immigrant Nathan Kimball, who held Lord's Narcissa through her death scene, and Wells' assistant director.[465]

The employment of established Hollywood actors lent prestige to the production. At the same time, Wells recruited actors locally for secondary roles and depended upon recognized authorities of area history when compiling the film's scenario. Cast estimates range from several hundred performers to an optimistic 3000.[466] This included experienced entertainers, such as members of the Baker Stock Company and the approximately thirty performers from the CTUIR, as well as eager volunteers who furnished their own costumes.[467] Wells also engaged as consultants the Oregon Historical Society's president and chief curator, Frederick V. Holman and George H. Himes respectively, author Eva Emery Dye, and Whitman incident survivors Elizabeth Sager Helm and Gertrude Hall Denny, who were both ten years old at the time of the attack, were among the hostages held for thirty days, and who later published accounts of their

[465] "Chief Tiloukakt and his Bad Band of Murderous Redmen who have Gathered on Clackamas, not to Massacre, but to Pose for Films," *Sunday Oregonian*, June 1, 1919, and "Motion Picture Progress Big," *Morning Oregonian*, January 1, 1920.
[466] "Film will Show History," and "Oregon's Scenic Beauty used in Whitman Massacre Film."
[467] "Old Scenes to be Taken," *Morning Oregonian*, May 8, 1919, "Indians Coming to City for Motion Picture," *Oregon City Enterprise*, May 23, 1919, and "Oregon Picture is Making Progress at Portland Studio," *Oregon City Enterprise*, May 23, 1919.

experiences.[468] Having such persons involved in the project created an aura of authenticity that moved the film beyond simple entertainment to what at least one member of the press described as a "historical-educational-melodrama."[469]

That advocates of the film understood it as embodying these three questionably compatible components betrayed a secondary value placed upon *Martyrs*; that it might serve as a new mode to preserve the history of the Whitman incident. Wells's pursuit of historical accuracy—as evidenced through his employment of experts and eye witnesses—represented a particular appeal to a broader national audience based on the recent successes of films such as *The Birth of a Nation*.[470] Presenting a melodramatic movie as historical truth legitimized viewer enjoyment of a medium that had yet to gain full middle-class respectability. Those seeking financial profit from *Martyrs* presumably appreciated the interplay between histrionics and history as a means toward filling seats. For those invested in perpetuating Oregon's pioneer legacy, however, the film's educational and historical aspects offered audiences an important lesson in area history; while as a melodrama, *Martyrs* potentially popularized the story beyond the region. This secondary purpose is perhaps best exemplified by Northwest colonial icon Cyrus Walker's interest in the venture.

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[468] "Film will Show History," "Historical Pictures are to be Taken Here," *Oregon City Enterprise*, May 9, 1919, and Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and the Opening of Old Oregon*, v. 2, 448.
[469] "Film will Show History."
[470] Though the producers of *Martyrs of Yesterday* hoped to find financial success with their historical epic, a genre made financially viable by the success of *The Birth of a Nation*, the local press did not draw correlations between the two films.

Based upon his birth at the Waíiletpu mission in 1838, Walker was exalted as the first white male born in the Oregon Territory.[471] In this role he was frequently called upon to publically represent Oregon's colonial legacy. Though not asked to participate on *Martyrs of Yesterday*, Walker offered his services to Himes—an acquaintance from the Oregon Pioneer Association where both men had served in leadership positions. Learning of the film through local newspaper accounts, Walker contacted Himes with the concern that the movie might fail to accurately portray the mission grounds. Of particular worry was that most existing renderings of the Whitman mission, "don't show the Walla Walla river back of the flour mill, nor the ditch taking water from the mill pond and passing in front of the Whitman home."[472] In support of this assertion Walker included a hand-drawn map of the mission grounds and multiple personal antidotes that Sager Helm could purportedly corroborate.[473] Walker's personal plea to Holmes asked not only that the film portray the Whitman incident with as much accuracy as possible but also that it serve as a record of Walker himself. Interest by persons such as Himes in preserving the region's colonial past depended upon the fear that it might be lost as the people directly associated with this history increasingly died of old age, a group that, at the time of *Martyrs*, Walker found himself approaching. As he aged, Walker went from being the first American boy born in the Oregon Territory to the oldest living person born in the Oregon Territory. For Walker the cinematic preservation of the Walla Walla River and the ditch that traversed

[471] "Cyrus H. Walker is 81 Years Old," *Albany Democrat*, December 9, 1919. Newspaper articles and other sources also frequently described Walker as the first white man born west of the Rockies. Significantly, both designations relied upon the exclusion of any boys born in the areas of northern New Spain claiming Spanish descent or the male offspring of British and French fur trappers from the status of whiteness.
[472] Cyrus H. Walker to George H. Himes," April 30, 1919, Whitman Mission vertical file, OHS Research Library.
[473] Ibid.

the property—both of which represented personal memories—translated into a preservation of self; if sites Walker interacted with survived in celluloid then he might do the same.

While Holman, Himes, Helms, and Denny consulted on *Martyrs*, Dye entered the project with grander expectations for her role, that her book *McLoughlin and Old Oregon* would serve as the source material and that Wells would collaborate with her on writing the scenario. Dye assumed an authoritative position on the set, appearing beside Wells as he directed the actors, yet ultimately felt her part circumscribed, a sense she later used to explain the film's failure.[474] Arguably, a greater contribution by Dye or a more faithful adherence to *McLoughlin and Old Oregon* would have generated a different movie. The height of action in *Martyrs* centers on the Whitman incident with Narcissa's death scene affording a particularly dramatic moment, yet in *McLoughlin* the violence occurs outside the text's narrative. Her chapter, "The Whitman Massacre," utilizes a series of vignettes in which others learn of the attack (yet not of the details) and then take steps to avoid a similar fate.[475] Dye's treatment of the Whitman incident diverges from that of many of her contemporaries, who graphically described multiple scenes of violence only to balk at recreating Narcissa's demise. In contrast, Dye largely obscures the event but offers a single hint to the carnage when referencing Narcissa. Before Dye bestows her heroine with the crown of martyrdom she notes that, "Whitman's fair hair floated in blood"—an act that returns Whitman's hair to its natural auburn rather than the blonde of Dye's

[474] Dye to McMonies, "Outgoing Correspondence, 1910–1921," Dye Papers, box 4, folder 14.
[475] Dye, *McLoughlin and Old Oregon*, 344-346.

imagination and momentarily, with Whitman's mortality, restores her personhood from the realm of myth.[476]

Martyrs' depiction of Narcissa's death varied significantly from contemporary portrayals such as Dye's and even Cannon's hesitant, if thorough, recreation of the event. This separation depended less upon the film's various inaccuracies—as many accountings of the Whitman incident contained some level of exaggeration—and more upon its easy portrayal of Whitman's demise. Where other sources retreated from Narcissa's murder *Martyrs of Yesterday* employed her death as a central feature of the film, an act that reflected cinematic conventions of the time and that allowed a particular interpretation of the Whitman incident and its aftermath. Beginning with the first narrative films and carrying through Griffith's *Birth of a Nation*—with its immediate connections to *Martyrs*—staged assaults of white women often served as catalysts for legal and extralegal retribution, particularly in depictions where the perpetrator is a man of color.[477] In *Martyrs*—as with Moore's opera before it—an emphasis upon Narcissa's domestic realm softened the Whitman's positions as colonialists and lessened the couple's culpability in their own demise. At the same time, showing (to a degree) the brutality that befell Narcissa justified the retribution meted out against her attackers.

Most accountings of the Whitman incident that preceded *Martyrs* unquestionably accepted the Cayuse War and the execution of five Cayuse leaders as a natural outcome of the attack, yet Wells, similar to Moore, attempted a complicated interpretation of the

[476] Ibid., 346.
[477] Amy Louise Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle: Witnessing Racial Violence in America, 1890–1940* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009), 137–138, 153–154.

Whitman incident in which many of the event's perpetrators were themselves victims. This occurred particularly around the depiction of Chief Tiloukaikt—one of the five Cayuse executed in Oregon City—which multiple newspaper reports described as the film's lead role.[478] Audience members witnessed Tiloukaikt stirred to action after suffering a great personal loss and expending serious contemplation before undertaking what became the Whitman incident.[479] Yet, similar to Moore's *Narcissa*, *Martyrs* ultimately reproduced a racially-based ideology that justified both the intentions of those who attacked the mission and the subsequent retribution by U.S. immigrants. A common interpretation of the Whitman incident at the time of *Martyrs* blamed one or the other of two historical figures for instigating the attack. Both potential perpetrators were a recently arrived Native American and Caucasian "half breed." This reading exploited fears of miscegenation and attributed the incident to an outsider.[480] Whatever terrible actions Tilokaikt and his followers undertook, ultimately they were led (or misled) into this course by a disreputable source that was disinvested in the region. In *Narcissa*, Tom Hill, or Delaware Tom, filled this role.[481] In *Martyrs*, the position fell to Joe Lewis as played by Hollywood import Guy Reynolds.[482]

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[478] "Chief Tiloukakt and his Bad Band of Murderous Redmen."
[479] *Martyrs of Yesterday* film stills, OHS Research Library.
[480] Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and the Opening of Old Oregon, v. 2*, 236-237.
[481] Moore, *Narcissa*, 5.
[482] "In the Land of the Setting Sun; or, Martyrs of Yesterday," AFI Catalog of Feature Films, http://www.afi.com/members/catalog/DetailView.aspx?s=1&Movie=2023, accessed September 25, 2015, and "Oregon's Scenic Beauty used in Whitman Massacre Film.".

Figure 3.6 *Martyrs of Yesterday* film still. Guy Reynolds as Joe Lewis. In this sequence Lewis locates the poison that he will accuse the Whitmans of using against the Cayuse. (Oregon Historical Society)

Accountings of Lewis vary widely on both his racial makeup and his geographic origin, including those provided by the two witnesses that consulted on *Martyrs*.[483] In their published renditions, both Denny and Helm identified Lewis with the "half-breed" epithet and placed him at the mission during the attack.[484] Helm's inclusion of Lewis, however, ends with those details, affording him a minimal role in the Whitman

[483] Drury, *Marcus and Narcissa Whitman and the Opening of Old Oregon, v. 2*, 236.
[484] "An Interview with a Survivor of the Whitman Massacre," *Oregon Native Son* 1, no. 2 (June 1899), 63-65, and "New Light Thrown on Whitman Death," *Sunday Oregonian*, October 30, 1932.

incident.[485] In contrast, Denny describes Lewis as a "Frenchman" who was both, "the ringleader of the trouble," and ultimately the savior of the surviving women and children, that without his interceding the attacking Cayuse would have killed all remaining hostages.[486] The movie's cataloged synopsis identifies Lewis as, "a Canadian half-breed, who says that Whitman and the other emigrants want to take the Indians' lands," and that, "Whitman is deliberately killing [the Cayuse] with his medicine."[487] The film appears to repeat this scenario through both Reynolds's actions and his aesthetic. Where other Native American characters are outfitted in unadorned buckskins or generic breeches and blankets and the aforementioned black wigs, Lewis's hair is cropped short and he wears an elaborately embroidered vest and trousers—though, ironically, the costume utilizes the appliqué and beading techniques of the Cayuse and other Columbia Plateau tribes. [488] For viewers unversed in traditional Cayuse regalia, Lewis's appearance suggests an attempt to surpass his assigned racial station and marks him as the particularly dangerous tragic mulatto à la Silas Lynch. Surviving stills show Reynolds's Lewis angrily scowling when first meeting Marcus, locating poison within the mission buildings that might be used against the Cayuse in lieu of measles medication, imposing upon various Cayuse in their homes, and finally making a pact with the perpetrators of the Whitman incident.[489] This rendition replicates much of the Whitman lore that preceded it, including the notion that Lewis accused the doctor of administering poison to those Cayuse suffering from the measles epidemic brought by the U.S. immigrants. While multiple sources framed Lewis

[485] "New Light Thrown on Whitman Death."
[486] "An Interview with a Survivor of the Whitman Massacre," 64-65.
[487] "In the Land of the Setting Sun; or, Martyrs of Yesterday."
[488] *Martyrs of Yesterday* film stills, OHS Research Library.
[489] Ibid.

as a renegade for making this claim few investigated the root fear that the Whitmans and other immigrants would ultimately displace the Cayuse, an event that came to pass well before the creation of *Narcissa* or *Martyrs*.

Though the surviving film stills position Lewis as the instigator of the Whitman incident, they fail to convey how Wells treated the hanging execution of the five Cayuse leaders. At an early publicity event Wells reportedly claimed that, "the execution of five Indians in Oregon City would be filmed."[490] Yet, the stills conclude with one of the perpetrators of the Whitman incident contemplating a poster tacked to a tree that implored:

> REMEMBER
> YOUR TREATY
> Whosoever kills a man
> shall be hung; whosoever
> burns a man's house shall
> be hung.
> SURRENDER the GUILTY
> and PREVENT further
> BLOODSHED.[491]

The image suggests that the guilty party heeded the poster's advice but offers no hints to the depiction of his final fate. Cinematic conventions of the period—which *Martyrs* seemingly kept with elsewhere—elected to imply rather than showcase such deaths, including *The Birth of a Nation's* infamous lynching scene. Historian Amy Louise Wood, in discussing Griffith's decision not to show the actual lynching act, notes:

> …it is unlikely that any filmic depiction of a lynching was produced after 1905, since motion pictures were coming under closer scrutiny from reformers concerned about the lack of moral decency in pictures. Scenes of extreme violence were considered particularly controversial. The

[490] "Historical Pictures are to be Taken Here," *Oregon City Enterprise*, May 9, 1919.
[491] *Martyrs of Yesterday* film stills, OHS Research Library.

> nation's first motion picture censorship ordinance, passed in Chicago in 1907, prohibited exhibition of any film that "purports to represent any hanging, lynching or burning of a human being," a prohibition that was surely repeated in cities across the country.[492]

Wood's assessment suggests that the hanging deaths of the five Cayuse would similarly be omitted, even though the actual acts occurred through a legal (if biased) process rather than the extralegality of a lynching. More than the means through which the death occurred, the spectacle of the hanging itself seemingly troubled censors. An emphasis upon the execution would also undermine Wells's attempt to create sympathetic Native American characters. In contrast, a remorseful adherence to the call to "surrender of the guilty and prevent further bloodshed" envelopes their tragic end in a redemptive act of self-sacrifice, one that a graphic depiction of their public execution and the inherent dehumanization might detract from.

Though Wells sought to offer complex Native American characters, his interest did not extend to casting a Native American actor for the role from either the growing number of Indian actors associated with Hollywood productions or the CTUIR performers brought in for the shoot.[493] Instead, white actors in redface portrayed all major Native American characters, with the notable exception of Japanese actor Misao Seki as Ed Titloukakt. Additionally, the number of white extras filling minor Native American roles caused one newspaper to comment that "every theatrical black wig in Portland must

[492] Wood, *Lynching and Spectacle*, 152.
[493] Michelle H. Raheja, *Reservation Reelism: Redfacing, Visual Sovereignty, and Representation of Native Americans in Film* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), 25; and "Indians Coming to City for Motion Picture." According to Raheja, by the filming of *Martyrs of Yesterday*, "Hundreds of Native American actors, consultants, screenwriters, and technicians [had] made their home in Southern California."

have been commandeered for the picture."[494] The choice to cast renowned white actors to perform major Indian roles created a strange dynamic in a movie that presumed to present a sympathetic treatment of Native Americans. The appearance of so many actors in redface negated both the continued presence of Native Americans generally—suggesting that they had indeed "vanished" as a race—and the possibility of casting experienced Indian performers in these roles.[495] As multiple scholars have noted, employment records of early Hollywood show a number of Native American actors participating and finding great success in silent films, thereby defying the vanishing Indian idea.[496] Locally, Native American performers associated with the annual Pendleton Round-up—and particularly members of the CTUIR—found employment through various performances of area history, *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won* among them. At least one actress from the CTUIR, Esther Motanic, achieved fame that moved beyond regional recognition in the early and mid-1920s though her work in film, historical pageantry (including *How the West was Won*), opera, and as an artists' model.[497] More than thirty actors from the CTUIR appeared in *Martyrs of Yesterday*, many of them donning the "theatrical black wig[s]" alongside their white counterparts.[498] As experienced performers, many of these actors could have arguably been cast into a leading role.[499]

[494] "Chief Tiloukakt and his Bad Band of Murderous Redmen."
[495] Raheja, *Reservation Reelism*, 72.
[496] Ibid.
[497] Interview with Bette Mclean, daughter of Esther Motanic, conducted by the author, October 4, 2012.
[498] "Indians Coming to City for Motion Picture,"and *Martyrs of Yesterday* film stills.
[499] It is unclear from existing evidence whether members of the CTUIR were offered leading roles that they refused or if they were cast only as extras. The final casting that employed prominent white actors rather than prominent Native American actors suggests the latter scenario.

At the same time, the employment of prominent white actors in redface brought increased attention to the Native American roles and shifted the show's focus from the Euro-American characters, who often served as the primary subjects in U.S. conquest narratives, to the damage wrought by colonization on indigenous communities. This emphasis particularly diminished the importance of Marcus Whitman in the film. Performers imported from the Golden State largely filled the leading roles and received recognition in the local press. Grace Lord's portrayal of Narcissa Whitman, for example, was often accompanied by a description of her work for director D.W. Griffith. Similarly, the young actresses playing Alice Whitman and the Whitman's adopted daughters appeared in the local press alongside resumes documenting their short but burgeoning careers.[500] The actor selected for Marcus Whitman, though enjoying a successful career that included a leading role in *The Birth of a Nation*, remained largely unnamed in the Portland area newspapers.[501] Where the doctor previously dominated all discussions of the Waíiletpu mission and the Whitman incident—even among those who disparaged him—within *Martyrs of Yesterday* he became a secondary figure.

Despite the participation of noted Hollywood performers and local support for the production, *Martyrs* ultimately failed to find distribution. Wells edited the film into a full, epic-length movie of seven to eight reels and showed it at a series of late-night screenings before Portland area investors in August 1919 under the title *In the Land of the Setting*

[500] "Chief Tiloukakt and his Bad Band of Murderous Redmen."
[501] Ralph Lewis, who played Marcus Whitman, also appeared as Radical Republican leader Senator Austin Stoneman in *The Birth of a Nation*. Among the local newspaper accounts of *Martyrs of Yesterday*, I only located one that discussed Lewis by name, "Martyrs of Yesterday Filmed in Portland, Tells Massacre Story."

Sun.[502] These screenings, however, appear to be where the movie's trajectory ends. A review written by local theater critic Leone Cass Baer hints at the film's problems. Baer wrote at length about the power and the appropriateness of the "beautiful incidental music," before commenting upon Portland's potential to grow a movie industry and noting the previous accomplishments of those involved.[503] Throughout Baer's flattery circumvents any discussion of the finished film suggesting that a reviewer determined toward positivity found little of value in the actual movie.[504]

Following these screenings, Wells journeyed to New York seeking distribution.[505] By then, however, he and others associated with *Martyrs* were actively attempting to insert themselves into the field of Christian cinema recently opened by the enthusiastic reception and success of film at the Methodist Centenary Celebration.[506] Accordingly, the trip to New York also involved an attempt by Wells and his associates to ingratiate themselves with the Interchurch World Movement.[507] It is unclear if *Martyrs* failure resided in the quality of the movie or the divided interests of those involved. Probably, both were factors, but at least one observer placed the fault in the former. Local journalist Frances Whitehead Blakely, in private communiqué with Eva Emery Dye, noted a decade

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[502] "People Again Warned About Hiding Glory," *Oregonian*, August 5, 1919, and "Oregon's Scenic Beauty used in Whitman Massacre Film." Though Wells changed the movie's title to *In the Land of the Setting Sun*, overwhelmingly the local press continued using the earlier *Martyrs of Yesterday*. The internet site IMDb utilizes the title *In the Land of the Setting Sun*, but describes Wells's movie as a short consisting of a single reel of film rather than the seven to eight reels that premiered in Portland. IMDb, "In the Land of the Setting Sun," http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0010294/?ref_=fn_al_tt_1 (accessed October 18, 2015).
[503] "Oregon's Scenic Beauty used in Whitman Massacre Film."
[504] Ibid.
[505] "Bible to be Filmed," *Oregonian*, September 28, 1919.
[506] "Churches Install Movies," *Oregonian*, October 5, 1919.
[507] Ibid.

after the fact that the movie, "never succeeded because Mr. Wells was back of it and it was Oregon history and you did not write it."[508] Dye apparently agreed.

After *Martyrs of Yesterday* failed to locate an interested distributor, Dye maintained hope for a cinematic rendering of the Whitman incident, proposing at least two approaches for creating a successful silent film; both deemphasized Whitman's demise. One transformed Moore's opera, *Narcissa*, into a film scenario with the offer that it might "be improved by following [Dye's *Mcloughlin and Old Oregon*] more closely."[509] The other suggested salvaging the existing footage from *Martyrs of Yesterday*, but (again with a greater adherence to *Mcloughlin and Old Oregon*] transforming it into the "great romantic picture desired."[510] In a letter to American Lifeograph president William H. McMonies, written just six months after the film's screening before investors, Dye complained of her poor working relationship with Wells and chastised the director for ignoring her historical novel, a failure that, according to Dye, "lost the real heart interest of the Whitman massacre."[511] In reapproaching the movie Dye suggested transforming the film into a captivity narrative by shifting the focus to hostage Esther Lorinda Bewley, described by Dye as, "the beautiful white girl…captured at the massacre," who endured, "romantic and harrowing experiences," before her ransom and rescue along with the other Whitman incident survivors.[512]

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[508] Blakely to Dye, 11-4-1929, Dye Papers .
[509] Dye's Write-up of *Narcissa* (ca. 1925), Dye Papers, Box 6, folder 7, OHS Research Library.
[510] Dye to McMonies, "Outgoing Correspondence, 1910–1921," Dye Papers, box 4, folder 14, OHS Research Library.
[511] Ibid.
[512] Ibid. Bewley preferred her middle name and is overwhelmingly referred to as Lorinda in the surviving source.

Bewley's "romantic and harrowing experiences" in the aftermath of the Whitman incident included her brother's murder, her public rape by one of the perpetrators of the attack, and her kidnapping by Five Crows, a Cayuse chief who was otherwise uninvolved in the incident, purportedly for the purpose of becoming his "white wife."[513] Bewley later married fellow colonist William Chapman, who she had met before her arrival at the Whitman Mission and with whom she resumed a relationship afterward. Bewley's role as a survivor of the Whitman incident defined the remainder of her public life, elevating her among Oregon's early settlers while extending the fact of her sexual assault to the general populous.[514] Bewley died in November 1899, a year before *Mcloughlin and Old Oregon* found publication and two decades before Dye attempted to exploit her story for a movie credit and the associated pay.[515] Arguing for an emphasis upon Bewley Dye offered both insider knowledge and a suggestion for how to adjust the historical facts. As Dye explained to McMonies:

> As a final word about this Lorinda Bewley, when she was brought to Oregon City with the rescued captives, she was taken into the home of one of the most noted pioneers, and that lady in her old age told me that Lorinda was terribly worried lest she become the mother of an Indian child. The devotion of [Five Crows] to her was beyond words, and he was a wealthy Indian, as the book relates—in fact, a noble Indian, of the very best type. But he wanted "a white wife" and thought he had one. Here is your fiery romance. I think in the picture it would be most effective to have her white lover arrive with her with the immigrant train and leave her at Whitman's while he goes on to make a home for her (as he really did) and then come back in time to rescue her.[516]

[513] Dye, *McLouhlin and Old Oregon*, 335.
[514] "Death of Esther L. Bewley Chapman," *Morning Oregonian*, November 8, 1899.
[515] Dye concluded her letter to McMonies with an assessment of her input's worth, stating, "I should ask at least $5000 for this co-operation. If you get $100,000 for the picture, this is cheap." Dye to McMonies.
[516] Dye to McMonies.

Demonstrating her skill in adjusting historical incidents to suit audience tastes, Dye's closing suggestion reframes Bewley's experiences into a familiar silent cinema scenario. Bewley becomes the white heroine sexually threatened by a man of color who is both rescued and redeemed by the white hero who she later marries. The threat of miscegenation, or that Bewley might "become the mother of an Indian child," is allayed by her return to the home Chapman purportedly created for her, and where, presumably, she will fulfill her symbolic role by populating the young colony with white offspring. While Dye's rendering affixes the expectations of white womanhood upon Bewley, her treatment of Five Crows similarly relies upon existing tropes. Describing him as "a noble Indian, of the very best type," Dye resists a full indictment of the historical figure, a common stance among chroniclers of the Whitman incident. His crime was not brutishness but a suppression of his inherent brutality that overstepped assigned racial boundaries—more Silas Lynch than Gus. The focus upon Bewley's kidnapping by Five Crows rather than her initial rape by another and Dye's placement of Five Crows within the Noble Savage tradition softens the violence Bewley experienced. Doing so increases audience understanding not of Bewley's ordeal but of how she survived events that sent other cinematic heroines to their death. That Bewley endures her captivity intact allows her to overtake the figurative position vacated by Narcissa's murder. Bewley's rescue becomes that of the besieged colony. Such a treatment differs significantly from the existing *Martyrs* conclusion that pursues redemption through the willing surrender and prosecution of the guilty but leaves the young territory without its symbolic civilizing force.

How the West was Won

In creating *How the West was Won*, Penrose seemingly struggled to rectify the idealization of Narcissa against the brutality of her fate; a difficulty compounded by Penrose's place in the Whitman legacy debates. Penrose further contended with the conventions of historical pageantry, which in variance to those of film, rarely portrayed the violent death of a white woman. Although the combined purposes of celebrating the recent conquest of the West and commemorating United States' participation in the World War I raised the specter of violence in historical pageantry, those productions also tended to create a distance from and anonymity about actual victims. Instances that recreated a particular person's death were markedly rare, but the few examples that exist are instructional as to the limitations of violence within historical pageantry. In pageants, for example, addressing the U.S. conquest of California—an event that placed Native Americans, Mexican citizens, and incoming Anglos on the stage simultaneously—a shooting death of a main character often served as a narrative devise to indicate the shift in regional control.[517] Yet, when the long-running and immensely popular *Mission Play* included the accidental shooting of a woman in its initial iteration, audiences responded negatively and producers significantly altered the scene within the first season.[518] The

[517] Though representing a number of European nationalities many of the incoming U.S. citizenry self-identified as Anglo to create a shared national identity distinct from the Mexican citizenry who were also of European descent. The *Ramona Pageant* in Hemet, California (1923–present), included the shooting death of the lead Native American male character Alessandro, while *Felicita* in Escondido, California (1927–1931), included the death of the lead white, male character from a war wound.

[518] I discuss the changing treatments of *Mission Play*'s female lead in "The Joining of Historical Pageantry and the Spanish Fantasy Past: The Meeting of Senora Josefa Yorba and Lucretia del Valle," *The Journal of San Diego History* 57, no. 4 (Fall 2011): 213.

character, identified as both Spanish and Catholic, did not enjoy the same level of ethnic and religious privilege as Whitman, but the staged death of a woman of European decent still troubled audience expectations of historical pageantry.

The communal nature of pageantry also influenced Penrose's treatment of Marcus Whitman. While elsewhere Penrose might proclaim that Marcus deserved "a place in the Scriptures as an addition to the Acts of the Apostles," he assumed a significantly more conciliatory tone for the script of *How the West was Won*, placing distance between his role in the Whitman controversy and the pageant's content. [519] That conciliation included creating a surrogate champion through Jesse Applegate, a leader of the 1843 wagon train. Beginning with the assertion that Marcus Whitman "is a trump," an actor portraying Applegate then testified before Narcissa about the value of Marcus to the venture's success.[520] Adapted from Applegate's 1876 talk, "A Day with the Cow Column in 1843," originally read before the Oregon Pioneer Association, this monologue describes the ways Marcus assisted the wagon train as both a physician and as someone who had previously made the long venture west, rather than the more hyperbolic estimations of his activities that Penrose offered elsewhere.[521] The adoption of another's sentiments to express his own strong feelings toward Marcus Whitman permitted Penrose to champion the doctor within a community-based event without raising the controversy that had

[519] From a public address in Olympia, WA, reprinted in Meany, *History of the State of Washington*, 122.
[520] Penrose, *How the West was Won* (1923), unpaged, (1927), 20.
[521] Removed from its original context, the description of Marcus misses Applegate's intention to offer special tribute to the doctor, as opposed to others who participated in the 1843 migration, on the basis that he was neither a member of the wagon train nor still alive. Importantly, to Applegate, "[Whitman's] stay with us was transient, though the good he did was permanent, and he has long since died at his post." Jesse Applegate, "A Day with the Cow Column in 1843," *The Quarterly of the Oregon Historical Society*, 1: (Dec. 1900): 381.

embroiled Whitman's historical legacy and in which Penrose had emerged as representing one extreme of the argument.

Initially conceived as a mode of commemorating the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Whitman incident by Whitman College students, the pageant that became *How the West was Won* was scheduled as part of the memorial ceremonies held November 29, 1922. According to Penrose, however, "the season of the year rendered an out-of-doors pageant impracticable, and the character of the history to be portrayed forbade an in-doors performance." In the shift from an autumn to summer production, the breadth of involvement expanded to incorporate members of local civic organizations and the Walla Walla Commercial Club transforming the production into a "community enterprise," a move that according to Penrose changed the character of the production "from that originally contemplated."[522] Yet, the production as "originally contemplated" also appeared to trouble some community members. In an exchange between prominent Pacific Northwest historians Cornelius Bronson and Thompson C. Elliott, the former complained about Penrose's proposed outline for the November 1922 historical pageant. Responding to Penrose's insistence on "implicitly O.K. ing the Whitman-Spalding saved-Oregon story" through recreating that interpretation of historical events within the Walla Walla pageant, Brosnan referenced the original critics of Marcus Whitman's legacy,

[522] Penrose, *How the West was Won* (1923), unpaged. Expanding on the nature of these changes Penrose further wrote, "the history of the Walla Walla Valley was taken as the theme, with the Whitman Mission and the heroic figures of Dr. and Mrs. Whitman incidental to it. Whitman College, which had first conceived the idea, sank into the background and merged its efforts in those of the community."

worrying that "some more Marshalls and Bournes will have to get to work before this legend evaporates."[523]

Bronson's concern regarding the sort of pageant that Penrose might present probably reflected a larger concern among historians throughout the Pacific Northwest, many of whom were invested in establishing the validity of this relatively new field of study. The continued embrace of the Whitman-saved-Oregon idea served as a sort of embarrassment for many—Elliott among them.[524] While Elliott's name did not appear in the official program for *How the West was Won*, he had a close association with Whitman College and with many of those directly involved in the production, and his work on other historical celebrations in Walla Walla suggests that he represented a section of the Walla Walla community disinterested in perpetuating the Whitman-saved-Oregon idea, particularly on the scale that the historical pageant eventually assumed.

The de-emphasis upon Marcus's exploits also removed the doctor's culpability in his own demise. If he is not the great savior of the Oregon colonial project—as Penrose posited elsewhere—then his death loses purpose, and he moves from a martyr to a murder victim. Portraying the Whitman incident through symbolism corrects this concern yet creates another about conveying its aftermath, particularly the Cayuse War. As with the Whitman incident, the Cayuse War was similarly suggested rather than shown. Where the former was reenacted through an elaborate series of dances, however, the latter appeared only in verse. Explaining the interim between the Whitman incident and treaty

[523] "Cornelius Brosnan to T.C. Elliott, May 24, 1922," T. C. Elliott Papers, MSS 231 [hereafter Elliott Papers], box 5, folder 6, OHS Research Library. Penrose's addition of Henry Spalding probably reflected the talk's location in Moscow, Idaho, less than fifty miles from the site of Spalding's Lapwai mission.
[524] "Whitman Controversy Correspondence (1888–1922 and undated)," Elliott Papers, box 5, folder 1, OHS Research Library.

negotiations occurring eight years later the pageant's narrator states: "Long lay the region bare, once more the haunt of rattlesnake, and savage, and coyote, alike in nature."[525] This dehumanizing equation of Native Americans with dangerous predators—when not under the domesticating influence of either Protestant missions or U.S. governmental authority—makes the omission of the Cayuse War as a reassertion of Euro-American regional control all the more striking. Looking at subsequent scenes, it was certainly within the capacity of the pageant to stage the conflict, particularly as other acts of war between Native Americans and the U.S. military were recreated.[526] This suggests that Penrose could not successfully obscure the brutality of the Whitman incident without providing a similar treatment of the event's aftermath. The mobilization of the U.S. citizenry against the Cayuse shifts from an act of retribution to one of aggression without a portrayal of the precipitating event. In obscuring the Cayuse War, then, Penrose did not concern himself with the complexities of the Whitman incident, the motivations of those who carried it out, or the event's larger effect on Cayuse communities, as Wells had in *Martyrs of Yesterday*. Instead, Penrose's treatment of the war simply avoided besmirching the very U.S. colonists that the pageant sought to celebrate.

Simultaneous to Penrose's denigration of the Cayuse, the pageant's first year planning board, working under the title of Executive Committee, struggled to cast local Native American performers, thereby compounding the production's reductive rendering of area tribes. The "Question of Securing Indians," appears early in the Executive

[525] Penrose, *How the West Was Won* (1923), unpaged, and (1927), 27.
[526] Ibid., these sequences included Col. Edward Steptoe's retreat at Pine Creek and Col. George Wright's victory over Kamiahkin.

Figure 3.7 *How the West was Won*. Speer's Whitman appears second from the right, surrounded by white children in redface. (Penrose Library)

Committee's planning process as a line item from a special meeting.[527] Here, director Percy Burrell, after specifying his desire to cast "several hundred Indians," outlined his concerns regarding the number of available Native American performers, the ability of these performers to remain off reservation, their cost, and finally their ability to, "do what is required in dramatic action."[528] This last consideration betrayed Burrell's experiences as a pageant director working primarily in the eastern United States where the almost total displacement of original inhabitants precluded the ready casting of Native Americans, experienced performers or not.[529] Most area productions however, from at least the *Bridge of the Gods* forward and including *Martyrs of Yesterday*, appreciated the

[527] Executive Committee of Pageant, "Minutes," Pioneer Pageant Records, Penrose Library, insert
[528] Ibid.
[529] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 114.

performative abilities of local Native American entertainers (if not always understanding their acts as a performance) and expected their competent participation. Rather than correct Burrell with the fact of experienced, area Native American performers, the Executive Committee seemingly bowed to Burrell's perceived expertise, let their own prejudices influence the casting process, and pursued unproductive recruitment channels.

Foremost among the barriers to casting from the available area performers, Penrose, "suggested that we should have two bands of Indians, good and bad," in which, "the Nez Perce were the good Indians and the Umatilla the bad Indians."[530] Again, while Wells and others attempted a sympathetic treatment of those Native Americans involved in the Whitman incident, Penrose allowed his strong regard for Marcus Whitman to create a corresponding vitriol for Marcus's attackers, condemning all Cayuse to villainy. That the show's creative leadership—both its writer and director—openly expressed negative expectations for the pageant's would-be Native American performers probably contributed to the difficulties show producers encountered in recruiting from this very group. At the same time, those charged with recruitment inexplicably disregarded established cites of local Native American performance, such as the popular Pendleton Round-Up or Walla Walla's annual Westward Ho parade, and elected instead to charge reservation missionaries with the task. Doing so generated such unwelcome responses as the assertion from the Nez Perce Christian mission that:

> …a large part of the Indians on [the Nez Perce] reservation were Presbyterian Indians and would not take part in anything that would necessitate their wearing the Indian costumes of the old days, and did not

[530] Executive Committee of Pageant, "Minutes," insert

> want to take part in anything where they would have to imitate their warring ancestors.[531]

The early probability of limited Native American participation led Burrell within his first month as director to contemplate the use of white actors in redface—a group who's prominence within the production would garner the moniker "white Indians" by the second season.[532] Ultimately, the pageant engaged a mix of white Indians and Native American performers. The casting difficulties of the latter group combined with an associated expense the first season of nearly five hundred dollars—a sum that included transportation costs from area reservations to the pageant grounds and the rental of paraphernalia such as teepees utilized within the show—and led to an expansion of the former group during the show's second season.[533]

Show producers also continued their recruitment efforts among local Native American performers for the second season, maintaining the five hundred dollar budget established in the first and employing paternalistic, colonial language in the process.[534] A card representing the pageant's second season leadership, now a Board of Directors, and distributed among recruits to remind them of their obligations, for example, declares the event a "Pow Wow!" and includes the assertion:

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[531] Ibid., 16.
[532] Executive Committee of Pageant, "Minutes," 23, and "Minutes of Board of Directors of the Pageant Association," March 26, 1924**,** Pioneer Pageant Records, Penrose Library, 1.
[533] "Minutes of Board of Directors of the Pageant Association," March 26, 1924, 1, 3. The all-volunteer, white Indians also created an expense through the necessary installation of shower baths to remove bronze body paint, though this cost the production approximately one fifth that of hiring actual Indian performers. See, Minutes of Board of Directors of the Pageant Association," April 23, 1924, 1.
[534] "Proposed Preliminary Budget, Pageant 1924," Pioneer Pageant Records, Penrose Library.

> Your chiefs call on you to assemble at the armory tonight…You have signed a pledge to be loyal to our pageant and we are counting upon you with all other Indians to keep it.[535]

Yet amid these condescending commands, the pageant's producers still revealed their desire to cast from area tribes and the difficulties they encountered in doing so. The card continues:

> You are greatly needed. Your support and attendance tonight will help more than words can tell. We must have 200 Indians this year. The program goes to press Wednesday. We want your name in it.[536]

Another second season development, a recasting of the historical figure Sacagawea, further betrayed producers' desires to not only include Native American performers among the cast but to tout this inclusion as evidence of historical authenticity. Sacagawea appeared regularly in pageants of U.S. westward expansion prior to *How the West was Won*, often as an accessory to Lewis and Clark's heroics. Three years after members of the Oregon Historical Society declined to stage George Baker's proposed pageant, for example, his protégé Frederick H. Koch, along with Koch's students at the University of North Dakota, created *A Pageant of the North-west* as a celebration of Sacagawea.[537] The *Pageant of Portland* included the Shoshone guide, while *Americanus,* premiering seven weeks after the initial run of *How the West was Won,* would prioritize the character and the Broadway actress hired to play her. In *How the West was Won,* the treatment of Sacagawea varied greatly from the first and second seasons. In both, she appeared amid a depiction of Lewis and Clark's travels through the Walla Walla Valley,

[535] "Pow Wow!" Pioneer Pageant Records, Penrose Library
[536] Ibid.
[537] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 242.

Figure 3.8 *How the West was Won* (1923). During the pageant's first season, Whitman College student Evelyn Sellers (fourth from the right) appeared as Sacagawea. (Penrose Library)

yet between Whitman College student Evelyn Sellers's turn at the role the first season and CTUIR member Esther Motanic's casting for the second, the part's scope and importance increased significantly, a change that reflected both a revaluation of the historical figure and Motanic's popularity as an area performer.

In the initial staging of *How the West was Won*, Seller's Sacagawea arrived silently into a scene of tension between the Corps of Discovery and the Sokulk—a small Native American tribe residing near the confluence of the Snake and Columbia Rivers—calming all with her presence.[538] Exchanging a bit of expository dialog with another member of the expedition, the actor playing Sacagawea's husband explains, "They fear no longer. Where a woman goes, no war is planned." To this another performer adds,

[538] "How the West was Won," 1923, unpaged.

"That squaw always brings us good luck."[539] This construction of Sacagawea straddles nineteenth and twentieth-century understandings of the historical figure. Both the pageant's script and program refer to Sacagawea as a "squaw," a negative typing of Native American womanhood that also characterizes Sacagawea's treatment within nineteenth-century literature on Lewis and Clark.[540] Yet the production also offers hints of the squaw's opposite, the Indian princess, that overtook renderings of Sacagawea in the first years of the twentieth century and that would dominate her interpretation in the second season of *How the West was Won*. This second idea, and subsequent idealization, of Sacagawea started with efforts such as Dye's 1902 historical novel *The Conquest*.[541] A fictionalized chronicle of Lewis and Clark's trek across the continent in which Sacagawea became both a symbol of female independence and a facilitator of U.S. Empire, Dye's work foretold the overdetermination that defined accountings of Sacagawea in the twentieth century. Finally, with the assertion, "Where a woman goes, no war is planned," the pageant afforded Sacagawea a burden of civilization similar to that of Narcissa Whitman, though, where the production portrayed the former as bringing peace to a single, small Native American tribe, by the pageant's estimation the latter birthed the entire U.S. colonial project in the Oregon Territory.

The casting of Seller's in the role and the limited importance the show's promotional materials gave this choice further reinforced the minor position Sacagawea occupied during the pageant's first season. A freshman at Whitman College, Sellers—

[539] Ibid.
[540] Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea*, 63.
[541] Ibid., 67.

who appeared in the production along with her older sister Margret, then a senior at the school—represented the pageant's reliance upon Whitman's student body during its initial run. Though an experienced performer, having sung and played piano regularly before women's clubs as a young girl and teenager in her hometown of Spokane, Washington, Sellers portrayal of Sacagawea garnered limited attention in the press compared to both her first season counterparts and her second season replacement.[542] In the surviving ephemera Sellers appears in a single photograph reproduced among a series of promotional postcards. Here, she stands among twelve other performers depicting various members of the Corps of Discovery including William Clark's slave York—performed by George Kinney in apparent blackface and described within the pageant's program as a "Colored Servant."[543]

Sellers enacted her own racial burlesque as a white actress playing Sacagawea, thereby becoming one of the so-called white Indians in a featured role. With pale skin contrasting against a dark, fringed dress and long, braided hair, Sellers's picture suggests her transformation occurred more through costume than the application of bronze body paint. Outfitting Sellers in nondescript but recognizably Native American robes while retaining her light skin participates in the tradition of whitening Sacagawea begun by Dye and her contemporaries.[544] At the same time Sellers, as a white woman, is necessarily darkened by her performance of Sacagawea, a fact reiterated by the dark tones of her

[542] "Spokane Notes," *Music and Musicians* (March 1919), 18, "Pioneer Pageant," *Walla Walla Times*, May 19, 1923, "Pageant Courier," *Walla Walla Bulletin*, May 20, 1923, and "Esther Motanic Chosen for Part of Famous Sacajawea," *Walla Walla Daily Bulletin*, May 22, 1924.
[543] "Pioneer Pageant Postcard," donation of Mrs. Parker Barrett, Pioneer Pageant Records, Penrose Library.
[544] Kessler, *The Making of Sacagawea*, 82.

dress and contrasted against the pale deer skin Motanic would wear.[545] Sellers's traversing of racial type was compounded by her sister Margaret's portrayal within the same production of Eliza Spalding, Narcissa Whitman's missionary companion into the Oregon Territory. Though Spalding theoretically occupied the cultural space of civilizing white woman, the idealization of Whitman had darkened Spalding by contrast. Thus the Sellers sisters both portrayed racially liminal figures within *How the West was Won*, roles that would be reconsidered with the pageant's second season.

The pageant's 1924 production saw a recasting of both Sacagawea and Eliza Spaulding. For the latter show producers recruited Spaulding's great-granddaughter Cassa Blakemore to perform as her ancestor, a move that, according to at least one paper, brought "particular interest" to her scenes.[546] The second season of *How the West was Won* included other descendants of early Oregon colonists, all purportedly adding "interest" to the production.[547] The use of descendants to portray their ancestors occurred commonly throughout the early twentieth-century pageantry practice as a means of generating a sense of historical authenticity within a particular production. Doing so legitimized historical pageantry as a form offering educational and community value. It also appealed to an idea of wonderment, that the offspring of historically significant persons might be transformed into living relics through the application of period garb. Employing Esther Motanic as Sacagawea accomplished similar ends. Press accounts of

[545] Pioneer Pageant Postcard." Taken from a black and white photo, the specific colors of Sellers's costume are difficult to determine absolutely. Her dress appears to be brown with black or darker brown trim. Specific information about Motanic's costume beyond that evident through surviving photographs comes from an interview with her daughter Bette Mclean
[546] "3200 to Take Part in Pioneer Pageant.
[547] Ibid.

Figure 3.9 *How the West was Won* (1924). The second season casting of performer Esther Motanic expanded the role of Sacagawea in the pageant. (Penrose Library)

Motanic frequently aligned the young performer with both Sacagawea and Pocahontas—the original Indian princess. One writer blurring the boundary between Motanic and the historical figure she portrayed declared that Sacagawea, "will live again in all her native beauty."[548] Another wondered in connection to Motanic and two other women if Pocahontas was, "one half as good looking as her sophisticated great, great, etc., granddaughters," creating a strange interplay between the ideas of Motanic as an inheritor of the Indian princess legacy and of her as a contemporary actor.[549] Motanic's apparent straddling of the modern and the archaic would generate almost fetishistic interest in her both locally and nationally, a circumstance Motanic ably navigated.

Motanic's burgeoning fame and the public's easy alliance of her with the Indian princess type depended upon her talent as a performer, her ambition, and her family's position within the larger community. Her father Parsons Motanic had earned renown as a wrestler who momentarily bested World Heavyweight Champion Frank Gotch in a match, an accomplishment that eventually assumed the contours of local legend and found its way into the Oregon literary canon.[550] Write-ups of the elder Motanic's wrestling prowess often accompanied descriptions of his success as a wheat farmer and his conversion to Christianity with the latter facts purportedly supporting assimilationist programs such as the land divisions of the Dawes Act and the presence of Christian missionaries on Indian reservations.[551] At least one such article, cumbersomely titled

[548] "Esther Motanic Chosen for Part of Famous Sacajawea."
[549] "3 Pocahontases Picked as Round-up Beauties," *Sunday Oregonian*, September 21, 1924.
[550] See Ken Kesey, *Last Go Round: A Real Western* (New York: Penguin, 1994).
[551] See, for example, "Indian to Wrestle," *Morning Oregonian*, February 22, 1910, "Motanic will Play," *Morning Oregonian*, November 18, 1912, and "Indian Athlete Preaches," *Morning Oregonian*, January 19, 1914.

"Indians of Pendleton Country [sic.] Adopt Laws and Customs of Christian Folk," burdened Parsons and his family with representing this ideal throughout the entire Northwest. Within the piece, Parsons (quoted through an interpreter) relays his conversion experience through the parable of Jesus taming a wild ass before concluding, "I was like that wild ass."[552] Parson's transformation from wild animal to Christian citizen, within this accounting and elsewhere, represented a larger embrace of white, U.S. culture that transferred to his children. The article continues:

> [Parsons] Motanic is now about 48 years of age and has a wife and family of five living children. His oldest daughter, Esther Motanic, is an honor student in Pendleton high school and has captured highest honors in declamatory contests, having a highly dramatic sense. Motanic and his family live at his ranch home where he raises wheat and where, in the modern house, the family lives as white folk of good class.[553]

Here, Esther's accomplishments serve to support the assessment of her family as resembling that of "white folk of good class." Yet, as historian Renée M. Laegreid argues, this perception of the Motanics as embracing mainstream U.S. ideals also facilitated Esther's successes by creating a white audience receptive to her talents. Writing on Esther's 1926 turn as the first Native American queen of the popular Pendleton Round-Up, Laegreid describes this selection as beginning a trend of "recognizing young Indian women from the Umatilla Reservation who met traditional middle-class norms."[554]

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[552] "Indians of Pendleton Country Adopt Laws and Customs of Christian Folk," *Morning Oregonian,* August 6, 1922.
[553] Ibid.
[554] Renée M. Laegreid, *Riding Pretty: Rodeo Royalty in the American West* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2006), 59.

Importantly, while Motanic may have portrayed qualities that appealed to a white audience, whether those directly witnessing her performances or those reading of them in the state paper, her success as a performer ultimately depended upon both skill as an artist and ability to navigate the various forces imposed upon her. Not yet seventeen when a journalist described her as "having a highly dramatic sense," the above article both demonstrates Motanic's competitiveness and minimizes her actual accomplishments. Beyond her good grades and capacity to debate, Motanic had also received recognition for her abilities on the piano and violin and for her mezzo soprano singing voice. A local movie studio began courting Motanic months before her family appeared in the press as an assimilationist success. [555] Motanic embraced this opportunity and others that followed. Besides film work and *How the West was Won*, Motanic appeared regularly in the annual pageant associated with the Pendleton Round-Up, won the rodeo's American beauty contest that celebrated young, Native American women—literally becoming an Indian princess—and upgraded her title two years later to Round-Up Queen. [556] Following her second royal designation, Motanic consulted on the pseudo-Sioux opera *Winona* and reprised the role of Sacagawea as a model for the noted American artist Howard Chandler Christy—projects that collapsed all tribal distinction between the performer, the historical figure, and the fictional character.[557]

Motanic's turn in the *Pioneer Pageant* evidenced the various qualities that defined her later career; the production celebrated her talents while also calling upon her

[555] "Movies Want Indian Girl," *Morning Oregonian*, May 23, 1922.
[556] "3 Pocahontases Picked as Round-Up Beauties."
[557] "Round-up Queen to Aid Opera," *Morning Oregonian*, September 21, 1926, and "Tacoma Girl Goes as Christy's Model," *Morning Oregonian*, November 27, 1926.

to represent a broad sense of Indianness that appealed to white audiences. Press announcing Motanic's selection as Sacagawea praised her singing voice while clarifying that it would be used to, "give an Indian chant." [558] The addition of this chant places *How the West was Won* into a longer lineage of productions that simultaneously celebrated and appropriated Native American musical traditions and that included *Narcissa* and *Winona*.[559] Motanic's performance of the "Indian chant" elevates the song from the realm of the generic to the authentic, thereby reaffirming the pageant as a valid endeavor. Motanic's costume served a similar end. Where Sellers's Sacagawea wore a brown, fringed dress divorced of tribal association, Motanic provided her own garment for the role; that it represented tribal dress from the Columbia Plateau rather than the Great Plains appeared to mater little to the pageant's producers.[560] More than her Native Americanness, however, the specific validity that Motanic's presence provided the larger pageant depended upon her Christianity. As one article explained, "[Esther] is a leader in the Christian life among the Indians of her reservation, where her father…perpetuates the mission work which his ancestors tried to stamp out with the Whitman massacre in 1847," a correlation that justifies the pageant's central purpose of celebrating a history of conquest.[561]

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[558] "Pageant Music much Changed and Improved for this Year," *Walla Wallla Daily Bulletin*, May 22, 1924.
[559] Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 185-186.
[560] Interview with Bette Mclean. Ironically, the same qualities that increased Motanic's appeal among a white audience reduced her access to a costume. According to Motanic's daughter Bette Mclean, Parsons Motanic disposed of much of the family's regalia with his conversion to Christianity. When Esther performed in the *Pioneer Pageant* she did so in a hastily constructed garment referred to within the family as the "crooked-front dress." This designation resulted from the dress's construction by two separate people whose work did not meet up at the center front.
[561] "Esther Motanic Chosen for part of Famous Sacajawea.".

While *How the West was Won* perpetuated tired ideas about Native Americans and the Whitman incident, author Penrose confronted the anti-Catholic aspects of the event directly. Although the myth of Catholic contribution to the Whitman incident still persisted in the 1920s, by the premier of *How the West Was Won*, Catholics throughout the Pacific Northwest encountered a more immediate threat than the Whitman legacy: the resurgence of the Ku Klux Klan.[562] The once southern-based Klan reemerged throughout the United States in the first decades of the twentieth century, and in Oregon and Washington reached the height of its activities—many centered on anti-Catholic ideas and actions—contemporaneous to *How the West was Won*.[563] In Walla Walla, the Klan found eager support among many in the community and a ready voice through the *Walla Walla Times*. With the tagline, "The People's Newspaper," the publication enthusiastically promoted both the local Klan organization and, at least initially, the creation and staging of *How the West was Won*.[564] In early May 1923, the *Walla Walla Times* promised a "Times Booster Edition" to be published on June 3 and dedicated to the upcoming pageant.[565] Between this and the pageant's premiere on June 6, Penrose became embroiled in a debate in the *Walla Walla Times*, challenging the validity of the Ku Klux Klan. In response to the charge that he had described the Ku Klux Klan as "a dangerous and un-American organization," Penrose responded:

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[562] For example, Francis A Thomson, the Dean of the School of Mines at the University of Idaho in Moscow, wrote T. C. Elliot a very concerned letter in 1921 about a conversation in which people repeated the Catholic clergy contributing to the Whitman incident myth as fact. Elliot Papers, box 5, folder 1, OHS Research Library.
[563] See for example, Shawn Lay, ed., *The Invisible Empire in the West: Toward a New Historical Appraisal of the Ku Klux Klan in the 1920s* (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 2004).
[564] Frank R. [Tampman?] letter to Lem A. Dever, Ku Klux Klan Records, MSS 22, OHS Research Library.
[565] *Walla Walla Times*, May 3, 1923.

> …basing your challenge upon the report that I have asserted this before the students of Whitman College and elsewhere, I have… given a lecture on "True and False Americanism," to which I imagine you refer …. I think the lecture is a sane and dispassionate study of certain tendencies in American life which the intelligent citizen ought to understand, and I have no intention of taking back anything in it which I say concerning the Spanish inquisition, the intolerant clergy of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, or of the curious organizations like the Ku Klux Klan, which have sprung up, flourished, and died away each generation of American life for the past 80 years.[566]

By aligning the Klan with two of the most egregious historical examples of religious intolerance Penrose betrayed a deeper concern of his about the Klan, that they were carrying out their "un-American" activities under the banner of white Protestantism. An ordained Congregationalist minister turned college president, Penrose's own religious faith easily transferred into other aspects of his life including the conflation of evangelical Protestantism and American patriotism—as evidenced by his regard for Marcus Whitman. The Klan's appropriation of these same ideals to forward a hate-filled agenda troubled Penrose enough that he issued a public critique of the organization, a decision that affected *How the West was Won's* reception. The *Walla Walla Times* published its booster edition but emphasized local history from its own editorial point of view. Penrose's public critique of the Klan also brought to his historical pageant competition with a local theater's revival of the Klan-friendly epic *Birth of a Nation* and a Klan-centric parade in a neighboring community's annual celebration "Dayton Days"—an event that planners of *How the West was Won* had carefully scheduled around.[567]

Although Penrose publicly challenged the Klan in a speech proposing to identify "True and False Americanism," the pretence under which he did so influenced how

[566] "Dr. Penrose Declines to Publically Debate Merits of the Klan, *Walla Walla Times*, May 28, 1923.
[567] *Walla Walla Times*, June 8, 1923.

similar themes manifested in *How the West was Won*. Described by Penrose as "a lesson in Americanism," the content of the pageant depended on an idea of multiethnic inclusion, yet ultimately portrayed everyone actively embracing a white American identity.[568] The narrative frame for *How the West was Won* had three youths described as the "American Boy," the "Russian Boy," and the "Italian Boy," serve as on-stage witnesses to the Walla Walla Valley's history.[569] Constructed around nationality, the three characters represented types reproduced elsewhere and dependent on religious or ethnic identity. Much of the literature during that time disparaged the latter two.[570] In contrast, planners for *How the West was Won* actively sought members of the local Russian and Italian communities to portray the roles.[571] Contextualized against the pervasive anti-immigrant sentiments, the approach employed for *How the West was Won* represented an attempt (if an assimilationist one) to define a broader Walla Walla community and clearly refuted past and present attempts to exclude differing sects of white Americans.

The staging of *How the West was Won* repeated this idea of a shared American identity by including in many of the pageant's scenes "the flag" foretold by Whitman's presence in the territory. Yet, Penrose's larger construction of Whitman as an idealized representation of white womanhood placed far more importance on her than that lone symbol of national belonging. Penrose positioned Whitman as a purveyor of "peace" and as "the sweet-voiced mother of our first-born child" when claiming the Oregon Territory

[568] Penrose, *How the West was Won* (1923), unpaged.
[569] "Official Program: Pioneer Pageant," (1923), 15.
[570] See for example, H.W. Evans, *The Menace of Modern Immigration*, in Ku Klux Klan Records, OHS Research Library.
[571] "Planning Committee Minutes," Pioneer Pageant Records, box 1, folder 3, Penrose Library.

as a part of the United States[572] Within the former idea Whitman, as a representation of all white women, brought relief to the turmoil perceived as inherent to the U.S. frontier. The latter notion references Narcissa and Marcus's daughter Alice, yet the use of "our" allows all subsequent U.S. residents to claim her as part of a colonial legacy. The tragic deaths of both Narcissa and Alice complicate Penrose's assessment of Whitman as a bearer of peace and as the mother of U.S. civilization in the West. As a mother, she was unable to protect her only child, and her own death began a war. If the negative legacies associated with the Whitmans created a reason to shift emphasis from Marcus to Narcissa, the ways Narcissa's death represented a failure of the very ideals placed on her provides a rationale for obscuring her demise.

Writers and regional promoters continued to recall Whitman's legacy throughout the twentieth century in works that ranged from careful recountings of her death and life to overly romanticized fabrications. Yet, among the variety of renderings, *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won* are unique in both their purposes for and modes of engaging Whitman. Notably, both silent cinema and historical pageantry had waned in popularity by the decade's end. *How the West was Won* enjoyed a second successful season but an attempted 1927 revival failed to materialize.[573] That same year, the

[572] Penrose, *How the West was Won* (1927), 16, 23.
[573] Historical pageants continued to be staged after 1927 in the Pacific Northwest, including a production titled *Wagons West* created for the 1936 Centennial Celebration held in Walla Walla marking the Whitman's arrival. The productions were notably different in character than their predecessors. Where productions such as *How the West was Won* attempted to demonstrate to continued relevance of the region's history to its present, shows such as *Wagons West* created a separation between the area's past and present. David Glassberg notes a similar transformation in the historical pageantry popular in the eastern United States that occurred around World War I.

introduction of sound in cinema displaced its silent predecessor. Despite those changes in taste and technology, individuals such as Stephen Penrose and Eva Emery Dye continued to promote *How the West was Won* and *Martyrs of Yesterday* as important projects. When *How the West was Won* did not receive a third staging, Penrose self published a limited edition of the pageant's text, mailing approximately 200 copies to individuals interested in Pacific Northwest history and attempting to place the remainder in area bookstores.[574]After *Martyrs of Yesterday* failed to locate an interested distributor, Dye maintained hope for a cinematic rendering of the Whitman incident, proposing at least two approaches for creating a successful silent film; both deemphasized Whitman's demise.

How the West was Won's short tenure reflected larger shifts in the nature of historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest, although the failure of a film that explored the Whitman incident to materialize following *Martyrs of Yesterday* is surprising. The historical western epic emerged as a popular film genre in the early 1920s. Its themes often included the overland journey, early settlers in the Oregon territory, and conflicts between U.S. immigrants and Native Americans.[575] The value of the Whitman incident and the death of Narcissa Prentiss Whitman as engaged by *Martyrs of Yesterday* and *How the West was Won*, however, reflected a particular moment when white, Protestant writers and producers attempted to simultaneously exalt Whitman's death as a great patriotic

[574] "Correspondence 1927," Pioneer Pageant Records, box 1, folder 12, Penrose Library.
[575] Richard Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation: The Myth of the Frontier in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Harper Perenial, 1992), 253.

sacrifice and reconcile the Whitman incident's legacies of violence and exclusion.[576] In their attempts, however, producers of both productions ultimately denied the very histories they sought to correct. *Martyrs of Yesterday*'s emphasis on individual actors ignored the greater harm to Cayuse communities, while *How the West was Won*'s message of inclusion disallowed a consideration of area discord—realities that obscuring Whitman's death, either through allegorical representation or melodramatic romanticization, could not hide. The post-war mentality that allowed this treatment of Whitman was itself in transition by the second staging of *How the West was Won*, giving way to pageants that were more commercial than instructive and that treated the past as increasingly remote.

[576] Penrose was an ordained Congregationalist minister while Raymond Wells followed *Martyrs of Yesterday* by directing a series of films intended for viewing in Protestant churches. Available evidence suggests Dye was less interested in reconciling the more problematic aspects of the Whitman legacy. Her treatment of Native Americans in *McLoughlin and Old Oregon* depended heavily upon racist stereotypes and she regularly corresponded throughout the 1920s with anti-Catholic author George Estes.

Chapter 4

"The Road That Won an Empire," Commemoration, Commercialization, and the Promise of Auto Tourism at the "Top o' Blue Mountains"

Where *Americanus* and *How the West was Won* alternately expressed ideas of modernity and a veneration of the area's past, a third production staged in the summer of 1923 attempted to join these two currents and did so before an audience that included the nation's president. The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*—so titled for its celebration of the waves of migration into the Pacific Northwest over a specific path bearing the same name—premiered as part of a larger celebration that, at its July 3 opening, attracted over 30,000 people to the tiny town of Meacham, Oregon. Located in the Blue Mountains in the eastern part of the state, Meacham rarely hosted more than a few people at a time and, for much of its recent past, had primarily been what one observer described dismissively as a "water-tank station"—a stopping point for travelers on their way to other destinations.[577] The convergence of so many people in Meacham signaled a great event. Many visitors had arrived via a freshly graded and graveled roadway, swarming into the surrounding campgrounds and placing great stress on the region's limited resources. They gathered to witness the opening of a two-day celebration that brought together the particular commemorative talents of three surrounding communities. Baker City arranged a historical pageant, La Grande oversaw a dancehall and concessions, and Pendleton was called on to "furnish Indians," a request that expected members of the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR), who regularly participated in the

[577] James A. Wood, "The Old Oregon Trail and the Next Day in Portland," in *Warren G. Harding in Memoriam* (Seattle: Seattle Press Club) 1923, unpaged.

Pendleton Round-Up, to eagerly perform in Meacham.[578] Described as occurring at the "Top o' Blue Mountains," the event incorporated the simultaneous purposes of "Commemorating [the] 80th Anniversary of the coming of the First Immigrant Train to the Pacific Northwest and Dedicating the New Oregon Trail Highway." It also represented several separate efforts, including the organized remembrance of Oregon's pioneer past and the embrace of the state's future potential as a site of commercial manufacture and as a tourist draw. [579] These various purposes found validation in the greatest of the day's attractions: the scheduled participation of President Warren G. Harding and his wife, First Lady Florence Harding.

The president attended the Meacham celebration as part of his extended speaking tour of the western United States en route to Alaska. This same voyage placed Harding on the *Americanus* stage later that month in his last major public appearance before his untimely death on August 2, 1923, in San Francisco. The demanding schedule of this voyage reflected the trip's larger purpose of correcting the perceived disconnect between the president and his western constituents.[580] Of the towns and cities that Harding visited during his travels in the West, Meacham was an anomaly for its limited population and relative isolation, requiring an audience of significant size to come from a considerable distance. Writing in a volume produced in memoriam to the president, the editor in chief of the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, James A. Wood, suggested that "any one of the towns visited in Alaska had much more of a permanent population than Meacham" and that

[578] "Plans Complete for Celebration of Trail Affair," *Walla Walla Bulletin*, April 23, 1923.
[579] "Official Program, Old Oregon Trail Pageant: Top o' Blue Mountains," (Meacham: Oregon Trail Association) 1923, unpaged.
[580] Robert H. Ferrell, *The Strange Deaths of President Harding* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press) 1996, 9.

"probably no such crowd was ever brought to a practically unpopulated place at any time or for any peaceful occasion in American history."[581] For Wood, like other commentators at the time, the contrast between the smallness of Meacham and the largeness of the crowd served as testament to the dedication and patriotism of those in the Pacific Northwest.[582] Yet, Wood also understood Harding's participation in the dedication of the Old Oregon Trail Highway as appropriate within the larger purpose of his trip, as the Oregon Trail had, "in the course of time, opened the way to the great territory of Alaska."[583]

The audience's efforts to reach the Blue Mountains were rewarded by the presence of the Hardings and their genuine interest in the small-town affair. By all accounts, the Hardings participated heartily in the celebration, even bypassing a planned golf outing to witness an afternoon staged battle, recreating an Indian attack on a wagon train.[584] Besides the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, the day's activities, intended to both entertain and engage the first couple, included a luncheon prepared by "pioneer ladies," and a "pioneer fiddlers' orchestra." The president contributed to the event by dedicating the silent epic *The Covered Wagon* to the Old Oregon Trail Association (OOTA, the group most associated with the days' events), becoming a lifetime member of that organization, and being adopted, along with the First Lady, into the Cayuses of the

[581] Wood, "The Old Oregon Trail," 1923, unpaged.
[582]Other commentators also saw the mass attendance in Meacham as significant, though elected more understated ways to express this. According to a writer for the *Morning Oregonian*, prior to the event in Meacham the President had "visited cities and met with receptions and the population merely had to walk a few blocks to see him. At Meacham there was no ready-made audience. Meacham has less than a score of people, so that the 30,000 or more men, women and children who assembled at the top of the Blue Mountains were paying a genuine tribute to the president." "Oregon Spirit Grips Harding," *Morning Oregonian*, July 4, 1923.
[583] Wood, "The Old Oregon Trail," 1923, unpaged..
[584] "Oregon Spirit Grips Harding."

CTUIR, an event marked by the gift to Florence Harding of a blanket manufactured by the nearby Pendleton Woolen Mills.

Through those activities, the Hardings' visit to the Blue Mountains transposed the events of a silent film over the actual experience of original travelers along the Oregon Trail, exposed regional rifts in historical commemoration, and blurred the lines between memorialization and commercialization. The events also demonstrated a larger tension evident throughout the Pacific Northwest, as people struggled to both honor the region's rural heritage and embrace the ideas of modernization that promised to prolong the area's relevance into the twentieth century. For many, that tension incorporated not only fear that the pioneer legacy might be lost but also anxiety that Oregon and Washington State were no longer important places within the ever expanding United States.[585] Narratives of the overland journey increasingly described those making the original trek in heroic terms. They were depicted as great patriots and as a few, brave empire builders whose sacrifices pushed the nation's imperial ambitions beyond a western edge at the Rocky Mountains. That narrative was reenacted throughout that July 3rd celebration. Harding, through his participation in the event, inserted himself into the larger regional effort, while his own task of empire—becoming the first U.S. President to visit Alaska—added legitimacy to the narrative's claims. This chapter examines three aspects of the president's visit to the Blue Mountains that exemplify both the competing currents at play in Meacham and throughout the larger region and the shifting modes of tribute that

[585] Around this time both Stephen Penrose and Eva Emery Dye, noted chroniclers and ardent champions of the U.S. colonization of the Pacific Northwest, acknowledged within public addresses that the area did not seem to hold the same sense of importance to the larger national narrative as it had in the century prior.

ultimately undid the popularity of historical pageantry: the existing means of commemorating Meacham's history and the larger relevance applied to it; the Hardings' ceremonial and less formal roles in the celebration; and the local communities' interactions with the first couple.

The Old Oregon Trail

The success of this event—and the particular rendering of history that it championed—depended heavily on the efforts of area booster Walter E. Meacham and preceded the expected participation of the president.[586] Though not an immediate relation of the Meachams for whom the town was named, Walter claimed an inherited legacy to the Oregon Trail as a "child of pioneers," a heritage he romanticized through his writing. Besides the OOTA produced promotional tracts, Walter published numerous articles on the history of the Oregon Trail as well as poetry celebrating the first colonists along this route.[587] He wrote the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* and a similarly themed historical pageant staged in Baker City the prior year. Walter was an experienced regional promoter, beginning his career selling bonds for the construction of the Columbia River Highway in the mid-1910s before serving a multi-year appointment as the secretary of the Chamber of Commerce in his home town of Baker City. He combined his experiences promoting roads and sentimentalizing Oregon's pioneer past by founding the OOTA and

[586] Though many people contributed to the planning and execution of the event from each of the three major eastern Oregon cities involved as well as from many of the surrounding communities, Walter Meacham took the lead in these activities and was frequently the public face of the event.

[587] Walter's parents migrated from the eastern United States to Baker City, Oregon sometime prior to 1870, but have no apparent relation to brothers Alfred and Harvey Meacham for whom the town was named. Ironically, though Walter grew up and spent much of the first half of his life in Baker City, he was born during the brief period in which his parents had moved to Alameda, California and, despite his efforts of Oregon boosterism, was not a native Oregonian.

Figure 4.1 Old Oregon Trail Association founder and president Walter Meacham (foreground) greets President Warren G. Harding and First Lady Florence Harding on the back of the Harding's train car. (Trail Association photo album, Walter Meacham papers, University of Oregon Special Collections)

serving as its president for five years, traveling to numerous towns along the trail, establishing local chapters of the OOTA, and advocating for official recognition of the Old Oregon Trail Highway.[588]

The Meacham celebration demonstrated the value ascribed to Walter's efforts at both the local and state levels. Representatives from the involved communities elected Walter president of the planning committee and master of ceremonies for the two-day

[588] Chronological file of correspondence related to activities of the OOTA, Meacham Papers, U of O Special Collections.

affair, while the event commemorated the roadway's official designation as the Old Oregon Trail Highway in Oregon—a process through which members of the state legislature repeatedly consulted Walter—and allowed for the grading and graveling of the route through Meacham, one of the last unimproved portions of the proposed highway in the state. At the time of Harding's tour approximately one hundred and fifty miles of the route was paved. Designated as the Columbia River Highway, this section connected Astoria to Portland and continued eastward to Hood River. Closer to Meacham, paved roads existed within the city limits of Pendleton, La Grande, and Baker City. The road between Hood River and Pendleton was graveled as was much of the route between La Grande and the Oregon/Idaho border. The fifty-mile stretch between Pendleton and La Grande that passed through Meacham remained unimproved until immediately before the July 1923 celebration.

While outside commentators had dismissed Meacham as a stopping point to greater places, Walter, in a pamphlet published by the OOTA, positioned it as the final gateway along "The Road that Won an Empire," an assessment that connected Meacham to the veneration of the Oregon Trail and that reflected a larger conversation occurring throughout the Pacific Northwest. [589] As the last travelers of the original Oregon Trail began to pass into history themselves, people concerned with preserving that legacy frequently connected the memory of the Oregon Trail to the United States' later-day imperial aspirations; by extension, they positioned the establishment of the Oregon

[589] Meacham, *The Old Oregon Trail*, front cover.

Territory as essential to eventual U.S. global prominence.[590] A variation on the idea championed by Stephen Penrose and others that the actions of Marcus Whitman eventually brought the region under U.S. territorial control, here the Oregon Trail itself becomes heroic as it allowed enough U.S. settlers into the territory to thwart British control of the region, permitting the United States to continue its movement westward, eventually consuming territories in the Pacific. Importantly, venerating the route rather than a specific person who undertook it shifts focus away from individual efforts (such as those attributed to Whitman) and celebrates the larger colonial endeavor. Meacham expanded on his own exaltation of the Oregon Trail in an earlier tract, writing about the path as:

> . . . the Trail of romance, adventure, hope, faith and achievement as well as the Trail of misery, tragedy, hardship, despair and death.
>
> But history so records that great things are accomplished only through suffering, sacrifice, devotion and death and because of these things an empire was reclaimed by the intrepid pioneer of the Old Oregon Trail and a great civilization founded along its course, the Old Oregon Trail stands by itself, apart from all others, the great Trail of Trails, the great highway of highways, beckoning the red blooded men and women of these United States to the great northwest into whose lap a generous Creator had poured with a lavish hand a wealth of scenery, resources, health and contentment.[591]

Meacham's hyperbolic accounting of the old Oregon Trail as the most important pathway in history repeats the rhetoric of Manifest Destiny as it moves beyond the idea

[590]This concern appeared frequently during the planning of commemorative events such as the one held in Meacham and among organizations dedicated to preserving Oregon's pioneer past. Many of the speeches given during the Annual Reunions of the Oregon Pioneer Association in the late 1910s and early 1920s, for example, focused upon the dwindling population of original pioneers, how their memory would be preserved once they passed away, and how this legacy might be applied to the current era.

[591]Walter E. Meacham, *Story of the Old Oregon Trail* (Baker: The Old Oregon Trail Association, 1922), 23.

of empire building and into the realm of divine provenance, an idea that found further expression during President Harding's stopover in the Blue Mountains.

Variations of those sentiments appeared elsewhere in discussions of the trail's worth, but Walter's work differs from similar materials by positioning the small town of Meacham as the most noteworthy point along this trail, which he highlighted both for its history as a worn dirt path and for its transition into a paved highway. As part of the original Oregon Trail, the passage through Meacham represented "the worst piece of road on the route," yet as an improved roadway, it was destined to be among "the best and most picturesque" portion of a national highway project connecting the coasts.[592] For Meacham and other proponents of the region, the creation and dedication of the Old Oregon Trail Highway confirmed the importance not only of the trail itself but also of those who decided to pursue its course, as the new highway memorialized the older route by representing "the hopes and ambitions, the vision and faith, the endurance and perseverance of brave men and women who dared the terrors of the long, weary way that an empire might be won for the United States of America."[593]

Such configuration of the area's past elevated to self-sacrifice for the greater good of the nation the intentions of those who traveled through Meacham and on to more promising places in what would become Oregon and Washington State. It negated any aspect of self-interest or the possibility for those who survived the treacherous journey to arrive waving anything besides the flag of empire, with patriotism that could be called on to inspire subsequent generations. Materials intended to memorialize the area's pioneer

[592] Meacham, *Story of the Old Oregon Trail*, 19.
[593] Meacham, *The Old Oregon Trail*, 29.

Figure 4.2 An estimated 30,000 ventured to Meacham, Oregon, to see President Harding. (UO Special Collections)

legacy idealized the past generation and placed their accomplishments above those of younger Oregonians. The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, like many other events scheduled for the two-day celebration in Meacham, perpetuated this idea that the first U.S. settlers to the Pacific Northwest undertook a courageous venture unmatched by subsequent efforts—including the long trek made by some 30,000 people that July third.

While the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* celebrated this heritage by recreating movement from east to west, spectators journeyed from all directions, many traveling hundreds of miles from as far away as Montana and Wyoming. Over 5,000 cars

accompanied the first day's spectators, and the ease with which they ascended the Blue Mountains demonstrated the potential value of the new highway as well as the incredible efforts to make this road suitable for automobiles.[594] Preparations for the two-day celebration had begun before necessary improvements to the roadway through Meacham were finished. Less than a month before the event, members of the planning committee publically hoped for adequate weather to dry out the roadbed enough that it might be graded and graveled in time for the affair.[595] People had been reaching Meacham via railcar for approximately four decades by then, and the local railroad companies would provide additional train service for the event. Still, the perceived importance of auto travel overshadowed that older mode of transport to the degree that the official dedication of the Old Oregon Trail Highway risked preceding the highway's actual completion.

As the roadway that had once served the wagon trains into the West became more formalized and improvements such as gravel and pavement narrowed and standardized the actual route, the OOTA, had worked to preserve its history through their own act of modernizing—having the name of the roadway made official through law. Founded in Baker City on February 23, 1922, the OOTA's constitution identified its purposes as threefold, the first being state and federal recognition of the of the highway as the "Old Oregon Trail" along the entire length of the passage between Independence, Missouri, and Seaside, Oregon.[596] The organization achieved some success, with the route designated as the Old Oregon Trail Highway in both Idaho and Oregon through

[594] *Morning Oregonian*, July 4, 1923.
[595] "Committee Hard at Work on Preparations for Big Celebration," *Pendleton East Oregonian*, June 18, 1923.
[596] Old Oregon Tail Association, constitution, and articles of incorporation, Meacham Papers, box 7, folder 6, U of O Special Collections.

legislative acts. The Oregon Senate bill that officially recognized the highway, however, also made exceptions for portions of the route whose names preceded the OOTA's efforts; for example, the popular Columbia River Highway retained its original name.[597] The value of naming the Old Oregon Trail Highway was related to both memorialization and future tourism. The Columbia River Highway, whose construction began a decade prior to the Meacham affair, already provided an important tourist draw through both the engineering feats involved in its construction and the scenic beauty of the route.[598]

The OOTA's desire for federal recognition of the Old Oregon Trail Highway was related to the burgeoning auto tourists' interest in accessing important historical sites, but it also built on previous commemoration efforts.[599] During the first decade of the twentieth century, one-time Oregon Trail migrant Ezra Meeker retraced his original path in 1906—this time moving west to east—using a rebuilt prairie schooner and team of oxen. As he traveled, Meeker rallied others to erect monuments along the original Trail route and support further preservation efforts. Once in the East, Meeker met with that great champion of empire, President Teddy Roosevelt, to make his case for the creation of a memorial to "the winners of the Farther West," in the form of an interstate highway.[600] Though Roosevelt enthusiastically supported Meeker's efforts to mark the Trail, and even proposed federal financial support, he relegated the work of creating a

[597] Legislative bills regarding the Old Oregon Trail, Meacham Papers, box 7, file 8, U of O Special Collections.
[598] Engineer on the Columbia River Highway, Samuel Lancaster wrote on the history and geology of the Columbia River Gorge and the construction of the Columbia River Highway in his work *The Columbia: America's Greatest Highway through the Cascade Mountains to the Sea*, first published 1915.
[599] See, for example, Shaffer, *See America First*. Shaffer describes a trend in auto tourism beginning with World War I and the closure of Europe to would-be tourist that stressed the importance of U.S. historical sites.
[600] Ezra Meeker, *Ox-Team Days on the Oregon Trail*, (New York: World Book Company, 1922), 220.

memorial highway to the states. In suggesting markers and the creation of a highway that facilitated automobile travel over the absolute preservation of the original Trail, Meeker was an early proponent of celebrating the work of early pioneers—himself among them—by understanding them as a necessary effort toward greater displays of civilization.

That work subsequently earned Meeker a place of honor within the two-day celebration in Meacham.[601] Such recognition demonstrated a marked change in the way boosters hoped to promote their various communities through veneration of the past. Historian David M. Wrobel describes the initial resistance of boosters to Meeker's earliest efforts to commemorate the Oregon Trail: "There was not much common ground when the purveyors of the future met in the early-twentieth-century present with an advocate for the past, not until a later age when the heritage of places became a more salable commodity."[602] Meacham and his event co-planners were part of that later age. Whereas earlier boosters had interpreted Meeker's attempts to memorialize an area's past as a threat to their emphasis on the future, Meacham described the potential for the work begun by Meeker and perpetuated by the OOTA as a "wonderful opportunity . . . to combine the historic, the sentimental and the commercial without detracting from either."[603]

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[601] In 1906 Meeker, who had migrated to the Pacific Northwest via ox-drawn wagon in the early 1850s, utilized this same means of transport to retrace his original journey, west to east, hoping to locate and mark the remnants of the Oregon Trail.
[602] David M. Wrobel, *Promised Lands: Promotion, Memory, and the Creation of the American West* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 2002), 110.
[603] Meacham, *The Old Oregon Trail*, 27.

Figure 4.3 Ezra Meeker posing with his automobile at the Old Oregon Trail monument in Meacham, Oregon. (UO Special Collections)

While Meacham embraced Meeker's work, he also sought to improve on it through the second stated purpose of the OOTA: "marking the route with the insignia of the Ox Team and the Prairie Schooner in enduring bronze or other metal."[604] The efforts of Meeker and others had led to a myriad of monuments marking the original Oregon Trail, and the increased sentimentalization of the original U.S. pioneers into the Pacific Northwest suggested that more would come. The OOTA hoped to standardize that process with a single design gracing every monument and road marker. Meacham placed so much importance on a unified marking system that he repeatedly attempted to

[604] Old Oregon Tail Association, constitution, and articles of incorporation.

copyright both the specific design created for the signage placed along the Old Oregon Trail Highway and the concept behind the illustration. Meacham hoped to prevent other highway systems—even those claiming a similar pioneer legacy—from utilizing the image of either an ox-team or a covered wagon, because he saw that means of transport as "peculiarly adapted to the old Oregon Trail."[605]

Where the first two goals of the OOTA sought to employ various acts of commemoration to rectify the burying of the original Oregon Trail beneath an improved roadway, its third goal emphasized the need for proper advertisement of the road and encouraged all travelers to the western United Sates, even those bound for California, to utilize this route through northeastern Oregon, claiming it provided, "the shortest and quickest route from the East to the Pacific Coast."[606] The larger importance ascribed to the roadway within the OOTA's third objective shifted within the first two years of the group's founding. While a promotional pamphlet from 1922 described the Old Oregon Trail Highway as the "Road to America's Scenic Wonderland," a similar tract published in 1924 replaced the interest in Oregon's scenery with the description of the highway as the "Road that Won an Empire."[607] This change in rhetoric was part of a larger shift in regional promotion that coincided with the rise of auto tourism. Historian Marguerite S. Shaffer explains this change:

> Seeing the country by automobile allowed individuals to both view the landscape and experience place firsthand. Prescriptive automobile touring literature shifted from the celebration of scenery and standardized

[605] Ibid.
[606] Meacham, *The Story of the Old Oregon Trail*, inside cover and Meacham, *The Old Oregon Trail*, inside cover.
[607] Ibid.

> destinations that characterized most railroad promotional literature and began to express an interest in history and local color. [608]

The two-day Meacham celebration abounded with "history and local color," while the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* clarified the value of these ideas. Staged over the "original trail," the Meacham production opened with Chauncey Bishop, a representative of both the burgeoning local industry, the Pendleton Woolen Mills, and the celebration's planning committee, leading a train of participants from the CTUIR in full regalia and riding on horseback before the audience. Depictions of significant travels from other parts of the United States and through Meacham followed, beginning with the Wilson Price Hunt party of 1811—whose efforts in founding Astoria the Astoria Centennial Celebration Committee declined to recreate in pageant form—and concluding with a display of Concord Coaches—horse-drawn carriages that served as the major means of communication into the western United States during the mid-nineteenth century, before their displacement by railroads during the 1880s.[609] Producers for the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* also made allowances for people who had never actually made the once-difficult journey through the Blue Mountains but whose efforts facilitated U.S. expansion into the Pacific Northwest or championed the process—most notably through a portrayal of Buffalo Bill Cody whose Wild West shows became the standard bearer upon which renderings of the West, such as the *Old Oregon Pageant*, were based. An actor portraying Capt. Robert Gray appeared early in the pageant, though his most important contribution

[608] Shaffer, *See America First*, 165.
[609] "Official Program: Old Oregon Trail Pageant," unpaged, Meacham, *Story of the Old Oregon Trail*, 13, 24.

Figure 4.4 The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* elected to feature the Wilson Price Hunt party as the major explorers through the region rather than the more popular Lewis and Clark expedition. (UO Special Collections)

to the establishment of the Oregon territory—locating the mouth of the Columbia River in 1792, naming the river after his ship, and navigating his way through the treacherous sandbars and nearly fifteen miles upriver before returning to the Pacific—left him more than 300 miles short of the place that would become Meacham. Similarly, President Thomas Jefferson and John Jacob Astor each made appearances, though during the early explorations of the Pacific Northwest, both had remained comfortably on the eastern

seaboard. The two gentlemen commissioned others to make the trek west—Jefferson through the Lewis and Clark Expedition and Astor by hiring Hunt to establish a fur trading post.

Interestingly, the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* excluded Meriwether Lewis and William Clark, though the pair appeared as standard fare among other celebrations of U.S. expansion into the West and came significantly closer to the future location of the small town of Meacham, Oregon, than Gray, Jefferson, or Astor had.[610] This omission may have occurred from fear that the popularity of the two would detract from the importance the show placed on the Hunt expedition. Hunt had actually passed through the place that would become Meacham, but he enjoyed a comparatively diminished place within popular renderings of Oregon history. Jealousy that the first travelers from the United States to traverse the Blue Mountains at Meacham received less attention than the Corps of Discovery (whose path took them north of the region) appeared elsewhere in the writings of Walter Meacham. Discussing the Native American wife of one of the Hunt party in relation to the attention afforded Sacagawea, Meacham complained: "The praises of Sacajawea [sic.], the Indian woman, who accompanied Lewis and Clark on their journey across the continent are heralded in song and story while the patient little Indian woman with the Hunt expedition is unnamed and unsung, while the privations she underwent were ten times greater than those of Sacajawea."[611] Meacham's dismissive

[610] For example, though both *Americanus* and *How the West Was Won* engage different histories, one a national narrative the other emphasizing local events, both include Lewis and Clark's journey across the continent as important elements of their productions.

[611] Meacham, *Story of the Old Oregon Trail*, 11. Though Meacham's motivations appear to lie in regional promotion, he was not the only one concerned about Sacagawea's legacy overshadowing Dorion's. In *Red Heroines of the Northwest*, first published in 1929, author Byron Defenbach chronicles the lives of

description of "the patient little Indian woman," reflected his larger treatment of the historical figure in both his writings and her portrayal within the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, as discussed later in this chapter. Notably, though Meacham complained the Sacajawea overshadowed the Native American woman accompanying the Hunt expedition to the extent that the latter remained unnamed within historical texts, this is untrue. A similar act of recovery by local historians identified her as Marie Dorion, a women of Iowan and French Canadian descent. Meacham's mistake may have resulted from his reliance upon Washington Irving's *Astoria* (first published in 1836) as his primary source in recounting the Hunt expedition. Throughout this work, Marie is referred to only as "Dorion's wife" or his "squaw."

This concern that Sacagawea had become a noted historical figure while a comparable member of the Hunt party remained unnamed (in some sources) demonstrated a conflict occurring throughout the Pacific Northwest. Through engaging their states' pioneer pasts to establish relevancy within the larger national narrative of the United States, boosters of Oregon and Washington also created regional competition over which sites, people, and events held the greatest historical significance. While the pageant at Meacham highlighted the Hunt expedition at the expense of Lewis and Clark, for example, Walla Walla's *How the West was Won* recreated Lewis and Clark's encampment near the Washington town but made no reference to Hunt.[612] The geographic specificity of these historical renderings confirmed existing tensions yet also

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Sacagawea, Dorion, and a third Native American woman who similarly accompanied an important, early expedition into the Northwest. By Defenbach's assessment, "[The three women] are not remembered in any reasonable proportion to their respective merits. The memory of only one [Sacagawea] is perpetuated in marble or bronze, nor is there any general agreement that she is the most deserving (10)."

[612] Penrose, "Official Program: Pioneer Pageant," 16.

had a financial purpose. For promoters of the Old Oregon Trail Highway and the communities along its path, any draw to Walla Walla meant a detour from the roadway and a diversion of tourist dollars.

The perceived importance of adequately promoting an area was such that the "first Oregon booster," Hall J. Kelly, was portrayed in the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*.[613] An early advocate of U.S. colonization of the Pacific Northwest, Kelly appeared in the show's final sequence amid other people deemed significant to Oregon's founding and early governance.[614] Although Kelly's actual efforts to establish a U.S. settlement in Oregon during the 1820s and 1830s met with limited success—and the disappointment of that failure would lead him to spend his later years embittered and seemingly deranged—his writings on Oregon inspired others to accomplish what he could not.[615] By situating Kelly among more notable early Oregonians, the narrative of the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* equated the ability to encourage migration to the work of establishing a territorial government; by extension, the region's significance as a campground for the 1843 wagon train was connected to the founding of the state. The pageant's program clarified that this first great wave of people brought "one thousand men, women, and

[613] Walter Meacham was not alone in his exaltation of Hall. A critical review of the historical pageant *How the West Was Won* published in the *East Oregonian* similar positioned Hall as important to the U.S. colonization of the Pacific Northwest.
[614] "Official Program: Old Oregon Trail Pageant," unpaged. This scene also includes such notable figures in Oregon history as Dr. John McLoughlin, Stephen A. Douglas, George Abernathy, John Wittiker, and Joe Meek.
[615] Elwood Evens, *History of the Pacific Northwest: Oregon and Washington, vol. 1* (Portland: Pacific Northwest History Company, 1899), 185.

children" to the territory and "settled forever the right of the United States to the 'Oregon Country'," over British claims.[616]

The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* highlighted the importance of people entering the region from the east but failed to show them actually stopping in Meacham, or in any of the places they ventured to further west. This differed from contemporaneous pageants in which participants paused to recreate moments from the past. When, in *Americanus,* George Washington is imagined at Valley Forge, for example, the future president is seen kneeling in prayer amid "his tattered Revolutionary Army" and artificial snow.[617] In the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, the performers remained constantly in motion, to the degree that the "Official Program" slipped between labeling the production a pageant and a parade, harkening to an earlier area when historically themed parades frequently bore the pageant label.[618] Newsreel footage of the event demonstrates the ease of this mistake. Beginning with Bishop and members of the CTUIR, the pageant's participants moved before the audience without halt. Following the first group, a second emerged in close succession with many of the area's Euro-American residents dressed in period garb and traveling either within or alongside a prairie schooner. Before that division disappeared from view, the third set appeared as U.S. Calvary on horseback.[619] At each point, participants employed some mode of transportation, either horse, cart, or concord coach. Ultimately, the show celebrated movement over place. People depicting the earliest U.S.

[616] "Official Program: Old Oregon Trail Pageant," unpaged.
[617] Meany, "Americanus," unpaged.
[618] "Official Program: *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*," unpaged
[619] "President Harding at Meacham, Oregon," Moving Image Archives, 01278 SILL, OHS Research Library.

pioneers, complete with covered wagon, presumably traveled with the accoutrements of homebuilding, but no vignette appeared of anyone doing so.

This focus on movement also influenced the show's conclusion. As a standard of the historical pageant format, most productions finished with an expression of the area's hopes for future prosperity. Both *Americanus* and *How the West Was Won* incorporated scenes that imagined forthcoming events, even Walter's previous pageant in Baker City included "the modern tourist traveler, with his complete camping outfit and family, yet the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* stopped in the mid 1880s, nearly forty years prior to the two-day celebration.[620] During these four decades rail travel had replaced the individualized movement through the region that the *old Oregon Trail Pageant* sought to commemorate. Though trains continued to bring persons to the area, this mode of transportation proved less heroic than earlier ventures and its comforts created few reasons to hold over in the small town, providing less for the pageant to celebrate. The introduction of the automobile and an improved roadway through the Blue Mountains created a new purpose for the tiny burg—that tourists might engage the location as a place to refuel and refresh, just as the original travelers of the Oregon Trail had done. In this way, the staging grounds themselves provided the clearest reference to the area's aspirations. The demands of car travel and the new ease of access through the region suggested that persons would again employ Meacham en masse as a stopping point in their journeys elsewhere.

[620] Meany, *Americanus*, unpaged, Penrose, "Official Program: The Pioneer Pageant," 23, "Baker's Pageant Viewed by 15,000," *Oregonian,* July 5, 1922.

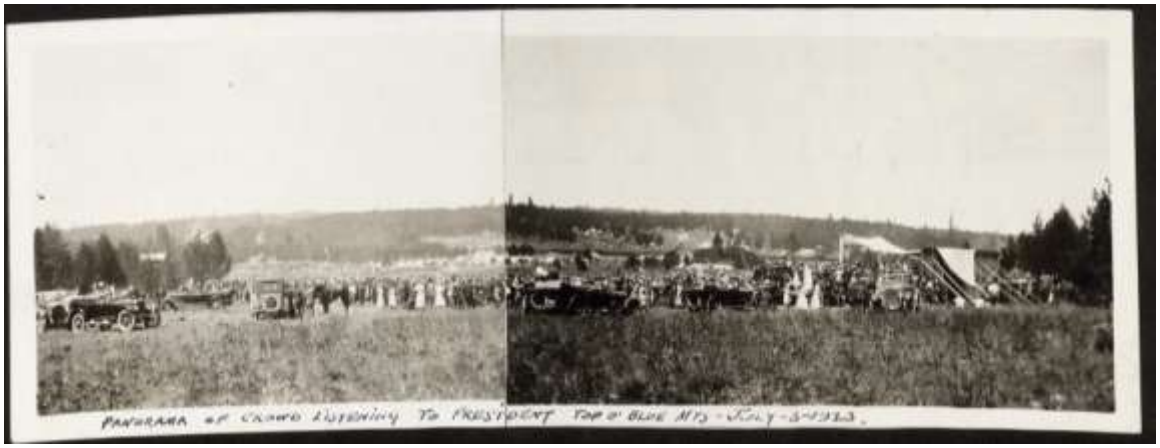

Figure 4.5 Autos and tourists intertwined on the celebration grounds in Meacham, Oregon. (UO Special Collections)

The importance of car travel to the event appears throughout the surviving photo documentation and site maps, which included little delineation between where cars could be parked and where people might engage the days' celebrations on foot. Autos intruded on nearly every aspect of the celebration, including stopping alongside the pageant route and displacing audience members who had gathered to hear the president speak.[621] The prominence of automobiles simultaneously disrupted the two-day event and allowed its occurrence by permitting people access to a historical site once known for its inapproachability. For those witnessing rather than participating in the days' events, traveling by car also created a temporal distance from the history being commemorated. The cars that littered the celebration grounds represented an idea of modernity that transformed both earlier modes of travel and those who had undertaken the arduous journey over the Oregon Trail into increasingly remote relics. The other element of modernity in evidence during Harding's visit—the dedicated copy of the silent film *The*

[621] Trail Pageant photo album, 1923, Meacham Papers, PH 106, 1, U of O Special Collections.

Covered Wagon—similarly altered how the audience interacted with the history at hand. Both represented important changes underway in historic commemoration that brought comment and contemplation from the president himself.

The President

While accountings of the event overwhelmingly praised the pageant for its portrayal of important persons through Meacham—and the ability of so many persons to witness the performance attested to the town's continued relevance—commentators perceived its effect as temporary, that despite its documentation through newsreel footage and other photographic devises this celebration would eventually fade into memory alongside the events it sought to reproduce. Proponents instead championed another of the day's components as a permanent living memorial to the legacy of the Oregon Trail—the dedication by President Harding to the Oregon Trail Association of the silent epic, *The Covered Wagon*.[622] Released the same year as the Meacham celebration, the movie offered a narrative of the overland journey that many, including the president, understood as providing a great tribute to the original travelers of the Oregon Trail.[623] As the first successful historical epic within the Western genre, the film drew comparisons to the work of D.W. Griffith and began a trend of "historical Westerns" that persisted through the end of the silent era.[624]

[622] "President Harding Presents 'The Covered Wagon' to Pioneers at Oregon Trail Pageant at Meacham," *The Sunday Oregonian*, July 8, 1923.
[623] Ibid.
[624] Slotkin, *Gunfighter Nation*, 253. Commentators at the time made frequent comparisons between *The Covered Wagon* and D.W. Griffith's *The Birth of a Nation* for both the scope of the narrative and the cinematic quality of the film.

The film became part of the day's ceremonies as a gift from Adolf Zucker, president of the film's production company, the Famous Players-Laskey Corporation. In a publicity stunt that highlighted the movie's perceived value, it had been kept under locked guard, first with Portland's chief of police and later, during its transport to the Blue Mountains, with two armed soldiers.[625] The presentation of the movie to Harding, who then gave it to Walter Meacham, echoed the earlier pageant performance, as the reels were carted to the Presidential reviewing stand via an ox-drawn wagon, with the driver clad in a buckskin costume originally worn by one of the film's stars. Outfitting the driver in this manner further referenced a convention of historical pageantry—using clothing and other objects belonging to ancestors or notable figures from the community's past as a way of adding a sense of historical authenticity. Rather than connecting the performance to the region's past, however, the wearing of buckskins seen on the silver screen depended on the historical authenticity ascribed to the film itself. Although later assessments of *The Covered Wagon* describe it as a sentimentalized portrayal, reviewers at the time saw it as a truthful accounting of the history it presumed to portray. Even Harding, in his dedication, attested to "how accurately, how thoroughly, and how impressively it preserves the story of the trials and triumphs of the pioneer empire builders who blazed the trail to this western land and made a greater United States."[626] In making this declaration, the president reaffirmed the sentiment that those

[625] "Historical Film is Guarded by Soldiers," *Daily East Oregonian*, July 2, 1923. While this film was highly revered and seen as an important aspect of the Meacham celebration, the excessive means employed to transport this film also probably served as a means of garnering publicity.
[626] James W. Murphy, *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding President of the United States: Delivered During the Course of His Tour From Washington, D.C., to Alaska and Return to San Francisco, June 20 to August 2, 1923* (Washington D.C., 1923), 250-251.

who had traversed the old Oregon Trail did so with the patriotic intentions of growing the U.S. empire, but he placed the authentic accounting of that effort outside remembrances offered through the July 3rd celebration.

According to the promotional pamphlet that accompanied the film's release much of this authenticity came not only from the historical subject matter, but also in the efforts involved in its creation—that the work of faithfully recreating the overland journey "meant weeks of preparation, painstaking research, gigantic expenditure and a responsibility almost unequaled in the history of the films." Participants accepted these responsibilities as they were "not only an entertaining drama of a vital period in American history," but, "a historical document on celluloid, preserving for all time the accurate spectacle of the great task of the pioneers who braved the trails across the continent in the face of untold hardships, dangers and privations."[627] To do so, cast and crew seemingly braved their own "dangers and privations," as "they endured floods, blizzards, zero temperatures and sometimes lack of food," in their isolated filming location on the Utah Nevada border.[628]

As a further nod to the authenticity of a movie depicting Anglo passage through an area once populated by the indigenous inhabitants of North America, the same promotional materials touted how the cast of three thousand included one thousand Native American performers, or "one-tenth of all the blanket Indians in the United States."[629] The term "blanket Indian" described Native American rejection of U.S.

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[627] "*The Covered Wagon*" (New York: Commanday-Roth Co.,1923), unpaged. Meany Papers, UW Special Collections.
[628] Ibid.
[629] Ibid.

assimilation policies—an act often symbolized through the wearing of a blanket about one's body.[630] In this usage however, the implication moves beyond an act of political protest and instead positions the Native American actors as existing in a pre-contact past, thereby denying the performative nature of their portrayals. These are "real" rather than "show" Indians. The film's director gained access to this idea of primitive authenticity through his adoption by the Native American performers on the set and the garnering of the name "Chief Standing Bear."[631]

While the film received praise as a historical document, many of those writing about *The Covered Wagon* also drew correlations between the content of the film, that of pioneers venturing westward into unfamiliar lands, and the new forms of exploration through technological and artistic innovations that allowed for *The Covered Wagon's* creation. Were one critic described the film as having "a rhythm of empire building about the whole," another proclaimed that, "a new frontier has been reached and a new standard set up in motion pictures."[632] As much as proponents of the film claimed that its value lay in its fidelity to recreating the past, the mode through which it did so also played a significant role in its valuation. The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* reproduced persons traversing the actual landscape of the Oregon Trail in period costume and vehicles—much of which was original to the era and not a later reproduction—yet did not receive the same level of recognition for memorializing the overland journey as did its cinematic counterpart.

[630] Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 30.
[631] "*The Covered Wagon*," unpaged.
[632] Ibid.

Though the pageant recreated events similar to those of *The Covered Wagon*—and arguably with greater claims to the idea of authenticity through its employment of the actual route and heirlooms of early pioneers—the pageant ultimately faced limitations as a form of memorialization that the film seemed to surpass. Where pageantry required mass participation and attendance in one location and time, proponents of the new medium understood it as reaching an unlimited number of audiences and capable of being replayed indefinitely through its capacity for both mass distribution and repeat viewings.[633] Producers for *How the West was Won* understood the value of this, arranging the pageant's filming by a Portland movie studio, and showing the footage in a Walla Walla movie house in competition with *The Covered Wagon*. The President embraced the idea of broad distribution and viewership when describing the value of film as a tool of commemoration during his dedication of *The Covered Wagon*. While this movie served as an immediate testimonial to the trials of the Oregon pioneers, it also provided something "to be handed down to generations which are yet to come."[634] More than existing in multiple locations, film, when preserved, also existed in multiple times.

This medium, while offering a greater scope of viewership than pageantry, also accomplished more with vantage point. Watching *The Covered Wagon* against newsreel footage of the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* this disparity becomes apparent. Where every viewer of *The Covered Wagon* is privy to amazing panoramic scenery and the intimate interactions between performers, those for the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* could only

[633] This estimation of film's longevity failed to account for the fragile nature of this relatively new medium.
[634] Murphy, *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding*, 251.

witness the action as it passed before them along the pageants route.[635] Even President Harding, from his viewing stand, had to enjoy the production standing near the front of a platform filled with other persons.[636] Finally, the newness of film created an excitement about it that, by the 1920s, pageantry generally failed to create. *The Covered Wagon's* cinematic and thematic innovations compounded this sentiment. Where promoters of the film could claim that, "nothing like it has ever been done before," and that, "probably nothing like it will ever be done again," historical pageantry began as a form emulating the past that was itself passing.[637] President Harding also understood the importance of this new mode of reproducing the past, as it offered "a picture of history that could not have been portrayed in times gone by."[638]

The magnitude of *The Covered Wagon* caused the president to emphasize its importance beyond his obligations in dedicating the film and doing so in a way that privileged the history it portrayed over the lived experiences of those who had survived the overland trek. Between his morning spent as an audience member of the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* and the afternoon exercises that included an exaltation of Oregon pioneers, Harding spent two hours among those very people. The luncheon that succeeded the pageant included a banquet of bear meat, prepared and served by "pioneer ladies" and that the president agreeably ate, followed by a "pioneer's [sic] fiddler orchestra" and

[635] *The Covered Wagon* (Paramount Pictures, 1923), newsreel footage from OHS
[636] " Pres. and Mrs. Harding, Gov. Purce and his two daughters, Mrs. Hart wife of Gov. Hart of Oregon, to left is Secy. Work and Gov. Hart, Oregon," Keystone-Mast Collection, UCR/California Museum of Photography, University of California at Riverside.
[637] "*The Covered Wagon*" unpaged.
[638] Murphy, *Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding*, 251.

square dance in which both Hardings participated.[639] Yet, in a speech entitled "Poetic Praise of the Pioneers Who Blazed the Way to Empire Following the Old Oregon Trail," Harding lamented his inability to "more effectively visualize" the rigors of the Oregon Trail and complimented *The Covered Wagon*, rather than those he had recently consumed bear with, for helping him better understand what the effort had entailed.[640]

The rest of the talk proved similarly problematic. Within a speech promising "Poetic Praise of the Pioneers," the president did surprisingly little to acknowledge the larger colonization experience. Instead, Harding focused on the singular legacy of Dr. Marcus Whitman whose importance to the establishment of the Oregon Territory shifted between fact and legend and who had long been the subject of debate among historians of the West. In electing to recall Whitman, Harding embroiled himself in decades of dispute. Some of that debate was based in regional competition that sought to place one noteworthy pioneer above another, thereby elevating the location associated with the individual. Had the president spoke before audiences of *How the West Was Won*, held the month before in Walla Walla, for example, he may have met less resistance to his remembrance of Whitman—a person celebrated within the show and championed by the pageant's author.[641] In Meacham, however, the Whitman legacy met with hostility. To proponents of the area the Whitman mission represented an unnecessary diversion off the Oregon Trail, and the importance placed upon the doctor drew attention away from another missionary, Methodist Jason Lee, who had camped in the Blue Mountains en

[639] Meacham, *The Old Oregon Trail*, 31, "Official Program: Old Oregon Trail Pageant," unpaged.
[640] Murphy, *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding*, 259.
[641] Meany, *History of the State of Washington,*122-127. Meany provides a detailed accounting of the debate over Whitman's legacy contemporary to Harding's speech along with his own conclusions on the matter.

route to the Willamette Valley, earning him a place among the notable individuals who passed through the region. Clarifying Lee's importance a Pendleton paper, in a review of *How the West was Won*, declared Lee "the first missionary" and an "empire builder."[642]

The unease over Whitman's legacy extended beyond competing constructions of the pioneer period in eastern Oregon and Washington State and into discussions of the place of myth within the ideal of historical accuracy. Harding inadvertently inserted himself into the latter debate through his references to Whitman, raising the ire of Oregon Historical Society President Frederick V. Holman. In a letter to the editor published in the *Sunday Oregonian* following the July 3 affair, Holman outlined the purpose of his organization: "to ascertain and establish the truths of history, and to discredit traditions and myths which are untrue and have no foundation in fact."[643] In retelling what Holman derisively described as the "Whitman myth," Harding had transgressed against "all who believe in establishing the truth of history."[644]

Holman did not take issue with all accomplishments ascribed to Whitman. That Whitman was an early pioneer and, in his role as a Christian proselytizer, a purveyor of civilization was not at question. Even many critics of the doctor were quick to compliment his efforts in establishing a mission. Whitman held enough historical relevance to warrant an appearance in the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, despite regional sentiments that favored others, and his untimely death left many—Meacham and Holman

[642] "How the West Was Won," *Pendleton East Oregonian*, June 8, 1923.
[643] "President's Reference to Whitman Myth Regretted: Romantic Story Revived by Harding in Address at Meacham Challenged by Frederick V. Holman," *Sunday Oregonian*, July 8, 1923. In this same letter Holman likens the damage caused by perpetuating myths on historical facts to a mother telling her child about both Santa Claus and God, as realization that the first is false might weaken faith in the second.
[644] Ibid.

among them—comfortable elevating the missionary to the level of "martyr."[645] Finally, Holman ignored the uglier aspects of the Whitman legacy in his critique of the doctor—including the use of Whitman's death to persecute both Catholics and Cayuse. The debate instead centered on Whitman's actions during a return trip east in the winter of 1842. Proponents of Whitman place him in the White House before President John Tyler and Secretary of State Daniel Webster, pleading the case for annexation of Oregon before encouraging the Great Migration of 1843—the primary wagon train celebrated by the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*. To critics of Whitman, that scenario overstated the importance of the missionary to the U.S. settlement of Oregon with many disputing whether Whitman ever actually appeared before Tyler and Webster.[646]

Harding, in his address before fellow travelers to Meacham, not only related the event as fact but also situated himself within the story. Engaging his unique position as the current resident of the White House, the president explained how, by standing in the very room that Whitman supposedly gave testimony before Tyler and Webster, he had imagined the events that unfolded. Harding then described those events in the vivid detail of his "mind's eye" before the 30,000 who had gathered to hear him speak. In his conception of Whitman, Harding saw a character clad in the trappings of the first U.S. explorers to the West, including "a course fur coat, buckskin breeches, fur leggings, and boot moccasins, looking much the worse for wear," with greater signs of sacrifice that left the doctor "bronzed from exposure to pitiless elements and seamed with deep lines of

[645]"Official Program: *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*," unpaged, "President's Reference to Whitman Myth Regretted.".
[646] It is generally accepted that Whitman aided the 1843 wagon train; the issue is to what degree this occurred.

physical suffering." At the same time that Harding imagined Whitman roughened by his experiences, the president also saw him as embodying "a rare combination of determination and gentleness—obviously a man of God, but no less a man among men."[647] In describing Whitman as rugged, self-sacrificing, and able to maintain his civility amid great strife, Harding employed rhetoric similar to that used by Walter Meacham and others to champion the efforts of the original U.S. settlers into the Oregon Territory. He had presented before the audience an ideal pioneer. Holman, however, understood the president's "adoption and acceptance of the Whitman myth" as negating the larger colonization effort. Harding's reliance on a singular heroic act (particularly one understood as untrue) to exemplify all pioneer experiences, Holman argued, "discredits and belittles the patriotism and the heroism of the early Oregon pioneers."[648] Harding's effort to participate in the exaltation of the earliest U.S. settlers into the Oregon Territory instead resulted in a reprimand by one of the chief guardians of that legacy.

Harding recounted the "story mindful of the fact that its accuracy is challenged" and against the suggestion of friends who advised that he "ought not to relate it because it cannot be justified in history." The president defended his decision to include an event of questionable historical accuracy, because, he explained, through his "intimate association with the White House," he had "come to believe that this story, whether literally correct or not, affords the finest inspiration for the highest possible type of American patriotism

[647] .Murphy, *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding*, 253. This emphasis upon Whitman's physical appearance was common within written accounts of his journey east contemporary to its occurrence.
[648] "President's Reference to the Whitman Myth Regretted."

and devotion."[649] Where Holman understood the elevation of a single actor as undermining appreciation for the larger event, Harding, having achieved his own level of personal greatness through the office of President, saw emphasizing the actions of an individual as providing a better source of inspiration than the communal effort involved in empire building. Holman used Harding's role as Chief Executive against him in issuing a public scolding, arguing:

> Warren G. Harding, as a private citizen, may believe in such historical myths as he chooses, and he may teach them to his family and to his friends as charming fictions. But as president of the United States, in a public historical address, he should not give his approval to discredited myths and traditions.[650]

By this estimation, Harding's recounting of the Whitman myth did more than perpetuate a long since disproven tale; he neglected the responsibilities of his office. Yet beyond this misstep, Harding would prove himself well suited to the role of politician, at least in his interactions with his constituents and in particular with the day's other honorees.

During the two-day event all attendees who migrated to the territory before it achieved statehood received some level of commendation. Amid the celebration in the Blue Mountains, efforts to acknowledge these aging immigrants included a tent that provided reprieve from the summer sun, a special viewing stand from which to observe the passing pageant, ribbons that marked their position within the U.S. conquest of the West, while also affording them free entrance to the dance floor, and perhaps most

[649] Murphy, *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding*, 256.
[650] "President's Reference to Whitman Myth Regretted."

Figure 4.6 As part of the Meacham celebration President Harding dedicated a monument to the Old Oregon Trail. (UO Special Collections)

importantly, access to the President and Mrs. Harding.[651] During the address in which Harding spoke about the importance of *The Covered Wagon* and Marcus Whitman, rather than the larger set of experiences that the talk's title presumed to offer, a hierarchy of pioneers allowed those who had migrated as late as 1853 to occupy the place nearest the President, with those arriving later positioned "immediately about [the] grandstand."[652]

Later, at the unveiling of the Old Oregon Trail Monument—a large stone fixed with a bronze placard—at Emigrant Springs, approximately three miles west of Meacham, Harding offered to those pioneers present his most genuine tribute of the day.[653] While his earlier talk made it appear that the president preferred myth and movies to the lived experiences of those around him, this oration reflected both his interactions throughout the day with those who claimed pioneer status and his capacity for candid conversation. Commenting that a woman within his immediate vicinity had brought with her to the event "a water-bottle which came overland with the earliest pioneers," Harding thought it "appropriate, in addition to the dedication . . . to baptize this stone in the name of the Creator and those who love and revere our common country."[654] In a dialogue assuming that every aspect of the overland journey served the greater purpose of empire building and that even objects surviving the trek could acquire the status of religious

[651] "Official Program: Old Oregon Trail Pageant," unpaged.
[652] Ibid.
[653] This is now the site of the Emigrant Springs State Heritage Area owned and operated by the Oregon State Parks and Recreation Department. Literature produced at the time of the celebration alternately labeled the location "Immigrant Springs."
[654] Murphy, *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding*, 261.

icons, the president also demonstrated his ability to relate to his constituents, indicating that he understood the value of their efforts and could apply them to greater purposes.[655]

The president's appeals to commonality also appeared in expressions of humility. The final time Harding appeared before the audience in Meacham he voiced embarrassment at being called on to speak again, as seemingly he had "already said enough."[656] The cause of this modesty included the presentation of a lifetime membership into the OOTA. Besides Harding, nine other persons acquired a "gold membership card" as part of the day's ceremonies. Meeker, whose work in preserving the Oregon Trail and attempts to establish an interstate highway along the original route preceded similar efforts by Walter Meacham by more than a decade—and garnered significantly more attention—received the third membership into the association. The first card went to Harding, presumably more for his position as President of the United States than actual work done toward the creation of the Oregon Trail Highway, while Zucker, whose company produced *The Covered Wagon*, received the second.[657] Meeker publicly advocated the use of cinema as a means of memorialization and preservation; yet this single act of honoring Zucker before Meeker signaled a transformation in understanding which energies best supported the cause of commemoration. Meeker had always included some manner of commercialization in his efforts—he started selling written accounts of

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[655] "'He's Common Like us' Crowd Says of Harding After Talk," *Pendleton East Oregonian*, July 4, 1923. In a speech characteristic of those given throughout his tour of the West, Harding spoke later that same day from his Presidential train car in Pendleton before an impromptu audience of persons concerned with farming about his own experiences as a farmer, thereby creating a connection with his constituents based upon commonalities rather than elitism.

[656] Murphy, *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding President*, 261.

[657] "President Harding Presents 'The Covered Wagon' to Pioneers at Oregon Trail Pageant at Meacham," *Sunday Oregonian*, July 8, 1923.

his experiences as a homesteader and farmer well before he began his first promotional tour eastward across the continent, when he created a series of postcards documenting the journey that he sold en route—but had also positioned himself as uninterested in profit. His plans for films included distributing them freely to schools and other civic organizations.[658] Conversely, *The Covered Wagon* exemplified an explicit move toward combining commemoration with commercialization.

Harding, with his Meacham appearance, unwittingly placed himself within larger regional trends, whether competition between particular pioneer legacies, efforts to change outside perceptions of the area from bucolic to modern, or the realization of the region's tourist potential. At the same time, Harding's position as president legitimized his stances on these various issues in a manner that indicates their larger significance. Harding's praise of Whitman brought condemnation from a person specifically charged with preserving the memory of early U.S. colonialists, yet Harding's privileging of a movie presuming to recreate these same colonists' experiences over his interactions with the very people celebrated in the film did not bring a similar critique. With Harding's visit to the Blue Mountains—and amid the height of historical pageantry in the Pacific Northwest—what aspects of local history might be recalled remained contentious while the means through which this history appeared became fluid. A fictionalized accounting committed to celluloid held greater commemorative value than the participation of those who witnessed the initial event. Conceivably, in 1923, the latter and their memories would turn to dust like so many humans before them, while the former—without an

[658] Ezra Meeker, "Article of Incorporation" (New York: The Oregon Trail Memorial Association, Inc., ca. 1923) unpaged.

appreciation of rapid technological changes or an understanding of the volatile nature of celluloid—might exist forever. Ultimately, *The Covered Wagon* became increasingly obsolete, undone by the advent of sound in cinema and the move away from melodramatic pantomime—a shift in popular reception of entertainment formats that also undermined public appreciation of pageantry. Instead, the president's appearance before a vast tourist audience in the Blue Mountains represented the very shift in process between the unquestioned canonization of the early U.S. colonists in the Pacific Northwest. Here those most hurt by the colonial process defied expectations of their ready participation in the celebration and brought their protests before the president.

The Blanket

The Hardings' choice to remain in Meacham beyond their scheduled participation in the day's events depended upon the president's desire to witness a final reenactment, that of Native American performers descending upon a wagon train only to be defeated by the incoming cavalry.[659] This attack and retreat scenario had multiple antecedents in a growing romanticization of the West begun some forty years prior. Among the most notable examples, reputed Indian killer and showman William "Buffalo Bill" Cody included an attack on the "Deadwood Mail Coach" in the first iteration of his popular Wild West show.[660] The success of this particular display caused Cody to include it throughout multiple versions of the show with its greatest endorsement coming in 1887

[659] "Oregon Spirit Grips Harding," *Morning Oregonian*, July 5, 1923.
[660] Joy S. Kasson, *Buffalo Bill's Wild West: Celebrity, Memory, and Popular History* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000), 43.

as part of Queen Victoria's Golden Jubilee.[661] Here the national narrative of the U.S. conquest of the West repeated through this mock attack assumed international proportions with several European monarchs enjoying the show from within the fabled stagecoach, King Leopold II of Belgium—on the brink of his own terrible colonial endeavor—among them.[662] When Harding sought a similar portrayal thirty-six years later his interest demonstrated the iconic nature such performances had assumed with their increased relegation to the past. It also reflected a lingering sense of the West specific to the region. Harding's appearance in Meacham depended upon a larger effort to prove his interest in the western United States. As an Easterner who preferred perpetuating aspects of the area's mythology, even when that act proved controversial, to a genuine honoring of the region's past, displays of crude modernity, such as a recently graveled trail claiming highway status, presumably meant little to Harding. Instead, the same idea of "local flavor" that motivated auto tourism attracted the president.

Harding had articulated a similar fascination prior to the day's events, expressing "particular interest" in viewing the Native American actors in their encampment, created as an extension of the show.[663] The "Indian Village" was a collection of teepees near the performance grounds occupied by participants in the two-day affair and was a standard feature of productions employing Native American performers by the time the president sought them out at the Top o' Blue Mountains. The campgrounds appeared commonly in association with Wild West shows and rodeos, as well as other productions featuring

[661] L.G. Moses, *Wild West Shows: and the Images of American Indians, 1883-1933* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1996), 55.
[662] Robert W. Rydell and Ron Kroes, *Buffalo Bill in Bologna: The Americanization of the World, 1869-1922* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 108.
[663] "Dedication of Old Oregon Trail will be Made by Harding," *Pendleton East Oregonian,* June 8, 1923.

Figure 4.7 Indian encampment at Meacham. President Harding , as with many of the white visitors to the celebration, expressed a voyeuristic fascination with witnessing this pseudo-ethnographic exhibit (UO Special Collections)

Native American performers. The 1911 Astoria Centennial included a village associated with *The Bridge of the Gods* pageant, while promoters for the *Covered Wagon* erected teepees in New York City.[664] These displays were open to the public, offering interested viewers such as Harding access to a world seemingly out of time, one of ethnographic curiosity and one that was largely understood as vanishing. As Philip Deloria argues, these encampments also offered audiences a counter to staged reenactments such as the one that kept the Hardings in Meacham, as the fierce warriors who had descended upon the stagecoach now appeared peacefully within their own homes. According to Deloria:

[664] Moses, *Wild West Shows*, 250.

> Even as audiences quailed before the physical fact of the charging warriors, however, they could take comfort in the knowledge of their own social domination, which became visible as they strolled through the domestic space of the camp after the show. Feminized passivity now characterized the pacified Indians, while the audience took on a masculine authority derived from ethnographic pretense and the difference in status between the paying customer and the performer.[665]

While the Indian village at Meacham potentially served the voyeuristic desires of the event's overwhelmingly white audience, those who opened their dwellings to outside spectators had their own motivations for participating in this display. The history of a similar encampment at the annual rodeo in nearby Pendleton suggests that the formation of such camps also depended on the desires of Native American participants to gather in this way. Director of the CTUIR's Tamástslikt Cultural Institute, Roberta Conner, writing on tribal participation in the original Pendleton Round-Up of 1910 and describing the loss of various campgrounds in northern Oregon, explains that:

> Wounds of forced assimilation and loss of land, freedom, and rights were still fresh in 1910. But for tribal people who camped together in great numbers at Cayuse, Johnson Creek, and the July Grounds, Round-Up was a kind of blessing. It was one more celebration where they could remember a different way of life, when they camped together with neighboring tribes and relatives at various camas prairies. It was a time to remember living peaceably.[666]

The Pendleton Round-Up held the same year as the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* boasted an Indian Village of at least fifty teepees.[667] Native Americans from the CTUIR and other Columbia Plateau reservations had participated from the Round-Up's inception,

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[665] Deloria, *Indians in Unexpected Places*, 65.
[666] Roberta Conner, "Round-Up Reminisceces: 'You Can't Eat Lound-Up,' in *Pendleton Round-Up at 100: Oregon's Legendary Rodeo*, Michael Bales and Ann Terry Hill, eds. (Portland: Graphic Arts Books, 2009), 47.
[667] Wesley Andrews, "'Pendleton Roundup' from Airplane," Wesley Andrews Post Cards, Organized Lot No. 87, box 1, folder 9, OHS Research Library.

Figure 4.8 Poker Jim, Chauncey Bishop, and Cap' Sumkin (from left to right), were prominent members in their respective communities and regular participants in the annual Pendleton Round-up. (UO Special Collections)

and in the thirteen years since their potential roles had been expanded through features such as the all-Indian pageant *Happy Canyon* and the contest that bestowed Esther Motanic with the title of princess. Association with the annual rodeo generated opportunities to perform in other area productions, including a handful of nationally released motion pictures filmed locally. It also created a pool of performers that shows

throughout the Northwest expected to call upon as necessary, yet instances such as *How the West was Won's* difficulty recruiting performers from this very pool and performers such as Motanic's manipulation of popular interest in her demonstrate a more complex dynamic than most white show producers presumed to exist and that appeared readily with the president's visit to Meacham.

Though the "Official Program" for the Meacham celebration offered little evidence of Native American participation, members of the CTUIR played several integral roles in the day's events. Within the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, they performed as specific historical characters in addition to offering the opening cavalcade. On the former, performers appeared as important Native American figures, including Chief Joseph, Chief Egan, Chief War Eagle and the "Indian wife of Dorian." [668] The failure to define Marie Dorian separate from her husband resulted in part from the differing significance applied to Native American men and Native American women in performances such as pageantry. Writing on Native American representation and participation in film, Michelle H. Raheja describes the colonial narrative needs of early Westerns—which functioned similarly to the particular narrative offered by the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* and its ilk—as deemphasizing the roles of Native women. According to Raheja:

> Historically, motion picture companies have hired fewer Native American female actors than their male counterparts. Because the politics of representation in films with American Indian plots and subplots privilege the frontier as an imagined site where Native American warriors must be

[668] "Official Program: Old Oregon Trail Pageant," unpaged.

> conquered, secured, and surveyed, especially in westerns, male characters have been more visible.[669]

This tendency accounts for the prioritization of notable chiefs over Dorian, but the pageant program also reveals a larger discounting of the Native American performers generally. Though Chiefs Joseph, Egan, and War Eagle are named in the program the actors who portrayed them are not. The "Indian wife of Dorian" receives only slightly better treatment, appearing among a cast list in which all other actors are named as an, "Umatilla Indian Woman."[670] While Walter Meacham had lamented Marie Dorian's passage into history unnamed, his own work repeated this erasure through his failure to fully name Dorian or the actress performing her. Possibly, the latter slight resulted from show producers not knowing who would portray Dorian (or Joseph, Egan, and War Eagle) prior to the printing deadline for the pageant's program. Yet, the ability to actively cast all other roles by this point indicates a perceived interchangeability between Native American performers and the historical figures they were called upon to portray. Just as Motanic might easily assume Sacagawea's identity or provide guidance to the white woman playing Winona, so, seemingly, any "Umatilla Indian Woman" might do as Dorian. The prevalence of white actresses preceding Motanic as Sacagawea in *How the West was Won* and other area pageants suggests that any woman might emerge as an Indian princess on the Northwest pageant stage even if, as Jane Burns Albert did in the *Pageant of Portland*, she might later emerge as an icon of white womanhood.

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[669] Raheja, *Reservation Reelism*, 46. Significantly, while the historical figures Chief Joseph, Chief Egan, and Chief War Eagle were represented in the pageant program, the actors portraying them were unnamed.
[670] "Official Program: Old Oregon Trail Pageant," unpaged.

Figure 4.9 The character of Marie Dorian sits atop the horse. While all other members of the Wilson Price Hunt party are identified by the name of the historic figure and the actor portraying them, Dorian appears only in reference to her husband as the, "Indian wife of Dorian," and the actress playing her is listed as, "Umatilla Indian Woman." (UO Special Collections)

It is unsurprising in this context that the unnamed CTUIR actress might convincingly portray a woman of French-Canadian and Iowan descent for an overwhelmingly white audience, yet the slip was of more than of tribal or racial affiliations. Marie Dorion was in her early twenties when she participated in the Hunt expedition, while surviving photos show a much older actress in the role. This shift in age changes Dorian from a young and surprisingly capable woman who, true to Meacham's assessment, underwent some serious privations, to a woman with presumably more experience and capacity for the challenges that she encountered. The simultaneous portrayal and nearly complete erasure of Dorian betrays Meacham's true intentions in

championing her as noteworthy historical figure. He held limited concern for her legacy but when it benefited regional promotion. Dorian's role in the Astor expedition mirrored Sacagawea's travels enough that even a recent writer on Astor drew comparisons between the two.[671] The possibility that Dorian might enjoy some of the popularity afforded Sacagawea (or at least that she should) provided reason for Meacham to embrace her; yet the actuality of Dorian's appearance in promotional materials Meacham wrote and the pageant he created demonstrate the shallowness of his interest. Ultimately, Dorian's value lie in her potential to draw tourists to the region, an act that required a remaking her as a second Sacagawea, but Meacham and other area promoters failed to recognize what attracted contemporary audiences to the Shoshone guide. By the early 1920s Sacagawea had come to represent female independence, the expansion of U.S. empire, and a personification of the Indian princess ideal. The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* arguably entitled Dorian to the first two, though the loss of her name and the actual failure of the Astor expedition seriously undermined her role in either. By choosing an older actress, however, pageant planners both separated the portrayal from the actual person of Dorian and the possibility of her appearing as an Indian princess, thereby negating her appeal to much of the Meacham audience.

In designing the program, planners for the Meacham affair had assumed Native American participation, yet that met with resistance from the performers.[672] Poker Jim, a Walla Walla chief and chief of the Round-Up, initially declined to attend the Meacham

[671] Peter Stark, *Astoria: Astor and Jefferson's Lost Pacific Empire* (New York: HarperCollins, 2015), 108, 125, 180-81.
[672] "Plans Completed for Celebration of Trail Affair."

Figure 4.10 Local tribal leaders utilized their participation in the Meacham celebration and the accompanying access to President Harding to voice complaints about the federal government's poor treatment of Native Americans. (UO Special Collections)

ceremonies, and only consented through the convincing of his friend, Chauncey Bishop.[673] In a letter written by Poker Jim to Bishop and reprinted in the Pendleton paper the *East Oregonian,* Poker Jim outlines his reservations and issues a demand for self-representation within the event: "I have always believe in my own religion; all these buckskin customs and warbonnets and feather flags made of eagles never believe in no white man's way. I will take along my own relics if I do go up and participate in the

[673] "Poker Jim Consents to go to Celebrations to Greet Great Chief Harding; Writes Letter," *Pendleton East Oregonian,* June 26, 1923.

celebration."[674] Poker Jim did take part as one of the prominent people in the pow wow with the president. Another participant, Cap' Sumpkin, used his audience before Harding to voice his grievances to the president about the treatment of Native Americans by the federal government—a conversation the president deflected by referring Sumpkin to the Commissioner of Indian Affairs. The ceremony concluded with the president and First Lady's adoption by the Cayuse, a process Harding appeared unclear about, asking: "So now, I am a Umatilla?" He received the response: "No . . . you are a Cayuse."[675] Although this interaction promised to provide the ultimate legitimization of the region's pioneer legacy—that those most injured by colonization might now welcome the president as their own—the demonstrations of resistance both before and during the ceremony by Poker Jim and Sumpkin disrupted the unquestioned celebration of westward expansion.

If the pow wow participants did not offer the clear endorsement of U.S. empire sought by the event's planners, then a component created by a burgeoning industrial empire did. As part of the ceremony, the First Lady received a blanket designed and produced for the occasion by a burgeoning local industry, the Pendleton Woolen Mills. Based on the company's popular Chief Joseph design, the blanket featured a white background with a large cross pattern in shades of yellow and brown and a fringed border. The tradition of "Indian trade blankets," often worn about the body as a robe, predated the establishment of the mill in eastern Oregon, but Pendleton Woolen Mills became the premier provider of cloths during the early twentieth century through a policy

[674] Ibid.
[675] "Harding Initiated into Cayuse Tribe," *Morning Oregonian* July 4, 1923.

of pursuing Native American customers by appealing to their tastes and preferences, beginning with members of the CTUIR.[676] Newsreel footage described the exchange as "the history and traditions of a noble race [being] handed down in an Indian blanket."[677] Bestowing of this blanket upon Florence Harding offered physical evidence of her and her husband's adoption into the Cayuse (the president similarly received gifts), symbolically making blanket Indians of the First Couple.

The exchange also increased the national profile of a local industry. The Pendleton Woolen Mills continued producing blankets with the design created for the Meacham event. Sold as the "Harding" pattern, the blanket proved quite popular in subsequent years, with garments made from the material, including the "Harding Sport Coat," introduced by the end of the decade. Marketing for both the coat and the blanket depended on the original design's presentation before the First Lady, for while "the beauty of the robe [bespoke] its popularity," it was "valued for its historic significance."[678] Different from a souvenir or reproduction, the Harding blankets manufactured and sold by the Pendleton Woolen Mills descend directly from the first shawl conferred upon Florence Harding as part of the same line of production created for a historical event. The Hardings' visit to Meacham, their witnessing of the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* and subsequent participation in the day's events, their interactions with Poker Jim and Sumkin, and their eventual departure all repeat through duplicates of that first blanket. A

[676] *The Romantic Story of Man and Sheep* (Portland: Pendleton Woolen Mills, 1962), 33, Vertical File, "Oregon Industries, Wool Industry, Pendleton Mills," OHS Research Libraries.
[677] "President Harding at Meacham, Oregon 1923," 01278, OHS Research Libraries.
[678] "Pendleton, Catalog No. 6," (Portland: Pendleton Woolen Mills, 1928). 12, 19, Vertical File, "Oregon Industries, Wool Industry, Pendleton Mills," OHS Research Libraries.

day that sought to memorialize the recent past is itself remembered through this commercially constructed piece of cloth.

Pendleton Woolen Mills' continued manufacture of the Harding blanket with clear reference to the celebration of July 3, 1923 attests to the sustained importance of the event in the formation of a regional identity. The early twentieth century saw the communities that contributed to the Meacham affair losing prestige to growing metropolises such as Portland, Spokane, and Seattle. In trying to reestablish their area's importance, Walter Meacham and his fellow boosters pushed beyond asserting their cities' significance on the state level, positioning the passage through the Blue Mountains as essential to the wellbeing of the entire United States and the nation's ability to establish an empire abroad. The validation that Harding's participation brought to that claim was undeterred by either the president's untimely death later that month or the scandals marring his reputation in the decades since.[679] Writing in a subsequent promotional tract, Walter Meacham lamented that the president's lifetime membership in the OOTA "terminated so tragically within thirty days" but made no reference to Harding's supposed misdeeds; Meacham did not attempt to lessen the president's role in the celebration in response to his increased unpopularity.[680]

Instead, as commemorative forms such as historical pageantry diminished in relevance and the connections made between covered wagons moving through Meacham and the U.S. territorial expansion into the Pacific became less pertinent, the fact of the

[679] Ferrell, *The Strange Deaths of President Harding*. Ferrell describes President Harding as a relatively popular political figure before his death, but increasingly unpopular posthumously with his reputation tarnished by such scandals as Teapot Dome, the Veteran's Affairs Administration, *The Strange Death of President Harding*, and *The President's Daughter.*
[680] Meacham, *The Old Oregon Trail*, 32.

president's participation overshadowed other elements of the two-day event and acquired mythical proportions of their own. Harding had many kind words about the communities that surrounded Meacham, the people who inhabited the area, and the region's pioneer past, yet the greatest significance attributed to the day depended on the idea that the president described Meacham as "the capital of the United States all day long," a statement that does not appear within the official record of the day's speeches.[681] Meacham's boosters aspired to equate the area's importance to the acquisition of Alaska and Hawaii—and certainly such rhetoric persisted for a time—but what survives within the popular memory of the event is that Meacham had a singular moment of national importance, a legacy not incongruent with the desires of Walter Meacham and other promoters of the area. Although the two-day event commemorated the U.S. colonization of the Pacific Northwest and those who undertook the task of empire, it also marked a hopeful transition away from that earlier period—evidenced through such displays of modernity as the celebration of the recently improved roadway, the potential for auto travel that it represented, and the employment of the film, *The Covered Wagon*, as a new means of memorializing the overland journey. Harding's supposed equation of the unincorporated community of Meacham with the nation's capital—even briefly—

[681] Upon President Harding's death James W. Murphy compiled and published the final speeches of President Harding, including comments Harding made beyond the planned dialog in *Last Speeches and Addresses of Warren G. Harding President of the United States: Delivered During the Course of His Tour From Washington, D.C., to Alaska and Return to San Francisco, June 20 to August 2, 1923*. For the Meacham celebration this included the dedication of the silent film *The Covered Wagon*, Harding's speech about Oregon's pioneer legacy, his dedication of the monument at Emigrant Springs, and his initiation into the OOTA. In an article immediately following the event a writer for *The East Oregonian* described Meacham as the "capital of the United States" but did not attribute this sentiment to the President. Harding's supposed remark appears in several places including a historical marker in Meacham and most recently in a newspaper article marking the ninetieth anniversary of the Meacham celebration. See Dick Mason, "For a day, Meacham, was 'capital of the United States all day long'" *The Observer*, July 1, 2013.

indicated that Meacham had achieved some level of the modernity and civility frequently equated with the urbanized East during this period and pursued by aspiring burgs in the West.

The very sense of modernity pursued by promoters of the Meacham affair ultimately led to a continued embrace of the region's pioneer past in an effort to attract tourists. The same desire that caused the president to express "particular interest" in viewing the Indian encampment pushed subsequent generations to romanticize Oregon's frontier heritage and to seek out remnants of that period. Representations of that earlier era abound in the region. A prairie schooner led by plywood oxen greets visitors at the state park that developed around the monument at Emigrant Springs, and one of the more enduring celebrations of regional identity, the Pendleton Round-Up, references approximately the same timeframe as that portrayed within the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*. Yet, considered against the construction of area history presented by the pageant—one that embraced the idea of the forward motion of the United States and negated the continued presence of Native Americans—the annual rodeo is arguably of the present. Just as Poker Jim and Cap' Sumpkin challenged their presumed positions as relics before the president of the United States, the Round-Up continues to offer a complex portrayal of the region's history of colonization—one that frustrates the narrative of empire championed by Walter Meacham and his cohort.

Epilogue

Looking around the Northwest in the summer of 1923, pageants appeared everywhere. Besides Walla Walla's *How the West was Won*, the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* that entertained President Harding, and *Americanus* that provided his final, public stage, at least three other large-scale pageants appeared in Oregon and Washington with a myriad of smaller productions also vying for viewership.[682] *Pageant of Portland* author Adah Losh Rose revisited the theme of Portland's development as expressed through allegory with the pageant *On the Trail of the Setting Sun*, Rose's contribution to that year's Multnomah County Fair.[683] In a celebration of transportation akin to Meacham's *Old Oregon Trail Pageant*, the community of Klamouth Falls, Oregon, in the southeastern portion of the state, marked the construction of a new railroad line with *The Passing of the Covered Wagon*, a pageant that utilized a film of a volcanic explosion among its effects.[684] Finally, the city of The Dalles, Oregon, along the Columbia River Corridor, enjoyed a third successful run of the *Pageant of Wascopam*, a production that utilized the same Native American legend as the *Bridge of the Gods* but continued the action forward into the modern day.[685]

The author of this last production, the respected amateur historian Lulu Crandall, pondered the merits of her work in a brief letter to *Americanus* author Edmond Meany, and wondered that The Dalles was not just as deserving of the title "The Pageant City,"

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[682] See, for example, "Girls Receive Notes," *Sunday Oregonian*, May 27, 1923, and "Women Present Historic Pageant," *Morning Oregonian*, June 9, 1923.
[683] "Plans Completed for Gresham Fair," *Sunday Oregonian*, July 29, 1923.
[684] "Days of Pioneer Return at Fete," *Morning Oregonian*, October 13, 1923.
[685] "The Dalles Fete Today," *Morning Oregonian*, May 26, 1922, and Ruth Elizabeth Sheldon, "Pageant of Wascopam Portrays Early History of Columbia," *Sunday Oregonian*, June 17, 1923.

as Meany's Seattle.[686] This suggestion that the tiny town of The Dalles, with a population in the early 1920s of less than 6,000 people, might compete with the Northwest's largest city for the "Pageant City" moniker is revealing about the importance of historical pageantry to a variety of Northwest communities, yet more significant is the timing of Crandall's letter and what she excludes. Written on July 4, 1923, Crandall's words followed by one day President Harding's well attended visit to Meacham, Oregon—an event held just 150 miles west of The Dalles and which Crandall conceivably witnessed. It also followed the president's late-night visit to The Dalles en route between Meacham and Portland and coincided with the radio broadcast of Harding's Portland address that would again bring the president's words into Crandall's hometown. [687] Amid these historic moments, however, The Dalles' self-appointed historian spoke only of pageants.

Pageantry in the Pacific Northwest never repeated its 1923 height. By the time Crandall contacted Meany with the idea that her small hometown might become the "Pageant City," the very production that Crandall based her ambition upon, the *Pageant of Wascopam*, had already enjoyed its final run. Reportedly, the community's pageant committee elected against staging the show in 1924, planning, "instead to put on a larger affair in 1925, with a paid director in charge," though the grander production never

[686] "Lulu D. Crandall to Edmond S. Meany," Meany Papers, box 10, folder 11, UW Special Collections, and Fred W. Wilson, "Lulu Donnell Crandall, 1854-1931," *Oregon Historical Quarterly* 32, no. 4 (December 1931), 349. Wilson describes Crandall's specific contribution to compiling regional history, noting, "…she began to gather historical data of The Dalles and Wasco County, and her industry was unceasing. From morning till late in the night she worked, apparently never tiring, and the result is that all possible historical facts relating to this portion of the state have been carefully gathered and wisely segregated. Future historians will find their work easier because of her efforts."

[687] "Dynamite Blasts Awaken President," and "Broadcasting from K.G.W.," both *Morning Oregonian*, July 5, 1923.

emerged.[688] Both the perceived need to assemble a greater and more professional spectacle and the failure to actually do so indicate an important shift in audience tastes. In 1924, The Dalles community leaders understood the *Pageant of Wascopam* in its current form to be an insufficient tourist draw. By the following year, The Dalles boosters had retreated entirely from staging a large-scale production, and those who continued to engage pageantry in Crandall's would-be Pageant City did so on a significantly smaller scale with diminished expectations for audience attendance.[689] The financial failure of Meany's pageant *Americanus* similarly signaled a cooling of enthusiasm for the form. In Seattle, the Associated Student Body of the University of Washington, who had been responsible for staging *Americanus* and its predecessor pageant, *The Wayfarer*, elected to take the summer of 1924 off from pageantry before assembling a final remount of *The Wayfarer* in 1925.[690]

If pageantry's ascent in Oregon and Washington followed a later trajectory than its eastern counterparts, by the late 1920s pageantry everywhere would succumb to other entertainments. The post-war prevalence of mass media and leisure activities altered audience tastes away from the burdensome history lessons offered by pageantry. Attempts to adapt to these changes ultimately stripped pageantry of its perceived cultural value and hastened its decline. Historian David Glassberg describes this transition:

> Commercial firms in the business of providing holiday entertainment for towns attempted to make their productions more and more spectacular to compete with other popular amusements—moving pictures, radio, and

[688] "Pageant is Postponed," *Morning Oregonian*, May 22, 1924.
[689] See, for example, "Pageant of The Dalles tells Story of Oregon of Today and Yesterday," *Morning Oregonian*, May 16, 1926.
[690] "Plans Made for 1925 'Wayfarer,'" *Seattle Daily Times*, March 8, 1925.

> professional sports—but this was a competition that pageantry clearly could not win.[691]

The proposed retooling of the *Pageant of Wascopam* fits well within Glassberg's assessment, as does the production's eventual disappearance. Arguably, the grand scale and scope undertaken by many of Oregon and Washington's post-WWI pageants grew as much out of competition for audience members with the "popular amusements" Glassberg outlines as from a rivalry amongst the pageants themselves. In particular, the advent and popularization of the cinematic historical epic and pageantry's late arrival to the Pacific Northwest generated a different dynamic between the two forms than had existed in the decades prior. Though both pageants and silent films depended heavily upon gesture and pantomime to convey their stories, those working in pageantry in the 1900s and 1910s often cited the historical themes undertaken by their preferred medium as a means of distinguishing themselves from cinema's commercial intentions.[692] By the 1920s, film had emerged as a valid site for recounting and recording history. The movie depicting the Whitman incident, *Martyrs of Yesterday*—though it failed to find distribution—existed within a growing cinematic trend of committing historic events to celluloid that would ultimately alter audience perceptions of these very events as well as expectations for their visual rendering.

Promoters of Northwest pageants in the early 1920s maintained a self-conscience appreciation of cinema's influence upon their chosen form. At least one production that I discuss in the preceding chapters attempted to exploit this relationship, efforts that

[691] Glassberg, *American Historical Pageantry*, 287.
[692] Ibid., 119.

ultimately demonstrated the perceived preeminence of motion pictures over pageants. Just as D.W. Griffith had recorded the Methodist Centenary staging of *The Wayfarer* and transformed it into a full-length film—thereby extending this regional event to a national audience—producers of Walla Walla's *How the West was Won* contracted with area filmmaker, Michael C. Priddy, to document their 1923 production. [693] Initially this agreement imagined footage of the pageant serving as filler scenes within locally produced motion pictures, a move that would both commercialize and confirm regional pageantry's reliance upon the visual vocabulary of silent cinema.[694] Such a scenario failed to materialize. Rather, Priddy cut the footage into a feature-length film that screened locally that October, ironically in competition with *The Covered Wagon*—the much-lauded silent epic that earlier in Meacham, Oregon, President Harding had praised as a more accurate and authentic accounting of the U.S. settlement of the West than that offered by either pageant reenactors or Oregon Trail travelers before an audience comprised of both.[695]

Priddy's inability to screen the pageant footage beyond a local audience may indicate a growing disinterest in the historical pageantry format, or it might simply suggest that he had overstated the extent of his relationships with area movie studios. More interestingly, the transference of *How the West was Won* from pageant to film—

[693] "Pageant Picture has its Premier Here this Evening," *Walla Walla Bulletin*, October 9, 1923.
[694] "Minutes of Special Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Pageant," May 18, 1923, Pioneer Pageant Records, WCMSS 293, Penrose Library. This earlier plan had Priddy entering into an, "agreement with a big moving picture company at Beaverton, Oregon," probably a reference to Premiere Picture Productions, a studio that operated in Beaverton between 1922 and 1925.
[695] "How the West was Won," "Pageant Picture has its Premier Here this Evening," and "The Covered Wagon," all *Walla Walla Bulletin*, October 10, 1923. Reiterating the importance of a tightly directed and edited drama over a filmed pageant, the admission price for *The Covered Wagon* was twice that of *How the West was Won's* cinematic debut, while a local newspaper write-up of the cinematic presentation of *How the West was Won* is accompanied by an image from *The Covered Wagon*.

with both viewed within a single community—offers an example of how recorded images legitimize lived experience.[696] Advertisements for the cinematic version of *How the West was Won* understood and exploited this dynamic, promising the Walla Walla citizenry, "You'll See Yourself and All Your Friends."[697] Reviews suggest that many in the audience appreciated this very quality about the film—that they or someone they knew would appear upon the silver screen—and that, at least within the initial showings, much of the viewership comprised of pageant participants, their families, and their friends.[698] Beyond the initial giddiness of recognizing oneself and others from within the local community in a space more commonly occupied by movie actors, the act of being recorded in celluloid altered the pageant participants' understandings of their own performances. As one review explained:

> [The pageant's] dramatic forcefulness is best attested to by the fact that the men and women who comprised its cast of 2500 actors were able to permanently record on the silent screen the appeal that the pageant itself made to the men and women of the city.[699]

Though the cinematic rendition of *How the West was Won* originated through agreements made in the pageant's early planning process, the above assessment presents the filmic version of the pageant as a testament to the original production's importance. Perhaps most revealing within this description is the emphasis placed upon the ability of pageant performers to "permanently record" their efforts. While their initial performances existed as singular events, once captured on film these performances might be engaged in

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[696] For an in-depth discussion of this phenomenon please see Susan Sontag, "In Plato's Cave," in *On Photography* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1977), 3-26.
[697] "Coming, the Motion Pictures of Walla Walla's Pioneer Pageant," from Bygone Walla Walla, http://wallawalladrazanphotos.blogspot.com/search/label/Legion%20Theatre, accessed March 20, 2016.
[698] "Pioneer Pageant Motion Picture Like Production," *Walla Walla Bulletin*, October 10, 1923.
[699] Ibid.

perpetuity[700] The seemingly concrete nature of film validated the fleetingness of pageantry. As with other popular amusements of the 1920s, film certainly overshadowed pageantry in its capacity to draw an interested audience. Examples such as the cinematic rendition of *How the West was Won* and Harding's appreciation for *The Covered Wagon* suggest that movies also overtook one of pageantry's primary claims of legitimacy: that they served as a vital space to remember and reenact an area's past.

Northwest communities continued to stage historical pageants into the late 1920s and beyond, but these productions, besides their smaller scale, differed significantly from their predecessors, particularly in their linking of the past to the present. Of the post-WWI pageants I explore in-depth, only the *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* failed to bring the action up to the current era, with many of the others even moved beyond the current day to offer a vision of future prosperity. The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* successfully bypassed these scenes as the newly improved roadway that covered the one-time Oregon Trail offered a better testament to the region's present and future aspirations than any amount of staged allegory or pantomime. As the decade progressed, however, such inclusions of the present largely disappeared from pageantry and the very histories celebrated by these productions were framed as increasingly remote.

A series of pageants from Eugene, Oregon, are telling of this change. Staged every three years between 1926 and 1950, these productions represent a later effort in the Northwest to engage pageantry as a significant means of community-wide celebration

[700] As with expectations placed upon *The Covered Wagon*, this idea of longevity failed to anticipate both the volatile composition of the actual film that would lead to the destruction of a large swath of silent era footage of that the advent of sound cinema would create an indifference to these early films that allowed the destruction to occur largely unabated.

and commemoration. Though there were continuations between these pageants—from the reuse of certain scenes to the rehiring of personnel—the pageants were also altered with each iteration in response to perceived community interests and needs.[701] In its first season the pageant bore the title, *Klatawa: A Pageant of Transportation*.[702] Staged as part of a larger three-day event celebrating the completion of a rail line seventeen years in the making, *Klatawa*'s larger narrative resembled that of Meacham's *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* in content and purpose. Moving through a procession of important historical figures and changing modes of transport, *Klatawa's* final two scenes exceeded the Meacham template, first surprising the audience with a locomotive driven onto the stage then following closely with an airplane swooping down from above.[703] These moves appreciate the role of spectacle in pageantry. They also demonstrate an emphasis upon modernity absent from subsequent productions. The pageant's second staging in 1929 occurred under the banner, *The Sunset Trail: A Pioneer Pageant*, and, as the differing subtitle suggests, undertook significantly less contemporary themes.[704] Demonstrating an emerging trend in Northwest Pageantry, *The Sunset Trail* celebrated the region's

[701] Longtime general manager for the Eugene pageants, Hugh Rosson chronicles these various changes in, "'Trail to Rail:' the First Eugene Pageant," *Lane County Historian* 18, no. 3 (Fall 1973), 43-59, and "'The Eugene Pageant," 1929-1950," *Lane County Historian* 18, no. 4 (Winter 1973), 63-83.
[702] *Trail to Rail Celebration Program* (Eugene: Koke Chapman, Co., 1926), 4. The official program clarifies this choice in title as, "In the Chinook language 'Klatawa' means 'to go,' 'to travel.' This word symbolizing forward movement, progress, has been personified as the Spirit of the Pageant, ever urging on the development of transportation facilities. The theme of the Pageant is the development of transportation in the Oregon Country."
[703] Rosson, "Trail to Rail," 50.
[704] *Sunset Trail Program* (Eugene: Koke Chapman, Co., 1929), 4. This pageant does include a scene titled, "The Ballet of Modern Times." Framed within the larger pageant as a "Pioneer's Vision of the Future," and followed by a "Procession of Pioneer's," that concludes in the late nineteenth century, the pageant acknowledges the contemporary era but treats it as separate from the region's earlier history.

nineteenth-century colonial and early-statehood periods while also distancing them from the modern era.

There are multiple reasons why pageants in Oregon and Washington disconnected their storylines from the present. The rise of other entertainments such as cinema not only drew audiences away from pageants, but also had the effect of positioning pageantry as out of step with the current era. This perception of pageantry as passé made it an appropriate mode to celebrate the increasingly archaic nineteenth century but not to commemorate more recent events. Accordingly, the productions that emerged in the latter 1920s emphasized the experiences of colonization and early statehood rather than forming a continuation between these and the current era. Further, while pageant makers in the early 1920s had sought to connect the colonization of the Northwest to U.S. imperial endeavors in the Pacific as a means of touting regional importance, ultimately this link reiterated the significance of a rural past rather than demonstrating Oregon or Washington's current relevance. The usefulness of pageantry to area boosters, then, shifted as the decade progressed. Finally, pageantry's use as a means of commemorating and celebrating the Northwest's colonial era would turn to an act of memorialization as the youngest of the so-called pioneers became septuagenarians and many of the more visible among their ranks passed away.[705] Later productions charged themselves with preserving this past at the expense of any pondering of the present.

[705] The Oregon Pioneer Association proffered the "pioneer" designation upon anyone who were born or arrived in the Oregon Territory before 1858, the year Oregon received statehood. Throughout the 1920s several prominent pioneers passed away, including *Martyrs of Yesterday* contributors Cyrus Walker in 1921 and Elizabeth Sager Helm in 1925, and champion of the Oregon Trail Ezra Meeker in 1928.

The changes that occurred throughout the 1920s explain the shifts in regional uses of pageantry but fail to account for the initial value ascribed to the form. While these earlier works would assume levels of scale and attract audience numbers unparalleled in later productions, the pageants that appeared in the five years following WWI overwhelmingly positioned themselves as sites of healing. Beginning with the eponymous *Pageant of Portland* and Seattle's *Democracy for all Humanity*, pageantry emerged as a valid medium to address both the recent war and related conflicts such as the Seattle General Strike, respectively. *The Wayfarer* would bridge these concerns as its initial creation sought to account for the war's violence while its Seattle appearance promised to remake the city's image away from the strike. *Americanus* intended to build upon *The Wayfarer's* legacy but be more inclusive in its appeal. *How the West was Won* offered a celebration of patriotic sacrifice that replaced historic instances of violence with allegorical dance and poetic verse. The *Old Oregon Trail Pageant* appeared alongside a ceremonial adoption of President Harding by the Cayuse—an act that assumed reconciliation between the United States and a local Native American tribe, but that would ultimately be challenged by tribal leaders and their interactions with the president.

In the early interwar period, pageantry provided one outlet for the lingering anxieties generated by the war. The pageants themselves suggest some of the alternate means through which people channeled their concerns. *The Wayfarer* was a component of the evangelical Protestant revivals that flourished nationally in the early 1920s, while the author of *How the West was Won* found his efforts positioned against those of the KKK, an organization whose height in the Northwest would roughly track that of

pageantry. A patriotic thread runs throughout the pageants I examine that both reflected the period's nationalist bent and responded to its uglier components. Each of these trends, whether religious revivalism, exclusion, or isolationism, operating individually or in concert, represented a retreat into the familiar and away from ideas of modernity. Yet, each also had a sense of immediacy about it. Similarly, pageantry has a basis in anti-modern ideals that depend upon tradition and a veneration of the past and, in the Pacific Northwest, emerged suddenly in the aftermath of WWI.[706] Other correlations might be drawn between pageantry and these expressions of collective anxiety. A dependence upon both the creation and witnessing of community spectacle, for example, appeared across multiple platforms in the early 1920s.

Describing the pageantry in Oregon and Washington simply as safe and familiar spaces in which a community might work out its anxieties, however, misses the aspirational components of these productions. Each of the Northwest communities that staged a large-scale pageant in the early 1920s understood that doing so would elevate their civic standing on a regional and (hopefully) national level. Further, they did so with an appreciation of pageantry as a still vital means of public celebration. While Glassberg and others have documented historical pageantry's post-WWI decline, the form's fate was less obvious in 1919. For established Northwest pageant makers who had been relegated to smaller productions over the prior decade, as well as those new to the form, the sudden emergence of large-scale pageantry generated an excitement that transferred

[706] Though the anti-modern tradition that led to the popularization of historical pageantry did not emerge in the Pacific Northwest until the early inter-war period, anti-modernist movements have a much longer presence in the United States. See, for example, Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1981).

to the works' participants and their audiences, as evidenced by the large turnout of both. These productions arose as a regional attempt to participate in a larger national popular phenomenon. In the process, a myriad of local concerns played out on pageantry stages across Oregon and Washington. Importantly, while many of these productions expressed an area specificity, the larger issues that they grappled with—rectifying the violence of the recent war, understanding subsequent tensions and animosities, countering historic and current acts of exclusion—had an application on a national scale.

This juxtaposition of local considerations and larger national concerns expressed through a communal artistic endeavor demonstrates the broader significance of Pacific Northwest pageantry. The majority of people in Oregon and Washington were late in their embrace of historical pageantry, yet the pageants they produced were far from trite copies of productions that had come before, as has been suggested elsewhere.[707] At the same time, the national treatment of the First World War did not differ significantly from that offered by Pacific Northwest pageants. Though the anti-war tracts of Ernest Hemingway and John Dos Passos would eventually dominate critical accounts of the U.S. literary response to WWI, Willa Cather's later-maligned, sentimental WWI novel *One of Ours* won the 1923 Pulitzer Prize for fiction.[708] Finally, all early-interwar pageants must be considered against the waves of mass culture that ultimately overtook them. Looking at Pacific Northwest pageants it is clear that show producers understood the importance of film. What they missed is that film would eventually render pageantry obsolete.

[707] See, for example, Michael Kammen, *Mystic Chords of Memory: The Transformation of Tradition in American Culture* (New York: Vintage Books, 1991), 423.
[708] Kennedy, *Over Here*, 218.

Moreover, the mass culture in which cinema was a significant part would ultimately stunt the growth of regionally specific artistic expression, contributing to the sense of the Northwest as an artistic and cultural wasteland dependent upon the efforts of people elsewhere. Ultimately, the Northwest pageants of the early 1920s defy this assessment of the region. These productions represented a significant effort on the part of civic planners, area boosters, and local historians to portray a unique rendering of their respective communities while simultaneously addressing area concerns. That these area concerns easily become national concerns demonstrates the importance of historical pageantry as a point of study. Its rapid rise and equally quick decline in the Northwest further reiterates the form's significance, that it might in the immediacy of the early-interwar period become an appropriate venue to address issues associated with the war itself.

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