



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

The
Washington Historical Quarterly

RETROSPECT OF HALF A CENTURY.

Having crossed the plains in 1853, while this was a part of Oregon, and arriving in Olympia in February, 1854, shortly after it had been organized as the Territory of Washington, I have thought it would be a fitting subject for this address to take a retrospect of the half century which has fully elapsed since I first beheld the placid waters of Puget Sound. During that period there have been striking events, and wonderful changes, not anticipated either in thought or dreams at its beginning. Some of the most important changes or discoveries have been made within the last twenty-five years, which, had they been even suggested fifty years ago, would have been declared chimerical if not absolutely impossible.

I doubt if there is among all the modern inventions and discoveries anything more wonderful than the growth and progressive development of the United States. In its earlier history, its life and continuance as a republic was gravely questioned, especially by European powers, who have since discovered that the infant they once despised has not only broke through its swaddling clothes, but has become a veritable Hercules in strength and in power.

Half a century ago the number of the States forming the Union was thirty-one. The last of these was California, which was admitted in 1850. It thus remained until 1858, when Minnesota was added. The following have been admitted since, in the order named: Oregon, Kansas, West Virginia, Nevada, Nebraska, Colorado, the two Dakotas, North and South; Montana, Washington, Idaho, Wyoming and Utah. This last was admitted in 1896. These fourteen added in the last half century make the total number which now constitute the United States forty-five. Including the Territories and District of Columbia, the popula-

tion is now estimated at 85,000,000. The last census, taken in 1900, gave the population at 76,303,387. At the beginning of the last century it was only 5,308,483. By 1850 it had increased to 23,191,876. The rate of increase had been at an average of a little over 33 1-3 per cent. for each year. From 1850 to 1900 the average has been about 28 per cent. One cause for this lower average may be found in the Civil War, which occurred in this period, for a few years creating a temporary division, consisting on the one hand of twenty Northern, and on the other of eleven Southern States. This began in 1860 and ended in 1865. It resulted in striking the shackles of slavery from the limbs of thousands and the removal of the dark blot which had so long stained our national escutcheon. This deliverance was purchased at the priceless cost of the precious blood that was shed by thousands on either side. It is estimated to have cost the sacrifice of 300,000 lives and a loss of eight billions of dollars. The memories of the dead, their sufferings and their gallant deeds are brought to mind year by year as the blue and the gray meet together, and arm in arm take their part with a grateful people as they decorate the graves of the departed heroes. Nor will they ever be forgotten. Though tears may fall from many eyes as the loss of friends, of husband, of father or of brother is remembered; hearts will glow with gratitude to our Father above that we are a reunited people, and that the Stars and Stripes float proudly over "the land of the free and the home of the brave." It is considered in many respects as the most gigantic conflict of modern times, and as followed by one of the greatest marvels, that the great armies should so quietly have disbanded and returned to civil life.

The news of Lee's surrender to Grant on April 9, 1865, had barely been flashed over the wires when it was followed by the sad news of the assassination of President Lincoln, who had not been spared to see the full fruition of that for which he had prayed and labored. His name will ever be revered, and throughout all time will be associated with that of Washington, the one as the father, the other as the preserver of his country.

The use of steam power for navigation except on inland waters had been quite limited until 1856, although it had been in partial use from 1838. The first experiment was made in 1819. The expected event was thus announced by the Times, a paper published in London, England, in the issue of May 18, 1819: "Great experiment. A new steam vessel of 300 tons has been built at

New York for the express purpose of carrying passengers across the Atlantic. She is to come to Liverpool direct."

I further find that this steamer, named the Savannah, the first that crossed the Atlantic, was built at New York. Her engines were made at Morristown. She was launched on the 22d of August, 1818. She could carry only seventy-five tons of coal and twenty-five cords of wood. She sailed from Savannah, Georgia, May 25, 1819, bound for St. Petersburg via Liverpool. This latter port she reached on the 20th of June. The voyage thus took twenty-six days, and out of these she used steam eighteen days. The record is silent as to whether she continued her voyage to St. Petersburg. I rather conclude she did not. If she did, there is question if she has ever returned. Experiments were made at intervals up to 1856, when larger ships were built and equipped with greater power. I find the steamship Persia the only one mentioned in 1856 (capacity not given), making the time between New York and Queenstown in nine days, one hour and fifteen minutes. Up to 1860 there was a question of supremacy between the screw and the side or paddle-wheel, when it was decided in favor of the screw, so far as ocean navigation was concerned, both in the merchant marine and in naval construction.

I find two steamships recorded in 1856, the Persia and the Scotia, making the voyage between New York and Southampton, the Persia in nine days, one hour and forty-five minutes, and the Scotia in eight days, two hours, forty-eight minutes. The time was then gradually reduced until 1889, when the City of Paris made the voyage in five days, nineteen hours and eighteen minutes, since which date the time has hovered about five days.

Vast improvements in regard to safety and comfort of passengers, as well as increased rapidity of travel, have been, and still are, being made. It is confidently asserted that on most of the steamships the accommodations in the steerage are superior to those that were furnished some years ago for first-class passengers.

The Arrow, a vessel recently built in New York, is claimed to be the fastest steamship afloat, having attained a speed of nearly fifty miles an hour. She can be stripped and converted into a torpedo-boat at forty-eight hours' notice.

The Minnesota, which we all know, is said to be the largest merchandise vessel ever built in America. Designed primarily for freight, she can carry 172 first-class cabin passengers, 110

second cabin, 68 third cabin and 2,424 steerage passengers or troops, in addition to a crew of 250.

Iron has taken the place of wood in the construction of large merchant and steamships for freight or passenger service on the ocean. Their masts are often iron instead of wood, as heretofore.

The day has come when boats, instead of floating on the top of the water, can be so constructed as to dive, swim and stay under the water, almost as long as the operators of them desire. The trial of one such boat proved so successful that the government had six more built.

Turning to machines of locomotion on land which have been constructed within a few years, the one which has been more extensively used is the bicycle. This had its prototype, which was used in England eighty years ago. It was a bicycle with wheels attached to a bar of wood, rudely shaped like the body of a horse, the rider sitting astride and propelling it with his feet on the ground. Some were a little more stylish, and so arranged that the front wheel might be turned by a handle. This was called a "nobbyhorse," sometimes a "dandy horse." I can remember seeing them when I was a ten-year-old boy.

In 1856 the Western Union Telegraph Company was formed by the union of two Eastern companies. From that time combinations and consolidations have been carried on and the efficiency of the service continually improved and increased. Its lines were not extended to the Pacific Coast until 1861. In October it was completed and in operation to San Francisco. In 1864 it reached Puget Sound, and now has its offices in every important town in the State of Washington, connected by 12,000 miles of wire. Its Seattle office employs thirty-five operators. It has fourteen dynamos, which supply the power that it formerly required 5,000 batteries to furnish. Messages sent and received amount to 5,000 daily, of which 500 alone are sent to Chicago.

The Postal Telegraph Company made its first connection with Seattle in January, 1887. It has in this State 1,060 miles of wire. It employs twenty-four operators. It has five dynamos, which supply power equal to that produced by 2,000 cells battery. Messages sent and received average a daily number of 3,500. It has direct connection with commercial cables, the Canadian Pacific Railway telegraphs, seven Atlantic cables and one Pacific cable from San Francisco to Manila, Honolulu and Japan.

I should have stated that the Western Union is so connected as to have cable service to all the world. I may also say that

these lines use the Morse code of signals, which consists of dots and dashes, so arranged as to represent the different letters of the alphabet. The experienced operator reads the messages thus sent by sound. So expert do they become that errors rarely occur in the reading. Sometimes in transcribing by the typewriter errors do occur. One rather amusing instance of this kind is reported, where a "t" was touched instead of an "r." Some friends on a journey, having arrived at their destination, desired to inform those at home of their safe arrival, and that they were all right. The message delivered stated "they were all tight."

The restless spirit of modern invention was not content with guiding the mysterious power of electricity both above and beneath the surface of the earth, when a proposition was started in England to join the shores of England and France by means of a submarine telegraph. While it was admitted that such an undertaking was possible, it was questioned whether it would be worth while to attempt it. It was alleged that "the injuries to which the wires would be subjected created an insuperable objection to this plan being carried out on a large scale." This was the condition in 1848. In 1845 an American newspaper had made a bold prediction that the Atlantic would one day be spanned by an electric wire. The idea was derided as extravagant. Nevertheless, many were experimenting in submarine telegraphy, but it was not until 1857, when Mr. Cyrus W. Field, at the head of a company, made the first attempt to span the ocean. This proved unsuccessful, as the cable broke in two places, which left 144 miles of it at the bottom of the ocean, thus rendering the whole worse than useless. But the projectors were plucky men and resolved to try again. The third attempt succeeded, and the first message sped across the Atlantic on August 6, 1858. This success was but temporary, and failed after having conveyed a total of 400 messages. It is somewhat curious to tell that the last word transmitted was "forward." It was not until 1865 that another company was formed, a heavier cable of 2,300 miles in length constructed and successfully laid by the Great Eastern in 1866, and thus secured permanent connection between the Old World and the New. Two other Atlantic cables were laid in 1874 and 1875, and a number of others since. There are at least two on the Pacific.

The greatest, the most marvelous wonder in this line is that of wireless telegraphy. Had it not been fully demonstrated it would seem to be beyond possibility of belief. Electric wave

wireless telegraphy may be said to have had its beginning when the great physicist, Michael Faraday, deduced philosophically the broad generalization that ether, which scientists consider to exist in, but different to, the air, constituted the medium by which, not only light and radiant heat were propagated, but electric forces as well. This was in 1845. Faraday and others conjectured that light from the sun and electricity were of the same order, only differing in degree—that is, in the length of their respective waves, whose velocity through space was the same, namely, 186,400 miles a second. Marconi in 1890 began some experiments in accordance with these views, but made his first experiments in transatlantic telegraphy without wires on February 25th, 1902, while on his way to the United States on board the steamship Philadelphia, and received signals at a distance of 2,099 miles, and worded messages at a distance of 1,551 miles. Messages are often sent now to passengers on ships several miles out on the ocean, so that it is stated to have become a regular experience on some of the Atlantic boats to see, as in a club, the servants carrying around telegrams and calling the names of the recipients.

Having said thus much in regard to telegraph, I need not say much regarding the telephone, as it is on the same principle, only that it conveys sound and enables two to carry on conversation even at long distances. This is one of the wonderful discoveries made within a few years. In 1876 Alexander Bell first exhibited the speaking telephone at the Philadelphia Centennial Exposition. It is this telephone which has been greatly improved which is now in common use. Edison and Blake have made additions and improvements which have been combined with it and makes it of general use. Communications have been held through it between Chicago and New York.

There are two telephone offices in Seattle—the Sunset and the Independent. The Sunset opened its office in May, 1883, starting with thirty subscribers. Its plant was destroyed in the fire of June, 1889. When it resumed it had 560 subscribers. It has built in this State 115,250 miles of wire. It has five offices in Seattle, including the main office. J. N. Cochran is the division superintendent, and J. B. Jansen manager. It has 1,027 employes and on June 1st had 23,500 subscribers.

The Independent Telephone opened its office in Seattle in 1902 with 2,000 subscribers. It has in all five offices in Seattle,

has 400 employes and has now 15,000 subscribers, and including its cable wires, about fifty thousand miles of wire in this State.

Vast changes have been wrought in the work of printing, especially as it is connected with the publishing of newspapers. The old Ramage press with which our early papers were printed has long since been laid aside, and displaced by the modern Hoe press, to which the name Perfection has been attached. Well may it be so called, for not only does it print the papers, but feeds them to an electrically controlled paper carrier, which carries and counts them, ready for distribution, to the mailing department. If no such improvement had been made, neither the Post-Intelligencer nor the Times could begin to furnish the papers which daily and weekly they send forth. The P.-I. has two condensed quadruple Hoe presses. Each press complete, carrying thirty-two page plates, will print per hour 48,000 eight-page papers, 24,000 of ten to sixteen-page papers, or 12,000 papers containing from sixteen to thirty-two pages. In its city deliveries the P.-I. uses seven special chartered cars, together with a number of wagons and automobiles. It requires 200 persons to bring out the paper each day; forty-nine are in the editorial department, sixty-eight in the business departments, and eighty-three on the mechanical side. Besides this the paper has a staff of special correspondents numbering 158. Its net circulation for May was 992,461.

The Times has three quintuple presses, which are the Hoe & Co. perfection presses, with which it publishes daily between 40,000 and 50,000 papers on an average; of the Sunday Times between 50,000 and 60,000. In December last its circulation exceeded 60,000. From circulation of less than 3,000, nine years ago, the daily has passed 40,000. Its consumption of white paper in 1906 amounted to seven million pounds. This paper costs 3 cents per pound. The circulation of the Daily and Sunday Times according to the "press report" for the year 1906 is given as follows:

Daily average for 12 months.....	42,172
Sunday average for 12 months.....	56,794
Average for both daily and Sunday.....	44,529

From the items furnished by both papers I have selected what I have given, which, taken together, show the extent of the work which is done by both.

The Times has over 300 persons engaged in the different departments of the office.

Besides these two, which are the principal papers, there are about seventy other publications, some daily, semi-weekly, weekly, semi-monthly and monthly.

The automobile needs no description from me. They make themselves generally known, but do not always obey or care even for the lives of those they carry. It is more comfortable and much swifter than the oxmobiles with which so many of us crossed the plains. Our pioneer brother Coombs tells the story of an old teamster who declared when he saw the first automobile in town that his horses, as they looked at it, laughed, congratulating themselves that they would soon be relieved of their laborious work. He does not say whether or not it was a mule team. If it was, I expect they would have laid their ears back and loudly hee-hawed.

Electricity is causing many wonderful changes in locomotion by the use of the trolley, furnishing facilities of rapid transit both by street car and interurban lines at very low rates.

In Seattle at this time we have not less than twenty-four street lines. We have also two interurban lines in operation and others projected.

When the early pioneers crossed the continent they found one serious obstacle in the way, which was then denominated "The Great American Desert." The geographies and atlases of half a century ago contained description of it. It has now disappeared, not only from the atlas, but from the face of the earth. I have endeavored to locate it, and conclude that a part of it, if not the whole, has been swallowed up by the State of Wyoming. That it was in existence in 1853 there are others than myself who can testify from their recollection of undertaking to cross a part of it, at least, by driving over it at night, so that the cattle should not suffer from thirst, as no water was to be found for a distance of some twenty or twenty-five miles. This was encountered soon after the Rocky Mountains had been crossed by way of the South Pass, and the Pacific Springs passed, where the waters divided, a portion going to the southwest, continuing down until emptying into the Colorado River, the other to the eastward, by the way of Sweetwater, discharging into the North Platte.

The plains, as they were then called, over which we passed, had their beginning as soon as we crossed the Missouri River, and did not really end until we reached the Columbia River, although divided at times by mountain ridges, of which the principal one was the Rockies. The whole may be described as

wilderness. It had been described on the floor of Congress as an "interminable desert," with "arid plains" and "impassable mountains," reaching to a land that was "worthless," "not even worth a pinch of snuff," "the whole country irreclaimable, and as barren a waste as the Desert of Sahara." Out of this barren, desolate land there have been carved at least six States, which have been reclaimed and made fruitful by the labors of hardy pioneers and settlers, so that now it may be truthfully said that "the wilderness and the solitary places have been made glad by them, and the deserts to rejoice and blossom as the rose."

These States are now teeming with rapidly growing population, and are dotted on every hand with towns and villages, and here and there with cities of no mean proportion.

These changes and this progress have been greatly aided by the railroads which have been built, especially the Northern Pacific and the Union Pacific, which have traversed this region, through which it had been claimed that it was impossible to construct even a wagon road. Senator McDuffie, of South Carolina, declared that the idea of building a railroad to the Pacific was preposterous, and that were it even possible "the wealth of the Indies would be insufficient."

Now we have at least six from the Atlantic to the Pacific in operation, and others projected. It was not until the Northern Pacific was completed to the Sound that Washington began to grow. This was accomplished by 1885, and in 1887 it reached Seattle; since which time the growth of the State has been rapid. The entire length of the main line of the N. P. from St. Paul to Seattle is 1,911 miles. In this State it has nearly, if not quite, 1,200 miles, 400 of which is of the main line, the balance being made up by branches.

The Great Northern reached here in 1893. Its main line from St. Paul to Seattle is 1,828 miles, and it has within this State about 800 miles, 388 of which is in the main line.

Both of these roads have united in the building of the Union depot, which is an ornament to the city, a credit to the companies. It is admirably adapted to the purpose for which it has been built and for the comfort and convenience of the traveling community.

The facilities of travel, both on the water and on land, have been greatly multiplied. For a long time the only steamer on the Sound was the *Eliza Anderson*, which made only one trip a week between Olympia and Victoria. There were then only

the towns of Steilacoom, Seattle, Port Gamble, Port Ludlow and Port Townsend, each with sparse population.

The trip to Portland, which is now accomplished by rail in about nine hours, used to require about three days. Before there were any railroad connections the land travel from Olympia to Monticello taking a day and a half, with part of a night, by stage, or more correctly, a mud wagon; the first portion of the route being by water to Olympia, and the last from Monticello to Portland by the Cowlitz and Columbia and Willamette Rivers.

Those memorable words of George Berkeley, the celebrated philosopher, "Westward the course of empire takes its way," written as long ago as 1730, are being verified in the onward march of our population.

The center of population of the United States has been gradually moving westward. In 1790 the center was twenty-three miles southeast of Parkersburg, W. Va. In 1890 it was twenty miles east of Columbus, Indiana, and in 1900 was seven miles southeast of that place. The Western movement in 110 years has been 513 miles.

When Washington was organized as a Territory it had a population of a little over 3,000. In 1889 its population had increased to about 300,000, when it was admitted as a State. It has grown, until in 1906, as estimated by State authorities, it had reached the number of 925,000. It is now by some authorities estimated to be about one million.

Fifty years ago there were no settlements in Eastern Washington. It was still in the grasp of the Hudson Bay Company, but on the discovery of gold in the Nez Perce country in 1855 and 1856, attention was so attracted that the tide of population began to flow in that direction. This has been greatly increased, and its agricultural and horticultural capacities have been marvelously developed, so that it has become widely known for its wonderful production of grain and its fine, delicious fruits. Its prominent cities are Walla Walla, Spokane, Ellensburg and North Yakima. Returning to the West, in addition to the towns already mentioned, as bordering on the waters of Puget Sound, have been added the city of Tacoma, sometimes called the City of Destiny, with a population now estimated at 100,000; Everett, near the mouth of the Snohomish River, has of late years sprung into existence, partly through the influence of the Great Northern, and bids fair to become a young giant before many years.

Its population is numbered by the thousands. Bellingham, formerly Whatcom, is growing rapidly.

In 1858 Seattle was a small village of not more than 150 whites. In 1860 it had increased to 250; in 1870 it was 1,107; in 1880, 3,533; in 1890, 42,837; in 1900, 80,670. Its population, as estimated by the Chamber of Commerce on January 1st, 1907, was 221,000.

The growth of the cities along the Sound has no doubt been much accelerated by the trade with Alaska, which has been pouring into our lap its golden treasure. When the purchase was made in 1867 from Russia for \$7,200,000, the wisdom of it was greatly questioned, for the general impression was that it was utterly worthless. Time, however, has fully justified the action of Seward by the revelation that has been made of its wonderful resources.

The Seattle assay office, since its establishment in 1898, has received and paid for gold dust to the value of \$139,353,686.31, nearly all of which came from Alaska. But its entire output was not received here. Much was sent to other places. It has other valuable resources than its gold. Seattle has probably been a larger recipient of benefits from this source than have other places. It has now twenty-two banks, in which, in 1906, there were deposits amounting to \$60,000,000, and the amount of clearances were \$485,920,021.

Seattle has about 120 churches and church societies.

The enlargement of the business of the postoffice and its multiplied facilities reveal perhaps as fully as does any other branch of business the substantial growth of the country. Having opportunity only to ascertain with any degree of accuracy the increase of business of the Seattle office, I give what I have been enabled to learn of its growth, while no doubt similar growth is to be found in the postoffice of other principal cities in both Eastern and Western Washington, with this exception only: that Seattle is one of the distributing offices. I give, therefore, the history of its feeble beginning, and its present capacity, and with this will close:

Until August 27th, 1853, the settlers in this region had to depend upon uncertain chances for either letters or papers. At that date national recognition of Seattle was given by the establishment of a postoffice, and the appointment of Mr. Arthur A. Denny the first postmaster, who opened the office in his dwelling house, which was a log building, situated at the corner of

what is now known as Marion and First Avenue. I learn from Mrs. Denny that a man had been previously employed to go to Olympia to procure whatever mail matter was there for parties residing here. He returned on August 16, and brought twenty-two letters and fourteen newspapers, but what was brought on the 27th she does not recollect, only that it was a very small amount.

I was living near Olympia when the first mail arrived from Portland and recollect of its being publicly stated that it was all brought in one of the mail carrier's pockets. I know that for some time after it was brought in an ordinary pair of saddlebags on the same horse on which the carrier rode. Many years elapsed before there was business enough to require any assistance. A few minutes were generally sufficient to open and distribute the mail. It was the same in making it up.

It is very different now. Mr. Colkett, the assistant postmaster, informs me that in addition to Postmaster Stewart and himself, both of whom are kept busily employed, there are in the main office 124 clerks. There are forty-one stations, with one clerk each, thus making the full office force employed 167. There are also 124 letter carriers and 12 special messengers, thus making the number of outside employes 136. This brings the total of officers, clerks and employes to 303. On an average five tons of mail are daily received, and from ten to fifteen tons sent away.

GEORGE F. WHITWORTH.

* *Note.*—Agreeably to suggestions made at the time of delivery, I have amplified some matters then only hinted at, for which there was not time to enlarge. I take this opportunity to acknowledge my indebtedness for help so kindly given by Chamber of Commerce, Railroad, Telegraph and Telephone companies, the P.-I. and Times, in furnishing information which I could not otherwise obtain: also to Judge Burke, Thomas W. Prosch and Prof. Meany, in addition to names which have already been mentioned.