



Last update : Sarah Hurlburt, October 2025

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This pdf document contains maps and photos of the locations of the signage at the Frenchtown Historic site and legible images of the signs themselves.

Audio versions of these same interpretive panels may be accessed here :

[frenchtownhistoricalfoundation.podbean.com/](https://frenchtownhistoricalfoundation.podbean.com/)

or by snapping the QR code below. It is possible to listen in your browser without installing the Podbean app. The order of the audio signs begins under the shelter, and then proceeds down the walking trail, up to the overlook, then the cemetery, and finally to the Prince's Cabin



**The Voices of Frenchtown**

# Map and key of signage locations at the Frenchtown Historic Site

8364 Old Highway 12, Walla Walla, WA

September 2025





## A. Shelter

- A Brief History of Frenchtown

## B. Trail head

- Welcome

## C. Lower Trail

- Horse Heaven Hills
- Trade Networks
- The Americans Came





**Frenchtown**, originally known as the "village des Canadiens", began as a fur trade community in the 1820s and consisted of approximately fifty cabins at its height. It was a mixed-marriage, multi-lingual settlement of French Canadian voyageurs and Indigenous women living among Cayuse camps and farms along the Walla Walla river. When American missionaries Marcus and Narcissa Whitman arrived in 1836, at least a dozen métis [mixed] families were already in place. Families named on the Kolecki maps of the Walla Walla valley in 1858 include Tellier, Poirier, LaRoque, Parquette, and Pambrun. The present-day Frenchtown Historic Site is only a small fragment of that larger community.



Fort Nez Percés, later known as Fort Walla Walla, was established at Walulla in 1816 at the convergence of land and water trails for the inland plateau. The lush landscape of the nearby Walla Walla valley (inset) provided food and forage for the tribes, the fort, and Frenchtown. A larger version of the inset map may be seen at the overlook.



Artist's rendition of a fur trade post.

### The Fur Trade

European and Chinese demand brought international fur-trade companies (North West Company, Hudson's Bay Company) to trade with the tribes of the Columbia plateau in the early 19th century. These companies hired French-Canadian voyageurs as laborers, guides, trappers, and interpreters.

Approximately 300 of these men married Indigenous women and settled near fur-trade posts, usually the post closest to their wife's family. There are traces of Frenchtowns near Forts Walla Walla, Vancouver, Nisqually, & Colville. Portions of the Willamette valley are still known as French Prairie today.

**What is Métis?** "Métis" [pronounced meh-TEE] derives from a French word meaning "mixed". The term is used generally to describe people of mixed European and Indigenous descent. In the United States, the word is typically written with a small-m, as an adjective, whereas the capitalized "Métis" of Canada refers to the Métis Nation, which is recognized as a distinct Aboriginal people by the Canadian government.



The "ceinture bechée," a traditional Red River Métis design.

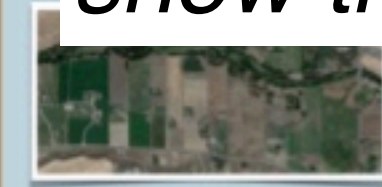
### Settlers, Squatters, and Jumpers

Western Frenchtowns predated the establishment of the Oregon Territory in 1848, and existed in collaboration with the tribes. A flood of American settlers during the 1840s and 1850s strained established practices of shared land use, as new immigrants attempted to claim land without regard for previous occupation or agreements.

**The Long Lot System :** French-Canadians brought the "long lot" system (le rang) from Canada. This practice divided the land into strips to maximize the number of properties with access to the waterway, which doubled as the principal road. A satellite view of the Frenchtown area still shows traces of the practice.



This is the original Frenchtown site.



Satellite view of long lot patterns near Frenchtown.

## A Brief History of FRENCHTOWN

Following the **Donation Land Act of 1850**, American immigrants filed claim on nearly 2.6 million acres in Oregon Territory. Provisions allowed French Canadian settlers to claim land they already occupied by collecting witness statements, but claim-jumping was common. Many pioneers squatted Indigenous land, or else "jumped" the claims of métis families, proclaiming métis land forfeit along with Indian rights.

### The End of Indigenous Occupation

In June of 1855, representatives for the Nez Perce, Cayuse, Walla Walla, Yakama, and Palouse peoples signed a treaty

Perce with Raymond, or down the river to the Dalles. Walla Walla leader Peo Peo Mox Mox was taken hostage at the outset and killed and mutilated while in captivity.



Front of the big house built by Peo Peo Mox Mox, Walla Walla leader, 1855.

### The Written Record

The written record of Frenchtown families is drawn from the journals of the forts and the religious and employment records of the men who settled here, few of whom could even sign their names. However, it is also possible to use Catholic records to follow Frenchtown connections through maternal lines.



in a barren landscape devoid of human life. They were negotiated with the tribes, possibly at the level of individual families, and resembled a shared-use agreement rather than a transfer of ownership.

### Allotting the Reservation

The Dawes Act of 1887 carved existing reservations into private properties that could then be claimed by Native or mixed-race individuals. Many Frenchtown wives and children were eligible and families saw this option as a way to both get land and escape rising prejudice in the valley.



life ways with the fence and the plow, it was thought that within a generation, they would "earn their living as other folks... or be exterminated." Reservation schools were explicitly intended to accelerate this process.



Students of the Umatilla Indian School.

Reservation effectively segregated Frenchtown twice in its history. The first took place in the 1860s, with the removal of Cayuse and Walla Walla neighbors and relatives to the reservation. The second took place in the 1880s with the voluntary exodus of mixed blood, who were sent to reservations as descendants into the Walla Walla reservation by Chief Homilie and authorized

### After the Fur trade

French Canadian men and later families continued to come west long after the fur trade ended, seeking their fortunes in the mines or in the land. Once here, they too often preferred to settle in the same French-speaking, Catholic communities as their predecessors. Families from this period include the Bergevins, Forrest, Allard, LaDouceur, Gagnon, Remillard, and Lefebvres.



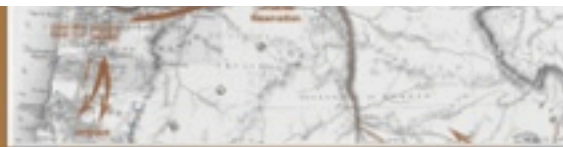
Left to Right: Mary Pamela Allard, Joseph Camasse Bergevin Jr., Elodie Pamela Bergevin, Camasse Bergevin.

Both Swiss and French immigrant communities also settled in the Walla Walla valley in the late 19th century, but not at Frenchtown. French continued to be spoken in Frenchtown up into the early 20th century, but the town was renamed Lowden in 1915.

**The Frenchtown Historical Foundation** was established by descendants of the early settlers in the summer of 1993. In 2005 the Foundation acquired 57 acres along the river, including the sites of the Saint Rose of Lima Mission Church and the final Frenchtown cemetery. The historic site opened to the public in 2010. In 2013, the Frenchtown Historical Foundation ceded 30 acres along the Walla Walla river to the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation and the two entities signed a Memorandum of Understanding.

*Map location A: Thumbnail version — this is a large horizontal sign under the shelter. The following three images show the left, center, and right sections of this banner.*

peoples in a four-day battle up and down the Walla Walla River and across the present-day Frenchtown Historic Site. A few Frenchtown people assisted the vigilantes; others camped on Mill Creek with Father Chirouse, or fled to the Nez



Métis movement to the reservations at the time of allotment. Photo credit: Robert Foxman and Christine Dubois.

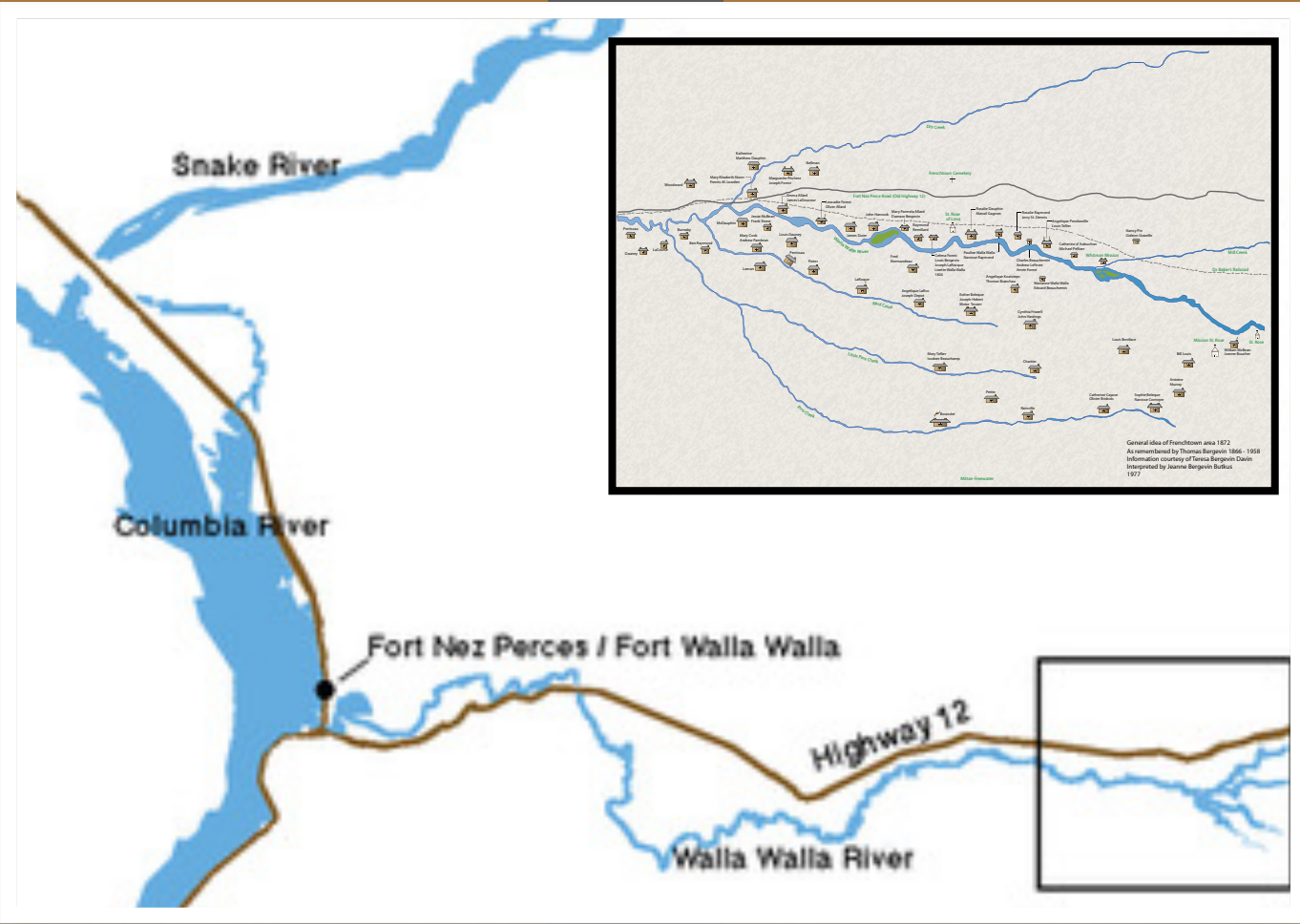
into his own family back in Quebec but rather married into hers—into a living network of community connections rooted here in the valley. The locations of the Frenchtown cabins thus did not take place

Indigenous peoples to replace traditional

to claim reservation land.



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Artist's rendition of a fur trade post.

**The Fur Trade**

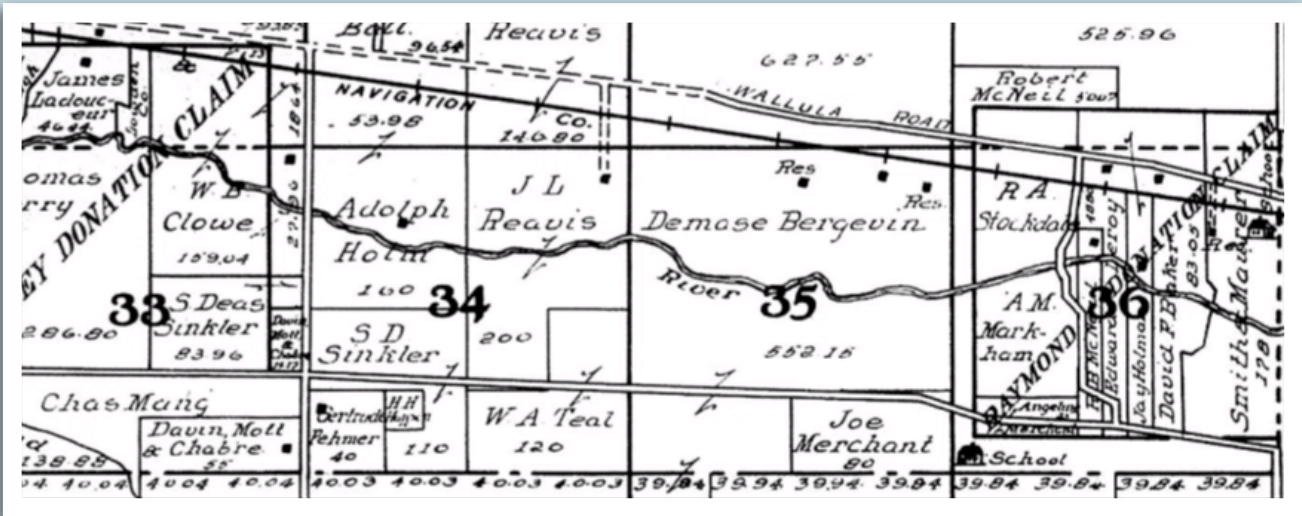
European and Chinese demand brought international fur-trade companies (North West Company, Hudson’s Bay Company) to trade with the tribes of the Columbia plateau in the early 19th century. These companies hired French-Canadian *voyageurs* as laborers, guides, trappers, and interpreters.

Approximately 300 of these men married Indigenous women and settled near fur-trade posts, usually the post closest to their wife’s family. There are traces of Frenchtowns near Forts Walla Walla, Vancouver, Nisqually, & Colville. Portions of the Willamette valley are still known as French Prairie today.

**Settlers, Squatters, and Jumpers**

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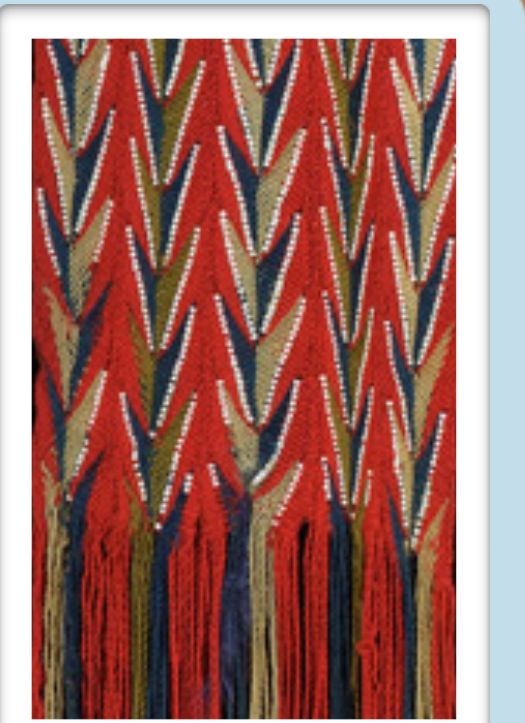


This 1909 plat map of the immediate area around the Frenchtown site shows both the grid lines of the original survey and the long-lot layout of the Narcisse Raymond land claim.



Satellite view of long lot patterns near Frenchtown.

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The “ceinture flechée,” a traditional Red River Métis design.



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## The End of Indigenous Occupation

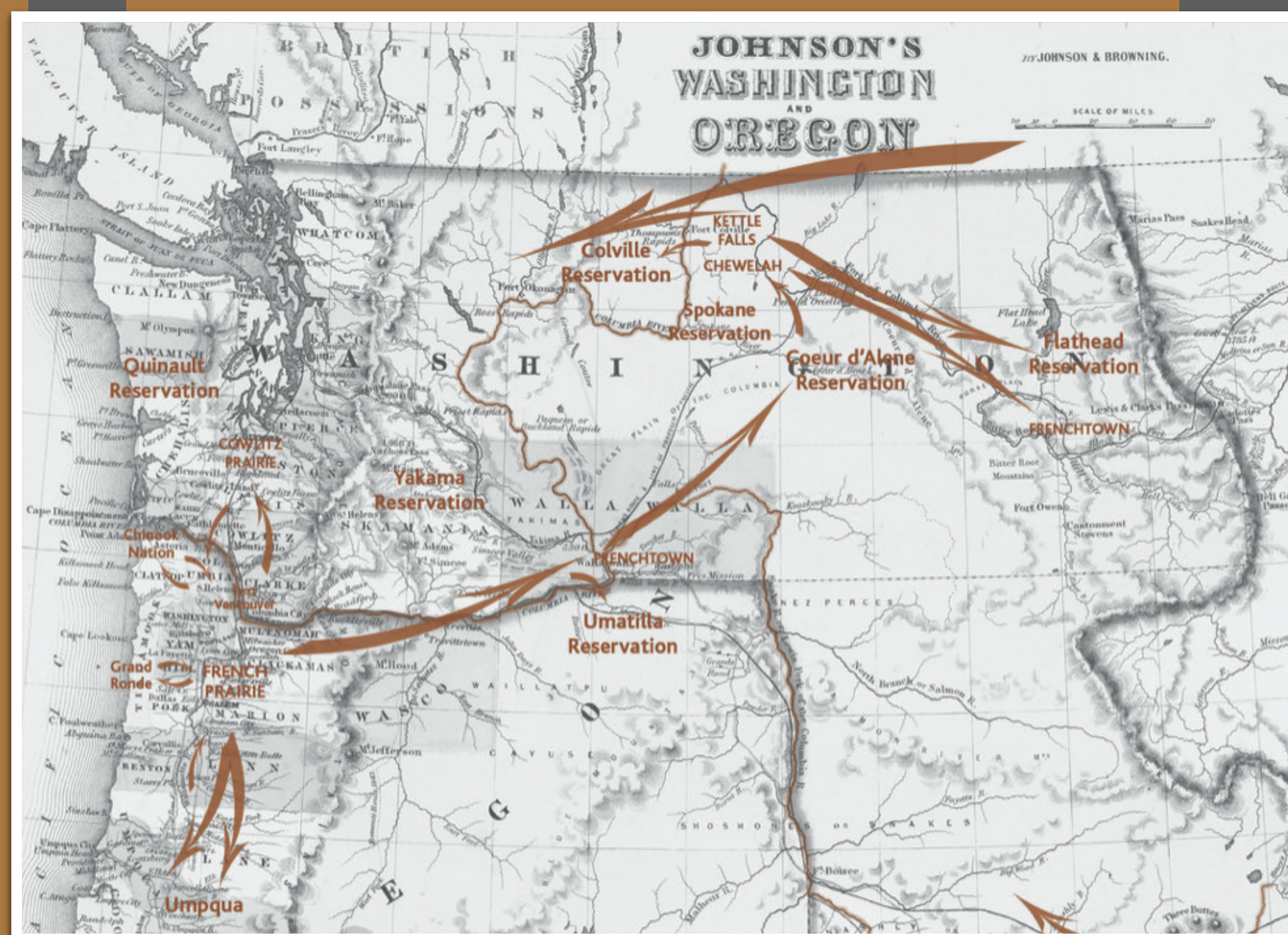
In June of 1855, representatives for the Nez Perce, Cayuse, Walla Walla, Yakama, and Palouse peoples signed a treaty ceding 6.4 million acres of land to the United States government. Several Frenchtown men acted as interpreters for the negotiations. Announcements appeared in eastern papers before the treaty was even signed and settlers descended upon the valley in droves.

In December of 1855, in the longest battle of the Yakama War, the vigilante Oregon Mounted Volunteers fought to evict or eliminate the Cayuse and Walla Walla peoples in a four-day battle up and down the Walla Walla River and across the present-day Frenchtown Historic Site. A few Frenchtown people assisted the vigilantes; others camped on Mill Creek with Father Chirouse, or fled to the Nez

Perce with Raymond, or down the river to the Dalles. Walla Walla leader Peo Peo Mox Mox was taken hostage at the outset and killed and mutilated while in captivity.



Arrival of Nez Perce at 1855 Treaty Council.



Métis movement to the reservations at the time of allotment.  
Photo credit Robert Foxcurran and Christina Dubois.

## The Written Record

The written record of Frenchtown families is drawn from the journals of the forts and the religious and employment records of the men who settled here, few of whom could even sign their names. However, it is also possible to use Catholic records to follow Frenchtown connections through maternal lines.



Sarah Clara Bonifer Duffy [Dauphin], Mary Duffy Sherburn Sams, Marguerite LaRoque Bonifer (daughter of Joseph Sebastian LaRoque and Marianne Cayuse) and Virgil Sherburn.

When Joseph LaRoque (believed to have built the first Frenchtown cabin) married Lizette Walla Walla, he did not bring her into his own family back in Quebec but rather married into hers—into a living network of community connections rooted here in the valley. The locations of the Frenchtown cabins thus did not take place



## Alloting the Reservation

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Pupils of The Umphville Indian School  
W. J. Woodhouse

Left to Right: Mary Parmelia Allard, Joseph Damase Bergevin Jr.,  
Eleonie Parmela Bergevin, Damase Bergevin.



# WELCOME TO THE FRENCHTOWN HISTORIC SITE

BIENVENUE AU SITE HISTORIQUE DE  
FRENCHTOWN

LILÓOYCA

(“WELCOME” IN WEYIILETPUUT’IMT)

You stand within the homeland of the Walla Walla and Cayuse tribes, at the site of one of the earliest Catholic communities in Washington Territory. The longest Indian battle in the history of Washington Territory was fought here in 1855. This is sacred ground.

We hope you enjoy your visit. Historical signage offers information about the Tribes, the fur trade, the St. Rose cemetery, the Battle of Frenchtown, the Treaty of 1855, the Prince’s Cabin, and more.

This site is preserved and maintained by volunteers. Please respect our work!

- a. Stay on the gravel trails to protect native grasses and other vegetation.
- b. Please leash your pets, and clean up their waste.
- c. Horses are not allowed on the trails.
- d. Where available, QR codes link to more content.
- e. The site is open from sunrise to sunset; camping, and overnight parking are not permitted.

For inquiries or concerns, please contact a board member of the Frenchtown Historical Foundation:

<https://bit.ly/contact-FHF>



# HORSE HEAVEN HILLS



The Olympic-Wallowa lineament, where the Walla Walla River meets Lake Wallula. Photo: Bob Carson.



Slackwater sediments deposited by the Missoula Floods are visible along the Walla Walla River south of Touchet. The Horse Heaven Hills are in the background. Photo: Kevin Pogue.



A granite boulder sits 700 feet above the Columbia River. Photo: Bob Carson.

The ridge across the valley from where you stand is part of a chain traversing the Columbia Basin called the Olympic-Wallowa lineament. Basalt bedrock was lifted up by tectonic forces along the Wallula fault, one of the most active faults in the inland Northwest. Numerous, massive ice age floods from northern Idaho and Montana inundated this landscape between 18,000 and 15,000 years ago. Granite boulders carried by enormous icebergs can be found as high as 800 feet above the valley floor. The wind-deposited silt, (loess), that forms the productive agricultural soils of eastern Washington derives from the sediments left behind.

The uplands were covered with native grasses and shrub-steppe flora, including sagebrush, rabbit brush, and bitter brush. Mule deer, black bear, grizzly bear, pronghorn antelope, white-tailed jack rabbit and sharp-tailed grouse also shared the land. The Cayuse pastured thousands of horses on the foothills. Groves of Black Cottonwood trees shaded and cooled waterways in the valley, supporting flourishing populations of salmon and steelhead, mainstays of the local diet.

Beaver were plentiful. Two thirds of the species of the region depended on the riparian zones created by their dams.

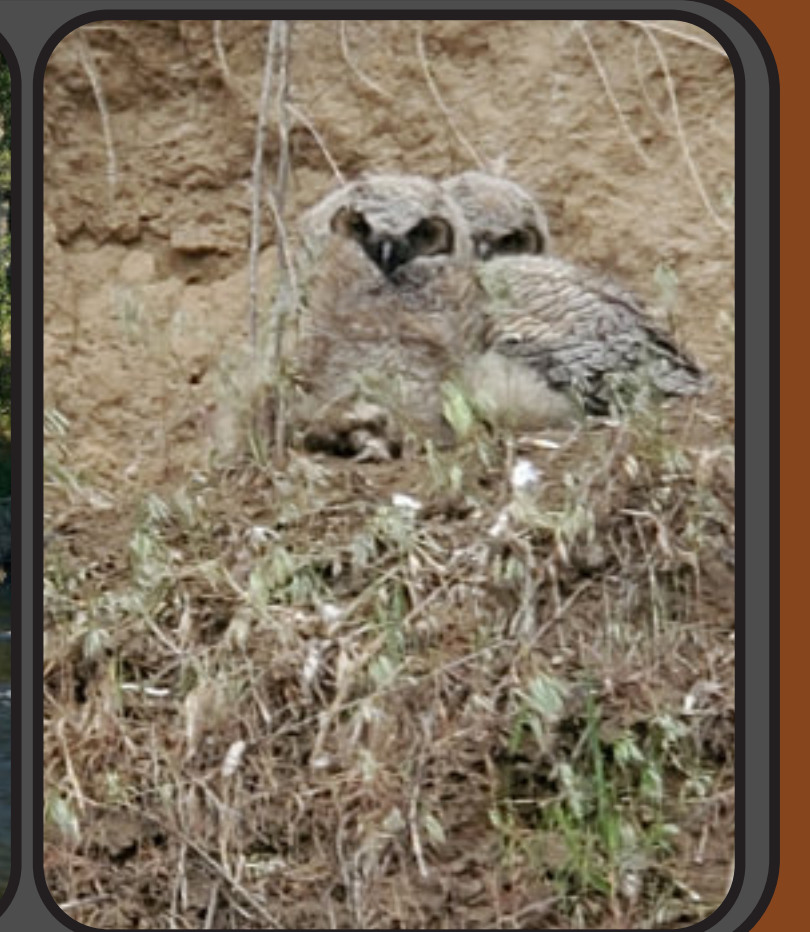


Photo credits : Andy Asmus, Sarah Hurlburt, istockphoto, Rebecca Hanrahan, Hurlburt, Hanrahan



# TRADE NETWORKS



Photo courtesy of Deerwood Ranch Wild Horse EcoSanctuary.



Photo courtesy of La Compagnie des hivernants de la Rivière Saint Pierre.

Unlike the Oregon Trail, the fur trade relied on water routes to transport people and goods. Furs and supplies traveled by ship around South America; men and mail followed northern river routes from Quebec to the Columbia, and on to Fort Vancouver. Ships sailed to the Sandwich Islands (Hawaii) carrying fur for European and Chinese markets, as well as dried salmon and timber for the whaling ships. They returned with textiles and guns from England, beads from Venice, silver work from Quebec, tobacco from Virginia or Brazil, and tea and vermilion directly from China. Along with these material goods, the fur trade also brought the earliest epidemics to the tribes, altered their political systems and economic practices, and damaged the watershed and ecosystems.

The Hudson Bay Company purchased up to 250 Cayuse and Nez Perce horses a year to mount and feed the inland fur brigades. Because of the demand for horses, Cayuse

and Walla Walla people did not need to trap to purchase goods from the Fort.

The primary goal of the British companies was trade, not settlement. Both British and early American fur companies were motivated to partner with the tribes, not eradicate them. Frenchtown embodied this approach. Mixed families settled near the forts with the permission of their Indigenous in-laws but continued to work in the fur trade system. Kin networks from the fur trade era linked Frenchtown communities like French Prairie and Walla Walla through the end of the 19th century.

Subsequent American settler practices, rooted in a system of private property and deeply opposed to interracial marriage, were incompatible with Indigenous principles of land stewardship and shared occupation.

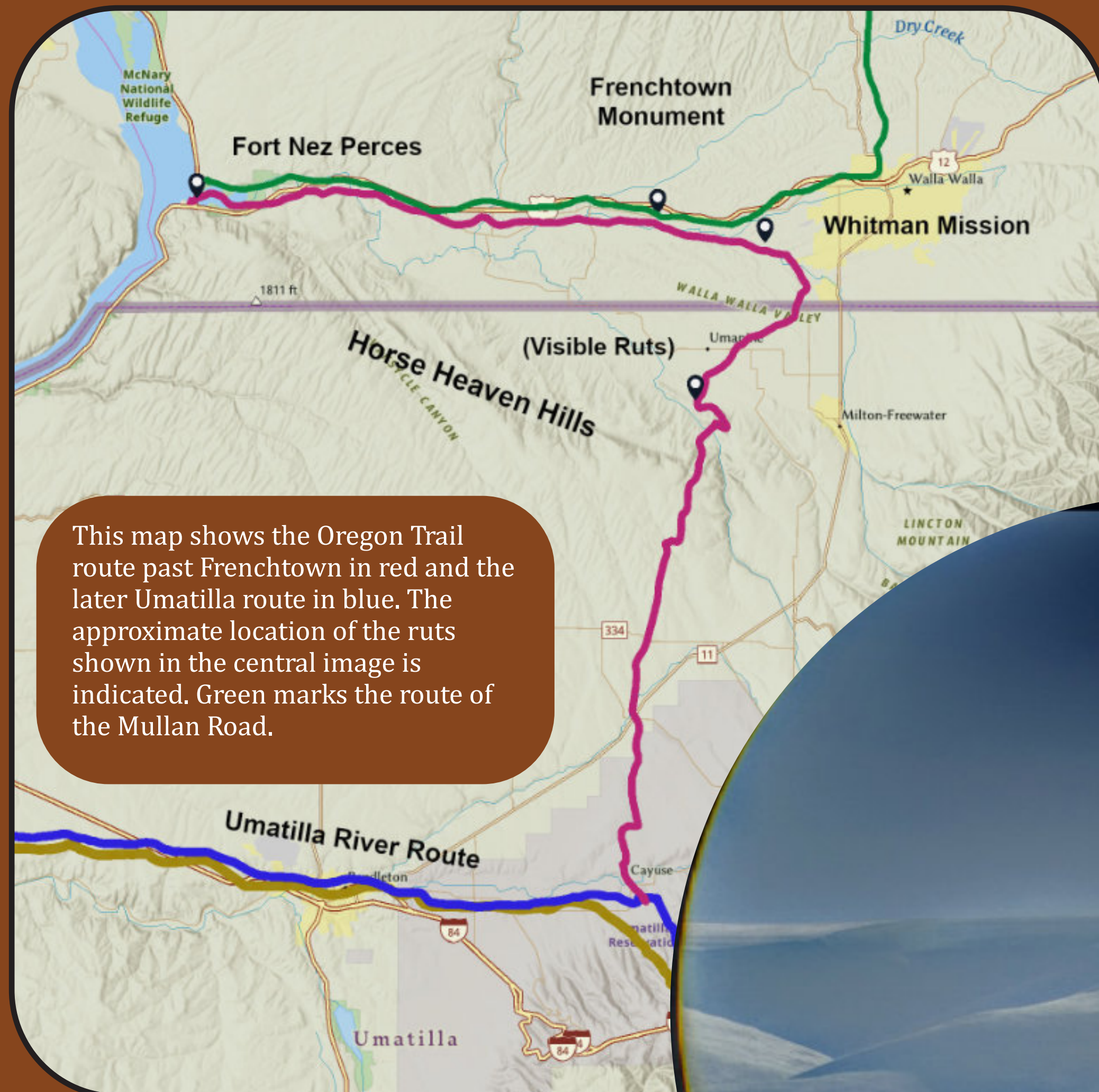


The World, on Mercator's Projection... David H. Burr. 1850. The York Factory Express is shown in blue.



# THE AMERICANS CAME

The Oregon Territory – present-day Washington, Oregon, and Idaho, and large portions of British Columbia – was claimed by both Great Britain and the United States from 1818 until 1846, when the Oregon Treaty established the 49th parallel as the boundary between the two colonial powers. Suddenly, Frenchtown was American.



This map shows the Oregon Trail route past Frenchtown in red and the later Umatilla route in blue. The approximate location of the ruts shown in the central image is indicated. Green marks the route of the Mullan Road.

American settlers did not wait for the territorial dispute between the two colonial powers to be decided. Beginning in 1841, emigrants crossed Cayuse lands on their way to the Willamette Valley. The first large train was led by Marcus Whitman himself. Settlers bought provisions at the Whitman mission for inflated prices and passed through Frenchtown on their way to the Columbia River.



View Descending the Grand Round Foot of the Blue Mountain  
An illustration from *Expedition to Oregon*, 1849.

Although the main settler trail cut south to the Umatilla River beginning in 1845, emigrants in need of supplies or care still followed the old route to the Whitman Mission until its destruction in 1847. The route from the mission to the Columbia River at Wallula was incorporated into the Mullan Road in 1860, and Frenchtown served as a stage stop.

The Homestead Act of 1861 changed the face of Frenchtown. New French Canadian settlers arrived, but so did many Americans. In 1860, 40% of married women on the Frenchtown census were Indian or métis; by 1870, this number dropped to 25%; by 1900 there remained only one.



Oregon Trail ruts descending into the Walla Walla Valley, taken from the top of the Whitman Monument.

Photo courtesy of Sam Pambrun.



# Map and key of signage locations at the Frenchtown Historic Site

8364 Old Highway 12, Walla Walla, WA

September 2025





## D. Overlook

- The People
- Early Catholic Communities
- Cutting up the Land
- The Battle of Walla Walla
- “Allotment Day”

## E. St Rose Cemetery

- Names





# THE PEOPLE

The Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla, Palouse, Yakama, and Nez Perce peoples have lived in this region for well over ten thousand years. These tribes were river people, and salmon was central to their way of life. The Cayuse quickly adapted to the arrival of the horse, brought to North America by the Spanish in the early 1500s. The Cayuse, Palouse, and Nez Perce became renowned for their horsemanship, and their herds grazed the Blue Mountains and the Palouse all the way to Clearwater.



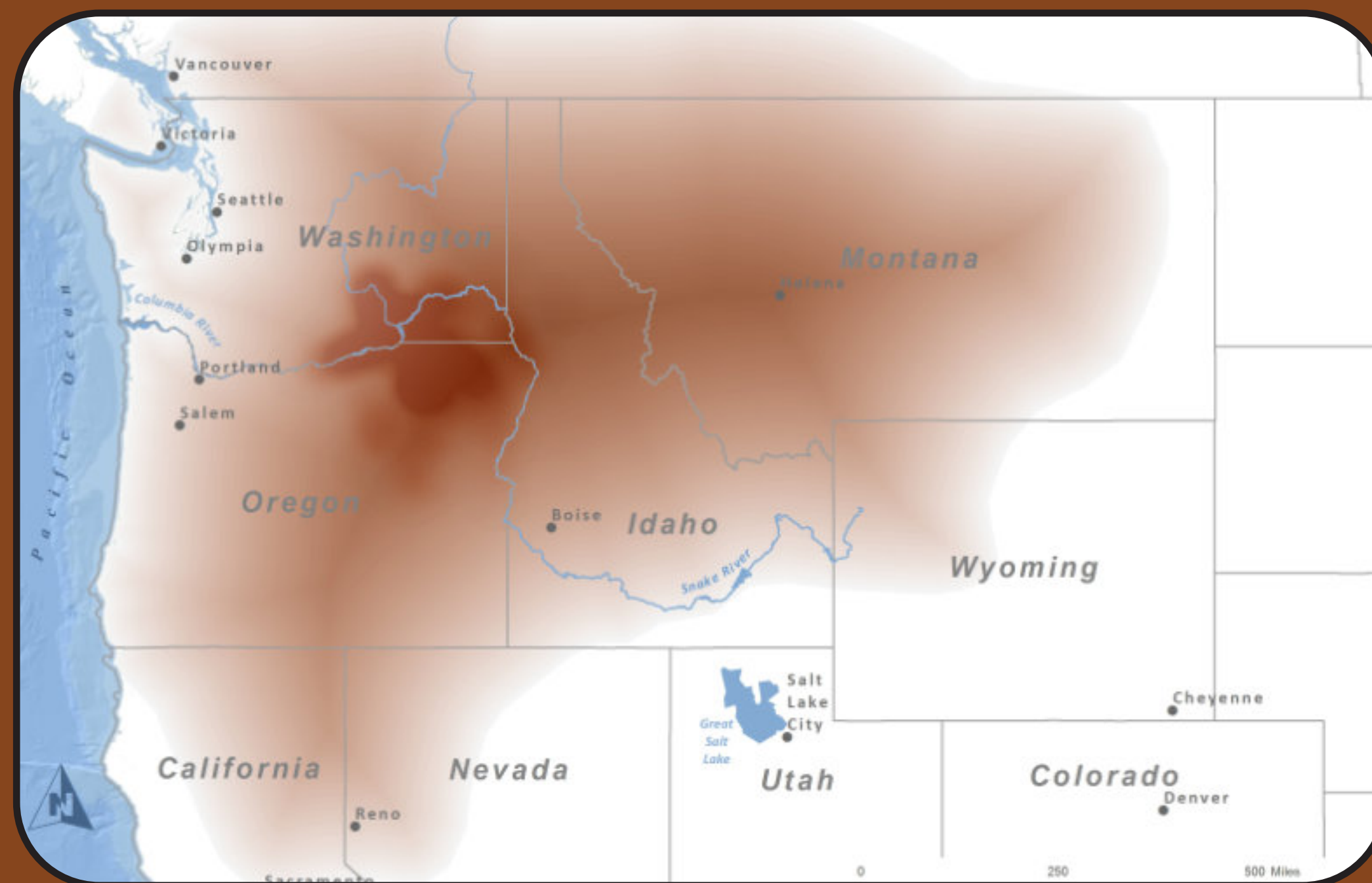
Paul Kane (1810–1871). “Drying Salmon”. 1847, watercolor and pencil on paper. 5 ½” x 9 5/16”.  
Courtesy of Stark Museum of Art, Orange, Texas. Bequest of H.J. Lutzer Stark, 1965. 31.78.50

Tamánwit, or Indian natural law, defined a mutually nurturing and spiritual relationship between all aspects of the land and its inhabitants. It is reflected in Indigenous food ways, which followed a complex and sustainable mobile harvest system based on seasonal availability, food preservation practices, and trade between families and tribes. Bands moved between traditional hereditary sites for fishing, root-gathering, berry harvest and hunting throughout the year. Under the provisions of the 1855 Treaty with the United States, the Tribes retain in perpetuity the right to hunt, fish, gather food and medicines, and pasture livestock on public lands within their traditional homelands, independent of the reservation boundaries.



Atana Melissa Toislap Narcisse Abraham (?ipnáatamti?akt), Modesta Wawintaton'may Minthorn, Lucy Shouse, Pendleton Roundup, ca. 1913. Photo courtesy of Joseph A. Lavadour Jr.

The people on the Columbia Plateau were polyglot, speaking multiple Sahaptin dialects, as well as Cayuse, Salish, Chinook, Klamath, sign language, and several trade jargons. The early European fur trade depended absolutely upon these language skills, as well as upon the extensive kin networks that anchored the political, economic, and social structures of the Columbia Plateau.



Map showing range of traditional areas used by the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla people at or before the Treaty. Much of this territory was non-exclusive, and shared use with other tribes was common. [Map]. CTUIR GIS. Retrieved 9/3/25.



# EARLY CATHOLIC COMMUNITIES

The Catholic French Canadian *voyageurs* of the fur trade created blended families with Indigenous wives and settled here years before the Whitmans' arrival in 1836. The Whitmans vehemently opposed Catholic influence in the Walla Walla valley and referred to their neighbors' mixed-race children as "abominations." They nonetheless employed Frenchtown carpenters, bought supplies from the Forts, and sent their mail via the Hudson's Bay Express.

Before the arrival of French Canadian priest Father Blanchet in Oregon in 1838, fur trade couples were married "à la façon du pays", according to the customs of the wife's people. Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun, (Chief Trader of Fort Walla Walla), and his métis wife Catherine "Kitty" Humphreyville, were the first Frenchtown family to be married by a priest. Kitty and three of their seven children were baptized the same day.



Rosalie Dauphin Gagnon and her son Marcel Jr., ca. 1874. Rosalie was the daughter of Suzanne Cayuse and Matthieu Dauphin.

Five different Saint Rose missions served Frenchtown between 1847 and 1900. Father Brouillet established the first among the Walla Wallas in October of 1847, just weeks before the Whitmans were killed. St. Rose of the Cayouse was built by Fr. Chirouse on Yellow Hawk Creek in 1853, and burned in the battle in 1855. In 1863, a log chapel was constructed on the McBean claim, and moved to Frenchtown later that year. This cabin may have doubled as the school house. The last St. Rose was established by Fr Richard in 1876. It was located just south of here on the Walla Walla River.

For many Frenchtown people, whether French Canadian, Indigenous, or Métis, the Catholic Church registers are the only written records of their lives prior to 1860. Frenchtown Historical Foundation has used these records to establish the names of those buried in the five St. Rose cemeteries. They appear on the memorial sign in the cemetery to your right.



The last St. Rose of Lima church was erected in 1876 on land donated by Marcel Gagnon. In 1911, the building was sold and the wood used to build a grocery at 9th & Chestnut in Walla Walla. The image is a colorized version of a photo by Augustine Bergevin, ca. 1900.

b.185. Ce huit Decembre, mil huit cent trente huit, nous prêtre  
Henriette sousigné avons baptisé Henriette, âgée d'environ seize mois,  
Pambrun fille naturelle de Sieur Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun, en charge  
1. 4 du Fort des Nez percés, sur la Rivière Colombie, et de Catherine Hum-  
frable. Parrain John McLoughlin, écuyer, junior, sousigné  
ainsi que le père : Marraine Dame Marguerite McLoughlin qui  
n'a su signer.  
P.C. Pambrun  
John McLoughlin

b.185 Henriette Pambrun 1.4

[Transcription]

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ainsi que le père : Marraine Dame Marguerite McLoughlin qui n'a su signer.

P.C. Pambrun John McLoughlin



# CUTTING UP THE LAND

Beginning in 1818, the United States and Great Britain claimed joint control of the Pacific Northwest, asserting mutual rights to settlement and economic activity.



In 1846, the Oregon Treaty established a national border along the 49th parallel. However, despite the Discovery claims of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, the British fur trade, and many thousands of settlers and miners, until the ratification of the Treaties of 1853-1855, all land west of the Rocky Mountains was still Indigenous land.

With the Oregon Donation Land Law of 1850, the United States offered free title to land it did not yet own to American immigrants. The law defined eligibility by race and citizenship. By 1855, American settlers had claimed 2.5 million acres.

To regularize these land claims, United States lawmakers sought to extinguish Indian title in Oregon Territory "and leave

the whole of the most desirable portion open to white settlers." From May 29 to June 9, 1855, Superintendents of Indian Affairs Isaac I. Stevens and Joel Palmer met with Nez Perce, Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla, and Yakama leaders to establish treaties. Many of the interpreters were from Frenchtown, including A.D. Pambrun, William McKay, and Matthieu Dauphin ("Dofa"). Father Chirouse also signed. Narcisse Raymond, William McBean and Edward LaFave interpreted but did not sign.

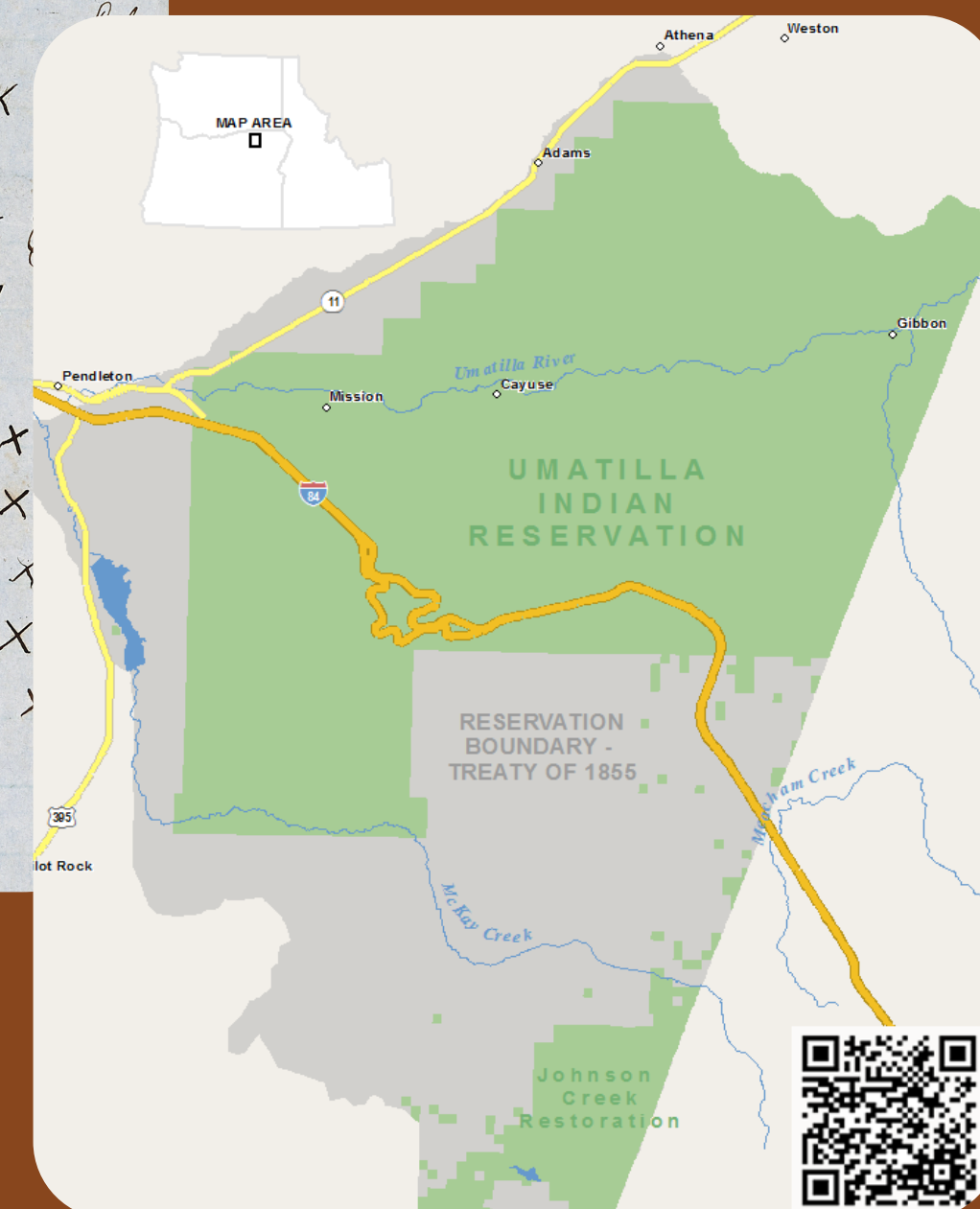
The Treaty negotiators pressured the Tribes to consider the living earth as a material commodity. They proposed grouping all the tribes on just two reservations – the Yakama and the Nez Perce. The Tribes resisted the principle and the process. Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla headmen argued for a separate reservation in their homeland. Frenchtown interpreters suggested to US officials that the most direct path to peace was to isolate the Cayuse from other major tribes. On June 9, 1855, the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla ceded roughly 5.9 million acres to the United States for the promise of a 512,000-acre reservation, money, farming supplies, key buildings, and skilled personnel, including a doctor, blacksmith, carpenters, and teachers.

In Testimony, whereof the said  
S. S. Stevens and Joel Palmer on the part  
of the United States and the undersigned  
Chiefs, head men and delegates of the said  
Confederated bands have hereunto set their  
hands and seals this Ninth day of June  
Eighteen hundred and fifty five.

Signed in the presence of  
James Doty  
Secty. Treaties  
Wm. McKay  
Secty. Treaties  
C. Thirreux, O.M.G.  
A.D. Pambrun  
Interpreter  
John Whitford  
his mark  
Interpreter  
Matthieu Dofa  
his mark  
Interpreter  
William Craig  
Interpreter  
James Conroy  
his mark  
Interpreter  
Patrick McHenry  
Interpreter  
Arch. Gracie  
his mark  
Bo 2 St. L. Dofa.

Isaac Stevens  
Gov. Sup. Wash. Ter.  
Joel Palmer  
Supt. Ind. Affairs  
Proprio. Max. mos  
Head Chief of Wallawalla  
Miami-test or Plume  
Negotenatemy  
Head Chief of Cayuse  
Menap snoot  
Head Chief of Umatilla  
Kamaspello  
Stachus  
Howlishwampo  
Five Crows  
Stachauia  
Mmhowish  
Linton-mitchauia

Treaty signatures, June 9, 1855. The text of the Treaty is written in A.D. Pambrun's hand. Note the use of "x" signatures. Image courtesy of the National Archives.



The Treaty of 1855 promised 512,000 acres. A federal survey reduced this area to ~245,000 acres (grey). The Umatilla Allotment Act (Slater Act) of 1885 further diminished the Reservation to ~152,000 acres. The present-day Reservation (green) encompasses 172,000 acres, much owned by non-Indians.

Traditional use by the Cayuse, Umatilla, Walla Walla tribes [Map]. CTUIR GIS. Retrieved 9/3/25.

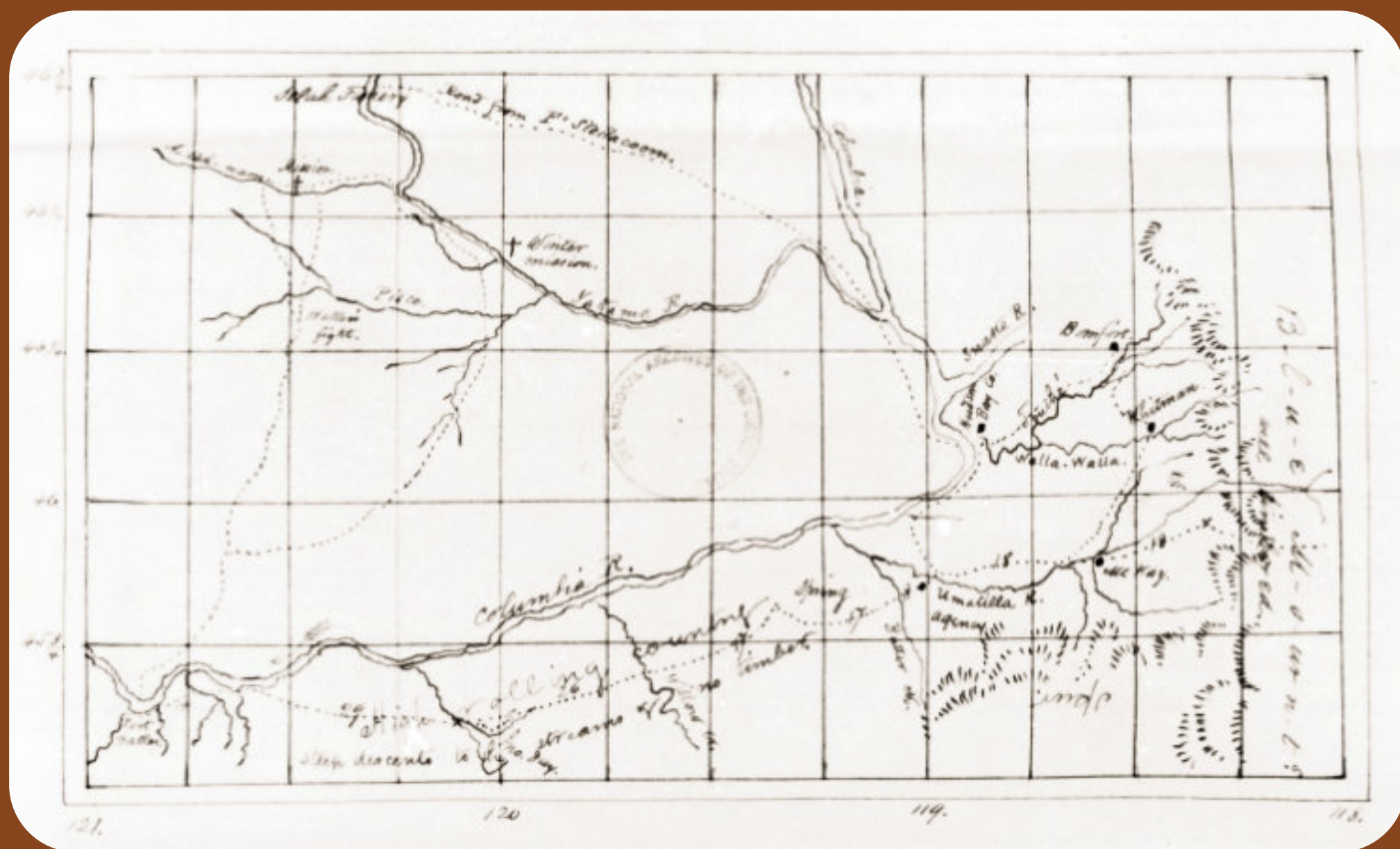


# THE BATTLE OF WALLA WALLA

## DEC 7-11, 1855

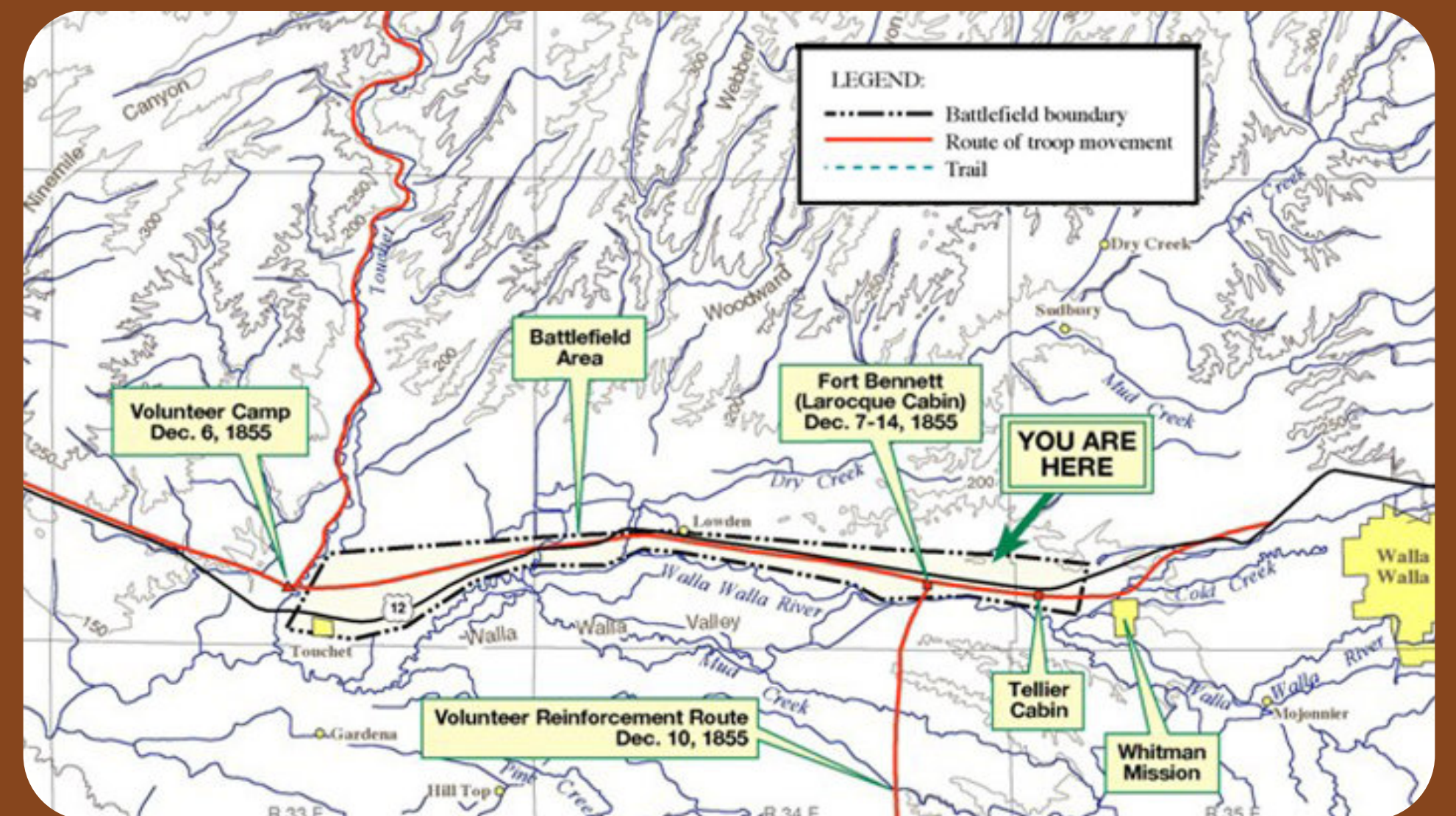
The 1855 Treaty was not ratified by Congress until 1859, although the ceded lands were advertised in eastern US newspapers before it was even signed. Seeking to accelerate settlement, Territorial Governor Curry formed local militias to suppress Indian resistance. Miners chasing new gold strikes also flooded in, stealing horses and supplies, and attacking Yakama women. War broke out in October 1855, and Sub Indian Agent Nathan Olney ordered the Walla Walla valley cleared of settlers.

Hard pressed in the Yakama war, and fearing its expansion to the Columbia tribes, U.S. Army major Gabriel Rains called for assistance. Governor Curry used dramatic descriptions of Indian violence and promises of land to recruit ten companies of volunteers, but refused to submit his militia to the authority of the US Army.



Major General John Wool ordered a topographical military reconnaissance report be compiled of the lower Columbia region, including the Yakima and the Walla Walla valleys, in November of 1855. The report details distances and terrain in preparation for military action. Section 3 of that report contains the map you see here: "Reconnaissance from Fort Dalles across the Blue Mountains by Lt. Mendell T. E. in the summer of 1855".

The Battle of Walla Walla at Frenchtown was a four-day running fight between Curry's Oregon Mounted Volunteers (OMV) and members of the Walla Walla, Cayuse, Palouse, and Yakama tribes. At the outset, Walla Walla leader Peo Peo Mox Mox approached the militia under a white flag of negotiation and was taken hostage. Two days later, he was murdered in captivity and his body mutilated.



Map showing key locations and movements of the Battle of Frenchtown. "You are here" indicates the location of the present-day Frenchtown Historic Site.

The OMV wintered in the valley, with little discipline and no supplies. They sacked the Frenchtown farms and Cayuse camps, pillaging cattle and potatoes. The people of Frenchtown fled, along with an unknown number of "friendly Indians", some to the Dalles, some north with Ramo (Raymond), some to a winter camp on Mill Creek with Father Chirouse. Many did not return.

Excerpt from "Yakima War Diary, 1855-1856," by K.B. Mercer.

Transcription :

[16 Dec 1855] 16th Sunday a cloudy frosty morning the rolls of the different companies were called this morning and the whole command paraded and Majors Chinn delivered the general rules for the command

First he congratulated us on our victory over the Indians he also informed us that the French settlers would return to their farms in a few days accompanied by those friendly Indians who protected them and that we should respect these persons and property

2 that no more cashes should be raided but by the men in the service of the commissary

3 that no more hogs be killed

4 that there be no more stealing

\* The transcription preserves the spelling and punctuation of the original document.

16th Sunday a cloudy frosty morning the rolls of the different companies were called this morning and the whole command paraded and Majors Chinn delivered the general rules for the command first he congratulated us on our victory over the Indians he also informed us that the French settlers would return to their farms in a few days accompanied by those friendly Indians who protected them and that we should respect their persons and property 2 that no more cashes should be raided but by the men in the service of the commissary 3 that no more hogs be killed 4 that there be no more stealing



# “ALLOTMENT DAY”



This image shows a group of 34 Frenchtown Métis women and children in the spring of 1886. Many “mixed blood” individuals were acknowledged as descendants of the Walla Walla tribe by Chief Homilie and allowed to claim land on the reservation. The numbers refer to a list of handwritten names on the back of the photo. We have standardized spelling and included maiden names, married names, and life dates to create the list below.

*Image courtesy of Tamástslíkt Cultural Institute.*

*The head of a family gets 160 acres, single adults eighty acres, and minor children forty acres. Wives receive no allotment unless the husband is not a member of the Confederated Tribes, and then the wife is considered the head of the family and allotted accordingly.*

The Dalles Times-Mountaineer, January 9, 1892 and children in the spring of 1886.

The Slater Act of 1885 (precursor to the Dawes act of 1887) carved portions of the reservation into individual parcels to be distributed to tribal members. The goal was to accelerate assimilation and take even more land for white settlement. Unallocated land was declared surplus and sold. Métis or full blood women married to Cayuse, Walla Walla, or Umatilla men were disenfranchised, receiving no land at all.

- |                                                 |                                                                   |                                                |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Angie McBean Bergevin (1872-1935)            | 12. Malvina Rainville Picard (1872-1937)                          | 23. Eliza Cameron (1878-1958)                  |
| 2. Sarah Clara Bonifer Duffy (1868-1916)        | 13. Felicite Dauphin Pambrun (1851-1934)                          | 24. Jane Woodward Wilson (1866-1945)           |
| 3. Willie Duffy (1885-1953)                     | 14. Clarence LaBrache (1885-1908)                                 | 25. Charley Wilson (1882-1911)                 |
| 4. Selena Gagnon (1871-1891)                    | 15. Maggie Depot LaBrache (1862-1916)                             | 26. Mary St. Denis Allen Slickpoo (1879-1948)  |
| 5. Mary Smith Guyette McIntyre (1872-1933)      | 16. Marianne Gendron Poirier Parr (1844-1911)                     | 27. Hattie Pambrun Williams (1880-1969)        |
| 6. Rosa Gobin Rainville Farrow Parr (1871-1952) | 17. Rosa Lucille Poirier Bonifer (1861 -1944)                     | 28. Cora Woodward Grove (1880-1944)            |
| 7. Josephine LaFave Bergevin (1871-1907)        | 18. Mary Jane Bellman Bushman (1864-1913)                         | 29. Rosa Pambrun Reed (1875-1904)              |
| 8. Catherine Brisbois Lesage McBean (1846-1918) | 19. Rose Virginia Picard Bergevin (1866-1961) and daughter Minnie | 30. Alfred LaBrache (1882-1900)                |
| 9. Adeline (Gardipe) Lucier ( 1867- )           | 20. Carrie LaFave Bergevin (1867-1953)                            | 31. Willie Pambrun (1882- )                    |
| 10. Margaret Russie Gobin Damain (1853-1894)    | 21. Sophie Gagnon Remillard (1868-1942)                           | 32. Henry LaBrache (1883-1909)                 |
| 11. Mary Sophie Bellique Cornoyer (1832-1920)   | 22. Willie Cameron (1880-1911)                                    | 33. Agnes LaFave Bergevin (1873-1947)          |
|                                                 |                                                                   | 34. Julia Morissette LaFave Martin (1859-1948) |



Map location E: Thumbnail version — this is a large (92” wide) horizontal sign in the cemetery. The four subsequent images show the left, center, and right sections of this banner.

Parish Records

The St. Rose Mission was located at three different sites between 1853 and 1911. We remember and record the names of burials at all three here. The St. Rose of Lima cemetery where you now stand was established in 1876, when the Walla Walla river flooded the previous site. Many graves were moved here at that time.

With the brief exception of Father Chirouse, who founded St. Rose of the Cayouse in 1853, Frenchtown did not have a resident priest. Eleven different priests officiated at St. Rose burials. These include Fathers Chirouse,

Richard, Brouillet, Halde, Duffy, Brondel, Paaps, Cesari, Jung, Flohr, and Holderbeke. Marriages, baptisms, and burials were often recorded in a travel journal in French, English, or Latin, and then recopied into church registers in Walla Walla upon return, resulting in occasional gaps and inconsistencies.

For reasons of space we have not included witnesses. The indication “of this mission,” suggests a person with no known family. Where possible, we have cross-checked the death record with other sources. Spelling varies widely, and is preserved—for example, note variations for Forrest / Fôret and

Gravelle / Gravel, or Peyrègne / Perrin. Superscript letters beside each name indicate the principal source reference used for the record.

a) Missions of St. Ann and St. Rose of the Cayouse, 1847-1888; Walla Walla and Frenchtown, 1859-1872. (Harriet Duncan Mannick & Adrian R. Mannick, Catholic Church Records of the Pacific Northwest St. Paul, OR: French Prairie Press, 1972, vol 7).

b) Frenchtown, 1872-1888 (Mannick).

c) Frenchtown, 1876-1888 (Mannick).

d)“Old Cemetery Roll Published.” Unise Basile (Walla Walla), 4 May 1947, p 17.

e) Record of interments for St Patrick's Parish of Walla Walla Jan 1st 1884-Dec 31, 1944. (Courtesy of St. Patrick's Church).

St. Rose of Lima Cemetery, 1863-1876

Nov 8, 1863  
Catherine Peltier, 18 yrs, wife of Etienne Peltier.<sup>b</sup>

Mar 3, 1864  
Charlotte Laprate, wife of Joseph Menard.<sup>b</sup>

Mar 19, 1868  
Leon Adrian Cascabil, 40 yrs, of Agen, Lot-et-Garonne, France.<sup>b</sup>

Mar 2, 1870  
John Baptist Forest, 56 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

Mar 16, 1872  
Annie Forest Lefebvre, 33 yrs, wife of Andrew Lefebvre.<sup>b</sup>

May 1, 1872  
Telephore Amadee Lefebvre, 2 mos, son of Andrew Lefebvre and Annie Forest of French Town.<sup>b</sup>

May 19, 1872  
Julienne Allard, 12 yrs, daughter of Olivier Allard and Leo Forest.<sup>b</sup>

Oct 3, 1872  
Josephine Petit, 16 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

Feb 4, 1873  
Joseph Begin [Bergevin], 50 yrs.<sup>a</sup>

Jun 22, 1874  
Joseph Cornoyer, 19 yrs, son of Narcisse Cornoyer and Marie Belique of Umatilla County, OR.<sup>b</sup>

Nov 11, 1874  
Celina M. Forest, 28 yrs, wife of Louis Bergevin.<sup>b</sup>

Apr 1875  
Mary Wind, 34 yrs, of this mission.<sup>b</sup>

May 9, 1875  
John Sing, 36 yrs, of this mission.<sup>b</sup>

St. Rose of Lima Cemetery, 1876-1888

Jan 10, 1876  
John Baptiste Lucier (dit Gardipe), 13 yrs, brother of Caroline.<sup>b</sup>

Jan 20, 1876  
Angelique LaRoque Depot, 38 yrs, wife of Joseph Depot.<sup>b</sup>

Feb 18, 1876  
Felicite St. Denis, 7 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

Feb 24, 1876  
George Forrest, 18 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

Jun 12, 1876  
Narcisse Depot, 16 yrs.<sup>c</sup>

Jun 19, 1876  
Suzanne Dauphin, 78 yrs, widow of Matthieu Dauphin.<sup>c</sup>

Sept 4, 1876  
Marie Beauchemin, 28 yrs, wife of Paul Beauchemin.<sup>c</sup>

Oct 28, 1876  
Josephine Esther Bonenfant, 14 mos, daughter of Napoleon and Marguerite Bonenfant.<sup>c</sup>

Jan 14, 1877  
Narcisse Beauchemin, 13 mos, son of Charles Beauchemin and Julie.<sup>c</sup>

Apr 7, 1877  
Adolphe Lacourse, 5 yrs, son of Marie Lacourse.<sup>c</sup>

May 17, 1877  
Louis Lacourse, 9 yrs, son of Amable Lacourse and Magdeleine.<sup>c</sup>

Nov 3, 1877  
Caroline Weber, 1 mo, daughter of Francis Weber and Catherine Rush.<sup>b</sup>

Dec 21, 1877  
John Murphy, 55 yrs, of this mission.<sup>b</sup>

Jan 15, 1878  
Jean Baptiste Beauchemin, 1 mo 10 days, son of Charles Beauchemin and Julie Pierre.<sup>c</sup>

Jan 15, 1878  
Alexandre Allard, 7 yrs, son of Olivier Allard and Léocadie Fôret.<sup>c</sup>

Jan 25, 1878  
Emma Lefèvre, 7 yrs, daughter of André Lefèvre and Anna Fôret.<sup>c</sup>

Jan 27, 1878  
Nancy Payrègne [Perrin], 3 yrs 3 mos 26 days daughter of Francois Perrin and Julie Gravel.<sup>c</sup>

Jan 31, 1878  
Louis Payrègne [Perrin], 19 mos 17 days, son of Francois Perrin and Julie Gravel.<sup>c</sup>

Feb 1878  
Caroline (dit Lucier) Gardipe, 4 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

Feb 8, 1878  
Joseph St. Denis, 6 yrs 2 mos, son of Désiré St. Denis and Rosalie Raymond.<sup>c</sup>

Feb 11, 1878  
Basile Poirier, 6 yrs 10 mos, son of Antoine Poirier and Isabelle Thomas.<sup>c</sup>

Feb 22, 1878  
Gedeon Normandy, 14 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

May 18, 1878  
Rosalie Dauphin, 32 yrs, wife of Marcel Gagnon.<sup>c</sup>

May 30, 1878  
Marie Anne [Walla Walla] wife of Beauchemin.<sup>c</sup>

Nov 9, 1878  
Felix Morais [Moran], 5 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

Feb 24, 1879  
Abraham McDuffin [Dauphin], 30 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

Jul 2, 1879  
Cecile Marie [St. Denis], 3yrs 3 mos, daughter of Désiré St. Denis and Rosalie Raymond.<sup>b</sup>

Jul 7, 1879  
Pierre McBean, 24 yrs, son of William McBean and Jane Boucher.<sup>b</sup>

Oct 8, 1879  
Cecile Raymond, 35 yrs 5 mos, wife of Jacques Dobson, daughter of Narcisse Raymond and Pauline (“an Indian”).<sup>c</sup>

Mar 1880  
---- Morais, 7 yrs., of this mission.<sup>b</sup>

Aug 17, 1880  
Francois Perin, 2 yrs, son of Francois Perin and Julia Gravel.<sup>c</sup>

Nov 21, 1880  
---- Gagnon, infant son of Marcel Gagnon and Julia Raymond.<sup>c</sup>

Jan 9, 1881  
Marie Julia Remillard, 1 mo.<sup>c</sup>

Feb 27, 1881  
Marguerite Pitcherz, 69 yrs, wife of Joseph Forest.<sup>c</sup>

Mar 20, 1881  
Edith Mathilda Adolphine, 2 mos, daughter of Adolphe Pharon and Susana (“Indian”).<sup>c</sup>

May 27, 1881  
John M. Talie [Tellier], 88 yrs, born in Canada son of John Taylie.<sup>c</sup>

Feb 19, 1882  
Nancy Joanna Perrin, 22 mos 6 days, daughter of Francis Perrin and Julia Perrin.<sup>c</sup>

Aug 31, 1883  
John Tellier, 15 yrs.<sup>c</sup>

Sept 4, 1883  
J. Francois Perrin, 38 yrs, born in France.<sup>c</sup>

Sept 6, 1883  
Bresboy [Olivier Brisbols], 60 yrs, born in Canada.<sup>c</sup>

Oct 10, 1883  
Julia Perrin [Gravelle], 28 yrs, daughter of Gedeon Gravelle and Nancy [Pin].<sup>c</sup>

Oct 19, 1883  
Gedeon Gravelle [Gravel], 56 yrs, born in Canada.<sup>c</sup>

Mar 28, 1884  
Jules Dauphin [Julien], 30 yrs, born in Wasco Co., OR.<sup>b</sup>

May 6, 1884  
Marie Ranford, 17 yrs, born in the State of Iowa.<sup>b</sup>

Sept 27, 1885  
Denise Raymond, 26 yrs, wife of Roman Remillard.<sup>b</sup>

Jun 4, 1886  
Marc Vial, 28 yrs, born in France.<sup>b</sup>

Dec 12, 1886  
E.G. Pharon, born in Canada.<sup>b</sup>

Unrecorded Burials

If a priest was not available, the burial was not always recorded in the church register. Civil records are sparse before 1891, when Washington State passed a law requiring counties to record deaths. Long periods in the church record with no recorded events, such as in March of 1878, hint at missing names. For twenty-eight people, the only record of their burial is a list made in 1942 by Frenchtown descendants Mr. and Mrs. Marcel Gagnon and Lucien Gagnon, Mr. and Mrs. George Perrier, and Mr. and Mrs. Philip Remillard. The list was saved by Nydia Bergevin and published in the Walla Walla Union Bulletin on

May 4, 1947. Drawn from memory, it provides no dates and few first names. Below, a superscript letter “d” indicates names where this is the only known source. If a name from this group also appeared in the church register, we have recorded it in the main list.

From 1911-2005, the cemetery was located on private land, with no covenants, and limited access. A note found in the papers of Damase Bergevin in the Whitman College and Northwest Archives describes the site :

“A fire burned all the markers when I was a boy, but Clem Bergevin has relocated all the graves. They are

mostly returned Hudson Bay people. The wooden cross was saved from the fire and preserved in Clem's barn for many years before replacing in the graveyard [it is now on display at Tamastalik Cultural Institute in Pendleton]. In the cemetery, there are thirty children who died in a diphtheria epidemic, including two Pambrun children, two Allard children (grandchildren of Joe Forest), and one McBean child.”

Diphtheria raged through the Walla Walla valley multiple times in the 1880s and 1890s. It is most visible here in the recorded burials for January and February of 1878.

Unrecorded Burials

Mr. Ferrians <sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Ferrians <sup>d</sup>

Benjamin Raymond <sup>d</sup>

Eleanor Findlay Raymond <sup>d</sup>

Julia Raymond Gagnon <sup>d</sup>

Edouard Beauchemin <sup>d</sup>

Desire St. Denis <sup>d</sup>

Rosalie Raymond St. Denis <sup>d</sup>

Romaine Remillard <sup>d</sup>

Baptiste Perrier <sup>d</sup>

John Findlay <sup>d</sup>

Mrs. John Findlay <sup>d</sup>

Nicholas Findlay <sup>d</sup>

William Dobson <sup>d</sup>

Pierre Lacourse <sup>d</sup>

Louise Hops Lacourse <sup>d</sup>

Isadore Beauchamp <sup>d</sup>

Pecore <sup>d</sup>

Baptiste Dorian <sup>d</sup>

Isabelle Dobson Rainville <sup>d</sup>

Mr. Palno <sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Palno <sup>d</sup>

Mr. Tellier <sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Tellier <sup>d</sup>

Terry St. Denis <sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Terry St. Denis <sup>d</sup>

James Dobson <sup>d</sup>

Baltzor <sup>d</sup>



# Parish Records

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Richard, Brouillet, Halde, Duffy, Brondel, Paaps, Cesari, Junger, Flohr, and Holderbeke. Marriages, baptisms, and burials were often recorded in a travel journal in French, English, or Latin, and then recopied into church registers in Walla Walla upon return, resulting in occasional gaps and inconsistencies.

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- b) Frenchtown, 1872-1888 (Munnick).
- c) Frenchtown, 1876-1888 (Munnick).
- d)“Old Cemetery Roll Published.” *Union Bulletin* [Walla Walla], 4 May 1947, p 17.
- e) Record of interments for St Patrick’s Parish of Walla Walla Jan 1st 1884-Dec 31, 1944. (Courtesy of St. Patrick’s Church).

## St. Rose of the Cayouse Cemetery, 1853-1855

Sept 8, 1853

Andre Caxtalpi.<sup>a</sup>

Sept 10, 1853

Agatha Twalratimani, 5 yrs.<sup>a</sup>

Sept 20, 1853

Joseph Watianiokslik, 23 yrs.<sup>a</sup>

Oct 3, 1853

Augustin Owlishwampo, 20 yrs.<sup>a</sup>

Jan 14, 1854

Sophie Branchaud, 18 mos.<sup>a</sup>

Feb 2, 1854

Genevieve Tiyalquagee, 50 yrs.<sup>a</sup>

Mar 16, 1854

Josephine, 8 days, daughter of Americans Mr. Labouchelliere and Miveray.<sup>a</sup>

Apr 14, 1854

—nalie Kotalbich.<sup>a</sup>

Oct 8, 1854

Marie Chiwawai.<sup>a</sup>

Oct 11, 1854

Marie Walla, wife of John Couture.<sup>a</sup>

Jan 4, 1855

Marie Katlapish, 10 days.<sup>a</sup>

Jan 28, 1855

Charles, of the Snake nation, slave to the Cayuse.<sup>a</sup>

Jan 29, 1855

Victor Utala, of the Cayuse nation.<sup>a</sup>

Jun 3, 1855

Angelique Yellow Serpent, 30 yrs, wife of Antoine Placide.<sup>a</sup>

Jul 4, 1855

Raphael, 6 yrs, and Catherine Ayomakeni, 3 yrs, of the Walla Walla nation.<sup>a</sup>

Feb 3, 1856

Lucie Tolmy [Tallman], 2 mos., daughter of Mr. Tolmy, American, and Julie Toualra, *métisse* Cayuse and Snake.<sup>a</sup>



**St. Rose of Lima Cemetery,  
1863-1876**

**Nov 8, 1863**

Catherine Peltier, 18 yrs, wife of Etienne Peltier.<sup>b</sup>

**Mar 3, 1864**

Charlotte Laprate, wife of Joseph Menard.<sup>b</sup>

**Mar 19, 1868**

Leon Adrian Cascabil, 40 yrs, of Agen, Lot-et-Garonne, France.<sup>b</sup>

**Mar 2, 1870**

John Baptist Forest, 56 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

**Mar 16, 1872**

Annie Forest Lefebve, 33 yrs, wife of Andrew Lefebve.<sup>b</sup>

**May 1, 1872**

Telesphore Amadee Lefebve, 2 mos, son of Andrew Lefebve and Annie Forest of French Town.<sup>b</sup>

**May 19, 1872**

Julienne Allard, 12 yrs, daughter of Olivier Allard and Leo Forest.<sup>b</sup>

**Oct 3, 1872**

Josephine Petit, 16 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

**Feb 4, 1873**

Joseph Begin [Bergevin], 50 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

**Jun 22, 1874**

Joseph Cornoyer, 19 yrs, son of Narcisse Cornoyer and Marie Belique of Umatilla County, OR.<sup>b</sup>

**Nov 11, 1874**

Celina M. Forest, 28 yrs, wife of Louis Bergevin.<sup>b</sup>

**Apr 1875**

Mary Wind, 34 yrs, of this mission.<sup>b</sup>

**May 9, 1875**

John Sing, 36 yrs, of this mission.<sup>b</sup>

**St. Rose of Lima Cemetery,  
1876-1888**

**Jan 10, 1876**

John Baptiste Lucier (dit Gardipe), 13 yrs, brother of Caroline.<sup>b</sup>

**Jan 20, 1876**

Angelique LaRoque Depot, 38 yrs, wife of Joseph Depot.<sup>b</sup>

**Feb 18, 1876**

Felicite St. Denis, 7 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

**Feb 24, 1876**

George Forrest, 18 yrs.<sup>b</sup>

**Jun 12, 1876**

Narcisse Depot, 16 yrs.<sup>c</sup>

**Jun 19, 1876**

Suzanne Dauphin, 78 yrs, widow of Matthieu Dauphin.<sup>c</sup>

**Sept 4, 1876**

Marie Beauchemin, 28 yrs, wife of Paul Beauchemin.<sup>c</sup>

**Oct 28, 1876**

Josephine Esther Bonenfant, 14 mos, daughter of Napoleon and Marguerite Bonenfant.<sup>c</sup>

**Jan 14, 1877**

Narcisse Beauchemin, 13 mos, son of Charles Beauchemin and Julie.<sup>c</sup>

**Apr 7, 1877**

Adolphe Lacourse, 5 yrs, son of Marie Lacourse.<sup>c</sup>

**May 17, 1877**

Louis Lacourse, 9 yrs, son of Amable Lacourse and Magdeleine.<sup>c</sup>

**Nov 3, 1877**

Caroline Weber, 1 mo, daughter of Francis Weber and Catherine Rush.<sup>b</sup>

**Dec 21, 1877**

John Murphy, 55 yrs, of this mission.<sup>b</sup>

**Jan 15, 1878**

Jean Baptiste Beauchemin, 1 mo 10 days, son of Charles Beauchemin and Julie Pierre.<sup>c</sup>

**Jan 15, 1878**

Alexandre Allard, 7 yrs, son of Olivier Allard and Léocadie Fôret.<sup>c</sup>

**Jan 25, 1878**

Emma Lefèvre, 7 yrs, daughter of André Lefèvre and Anna Fôret.<sup>c</sup>



|                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                             |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Jan 27, 1878</b><br/>Nancy Payrègne [Perrin], 3 yrs 3 mos 26 days daughter of Francois Perrin and Julie Gravel.<sup>c</sup></p> | <p><b>Jul 2, 1879</b><br/>Cecile Marie [St. Denis], 3yrs 3 mos, daughter of Désiré St. Denis and Rosalie Raymond.<sup>b</sup></p>                       | <p><b>Feb 19, 1882</b><br/>Nancy Joanna Perrin, 22 mos 6 days, daughter of Francis Perrin and Julia Perrin.<sup>c</sup></p> |
| <p><b>Jan 31, 1878</b><br/>Louis Payrègne [Perrin], 19 mos 17 days, son of Francois Perrin and Julie Gravel.<sup>c</sup></p>          | <p><b>Jul 7, 1879</b><br/>Pierre McBean, 24 yrs, son of William McBean and Jane Boucher.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                | <p><b>Aug 31, 1883</b><br/>John Tellier, 15 yrs.<sup>c</sup></p>                                                            |
| <p><b>Feb 1878</b><br/>Caroline (dit Lucier) Gardipe, 4 yrs.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                          | <p><b>Oct 8, 1879</b><br/>Cecile Raymond, 35 yrs 5 mos, wife of Jacques Dobson, daughter of Narcisse Raymond and Pauline (“an Indian”).<sup>c</sup></p> | <p><b>Sept 4, 1883</b><br/>J. Francois Perrin, 38 yrs, born in France.<sup>c</sup></p>                                      |
| <p><b>Feb 8, 1878</b><br/>Joseph St. Denis, 6 yrs 2 mos, son of Désiré St. Denis and Rosalie Raymond.<sup>c</sup></p>                 | <p><b>Mar 1880</b><br/>---- Morais, 7 yrs., of this mission.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                                            | <p><b>Sept 6, 1883</b><br/>Bresboy [Olivier Brisbois], 60 yrs, born in Canada.<sup>c</sup></p>                              |
| <p><b>Feb 11, 1878</b><br/>Basile Poirier, 6 yrs 10 mos, son of Antoine Poirier and Isabelle Thomas.<sup>c</sup></p>                  | <p><b>Aug 17, 1880</b><br/>Francois Perin, 2 yrs, son of Francois Perin and Julia Gravel.<sup>c</sup></p>                                               | <p><b>Oct 10, 1883</b><br/>Julia Perrin [Gravelle], 28 yrs, daughter of Gedeon Gravelle and Nancy [Pin].<sup>c</sup></p>    |
| <p><b>Feb 22, 1878</b><br/>Gedeon Normandy, 14 yrs.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                                   | <p><b>Nov 21, 1880</b><br/>---- Gagnon, infant son of Marcel Gagnon and Julia Raymond.<sup>c</sup></p>                                                  | <p><b>Oct 19, 1883</b><br/>Gedeon Gravelle [Gravel], 56 yrs, born in Canada.<sup>c</sup></p>                                |
| <p><b>May 18, 1878</b><br/>Rosalie Dauphin, 32 yrs, wife of Marcel Gagnon.<sup>c</sup></p>                                            | <p><b>Jan 9, 1881</b><br/>Marie Julia Remillard, 1 mo.<sup>c</sup></p>                                                                                  | <p><b>Mar 28, 1884</b><br/>Jules Dauphin [Julien], 30 yrs, born in Wasco Co., OR.<sup>b</sup></p>                           |
| <p><b>May 30, 1878</b><br/>Marie Anne [Walla Walla] wife of Beauchemin.<sup>c</sup></p>                                               | <p><b>Feb 27, 1881</b><br/>Marguerite Pitcherz, 69 yrs, wife of Joseph Forest.<sup>c</sup></p>                                                          | <p><b>May 6, 1884</b><br/>Marie Ranford, 17 yrs, born in the State of Iowa.<sup>b</sup></p>                                 |
| <p><b>Nov 9, 1878</b><br/>Felix Morais [Moran], 5 yrs.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                                | <p><b>Mar 20, 1881</b><br/>Edith Mathilda Adolphine, 2 mos, daughter of Adolphe Pharon and Susana (“Indian”).<sup>c</sup></p>                           | <p><b>Sept 27, 1885</b><br/>Denise Raymond, 26 yrs, wife of Roman Remillard.<sup>b</sup></p>                                |
| <p><b>Feb 24, 1879</b><br/>Abraham McDuffin [Dauphin], 30 yrs.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                        | <p><b>May 27, 1881</b><br/>John M. Talie [Tellier], 88 yrs, born in Canada son of John Taylie.<sup>c</sup></p>                                          | <p><b>Jun 4, 1886</b><br/>Marc Vial, 28 yrs, born in France.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                |
|                                                                                                                                       |                                                                                                                                                         | <p><b>Dec 12, 1886</b><br/>F.G. Pharon, born in Canada.<sup>b</sup></p>                                                     |



# Unrecorded Burials

If a priest was not available, the burial was not always recorded in the church register. Civil records are sparse before 1891, when Washington State passed a law requiring counties to record deaths. Long periods in the church record with no recorded events, such as in March of 1878, hint at missing names. For twenty-eight people, the only record of their burial is a list made in 1942 by Frenchtown descendants Mr. and Mrs. Marcel Gagnon and Lucien Gagnon, Mr. and Mrs. George Perrier, and Mr. and Mrs. Philip Remillard. The list was saved by Nydia Bergevin and published in the Walla Walla *Union Bulletin* on

May 4, 1947. Drawn from memory, it provides no dates and few first names. Below, a superscript letter “d” indicates names where this is the only known source. If a name from this group also appeared in the church register, we have recorded it in the main list.

From 1911-2005, the cemetery was located on private land, with no covenants, and limited access. A note found in the papers of Damase Bergevin in the Whitman College and Northwest Archives describes the site :

“A fire burned all the markers when I was a boy, but Clem Bergevin has relocated all the graves. They are

mostly returned Hudson Bay people. The wooden cross was saved from the fire and preserved in Clem’s barn for many years before replacing in the graveyard [it is now on display at Tamastlikt Cultural Institute in Pendleton]. In the cemetery, there are thirty children who died in a diphtheria epidemic, including two Pambrun children, two Allard children (grandchildren of Joe Forest), and one McBean child.”

Diphtheria raged through the Walla Walla valley multiple times in the 1880s and 1890s. It is most visible here in the recorded burials for January and February of 1878.

## Oct 28, 1887

Bernard Renfort [Renford], 17 yrs, son of Bernard.<sup>c</sup>

## Oct 28, 1887

Julia Faron, 24 yrs, wife of Martin.<sup>c</sup>

## Sept 9, 1888

Adolphe Martin, 1 yr, son of Francis Martin and Juliana Farron.<sup>b</sup>

## Oct 21, 1888

John Groves, 27 yrs, died in the hospital in Walla Walla.<sup>b</sup>

## June 1, 1889

Peter Raymond, 15 yrs.

## April 21, 1891

Lelanie [Selina] Gagnon, 19 yrs.<sup>e</sup>

## Dec 3, 1893

——-Gagnon, 65 yrs.<sup>e</sup>

# Unrecorded Burials

Mr. Ferrians<sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Ferrians<sup>d</sup>

Benjamin Raymond<sup>d</sup>

Eleanor Findlay Raymond<sup>d</sup>

Julia Raymond Gagnon<sup>d</sup>

Edouard Beauchemin<sup>d</sup>

Desire St. Denis<sup>d</sup>

Rosalie Raymond St. Denis<sup>d</sup>

Romaine Remillard<sup>d</sup>

Baptiste Perrier<sup>d</sup>

John Findlay<sup>d</sup>

Mrs. John Findlay<sup>d</sup>

Nicholas Findlay<sup>d</sup>

William Dobson<sup>d</sup>

Pierre Lacourse<sup>d</sup>

Louise Hops Lacourse<sup>d</sup>

Isadore Beauchamp<sup>d</sup>

Pecore<sup>d</sup>

Baptiste Dorian<sup>d</sup>

Isabelle Dobson Rainville<sup>d</sup>

Mr. Paino<sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Paino<sup>d</sup>

Mr. Tellier<sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Tellier<sup>d</sup>

Terry St. Denis<sup>d</sup>

Mrs. Terry St. Denis<sup>d</sup>

James Dobson<sup>d</sup>

Baltzor<sup>d</sup>



# Map and key of signage locations at the Frenchtown Historic Site

8364 Old Highway 12, Walla Walla, WA

September 2025





## F. The Prince's Cabin

- Welcome to the Prince's Cabin
- The Hudson Bay Company
- The Prince
- French Canadian Cabin Design
- Moving and Restoring the Cabin
- Thanks to All Who Helped



F.



# WELCOME TO THE PRINCE'S CABIN

Based on architectural design and textual evidence, the cabin standing before you is believed to have been built in 1837 by Hudson Bay traders for a Cayuse leader called “the Prince.”

The Prince’s cabin is thought to be the oldest standing cabin in the state of Washington. It originally stood at a Cayuse wintering place just upstream of the Whitman Presbyterian mission, two miles east of the Frenchtown Historic Site. In a January 1844 letter, Narcissa Whitman refers to the recent move by an immigrant family from the crowded mission building to “the Prince’s house up the river.”

The land and cabin were acquired by the Smith family around 1888. Oral history indicates the cabin was moved from its original location “across water”. This move may have taken place when Marcus Whitman rerouted a portion of the river for his mill race. By 1860, the first Government Land Office survey of the area notes a dwelling on the precise spot where the cabin was located when Kriss and Robin Peterson purchased the property in 1990. It was Robin Peterson who recognized the cabin as a fur trade relic and began research into its origins and construction. In 2013, his widow Kriss Peterson donated the cabin to the Frenchtown Historical Foundation, to be moved, restored and interpreted at the nearby historic site.



The Cabin on the Peterson farm in 2005.

The 1855 Treaty was ratified by Congress in 1859. The last Cayuse were forced off the land in this area in early 1861, when white settlers demanded their removal, threatening to hang hostages if they stayed. In the same year, Albert and Elizabeth Blanchard laid claim to the property where the cabin still stood. The Homestead Act of 1862 officially opened the land up for settlement the following year.



Above : The site of the Páxapa village as seen looking south and east from the Whitman monument. The cabin stood in the center, to the right of the red barn. The city of Walla Walla is visible in the distance.

Right: circa 1940 aerial of the Smith Farm looking west towards the Whitman monument, showing the shed covering the Peterson cabin (A), the pasture believed by Robin Peterson to be its original location (B), the Smith family farmhouse, now demolished (C), and the red barn.





# HUDSON'S BAY COMPANY

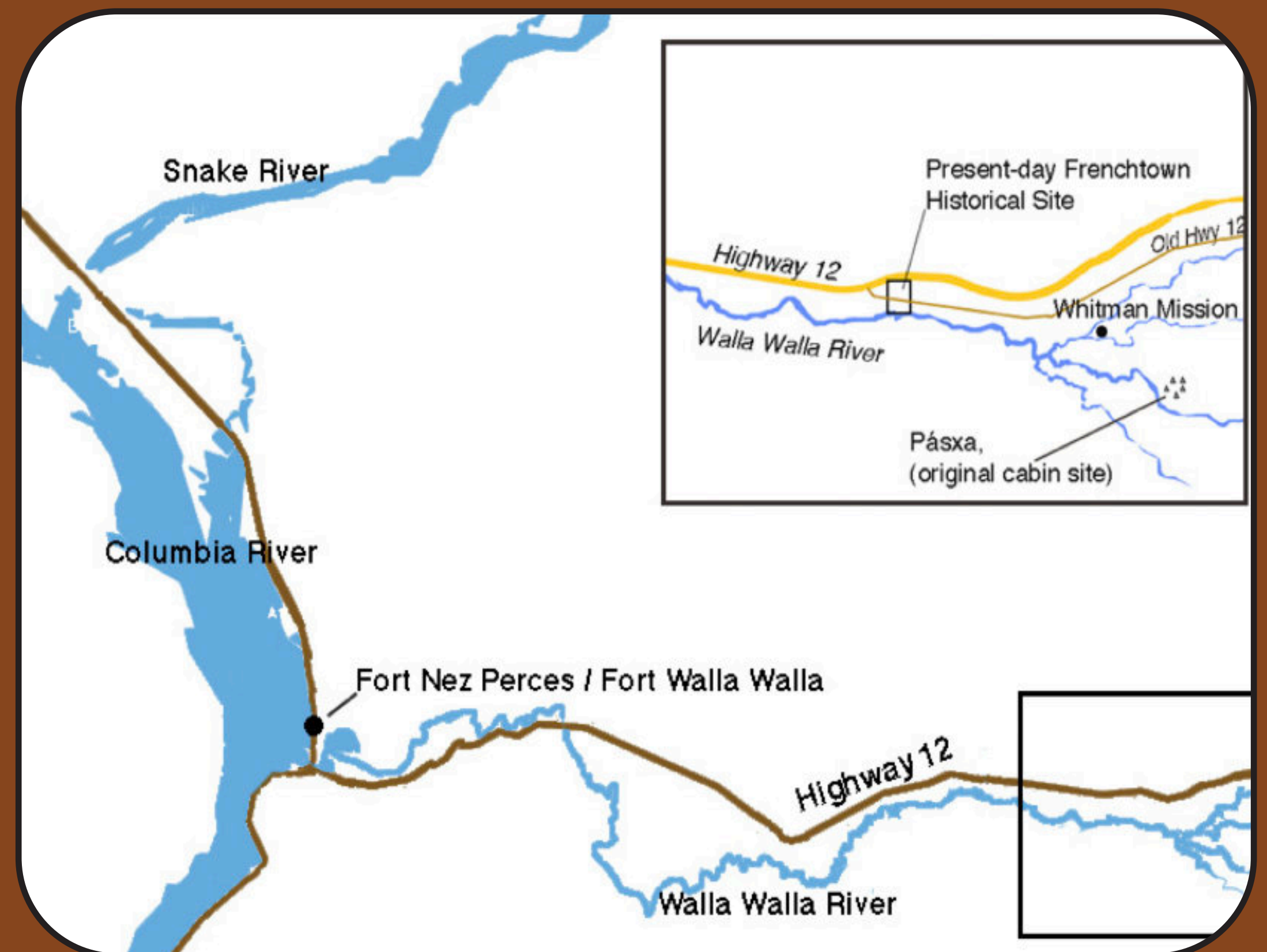
Unlike the industrial Frenchtowns of New England, western Frenchtowns were a by-product of the fur trade, established by French-Canadian voyageurs and their Indigenous or Métis (mixed French Canadian and Native American) wives. Upon retirement or termination from the companies, ~25% of these former employees chose to settle near fur trade posts, usually close to the wife's family. The first Frenchtown cabin here was likely built in 1823 by Joseph LaRocque and his first wife. He later married Marianne Walla Walla, daughter of PeoPeoMoxMox.

Fort Nez Perces (from the French, meaning “pierced noses”) was established by the Montreal-based North West Company in 1816 at Wallula Gap (from the native Walúula, meaning “little river”). It was an ideal location, the site of a large, traditional village of the Walúulapam, or Walla Walla people, and the second largest trading point for the tribes of the Columbia River Plateau after Celilo. In 1821, the London-based Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) took possession and renamed it Fort Walla Walla.

The principal charge of Fort Walla Walla was to ensure safe passage for company goods and mail through the region. The Fort also traded with the Cayuse and Nez Perce to supply horses for the



Fort Nez Perces / Fort Walla Walla, at the confluence of the Walla Walla and Columbia Rivers (John Mix Stanley, 1853).



Map showing the relative locations of Fort Nez Perces / Fort Walla Walla and Frenchtown. The Fort at Wallula was approximately twenty miles west of Frenchtown.

Okanagan-Fraser Brigade, the Snake Brigade and the farm at Fort Vancouver.

According to HBC regional administrator John McLoughlin, Fort Walla Walla was “one of the most troublesome posts...in the Country” because of the “numerous daring and warlike tribes.” Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun (1792-1841) was put in charge of it in 1832. He was named Chief Trader in 1839, the only French-Canadian to achieve that rank in the HBC. His descendants live in nearby Athena, Oregon to this day.

The fur trade system of gift diplomacy connected with pre-existing diplomatic customs between tribes for acknowledging relationships and agreements. Gifting cabins would have been a fairly extreme example, but Pambrun believed “the main object must be to keep the Natives qui[e]t. Keep all matters smooth....” After Pambrun's death in 1841, his successor Archibald McKinlay discontinued the practice.



# THE PRINCE

The Cayuse name of the Prince was not recorded. “Prince” was often used in fur trade culture to refer to a headman’s younger brother or son. The Prince was a younger brother of Hiyumtipin, headman at Pášxapa, the Cayuse village just east of the Whitman Mission. It was Hiyumtipin who discovered the drowned body of young Alice Clarissa Whitman in the Walla Walla River in 1839. Hiyumtipin and the Prince were from the same extended family as Wilewmutkin (Old Joseph) and Wilewmutnin (Twisted Hair, who was Lewis and Clark’s Nez Perces Guide), as well as Young Chief (Tautau), Looking Glass, Homlie, and others, all leaders in a regional indigenous political alliance.

Around 1834, Looking Glass of the Nez Perces, Young Chief of the Cayuse, and the Prince became involved in a dispute with Pierre Chrysologue Pambrun of the Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) over prices for furs and horses. They allegedly seized Pambrun and interpreter Jean Toupin, threw blankets over them and beat them severely. In response to this incident, the HBC cut off trade with those involved, blacklisting all three leaders and their families.

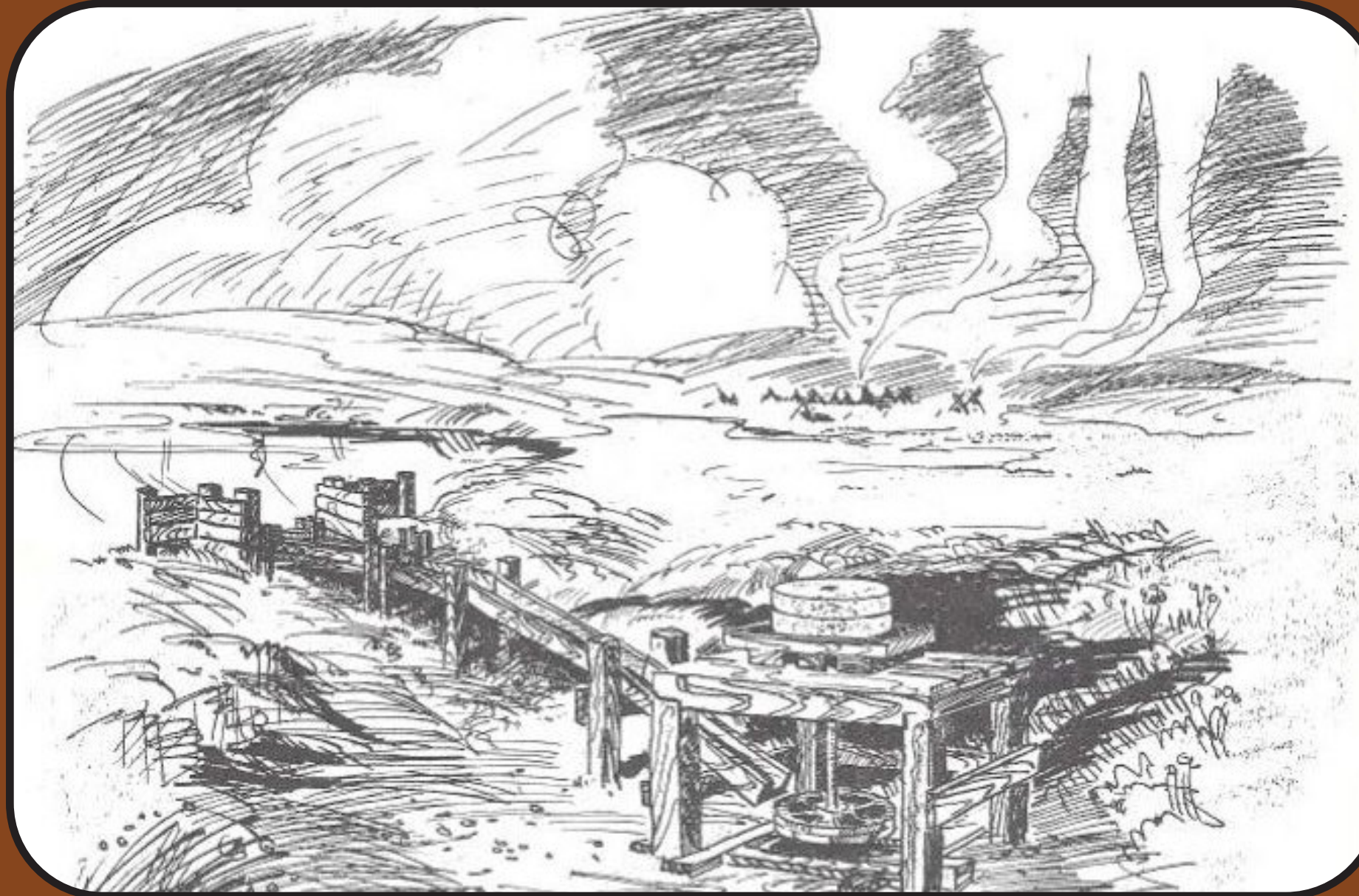
When the three leaders returned to the HBC to seek reconciliation, Pambrun resorted to “gift diplomacy” to resolve the conflict. Gift diplomacy was the common practice of offering gifts in exchange

for goods or promises of peaceful collaboration. It is documented that Pambrun built a cabin for Young Chief ~1840. In part because of the Prince’s involvement in this conflict, we believe Pambrun built at least two cabins : one for Young Chief on the Umatilla River, and one for the Prince at Pášxapa. It is not known if Looking Glass received a cabin.

Although there is no official record linking the Prince’s cabin to Pambrun, several pieces of evidence point to a connection. An 1844 letter by Narcissa Whitman referencing “the Prince’s house up the river,” attests to its location and ownership. Additionally, the cabin itself exhibits structural characteristics typical of the 1830s, and a level of construction skill specific to French-Canadian artisans of the time.

In an 1843 council with Indian Agent Elijah White, the Prince is reported to have said, “Perhaps you will say it is out of place for me to speak, because I am not a great chief. Once I had influence, but now I have but

little...yet, I am from honorable stock. Promises which have been made to me and my fathers have not been fulfilled...But it will not answer for me to speak, for my people do not consider me their chief.” Unfortunately, the Prince did not long enjoy the shelter of his cabin—he was slain by members of another tribe in about 1845, en route to the buffalo country.



*Pášxapa*, the Cayuse winter village, seen in the distance from the grist mill at the Whitman Mission (Photo Courtesy of National Park Service).

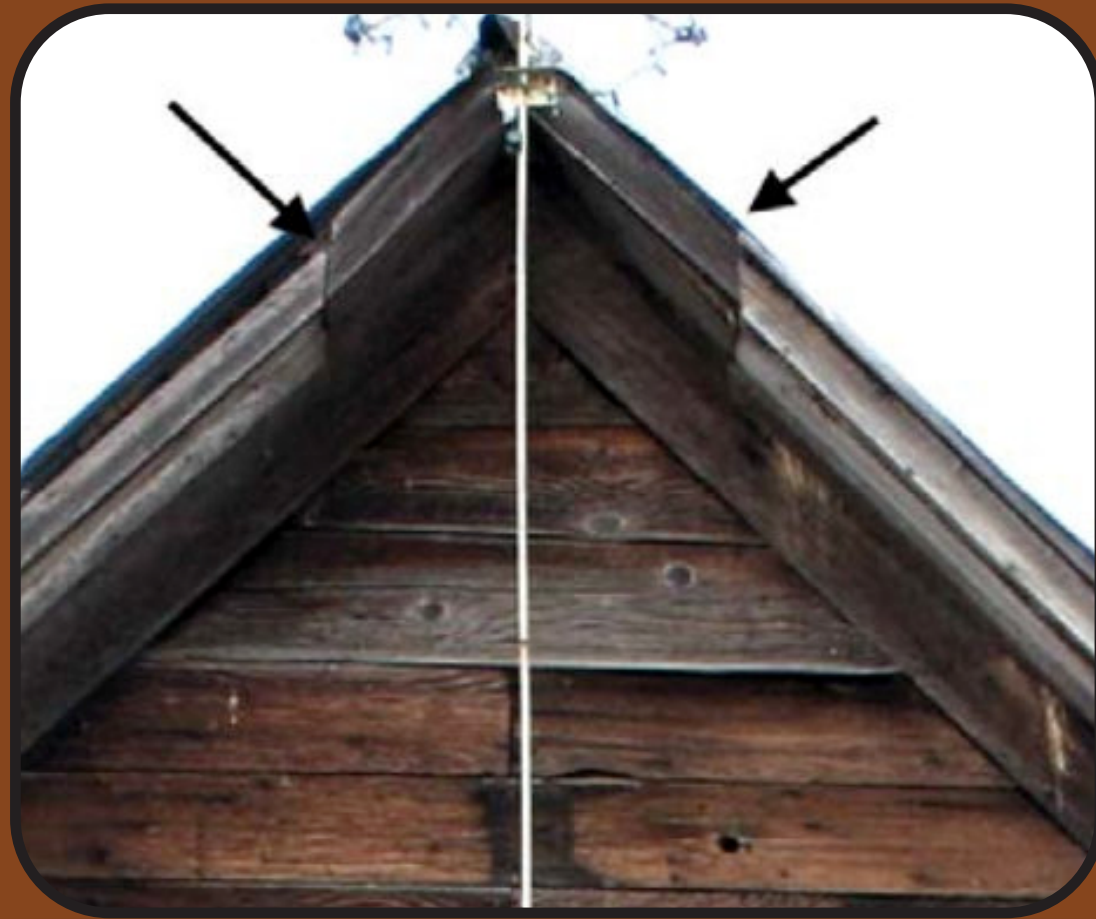


Hudson’s Bay Company, Fort Walla Walla at Wallula (Joseph Drayton, 1841).

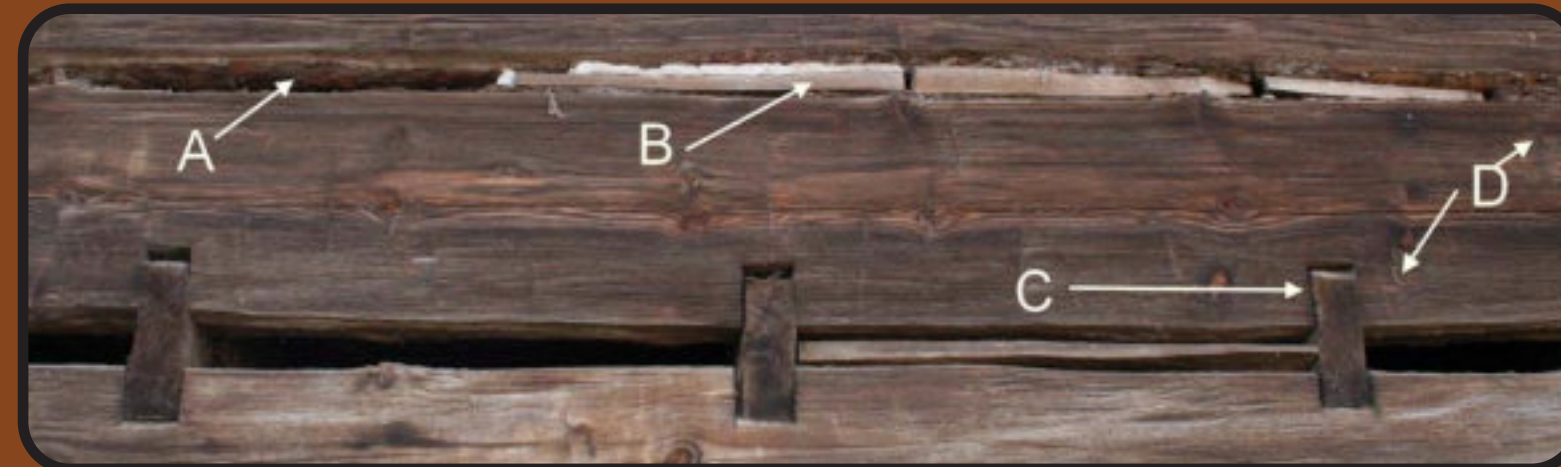


# FRENCH-CANADIAN CABIN DESIGN

The Prince's cabin displays prominent characteristics of homes of French-Canadian/Métis design of the 1830s.



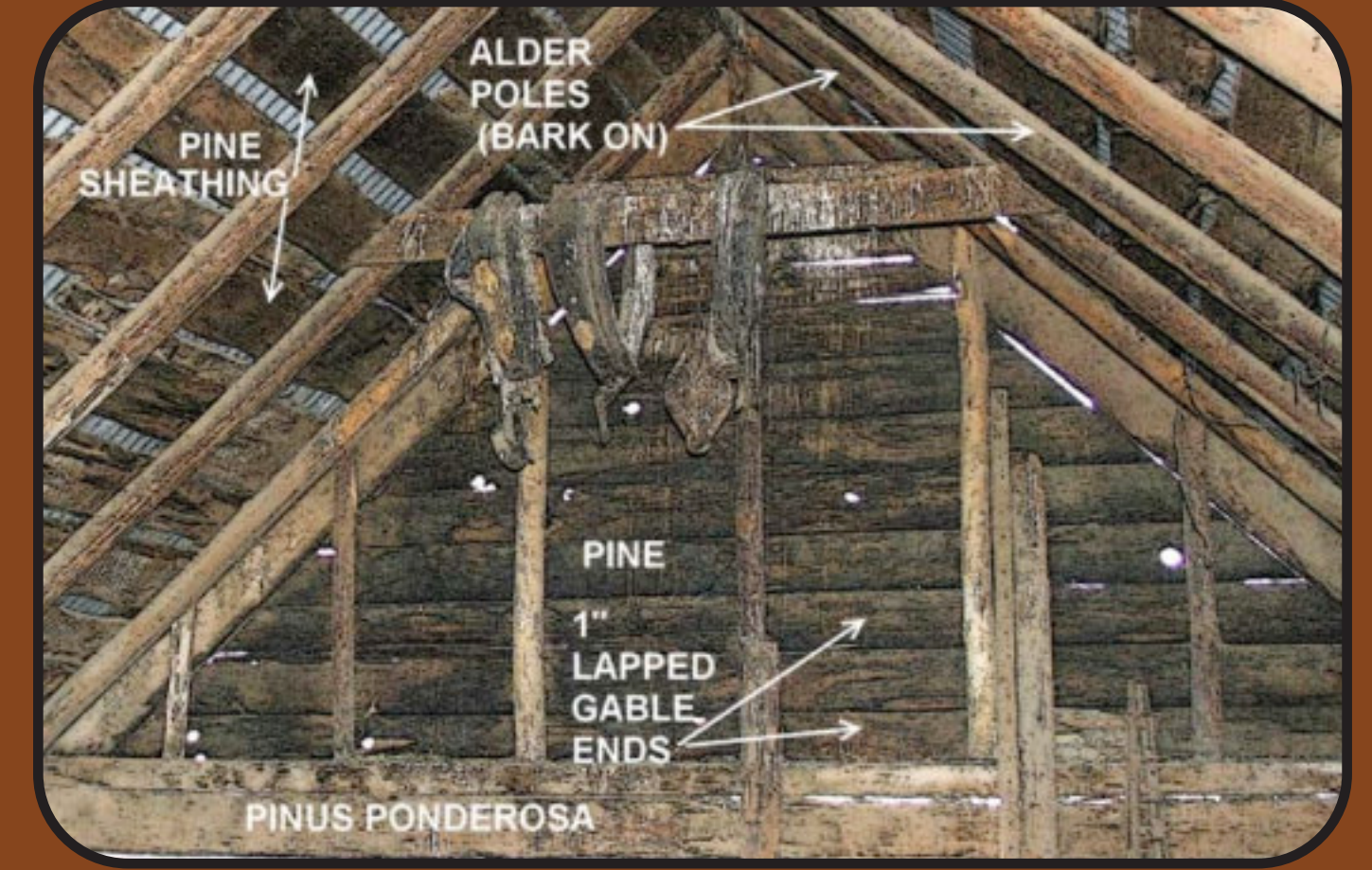
The replacement of trim lumber at the gable suggests the original location of an exterior chimney extending above the roof line.



This detail from the northeast wall shows the bark of *Pinus ponderosa* (A); wood slivers held in place by mortar chinking (B); loft joist (C); and broad axe nicks in wood (D).



Cut nail from Peterson cabin. Arrows point to beveled upper edges. Such signatures are left when the nail is heated in a dye and hammered for heading. Cut nails of the period ~1815-1830s have a distinct rounded shank under the head caused by the wide heading clamp.



Rough pine sheathing was cut with a circular saw. The alder poles were flattened to receive sheathing, likely with a draw knife. The use of Ponderosa pine from the Blue Mountains partly explains the cabin's preservation.

These features include the cabin's size (16' x 24'), original hinges and door, and interior paint color, as well as the design of the interior wall. The cabin also uses an angled dovetail joint typical of French Canadian construction and characterized by the 45° downward slant of the topmost cut surface. This technique preserved the wood by shedding water away from the heart of the joint, unlike the flat saddle joint typical of American cabins.

The finely tuned joinery and finish of the cabin suggests the work of a skilled artisan, able to use the offset broad axe, whip and bow saws, mallets and chisels, froe, drawknife, and adze—skills that were all present in the Frenchtown community.



Left : Note the *cheville* or dowel pin holding the first log to the sill.



Above : 45° angled dovetail corners, typical of French-Canadian design.

Left: Here you can see the *solage*, or granite foundation boulder.

French-Canadian design also typically secured the first pièce (log) to the sole (sill) with a cheville (dowel pin). While the Prince's cabin lacks forged nails, the features of cut nails found in the cabin are also consistent with nail technology and signatures from the period 1815 to 1830.

Finally, French-Canadian style cabins were normally one and a half stories, with a grenier (attic area) accessed by straight stairs coming from the main floor. The grenier was an important aspect of the cabin's functional design, used for storage and additional sleeping space.

These details set the Prince's cabin apart from a simple trapper's dwelling and are consistent with the proposed construction date of 1837.



# MOVING & RESTORING THE CABIN

At the time of donation in 2012, the upper floor of the cabin was intact and in relatively good condition while the lower walls were partially dismantled and actively deteriorating.



The Frenchtown Historical Foundation consulted with archaeologists, contractors, craftsmen, historians, tribal representatives, and professional movers to plan the relocation and restoration of the cabin. Rather than fully disassemble the cabin, it was decided to detach and move the entire upper story in one piece. The attached shed on the south side of the cabin was a later addition and was removed.



At the Frenchtown site, the upper story was placed on steel posts set in concrete footings. These posts serve to both strengthen the walls and support the upper story. The lower walls were stabilized in place and moved to the site in six intact segments. Each wall segment was placed on new foundation stones and attached to the posts.



The ponderosa logs used to build the cabin were much more durable than the more easily available but much softer cottonwood logs. However, while the side walls were protected by attached sheds, an opening for farm equipment had been cut into the east wall and the west end wall was severely weathered.



Replacement pine logs were hand-hewn and the ends were cut into traditional French Canadian-style dovetail corners. Mortar chinking, restored windows and doors, and a floor of repurposed barn wood completed the initial phase in 2015. Restoration of the cabin's inner wall and stairway, exterior soffits and fascia, plus the replacement of tin roofing with cedar shakes and installation of signage took place in 2016.





# THANKS TO ALL WHO HELPED

Between the physical restoration of the cabin, grant-writing, planning, and presentation, over 4,000 volunteer hours went into the relocation and restoration of this significant artifact of regional history.

Many hands came together to make this possible. The team included volunteer archaeologists Darby Stapp, Steve Roberts, and Greg Cleveland, general contractor Doug Majerus, moving contractor Don Shaw of Advanced Moving & Rigging, steel fabricators David Larson of David's Aquacut and Dwight Steffanson of Accufab, Allan Gillespie of Gillespie Roofing, Ron Milks of Modern Masonry & Repairs, the Washington State Department of Corrections Sign and Metal Shops, and project coordinators and researchers Daniel Clark, Sam Pambrun, Rich Monacelli, and Sarah Hurlburt, as well as Whitman student interns Jessie and Nicki Day-Lucore.

Special thanks go to the extraordinary efforts of mason and general construction volunteer Ross Osborn (1943-2023); to volunteer carpenter Steve Smart, also to log supplier and volunteer craftsman Eric Sederburg together with restoration contractor and craftsman Jehannot Poirot for hewing the logs and cutting the dovetail corners.



The restoration of the Prince's Cabin would not have been possible without the dedication to historical preservation of Robin and Kriss Peterson. Robin was the first person to document the history of the cabin and research its relationship to the Prince. He measured, photographed, and catalogued the cabin and its contents, as well as obtained a grant from the Bonneville Power Administration for a professional archaeological study.

Robin's goal for the cabin was to move it to a more prominent location on their farm, where he hoped to restore it for use as a center of reconciliation. Following Robin's death in 2011, Kriss Peterson donated the cabin to the Frenchtown Historical Foundation on the condition that it be moved to the Frenchtown site, preserved, and restored for public viewing. The Frenchtown Historical Foundation is proud to continue this work.



Left to right: Ross Osborn, Eric Sederburg, Steve Smart & Jehannot Poirot.

Our thanks to the many supporters, large and small, who made this work possible.

Major donors include:

|                          |                                                        |
|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Kriss Peterson           | Wildhorse Foundation                                   |
| Paul A. Campbell         | Clara & Art Bald Trust                                 |
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# Frenchtown Historical Foundation

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## **The Voices of Frenchtown**

Listen to the many voices of Frenchtown. Scroll down in your browser to listen to audio for each sign, or install the Podbean app.

The order of the audio signs begins under the shelter, and then proceeds down the walking trail, up to the overlook, then the cemetery, and finally to the Prince's Cabin.