

MULLAN CHRONICLES

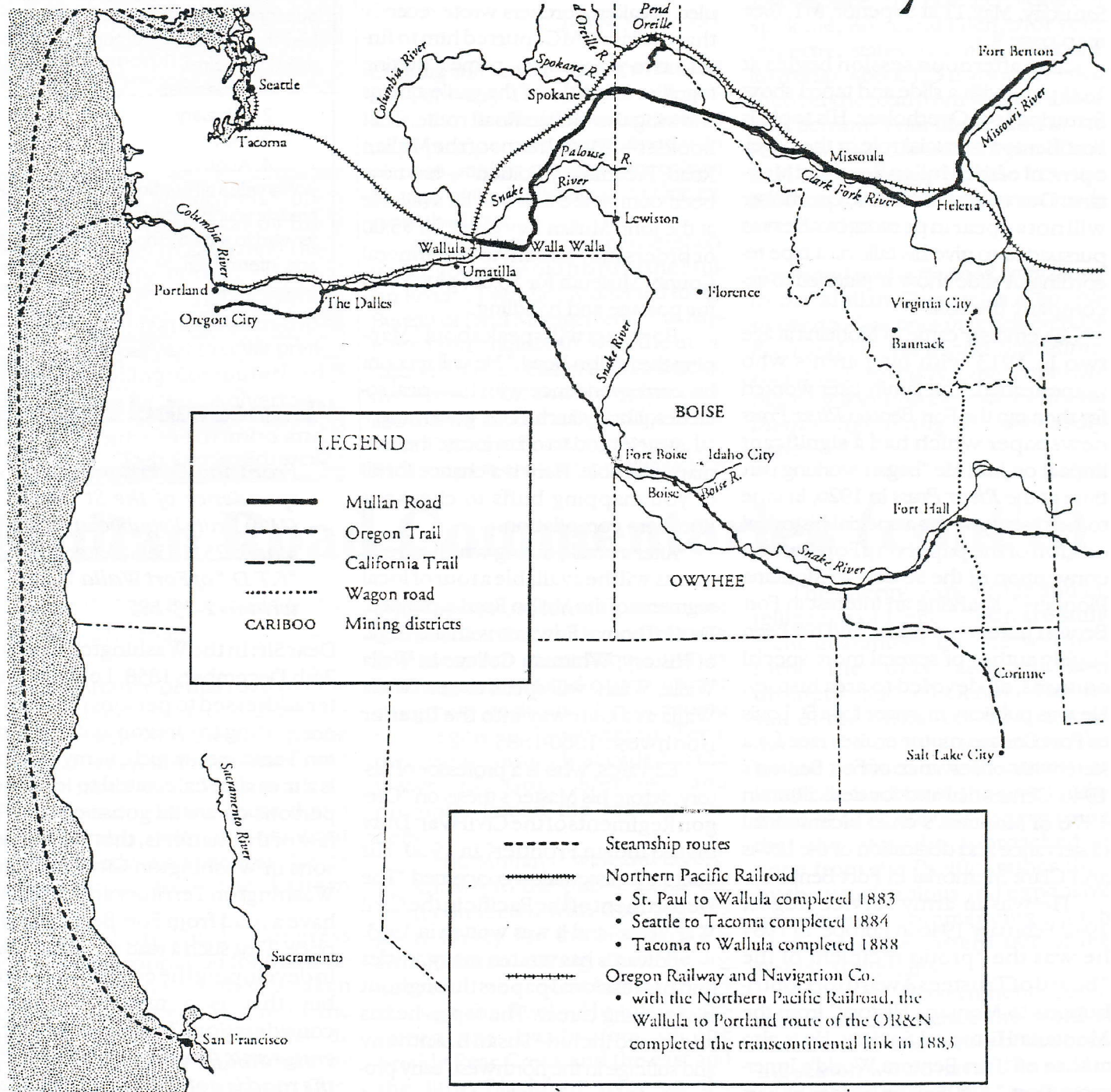
Volume Two

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Number Three



Second Mullan Day Set



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This map accompanied "Walla Walla, Gateway to the Pacific Northwest," an article written by G. Thomas Edwards that appeared in Montana The Magazine of Western History, Summer 1990. Edwards is a speaker at the Second Mullan Day in Superior, MT on May 11..

Mullan Day Sessions Will Cover The Road From End to End

Three speakers are appearing at the second annual John Mullan Day on Saturday, May 11 at Superior, MT. (See map page 4.)

The afternoon session begins at 1:00 p.m. with a slide and taped show featuring Joel Overholser. His topic is Fort Benton's crucial role in the development of the Mullan Road and Montana. Due to health reasons, Overholser will not appear in person, but he was persuaded to give his talk via a tape recording. A slide show is planned to accompany the talk.

Overholser came to Montana at age two in 1913 with his parents who homesteaded. The family later worked for then ran the Fort Benton *River Press* newspaper which had a significant impact on Joel. He "began working part time at the *River Press* in 1926, in time to help set type for a special historical edition of the paper on a Fort Benton convention of the Society of Montana Pioneers", sparking an interest in Fort Benton history never lost, and has been largely author of several more special editions, all devoted to area history. He was publicity manager for a St. Louis to Fort Benton motor cruiser race for a state-wide observance of Fort Benton's 1946 Centennial and for dedication in 1976 of Montana's chief bicentennial observance and dedication of the Lewis and Clark Memorial in Fort Benton.

He was in army service August 1942-February 1946 in Europe. In 1984 he was the "proud recipient of the "Board of Trustees Award for Contributions to Montana History" from the Montana Historical Society. He is also author of "Fort Benton: World's Innermost Port," a 405-page history of Fort Benton, and a number of historical booklets. Overholser retired in 1980 to complete his history and to continue building historical files.

Raymond Borchers, a retired pro-

fessor of biochemistry from the University of Nebraska, is the second scheduled speaker. Borchers wrote recently that the latest MC spurred him to finish a two-year project, namely putting together a booklet of the earliest maps showing the Mullan Road route. That booklet—"Detail Maps of the Mullan Road, Preliminary Edition"—has now been completed and will be available at the John Mullan Day event for \$5.00 or orders may be sent to the Mineral County Museum for \$5.00, plus \$2.00 for postage and handling.

Borchers will speak about "Mapping the Mullan Road." He will recount his correspondence with historical societies, library archivists, governmental agencies and so on to locate the best maps available. Here is a chance for all of you mapping buffs to checkout Borchers compilation.

After a break, during which refreshments will be available a tour of local segments of the Mullan Road is planned, Dr. G. Thomas Edwards with the Dept. of History, Whitman College in Walla Walla, Wash. will speak about "Walla Walla as a Gateway into the Interior Northwest, 1860-1885."

Edwards, who is a professor of history, wrote his Master's thesis on "Oregon Regiments of the Civil War: Duty on the Indian Frontier" in 1960. His doctorate dissertation concerned "The Department of the Pacific in the Civil War Years" and it was written in 1963.

Edwards has written many articles and professional papers throughout his teaching career. The topics he has addressed include Susan B. Anthony and suffrage in the northwest, early promotion of the northwest region and Whitman College history. Edwards' presentation will conclude the John Mullan Day activities.

Time to Renew

It's time for May renewals to be sent. Because all work is done by volunteers, the money is used only to publish and mail the Mullan Chronicles.

As a reminder, a friendly smile will be next to your name if your subscription is due for renewal plus one of these numbers that identifies the month your subscription expires.

1: November

2: February

3: May

4: August

We value all our fine friends. We appreciate your support in the past, and look forward to a continuing exchange of ideas and information.

"Buncombe! He Says"

From the Overland Correspondence of the St. Louis (MO) Daily Republican dated March 25, 1859, a letter from "F.T.D." of Fort Walla Walla written 2-13-1859

Dear Sir; In the Washington Union of 24th December, 1858, I observe a letter addressed to persons desirous of emigrating to Oregon and Washington Territories, which, in my opinion, is a measure calculated to lead such persons on a wild goose chase. The fact of the matter is, that certain persons in Washington City (D.C.) and Washington Territory are anxious to have a road from Fort Benton to this place. That such a road should be made in developing the country is certain, but that is a matter for future consideration. *Truth and justice to emigrants forces me to tell you that the road is not there now, and judging from some portion of the country I saw last summer, is not likely to be for several years to come.* I don't like to see my fellow Pike's led astray by buncombe ...

Coming in August

Due to so much info about the second John Mullan Day event, the article about the doctors will be held over until August.

Report of 2nd John Mullan Day activities and photos.

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Cathryn Strombo and
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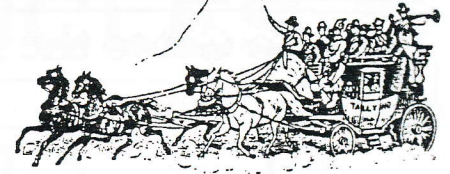
from the mail pouch

Borchers Enthusiastic

January 30, 1991

Exciting and timely — that's what I call the February 1991 *Mullan Chronicles*... the *Chronicles'* comments about maps prompts me to move ahead with plans to publish a preliminary edition of maps of the Mullan Road. Let me expand the latter.

After nearly two years of correspondence about the old maps of the Mullan Road ... I was finally directed to the Bureau of Land Management. This happened simultaneously with the information (by) Carl Cliff in the *Chronicles*, my letter to Carl and his reply which also told me about the BLM maps. These were Carl's chief location resource. The BLM maps were then purchased on



my trip last fall which included a stop at your place. The BLM archives are in Spokane, Boise and Billings for your respective states. Each map is just one township. About 125 maps are needed to cover the road from Walla Walla to Fort Benton. Your illustration in the February 1991 *Chronicles* is part of one BLM township map of these 125—the BLM maps do not show present roads or even towns.

Raymond sent a finished copy along to the Mullan Chronicles a couple weeks ago (see price in article on page two) and I found it quite interesting. Kay and I carefully looked over the maps for the Superior area and found them enlightening. We can hardly wait.

—Deb

Mullan Road Commentaries (cont'd)

From the *Olympia Pioneer and Democrat*, May 21, 1858:

The importance of this road to emigrants cannot be too highly estimated. It will form the connecting link that will join the military road already made from Walla-Walla to Puget Sound, and the route down the Columbia, with the emigrant roads already extended as far as Fort Benton, from the Eastern States.

The Thirty-Third Congress made an appropriation for this military road, but no action was taken upon it, until the attention of the present Secretary of War was directed to its great importance by Gov. Stevens, the delegate in Congress from Washington Territory. Secretary (John B.) Floyd at once saw the advantage which this road would afford to the Government and country, not only in a military

point of view, as forming a means of communication with our remote northwestern possessions, but as opening a direct and easy route for emigrants desirous of proceeding to Oregon or Washington Territory. He accordingly acceded to the views of Gov. Stevens, and promptly issued the requisite orders.

Lieut. Mullan is well and favorably known to the public as having been connected with Gov. Stevens great survey for the Northern Pacific Railroad, during which he discovered the celebrated pass through the Rocky Mountains, between the headwaters of the Prickly Pear Creek and the east and the little Blackfoot river on the west, known as Mullan's Pass, and through which the road is so easy that Lieut. Mullan in his report says he passed over it "in a wagon with his horses on a trot."

The energy, experience and intelligence of Lieut. Mullan are sufficient guarantees that he will perform the duty assigned him promptly and efficiently. The result of the operations on this road during the coming season may be looked forward to with interest, as it will demonstrate the good judgment of Gov. Stevens in proposing that the work be approached at once from the Pacific, rather than by the usual tedious and expensive operations commencing such roads from the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains.

Had the Government determined to commence the work at Fort Benton, the whole of the coming season would have to be used in getting forward the necessary equipment and subsistence. By adopting the present plan, a saving of at least one year's time will be effected.

How To Get to the Mullan Day Events

