

In early 1883 the transcontinental rail connection between St. Paul and Tacoma was nearly complete. Hereafter, the Northern Pacific announced, it would use "the Indian name Tacoma" in all its publications instead of "Mount Rainier." The railroad, by nationally advertising the beauties of Pacific Northwest scenery, hoped to boost the fortunes of its terminal city, Tacoma. Nearly a century earlier, Captain George Vancouver had sailed into Commencement Bay during the course of his explorations of Puget Sound. Sighting the majestic mountain rising directly from the sea-level plains, he decided to name it after his friend Admiral Peter Rainier of the Royal Navy.¹

Forty years after Vancouver's voyage, still only a handful of white men lived within viewing range of the mountain. One of these, Dr. William Tolmie, had been sent by the Hudson's Bay Company to locate a post at Nisqually. Adjusting to the physical isolation of the wilderness, the well-schooled Scotsman spent many hours studying whatever scholarly literature the mails belatedly brought and learning native dialects firsthand. After one of his long reflective strolls across the prairie, Tolmie wrote in his diary for October 15, 1833, that he had enjoyed "a fine view of Tuchoma or Mt Rainier, appearing in relief against the cloudless firmament."²

On a hot and hazy summer day in 1853, Theodore Winthrop of the New England dynasty arrived by Indian canoe in Commencement Bay. He was on a grand tour of the far western frontier, seeking Emersonian self-culture and artistic inspiration. Awakening from a doze, the would-be transcendentalist looked up and at first mistook the mountain for a cloud, only to discover it was, rather, a massive "cloud compeller." In *The Canoe and the Saddle*, a romantically embellished account of his travels on Puget Sound and across the Cascades, Winthrop laments the name Vancouver bestowed on the mountain: "Mount Regnier Christians have dubbed it, in stupid nomenclature perpetuating the name of somebody or nobody. More melodiously the siwashes call it Tacoma,—a generic term also applied to all snow peaks."³

Unpublished until after Winthrop sprang

into prominence as the first officer killed in the first battle of the Civil War, *The Canoe and the Saddle* quickly went through several printings and soon appeared in the Puget Sound region. The book probably was the source of inspiration for the developers renaming the settlement on Commencement Bay. "Commencement City," the *Seattle Weekly Intelligencer* briefly noted in late 1868, "has been changed to 'Tacoma,' after the Indian name for Mt. Ranier."⁴

Outside its boundaries, little interest could be aroused in Tacoma's future until five years later when the embryo town, to everyone's surprise, was selected the Puget Sound terminus for the transcontinental railroad. Then it drew the barbs of disappointed rivals, foremost among them, Seattle. In the sparring presses, name calling alternated with charges of name stealing. Seattle boomers, Tacomans protested, wanted to deprive Tacoma of her rightful namesake. Tacomans, Seattleites retaliated, had illicitly removed Vancouver's label, one much used by Seattle businesses. By the 1880s, the mountain had become part of fiercely pursued economic stakes. Its name, "Rainier" or "Tacoma," would make clear which of the Puget Sound rivals

"Mount Tacoma" vs. "Mount Rainier"

The Fight to Rename the Mountain

Genevieve McCoy

1. *Northwest Magazine*, Vol. 1 (March 1883), 9; George Vancouver, *A Voyage of Discovery to the North Pacific Ocean and Round the World*, 3 vols. (London, 1798), I, 235. Because Rainier did not become an admiral until 1795, some Mt. Tacoma proponents believed this 1792 reference was additional evidence that the journal had been altered after Vancouver's death. The discrediting of the journal helped support arguments that Vancouver was not the first to discover the mountain and that he had not actually named it.

2. *The Journals of William Fraser Tolmie, Physician and Fur Trader*, [ed. R. G. Large] (Vancouver, B.C., 1963), 242.

3. Theodore Winthrop, *The Canoe and the Saddle*, ed. John H. Williams (Tacoma, 1913), 36, 16.

4. Van Wyck Brooks, *The Times of Melville and Whitman* (New York, 1947), 221; Thomas W. Prosch, *McCarver and Tacoma* (Seattle, 1906), 163-64; *Seattle Weekly Intelligencer*, Nov. 23, 1868. For a detailed account of the Rainier-Tacoma issue, see Genevieve E. McCoy, "'Call It Mount Tacoma': A History of the Controversy over the Name of Mount Rainier," M.A. thesis (University of Washington, 1984).



This Asahel Curtis view of "The Mountain" appeared in a 1924 national magazine account of the name controversy. (Washington State Historical Society, Tacoma)

had won economic dominance in the region.

Soon after President Benjamin Harrison signed the proclamation establishing the Pacific Forest Reserve in early 1893, groups in Seattle and Tacoma independently formed to discuss tactics for memorializing Congress about the creation of a national park. For some Tacomans the question of the mountain's name was as compelling as the concern for preservation of the mountain environment. At a meeting of the Tacoma Academy of Science, Judge James Wickersham urged citizens to see "that everything concerning this proposed park be well done," including giving it "a proper and fitting name." To determine that name, Wickersham, a mountaineering enthusiast, self-educated ethnologist, and future Alaska pioneer judge and territorial delegate, had reviewed "the facts" and heard

"the evidence." He had relied heavily on the testimony of old Indians, "who, of course, know the truth," and on those pioneers who understood their languages. Strengthening his carefully researched paper were letters and comments from Indian scholars and several first settlers and climbers, such as James Swan and General A. V. Kautz, who in 1857 was the first white man to attempt the summit. Wickersham also presented the statements of Indians born nearby, who verified his claim that the peak had been known to a number of tribes as Tacobet and Tahoma. "Tacoma," a variation of the Indian pronunciation, he concluded, "is a fair, honest Indian name," meaning "snow-covered mountain."⁵

When the Tacoma academy published Wickersham's research and then reprinted it later in the spring with a supplement of letters responding to the first edition, the controversy began to receive national attention. Endorsements came in from individuals associated with the *Chicago Mail*, the *New York Sun*, the *Washington Post*, the *Oneida Historical Society*, and the *Smithsonian Institution*.

How many of these correspondents had ever seen the mountain is unknown, but all expressed sentiments similar to those of Colonel John Puget of Hertfordshire, grandnephew of Peter Puget, who had written Wickersham that "the name of the mountain should be what it originally bore in times past before Vancouver gave it a new name."⁶

A decade of agitation for a national park encircling the mountain was finally successful on March 2, 1899. But just hours before President William Mc-

5. James Wickersham, "Is It 'Mt. Tacoma' or 'Rainier,'" *Proceedings of the Tacoma Academy of Science* (Tacoma, 1893), 2, 3, 16. Because this was the only publication of the Tacoma Academy of Science in its four-year history, some may conclude that the sole purpose of the organization was to promote the name change. In fact, the group, which formed two years prior to Wickersham's presentation, was, like many late 19th-century "scientific associations" throughout the country, devoted to the cultivation of science, literature, and art.

6. Wickersham, 2d ed. (Tacoma, 1893), 27.

Kinley signed the bill to create Washington National Park. John Lacey of Iowa, chairman of the House Public Lands Committee, attached an amendment that changed the name to "Mount Rainier National Park." *The Tacoma Ledger* reacted immediately, calling the name an insult. Most Tacomans, however, seem to have taken it in stride; they continued to call the mountain Tacoma, while they called the park Rainier. In the first years of the new century, with the return of more prosperous times, the community showed less concern about the mountain's name than about its successful promotion and development as a recreational area. Even so, in 1909 Tacoma city boosters managed to lure a group of nearly 400 editors, in Seattle for a national convention, on a day's all-expense-paid excursion to the mountain. Before the day was over, many of the editors had promised "to spell the mountain's name 'Tacoma.'"⁷

Comprehensive in scope and handsomely illustrated, *The Mountain That Was "God,"* first published in 1910 by the Tacoma author John H. Williams, drew large sales and national reviews, which further widened interest in the mountain and the controversy over its name. In

As this photo suggests, the railroads made good use of the mountain in their promotional campaigns extolling western rail travel. (A. Curtis Coll., WSHS)

1912, the *Nation* noted that nearly all reviewers of Williams's book favored the Indian name. A reviewer of the second edition predicted in the *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society* that "the name Tacoma . . . is likely to be perpetuated in popular usage." Tacoma's mayor, A. V. Fawcett, and its city council were encouraged by these developments and invited the Seattle City Council to meet with them and "discuss a new name for the mountain." Upon receiving the communication, the December 8, 1915, meeting of the Seattle council's public safety committee "developed into a rollicking farce."⁸

The question whether "Mount Tacoma" was good for Tacoma businesses was a serious one, however, and it came to a head in the spring of 1916. The town's recently combined commercial club and chamber of commerce called a mass meeting in order to propose that they end the controversy by adopting the name "Rainier." But several strong supporters of "Mount Tacoma" had been forewarned, and they convinced the group instead to organize the Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee. The committee, which included the mayor, city librarian, and several prominent business and professional men, resolved to begin a systematic educational campaign directed particularly at the people of Seattle.⁹

Sam Wall, a journalist and chronic rover, was elected executive secretary, and he volunteered to tour the state and lobby

for a state petition addressed to the United States Board on Geographic Names. The handsome, mustachioed Wall had recently edited the short-lived, eight-page Tacoma weekly *What's Doing*, which was devoted solely to the issue of the mountain's name. Prior to that, while he was the Tacoma correspondent for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, he had achieved some notoriety when he burst into the Tacoma News office and shot the editor who had accused him of writing against that city's welfare. Happily for both men, the bullet was deflected by the editor's tie pin. On his year-long lobbying tour around the state, Wall contacted state legislators and managed to persuade a number of newspapers and civic clubs that "lifting the curse," as he termed it, from the mountain was the only moral and patriotic thing to do. Even Harry Chadwick, editor of the *Seattle Argus*, who had been featuring regular rejoinders to *What's Doing*, wrote that he would be willing to call the peak "Mt. Honerificentissimus, or any other old thing," if it would improve relations between Tacoma and Seattle.¹⁰

When the issue came before the state legislature the first week of February 1917 as a joint memorial petitioning the U.S. Board on Geographic Names to adopt a more appropriate name, it was vigorously debated. Some representatives thought they would have a little fun and introduce five additional "solemn and

7. Arthur Martinson, "Mountain in the Sky: A History of Mount Rainier National Park," Ph.D. dissertation (Washington State University, 1966), 54; *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, March 3, 1899 (hereafter cited as *Ledger* with appropriate date); *Tacoma Daily News*, July 24, 1909.

8. *Nation*, Vol. 95 (Oct. 31, 1912), 411; *Bulletin of the American Geographical Society*, Vol. 45 (1913), 140; *Seattle Post-Intelligencer*, Dec. 9, 1915 (hereafter cited as *P-I* with appropriate date).

9. F. C. Brewer to John Kaiser, April 24, 1916, and Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee, "For Justice to the Mountain: An Open Letter from the Citizens of Tacoma to the Citizens of Seattle" (n.d.), Box 1, John Kaiser Papers, Tacoma Public Library.

10. Herbert Hunt, *Tacoma, Its History and Its Builders: A Half Century of Activity*, 3 vols. (Chicago, 1916), I, 391-92; *Seattle Argus*, March 17, 1917, p. 1, Feb. 24, 1917, p. 2 (quotation); *Colfax(?) Chronicle*, Oct. 21, 1916.



sonorously-worded resolutions" to change the names of Puget Sound, Hood's Canal, Mount Baker, Mount St. Helens, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca to their "aboriginal" counterparts. They did not enjoy the last laugh, however, for the real memorial passed by more than two to one. Both the speaker of the house and the president of the senate were Tacomans.¹¹

Four days before the United States declared war on the kaiser, on April 6, 1917, Congressman Albert Johnson of Washington presented the state memorial to the Board on Geographic Names. The Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee hastily formed a subcommittee with another "kaiser," the Tacoma librarian John B. Kaiser, in charge of preparing a brief detailing the Mount Tacoma argument. From his library office, Kaiser conducted a letter-writing blitz, contacting librarians, educators, scientists, and government officials throughout the country. After 10 days he and his library staff had compiled a 77-page book that cited examples of the usage of the name "Mount Tacoma" in books, periodicals, and reports. Along with the letters of endorsement, the book provided a history of the present movement and a six-page bibliography. Kaiser wrote the geographic board that he had tried to "approach the problem in the same scientific spirit with which one would produce a doctor's thesis."¹²

The U.S. Board on Geographic Names had first come together in 1890 as an informal body of 10 men, serving voluntarily and representing several government departments and bureaus. Its objective was to resolve interdepartmental disparities by establishing a uniform nomenclature for government publications. At its first monthly meetings in the spring and summer of 1890, the board had discussed the principles that would govern its decisions; at the same time, it considered one of its first cases, the disputed name of Mount Rainier. On September 4, an executive order designated the board the "standard authority" for government departments to consult. Private parties could request a decision involving a disputed geographical name, although the unfunded board had no official jurisdiction outside its advisory ca-

capacity for federal executive departments. Soon after its formal constitution, the board determined that the official name of the Washington peak would be "Mount Rainier."¹³

The only evidence the geographic board currently possesses regarding this original decision is a letter dated June 24, 1890, from James Swan, who responded to a request for information from Lieutenant Richardson Clover, the board's first secretary. Swan, who was by then associated with the Smithsonian Institution's Department of Ethnology, claimed that the Indians called the mountain Tah-o-mah and that "Tacoma," the white pronunciation of the word, was "not Indian and had no significance other than a mispronunciation of a native name." He sneeringly charged that "the Tacoma people" wanted to change the names of Commencement Bay, Puget Sound, the state, and even the Pacific Ocean to "Tacoma."¹⁴

Since the board was required neither to retain evidence nor to issue official statements about its decisions, the compilers of the Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee brief had no ruling against which to make counterarguments. Instead, they consulted the board's "guiding principles," which by 1917 had been further refined. They argued that if the evidence they had collected had been available 27 years earlier, at the time of the original decision, the board would have been obliged to rule in favor of "Mount Tacoma." Further, the name "Tacoma" clearly adhered to the fourth principle set forth in the board's first report, published in 1892: "Where a choice is offered between two or more names for the same place or locality, all sanctioned by local usage, that which is most appropriate and euphonious should be adopted."¹⁵

The board's second report, dated 1900, emphasized that "the name which is in common local use at present should be adopted." To determine the common usage, the board customarily consulted "printed authorities" such as atlases, geographies, and maps. But it attached "great importance" to the information it obtained from county clerks and postmasters, supplemented with the "oral testimony" of knowledgeable individuals. In this report the board claimed that

its "tendency" was to discard "objectionable names" for "pleasing ones"; it also maintained that it did not attach much importance to priority, conceding that "changes are constantly occurring. The Board can not if it would, and would not if it could, oppose change."¹⁶

Hardly had the Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee brief reached their desks before the board members were listening to the arguments of Mount Tacoma representatives—Sam Wall, the Tacoma pastor Frank Dyer, the Puyallup tribal leader Henry Sicade, Congressman and former Tacoman Albert Johnson, and James Wickersham, who came all the way from Alaska to testify. Arguing for retention of "Mount Rainier" were C. T. Conover; Victor Farrar, research assistant to Edmond Meany, professor of history at the University of Washington; Richardson Clover, a member of the first geographic board; and Professor Charles Vancouver Piper, a friend of Meany's, "whose middle name was not permitted to get into the record for fear of prejudicing his case."¹⁷

Most Mount Tacoma advocates seem to have been unaware that Charles T. Con-

11. For the text of the joint memorial, see Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee, *Brief Submitted to the United States Geographic Board* (Tacoma, 1917), 7; *Seattle Times*, Feb. 2, 1917; *Aberdeen World*, Feb. 2 (quotation), 6, 1917.

12. Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee, *Brief: Kaiser to C. Hart Merriam*, June 30, 1917, Box 1, Kaiser Papers (quotation).

13. U.S. Board on Geographic Names, *First Report, 1890-1891* (Washington, D.C., 1892), 2, 35 (first published 52d Cong., 1st Sess., 1892, H.E.D. 16 [Serial 2949]); C. S. Sloan to Kaiser, April 9, 1917, Box 1, Kaiser Papers. No date was recorded for the first Mt. Rainier ruling on decision card no. 18, now found at the Domestic Division of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in Reston, Virginia (hereafter cited as U.S.B.G.N.).

14. James Swan to Richardson Clover, June 24, 1890, Mt. Rainier File, U.S.B.G.N.

15. Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee, *Brief*, 16; U.S. Board on Geographic Names, *First Report*, 8.

16. U.S. Board on Geographic Names, *Second Report, 1890-99*, 2d ed. (Washington, D.C., 1901), 15-21 (first published 56th Cong., 1st Sess., 1900, H.D. 472 [Serial 3988]).

17. P-I, May 3, 1917.

WASHINGTON THE EVERGREEN STATE and SEATTLE, ITS METROPOLIS.



MOUNT RAINIER, (14,444 FEET HIGH) FROM SEATTLE.

PUBLISHED BY

Crawford & Conover

JANUARY 1890.

FIRST EDITION, 50,000 COPIES.

REAL ESTATE AND FINANCIAL
BROKERS,
SEATTLE WASHINGTON.



"MOUNT TACOMA FROM THE TOWER OF THE COUNTY COURT HOUSE, TACOMA"

TACOMA is famed for the beauty of its situation and environment. It has been called the "Naples of America," owing to a fancied similarity between the city on the beautiful Bay of Naples, with Mount Vesuvius in the background, and the attractive city on Puget Sound, behind which Mount Tacoma rears its lofty, snow-crowned head. Mount Tacoma is not only a great scenic attraction, but a marvel of efficiency and usefulness. Its giant glaciers and eternal snows feed many rivers that descend 7,000 feet from the snow line to tide level at the Sound, furnishing a water power unequalled in the United States, with the possible exception of Niagara Falls. Tacoma, the nearest industrial center to this majestic mountain, is the natural market for its harnessed energies, and, although Tacoma is the youngest of the larger cities on the Pacific Coast, it is already a great industrial center. Tacoma manufactures more lumber than any other city in the world; mills more flour than any city west of Minneapolis and Kansas City, and reduces more ores than any other city on the Pacific Coast.

Watch Tacoma Grow! Population 1880, 1,098; 1900, 37,714
1906, 85,000

For descriptive literature and particulars as to business opportunities, address

SECRETARY

Tacoma Chamber of Commerce and
Board of Trade

TACOMA, - WASHINGTON

over was and would remain their most determined opponent. After arriving in the Puget Sound area in 1884, Conover had worked for a few months as city editor for the Tacoma Ledger, where he became a friend of Wall's, then joined the staff of the Seattle P-I. Dapper and self-assured, the young journalist by 1888 sought a more lucrative field. So, with another reporter, he established a real estate firm, and together during the 1890s they spent thousands on nationally advertising Seattle and the state. By 1917 Conover was a business leader in the city and felt justified in representing what he considered to be the majority sentiment. The issue of changing Mount Rainier's name, however, had generated no organized opposition, and in fact, Seattle residents seemed largely uninterested.

Boosting Seattle for commercial advantage, C. T. Conover featured Mount Rainier prominently in this widely distributed 1890 publication. ([F. J. Grant], Washington the Evergreen State and Seattle, Its Metropolis)

Not averse to self-promotion with an eye to profit, Tacomans, too, used the mountain—here clearly identified as Mount Tacoma—to entice business to their city, and they did so even after Tacoma had lost the economic and population contest to Seattle. (Washington Magazine, 1906)

Many years later, when Conover in his eighties returned to the newspaper business, he claimed personal credit for defeating both the 1917 movement to rename the mountain and its 1925 counterpart, too.¹⁸

After the hearing, the passionate Wall excitedly telegraphed his colleagues on the Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee that they had "crucified" the opposition. But the geographic board apparently had not been nailed to the Mount Tacoma cross, for it voted nine to three to retain the name "Rainier." In a letter to Conover, the board secretary, C. S. Sloan, provided the only official reason known for the decision:

No geographic feature in any part of the world can claim a name more firmly fixed by right of discovery, by priority, and by universal

18. Times, Aug. 4, 1957; Conover to Mr. McGrath, Aug. 20, 1947, and biographical manuscript, C. T. Conover file, Seattle Times library.

usage for more than a century. So far as known, no attempt has ever been made by any people in any part of the world to change a name so firmly established.¹⁹

With the door to the board slammed shut, the Tacoma press began to vacillate, and many business leaders, some quietly and others mocking loudly, withdrew from the contest. The Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee firmly resolved to ignore the board's decision and follow the example of the many "illustrious" advocates of "Mount Tacoma." Yet, the defeat broke the will of many committee members, and by the summer of 1917 the organization was defunct.²⁰

But not for long. In the fall of the same year, the remaining loyalists, joined by new converts, re-formed as the Mount Tacoma Club. Walter Thompson, an attorney and pioneer Tacoma banker, was elected president. His stenographer, Mrs. Minnie Mitchell, quit her job at the bank to become the club's poorly paid but richly dedicated corresponding secretary. Although the group was small and always in need of financial support, it relentlessly pursued the program of its predecessor, campaigning locally and

nationally. The new organization distinctly departed from the old one in tone, however, and the departure was largely attributable to the irrepressible type-writer and tongue of Minnie Mitchell.²¹

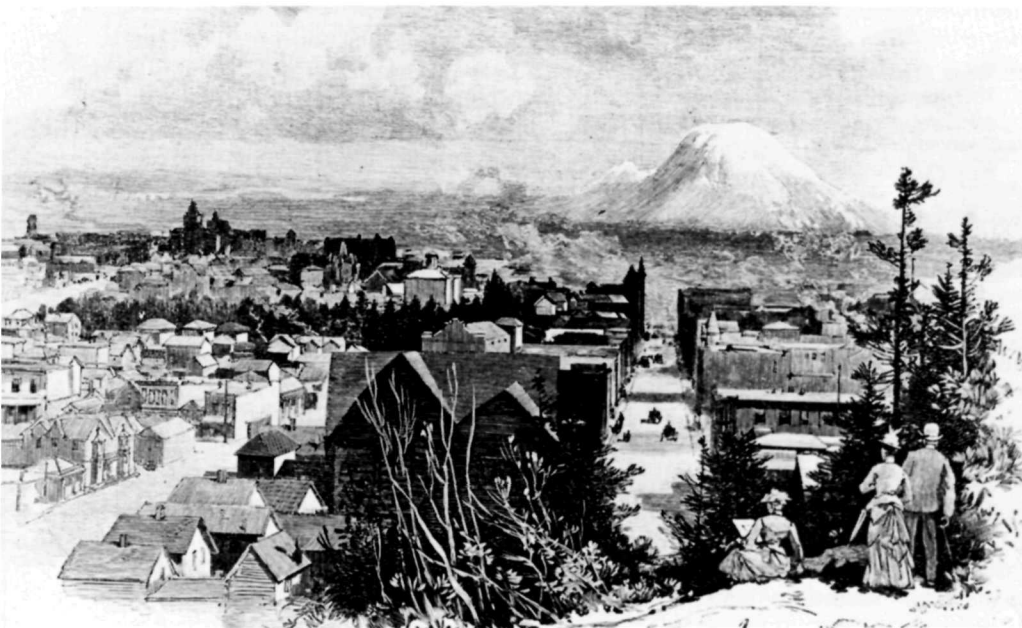
More than anyone, Mitchell brought to the Mount Tacoma Club the zeal of a religious cause and the crusading spirit that in 1924 lofted the tiny club into the portentous halls of Congress. Obsessed by her cause, Mitchell attempted to rally Tacoma, Pierce County, the state, and even the country behind her. Almost daily over a period of 20 years, she wrote to patriotic and professional societies, business leaders, scientists, and the editors of countless American and British publications. Her tenacious attempt to track down early maps, atlases, and geographies that labeled the mountain "Tacoma" became a source of exasperation to the Royal Geographic Society and the British Museum. But her correspondence campaign brought lasting support from such old guard patriots as Richard L. Jones, editor of the *Tulsa Tribune*, who carried on the fight in his editorials for nearly 30 years; George Cram, the millionaire Chicago map and atlas publisher, who until his death in 1928 sought evidence, usually futilely, of the usage of "Mount Tacoma" on early maps; and Henry T. Finck, the versatile *New York Evening Post* music critic and author of books on food, music, and *Gardening with Brains*, who wrote a number

of emotion-charged articles for *New York* readers on the subject of the mountain's "most appropriate and euphonious" name.²²

The widowed Mrs. Mitchell, unconcerned about her personal life, expected her correspondents and especially all Tacomans to follow her example, to dedicate their energies to the campaign, and to wage a "genuine American 'No compromise and no surrender' fight." Her efforts brought the cause much national attention, however confused. In the fall of 1918 the *Christian Science Monitor* wrote, "Many things will be settled by the Great War, and probably for all time, but hardly the controversy over the proper name of Mt. Tacoma, that is to say, the proper name of Mt. Rainier." But Mitchell's unyielding and often graceless tactics and her propensity for making unfounded accusations against anyone she suspected of disloyalty to the cause eventually compromised her work. Her arguments readily sacrificed accuracy for persuasive effect. She was prone to perpetuate conspiracy theories particularly when they involved Edmond Meany, whom, perhaps out of jealousy for his historical expertise, she portrayed as Mount Tacoma's chief enemy.²³

Mitchell was most critical of Tacoma

One instance of common usage of the name "Tacoma": Harper's Weekly labeled this illustration "View of Seattle and Mount Tacoma from Hotel Denny." (1891)



19. Sam Wall to Frank Cole, May 4, 1917 (telegram), Box 1, Kaiser Papers; *Daily News*, May 12, 1917; Sloan to Conover, May 28, 1917, in *Proposal to Change the Name of Mount Rainier* ([Seattle], n.d.), 69 (copy of original letter in Mt. Rainier File, U.S.B.G.N.)

20. Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee, "The Tacoma-Rainier Decision" (n.d.), Box 1, Kaiser Papers.

21. "The Mount Tacoma Club: Its Aims and Successes" (n.d.), Mount Rainier Name Controversy Correspondence, Box 1, Washington State Historical Society (WSHS) Library (hereafter cited as Rainier Name file); *News Tribune*, Nov. 22, 1917.

22. The bulk of the Rainier Name file is composed of Minnie Mitchell's extensive correspondence. Cram is eulogized for his self-described efforts to rally the bankers and capitalists in his *Tacoma Ledger* obituary, May 26, 1928. For one of Finck's articles, see *New York Times*, Sept. 16, 1917.

23. *Ledger*, Sept. 3, 1919 (genuine); *Christian Science Monitor*, Sept. 16, 1918; Mitchell to Tacoma Advertising Club, Feb. 28, 1928, Box 1, Rainier Name file.



Correspondents to the last territorial legislature, Conover and Sam Wall (back left and right) soon took opposing sides in the mountain name controversy. (Spec. Coll. Div., UW Libraries, neg. 1789)

business leaders and chamber of commerce members who had not pledged their support. After the board's unfavorable decision, she accused those on the payroll of the Rainier National Park Company—whom she called the “dupes” of the “Budweiser National Park Company”—of being “more concerned with their financial operations and prosperity than . . . with justice, [and] right patriotism.” Is it any wonder, she wrote the local Veterans of Foreign Wars, that Tacomans are ashamed to admit they are from Tacoma, the “City of the living dead”? In a letter to Richard Jones, Mitchell accounted for the reason Tacoma had become the butt of so many jokes:

I honestly believe that from the time when our citizens permitted the Seattle Chamber of Commerce . . . to put something over Tacoma by stealing the name of the mountain that a curse has rested on our city which will only be lifted when this wrong is righted. . . . It would seem as though the spirit of the mountain becoming incensed at the insult heaped upon her in the matter of the name . . . has taken revenge by limiting the activities, the intelligence, patriotism and other essential qualities of our citizens, making them act in a small, petty manner utterly unworthy of peo-

ple who have the privilege of living under the inspiring influence of such a great mountain.

On the same theme of the “Lumber Capital of the World” turned “Slumber Capital,” she wrote Jones four years later: “There is nothing the matter with Tacoma, it’s the people.”²⁴

By the mid-1920s the champions of “Mount Tacoma” had written a number of literary, etymological, and historical studies that, while ranging in reliability, attempted to prove that “Tacoma” or a close variant was an indigenous Indian word that the area’s first settlers recognized as the Indian name for the mountain. The opposition contended that the word was not indigenous, was coined by whites, and was generally not used to refer to the mountain until after the Northern Pacific’s 1883 announcement. Pursuing a lifelong interest in Indian lore as he filled his house with Indian artifacts, the retired Tacoma wholesale grocer Benjamin Harvey was one of the Mount Tacoma Club’s self-educated ethnologists. In an effort to collect evidence demonstrating that “Tacoma” was truly of local aboriginal origin, Harvey first began corresponding with the Tulalip Indian agent Charles M. Buchanan in 1908.²⁵

But Dr. Buchanan, because he had found the word used for place names in other parts of the country, had concluded that

“Tacoma” did not originate locally and probably derived from the wide-ranging Algonquin linguistic stock. It came to be used by the local Indians only when they began imitating what they thought the whites, who had come from the former Algonquin territory east of the Rockies, were calling the mountain. Harvey disagreed. He was inclined to side with James Wickersham, who believed that the word was “brought over with an early migration of Mongolians and carried down the coast to Mexico” whence it returned. Reversing Buchanan’s theory as well as the traditional perception of cultural hierarchy among the North American tribes, Harvey pinpointed the local occurrence of the word at around 900 A.D. The “people we call ‘Indians,’” he wrote in an unpublished manuscript, “left the valleys of the Columbia River and of Puget Sound and migrated . . . to the Atlantic Ocean and formed that great Indian Confederacy of Iroquois.”²⁶

What Buchanan called Harvey’s “*reductio ad absurdum*,” a characterization that might also have applied to his own argument, aptly illustrated the problems of determining the original usage and meaning of Indian vocabulary. A number of different dialects in the region, a variety of spellings and pronunciations used by whites and Indians, and a general ignorance of tribal language, history, and culture made the work of advocates, opponents, government officials, and even Indian specialists mostly guesswork, although few at the time were willing to admit it.²⁷

24. Mitchell to F. L. Kersie, Dec. 27, 1933 (Budweiser), to Mrs. Reynolds, Sept. 18, 1928 (financial), to Tacoma Veterans of Foreign Wars, Nov. 18, 1929, to R. L. Jones, Aug. 4, 1926, and Sept. 22, 1930; all are found in Box 1, Rainier Name file.

25. Some of Harvey’s earliest correspondence with Buchanan was published in *Washington State Historical Society Publications*, Vol. 2 (Olympia, 1915), 441-64.

26. Edmond S. Meany to Harvey, March 21, 1908, *ibid.*, 445-46; “The Historical Significance of the Ancient Name ‘Tacoma,’” Benjamin Harvey Papers, WSHS Library (quotations).

27. Charles Buchanan to Conover, June 10, 1918, Mt. Rainier Name Pamphlet File, Pacific Northwest Collection, University of Washington (UW) Libraries. (By 1919

Even apart from its aboriginal nature, Mount Tacoma proponents argued, the name "Tacoma" when compared to the name "Rainier" was self-evidently the more euphonious and appropriate. To demonstrate the inappropriateness of "Rainier," researchers dredged up the "facts" of history and appealed to patriotism. Pioneers especially, they believed, should be outraged to learn that Vancouver's friend Rainier had never seen the mountain, nor had he even been to the Pacific Northwest. Naval records showed that, as a lieutenant during the American War for Independence, Rainier had commanded the sloop *Ostrich*, which, cruising off the coast of Jamaica (the closest he ever came to American soil), captured a large American privateer commissioned into the Continental Service. Clearly, some "friends of the mountain" declared, Rainier had been an enemy of the Republic.²⁸

John Williams in 1913 had taken a relatively restrained position (at least in print), claiming that Rainier must be considered undistinguished even in his own country because "the 'Encyclopedia Britannica,' has been unable to find room for an account of him." In 1916 Theodore Roosevelt had written to the Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee: "Why should we Americans abandon the splendid Indian name 'Tacoma' in order to call our noblest landmark after a foreigner whose only connection with our history is that he fought against us when we were an infant nation?" The *New York Post's* Henry Finck, who was waging a personal battle against "Yankee Doodle," an "abominably vulgar tune," claimed in 1919 to be enraged that "our grandest mountain" should be named "after a man who fought George Washington." Rainier's aim had been "to prevent us from ever having a fourth of July," Mrs. Mitchell wrote to a small-town newspaper editor. According to the Seattle publication *Washington State Weekly*, the name "Rainier" when "applied to the greatest, the sublimest, the most worshipful natural object on the American continent," was "cheap, commonplace, beefy and vulgar."²⁹

The word even came to be guilty by association with a brand of beer bearing the same name. Speaking of the "Violence to the Moral Sense" of a nation triumphant

in the temperance cause, S. H. McKown of West Virginia, in a self-published pamphlet, contrasted the beneficent influence of the mountain to the destructive influence of the beer "blazing its way by broken fortunes, broken families, broken lives . . . down and down through drunkards' graves unnumbered into a drunkards' hell unending." Like Mitchell, McKown subscribed to the tradition that in 1890 one of Washington's senators, Watson Squire of Seattle, had delivered a carload of beer to the "scandalous midnight proceedings" of the first geographic board, which then fastened on the mountain the name "Rainier." This initial decision fueled conspiracy theories, for when Mount Tacoma proponents attempted to secure information about it, board members impatiently shrugged them off.³⁰

In the winter of 1923 the spirit of conciliation apparently descended on Seattle. Mrs. Mitchell and other Mount Tacoma Club members were pleased to learn that "90% of the people [there] are indifferent to the name 'Mt. Rainier.'" Mayor Edwin Brown of Seattle even wired his Tacoma counterpart, wishing Tacomans success in their efforts to rename Mount Rainier. This apparent relinquishing of old enmities further encouraged the Mount Tacoma Club to circumvent the geographic board and take its appeal directly to an "unprejudiced" Congress.³¹

Rallying to the club's new assault, the citizens of the City of Destiny came together as never before. Goaded by the press, they sent letters and telegrams by the hundreds to their congressmen. Dispensing for a time with their intracity rivalry, Tacoma trade councils, business associations, small and large companies, and civic and social clubs passed resolutions and worked toward a common goal. By the end of 1923 the Mount Tacoma Club's circularizing of members of the House and Senate seemed to be paying off. At least, the Tacoma *Ledger* thought so and reported that "the subject [was] becoming a familiar one in the senate and house cloak rooms."³²

In mid-January 1924 the joint resolution calling for the renaming of not only the mountain but also the park and national forest was introduced in the House by

Albert Johnson and in the Senate by C. C. Dill. Immediately, the opposition began to organize. Determined to convince the state's lawmakers that the majority of their constituents opposed the change, Conover, having observed that Senator Wesley Jones was another "poor fish" inclined to favor "Mount Tacoma" or "Tah-oma," wrote to Jones to enlighten him. At Conover's urging and after a stirring speech by Judge Thomas Burke, the Seattle Chamber of Commerce in February reversed its conciliatory position and voted to resist the resolution. It formed a special committee to tour the state and conduct a campaign for the retention of "Mount Rainier," and it sent John J. Underwood to the federal capital as a paid lobbyist. Members contributed funds for reprinting a brief that Conover had compiled for distribution to Congress after the 1917 geographic board hearing.³³

Buchanan admitted that he had abandoned the Algonquin theory and concluded that the word "Tacoma" was a variant of an Indian term meaning "white"; see Buchanan to Conover, Aug. 8, 1919, *ibid.* For a humorous response to Buchanan's waffling from another Mt. Tacoma advocate, see A. H. Denman, *The Name of Mount Tacoma* (Tacoma, 1924), 46.

28. C. Steward, Navy Department Library and Naval War Records, to W. P. Bonney, Oct. 25, 1925, Box 1, Rainier Name file.

29. Williams quoted in Winthrop, 311; Roosevelt quoted in Denman, 82 (the author could not locate the original of Roosevelt's frequently cited comment but did find in the Rainier Name file a letter dated April 11, 1917, from Walter Thompson to Roosevelt, requesting his "efficient aid"); *New York Evening Post*, April 26, 1919; Mitchell to *Lewis County Recorder*(?), Sept. 18, 1928, Box 1, Rainier Name file; *Washington State Weekly* (Seattle), Sept. 25, 1915.

30. S. H. McKown, *The Violence Done by Perpetuating the Name Mount Rainier*, 2d ed. (Tacoma, 1924), 9, 12 (copy in Mt. Rainier Name Pamphlet File).

31. William Pigott to Mitchell, Dec. 10, 1923, Rainier Name file (quotation); *Ledger*, Jan. 30, 1924.

32. *Ledger*, Dec. 30, 1923.

33. Conover to John J. Underwood, and to Wesley Jones, both Feb. 4, 1924, Charles T. Conover Papers, UW Libraries; and David Whitcomb to Meany, Feb. 7, 1924, Box 39, Edmond S. Meany Papers, UW Libraries; Mitchell to "Friend," May 3, 1926, Box 1, Rainier Name file; *Proposal to Change the Name*. This 74-page pro-Mt. Rainier polemic credited to Conover has usually been the



These dancers from the Mary Ann Wells studio in the 1930s may have been unaware that the fight over the name of the mountain continued. (A. Curtis Coll., WSHS)

Despite the derailing maneuvers of the "Rainierites," the Mount Tacoma train was rolling smoothly toward the hearing scheduled by the Senate Public Lands Committee. On February 21, 1924, Senator Dill, who claimed to be an advocate of the change, opened the hearing with a brief history of the previous fights and presented an impressive array of letters, resolutions, and published articles. The Tacoma news correspondent who covered the hearing was not impressed with the Mount Tacoma representation, however. Until a few months before, Dill had believed "that Rainier was an Indian name. He insisted that in the West Indian names should be retained." Senator Jones was no better, bringing letters and telegrams both for and against the change and joking that he had pictures of both mountains in his office.³⁴

The opponents of the resolution, represented by J. J. Underwood, Dr. C. Hart Merriam, the current chairman of the geographic board, and Congressman John

Miller, virtually monopolized the hearing. Underwood stressed the enormous expenditure on "permanent advertising in the shape of art photographs" of Mount Rainier, some of which hung in congressional offices. He denied that there was any national interest in the issue, attributing the out-of-state endorsements of "Mount Tacoma" to Tacoma's "insidious" propaganda. Miller quoted for an hour from Conover's brief and from Meany's Northwest histories. Merriam, who by this time had a reputation as a prominent naturalist and powerful government administrator, had lost all patience with the Mount Tacoma cause. Echoing the words of the board's secretary in 1917, he claimed that "Mount Rainier" had been the mountain's official name for 125 years and was firmly entrenched. According to one account, he declared that the various petitions for "Mount Tacoma" were based only on "'self interest, commercialization and local sentiment'—none of which commanded any weight with the Board."³⁵

Despite this weighty testimony, the committee reported the resolution out without amendment, and a month later it passed unanimously *viva voce* in the Senate. Tacomans were elated and prepared to take on the House. Mayor Fawcett proclaimed May 1 Mount Tacoma Day. On the recommendation of the Tacoma school superintendent W. F. Geiger, teachers assigned their pupils composition exercises in the form of letters to their congressmen. The local American Legion Post resolved to write to every large post in the nation, and businessmen scheduled extracurricular meetings to pass resolutions addressed to the state's representatives. Bearing banners demanding justice for the mountain, 3,500 schoolboys paraded through the business section of town; and in one of the city's earliest radio broadcasts, B. W. Coiner made a "red hot appeal" to Northwest "radiophans" on station KGB.³⁶

Meanwhile, "the reactionaries of the Seattle Chamber of Commerce," the Tacoma News Tribune warned, had been touring the state and stirring up sentiment against the resolution. Conover had written to a number of prestigious newspapers and individuals who had apparently been misled by the resolution advo-

cate. But, finally, it was not the Seattle chamber's "steam roller tactics" that flattened Mount Tacoma's prospects in the House Public Lands Committee. With the volume of business the House had before it, even if the committee reported favorably, the resolution could not possibly get to the floor before Congress adjourned in June. Instead, the Public Lands Committee chairman, Nicholas Sinnott, referred the resolution to the Board on Geographic Names, still headed by the formidable Dr. Merriam, for a report.³⁷

No matter how many endorsements, testimonials of usage, and published references the Mount Tacoma advocates collected, they could not outweigh in the board's eyes the predominance of "Mount Rainier" in government, scientific, and educational publications. No doubt, this latter type of evidence and bureaucratic inertia would have been sufficient reason to let sleeping dogs—and names—lie. The persistent agitation and fervid appeals for poetic justice only served to harden the unromantically disposed board against the Mount Tacoma cause. Particularly after the attempt to bypass the board and obtain a congressional hearing, board members were increasingly inclined to ignore the fact that their own guiding principles gave grounds for adopting the name "Tacoma."

major source on which histories of the controversy have relied.

34. *News Tribune*, Feb. 21, 1924.

35. For Merriam's 1924 report, see U.S., Congress, House, *Changing Name of Mount Rainier: Hearings before the Committee on the Public Lands, House of Representatives . . . on S.J. Res. 64, 68th Cong., 2d Sess., 1925*, pp. 4-9 [H 369-2]; Underwood to Conover, Feb. 18, 1924, Conover Papers; Merriam quoted in John F. Miller to Meany, Feb. 22, 1924, Box 39, Meany Papers. Merriam's well-argued position seems to have remained constant over the years. His only published statement outside the hearings themselves seems to have been made immediately after the 1917 review; see C. Hart Merriam, *Shall the Name of Mount Rainier Be Changed?* (Washington, D.C., 1917).

36. *Ledger*, April 30, May 1 (quotation), 1924; *News Tribune*, May 1, 3, 1924.

37. *News Tribune*, March 26, 1924 (reactionaries); Conover to editor, *Boston Transcript*, May 3, 1924, Conover Papers.

The Justice-to-the-Mountain Committee

GENERAL COMMITTEE

HON. A. V. FAWCETT, Mayor, Tacoma
 FRANK B. COLE, President Cole-Merriam Co.
 S. W. WALL, Journalist
 GEN. JAMES M. ASHTON, Attorney
 EVERETT G. GRIGGS, President St. Paul & Tacoma Lumber Co.
 HENRY RHODER, Pres. Rhodes Bros.
 REV. FRANK DYER, Pastor First Congregational Church
 W. H. PRINGLE, Vice-President Boan-davian American Bank
 MAURICE LANGHORNE, Attorney
 JOHN B. KAISER, Librarian
 BEVERLY W. COINER, Attorney
 WALTER J. THOMPSON, Attorney
 A. H. BASSETT, President Tacoma Rotary Club
 GEO. H. PLUMMER, Genl. L. Agt.
 A. J. RITCHIE, Mgr. R. G. Dun & Co.
 H. G. ROWLAND, Attorney
 W. N. ALLEN, Member Metropolitan Park Board

[An organization created at the instance of a mass meeting held in Tacoma April 18th, the purpose of which is to secure the elimination of the hyphenated name Rainier-Tacoma through the substitution of an aboriginal name for The Mountain to be chosen by the Federal Geographic Board from names to be submitted, with evidence. The committee and its work was unanimously endorsed by the Members Council of the Tacoma Commercial Club and Chamber of Commerce April 25. It seeks endorsement and aid of all citizens of the State and of the United States, that the confusion and friction resulting from the use of the double name may be brought to an end.]

HON. A. V. FAWCETT, Chairman. FRANK B. COLE, Vice-Chairman.
 S. W. WALL, Executive Secretary.

Tacoma, Washington

SUB-COMMITTEES

ON ORGANIZATION:

GEN. JAMES M. ASHTON
 Chairman
 BEVERLY W. COINER
 GEORGE H. PLUMMER

ON METHOD:

MAURICE LANGHORNE
 Chairman
 A. J. RITCHIE
 S. W. WALL

ON DATA:

WALTER J. THOMPSON
 Chairman
 W. N. ALLEN
 JOHN B. KAISER

So, by upholding its original decision, the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in 1924 maintained that the primary motivation for changing the mountain's name was to promote Tacoma. At the 1917 hearing, Richardson Clover, the only member of the 1890 board to have commented about its decision, had said that the original board ruled against "Mount Tacoma" because "we are opposed to changing an established name to one commercially promoted." Clearly, in the boom days of the 1880s, Tacomans meant to make the most of their greatest natural asset. But by 1917 the business and population contest between Seattle and Tacoma had long been decided. The board apparently had no objections to the commercial exploitation of established names, for it seemed not to consider such examples as Seattle's Rainier brewery and Conover's real estate promotions, which made prominent use of Mount Rainier. As one of their most urgent arguments, Mount Rainier supporters cited the monetary loss that a name change would mean for the "legitimate advertisers of the mountain and Mount Rainier National Park."³⁸

In November when the report was made public, the Tacoma press described Merriam as erupting, breaking loose again, and venting his spleen on the topic of the mountain's name. Merriam's statement reiterated the old arguments: Peter Rainier was not an obscure person but a brave officer; 90 percent of the publications about the Northwest "use the name 'Mount Rainier' exclusively"; no geographic feature in any part of the world had a name more firmly fixed; a change "would deal a death blow to the stability of international geographic nomenclature." The *News Tribune* reported that Merriam believed the Mount Tacoma

movement was based solely on "a desire to advertise the name of the city of Tacoma." According to the press, the board's report was a tirade that used particularly intemperate language and virtually restated Conover and the Seattle Chamber of Commerce's brief. Even the Washington correspondent of the *Portland Oregonian*, which was a longtime opponent of the cause, found the language of the report "at variance with the tone and terms of documents ordinarily produced by scientific men."³⁹

January 1925 found the embattled Mount Tacoma champions "surrounded by the paid agents of Seattle," holding on for a rough ride as they prepared for the House hearings. Since the militant days of May, their campaign had lost much of its fervor and unanimity. A new group formed. Composed mostly of newspaper editors and bankers, the Tacoma Defense Fund refused to work with the Mount Tacoma Club and adopted conciliatory tactics.⁴⁰

When the hearings began, Congressman Johnson delivered well-prepared evidence in defense of "Mount Tacoma." According to a mutually agreed-upon plan, his comments were to be followed by remarks of equal duration by Congressman Miller. Instead, Johnson found himself pitted against several opponents—three congressional colleagues from Washington, a lobbyist, and three geographic board members, including Merriam—who were determined to win. Merriam declared that Rainier was in the same class as the Andes and Himalayas and that the U.S. had never before considered changing a name of this character. Only two types of propaganda compared with that "engineered by the city of Tacoma," he railed: that of Germany in World War I and that of 200,000 paid

American preachers "who continually clamor for the Christian religion." Congressman Lindley Hadley warned of possible international consequences: Canada or Britain might be offended enough to declare war on the U.S. Miller scoffed at the evidence for the earliest "Tacoma" usage, claiming that the word was the personal invention of that "dreamer" Theodore Winthrop. Having studied a manuscript prepared by Conover, Miller was particularly shrill in his denunciation of the "childish," selfish people of Tacoma who falsified "the cold, silent facts of history."⁴¹

On January 15, 1925, the House committee voted nine to four against the Mount Tacoma resolution and brought an end to perhaps the most enduring and wide-reaching effort in American history to change a geographic place name. One by one the Tacoma newspapers, after initially blaming defeat on "treachery in high places," quietly dropped out. Those who had come late to the fight were easily persuaded by the Tacoma business community to accept defeat. The departure of the press left the struggle to those few who had fought longest and hardest,

38. *Mount Rainier: Hearings*, 9; P-I, May 3, 1917 (Clover quotation); *Proposal to Change the Name*, 32 (legitimate); [Frederick J. Grant], *Washington the Evergreen State and Seattle, Its Metropolis* (Seattle, 1890).

39. *Ledger*, Nov. 15, 1924; *Tacoma Daily Times*, Nov. 14, 1924; *Mount Rainier: Hearings*, 4-9; *News Tribune*, Nov. 14, 1924; *Portland Oregonian*, Nov. 16, 1924.

40. *Ledger*, Jan. 10, 1925.

41. *Mount Rainier: Hearings*, 34-73 (quotations, 25, 66, 73). As late as January 1924, Miller believed that popular opinion in Seattle favored the name change; he expressed his own preference for "Tacoma" or "Tahoma"; see Miller to Herman Chapin, Jan. 30, 1924, John F. Miller Papers, UW Libraries.

42. *News Tribune*, Jan. 15, 1925; Charles Welch to Harvey, Feb. 26, 1925, Harvey Papers.

43. Mitchell to W. L. McCormick, Aug. 3, 1939, Box 1, Rainier Name file; *Seattle Times*, March 19, 1941.

44. *News Tribune*, Dec. 19, 1978; Donald J. Orth, U.S. Board on Geographic Names, to Genevieve McCoy, Jan. 19, 1984.

but trouble developed even in those ranks. Allegedly for her tactlessness, Minnie Mitchell was ousted from the Mount Tacoma Club. Yet, she refused to give up the books, and she continued to receive donations to fund her correspondence despite the attempts of the new club secretary, the attorney and Congressman-to-be John Coffee, to discredit her.⁴²

For the next 16 years, Mitchell worked virtually alone. She devoted a large part of her meager income to keeping in touch with her few loyal correspondents, some of whom attempted to buttonhole Presidents Calvin Coolidge and Herbert

Hoover for the cause. In the spring of 1941, a small propeller plane labored up the side of the mountain and left behind the ashes of "the Mother of Mount Tacoma," dead of a stroke at age 79. Minnie Mitchell and her compatriots had failed to secure "justice to the mountain" misnamed "Rainier."⁴³

Even so, her celebrated cause has not vanished from the current files of state and federal agencies. In 1978 the state board on geographic names held a hearing in response to a petition filed by a Tacoman, Roger Pitsinger. Witnesses included the mayor of Tacoma, who reportedly called Rainier a "pirate with a price

on his head"; they unwittingly repeated all the old arguments. According to the executive secretary of the U.S. Board on Geographic Names in 1984, the board "appears to have received requests to change the name of the mountain almost every year since its [1890] inception." The Mount Tacoma train continues to be derailed but has yet to be permanently rerouted.⁴⁴ □

Genny McCoy is a doctoral student and teaching assistant in history at the University of Washington. A lifelong Seattle resident, she is now researching American evangelical religion in the antebellum period.

Pacific Northwest Quarterly

OCTOBER 1986

VOLUME 77

NUMBER 4



Editors

Robert E. Burke *Managing Editor*
Carol Zabilski *Associate Editor*
Vernon Carstensen *Adjunct Editor*

Editorial Advisory Board

Edwin R. Bingham
University of Oregon

Norman Clark
Everett Community College

Gordon B. Dodds
Portland State University

G. Thomas Edwards
Whitman College

Robin Fisher
Simon Fraser University

George A. Frykman
Washington State University

James E. Hendrickson
University of Victoria

Ted C. Hinckley
San Jose State University

Michael P. Malone
Montana State University

Murray Morgan
Trout Lake

Claus-M. Naske
University of Alaska, Fairbanks

Earl Pomeroy
University of California, San Diego

Lewis O. Saum
University of Washington

Carlos A. Schwantes
University of Idaho

David H. Stratton
Washington State University

Merle W. Wells
Idaho State Historical Society

PACIFIC NORTHWEST QUARTERLY (ISSN 0030-8803), published by the University of Washington co-operating with the Washington State Historical Society, appears in January, April, July, and October. Correspondence concerning editorial matters should be sent to the Managing Editor, 4045 Brooklyn Avenue N.E., University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98105; correspondence concerning business matters should be addressed to Edith Bowmar, Graduate School AG-10, University of Washington, Seattle, WA 98195. Subscription: \$15.00 per year; \$17.00 (U.S.) foreign and Canadian; \$10.00 student. Single copy: \$5.00 domestic, \$5.50 (U.S.) foreign.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST QUARTERLY assumes no responsibility for statements of fact or opinion by contributors. Articles appearing in PNQ are abstracted and indexed in *Historical Abstracts* and *America: History and Life*.

Cover Illustration

Shown here when she was a Portland, Oregon, high school history teacher, Jeannette Paddock (Nichols) left the West Coast in 1918 to do graduate work at Columbia University. The study that earned her a Ph.D. became the first political history of Alaska. For the story, see pages 130-38. (University of Pennsylvania Archives)