

The Washington 89, by George H. Tweney. Seattle: The Book Club of Washington, 16660 Marine View Drive Southwest, Seattle, WN 98166, 1989. Pp. xvii, 98. US\$32.50, plus \$2.00 postage (available from the author; ISBN 0-930704-27-4).

The literary treasures of Washington state in particular and the Pacific Northwest in general are carefully selected and well described in this important guide for book collectors, historians, and librarians. George Tweney, well-known Seattle bibliophile, acting for the 1982-chartered Book Club of Washington, has carried out in exemplary fashion the mandate of the charter members: to furnish a long-needed bibliographical and critical guide to a selection of highly significant books that trace the rise and progress of Washington state from pioneer days to centenarian. This book is not the first endeavour to describe and evaluate the literary historical treasures of the Pacific Northwest: Charles Smith's *Checklist of Books and Pamphlets Relating to the History of the Pacific Northwest to be Found in Representative Libraries of that Region* (Olympia, 1909) constituted the first functional approach to locating key works in what was then a book-poor region. A third edition of his work, revised and extended, was published in 1950. In 1960 Peter Decker compiled the descriptive checklist of some 7,500 items of Western Americana in the George W. Soliday collection, thought to be the greatest collection of such works ever compiled. This checklist was published by the Antiquarian Press of New York in 1960. My late friend R. D. Hilton Smith compiled *Northwestern Approaches: The First Century of Books*, and published it out of his Victoria, B.C., bookshop, The Adelphi, in 1969. It remains my favourite as a part historical and part literary feast of works about Northwest Coast voyaging, perhaps only rivalled in that genre by Edward Eberstadt and Sons' *The Northwest Coast: A Century of Personal Narratives of Discovery, Conquest and Exploration . . . 1741-1841* Catalogue 119 (New York, 1941). Neither Hilton Smith nor Eberstadt aimed at total inclusion of all the works; rather they described with loving admiration the works of their collection possibly offered for sale. Moreover, the three-volume guide to publications relating to the area that is now British Columbia (Gloria Strathern, 1970; Barbara Lowther, 1968; Margaret Edwards and John Lort, 1975) cover the British Columbiana to 1950. Other guides to books are available since that time, while the G. H. Hall *Catalogue of the Library of the British Columbia Archives* will provide more listings than anyone might possibly wish to know.

The Book Club of Washington and the author of *Washington 89* have correctly had a more definite object. What constitute the eighty-nine most important, most sought-after pamphlets and books relating to the history of Washington state, proclaimed a state of the union in 1889? There are some incredible surprises here listed, some very rich treasures indeed. Take for instance the rarest of all Washington Territorial imprints, the only known copy of which (like so many in this list) is in the Beinecke Library at Yale University, New Haven, Connecticut: *Gold Hunting in the Cascade Mountains: A Full and Complete History of the Gold Discoveries in the Cascade Mountains; Notes of Travel, etc.* It was written under the pseudonym Loo-Wit Lat-Kla, the Indian name for Mt. St. Helens. Another treasure listed here is Charles Prosch's *Reminiscences of Washington Territory: Scenes, Incidents and Reflections of the Pioneer Period of Puget Sound*. Privately printed, this 1904 work is from the pen of one of the earliest settlers. Prosch arrived at Steilacoom in 1858. His reminiscences include discussions about early land speculations, defying the Hudson's Bay Company, comments on the rise and fall of Whatcom (later Bellingham), the San Juan dispute, and, not least, hints that local residents were already defending their beloved Pacific Northwest against slurs about the seemingly incessant rain. A third "find" must be mentioned: Click Relander's *Drummers and Dreamers*, published in Caldwell, Idaho, in 1956. This work tells of nearly extinct Wanapum Indians of the Columbia and others of the area including the little-known Palouses. It also has useful material on the unsung northern Chief Moses and the Indian agent, the Reverend James Wilbur. Relander, city editor of the *Yakima Daily Republic*, was a serious student of Indian life and ways, and, as Frederick Webb Hodge notes in his foreword, this ranks as a highly important book, now quite scarce.

Among the more familiar titles given in the last are Lewis and Clark's first edition, Hall J. Kelley's immigration promotion guide regarding Oregon settlement, and Paul Kane's *Wanderings of an Artist*. Lawrence Kip's *Army Life on the Pacific* (1859) is included; this work recounts the expedition against the "Coeur d'Alenes, Spokans, and Pelouzes" (his spellings). I am happy to say that Murray Morgan's *Skid Road, an Informal Portrait of Seattle*, first published in New York by the Viking Press in 1951, is on the list. It has always been a first-rate book, though the work was a publisher's flop at the outset. But *Skid Road* has survived and gone into numerous editions, and is now a must on any collector's shelves.

Lastly it may be said that this work, limited to 890 copies, is proof positive that the fine art of book production still exists: fine design, typesetting, layout, stock and cover materials, and superb craftsmanship combine to

make this a most handsome book. The printer (Sagebrush Press) and the binder (Bela Blau) are to be commended, and the book is a credit to the many valuable works that it describes. George Tweney and the Book Club of Washington are to be congratulated on this very fine and valuable book, which for many years will serve as a reference to the rarest and the best that the book collector, working historian, librarian, and even browser will want to consult.

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