

IT'S 1874...MEET THE NEIGHBORS

11. ANNIE PIXLEY FULFORD (1855 Brooklyn, NY - Nov 8, 1893 London, Ontario)

From the moment Annie Pixley stepped on stage in the frontier town of Carson City, Nevada, she was a hit. The year was 1862, and Annie was seven. Her younger sister Minnie joined her, and they did some impromptu dancing and singing. The girls so charmed the crowd, that they began getting requests to perform at nearby mining camps in California and Nevada.

When Annie turned 11, the Pixley Family moved to Olympia. Mrs. Pixley opened a hat shop on Washington Street, and Mr. Pixley worked as a mason. There was now a third daughter, Lucy, who joined Annie and Minnie in performances at Olympia's Washington Hall. The girls all attended school at the old schoolhouse on Legion and Franklin.

At sixteen, Annie performed at the Philharmonic Hall in Portland, Oregon, and then travelled to Salt Lake City to entertain Brigham Young. Next she joined the Waldron Theatrical Company in Portland, where she met and married an actor named Robert Fulford. Annie's sister Minnie soon stopped performing, and Lucy went on to be an opera singer in the East. But it was Annie's career that would skyrocket to super stardom.

For the next two decades, Annie sang and acted in countless plays all across America. On January 15, 1879, she had the honor of playing "Josephine," the lead in the New York City debut of Gilbert and Sullivan's popular play H.M.S. Pinafore. Then in March of 1880, Annie opened at New York's Standard Theater as "M'liss," a role she would play over 2,000 times in her life. "M'liss," the heroine and title of the play, had been adapted from a short story by Bret Harte. Harte's stories of the Western Frontier often focused on "local color." During this time, most romantic plays such as Davy Crockett, had a rugged hero falling for a more sophisticated heroine. M'liss switched the roles, making the heroine an unlettered mountain girl who shows courage and independence. She eventually marries an educated gentleman. M'liss was described by a New York critic in the early 1880s as "*the most popular play on the American stage.*" A St. Louis reporter said of Annie, "*she sings like a bird with its heart full and its throat set to music.*" She was described as "*vivacious*" and "*effervescent*" and as having "*magnetic powers*".

But Annie's star burned out too soon. In 1893, at the age of 38, Annie died in Ontario, Canada. Audiences mourned the loss of this talented woman, who lived and performed life on the American Frontier.



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9. ANNIE CONNER HARTSUCK (Sept 3, 1827 Concord, NH - Apr 30, 1918 Elma, WA)

When Annie Conner stepped off the boat in Olympia on the 23rd of May, 1866, she completed a four month journey which started in New York Harbor and would end as a beloved chapter in Northwest history books. Annie was part of the Mercer Expedition, an idea hatched by Asa Mercer of Seattle, and supported by Washington Territory's Governor Pickering. Asa's goal was to bring Civil War widows and eligible single women from New England out West, to meet, and hopefully marry, one of a large number of lonely frontier bachelors.



Rogers Studio, Olympia, WA
Caroline Hartsuck Wright Collection
Henderson House Museum, Tumwater, WA

Annie Conner was born and raised in New Hampshire. When she made the journey out West she was single and 38. After remaining in Seattle a short time, Annie went south to Olympia, the first Mercer Girl to do so. She became a country schoolteacher in Lewis County and then taught in Tumwater. On December 26, 1869 she married a carpenter named Mark Hartsuck, and they spent the rest of their days together in Olympia.

Annie believed in temperance, and women's rights. The Olympia newspaper once reported that she had been in the saloons with a petition asking them to close their doors on Sundays.

Annie was an early member of the Woman's Club. On December 1, 1896, she read a paper before the group, recounting her adventures on the Mercer Expedition... On January 15, 1866, Asa and his recruits boarded the steamer Continental during one of the coldest spells on record in New York City. Not long after being on the open sea, they encountered a fierce storm with gale force winds, and all aboard, even the sailors, were seasick. No lanterns were allowed, and everything that wasn't tied down tumbled around the passengers in the dark. A week later one of the crew was lost overboard in the night, and the captain suspected the first mate. He was held prisoner on board and later left in Rio de Janeiro. Further south they entered the Strait of Magellan, and by March 8th they saw the Pacific Ocean. Annie's only entries on March 9 and 10 were "seasick". In Chile the Continental was fired on, held prisoner by a port blockade, and later ran aground in the fog at Talcahuano where they were forced to wait for high tide. The total trip time from New York to Seattle was 17 weeks!

Despite the harrowing voyage, Mercer's idea proved a good one for Annie and Mark. The frontier carpenter from the West and his bride from the East were married almost thirty years. A century later, the Mercer Girls would be remembered in a TV show called "*Here Come The Brides.*"

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6. ISAAC CHASE ELLIS (Oct 18, 1833 Fairfield, ME - June 8, 1910 Olympia)

Ellis Cove and Ellis Creek in Priest Point Park are named after Isaac (Ike) Ellis, one of South Sound's earliest pioneer loggers. Ike logged the timber at Priest Point, as well as most of the townsite of Olympia. He cleared along the eastside of Budd Inlet and by 1868, began the first systematic logging operations on the westside. (Before that, a logger built a mill, cleared a section of land, shut down the mill and repeated the process elsewhere.) He also shared a logging camp up north, which was responsible for clearing much of West Seattle. By the early 1880s, Ike had built a three mile logging railroad from the area near Plumb Station (south of the airport) to the east waterway at Moxlie Creek (about Union and Plum) where he could float the logs. He cleared as far east as Chambers Lake, and much of the area around North Street. (You can see Ike's mill in the 1879 Bird's-Eye View of Olympia.)



Washington State Capital Museum

Ike came to Olympia from Maine in 1854, at the age of 21. He built his home on Capitol Way, facing Sylvester Park. In 1874, after Olympia went to a council form of government, Ike won election as the first mayor. However he resigned a year later since his business so often kept him in San Francisco. Ike was married twice and had three children. One of his grandchildren was Elizabeth Ayer, (see 1933 bio). Over the years Ike became one of the wealthiest loggers in Southwest Washington. It is said that he won and lost two fortunes, but still owned considerable property at the time of his death.

On May 25, 1891, Ike became known for something besides logging. He opened the grand Woodland Driving Park in present-day Lacey. The park included a clubhouse, stables, grandstand and 1,600 feet of track. Ike's racetrack was considered one of the best in the Pacific Northwest, and since it was located only thirty feet from the train depot, the attraction drew large crowds from all over the region. The clubhouse boasted a kitchen, dining room, parlor and twelve guest rooms upstairs. It later became the Lacey Hotel, and was finally torn down in 1939.

Most of the old growth forests that Ike logged have evolved into housing developments, business centers, parks and roads. The sounds of horses' hooves pounding on the track have been replaced by car motors and postal trucks at Lacey Downs Shopping Center. But we can still imagine what a feeling it must have been for Ike, to stand in those massive groves that reached to the sky and think of the changing landscapes to come.

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5. ELISHA PEYRE FERRY (Aug 9, 1825 Monroe MI - Oct 14, 1895 Seattle)

Elisha Ferry had the distinction of being the only territorial governor to serve two full terms. His popularity was further shown by the fact that, almost a decade later, the people elected him to a third term, this time as the first governor of the new State of Washington. Through all these years, Elisha presided over business in the old wooden capitol, built by the pioneers.

Elisha grew up in Michigan. In 1845, at the age of 20, he began his career as a lawyer. He moved to Waukegan, Illinois in 1846 and became the first mayor of that town. Elisha was a member of the Illinois Constitutional Convention, and personally knew Abraham Lincoln. During the Civil War he held the rank of colonel, and was in charge of organizing regiments and sending them into the field. In this capacity, he came to know Ulysses S. Grant, who appointed him Surveyor General of Washington Territory. Elisha arrived in Olympia in July of 1869, and would live there, or in Seattle, for the rest of his life.

During his two terms as territorial governor, from 1872 to 1880, the population of the territory almost tripled, and the San Juan Islands became part of Washington. Railroads were completed from the Columbia River to Walla Walla in the east, and Tacoma in the west, (with a spur to Olympia which Elisha personally worked on). Two heavily debated issues which failed during this time were statehood and women's suffrage. Elisha supported the former and opposed the latter. In 1876, Elisha urged Washington's involvement in the Centennial Exposition in Philadelphia. (At this event, pioneer George Bush's son, Owen won first prize nationally for his wheat exhibit.) Throughout the 1870s, Elisha, his wife, and four children lived in Isaac Steven's "mansion" on the grounds near the capitol.

Elisha moved to Seattle, where he lived for most of the 1880s. He practiced law and became vice president of Puget Sound National Bank. In the fall of 1889, the Republican Party nominated him to be the first governor of Washington State. He was elected on October 1st, by a margin of 8,000 votes. During Elisha's third term, voters chose Olympia over Ellensburg and North Yakima to be the state capital, public colleges were established at Cheney and Ellensburg, the Great Northern Railway reached Everett, and the first Washington apples were shipped to the Orient.

Ferry County bears Elisha's name, as does Ferry Street in Olympia and Tumwater. They remind us of this dedicated, respected leader, who governed from the old wooden capitol, and took us from territory to state.



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3. HAZARD STEVENS (June 8, 1842 Newport RI - Oct 11, 1918 Goldendale, WA)

Hazard Stevens' life was truly the stuff of adventure novels. As the son of Isaac Stevens, Washington's first governor, twelve year old Hazard made the trek with his family from the East Coast, across the Isthmus of Panama, up the West Coast and along the rugged Cowlitz Trail to the village of Olympia in 1854. A year later, Hazard joined an expedition led by his father, to negotiate Indian treaties in land which today is part of Montana. At one point on the trip, Hazard was asked to carry a message to an Indian tribe, involving 150 miles round trip on horseback. Hazard and an interpreter completed the journey in only 35 hours!



Washington State Historical Society

In 1857 Hazard returned to the East Coast, attending Harvard until the outbreak of the Civil War. He and his father immediately enlisted in the Union Army, and Hazard became one of the youngest officers in the war. At the Battle of Chantilly, Hazard was wounded. Tragically, on that same battlefield, he witnessed the death of his father. Hazard served as a brigadier general at Appomattox, and was awarded the Medal of Honor.

After the war Hazard again heeded the call of the West, and returned to Olympia as collector of Internal Revenue. In 1870 Hazard and P.B. Van Trump, made the first fully documented ascent of Mount Rainier, even spending the night on top in a steam cave! The flag he brought back from the summit is part of Washington's historical collection in Tacoma.

In the early 1870s, Hazard was a key player in Olympia's struggle to get the railroad. He was first a lawyer for the Northern Pacific Railroad, and then president of the Olympia Railroad Union, spearheading the effort to connect the capital city by rail to the main line in Tenino.

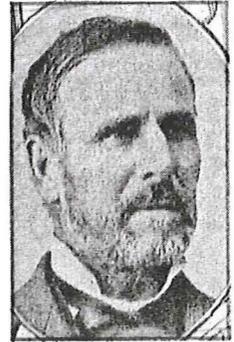
Hazard returned to Boston late in 1874, became active in politics, practiced law, and authored a book about his famous father. Despite the distance, he remained involved in building a better future for Olympia. In the 1890s, Hazard was president of the Olympia Light and Power Company which powered the streetcars. The trolley line ended at an elk farm that Hazard established for passenger enjoyment, at Tumwater's upper falls.

In 1914, at age 72, Hazard came back to Olympia for the last time. At one point he defended his father's treaty in court, arguing that the Indians had the right to hunt and fish in their usual and accustomed places. He also turned his father's land claim into a state-of-the-art dairy called Cloverfields Farm. The farmhouse he built still stands at 1100 Carlyon. It overlooks Hazard Lake, which honors the hero of these amazing adventures.

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2. GEORGE A. BARNES (Aug 31, 1821 Dundee, NY - Nov 29, 1912 Olympia)

George Barnes crossed the continent to Oregon twice in two years. Traveling as a bachelor in 1848, George settled briefly in Oregon City, but was soon lured by the California Gold Rush. After a short time there, he returned east by way of the Isthmus of Panama. In 1850, George began his second journey west, this time as a married man, with his wife's orphaned brother John Murphy in tow. (See Murphy sketch on previous page.) The family settled in Portland, where George managed a general store. In 1851 George began his career in public service as part of Portland's first city council. One year later, this enterprising storekeeper loaded his merchandise in a covered wagon, headed north, and set up shop in what would soon become the capital of Washington Territory. George would make a difference in Olympia.



Washington State Library microfilm
likely from early 1880s

In the spring of 1852, when George first opened the doors to his general store on First Street, it was as if the pioneers were peering into a treasure trove. Before that time, only the bare necessities such as gun powder and axes were sold in this frontier village. George's store carried "luxury" items like soap, medicines and hoop skirts. It immediately became one of the cornerstones of Olympia's earliest business district.

By 1869 George expanded his business skills to include banking. That year he built Olympia's first bank, out of brick on Main Street. George's building still stands today as the oldest bank building in the State of Washington, and Downtown Olympia's second oldest structure.

A good businessman gives back to his community, and George Barnes was no exception. He served on the school board, and was the city's mayor three different times. During a visit to Olympia, President Hayes was officially welcomed by then Mayor Barnes. In the 1860s, George spearheaded the effort to bring many of the Mercer Girls to Olympia. (Mercer Girls were Civil War widows and "respectable" young women from New England hoping to find a husband in the Northwest, where men outnumbered women by a large margin.) In the 1870s, George organized a second group of fire fighters, called the Barnes Hook and Ladder Company. He was also a powerful advocate for bringing the railroad to Olympia. In 1891, at the age of 70, George was president of both the Chamber of Commerce, and the newly-organized Humane Society.

For half a century, George returned each evening to his home on 4th and Adams, just a few streets east of his historic, "luxury" pioneer store.

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1. JOHN MILLER MURPHY (Nov 3,1839 Ft. Wayne, IN - Dec 20,1916 Olympia)

John Murphy was an eleven year old orphan when he made the trip out west to Portland, Oregon Territory in 1850. John's sister and her husband George Barnes, took him in their care and gave him a job in their Portland store. Not wanting to be a store clerk all his life, John immediately began pursuing his two great loves, the newspaper business and music. Before he turned thirteen, John made history in both fields, becoming the first paper carrier for The Oregonian newspaper, and a member of the first church choir (Methodist) in the territory. Decades later, John would again make history in these two fields, as editor and publisher, for 52 years, of the Washington Standard newspaper in Olympia, and as the civic booster who built the spectacular Olympia Opera House, which hosted such luminaries as John Phillip Sousa and Mark Twain.



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Back in 1852, young John accompanied the Barnes Family on their journey north to Olympia, where he attended school for four years. In 1857 John returned to the Portland area where he learned to be a printer, later working on The Argus newspaper in Oregon City. In June of 1860, John cofounded the first newspaper in Vancouver, Washington Territory. However within a few months, he would decide to make Olympia his permanent home. On November 17, 1860 he published and edited the first issue of the weekly Washington Standard. For the next two thousand six hundred weeks, John's newspaper would be delivered to most homes in Olympia and Thurston County, never missing an issue.

Throughout his career, John was a constant contributor to the development of Olympia. He was one of the founders of the Olympia Fire Department and a volunteer fireman. He served as territorial auditor three times, and was on the City Council for eight years. John was a strong railroad booster, and was County School Superintendent one term.

John's motto was *"Be not fearful to speak out, but be sure to speak right."* His cure for the common flu was *"Good sharp apple cider, raw onions and woolen underwear."* But as John once said, *"Music, sweet music, was ever my heart's delight"*. He played the guitar and sang, and in the early days, John and other musicians were known to serenade the young women around town. Later, the strains of music from his Opera House would serenade an audience of 1,000.

The Opera House is gone, but fifty-two years of Murphy journalism have been forever captured on microfilm at local libraries. Take a look.

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4. CHIEF SITKUM KETTLE (1831 Mud Bay - after 1891 Mud Bay)

Sitkum Kettle was the chief of the Squaxin Island Tribe in 1874. Although exact information about this man cannot be verified, he will be remembered for one small but significant event in the history of South Puget Sound. In April of 1874, Olympia's Washington Standard newspaper reported the following news story,

*"The head chief of the Squaxon Indians, Kettel, with three of his chosen braves reported early yesterday morning to the foreman on the grade of the railroad. 'Nesiki ticki cultus potlatch mamook ict sun copa la-lode.' * They manfully went to work."*

*(In the above statement Chief Kettle was speaking in Chinook Jargon, a trade language involving French, English and Salish. The translation is, *"We want to give work one day on the railroad."*)

At this moment in Olympia's history, everyone's hopes for the future focused on the railroad. The volunteer effort, to build 15 miles of track connecting with the main line in Tenino, was considered essential for the economic survival of the area. At the same time, members of the Squaxin Island Tribe were entering some of their darkest days. The harsh reality of early life on the reservation was setting in. As American Settlers appeared in greater numbers, Indians had a clearer understanding of what they had lost.

In the 1880 census, Sitkum was listed as Old Man Kettle, age 49. The census showed his wife Sally as being 35, and his daughter Ellen as 5. It listed Sitkum's occupation as oysterman, and indicated that he had been unemployed for 4 months, as were many of the whites and Indians in Mason County at that time. He could neither read nor write. His name appears once again, in July of 1891. Sitkum Kettle is listed as a survivor of a terrible wagon accident involving eight Indians at Mud Bay, where one man lost his life.

Considering the injustices to Native Americans during and after the Indian War, the actions of Sitkum Kettle at that volunteer event give us a unique picture of this man. As the leader of his people, Chief Kettle showed a spirit of cooperation, and a desire to do his share for the greater good. Finally it showed that Sitkum had not given up hope, during a time when it would have been easy to do so.

Although no one knows if Chief Kettle ever rode the train he helped build, his contribution was noted in Olympia then, as it is now.

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10. MARY OLNEY BROWN (Feb 7, 1821, Avon, NY - Nov 17, 1886 Olympia)

In 1846, the long road west from Iowa was full of hardship and sorrow for Mary Brown, her husband Ben, and their family. There was an outbreak of cholera and scurvy on the wagon train, causing the deaths of many, including two of the Brown's small children. Further along the journey, Mary and Ben encountered a woman standing alone on the prairie. Her family, and even their horses had perished. Mary and Ben brought the woman with them and cared for her all the way to Portland, Oregon.



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In Portland, Mary and Ben operated a fruit orchard until 1852, when they decided to move north to Olympia. The seedling fruit trees they sold to settlers were the start of orchards around southern Puget Sound. The Browns settled on the west side of Budd Inlet a few miles from town. In partnership with the French Family, they soon built Brown's Wharf. This wharf was used to unload all the big ships from San Francisco until Percival's Dock was built in town. Mary would exchange pleasantries with military officers from the ships, including a young Ulysses S. Grant.

During the Indian War, the Browns lived in constant fear since their land claim was so remote. The entire family slept behind a big log for several nights, fearing their home would be targeted for a raid. Finally, the Browns moved into the blockhouse in Olympia, and it was there, in 1856, that Mary gave birth to her son Theodore. Theodore would one day be credited with the idea to create Priest Point Park.

In addition to giving birth to eleven children, Mary somehow found time to help lead the women's suffrage movement. In 1870 she tried to vote at the courthouse, which still stands today at Union and Adams, but was turned away. In 1871, when Susan B. Anthony came to Olympia, Mary helped organize the Washington Territory Woman's Suffrage Association. For years she wrote eloquent newspaper articles supporting women's rights, as well as poetry for her family about the beauty of the land.

By 1874, the Browns had moved to a home in Olympia on 10th Avenue between Adams and Franklin. Mary worked as a midwife and children's nurse. She acquired the nickname Mrs. "Coldwater" Brown because of her successful water cures. In 1884, two years before her death, Mary had the joy of seeing women vote in Olympia for the first time in history.

Whether it was a destitute woman on the prairie, an expectant mother needing a midwife, or a woman wishing to cast her ballot, Mary "Coldwater" Brown was there to help.

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7. ABIGAIL HUNT STUART (Oct 28,1841 Boston, MA - Jan 5,1902 San Francisco, CA)

Abbie was born in Boston to a wealthy, educated family. After graduating from Tremont College at the age of 19, she refused her parent's offers of money and announced she was going to be a self-supporting bookkeeper at a knitting mill nearby. After the Civil War, she headed west to work for her uncle in San Francisco for five years. Then in 1871, Abbie took passage on a sailing ship bound for Olympia to visit a relative. She was "broken in health" when she arrived, but Northwest living would provide her cure.



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Abbie stayed in Olympia with a Mrs. Morgan whose husband was the Deputy U.S. Land Surveyor. In the summer, these two adventurous women convinced Mr. Morgan to let them come along on a four-month trek into the wilderness, surveying parts of lower Puget Sound Country. As they bushwacked through dense growth, swam treacherous rivers and camped under the stars, Abbie found herself thriving on the outdoor experience.

In 1873 Abbie married Robert Stuart, the Receiver of the U.S. Land Office in Olympia. That summer she was elected president of the capital city's newly-formed Women's Suffrage Association. She led this group until the triumphant day in 1883 when the legislature granted women the right to vote. Though the victory was short-lived and the vote taken away five years later, Abbie kept fighting for women's rights. She wore her hair short, unlike most women of her time, and signed her name Mrs. A.H.H. Stuart instead of Mrs. Robert Stuart, as was the custom.

Working beside her husband in the U.S. Land Office in Olympia, Abbie answered hundreds of letters inquiring about life around Puget Sound. In 1875 she wrote a pamphlet promoting the area, and 5,000 copies were distributed. Abbie was acting as a one-woman Chamber of Commerce!

In 1883, Abbie started the "Woman's Social Club For Mutual Improvement". This was a daring step for women, and likely the first of its kind on the West Coast. Abbie also organized Portland's first club for women. Women were encouraged to express their thoughts, write papers, and participate in community service, such as starting the public library.

In 1891 Abbie and her husband built the Stuart Block on the corner of Capitol Way and Sylvester Park. She kept an office in the building, and it was often the site of women's meetings until a clubhouse was built.

The Woman's Club still stands today at 1002 Washington Street, a testimony to Mrs. A.H.H. Stuart's undying belief in the power of women.

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8. REBECCA GROUNDAGE HOWARD (1827 Philadelphia, PA - July 10, 1881 Olympia)

Rebecca, or "Aunt Becky" as she was known to her friends in Olympia, was a skilled African American businesswoman who ran the popular Pacific House on the northeast corner of Third and Main. As the owner, cook and manager, Rebecca became the first woman in charge of a major business in Olympia. A newspaper ad from 1874 gives us a glimpse of her reputation: *"PACIFIC HOUSE RE-OPENED. Mrs. R. Howard has also resumed charge of the House which is sufficient guarantee to those familiar with her ability to superintend its cuisine, that complete satisfaction will be given to those who patronize the establishment."*

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In December of 1862 there was a gun battle outside Rebecca's restaurant. Afterwards, a man named Griswold entered the Pacific House, got into a heated argument with another man over the event, and a fight ensued. Rebecca responded decisively. *"She promptly embraced Mr. Griswold and raised him from the floor a good two feet, holding him thus suspended until he lost both breath and belligerency."* Griswold later said, *"Becky's grip remind(ed) him of an old fashioned blacksmith's vice."*

It was also in 1862 that Rebecca took custody of a five year old boy named Frank whose heritage was Indian, African American and Caucasian. He would one day be owner of the Pacific House, and inherit considerable land holdings. But as a child, Frank learned the hard way that it didn't pay to go against Rebecca's wishes. An early pioneer, recalled her no-nonsense approach to discipline, *"A favorite method of punishing him was to stand him in a well bucket and lower him halfway down the deep well, leaving him there for sometimes an hour at a time."*

The Pacific House entertained famous people like General Sherman, President Hayes and Governor Pickering, but Rebecca was never impressed by titles. She was described as sharp-tongued, handsome, enterprising, successful, robust, good-hearted and generous. She once donated 80 acres to the railroad cause. However, she did not appreciate being referred to as Aunt Becky by strangers, and always told them so. One of the nation's leading newspaper editors ate at the Pacific House and made the following comments, *"(she) welcomed us with the grace and dignity of a queen and fed us as if we were in training for a cannibal's table."*

Rebecca retired and built a home near Priest Point. She died in 1881. You can visit her gravesite at the Masonic Cemetery south of town, and remember, it's Mrs. Howard, not Aunt Becky.