

## THE NORTH IDAHO ANNEXATION ISSUE

(Continued from Vol. XXI, page 137)

Senator Wilson (Mass.) objected to the name Montana. He declared that Montana was no name at all and moved to substitute the name Idaho. The Senate did not act on his motion at the time. After the Harding amendment on the boundaries had been accepted, the Senator from Massachusetts renewed his attempt to change the name. Senator Doolittle opposed the change, but Harding supported Wilson; Doolittle withdrew his opposition and without formal vote the name was changed to Idaho.<sup>10</sup> But the great change which the Senate made in the bill was the modification of the boundary, which was brought about by Benjamin F. Harding,<sup>11</sup> of Oregon. Harding stated that, in his opinion, the figures given by Nesmith of the present population were much too large, as he did not think that there were more than 5,000 people in the region, but as the bill stood, it did not take in the population that wanted territorial government.<sup>12</sup> Accordingly he moved to amend the description of the boundaries to read as follows:

Beginning at a point in the middle channel of the Snake river, where the northern boundary of Oregon intersects the same; thence following down said channel of Snake river to a point opposite the mouth of Kooskooskia, or Clearwater river; thence due north to the

<sup>10</sup> When the Territory of Colorado was organized, in 1861, the name given to the territory in the bill as it passed the House was *Idaho*. It was changed to *Colorado* in the Senate.

<sup>11</sup> Benjamin F. Harding was born in Luzerne County, Pennsylvania, January 14, 1823. He studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1847. He began the practice of his profession in Illinois, but the lure of the West caught his imagination, and he reached California with the Argonauts of 1849. His stay in California was brief, and the next year he arrived in Salem, Oregon, and settled in Marion county. While a lawyer by profession, he devoted most of his time to farming and politics, and was reputed to be one of the shrewdest politicians in the state. He was United States attorney before the organization of the state government and was three times a member of the state legislature. He was Secretary of the territory from 1855 to 1859 by appointment of President Pierce. As a member of the Salem Clique, along with Asahel Bush, of the Oregon *Statesman*, Senator J. W. Nesmith, R. P. Boise, and Lafayette Grover, he was influential in the early political history of Oregon.

His election to the United States Senate in 1862 was to fill the vacancy caused by the death of Colonel Edward D. Baker, who was killed at the battle of Ball's Bluff, and was for the unexpired portion of Baker's term. There were several candidates and after a prolonged struggle, Harding, who was speaker of the House of Representatives, was chosen on the 30th ballot. Orange Jacobs, later to be mentioned as a delegate from Washington Territory, missed election on an earlier ballot by only three votes.

In the Senate, Harding, who was a Douglas Democrat, like his colleague, Nesmith, supported the policies of President Lincoln during the last session of the 37th and 38th Congresses. In 1864, the legislature chose Judge Williams, a Republican, to succeed Harding. In 1864, he supported McClellan for the presidency and tried, after the war was over, along with Asahel Bush, to reorganize the Democrats of the state under the leadership of Andrew Johnson.

Benjamin Harding was twice married. His first wife was Sally M. Bush, and seven children were born to this union. After her death he married, in 1867, Mrs. Eliza Cox, who died several years before her husband. During the last twelve years of his life, he lived at Cottage Grove, Oregon, and here he was stricken with paralysis, June 5, 1899, and died on the 16th. He was buried at Cottage Grove.

<sup>12</sup> The senator was probably honestly mistaken in this, as the greater part of the mining population was then in Boise Basin and Salmon river camps, which lay south of the forty-sixth parallel. The most of the Clearwater mines were north, but these had declined in importance.

forty-ninth parallel of latitude; thence along said parallel of latitude to the twenty-seventh degree of longitude west from Washington; thence south along said degree of longitude to the northern boundary of Colorado Territory; thence west along said boundary to the thirty-third degree of longitude west of Washington; thence north along said degree to the forty-second parallel of latitude; thence west along said parallel to the eastern boundary of the State of Oregon; thence north along said boundary to the place of beginning.

This amendment was agreed to without division. Its effect was to include in the Territory all of the present areas of Idaho and Montana and nearly all of the present area of Wyoming. It virtually doubled the size of the territory proposed by the House of Representatives. It may seem remarkable that a decision so fraught with future difficulties should have been made so lightly, but no one at that time apparently had any idea of the peculiar inconveniences that would perplex the people of North Idaho a generation later. Great events were hastening on their way; 1863 was the decisive year of the Civil War; and the sands in the hour glass of the 37th Congress were nearly run.

It seems reasonable to believe that if the House Committee plan had been adopted, the Bitterroot range would have become the boundary between Montana and Washington in 1864, with no narrow extension of Idaho Territory reaching to the forty-ninth parallel. It is unlikely, however, that Senator Harding proposed the boundary amendment without knowing that there was a considerable body of public opinion in western Washington which favored the line drawn due north from the mouth of the Clearwater. But while this plan of division was probably not original with Harding, the fact remains that to Benjamin Harding, more than to any man of his time, the Idaho Panhandle owes its existence, and in a certain sense is a monument to a public man whose connection with his work has been long forgotten.

The amended bill passed the Senate by a vote of 25 to 12, and was promptly sent to the House. Ashley demanded a conference and was unwilling to accept the Senate amendments, but yielded<sup>13</sup> at the solicitation of Sargent, of California, who reminded him that the closing hours would not admit a conference, and that to try to make better terms with the Senate would probably defeat the measure and deprive the people of the mining areas of an organized gov-

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13 *Cong. Globe*, 37th Congress, third session; p. 1542.

ernment. Ashley<sup>14</sup> reluctantly acquiesced and the bill passed the House by a vote of 65 to 33.

In the Pacific Northwest the opinion seems to have been general that Congress would take some action to divide the unwieldy territory of Washington. News travelled slowly; the overland telegraph had reached California, and the California papers had the latest reports from the East, but neither Oregon nor Washington had telegraphic connection with California until 1864, and had to rely on stages and steamships from San Francisco for information. As expressions of popular opinion at the time, the newspapers in the northwest both in their editorials and in communications from correspondents, furnish considerable information. John Miller Murphy, in the *Washington Standard* (Olympia) of February 21, 1863, writes:

"The whole matter can be summed up in a few words; incompatibility of interests, the inaccessibility of the public offices and records to those residing in the extreme limits, and the differences in the habits of the people, and the progress of the country demand such a division . . . with our extensive border of coast and inland sea, justice would establish that line as far east as the 117th meridian,<sup>15</sup> and thus include the fertile Walla Walla valley."

On March 16, 1863, the *Overland Press* (Olympia) expressed its editorial opinion quite in agreement with the views of the *Standard*:

"The most important item of Congressional information that has reached us during the past week is that of a division of Washington Territory. This measure, which had its advocates and opponents, is carried out to the delight of some and the disgust of others. How or where the dividing line is run, there is thus far no certain means of ascertaining; but it is fair to presume that the meridian of longitude which has hither divided Oregon on the east from the southern elbow of Washington Territory will be continued due north, thus giving the Territory of Washington the same eastern base. A line running due north from the northeastern boundary of Oregon would still leave us a large territory with abundant and

<sup>14</sup> Both Idaho and Montana were organized as territories while James M. Ashley was chairman of the House Committee on Territories. He was the third governor of Montana to be appointed, but held the office less than a year, as President Grant who made the appointment, removed Ashley for criticizing administration policies. Ashley was a forceful and versatile individual who had been a steamboat clerk on the Ohio and Mississippi rivers, a medical student, a newspaper man, a lawyer, a merchant, ten years a member of Congress, and in his later life a railroad promoter and builder. Early in life he became an ardent opponent of slavery; joined the Free Soil and Republican parties; belonged to the radical wing of the Republicans in Congress; and was prominent in the prosecution of the Johnson impeachment charges.

<sup>15</sup> The boundary line as established is less than two miles west of the 117th meridian.

diversified resources . . . such a boundary, we believe, would better suit the people of both sections than any other established further eastward."

Not until April 27th does the *Press* contain definite information regarding the boundary settlement. It prints this information without comment.

News of the impending division of Washington Territory appeared in the *Oregonian* from time to time. On March 10, 1863, a brief note is found stating that on the authority of a telegraphic report received at San Francisco, a bill organizing the Territory of Idaho had been passed. On April 6th, the boundaries of the new territory, according to House Bill 738, are given. This is quoted from the *Sacramento Union*, but the announcement is qualified by stating that the lines herein described may have been changed prior to the final passage of the bill as "we have been previously informed that a change was made while the bill was before the Senate." On April 18th, a correct statement of the boundaries as set forth in the Harding amendment was printed. Another and more detailed account appeared on May 12th with the added promise, "We shall publish the entire organic act as soon as we find room to do so."

Occasionally a critic of the plan of cutting the mining country off by itself had raised his voice. In the *Oregonian* of February 18, 1863, a correspondent writing from the Boise mines declares:

"Ere this, I suppose we are in the territory of Shoshone.<sup>16</sup> This division, to my way of thinking, is a foolish one. If the country were so divided as to embrace all the country west of the Cascades in Oregon, and that lying to the east in Washington Territory, it would be a natural division, and one that would be of some use to the people interested."

The most emphatic note of dissent came from the *Washington Statesman*<sup>17</sup> (Walla Walla):

<sup>16</sup> The *Washington Standard* of February 21, 1863 states that there were two plans of division: (1) To erect a territory of Idaho to include the Salmon river gold mines; (2) the erection of a territory of Shoshone to include Washington Territory south of the 46th parallel and contiguous portions of Utah, Dacotah, and Nebraska, extending eastward beyond the Rocky Mountains.

I am informed by Mr. Charles F. Curry, clerk of the Committee on Territories of the House of Representatives, that the minutes of the committees of the early congresses were seldom preserved and that neither the minutes of the Senate or the House Committees on Territories for this period can be located in the file room.

The *Congressional Globe* shows that on Dec. 22, 1862, Mr. Ashley introduced a bill for the temporary government of the Territory of Idaho. On January 20, 1863, Mr. Ashley asked unanimous consent to report a bill for the temporary government of the Territory of Shoshone in order that it might be printed and recommitted. Mr. Holman objected. The final recommendation of the committee came on February 12 and the name proposed for the territory was Montana. Apparently there was some uncertainty in the committee regarding the name for the territorial infant. It would seem that the plan reported by the House committee corresponded in a general way to the idea described in the *Washington Standard* for the territory of Shoshone.

<sup>17</sup> Quoted in the *Oregonian*, Jan. 22, 1863.

“. . . this division scheme was concocted by a few property holders at Olympia who are interested in keeping the Capital at that place, . . . It is perhaps seconded by a few of the citizens of Lewiston, because the head agitators promise them that the town of Lewiston shall be the seat of government of the new territory. But we fully believe that outside of that town the division question would not, in a fair test, bring fifty votes to its support.”

The same paper on March 21, 1863, strongly objected to the plan of division. It expressed fear that the 117th meridian would be adopted as the eastern boundary and deplored it. It said that this was proposed by Dr. A. G. Henry, “that slippery old hypocrite.” Henry had gone to Washington, D.C. as the “special emissary of the Olympia clique” that wished to keep Olympia as the capital of Washington Territory. *The Statesman* went on to denounce the Olympia “clameaters.”

In this fashion the Idaho country was separated from Washington Territory. The Puget Sound people seemed to have been satisfied. As John Miller Murphy says, the people about Puget Sound did not have much in common with the migratory gold miners of the mountainous interior, and they may well have thought that the division as made was to their advantage. But in Walla Walla, practically the only point of settlement in eastern Washington, there was a different state of feeling. Its business connections and lines of interest were with the mines, and the creation of the new Territory of Idaho left Walla Walla in a condition of unsettled political equilibrium for many years.

Lewiston was the first capital of the new territory. The organic law that created the territory empowered the governor to designate the seat of government, and Lewiston was selected by Governor Wallace. Here the first two meetings of the legislature were held, but in the second the legislature named Boise as the capital, and after a spirited legal contest the government was transferred. Boise Basin was now the most populous of the mining areas, and the mines along the Clearwater and Salmon were becoming of less importance. People with interests in and about Lewiston were naturally aggrieved, but the change was inevitable. The census of 1870 showed that the northern counties had 3178 of the 14,999 people in the territory, and in 1880 there were 6983 in North Idaho as compared with a total population of 32,610. In both periods the North had about 21% of the whole number.

Montana Territory was organized in 1864 and the western

boundary of Montana remains unchanged to this day. The long, narrow extension of Idaho Territory was now upon the map, but the political problems of the Panhandle did not appear at the time. They were to come into existence with the growth of population and the development of new economic and political interests. Montana Territory was organized for the same reasons that had brought about the organization of Idaho the year before. The mines of Last Chance and Alder Gulch were drawing increasing numbers of miners east of the mountains. It was a long and hazardous trip across the ranges to the capital of Idaho, and in winter communications become doubly difficult. The lack of effective government had been shown when vigilance committees were formed to deal with Plummer's gang of bandits and murderers. The Idaho Legislature itself memorialized Congress to organize the new territory, alleging with much force the physical obstacles which made the existing arrangement impracticable. In this memorial it was suggested that the name of the territory should be Jefferson.

It is interesting to note the eastern boundary which the Idaho Legislature wishes to establish for the proposed territory of Jefferson.<sup>18</sup> It was to follow the main range of the Rocky mountains from the forty-second parallel north to the intersection of the one-hundred and thirteenth meridian with the mountain range; the meridian was to be the boundary until it again intersected the main range, and from that point on to the British line, the continental divide was to be followed. Such a boundary had interesting possibilities. It would have included in Idaho the western half of Beaverhead county, and all that part of northwestern Montana which lies in the Columbia watershed. The northern part of Idaho would have been three or four times its present width, and this might have led, at a later date, to a division between the northern and southern portions, thus creating another interior territory west of the Rockies drained by the tributaries of the Columbia.

The production of placer gold quickly came to its peak and as quickly declined. In 1863 it was estimated at \$13,000,000 and in 1869 at \$1,600,000. By way of compensation, it may be noted that by 1867 the output of the quartz mines of southern Idaho was rapidly increasing.<sup>19</sup> More stable conditions prevailed both in mining and in general lines of business, and many people engaged in stock raising, farming, and lumbering. The interests of the people of north-

<sup>18</sup> *Cong. Globe*, 38th Congress, first session, p. 1164.

<sup>19</sup> J. Ross Browne: *A report upon the mineral resources of the states and territories west of the Rocky mountains*, p. 131.

ern Idaho were now the same as those of the adjoining Territory of Washington. Moreover, the Columbia and Snake rivers, which were the principal means of communication before the building of railroads, connected the Lewiston country, at that time the most populous part of North Idaho, closely with Washington and Oregon. On the other hand, the Union Pacific Railroad, which was completed in 1868, tended to draw the commercial interests of southern Idaho in the direction of Utah, Nevada, and California.

Soon we find the legislature of Idaho memorializing Congress regarding a re-arrangement of the territory. This memorial<sup>20</sup> was adopted in the session of 1865-66, and it stated that the Salmon river range of mountains made communication with northern Idaho a matter of the greatest difficulty; that by reason of the nature of the wide mountain barrier, it was destined to remain uninhabited; that the interests of the North and the South were dissimilar; and that both areas would be better off if they were separated. The memorial asked that that part of Utah lying north of forty-one degrees and thirty minutes be annexed to Idaho, and that a new territory, to be known as the territory of Columbia, should be formed out of western Montana, northern Idaho, and eastern Washington. The boundary proposed on the south would pass along the Salmon river range of mountains; on the east it was nearly the same as that which the Legislature had previously proposed for Jefferson Territory (Montana); on the west, it cut through the Big Bend country not far from the present western side of Lincoln county, Washington.<sup>21</sup>

Early in 1865 a delegation had been sent from Lewiston to Walla Walla to sound out the sentiment of the Walla Walla people on the organization of a new territory out of northern Idaho and eastern Washington. The delegation returned with the counter proposition that northern Idaho should be annexed to Washington. At a Lewiston mass meeting this proposal was unanimously rejected.<sup>22</sup> The proposal to erect an interior territory of Columbia, although made with the authority of the Idaho legislature did not attract much

<sup>20</sup> Memorial No. 5—Laws of Idaho Territory, third session. (Boise 1866) pp. 293-294.

<sup>21</sup> The following is the description of the boundaries: Commencing in the middle of the channel of Snake river, where the parallel of forty-four degrees and forty-five minutes north latitude crosses said river; thence east on said parallel to the western line of the territory of Montana; thence westerly on the summit of the Wind River mountains to a point where the meridian of thirty-five degrees and thirty minutes longitude west from Washington crosses said summit; thence north on said meridian of longitude until the same reaches the summit of the Rocky mountains; thence northerly following the summit of the Rocky mountains to the forty-ninth parallel of north latitude; thence west along said parallel to the forty-second meridian of longitude west from Washington; thence east on said parallel of latitude to the middle of the channel of Snake river; thence up the middle of the channel of Snake river to the place of beginning.

<sup>22</sup> *Washington Democrat* (Olympia) March 4, 1865, (from *Idaho World*, Idaho City).

favorable attention, and by 1867 the annexation of northern Idaho was being considered more favorably in the Lewiston region. The *Idaho Statesman*<sup>23</sup> voiced a note of alarm at this idea and gave reasons for believing that the separation of the northern area would be detrimental to the interests of the territory. On the other hand, the *Owyhee Avalanche*,<sup>24</sup> also representing southern Idaho interests, thought that the union of northern Idaho and Washington Territory would be desirable if the people affected considered that they would be benefited.

Considerable attention was given to a meeting<sup>25</sup> at Lewiston September 27, 1867, which was addressed by speakers from both northern Idaho and Walla Walla, urging annexation but only as a step to the formation of a new territory to consist of eastern Washington and northern Idaho. This policy was denounced by the *Walla Walla Statesman*<sup>26</sup> which declared that the sentiment in the Walla Walla region was in favor of the annexation of the northern Idaho counties for the purpose of increasing the population and wealth of Washington so that it might the sooner become a state in the Union. However, the *Pacific Tribune*<sup>27</sup> (Olympia) attacked the movement, the Walla Walla people, and the *Statesman* in an editorial quite in the journalistic fashion of that frontier period:

"The people of Walla Walla are just now suffering their periodical attack of territorial itch, and are scratching furiously for the annexation of Northern Idaho—all of which, a few years ago, was included in the Territory of Washington. Walla Walla wants to be the center of some big thing. She is the 'hub' of bushwhackerdom, Copper-headism, and a very respectable district of agricultural country, but is nevertheless discontented with her lot. . . . The ostensible object of the new annexation scheme is to secure population so that our Territory can become a state; but the real object is to get a slice of country east of Walla Walla large enough to make her the centre and capital of a big Territory. At a meeting recently held to advance this project, the great whale, Dugan,<sup>28</sup> the little fish, Langford, and snakes of various sorts and sizes, were in favor of openly avowing their real designs, and notifying the clam-eaters at

23 *Idaho Tri-Weekly Statesman*, (Boise) Sept. 21, 1867.

24 *Owyhee Avalanche*, October 19, 1867.

25 The *Weekly Oregonian*, Oct. 12, 1867, has the account taken from the *Lewiston Journal*, October 3.

26 *The Statesman* (Walla Walla), November 15, 1867.

27 *Pacific Tribune* (Olympia), November 16, 1867.

28 Frank P. Dugan was a pioneer Walla Walla lawyer and politician of the self-confident and aggressive type. He was a Democrat and was elected to the territorial legislature in 1863 and 1864. In the 1864 session he was speaker of the House. In the Democratic convention of 1867 he came within two votes of nomination as territorial delegate. In the county election of that year he became prosecuting attorney and in several succeeding years was city attorney of Walla Walla.



once, that the capital could, would, and should be moved to Walla Walla. But the more astute editor<sup>29</sup> of the *Statesman* pronounced such a course premature; the whale and the little fish were overruled, and the meeting abandoned the real, and fell back upon the ostensible object, as the base of future action."

The fact is that there was nothing settled at that time either as to territorial boundaries or capitol locations and it is evident that these early commonwealth builders thought realistically and in terms of the material advantages which political projects might bring to their respective localities. As the editor of the *Owyhee Avalanche* sagely observes: "The argument that selfishness and personal ambitions have much to do with it is nothing to us—as they to a certain extent attend all important political changes." Western Washington was intent on retaining that portion of the territory that lay east of the Cascades and was somewhat indifferent about acquiring northern Idaho. The people of northern Idaho wanted most of all to be separated from the rest of the territory; they would have preferred to be part of a new territory in the drainage area of the upper Columbia, but if that proved impracticable, wished to be united to Washington Territory.<sup>30</sup> For Walla Walla there were several possibilities: First, that described in the *Statesman's* editorial—the union of North Idaho to Washington for the sake of early statehood; second, an interior territory of which Walla Walla might be the capital—the plan advocated by Dugan and others; third, separation from Washington Territory and union with Oregon,<sup>31</sup>—in this way gain-

<sup>29</sup> William H. Newell:

<sup>30</sup> . . . "If Congress will not create a new territory including the section of Washington and Idaho east of the Columbia and Okanogan rivers, then annex us to Washington by all means." *Idaho Signal* (Lewiston), November 9, 1872.

<sup>31</sup> The Oregon constitutional convention of 1857 designated the Columbia and Snake rivers as the northern boundary of the state but the congressional act of February 14, 1859, which admitted Oregon to the Union, cut the Walla Walla area off and made the forty-sixth parallel the boundary from the Columbia to the Snake river. The Columbia route to the interior brought the Walla Walla region into commercial relations with Portland and western Oregon rather than with the towns of western Washington. For more than twenty years the ultimate disposition of the area between the forty-sixth parallel and Snake river was a matter of some political uncertainty. Governor Mullin of Washington Territory warned the legislative assembly, December 12, 1857, of the Oregon plan to secure the coveted region. The Washington territorial legislature in 1865-66 and again in 1879 memorialized Congress against the dismemberment of Washington Territory. On the other hand, the Oregon state legislature persistently memorialized Congress to separate the Walla Walla country from Washington and to incorporate it with Oregon. There was a memorial to this effect in 1865; one in 1870; one in 1872; and another in 1876. In 1874 the lower house of the Oregon legislature framed a memorial which was not acted on by the Senate.

The early sentiment of the people of Walla Walla probably favored union with Oregon as the majority of the voters in 1865 are said to have signed petitions praying for annexation. A petition to this effect was received by the Oregon legislature in that year. This feeling seems to have declined to a considerable degree but became intensified when Walla Walla county was reduced in size and population in 1875 by the creation of Columbia county. The people of Walla Walla resented this act of the legislature and for some time fervently supported the plan of annexation to Oregon. In a fiery editorial in the *Statesman*, of October 2, 1876, William H. Newell declared: . . . "Our enterprise is repressed and our energies retarded by being tailed on to Puget Sound—a live body linked to a dead carcass. Annexation to Oregon releases our beautiful valley from this deathly embrace and at once secures all the advantages of state

ing the advantage of immediate statehood, but losing the possibility of future political importance, either in a new territorial organization or by balancing Puget Sound against an enlarged eastern Washington.

The official opinion of Washington, as expressed in its territorial legislature, was in favor of annexation, and substantial encouragement was given to the movement through memorials to Congress that were adopted in 1868, 1873, and 1875, praying that Nez Perce, Idaho, and Shoshone, the three northern counties of Idaho Territory, should be attached to Washington. During the next few years public opinion in these counties became nearly unanimous in favor of annexation as the most practicable way out of their difficulties, but in southern Idaho popular sentiment had begun to show the cross currents so marked later on. People hesitated, and wondered if the separation of North Idaho would not be a serious loss.<sup>32</sup>

Public opinion and newspaper expressions throughout Washington, for the most part, steadily supported the action of the legislature favoring the reunion of the northern Idaho strip, detached in 1863, to the parent territory. It should be said, however, that feeling on the matter was less intense in Washington. The Idaho people felt acutely the inconvenience, and what seemed to them the injustice, of the situation, while in Washington the population generally was satisfied with the existing situation, but believed that if northern Idaho could be secured, it would be a valuable addition to the territory, and likely to result in statehood at an earlier date. Typical of this attitude is the cautious statement of the Walla Walla Union of November 23, 1872: . . . "We learn that in Stevens and Whitman counties, the members of the Legislatures are pledged to favor the

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organization. . . . Annexation will vivify every material interest of our valley and place us on the high road to prosperity."

Senator Kelly and Representative Slater of Oregon introduced bills in the Senate and House in the third session of the forty-second Congress to annex the country south of the Snake river to Oregon and in the forty-fourth Congress, first session, similar bills were introduced by Senator Kelly and Representative Lane. These measures provided that the qualified electors of the area affected should vote on the question of annexation to Oregon and that a majority vote was necessary to bring about the change. In February, 1876, Senator Kelly presented petitions from the Walla Walla county commissioners and from 819 citizens praying for annexation. Congress never acted on the question although the House committee of the forty-fourth Congress reported favorably on the Lane bill. Feeling arising from the question may have influenced the vote in Walla Walla county on the adoption of the 1878 constitution when only 89 votes were cast in its favor while 847 were cast against it.

The majority of the people in Columbia county, having gained county organization, opposed annexation to Oregon and petitioned Congress against it. In this connection it may be noted that the sentiment of northern Idaho was opposed to the separation of Walla Walla from Washington. The *Idaho Signal* of November 22, 1873, declared that if this came about North Idaho would not care to be a part of a diminished eastern Washington.

<sup>32</sup> The Idaho legislature memorialized Congress in 1870 for a change in boundaries but "none that would leave the territory less able to maintain the burden of government, interfere with the congressional ratio of representation, or decrease the prospect of arriving at the dignity of statehood." Evidently, this could not be done without taking parts of neighboring territories and adding these to southern Idaho.

annexation of northern Idaho to Washington Territory. We believe that such a movement would result to the benefit of our northern Idaho neighbors, and we cannot see that it would injure Washington Territory, but would add to our importance, and would make Washington a state much sooner."

A meeting which was held at Lewiston, October 30, 1873, and which was supposed to contain representatives from the different sections of northern Idaho strongly supported annexation, and appointed an executive committee to prepare a memorial to Congress. This document<sup>33</sup> is dated November 22, 1873, and under fourteen heads contains an admirable statement, in temperate language, of the topographical obstacles that made intercourse with southern Idaho so difficult; and of their dissimilar interests, while the interests of North Idaho and the adjoining portions of Washington were almost identical and the boundary entirely artificial. It recited the fact that the Northern Pacific Railroad then being built would contribute to draw northern Idaho more closely still to Washington. It asked that all that part of Idaho lying north of the forty-fifth parallel be annexed to Washington. The memorial served to make the feelings of the people of North Idaho more definitely articulate, while encouragement came from over the Washington line in meetings held at Walla Walla, Dayton, and Waitsburg during the month of January, 1874, in which resolutions were adopted endorsing the union of the areas.

The year 1874 was marked by lively controversies. John Hailey,<sup>34</sup> the territorial delegate, questioned the representative character of the names appended to the 1873 memorial; declared that a division on the forty-fifth parallel was unfair to southern Idaho; and argued that no arrangement had been suggested to take care of the territorial debt. On these points, numerous, fervid, and sarcastic rejoinders appeared.

Although Congress took no action, the movement gained, rather than lost, and petitions praying for annexation to Washington were presented in 1875 and 1877. An instructive example of the close connection between political and economic considerations was furnished on January 22, 1878, when Stephen S. Fenn, Idaho's delegate in Congress, presented two petitions from Nez Perce, Idaho, and Shoshone counties. One was signed by 999 residents praying Con-

<sup>33</sup> Most readily found in the *History North Idaho*, published by the Western Historical Publishing Company, p. 72.

<sup>34</sup> John Hailey (Dem.) was elected territorial delegate in 1872; Stephen S. Fenn (Dem.) in 1874 and 1876; George Ainslie (Dem.) in 1878 and 1880; T. F. Singiser (Rep.) in 1882; John Hailey (Dem.) in 1884; F. T. Dubois (Rep.) in 1886 and 1888.

gress for the improvement of the Snake and Clearwater rivers in Washington and Idaho, while the other was signed by 1065, and asked annexation of the same counties to Washington. A new description of the territory to be detached is here encountered. It is described as Nez Perce county and all that part of Idaho attached to that county for judicial purposes.

The election of Stephen S. Fenn in 1876 was regarded by the North Idaho people as a victory for the cause of separation, since Fenn was regarded as a friend of the movement, while his opponent, Bennet, had declared himself opposed. The *Lewiston Teller*, the aggressive organ of annexation, has frequent allusions in the follow-years to the Fenn-Bennet contest as indicative of the convictions of the people of the northern counties at the time.

The Walla Walla convention was held in 1878 to frame a constitution for what its proponents hoped would be the State of Washington. They were unduly optimistic and anticipated the admission of Washington into the Union by eleven years. In the expectation that the Idaho Panhandle would be joined with the State of Washington a representative of the northern counties of Idaho was admitted as a delegate without a vote but with all the privileges of debate. Alonzo Leland,<sup>35</sup> of Lewiston, was the Idaho delegate. When submitted to the voters for ratification, the constitution was approved in Washington by 6462 to 3231, and in northern Idaho by 742 to 28. This bore out the repeated assertions of the newspapers and petitions, that the people were virtually all in favor of separa-

<sup>35</sup> Alonzo Leland is a central figure in the annexation movement and prominent in Lewiston and North Idaho affairs from about 1862 till his death, October 24, 1891. He was born in Vermont in 1818, became a carpenter and teacher, and graduated from Brown University in 1843. He went to California in 1849 and from there to Oregon in 1850 where he was first employed as a civil engineer. He engaged in newspaper work in Portland as an editor and publisher, but in 1861 joined the rush to the gold fields of Florence. He acquired the *Lewiston Journal* in 1867 and seems to have had some interest with his son in the *Idaho Signal* which succeeded the *Journal*. In 1874 he founded the *Lewiston Teller* and published it until its sale in 1890 to C. A. Foresman. Leland was also admitted to the bar and practiced law. His varied career was typical of the energetic and adaptable westerner. When railroads came to the Northwest, Leland believed that a transcontinental line coming down the Clearwater from Montana would pass through Lewiston. In this he was disappointed, as he was also in his hope that North Idaho would be united to Washington. In the *Teller* he gave the annexation movement his unstinted support year after year. Its pages contain a mine of information on the subject.

In a letter to the writer dated January 17, 1930, ex-Senator Dubois says, . . . "I regard Alonzo Leland as the most earnest, conscientious and constant worker for many years in this movement. He was actuated by the highest motives, and not at all by personal considerations. Nearly every conspicuous man in every walk of life in north Idaho was in favor of this separation. I think I pointed out in my articles that they were not to be criticized for this, and at the time they were urging the separation it really would have been to the advantage of all north Idaho. Statehood was not even dreamed of during this agitation. I think I was the first public man who visioned statehood, and this made me so determined against the separation, for if the separation had taken place south Idaho would probably have been annexed to Nevada and Idaho wiped out."

The *Teller* had no rival until 1880 when the *Nez Perce News* was established at Lewiston. A. F. Parker bought the *News* in 1881 and it became the organ of the anti-annexationists. Parker was an aggressive champion of the territorial unity of Idaho. Parker later published the *Coeur d'Alene Eagle* and the *Idaho County Free Press*. He died January 3, 1930.

tion from Idaho. The dividing line in the Walla Walla constitution was the forty-fifth parallel from the Snake river to its intersection with the meridian thirty-fifth and thirty minutes west from Washington, and thence on this meridian to the summit of the Bitterroot range.

Before the Walla Walla convention had met, but after the people had approved and the legislature had authorized the holding of the convention, Orange Jacobs, then congressional delegate from Washington, introduced in the House of Representatives an enabling act to admit Washington to the Union. In this bill, the northern counties of Idaho are to be joined to Washington.<sup>36</sup> Jacobs introduced the bill December 10, 1877; it was referred to the Committee on Territories and no further action was taken during that Congress. It is doubtful if Washington had sufficient population to justify admission, but political strategy dictated its exclusion. Washington was Republican and the Democratic party controlled at least one of the branches of government until 1889.

Thomas H. Brents succeeded Orange Jacobs as delegate from Washington Territory; he was elected in 1878 and served three successive terms. In each Congress, the forty-sixth, forty-seventh and forty-eighth, he introduced bills to make Washington Territory a state. All these bills proposed the inclusion of the northern counties of Idaho, and the first two (H.B. 1290, 46th Congress, and H.B. 1925, 47th Congress) followed the line of division proposed in the Walla Walla convention. The bill introduced in the forty-eighth Congress (H.B. 2941) had the Salmon River as the boundary line.<sup>37</sup> The only bill of the three reported out of Committee was H.B. 1925 in the forty-seventh Congress, and this the Committee amended by cutting the proposed state down to its territorial limits and excluding the three Idaho counties. Evidently the Committee on Territories was either indifferent or hostile to the wishes of the people of North Idaho.<sup>38</sup>

But the inhabitants of the Panhandle were more determined

36 That part of the boundary is described as follows: From the intersection of the forty-sixth parallel with the Snake River; "thence up the middle of the main channel of the Snake river to the boundary line between the counties of Idaho and Ada in the Territory of Idaho; thence southeasterly along said boundary line to the northwest corner of Boise county; thence easterly along the south line of said Idaho county to the southeast corner thereof; thence north along the east line of said county of Idaho to the Bitter Root mountains."

37 Thence southerly from the intersection of the forty-sixth parallel with the middle channel of Snake river) along said channel of Snake river to a point opposite the mouth of Salmon river; thence up along the middle of the main channel of said river to a point opposite the mouth of Horse Creek; thence up the middle of the main channel of said stream to its source; thence to the nearest point of the crest of the Bitter Root range of mountains.

38 Among the reasons given by the committee were: (a) Washington would become too large; (b) Idaho would be "Mormonized"; (c) county and legislative machinery would be demoralized.

than ever in urging the change. The question was submitted to the voters in 1880 and only two ballots were cast against it in Nez Perce county, and not one in Shoshone. Senator Dolphe declared before the Senate,<sup>39</sup> April 1, 1886, that in 1880 the vote in northern Idaho in favor of annexation was 1216 for and 7 against. New Political tactics now came into use; at Lewiston, September 28, 1880,<sup>40</sup> a meeting of citizens of all parties unanimously agreed to support no man as delegate to Congress who would not publicly pledge himself to work for annexation, and moreover, the meeting offered to support the removal of the capital from Boise to some place in southeastern Idaho in return for the support, from that section, of the annexation of northern Idaho to Washington. Irrespective of party lines they would work unitedly for separation from southern Idaho with which, as one Washington newspaper<sup>41</sup> remarked, they had "no business relations except the payment of taxes and no social relations beyond the biennial visits made by members of the legislature and the occasional trips of sheriffs with prisoners." In a territory rather closely divided politically, 20% of the voters in the North could swing elections. This political strategy had been editorially outlined by Leland in the *Teller* on April 9, 1880. The first trial of the plan came in November 1880 when ex-Governor Brayman, who had been chosen to represent the North Idaho separationists, received 904 votes in the northern counties to 237 for Ainslie, the regular Democratic candidate, and 34 for Smith, the Republican. The people in northern Idaho were elated and further encouragement was given them when the lower house of the territorial legislature by a vote of 15 to 8 passed in the following session (1881) a memorial asking for the separation of the area in question. This was brought about by a combination between the representatives of northern and southeastern Idaho. A good description of the working of these non-partisan methods is given in a speech<sup>42</sup> in the House of Representatives by John Hailey, Idaho's delegate in the forty-ninth Congress:

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39 50th Congress, 1st Session, Serial no. 2520, p. 21.

40 *The Spokane Times*, October 9, 1880, p. 3, column 5.

41 *Palouse Gazette*, November 29, 1878.

42 *Congressional Record*, forty-ninth Congress, first session, p. 1707.