GONE WITH THE TREND

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UNTIL WE FIRST TRAVELED THROUGH THERE IN 1961, I HAD HARDLY HEARD OF THE STATE OF IDAHO EXCEPT PERHAPS IN A HISTORY OR GEOGRAPHY CLASS. I CERTAINLY HAD NO IDEA OF ITS GEOGRAPHICAL WONDERS OR OF THE IMPORTANT ROLE IT HAS PLAYED IN THE HISTORY AND ECONOMY OF OUR COUNTRY. WHEN MANY THINK OF IDAHO THEY THINK OF HER FAMOUS POTATOES, AND ALTHOUGH THEY ARE AMONG THE BEST AVAILABLE, THEY ARE ONLY A SMALL PART OF IDAHO'S CLAIM TO FAME. THE NAME IDAHO IS THE WHITE MAN'S DERIVATION OF THE INDIAN NAME FOR THIS REGION OF SOARING PEAKS, "EE-DA-HOW," WHICH MEANT, "LIGHT ON THE MOUNTAIN." IDAHO HAS MORE MOUNTAINS AND DEEPER GORGES THAN ANY OTHER STATE IN THE UNION, WITH OVER HALF ITS TOTAL AREA BEING COVERED WITH MASSIVE MOUNTAIN RANGES. THE HIGHEST OF THESE, MOUNT BORAH, REACHES TO 12,655 FEET. AT THE SAME TIME HELL'S CANYON OF THE SNAKE RIVER IS THE DEEPEST GORGE IN NORTH AMERICA, DEEPER THAN THE GRAND CANYON AND ALL THE REST. AND THE MASSIVE SHOSHONE FALLS ON THE SNAKE RIVER ARE HIGHER THAN NIAGRA. SUN VALLEY IS ONE OF THE WORLD'S FAVORITE AND THE MOST HIGHLY DEVELOPED OF WINTER SPORTS RESORTS WITH ITS FAMOUS BALDY MOUNTAIN SKI SLOPES HAVING A VERTICAL RISE OF 3,253 FEET. THE CRATERS OF THE MOON NATIONAL MONUMENT IS AN AREA OF NUMEROUS VOLCANIC CINDER CONES AND CRATERS THAT LOOKS VERY MUCH LIKE THE SURFACE OF THE MOON AND IS ONE AREA WHERE THE ASTRONAUTS TRAINED BEFORE GOING TO THE MOON. IDAHO HAS THE NATION'S LARGEST ELK HERD AND IS ONE OF ONLY TWO STATES WHERE HUNTERS CAN STILL TRY FOR MOOSE. THE FAMED KAMLOOPS RAINBOW TROUT IN IDAHO'S LAKE PEND OREILLE ARE THE WORLD'S LARGEST, AND MASSIVE STURGEON HAVE COME FROM THE SNAKE RIVER. I

DIDN'T BELIEVE IT WHEN I FIRST HEARD THAT THE LEGAL LIMIT FOR STURGEON WAS SIX FEET -- AND THAT'S THE MINIMUM! ANY SMALLER AND YOU HAVE TO PUT THEM BACK. IDAHO IS ALSO KNOWN AS THE GEM STATE BECAUSE AT LEAST SOME OF ALL PRECIOUS STONES HAVE BEEN FOUND THERE, FROM BEAUTIFUL STAR SAPPHIRES TO OPAL THAT RIVALS THE FAMOUS AUSTRALIAN STONES.

WHAT IS NOW IDAHO WAS SO RUGGED THAT THE GREAT MIGRATION OF SETTLERS TO OREGON AND THE NORTHWEST HAD PASSED IT BY. IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1860 THAT EVEN ONE PERMANENT SETTLEMENT HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED IN THIS AREA. THIS VAST REGION HAD COME TO BE KNOWN AS THE "UNSETTLED" PART OF THE WASHINGTON TERRITORY. BUT NUMEROUS DISCOVERIES OF GOLD WERE TO CHANGE THAT. TOWNS AND CITIES GREW RAPIDLY OVERNIGHT TO THE POINT THAT THE DEMAND FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT BECAME URGENT AND IN MARCH, 1893, IDAHO AS A TERRITORY CAME INTO EXISTENCE.

BUT THE MAIN FOCUS OF THIS PAPER IS TO BE ON ONLY A SMALL SEGMENT OF THIS WONDERLAND OF NATURE. A SEGMENT ONLY 30 MILES WIDE EAST TO WEST AND NO MORE THAN 15 TO 20 MILES NORTH TO SOUTH. THIS SEGMENT IS LOCATED IN THE NORTHERN IDAHO PANHANDLE AND IS KNOWN AS THE COEUR d'ALENES. NAMED AFTER THE INDIANS IN THAT AREA IT WAS TO BECOME ONE OF THE RICHEST MINING DISTRICTS IN THE WORLD. BY 1842 HOPKINSVILLE WAS ALREADY OFFICIALLY 45 YEARS OLD BUT IF ANY WHITE MAN HAD EVER BEEN IN THAT PART OF THE NORTHWEST BY THEN, "HE MUST HAVE WALKED VERY LIGHTLY, LEAVING NO FOOTPRINTS." THE FIRST RECORDED VISITOR CAME NOR FOR GOLD OR GAME BUT TO WORK WITH THE INDIANS. IT WAS FATHER PIERRE JEAN DE SMET WHO, IN APRIL, 1842, ON A TRIP FROM HIS MISSION IN MONTANA TO A FORT IN WHAT IS

NOW WASHINGTON STATE, CAME THROUGH THESE HEAVILY FORRESTED MOUNTAINS IN ORDER TO VISIT THE COEUR d'ALENE INDIANS. HE SPENT TWO OR THREE DAYS GIVING THEM RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION AND LEFT WITH A PROMISE TO ESTABLISH A MISSION FOR THEM SOON. IN THE FALL OF THAT YEAR FATHER NICHOLAS POINT AND BROTHER HUET CAME TO ESTABLISH THE MISSION PLANNED BY FATHER DE SMET. CRUDE LOG STRUCTURES WERE BUILT BUT FLOOD WATERS EACH YEAR FORCED PLANS TO MOVE THE MISSION TO A BETTER LOCATION. IT WAS NOT UNTIL 1852 OR '53 THAT THE NEW BUILDING OPENED FOR SERVICES. IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL CHURCH MADE WITH MASSIVE BEAMS HEWN FROM THE SURROUNDING FORREST AND PUT TOGETHER WITH WOODEN PEGS. PAINTS TO DECORATE THE INTERIOR WERE MADE BY THE INDIANS FROM WILD PLANTS AND BERRIES. THIS SACRED HEART MISSION, NOW USUALLY REFERRED TO AS THE CATALDO MISSION, STILL STANDS IN EXCELLENT CONDITION. A FAVORITE TOURIST ATTRACTION, IT IS LOCATED JUST OFF THE INTERSTATE THAT NOW PASSES THROUGH.

BUT THERE WERE NO ROADS IN THE COEUR d'ALENE DISTRICT IN THE MID-1800'S. IT WAS IN 1859 AND 1860 THAT CAPTAIN JOHN MULLAN SURVEYED AND BUILT THE FIRST "ROAD" THROUGH WHAT IS NOW THE IDAHO PANHANDLE. ACTUALLY IT WAS ONLY A NARROW TRAIL AT FIRST BUT IT WAS IMPROVED OVER THE NEXT TWO YEARS TO THE POINT THAT IT COULD HANDLE WAGONS MOST OF THE TIME. DURING HIS SURVEY CAPTAIN MULLAN WROTE ABOUT THE TIMBER IN SOME OF THE AREA: "CEDARS FROM THREE TO SIX FEET IN DIAMETER FREQUENTLY OCCUR. THE PINE BECOMES ABUNDANT, ATTAINING A GROWTH OF FROM TWO TO THREE FEET IN DIAMETER AND FROM 150 TO 200 FEET HIGH." DURING THE MONTANA GOLD RUSH OF THE MID-1860'S THE MULLAN ROAD WAS HEAVILY TRAVELED BUT AFTERWARD FELL INTO A STATE OF DISREPAIR.

THE ROAD HAD BEEN BUILT AS A MILITARY ROAD BUT BY NOW THE INDIANS OF THAT PART OF THE COUNTRY WERE NO LONGER HOSTILE. THE MULLEN ROAD WAS FAST REVERTING TO ITS ORIGINAL NATURAL STATUS WHEN THE DISCOVERY OF GOLD IN THE COEUR d'ALENES BROUGHT LIFE ONCE AGAIN.

NO ONE REALLY KNOWS WHO WAS THE FIRST TO DISCOVER GOLD IN THE COEUR d'ALENES BUT IT WAS QUITE LIKELY A BLACK MAN WHOSE NAME IS UNKNOWN. A MONTANA NEWSPAPER REPORTED A STORY OF A NEGRO WHO CAME TO MISSOULA WITH A LARGE AMOUNT OF GOLD DUST IN 1866, CLAIMING HE KNEW WHERE THERE WAS PLENTY MORE. IT WAS LATER FOUND THAT THE GOLD HAD COME FROM THE EASTERN PART OF THE COEUR d'ALENES, A SPOT THAT CAME TO BE KNOWN AS "NIGGER PRAIRIE." MANY OTHER GOLD SITES WERE FOUND IN THE COEUR d'ALENES BUT THE MOST FAMOUS AND RICHEST WAS THE AREA AROUND WHERE THE TOWN OF MURRAY WAS TO BE ESTABLISHED. THE FIRST GOLD WAS DISCOVERED THERE BY TWO MEN IN THE FALL OF 1881 AND ALTHOUGH THEY TRIED TO KEEP THE NEWS A SECRET EXCEPT FOR SHARING IT WITH A FEW CLOSE FRIENDS, THE WORD, OF COURSE, GOT OUT AND BY SPRING AT LEAST 100 MEN WERE ON THE SPOT. BY THE WINTER OF 1883 AT LEAST 5,000 MORE PEOPLE HAD COME TO THAT NARROW CANYON WITH MANY MORE TO COME LATER.

ONE COLORFUL FIGURE AMONG THEM WAS MARY BURDEN, A YOUNG IRISH WOMAN WHO QUICKLY FOUND HER PLACE IN MURRAY AS QUEEN OF THE UNDERWORLD. SHE BECAME KNOWN AS THE NOTORIOUS MOLLY-B'DAMN, WHO LIVED IN LUXURY BUT NEVER HESITATED TO CLIMB TO A MOUNTAIN CABIN TO NURSE A SICK PROSPECTOR WHO WAS FAR FROM HOME AND FAMILY. IN 1884 THERE WAS A CONTROVERSIAL MOVEMENT TO PREVENT ANY CHEAP CHINESE LABOR FROM BEING BROUGHT INTO THE CAMPS AND MOLLY WAS THE

FIRST TO TAKE AN OPEN STAND. ON HER HORSE SHE MADE THE ROUNDS OF ALL THE CAMPS, AROUSING THE MINERS AND WARNING THEM OF THE DANGERS. A NEWSPAPER FROM COEUR d'ALENE CITY ABOUT 50 MILES AWAY CARRIED THE FOLLOWING NOTICE: "WE WANT CHINAMEN BUT WE WANT THEM A LONG WAY OFF. AS COOKS THEY WOULD OFT TIMES BE VERY ACCEPTABLE. AS LAUNDRYMEN THEY WOULD BE CONVENIENT. AS PACK ANIMALS ON DIFFERENT TRAILS THEY WOULD BE BONANZAS. BUT THEY HAD BETTER STAY AWAY JUST THE SAME. THE FIAT HAS GONE FORTH THAT NO CELESTIAL CAN EVER GAZE UPON THE WOODED GULCHES OF THE COEUR d'ALENES AND LIVE. THIS CAMP, LIKE LEADVILLE, WILL NEVER FEEL THE CURSE OF CHEAP COOLIE LABOR."

EVERY MINING CAMP HAS ITS FAVORITE STORIES AND THE BEST KNOWN ONE IN MURRAY IS THAT OF DREAM GULCH AND "DREAM GULCH" DAVIS WHO DISCOVERED IT, AND FEW PEOPLE DOUBT THE STORY IS TRUE. DAVIS HAD ARRIVED IN MURRAY LATE AND HAD TO WORK HARD, BUT HIS WORK BROUGHT LITTLE REWARD. HE WAS DISCOURAGED AND DOWN TO HIS LAST HANDFUL OF BEANS AND WAS READY TO GIVE UP AND MOVE ON WHEN HE HAD A DREAM. WHEN HE WOKE UP THE DREAM WAS STILL SO VIVID THAT HE WENT TO HIS FRIEND, JOCK HAZELTON. ACCORDING TO THE STORY HE SAID, "JOCK, I HAD THE DING-BUSTEDEST DREAM. I SAW MYSELF PANNING OUT GOLD, LOTS OF IT." THERE WAS, OF COURSE, NOTHING STRANGE ABOUT THAT. MEN LOOKING FOR GOLD OFTEN DREAM OF IT BUT DAVIS DREAMED <u>WHERE</u> HE HAD FOUND IT, THE EXACT SPOT. HE DESCRIBED IT TO HIS FRIEND AND JOCK DIDN'T LAUGH. INSTEAD HE SAID IT WON'T HURT ANY TO GO LOOK, AND THEY WENT DOWN THE TRAIL A COUPLE OF MILES AND TURNED RIGHT UP A BUSHY GULCH TO THE PLACE DAVIS HAD SEEN IN HIS DREAM. THE FIRST PANFUL OF DIRT BROUGHT SO MANY

NUGGETS THAT DAVIS THOUGHT HE MUST STILL BE DREAMING -- BUT HE WASN'T. IT WAS THE REAL THING. SEVERAL PEOPLE EVENTUALLY HAD CLAIMS IN DREAM GULCH, INCLUDING WYATT EARP AND HIS BROTHER, JAMES, WHO PURCHASED SOME MINING PROPERTY THERE DURING THEIR SHORT STAY IN THE NORTHWEST. TODAY A STATE HISTORICAL MARKER TELLS THE STORY.

AS IS USUALLY THE CASE IT DIDN't TAKE MANY YEARS FOR THE EASY DIGGINGS TO BE PLAYED OUT, BUT NOT UNTIL MANY FORTUNES HAD BEEN MADE. OFFICIAL RECORDS SHOW THAT 30,720 OUNCES OF FINE GOLD HAD BEEN MINED IN THE DISTRICT IN 1884 AND 1885 ALONE, BUT THERE WAS PROBABLY MUCH MORE THAT WAS NOT REPORTED. AND MORE WAS TO COME LATER WITH THE USE OF BIG DREDGES AND HYDRAULICS. BUT THIS GOLD RUSH WAS TO BE ONLY THE BEGINNING OF WHAT THE COEUR d'ALENES HAD TO OFFER. A MAN BY THE NAME OF NOAH KELLOGG WAS IN MURRAY AND AFTER RECEIVING A GRUB STAKE FROM SOME BACKERS THERE IN 1885, HE SET OUT PROSPECTING OTHER TERRITORY NEARBY. HE WAS SEVERAL MILES TO THE SOUTH WHEN, AT LEAST ACCORDING TO LEGEND, HIS MULE GOT AWAY, AND WHEN KELLOGG FOUND HIM HE NOTICED THAT THE MULE HAD KICKED OVER A ROCK AND EXPOSED A SILVER-GRAY ORE. THIS SPOT WAS TO BECOME ONE OF THE WORLD'S LARGEST LEAD AND SILVER MINES. THE TOWN OF KELLOGG, IDAHO, IS NOW LOCATED THERE AND A LARGE BILL-BOARD AT THE ENTRANCE TO TOWN READS, "WELCOME TO KELLOGG, IDAHO, THE TOWN DISCOVERED BY A JACKASS AND INHABITED BY ITS DESCENDANTS."

ABOUT THE SAME TIME COL. W.R. WALLACE BUILT A CABIN ON A HILLSIDE BESIDE WHAT REMAINED OF THE MULLAN ROAD AT THE JUNCTURE OF FIVE MAJOR CANYONS, ONE OF WHICH LEAD TO KELLOGG'S DISCOVERY AND ANOTHER THAT LED TOWARD MURRAY. OTHER MINING CLAIMS FOR

SILVER AND LEAD WERE BEING STAKED AND BY THE FOLLOWING YEAR OTHERS HAD JOINED COL. WALLACE AND A TOWN CALLED PLACER CENTER HAD STARTED WITH 14 RESIDENTS. MINING OPERATIONS GREW VERY RAPIDLY AND SO DID THE POPULATION OF THIS PART OF THE COEUR d'ALENES. IN AUGUST, 1886, COL. WALLACE'S WIFE WAS APPOINTED THE FIRST POST MISTRESS THERE AND SHE RAN INTO THE PROBLEM THAT THE U.S. POST OFFICE DEPARTMENT WOULD NOT ACCEPT THE NAME OF PLACER CENTER BECAUSE IT WAS TOO LONG. THEREFORE, EVEN AGAINST HER HUSBAND'S WISHES, SHE FILLED OUT THE POSTAL DEPARTMENT'S SLIP LISTING THE POST OFFICE IN THE NAME OF WALLACE, WHICH REMAINS TODAY. WALLACE GREW AT A PHENOMENAL PACE THE NEXT FEW YEARS AS DID THE REST OF THE DISTRICT, UNTIL THE LITTLE CANYON FLOOR WAS COMPLETELY FILLED. FROM MOUNTAIN TO MOUNTAIN THE AREA IN WHICH WALLACE SITS IS ONLY ABOUT ONE-HALF MILE EAST TO WEST AND NO MORE THAN ONE-QUARTER MILE NORTH TO SOUTH. SOME OF THE HOMES WERE BUILT ON THE LOWER HILLSIDE BUT NOT FAR UP BECAUSE IT BECOMES TOO STEEP.

ONE BY ONE NEW MINING CLAIMS WERE FILED, DEVELOPED, AND GREW IN SIZE. AND IT WAS NO LONGER THE SMALL ONE OR TWO MAN PICK-AND-SHOVEL SURFACE MINING. DRIFT TUNNELS, SHAFTS AND RAISES WENT DEEP INTO THE MOUNTAINS. AND IT WAS NO LONGER JUST MINING. REFINING MILLS AND SMELTERS WERE STARTED AND GREW. A NEW INDUSTRIAL COMPLEX 30 MILES WIDE AND VITAL TO THE NATION'S ECONOMY WAS BEING FORMED. BY 1890 OVER 73,500 OUNCES OF GOLD, OVER 3,600,000 OUNCES OF FINE SILVER, AND ALMOST 60,500 TONS OF LEAD HAD BEEN MINED FROM THE DISTRICT.

COMMUNITIES WERE SPRINGING UP ALL OVER THE COUER d'ALENES DISTRICT, WHEREVER THERE WAS ENOUGH FLAT LAND TO BUILD A HOUSE OR

TWO, AND AS ALWAYS GROWTH BROUGHT PROBLEMS. AS THE MINES GREW, MINERS FORMED UNIONS IN ORDER TO GAIN HIGHER WAGES AND SAFER WORKING CONDITIONS. A SERIES OF STRIKES IN 1891 RESULTED IN MOST ALL MINERS IN THE DISTRICT RECEIVING $3.50 PER TEN HOUR DAY. SHORTLY AFTERWARD MOST MINES CLOSED OVER A DISPUTE WITH THE RAILROADS OVER FREIGHT RATES. WHEN THAT WAS SETTLED THE MINE OWNERS ANNOUNCED THEY WOULD REOPEN BUT THAT SOME MINERS' WAGES WOULD BE CUT TO $3.00. THE UNION MINERS REFUSED TO WORK AND THE OWNERS BROUGHT IN LABOR FROM OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT. ANGER LEAD TO ARGUMENTS AND MINOR FIGHTS, UNTIL ON JULY 11, 1892, VIOLENCE ERUPTED. AT ONE OF THE MINES A FEW MILES ABOVE WALLACE, SHOTS WERE FIRED FROM BOTH SIDES, WITH FIVE MEN KILLED AND SIXTEEN WOUNDED, AND THE MILL WAS BLOWN UP. THE REMAINS OF THE MILL STILL LAY ON THE HILLSIDE TODAY. THE NON-UNION FORCES SURRENDERED, BUT ON JULY 13 THE GOVERNOR PROCLAIMED SHOSHONE COUNTY TO BE "IN A STATE OF INSURRECTION AND REBELLION" AND FEDERAL TROUPS WERE MOVED IN. FOR FOUR MONTHS THE COUNTY WAS UNDER MARTIAL LAW. THE CONFLICT EASED BUT DID NOT COMPLETELY STOP. THE UNIONS GREW IN STRENGTH UNTIL BY 1899 ALL MINES WERE PAYING UNION SCALE EXCEPT FOR ONE COMPANY IN KELLOGG, ABOUT TWELVE MILES WEST OF WALLACE. ANOTHER STRIKE STARTED, AND AGAIN THE COMPANIES RAISED A SMALL ARMY AND HIRED NON-UNION LABOR. OVER A THOUSAND UNION MINERS STOLE A TRAIN AT BURKE ABOVE WALLACE, LOADED IT WITH DYNAMITE AND FORCED THE ENGINEERS AT GUNPOINT TO DRIVE IT TO KELLOGG. THREE THOUSAND POUNDS OF DYNAMITE WERE PUT IN THE CONCENTRATOR AND DEMOLISHED THE BUNKER HILL PLANT. TWO MEN DIED FROM GUNFIRE AND

ONCE AGAIN MARTIAL LAW WAS DECLARED, THIS TIME FOR TWO YEARS. REPORTEDLY RELATED TO THAT WAS THE MURDER OF AN EX-GOVERNOR OF IDAHO A FEW YEARS LATER. THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR THAT BOMBING MURDER WAS DEFENDED BY THE FAMED CLARENCE DARROW. I DON'T KNOW WHAT THE OUTCOME WAS. AFTER THAT, ALTHOUGH THERE HAVE BEEN MINOR DISPUTES AND OCCASIONAL STRIKES AS WITH ANY BIG INDUSTRY, THINGS SEEMED TO QUIETEN DOWN AND PRODUCTION CONTINUED TO GROW.

A FEW MILES TO THE NORTH OF WALLACE AND ABOUT 1,500 FEET HIGHER IN ELEVATION, IS THE MINING COMMUNITY OF BURKE. BURKE HAS SEVERAL CLAIMS TO FAME, INCLUDING BEING THE LOCATION OF THE STAR MINE THAT WAS TO BECOME THE DEEPEST SILVER MINE IN THE U.S. BURKE IS LOCATED IN A CANYON SO NARROW THAT ONE COULD STAND ON THE MOUNTAIN ON ONE SIDE OF TOWN AND EASILY SHOOT A DEER ON THE MOUNTAIN ON THE OTHER SIDE OF TOWN. IT HAS BEEN SAID THAT THE CANYON IS SO NARROW THAT DOGS IN BURKE HAVE TO LEARN TO WAG THEIR TAILS UP AND DOWN. WHEN A STORE KEEPER OPENS HIS DOOR HE CAUSES A TRAFFIC JAM, AND WHEN YOU OPEN A NEWSPAPER YOU SKIN YOUR KNUCKLES ON BOTH SIDES OF THE CANYON. ACTUALLY, THE CANYON IS SO NARROW THAT RIPLEY'S "BELIEVE IT OR NOT," REPORTED THE FACT THAT THE RAILROAD TRACKS RUN UP THE CENTER OF THE ONLY STREET, THE CREEK RUNS UNDER THEM, AND ALL THREE ONCE WENT RIGHT THROUGH THE TIGER HOTEL AND HERCULES MINE. AND BEING SO HIGH IN ELEVATION, I HAVE OFTEN HEARD IT SAID OF BURKE THAT, "SUMMER IS THE PRETTIEST DAY OF THE YEAR!"

BUT WALLACE HAS BEEN THE HUB OF THE DISTRICT AND THE MAJOR BUSINESS CENTER FOR OVER A DOZEN SMALLER COMMUNITIES AROUND IT AND MANY NOTED PEOPLE HAVE BEEN A PART OF ITS HISTORY. AS WELL

AS LIVING IN MURRAY FOR AWHILE, WYATT EARP ALSO AT ONE TIME WAS A REGISTERED VOTER IN WALLACE AND CALAMITY JANE WAS A RESIDENT FOR A TIME. THE MOVIE ACTRESS, LANA TURNER, WAS BORN IN WALLACE AND SPENT PART OF HER CHILDHOOD THERE AS WELL AS LIVING IN BURKE FOR AWHILE.

IN ADDITION TO MINING IN THE COUER d'ALENES, A "COMPANION INDUSTRY" THROUGHOUT ITS HISTORY HAS BEEN THAT OF THE OLDEST OF PROFESSIONS. PROBABLY NO MINING COMMUNITY WAS WITHOUT ITS HOUSES OF PLEASURE AND COMPANIONSHIP. WE HAVE ALREADY MENTIONED MOLLY b'DAMN OF NOTORIETY IN MURRAY WHICH BOASTED A WHOLE ROW OF SUCH BUSINESSES UP ON THE BACK HILLSIDE. WALLACE HAS OFFERED ITS SHARE OF PLEASURE TO THE MINERS ALSO. A PRESENT RESIDENT OF WALLACE RECALLED TO A FRIEND OF MINE ONLY A FEW WEEKS AGO THE FACT THAT HIS MOTHER HAD BEEN THE PROPRIETOR OF ONE OF THE ESTABLISHMENTS THERE AND THAT HE HAD BEEN BORN THERE. WALLACE HAS BEEN VIRTUALLY DESTROYED BY FIRE ON TWO OCCASIONS, ONCE IN 1890 AND AGAIN IN 1910. HE REMEMBERS THAT DURING THE 1910 FIRE HE WAS A CHILD STANDING IN THE STREET WATCHING MANY OF THE MINERS AS THEY RUSHED OVER WITH LADDERS TO HELP THE GIRLS OUT TO SAFETY. BEFORE THE FIRE THERE WERE 40 GIRLS WORKING IN THE "ROOMS," AS THEY WERE CALLED. THE ROOMS WERE FAIRLY WELL ACCEPTED AS AN EXPECTED PART OF THE LIFESTYLE OF THE COMMUNITY AND HAD SOME RATHER COLORFUL NAMES.

MY FIRST CONTACT WITH WALLACE WAS IN 1961 WHEN WE STOPPED THERE FOR GAS, RETURNING FROM OUT FIRST TRIP TO THE WEST. AS MY WIFE STOOD THERE LOOKING AT THE HOUSES SO CLOSE TOGETHER AND PUSHED UP ON THE HILLSIDE, SHE REMARKED THAT, "THIS IS CERTAINLY ONE PLACE I'D NEVER WANT TO LIVE!" ABOUT A YEAR LATER I HAD DECIDED TO GO AFTER MY Ph.D. AND HAD LEARNED THAT WASHINGTON STATE

UNIVERSITY HAD A GOOD CLINICAL PROGRAM. I WAS STILL IN THE PASTORAL MINISTRY AND WOULD NEED A SPECIAL STUDENT APPOINTMENT IN THE CHURCH IN ORDER TO ATTEND SCHOOL FULL TIME AND SERVE A CHURCH PART TIME, SO I CONTACTED THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST CONVERENCE OF OUR CHURCH ABOUT THIS AND AGREED TO SERVE FULL TIME IN A CHURCH FOR THREE YEARS BEFORE STARTING TO SCHOOL. I DID NOT KNOW AT FIRST THAT THE CONFERENCE INCLUDED PART OF NORTHERN IDAHO AND WHEN THEY CALLED BACK TO TELL ME I HAD BEEN GIVEN AN APPOINTMENT, IT WAS TO BE IN -- YOU GUESSED IT -- WALLACE, IDAHO. IT WAS ONLY WITHIN A COUPLE OF YEARS BEFORE THEN THAT THE AREA WAS STILL LISTED AS A MISSION FIELD IN THE METHODIST CHURCH. ONLY 25 PERCENT OF THE POPULATION EVEN CLAIMED ANY FORMAL CHURCH MEMBERSHIP -- QUITE A SWITCH FROM THE "BIBLE BELT" OF MISSISSIPPI WERE WE HAD BEEN. BUT THAT'S NOT ALL THAT WAS DIFFERENT. PICTURE THIS: A METHODIST MINISTER COMING FROM THE MISSISSIPPI DELTA WITH ITS TOTALLY FLAT LAND, RATTLESNAKES AND COPPERHEADS, FIFTY PERCENT POPULATION OF BLACKS (BEFORE THE DAYS OF INTEGRATION) AND AT LEAST EQUALLY NUMEROUS BAPTISTS, MOVING TO THE BEAUTIFUL MOUNTAINS OF SHOSHONE COUNTY WHERE THERE WERE ABSOLUTELY NO POISONOUS SNAKES, NO BLACKS, AND NO BAPTIST CHURCHES! I THOUGHT I HAD DIED AND GONE TO HEAVEN! ANOTHER IRONY ABOUT OUR MOVING THERE WAS THAT WITHIN TWO WEEKS AFTER ARRIVING, MY WIFE HAD BEEN GIVEN A JOB TEACHING IN THE HIGH SCHOOL, BUT THEY REQUIRED HER TO ATTEND AN INSTITUTE IN SPANISH FOR THE REST OF THE SUMMER THAT WAS BEING HELD, OF ALL PLACES WE HAD NEVER HEARD OF, MURRAY STATE UNIVERSITY, KENTUCKY!

AFTER ARRIVING IN WALLACE, WE DROVE AROUND THE LITTLE TOWN AND WERE CURIOUS WHEN WE NOTICED ON A COUPLE OF STREETS NEON

SIGNS ON FIVE TWO-STORY BUILDINGS THAT READ, "LUX ROOMS," "JADE ROOMS," "OASIS ROOMS," "JADETTE ROOMS," AND "U & I ROOMS." LITTLE DID WE KNOW. WE WERE TO FIND THAT THIS FORM OF PROSTITUTION WAS GENERALLY ACCEPTED, BUT IT WAS NOT LIKE WHAT YOU SEE IN THE BIG CITIES TODAY. THE GIRLS WERE NEVER SEEN ON THE STREETS, OR IF THEY WERE YOU NEVER KNEW IT. AND PHYSICIANS THERE TOLD ME THAT THE GIRLS ALWAYS CAME IN FOR REGULAR CHECK-UPS TO KEEP DOWN ANY SPREAD OF DISEASE. PEOPLE ARGUED THAT WITH THE VERY DANGEROUS LIFE STYLE OF UNDERGROUND MINERS THIS WAS AN EXPECTED PART OF THE PICTURE. AND IT WAS ALSO ARGUED THAT OTHER FEMALE CITIZENS WERE SAFER WITH THE PRESENCE OF THE ROOMS. RAPE WAS ESSENTIALLY UN-HEARD OF. HOWEVER, THERE WERE SOME WHO FELT DIFFERENTLY. ONE YOUNG LADY ARRIVED IN TOWN BY BUS TO TAKE A JOB AS SCHOOL TEACHER AND LOOKED FOR A PLACE TO STAY TEMPORARILY. WHEN SHE TRIED TO GET A ROOM FOR THE NIGHT, WOW! SHE RAN OUT AND CAUGHT THE NEXT BUS OUT OF TOWN. ANOTHER PROBLEM WAS THAT OCCASIONALLY WHEN THE GIRL'S BASKETBALL TEAM WOULD PLAY OUTSIDE THE DISTRICT, PEOPLE WOULD THROW COINS OUT ON THE FLOOR. WALLACE'S REPUTATION FOR THE ROOMS WAS FAR-REACHING. EVEN MY WIFE'S MOTHER HEARD ABOUT THEM FROM SOMEONE ELSE 2,500 MILES AWAY. I'LL HAVE TO MENTION THAT THE FIRST CHRISTMAS WE WERE THERE WE DROVE BY THE LUX AND SAW ALL THEIR DECORATIONS AND TREE IN THE WINDOW WITH ALL THE LIGHTS ON THEM -- ALL RED!

BY THE TIME WE MOVED TO WALLACE IT HAD BECOME THE SILVER CAPITOL OF THE WORLD. MINES FROM THE COUER d'ALENES WERE PRODUCING MORE SILVER THAN ALL THE REST OF THE UNITED STATES COMBINED. IN

THE 1960's THE BUNKER HILL MINE ALONE SUPPLIED 19 PERCENT OF THE PRIMARY LEAD REFINED IN THE U.S. AND 19 PERCENT OF THE SPECIAL HIGH GRADE ZINC. ALTOGETHER, ABOUT 450,000 OUNCES OF GOLD, OVER 671,000,000 OUNCES OF SILVER, ALMOST 7,000,000 TONS OF LEAD, AND ABOUT 1,000,000 TONS OF ZINC, AS WELL AS OTHER LESSER MINERALS, HAD BEEN MINED AND THE INDUSTRY WAS STILL GOING STRONG. ONE MIGHT WONDER WHAT WALLACE WAS MOST FAMOUS FOR, ITS SILVER AND LEAD OR ITS LIGHTS OF RED! THE COUER d'ALENES PROVED TO BE A DELIGHTFUL PLACE TO LIVE. IN MANY WAYS THE OLD WEST WAS STILL ALIVE; IN THE GENUINENESS OF THE PEOPLE WITHOUT MUCH PRETENCE, IN THEIR RUGGED LIFESTYLE, THEIR MUSIC, THEIR DANCE. AND THERE IS NOTHING LIKE DRIVING ON A NARROW, DIRT FORREST SERVICE ROAD SCRAPED OUT OF THE SIDE OF A STEEP MOUNTAIN 2,000 FEET OR MORE ABOVE THE VALLEY FLOOR! MY WIFE AND I ALSO HAD THE THRILL OF GOING DOWN INTO THAT FAMOUS STAR MINE AT BURKE. HAVING DONNED FULL MINING GEAR, WE WERE TAKEN BY SMALL RAIL CARS OVER A MILE AND A HALF INTO THE MOUNTAIN, THEN BY A LIFT STRAIGHT DOWN INTO THE SHAFT TO THE 6,000 FOOT LEVEL! THERE ANNETTE GOT TO TRY HER HAND AT OPERATING ONE OF THE MODERN MINING DRILLS. IT IS ALWAYS COOL WHEN YOU GO UNDER-GROUND AT MAMMOTH CAVE, BUT NOT SO WHEN THAT DEEP. THE TEMPERATURE IN SOME OF THE MINES IS SO HIGH THAT EVEN WITH THE BIGGEST AIR CONDITIONING SYSTEMS AVAILABLE, THE HEAT IS ALMOST TOO MUCH.

BUSINESS WAS BOOMING IN THE COUER d'ALENES BUT THE AREA HAD NOT BEEN WITHOUT ITS TRAGEDIES. IN ADDITION TO THE TWO UNION WARS MENTIONED, MANY MEN DIED IN MINE ACCIDENTS. THERE WERE FORREST FIRES, FLOODS IN THE VALLEYS, AND OCCASIONALLY HUGE SNOW SLIDES THAT BURIED HOMES AND HIGHWAYS. PERHAPS THE GREATEST

SINGLE DISASTER OCCURRED IN 1972 A FEW YEARS AFTER WE LEFT. THE SUNSHINE MINE HAS BEEN CALLED THE WORLD'S GREATEST SILVER MINE AND HAS CERTAINLY BEEN ONE OF THE LEADING PRODUCERS. UNDERGROUND FIRES HAD OCCURRED IN THE MINES BEFORE BUT THIS WAS PROBABLY THE WORST. BEFORE IT WAS ALL OVER 91 MEN HAD BEEN KILLED AND MANY OTHERS SERIOUSLY INJURED. ONE OF MY BEST FRIENDS AND HIS SONS WERE WORKING IN THE SUNSHINE THEN, BUT FORTUNATELY WERE NOT ON THAT SHIFT. SOME OF THEM HAD JUST COME OUT A FEW HOURS BEFORE IT STARTED.

ANOTHER POTENTIAL DISASTER HAS BEEN HAPPENING THROUGHOUT THE COEUR d'ALENES DURING THE PAST FEW YEARS, A DISASTER HIDDEN UNDER THE GUISE OF PROGRESS; TRENDS THAT ARE EATING AWAY NOT JUST THAT ARM OF THE MINING INDUSTRY BUT ALL OF OUR ECONOMY. TO BEGIN WITH THE DEMAND FOR HIGHER AND HIGHER WAGES AND MORE AND MORE BENEFITS FOR THE SAME AMOUNT OF WORK HAS BEGUN TO TAKE ITS TOLL. AND THEN THERE HAVE BEEN SUCH PROGRAMS AS OSHA AND OTHER SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTALIST REQUIREMENTS THAT HAVE OFTEN BEEN EXCESSIVE, MORE THAN THE INDUSTRY CAN STAND. SOME OF THE DEMANDS HAVE HAD BENEFICIAL RESULTS BUT OTHERS HAVE NOT BEEN NECESSARY AND HAVE BEEN VERY COSTLY. ANOTHER PART OF THE TREND HAS BEEN THE ALL-TOO-FAMILIAR PROBLEM OF IMPORTING MORE METALS FROM OTHER COUNTRIES BECAUSE IT'S CHEAPER. AS A RESULT OF ALL OF THIS THE ONCE BOOMING MINING INDUSTRY OF THE BOEUR d'ALENES AFTER GROWING FOR 100 YEARS HAS TAKEN A BIG NOSEDIVE. MANY OF THE MAJOR MINES AND COMPANIES HAVE HAD TO JUST QUIT, INCLUDING THE FAMED BUNKER HILL MINE, MILL AND SMELTER, ONE OF THE LARGEST IN THE COUNTRY, AND THE STAR MINE IN BURKE (DOWN TO THE 8,000 FOOT LEVEL BEFORE THEY SHUT DOWN!). OVERALL ABOUT 60 PERCENT OF THE MINING OPERATIONS ARE NOW SHUT DOWN. SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT OF THE WORKING FORCE HAS BEEN LAYED OFF, AND THERE HAS BEEN A 50 PERCENT REDUCTION IN THE OVERALL ECONOMY

DISTRICT-WIDE. BY THE 100th ANNIVERSARY LAST YEAR THIS LITTLE MINING DISTRICT ONLY 30 MILES WIDE HAD GONE FROM A HANDFUL OF GOLD DUST TO A TOTAL PRODUCTION OF MINERALS WHICH, COMPUTED AT THE METAL PRICE PREVAILING AT THE END OF EACH SUCCESSIVE YEAR, ALMOST REACHED THE 4½ BILLION DOLLAR MARK. IF THAT WERE ALL COMPUTED AT TODAY'S PRICES, THE VALUE WOULD KNOCK A BIG HOLE IN THE NATIONAL DEBT! ONLY A FEW OTHER MINING AREAS IN THE WORLD HAVE REACHED THAT LEVEL OF PRODUCTION.

OTHER CHANGES ARE HAPPENING TOO; TOURISM IS ON THE RISE AND THE LAST SECTION OF THE FREEWAY WILL SOON BE BUILT THROUGH, OR RATHER "OVER," WALLACE. ALSO SOME NEW LAWS A FEW YEARS AGO FORCED THE FAMOUS "ROOMS" TO CLOSE, OR AT LEAST TO (IF YOU WILL PARDON THE EXPRESSION) GO "UNDER COVER." MY LATEST REPORT OF A FEW WEEKS AGO INDICATES THAT TWO OF THEM STILL OPERATE FULL TIME AND THREE OTHERS OFF AND ON.

WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO THIS FASCINATING AND ECONOMICALLY IMPORTANT AREA? WILL IT SOMEHOW RECOVER, OR DOES IT REPRESENT ANOTHER ERA THAT IS "GONE WITH THE TREND?"

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