



THE WESTERNERS

POTOMAC CORRAL

Erin Russell

NEXT MEETING OF THE POTOMAC CORRAL

SPEAKER: Frank Goodyear, Associate Curator at the National Portrait Gallery.

TOPIC: Revisiting The American West: The National Portrait Gallery's forthcoming exhibition, "The Frontier Remade" • This talk will discuss an upcoming photographic exhibit at the NPG featuring the 100 most influential people in the American West - (1845 - 1924)

WHEN: Thursday, September 18, 6:30 p.m.

WHERE: The **Boulevard Woodgrill** in the Clarendon neighborhood of Arlington, at the intersection of Wilson Boulevard and North Fillmore Street. The meeting will take place downstairs in the restaurant's **Fillmore Room**.
Address: 2901 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22201; Phone: 703.875.9663.

METRORAIL: Orange Line, Clarendon Metro Stop. (Exit metro escalators and walk two blocks east on Wilson Boulevard. The restaurant is at the corner of Wilson Boulevard and N. Fillmore St.)

METROBUS: Routes 38B, 4B, 4E, possibly others.

PARKING: Ample on-street parking; free parking after 6:00 p.m. at the DHS parking garage (north off Wilson on Highland Street); \$5.00 private parking lot immediately behind restaurant.

MENU: Dinners must be **pre-ordered by Sunday, Sept 14, 2008**. Please **RSVP to Mike Lawson** (email: Mike_Lawson@potomac-corrall.org; phone: 202.415.1321) and specify choice of entrée.

Each dinner includes:

- non-alcoholic beverage • salad • choice of entrée • dessert

Entrée choices are:

- **Skirt steak frites:** woodgrilled, tamarind-soy marinated, black angus skirt steak served over buttermilk mashed potatoes and creamed spinach
- **Woodgrilled Nordic salmon:** flown in fresh from Bergen, Norway; served over buttermilk mashed potatoes, with grilled asparagus; finished with mimosa vinaigrette
- **Hawaiian chicken:** woodgrilled boneless chicken breast marinated in ginger and honey, served over basmati rice and topped with pineapple relish
- **Vegetarian gateaux:** sautéed artichoke, baby spinach, and roasted red pepper "cakes" served over a pool of pomodoro sauce accompanied by woodgrilled asparagus

Remember, dinners must be **pre-ordered by Sunday, SEPT 14, 2008**.

CASH BAR: The Fillmore Room also features a cash bar.

PRICE: Dinners are \$45 per person. Please pay with cash or check on or before September 18, 2008 to Tallyman Gene Anderson, 619 Broad Creek Drive, Fort Washington, MD 20744.

Payment may be submitted at the meeting. Checks should be payable to the Potomac Corral.



Announcing the Jeff Dykes Award Meeting - Friday, November 7, 2008, at 12:00 pm: The Potomac Corral's presentation of its annual Dykes Award. This year's recipient is Nancy Anderson, Ph.D., of the National Gallery of Art. The awards luncheon will be at the Cosmos Club in Washington, D.C., just off DuPont Circle.

SEPTEMBER CORRAL MEETING:

PRESENTATION: *Revisiting the American West: The National Portrait Gallery's forthcoming exhibition, "The Frontier Remade: Photographic Portraits from the American West, 1845-1924,"* by Frank Goodyear, Ph.D.

The American West was dramatically reconstituted during the eighty years between the Mexican War and the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act in 1924. This exhibition tells the story of these changes through one hundred portrait photographs of the defining men and women of this period. It chronicles such events as the completion of the transcontinental railroad, on-going conflicts between Native Americans and non-Natives, the emergence of the national parks movement, and the admittance of nineteen new states west of the Mississippi River into the Union. Visitors will encounter those who explored, fought over, developed, and represented this vast territory—individuals who contributed to the transformation of this region's nature and identity.

Coincident with these changes was the popularization of photography, a medium that was influential in reshaping how Easterners came to understand the West. More than any literary or artistic medium, photography made visible these new lands and the different people who lived on them. Although it reinforced at times preconceived notions of the West, photography also gave rise to new ideas about this region—and in the process America itself. While the exhibition will include a select group of loans, eighty-five of the images will be drawn from the photographic collection of the Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. Outstanding photographic portraits from the Daguerrian era to the early modern period will be highlighted. The exhibition will include portraits of individuals who made their mark in a variety of professional endeavors, including politics, the military, science, exploration, literature, art, photography, religion, reform, entertainment, journalism, crime, and business and industry. The figures who will be included reflect the great diversity of the trans-Mississippian West during this period, and the historic intersection of different ethnic groups will be an important theme. The frontier was remade during this period, and this exhibition will permit visitors to encounter those who were most instrumental in these dramatic changes.

SPEAKER: Frank Goodyear is the associate curator of photographs at the [National Portrait Gallery](#). He has worked at the NPG since July, 2001. Goodyear did his undergraduate work at Princeton University and completed his Ph.D. in the Department of American Studies at the University of Texas at Austin in May, 1998. His Ph.D. dissertation considered the relationship between landscape photography and the birth of the commercial tourist trade in nineteenth-century America. In addition to publishing several articles based on research from this project, he is also the author of [Red Cloud: Photographs of a Lakota Chief](#) (University of Nebraska Press, 2003), a book that re-examines the life of an important tribal diplomat through an investigation of more than 130 photographic portraits. Goodyear is an affiliated faculty member in the Department of American Studies at The George Washington University, where he teaches graduate classes in American Visual Studies, the History of Photography, and Native American History.

At the Portrait Gallery, Goodyear was on the curatorial team that developed "[RECOGNIZE! Hip Hop and Contemporary Portraiture](#)," an exhibition that highlights six contemporary artists and a poet whose work grows out of or responds to the tradition of hip hop. He has also recently completed an exhibition devoted to the career of Zaida Ben-Yusuf (1869-1933), a little-known, yet important New York photographer whose Fifth Avenue studio attracted the leading artistic, literary, and theatrical elite of her day. This exhibition opened in April 2009 and is accompanied by a catalogue published by Merrell. Goodyear has recently written an essay about Richard Avedon for the exhibition catalogue that will accompany the Corcoran Gallery of Art's "[Richard Avedon: Portraits of Power](#)." He is also developing "[The Frontier Remade: Photographic Portraits from the American West, 1845-1924](#)," an exhibition that will open at the NPG in September 2009.

OTHER: Please make a special effort to attend this meeting. It is the first meeting of our 2007-2008 season, and we have several great speakers lined up for this year. This will be our only meeting before presenting our **Dykes Award** later this fall. We had a great turnout at our last meeting, and we think that the Boulevard Woodgrill is especially well-suited to our organization's needs. Please feel free to invite family, friends, and colleagues.

Thanks!

Remember, dinners must be pre-ordered by Sunday, May 18, 2008.

Please RSVP to Mike Lawson (email: Mike_Lawson@potomac-coral.org; phone: 202.415.1321) and specify choice of entrée.

HOMESTEADS, DRY LAND FARMS, AND THE RAILROADS

by Dale L. Anderson

THE BOOK THAT WON (OR LOST) THE WEST

Horace Greeley, congressman, editor of the New York Tribune and other fame and in 1865 is credited with the phrase "Go West Young Man, Go West and grow up with the country." This is supposed to have inspired the great westward migration. However in the years before the Civil War he often disparaged the West as a great wasteland.

Another publisher and his book may have well created an even greater Westward movement.

After the gold rush and Oregon and California Trails migrations, the next important change to westward migration was homesteading and the development of a new form of farming. The developer, or at least an early proponent, of this system was a Harvey Webster Campbell. His 1902 Soil Culture Manual "Explains how rain waters are stored and conserved in the soil; how moisture moves in the soil by capillary attraction, percolation and evaporation, and how these conditions may be regulated by cultivation." Followers of his procedures of letting land lie fallow every other year were called "Campbellites." (1)

His 1902 edition was followed by another in 1909 and the 1902 version was reprinted by the U. S. Department of Agriculture, at that time a relatively minor Bureau, Descriptions of his methods were used to sell Easterners, who were prospective settlers, on buying some of the vast lands held by the railroads or becoming homesteaders and thus customers of the railroads. The Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad was the publisher of many of Campbell's manuals and other railroads pushed this concept of dry land farming. Thus many areas previously bypassed by land hungry settlers were now purchased or homesteaded.

In 1904, the Oregon Railroad & Navigation Company (Southern Pacific Company Lines in Oregon) published a booklet "Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Their Resources - Mecca of the Homeseeker and Investor - A Land of Promise and Opportunity, Where the Soil, Climate and All Conditions Are Unsurpassable For the Successful Pursuance of Varied Industry" (and that was just the title). The author states that "the movement of homeseekers and prospectors to the Pacific Northwest in 1903 was one of the most phenomenal within its history. Oregon alone receiving about 40,000 new settlers. At the end of the year The Dalles Land District had 3,437,357 acres of unappropriated land ready for entry." (This district included most of the Great Basin) Of course, this open land did not include much of the rich bottomland of the Willamette or other valleys. Also, most of the lands with creeks or other water sources were already taken. This booklet talks about the development of diversified farming and the breaking up of the great ranches into smaller acreages of family farms. What this meant was the dry hills and elevated pastures. Homesteaders who hoped to make their fortune with general agricultural production were out of luck. In the long run it didn't happen. Shortage of water and land unsuited to many crops made these



By 1900, railroads had fanned out over much of western America.

small dry land farms uneconomical. By the 1930's, most of these settlers had "starved out" and the cleared land was merged into larger and larger acreages economically suited to wheat farming, leaving behind the ruins of many homesteaders' dreams.

A homesteader could settle on a quarter section, 120 acres, and another 120 with a wife. However these had to be in the section lines, which meant a square, which might include much unvariable land. In a 320 block they might find 200 acres level enough or of good enough soil to clear. Out of this with dry land farming half would be in fallow each year, It would be hard work plowing up the grass sod or clearing brush. Sons would be of value and this assisted in the popularity of the orphan trains, from which a farm family could adopt an orphan and thus add to their labor force..

The land from Oklahoma to Montana and West to Eastern Oregon and Washington included millions of acres of prime open grazing land for livestock. The ranchers would lose much of their best open grazing to homesteaders and resisted.

(1) Not to be confused with the religious movement created by Alexander Campbell, 1788 - 1866, founder of Bethany College, West Virginia, and leader of the Disciples of Christ movement.

The westward movement of settlers looking for farm lands was, in itself, something of a religious movement. Followers of this westward agricultural philosophy supported the Granger movement and granges are still prevalent in Washington State. The author was the "master" of the Endersby Grange in 1940 (it was in decline) and when he arrived in Washington, D.C. he joined Grange #1. As an economist, he was recruited to draft the Grange's National Agricultural Policy. Needless to say, the Grange strongly supported his marketing programs at the U.S.D.A. This agrarian movement still exists in the politics of Minnesota and other northwest states.

HOMESTEAD SHACKS

Homesteaders had to provide a dwelling and cultivate some of the land to qualify. Most built a quick clapboard shack since these lands were seldom near timber. Sawed boards however were available and could be transported easily. Most homestead shacks were later converted to outbuildings if better homes were built, either that or abandoned. My grandfather built a very small shack which was moved several times and finally ended up as a pig pen. My father had been born that first year on the homestead and he used to point out this pig pen as "that's where I was born."



Shacks, sheds and shanties, Little House on the Farm.

Only one out of five homesteaders ever completed their five years and "proved up" .Much of this land required a minimum of 16 to 20 inches of rainfall even with the dry land fallow system. In some areas this did not occur every year and with several years of drought the wheat seeded in the fall in the southern part and spring in the northern belt would not grow. After several years of such crop failures the homesteaders would pack up and leave, leaving behind fallow soil, often very light and easily blown by the winds, thus resulting in dust storms and eventually to the Dust Bowl of the 1930s. The land once plowed would no longer support prairie grasses and had no value as pasture.

THE HOMESTEAD ACT AND THE IMMIGRANT TRAINS

With the completion of the transcontinental railroad in 1869, the railroads carried thousands of immigrants to the West. Public land had been offered for some years at \$1.25 an acre. The Homestead Act said any person over 21 could have 160 acres if they lived on it for five years and improved it (added a building). In 1873, they modified the law to allow larger acreages. Congress also granted the railroads alternate sections for six miles on either side of the new roadbeds. Additional public land was also granted the states to establish agricultural colleges.

I presume this homestead deed for William J. Means was completed in 1900 (note the lack of a year after one thousand nine hundred) giving him clear title to the land. I think he filed his Donation Land Claim in 1894.

The railroads ran special immigrant trains, besides their regular passenger trains and freight trains, to bring these settlers to the West cheaply. Since most of these people had come to America steerage class on ocean liners this was a

natural extension of their westward trek.

In 1875, William Harris Rayner described his trip from Missouri to California: "The immigrant train was simply a freight train with some old box cars hitched on behind, and they were cheap too. The seats were made of four inch strips nailed together and the backs were reversible so two seats could be thrown together. Some crates were stacked in a corner of each car which could be laid across the seats to form a bed. Each passenger had his own bed pack.

"The immigrant ticket cost \$15.00 as compared to passenger car tickets of \$60.00. There were six cars hooked on behind thirty two freight cars. Two were reserved for men only, the others for families or single women.

"After leaving Omaha seventy-five miles behind there was nothing but plains as far as I could see. About every fifty miles was a coaling station water tank and a little house for the attendant. At times we would be switched off for passing trains and would wait for an hour or two. The passengers would unload and promenade the countryside. The only sign of vegetation was ball cactus and buffalo grass, frequently there was a large pile of bones piled by the track for shipment east as fertilizer. We saw a lot of antelope.

"One day we saw Pikes Peak. Another engine was hitched on for the pull through the mountains. There were no towns, but at coaling stations a woman would get on the train with a basket of doughnuts and sandwiches. There would be a man with her with a basket of pint and half pint bottles of whiskey.

"At Ogden we were permitted to change our paper money for gold coin, beyond there paper money was discounted. Our next stop was Sacramento."

Another writer, Jonathan Raban, in his book *Bad Land - An American Romance*, described the immigrant trains going west through Montana in 1909. Conditions had not changed materially in 35 years.

"The roadbed was still soft, and when the immigrant train pulled out of Marmarth, North Dakota, its speed didn't rise above that of a reasonably agile man on foot. As usual, it was already running more than five hours late; the published timetable was another railroad fiction.

"At the back of the train were the immigrant cars, each with a family, its livestock, furniture and farm implements snugly boxed into a single wagon. Whenever the train stopped at a station, these families could be seen living the life of Reilly; they slept in brass bound feather beds, tipped luxuriously back in rockers, played cards around their dining tables, while their cattle grieved and snorted at the bars of their compartments.

"To rent an immigrant car was relatively expensive. From Chicago to Miles City, Montana it cost 49 cents per hundred pounds, with a minimum charge of \$98 a car.

"The polyglot crowd in the coaches had to stow their belongings as best they could. Their stuff parceled in blankets, cardboard boxes, old flour sacks and flimsy suitcases lashed shut with rope, spilled into the gangways of the carriages, where it served as seating for children and beds for household cats. The toilets (one at each end of every coach), the poorly trimmed oil lamps, improvised cooking arrangements, and scanty opportunities for washing, gave the coaches a powerful and complicated smell that many settler's children would be able to recall in their nonage.

"The journey had to be survived on a bare wood-slatted seat with the temperature outside close to 90 degrees and the train barely moving."



THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA,

To all to whom these presents shall come, Greeting:

Homestead Certificate No. 3462
Application 5238

Whereas There has been deposited in the GENERAL LAND OFFICE of the United States a Certificate of the Register of the Land Office at The Dalles Oregon, whereby it appears that, pursuant to the Act of Congress approved 30th May, 1862, "To secure Homesteads to Actual Settlers on the Public Domain," and the acts supplemental thereto, the claim of William J. Means has been established and duly consummated, in conformity to law, for the North half of the South West quarter and the North half of the South East quarter of Section twenty-three in Township one North of Range twelve East of Willamette Meridian in Oregon containing one hundred and fifty acres.

according to the Official Plat of the Survey of the said Land, returned to the GENERAL LAND OFFICE by the Surveyor General:

Now know ye, That there is, therefore, granted by the United States unto the said William J. Means

the tract of Land above-described: To have and to hold the said tract of Land, with the appurtenances thereof, unto the said William J. Means and to his heirs and assigns forever; subject to any vested and accrued water rights for mining, agricultural, manufacturing, or other purposes, and rights to ditches and reservoirs used in connection with such water rights, as may be recognized and acknowledged by the local customs, laws, and decisions of courts, and also subject to the right of the proprietor of a vein or lode to extract and remove his ore therefrom, should the same be found to penetrate or intersect the premises hereby granted, as provided by law. And there is reserved from the lands hereby granted, a right of way thereon for ditches or canals constructed by the authority of the United States.

In testimony whereof William McKinley, PRESIDENT of the UNITED STATES of AMERICA, have caused these letters to be made Patent, and the seal of the GENERAL LAND OFFICE to be hereunto affixed.

GIVEN under my hand, at the City of Washington, the twelfth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and zero, and of the Independence of the United States the one hundred and thirtieth.

By the President:

William McKinley

Luke McKean Secretary

Oregon rec'd 126 12/12/00



Photo: Union Pacific Historical Collection
Union Pacific immigrant train at Compton, California, circa 1870s

Books available from the Potomac Corral of Westerners:

We have a few copies of the Great Western Books Series, #16, "*Remittance Men, Second Sons, and Other Gentlemen of the West*" by Orlin Scoville

These are soft cover saddle stitched. Cost \$12.00 plus postage. This is the only book in our Great Western Books series that is not out of print.

Watch for these, they are collectors items.

We also have copies of all of the *Corral Dusts* since 1996 and can reproduce copies of older ones.

Cost is reproduction cost plus postage.

We have available on the WEB page the last two *Corral Dusts* plus copies of meeting announcements since 2007

ADDENDUM: Our September speaker tells us that he has ruptured his Achilles tendon but he definitely assures us he WILL make our September meeting.



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