

HISTORIC ROADS AND TRAILS OF PIERCE COUNTY

by Gary Fuller Reese

TACOMA PUBLIC LIBRARY

DECEMBER 1974

The following roads and trails were of significance to the early trappers and traders, Indians, settlers and the military in present Pierce County, Washington. In some cases certain of them were considered parts of other routes and in other cases some had local names which differed from names that have been assigned. These early overland routes of communication include:

1. INDIAN HENRY TRAIL.

An early trail which led from the western slopes of Mount Rainier to Commencement Bay in Tacoma. The only marker to this trail is located at South 84th and Thompson in Tacoma.

2. HUDSON BAY COMPANY TRAIL.

A trail which ran from the original site of Fort Nisqually near DuPont, Washington to Muck Station near present Roy, Washington. It was used by traders and trappers to join Fort Nisqually which was on the shores of Puget Sound with the main north-south overland route which led over the prairies from Fort Vancouver to present British Columbia.

3. NACHES PASS TRAIL.

A trail which ran from Naches Pass down the Greenwater and White Rivers to near Buckley, Washington. It followed the old Sumner-Buckley Highway to near Bonney Lake and down Elhi Hill to the Puyallup River where it followed the Puyallup to near present McMillan. It climbed the McMillan Hill and traveled to the Spanaway Lake area where it crossed the present Military Reservation north of Spanaway Lake to Ponders and Fort Steilacoom.

4. BYRD MILL ROAD.

The road between Steilacoom and Puyallup. It served as the Pierce County section of Old Military Road to Fort Bellingham.

5. OLD MILITARY ROAD-FORT BELLINGHAM.

This road was never completed beyond Seattle. In Pierce County it ran from Fort Steilacoom on the route of the Byrd Mill Road to Puyallup and north into King County following generally

the present road which is called Old Military Road.

6. OLD MILITARY ROAD-FORT VANCOUVER.

Connected Fort Steilacoom with Fort Vancouver. It ran from Steilacoom across the prairies to the Nisqually River then to Olympia and southward.

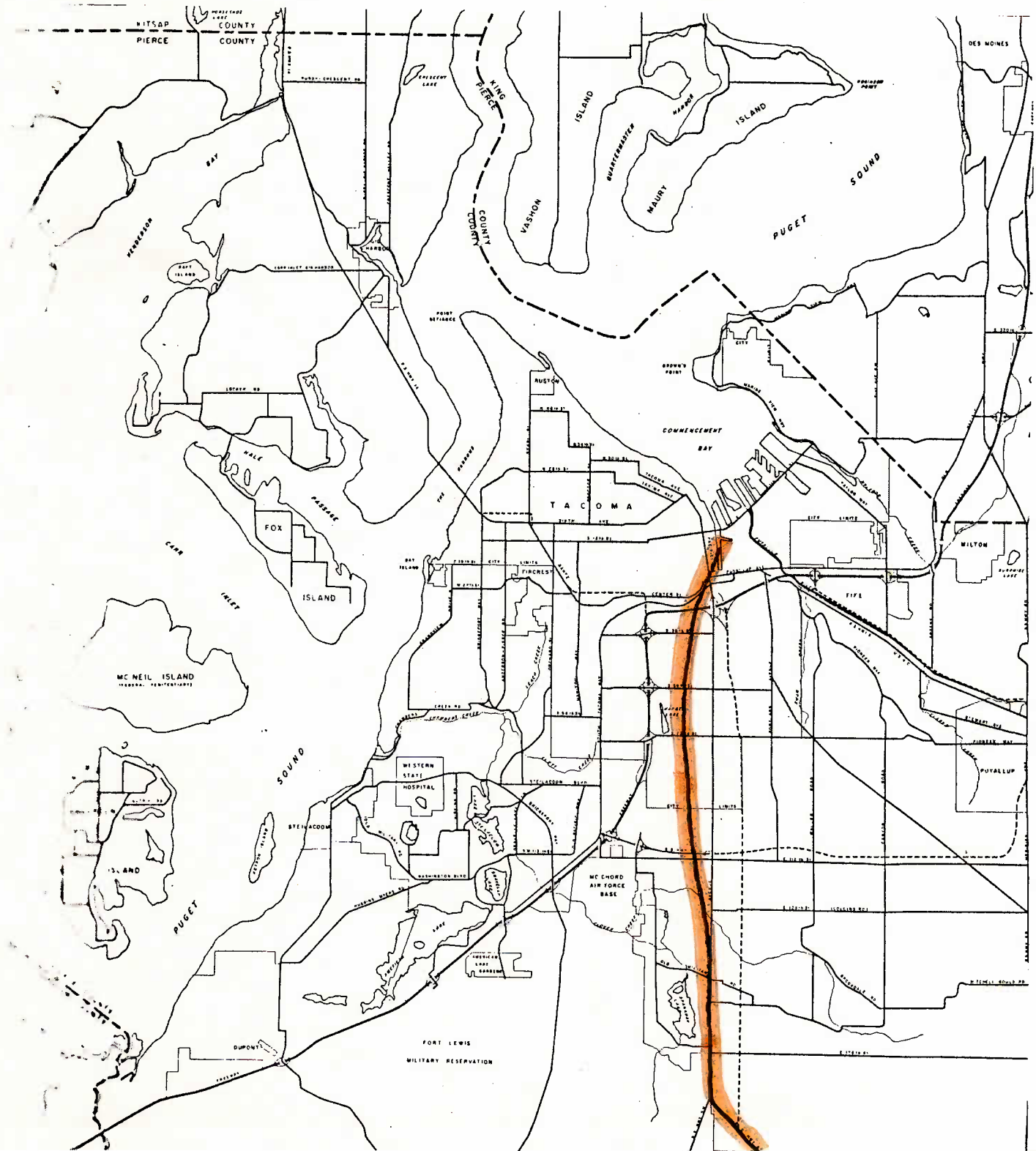
7. OLD MILITARY ROAD-FORT WALLA WALLA.

This road connected Fort Steilacoom with Fort Walla Walla. In Pierce County it was the same as the Naches Pass Trail.

8. STATE HISTORICAL ROAD NUMBER ONE.

A designation given by the Washington State Legislature in 1941 to the Byrd Mill Road.

INDIAN HENRY TRAIL-FIRST ROAD TO TACOMA



Sotolick, a Cowlitz Indian, had a homestead on the Michel Prairie in the 1870s. He hunted in the southwestern portion of present Mount Rainier National Park. He was well known by inhabitants of the area and was called Indian Henry.

The Indian Henry Hunting Ground in the National Park was named to honor him for he was often found there in the fall hunting while his women picked berries. Satulick Mountain which is east of the Hunting Ground was named to honor Indian Henry.

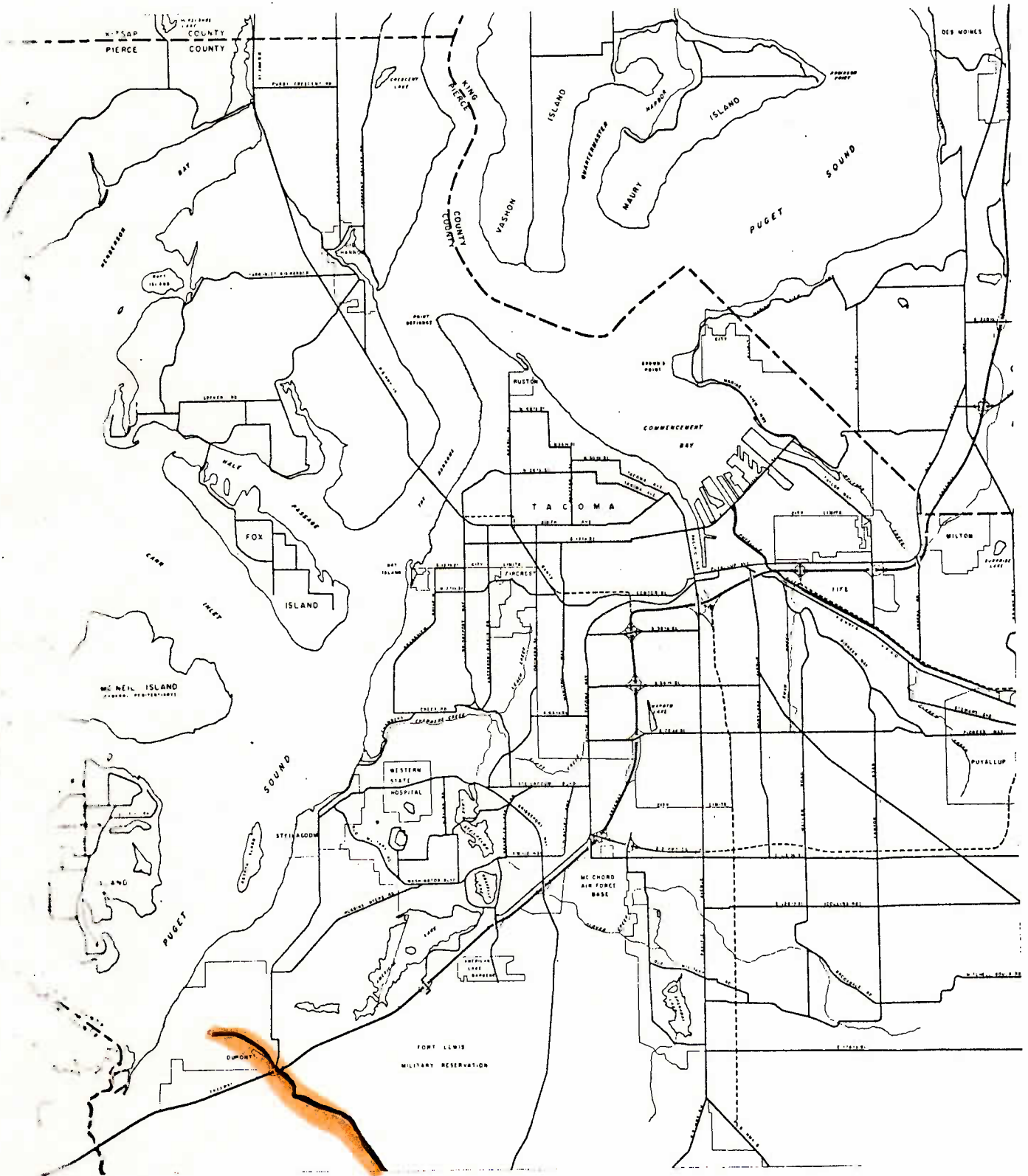
The road ran from near present Longmire through several river valleys to near the present Graham-Elk Plain area. It then took a south-to-north route generally following Pacific Avenue in Tacoma. Near the Tacoma City limits it turned slightly westward to pass Alapato Lake and follow the natural topography to Commencement Bay.

The only marker to this trail is located on the southeast corner of South 84th and Thompson Avenue in Tacoma. There is a large granite boulder with a carved inscription which reads:

Indian Henry Trail

First road to Tacoma, 1853.

HUDSON BAY COMPANY TRAIL



Soon after the establishment of Fort Nisqually on the shore of Puget Sound near the mouth of Sequalitchew Creek, the Hudson's Bay Company set up a number of sub-posts, farms or stations in the area. One of these was located on the prairie lands east of the Fort on the banks of Muck Creek. Known as Muck Station, this station also served as a stopping place for the general north-south traffic from Fort Vancouver to present British Columbia.

After several years when the Hudson's Bay Company established an agricultural unit, the Puget Sound Agricultural Company, locations like Muck served as headquarters for the activities of the Agricultural Company.

The trail itself ran from Fort Nisqually near present DuPont in a southwestward direction to Muck. The only marker to the trail is located east of the intersection of Clark Road and the freeway at the North Fort Lewis-DuPont exit to the Freeway.

The marker is a rough granite stone with a bronze plaque executed by Alonzo Victor Lewis. The inscription reads:

This street from railroad crossing at American Lake Station, thru Camp Lewis to its intersection with Lewis Drive follows the Hudson's Bay Company Trail established in 1833 between Nisqually House and Muck Creek.

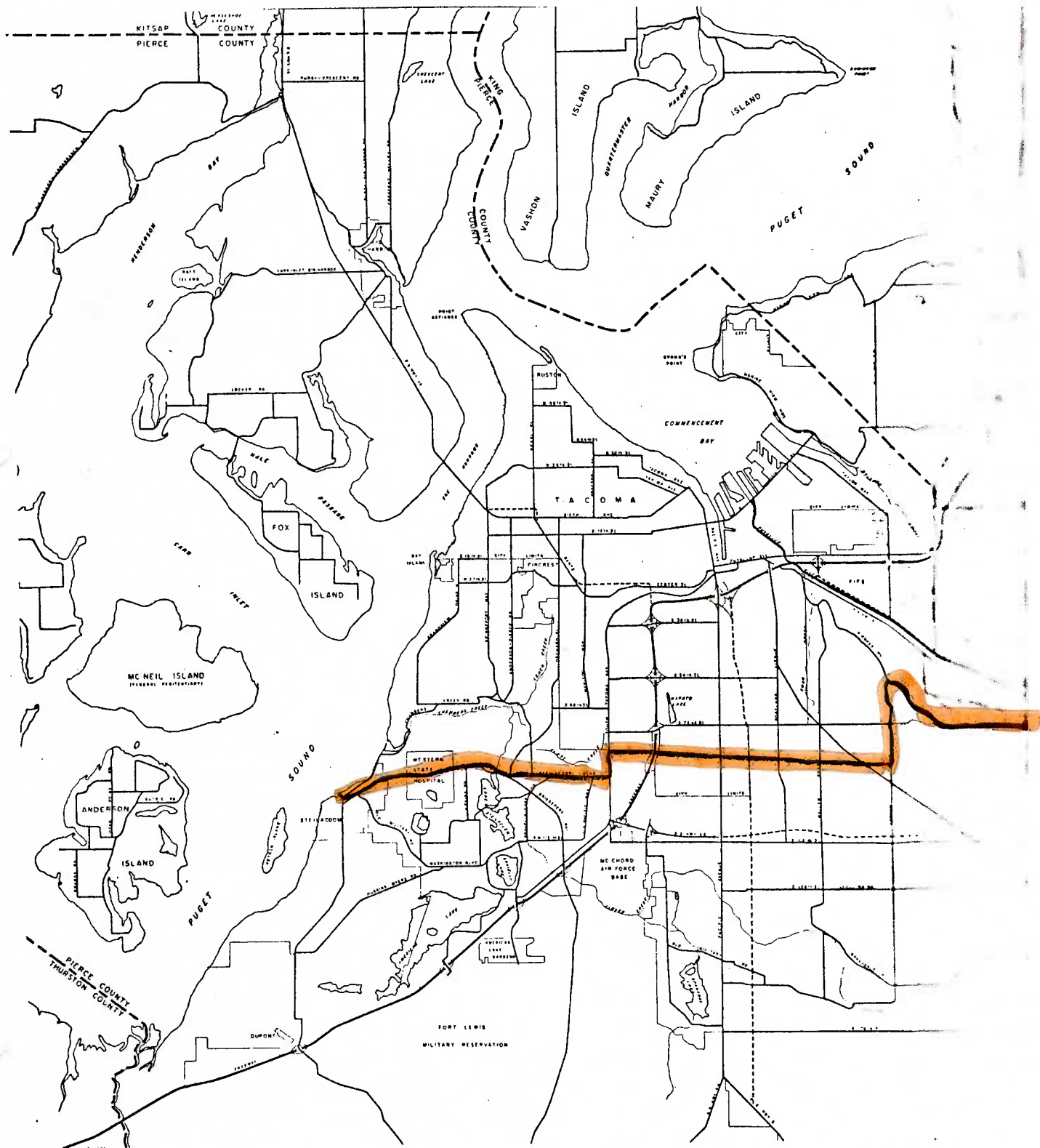
In 1889 this became a legal state highway, designated Huggins-Gregg Road. In 1917 the roadway was paved and named Clark Way.

This monument erected in 1918 by the Washington State Historical Society.

Clark Road can be followed through the Military Reservation west of Gray Field. Permission must be obtained to cross 91st Division Prairie as the military uses the area for their purposes.

An interested side trip can be made at the Northern edge of Division Prairie at King Hill. The King Hill Cemetery is located on the southern side of the hill. Buried in the Cemetery are a number of former Hudson Bay Company employees and their families.

BYRD MILL ROAD



One of the first overland routes of communication between settlements was the road between the Puyallup and Steilacoom. It was actually most of the Pierce County section of the Fort Steilacoom-Fort Bellingham Military Road but was locally known as the Byrd's Mill Road. It began at the Steilacoom Dock at the foot of Union Avenue and ran eastward to downtown Puyallup.

In 1941 the Washington State Legislature designated the Byrd's Mill Road as State Historical Road Number One and had two billboard markers erected to give information about the road.

Starting at the dock in Steilacoom at the foot of Union Avenue one may follow the designated road and visit a number of the locations of historic interest in addition to the road markers.

The first marker is located at the northeast corner of Lafayette and Frederick Streets in Steilacoom and reads:

"State Historical Road No. One
(Byrd's Mill Road)

Established by the Thurston County, Oregon Territory Legislature in 1852 and re-established by the Washington State Legislature in 1941.

This military road afforded the only route of escape from the Puyallup Valley to Fort Steilacoom during the Indian War of 1855 and to the pioneers was a highway of great importance.

Along this route in 1864 there was built the Russian American telegraph line which was proposed to extend to Europe by way of the Bering Strait and Asia."

Other monuments and sites of historical interest are located in Steilacoom. These include the marker to the first Protestant Church north of the Columbia River. The monument is a tall stone structure atop which is the original church bell. It is inscribed:

"1854-1908

The monument commemorates the erected on this site of the first Protestant Church building north of the Columbia River in

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1853 by Rev. John F. DeVore, D.D., and his co-workers and friends.

Erected by the Washington State Historical Society, Puget Sound M.E. Conference and Pioneer Friends in 1908."

The Steilacoom Town Hall located at the corner of Main Street and Lafayette is of special interest. A display collection of a number of enlarged photographs is housed in the main assembly room. The photographs are of early events, activities and people.

The Steilacoom Historical Museum is located on the lower level of the Town Hall Building and can be entered from the Main Street side of the building. Pioneer and Indian artifacts as well as works of art are on display with regular visiting hours posted. The Museum also houses its own historical research book collection and the books of the Steilacoom Library Association, the first library in the area.

At the foot of Main Street is a marker commemorating several events of historical interest:

Two story log house just south erected 1852. First school session north of Columbia 1854. Refuge during Indian War 1855-56 occupied by families of Rev. J.F. DeVore, 1853, Abram Wollery, 1854, Sherwood Bonney, 1854-56.

Erected 1961 Pierce County Pioneer Historical Association."

The oldest Roman Catholic church in the area is located on the north side of Main Street, three blocks east of Lafayette Street. A bronze marker on a large boulder is on the Main street corner of the front of the Church and reads:

This Catholic Church was erected near Fort Steilacoom by soldiers in the early fifties. Afterward moved to the city of Steilacoom and dedicated Church of the Immaculate Conception.

Return down the hill on Main Street to Starling Street. Turn to the right and immediately on the left side of the road is a marker

showing the site of the first jail in Washington Territory. The inscription on the stone marker which also has an engraved picture of the building reads:

"Site of the first Washington Territorial jail built of brick. 1858.
Used for county, state, federal prisoners. Razed 1944."

Travel east on Starling street which becomes Steilacoom Boulevard at the first stop sign. On the left side of the road at this corner is a billboard sign describing a number of "Firsts" credited to Steilacoom.

Continue on Steilacoom Boulevard toward Western State Hospital. Enter the west gate of the hospital turning to the left of the chaplain's headquarters and then to the right to the graveyard which is surrounded by a hedge and fence.

Inside the half acre are the graves of a number of local early settlers, the most prominent of which is that of William Wallace, a prominent territorial period public official. Captain Wallace, as he was known for his Indian War of 1855 service, was the first territorial governor of Idaho, designated the fifth territorial governor of Washington and served as a Washington territorial delegate to Congress. Other graves include those of Thomas, son of Ezra Meeker and Melia, the wife of C.H. Botsford, an early public official.

There are presently no military burials in the cemetery for in the 1890s the bodies of more than twenty soldiers who died or were killed during their terms of service at Fort Steilacoom were moved to the National Cemetery at the Presidio in San Francisco. Not all graves are now marked, and several shallow depressions indicate graves of those whose names are lost.

The most easily explainable method of visiting the remaining sites of historical importance on the grounds is to return to Steilacoom Boulevard, to turn left and proceed eastward to the Main Gate of the Hospital.

On the right side of Steilacoom Boulevard is a cobblestone pyramid monument bearing the following inscriptions:

1857.

Congress appropriated \$35,000 for a military road from Steilacoom to Bellingham. This memorial erected by the Washington State Historical Society, 1925.

Supplementing the appropriation made by Congress, citizens helped build

the military road through the Naches Pass to Walla Walla, 1853.

1852
Congress appropriated 20,000 for a military road from Fort Steilacoom to Fort Walla Walla. The road made passable in 1853."

Turn left into the Western State Hospital grounds and travel to the second road on the right. Here can be seen residences which were part of the Fort and were constructed in the 1855 period by August V. ... A World War I field piece has been placed on the parade ground of the Fort and has the following wooden marker placed nearby:

Fort Steilacoom, 1849-1868

Troops of the U.S. Army arrived in 1849 to establish on this site, Fort Steilacoom to protect settlers from hostile Indians. Officers were formerly billeted in the four buildings immediately in front of this sign. Cottage # 2 was the commanding officer's quarters and has seven fireplaces.

The fort's most famous historical figure was General U.S. Grant who visited here in 1853. The present administration building is the former location of the barracks for enlisted men.

A number of other buildings formed a rough stockade and housed such facilities as stables, granary, ammunition storage shed, and a post hospital. In each of two opposite corners of the rectangular fort were constructed block houses to assist in the security of the area. The military abandoned the Fort in 1868."

Evidence that U.S. Grant, while an officer stationed at Vancouver ... on the Columbia River, visited the Fort is quite sparse.

An interesting side trip can be made on the grounds of the hospital. Between the main buildings of the institution and Fort Steilacoom County Golf Course is a deep gulch or ravine through which Taylor Creek flows. A walk down the roadway beside the creek leads to an artesian well the water from which possesses remarkable clearness and purity. A row of redwood trees is planted on the right side of the roadway and here and there in the forested area are other flowering trees and shrubs.

It should be mentioned that no marker on the grounds of the hospital commemorates the farm of Joseph Thomas Heath, an Englishman who arrived in the area in the early 1840s. Mr. Heath was possibly the first man in Pierce County who had a farm who was not a direct employee of the Hudson's Bay Company. His farm which the army used for Fort Steilacoom after his death was on land claimed by the Hudson's Bay Company and leased by Mr. Heath from them.

After returning to Steilacoom Boulevard turn left and continue on the Boulevard to the Thunderbird Shopping Center. A monument to Leschi, a War Chief of the Nisqually Indian Tribe is located in front of a group of business establishments.

Continue east on Steilacoom Boulevard to Phillips Road and turn left and then right at the entrance to the State Game Farm. On the hill behind the buildings opposite the entrance is a grove of oak trees. Here is the Byrd family cemetery which contains the graves of nearly one hundred early settlers. Most of the markers were destroyed during years of neglect and most individual grave sites were lost.

The monument was placed by the Byrd family association to perpetuate the memory of the pioneers who were buried there. The marker reads:

Byrd Cemetery

Established 1853 in memory of Adam Byrd, 1796-1853, Mary Houck Byrd, 1797-1853, Rufus Byrd, 1861-1863, Ollie Byrd and the other 95 pioneers buried here. Their indomitable spirit helped blaze the trail for our western civilization.

The reader board marker at the main entrance to the game farm explains the use and purposes of the farm:

South Tacoma Game Farm

Purchased and operated by monies

received from hunting and fishing licenses. This farm produces about 12,000 Chinese pheasants yearly for release in the upland bird areas of Washington.

It is an important link in the Game Department's program of providing wild life for sportsmen of today and future generations.

State of Washington. Department of Game.

The fish hatchery which is housed on the same grounds is also an important and interesting site to visit.

After returning to Steilacoom Boulevard turn left and travel a short distance to the Chambers Creek Bridge. Turn left at the east end of the Bridge. A monument commemorating the construction of the dam by Andrew Byrd is located at the head of the creek. The inscription reads as follows:

Byrd Mill Site.

Andrew F. Byrd built a dam and saw-mill here in 1853. 100 yards downstream he built a gristmill in 1857.

Erected in 1964 by the Pierce County Pioneer and Historical Society. Sponsored by A.R. Adams whose mother was born here in 1856."

It is of special interest to note that at this point the main road crosses the site of a dam built to impound the creek waters from the mill. Rather than a bridge, the Chambers Creek Bridge is actually a passage over the dam. The resulting lake behind the dam raised the level of the several ponds there and formed what is known as Lake Steilacoom. While present roads follow the original route of this road in general, this is one of the few places that the exact location of the Byrd Mill Road is known.

After returning to the Boulevard follow it eastward past the grounds of the Clover Park School District on the former Navy Base. On the grounds of the School District headquarters building is a monument to the first school district in Pierce County. The monument was placed by the Pierce County Pioneer and Historical Society in 1966.

BYRD SCHOOL, DISTRICT 2

The First school house in Pierce County and one of the earliest north of the Columbia River stood 160 yards north of here.

Built 1855 - Burned 1885."

Again following Steilacoom Boulevard eastward travel to the terminus of the road at South Tacoma Way, turn left and follow South Tacoma Way to South 84th Street. Turn right and travel east on South 84th Street to South Thompson Avenue. It should be noted that the exact route of the road was difficult to follow since the land over which it ran was completely uninhabited prairie land. It was possible to travel several hundred yards in either direction without ever being "off" the road. In winter and in summer rutts of previous travelers were to be avoided.

On the southeast corner of the intersection of South 84th Street and South Thompson Avenue is the only marker to the Indian Henry. Indian Henry, whose actual name was Sotolick, was a Cowlitz man who had a homestead in the Eatonville area, hunted in the Rainier area, and was a friend to early local settlers. This marked trail ran from Mount Rainier to Commencement Bay.

Continue east on South 84th Street to Yakima Avenue where the Square is located. Several monuments of interest are found on the square. The building has become the Fern Hill Branch of the Tacoma Public Library.

Situated in the northwest corner of the Square is one of the stones from the Byrd Mill originally located at the head of Byrd's Creek. In the center of the square, facing Yakima Avenue is a monument to soldiers from the Fern Hill area who died during the Second World War. The inscription reads:

In memory of the Fern Hill Boys who gave their lives in World War II. 1941-1945.

John C. Johnson, William J. Turner,
Douglas Dean, Russell E. Deritis,
Laurence M. Ganes, David B. Morgan,
Willace F. Schwiesow, James H.
Kleyn, John R. Kleyn, William V.
Porter, Robert J. England, Earl S.
Thompson, Ernest Livermore, Oscar
J. Rambeck, Emory H. Leamon, Robert
L. Marshall, Harley W. Buechler,
Charles J. Mulderic, Arthur Rains,
Gerald B. Holmes, Verne Colwell,
James C. Mohn, Delbert G. Berchot,

Dean W. Gustavson, Lorenz F. Siegel,
Donald M. Joy, Kenneth C. Schulz.

"They died that we might live as free
men."

Behind the monument, arranged in a semi-circle are memorial
stones dedicated to the memory of locally prominent individuals. The
stone immediately to the west of the library building memorializes
President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The boulder facing South 84th
Street announces the naming of the Square to honor the Byrd Family.

Travel one block south on Yakima Avenue to South 85th Street
and left one block to South Park Avenue. Turn left on Park Avenue
where a military road marker is located on the grounds of the Fern
Hill School. The text of the marker reads:

MILITARY ROAD.

Steilacoom to Bellingham ran 30
feet south in 1857. Telegraph in
1864.

On this homestead George W. Byrd
built the first home in Fern Hill
in 1866.

First school in Fern Hill (Byrd
School) erected on this site in
1880."

Return to South 84th Street and turn right following it
to Pacific Avenue to McKinley Avenue where it becomes 85th
Street. Following this street crossing Portland Avenue where
the name 84th Street is resumed. South 84th terminates at Fruit-
land Avenue. Turn left on Fruitland Avenue and travel to Pioneer
Way. Turn right on Pioneer Way and travel toward Puyallup. Just
before the city of Puyallup on the grounds of Maplewood School for
many years was a billboard marker with the same text as the Road
Marker in Steilacoom.

Follow Pioneer Way to its union with Meridian Avenue. Turn
left and travel two blocks south on Meridian. On the right side
of the street is Puyallup City Park. On the grounds of the park
is a life size figure in bronze of Ezra Meeker, sculpted by Alonzo
Parker Lewis. The inscription on the base of the statue reads:

Ezra Meeker who reblazed the Oregon Trail.

In honoring, the citizens of Puget Sound
Country seek to honor that valiant company
who were its pioneers."

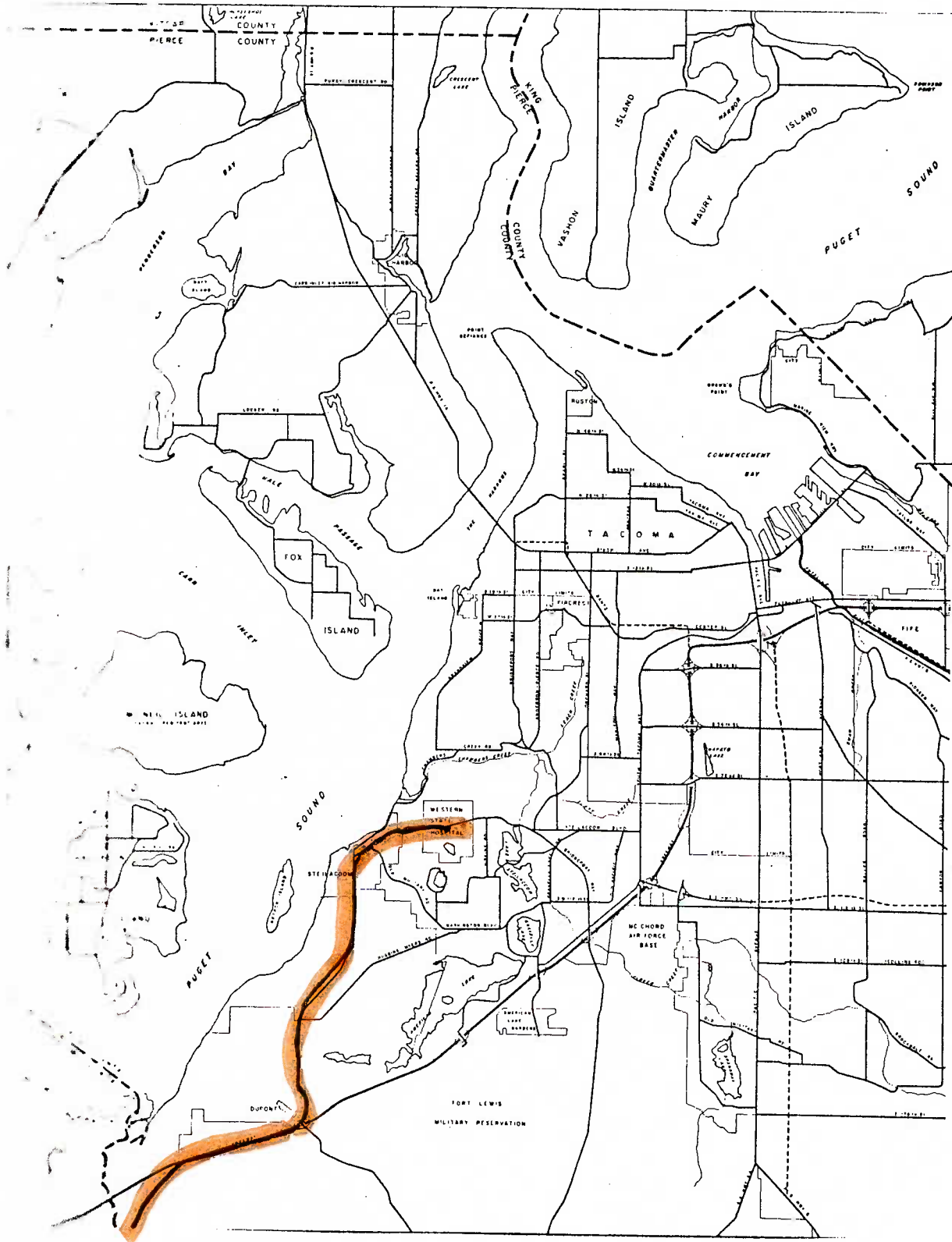
Another tablet has been placed on the base of the statue and
reads:

Eliza Jane Meeker, 1833-1909

Beloved wife of Ezra Meeker who as a bride
trekked with him over the Old Oregon Trail
and through life as a devoted wife and mother.

The Ezra Meeker Mansion which is in process of being restored
is located two blocks east of the park at 321 East Pioneer Way and
is open to visitors.

OLD MILITARY ROAD-FORT VANCOUVER



The Fort Steilacoom-Fort Vancouver Military Road began at the Western State Hospital where the marker is located at the main gate of the Hospital on Steilacoom Boulevard.

The marker reads:

1852

Congress appropriated \$20,000 for a military road from Fort Steilacoom to Fort Walla Walla. The road made passable in 1853.

Supplementing the appropriation made by Congress, citizens helped build the military road through the Naches Pass to Walla Walla, 1853 .

1857

Congress appropriated \$35,000 for a military road from Steilacoom to Bellingham. This memorial erected by the Washington State Historical Society, 1925.

The route of the Vancouver road which ran from the fort south and west can be best followed by traveling west on Steilacoom Boulevard to the town of Steilacoom, through the town of Steilacoom on Starling Street to its junction with Union Avenue. Turn left on Union Avenue and follow it through the Fort Lewis Military Reservation where the road is known as the Steilacoom Road.

At the junction of Steilacoom Road with the Freeway, follow the freeway south to the Fort Lewis Golf Course-Old Nisqually Road. Cross the Freeway and follow the Old Nisqually Road to the Nisqually River. Near the bridge was the site of one of several ferrys which were used to cross the river. As in the case of other Military Roads in the area the exact route of the road varied greatly season-by-season and year-by-year.

At the junction of Pacific Avenue and Hawk Road is a marker for the Medicine Creek Treaty of 1854 which was negotiated by Gen. W. L. Stevens and the various leaders of several Indian tribes. The actual site of the treaty grounds was closer to the present location but when the road was built Pacific Avenue was the main route to Olympia Road.

The next mention of Old Military Road on modern maps is two

east of Tenino when Old Military Road leaves the Rainier-
Road near Scatter Creek and travels to the eastern edge
of Tenino. The road did go by way of Tumwater before reaching Tenino.

The road continued in a general way to near the present site of
Vancouver, Washington where at what was called the Cowlitz Landing
the travel was generally used to Fort Vancouver.

There were several routes available to early settlers and the
result was so much confusion has resulted when individuals try
to "tie" all roads into one system. In 1852 local settlers
built their own road from Yelm to the Nisqually River. This
road joined the military road for a time but was not part of

A marker showing the site of one of the numerous endings of the
Oregon Trail is located at the northwest corner of Capitol Boule-
vard and Legion Way in Olympia in Sylvester Park. The text of
this marker reads:

Marking the end of the Oregon
Trail. 1844. Erected by Sacajawea Chapter. Daughters of
the American Revolution, Olym-
pia, Washington. 1913.

Tumwater is a bronze plaque at the west end of the old Deschutes
River bridge which reads:

Oregon Trail. 1844. Marked
by the Daughters and Sons of
the American Revolution in the
State of Washington. 1916.

Tumwater is the marker commemorating the arrival of the
Simmons-George Bush party of 1845. It is located at the
west end of the Deschutes River bridge west of the roadway.

Albion is another marker erected by the S.A.R. and the D.A.R.
It is located on a small plot of land on West Main Street
at 1st Street. The text of the marker reads:

Oregon Trail. 1844. Marked by
the Daughters and Sons of the
American Revolution in the State
of Washington. 1916.

are other markers in Toledo and Marys Corner with the Oregon Trail Markers with the same inscriptions as on the markers in Matilda and Tumwater. The markers are both on U.S. Highway 99, the one in Toledo being at the north limits of the town and the other at Marys Corner being in Matilda Jackson park.

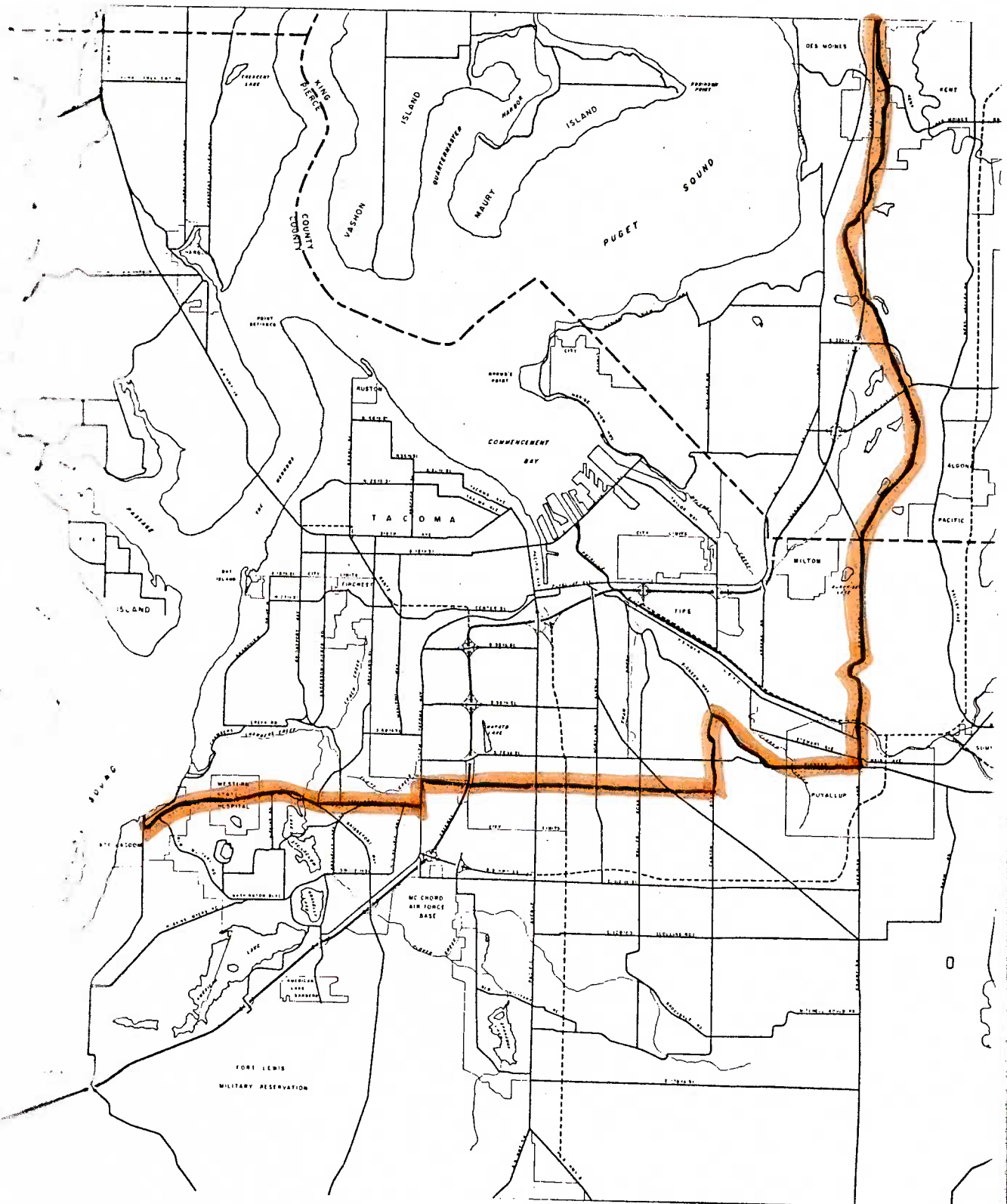
A marker of interest to the student of the road which ran from Fort Vancouver to Fort Steilacoom is located in the City of Olympia at the south end of City park. It is a sculpted bronze tablet placed on a large rock. The text of the marker reads:

North to Olympia

Dedicated to the memory of the early settlers of Monticello and those pioneers who blazed their way through to Olympia, the end of the Old Oregon Trail.

Erected by the Kiwanis Club of Olympia
July, 1926.

OLD MILITARY ROAD-FORT BELLINGHAM



The Fort Steilacoom-Fort Bellingham Military Road in Pierce County followed the same course as the Byrd Mill Road until the center of Puyallup is reached. The road turned north on Washington Avenue and went directly north to the Puyallup River bridge. Here can be found the only monument in Pierce County marking this route other than those listed on the Byrd's Mill Road.

The marker has been moved from its original location during several years of road widening and other improvements. It is presently on the north side of the river on the left side of the road.

The text of the marker reads as follows:

At night in October 1855 Abraham Salatut an Indian rode through the Puyallup Valley warning white settlers that a war party of Indians was coming.

A Military road from Steilacoom to Bellingham crossed the Puyallup River here in 1864. First telegraph line through the state was construction on this road.

Washington State Historical Society, 1925.

In 1855 under Territorial charter John Carson built a toll bridge here. It was carried away by floods during the winter of 1862-63.

In February 1856 U.S. Soldiers built Fort Maloney here to protect the John Carson Ferry. The Summer of 1861 Mrs. E.E. Carson taught school in Fort Maloney."

The road then continues north to the King County line as 1st Street where a right turn leads on Edgewood Road to past Lake Dolloff. At this point the road is listed on road signs as Military or Old Military Road except for a brief time where the road becomes 51st Avenue South and continues as such until the road crosses 110th South west of the town of Algona.

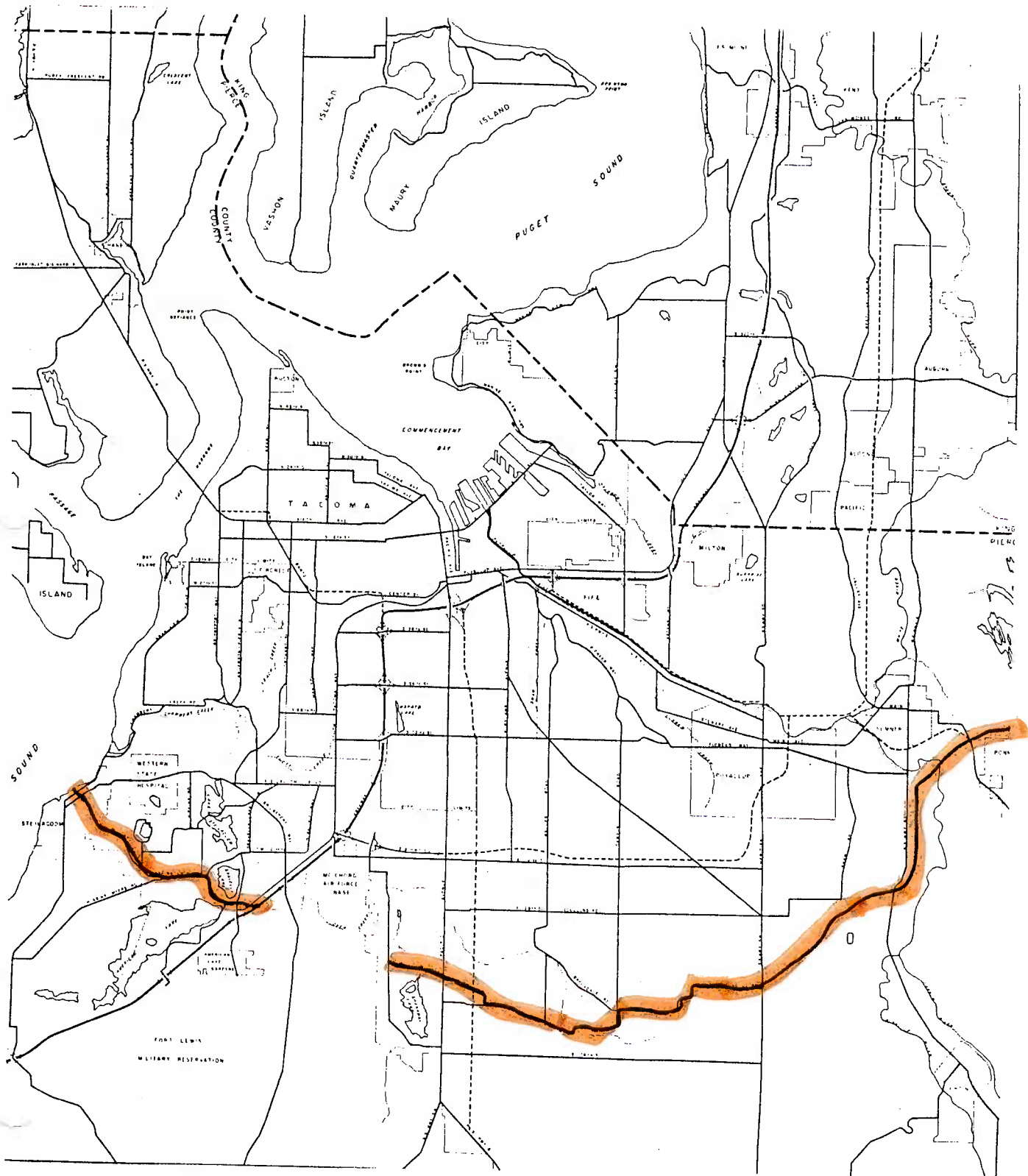
Follow Old Military Road to the left to near Lake Dolloff where the road crosses the Freeway and becomes Holst Road until 11th Street South where it again goes under the Freeway. After the freeway is passed travel to the left where the road is listed

Military Road until near the Kent city limits it becomes 36th Avenue South. The road at this point is the southern border of the City of Kent until it becomes 36th Avenue South. This road is followed to the Kent Des Moines Road when Old Military Road parallels the Freeway to near South 204th Street when it crosses the Freeway again near Angel Lake.

The Military Road parallels the Freeway for a short distance on the west side of the road until east of the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport the road travels in a westerly direction until it is lost crossing highway 518.

On 42nd Avenue South across the gulch, turn left onto the Three Tree Point road where at the crossing of Pacific Highway (old U.S.99) the road to the northwest becomes Military Road and continues to its junction with Des Moines Way where it enters Metropolitan Seattle.

OLD MILITARY ROAD - FORT WALLA WALLA



The Fort Steilacoom-Fort Walla Walla Military Road can best be described by beginning at Green water, Washington on U.S. Highway 410 where the road, after following the Greenwater River from Eastern Washington by way of Naches Pass enters Western Washington. Those who used the road followed the course of the Greenwater River from the pass area until the Greenwater flows into the White River.

A monument has been erected on the east side of the Highway where a bridge crosses the Greenwater River. The text of the marker is as follows:

OREGON TRAIL MEMORIAL

Names of pioneer families that came of the Naches Pass in 1853.

Aiken-Bell-Baker-Bites-Burnett-Byles-Clinton-Davis-Day-Downey-Finch-Fitch-Frazier-Gant-Gordon-Greenman-Guess-Hamilton-Hill-Himes-Judson-Kinkaid-Lane-Light-Longmire-McCollough-Melville-Mitchell-Mueller-Neilson-Ogle-Porter-Risdon-Sargent-West-Woodward-Wollery-Wright-Young.

Marker erected in memory of pioneers who came over Naches Branch of the Oregon Trail.

Financed by Students of Yale College, Pierce County Pioneer Society and other Friends. Sponsored by the Washington State Historical Society. 1941."

The present highway follows the general route of the trail from the Greenwater down the White River to the present site of Buckley. The modern road then takes a more direct route while the original road, known as the Sumner-Buckley Highway leads to Connell's Prairie.

A monument has been erected at Connell's Prairie five miles southwest of Buckley, on the old Sumner-Buckley Highway. In the middle of the intersection is a pyramid shaped cobblestone marker.

Near here Indians lay in ambush and killed Lieutenant McAllister and Michael Connell, October 27, 1855. In this vicinity seven white men on way from Camp Naches to Fort Steilacoom were ambushed by Indians October 31, 1855.

Of the number, Colonels Miles and Moses were killed. Fifty feet directly in front of this was the military road from Fort Steilacoom via Naches Pass to Fort Walla Walla, located 1850-1854.

This memorial erected by the Washington State Historical Society, A.D. 1924.

The trail originally passed through the site of present Bonney Lake, down Elhi Hill, across the Puyallup River and over the hill separating the upper reaches of the Puyallup Valley near the present site of McMillan with the uplands to the south.

Short stretches of the roadway in the vicinity of Sunrise Terrace are marked as Military Road East. South of Canyon Road East the route called Old Military Road can be followed to where it joins 160th Street East. After two or three blocks the road is again designated Old Military Road from its connecting point with 160th East to East B. Street.

One half mile west of the Clover Creek School on the north side of Old Military Road is a seven foot cobblestone pyramid marker locating Camp Montgomery. The marker was dedicated on June 14, 1931 by the Monday Civic Club of Tacoma. Near the apex of the marker is an Oregon Trail memorial plaque with the following inscription:

1853

The Naches Pass Immigrant Train made their last camp here October, 1853. Some of the party went south to Oregon from this spot, some north into King County, and others southwest into Thurston County and a large number settled near in Pierce County.

Camp Montgomery located on the John Montgomery Donation Land Claim was used by soldiers during the Indian War of 1855 as a military center and way stop on the Military Road.

The stone pyramid marker at the southwest corner of Pacific Avenue and Old Military Road near the entrance to Spanaway Park was dedicated by the Washington State Historical Society on December 2, 1922. The text of the marker reads:

First military road in Washington
from Fort Steilacoom to Fort Walla
Walla via the Naches Pass crossed
the highway here.

Located 1853-1854. This memorial
erected by the Washington State
Historical Society, A.D. 1922."

The final encampment site of the Naches Pass Trail pioneers is also marked at the entrance of the Brookdale Golf Course one and one half miles east of Pacific Avenue on Brookdale Road East. The text of the marker is as follows:

OREGON TRAIL MEMORIAL
1853-1913

Commemorating the 60th anniversary
of the arrival of the first emigrant
train coming direct to the Puget Sound
via the Naches Pass. They made their
last encampment October 18, 1853 on
the banks of Clover Creek three-fourths
of a mile south of this monument.

Erected by Washington State Historical
Society - Members - Descendants and
friends of the Naches Emigrant Train.

The original road which led across the air field west of Spanaway Park was closed in the 1930s when the crossing of the base was eliminated. The present road ends at the East Gate of McChord Air Force Base.

By following the Perimeter Road to the left of the East Gate of McChord Air Force Base through the Air Force Base property into the Military Reservation until Woodbrook Drive the Ponders Military Road Marker can be visited. Leave the Perimeter Road and turn right onto Woodbrook Drive following that road across the Freeway to Old U.S. Highway 99 or Pacific Highway South. Turn onto Pacific Highway South and at the beginning of the business district on the right side of the road is the Ponders Marker:

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This memorial erected by the Washington State Historical Society on ground donated by A.F. Ponder.

Military Road from Fort Steilacoom to Fort Walla Walla located 1853-1854."

The final Old Military Road marker is located at the entrance to Western State Hospital on Steilacoom Boulevard.

The text is as follows:

1852

Congress appropriated \$20,000 for a military road from Fort Steilacoom to Fort Walla Walla. The road was made passable in 1853.

Supplementing the appropriation made by Congress citizens helped build the military road through the Naches Pass to Walla Walla in 1853.

1857

Congress appropriated \$35,000 for a military road from Steilacoom to Bellingham.

This memorial erected by the Washington State Historical Society, 1925.