

Art Depicting State History Now on Walls

**Murals Capture Spirit
of Early Oregon and
Correct in Detail**

**Discovery, Exploration,
Missionary, Settler
Arrival Shown**

By RALPH C. CURTIS

Those colorful murals depicting scenes outstandingly significant in Oregon's early history are now in place upon the walls of the capital rotunda and, because they were contemplated and included in the original planning, they look as though they had always been there. They belong. They make the rotunda the completed work of art that it was meant to be, relieving any monotony it may have had in its unfinished state.

Murals of this size and character are something entirely new in architecture so far as Salem is concerned. Certainly they are new to the present writer, who heretofore has reported every imaginable type of news except art news. Really a qualified art critic should have been called, but the opportunity to interview Barry Faulkner and Frank H. Schwarz, the renowned muralists who created them, was fleeting and so—

If you happen to be left-brained, the first of the four large murals to greet the eye on entering the capitol, and the first one in historical sequence, is Faulkner's representation of the landing of Captain Robert Gray on the bank of the Columbia river after discovering its mouth and sailing inside in the "Columbia Rediviva" for which the river was named, in the spring of 1792.

**First Claim Based
On Gray's Landing**

Now here are the things you need to know about this picture. It is idealized, in that it is not certain or even likely that Gray's entire crew accompanied him on the occasion of his landing. But in the picture a sailor plants the United States flag on the soil of the Oregon country to symbolize this visit as a basis for territorial claims. All members of the crew are young men—they were farm boys who went to sea as a lark. There is no authentic portrait of Captain Gray in existence; the model for Gray's face was a great-great-grandnephew, who bears the family resemblance. Now about the Indians—they are Chinooks, a family now practically extinct, with distinctly oriental features. The driftwood on the beach, well, it is driftwood that is there now; but there was no driftwood in 1792.

**Lewis and Clark
At Celilo Falls**

Glancing to the right of the foyer, we now inspect the mural depicting Lewis and Clark at Celilo Falls. Of the two central figures, the one facing the beholder is Lewis. Mr. Schwarz, who painted this mural, obtained the services of the same Indian woman who posed as Sacajawea for James Earl Fraser's famous sculpture, "Lewis and Clark." Celilo Falls is there as it is today—with the things of civilization left out. There are two dogs in the picture; if it were absolutely true to history, there would be swarms of them. The canoes, burnt out of willow logs, are authentic. This scene is described in only a few sentences in the explorers' journal.

**Whitman's Arrival
At Fort Vancouver**

The best place to view Faulkner's picture of Fort Vancouver, on the northwest corner of the rotunda, is from the second floor in front of the governor's suite. Dr. John McLoughlin is the central figure, as he greets the Whitman party in 1836. Narcissa Whitman is shaking hands with James Douglas, who four years later succeeded McLoughlin as factor. The taller woman behind Mrs. Whitman is Mrs. H. H. Spalding and the blonde man with the tan coat slightly behind her is Marcus Whitman.

Now before you criticize the spotless, civilized attire of these people just ending a weary trek across the continent, or that of these men holding an outpost in the wilderness, it is well to explain that these things are historically correct. The Englishmen at Fort Vancouver, especially Douglas, always dressed neatly. The Whitman party had halted at "the sawmill" a few miles above the fort, spruced up and changed clothes. The two ships in the river, in front of the

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Historic Art

Now on Walls

Murals Capture Spirit of Early Oregon and Correct in Detail

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background of Portland's hills—yest, they were there too. But the somber-looking Indians on the right are symbolic—reminders of the fate that was in store for the Whitman party.

"Great Wagon Train Of 1843" Arrives

From the same second floor viewpoint we now scan the last of the large murals, Schwarz's representation of the "Great Wagon Train of 1843." The scene is the "last encampment," some miles above the present site of Portland. It was a spot where the travelers rested and sought information about the land they had reached. There is a sort of evening council, such as was often held as the covered wagon pioneers halted for the night.

It would have been possible for Schwarz to depict individual members of this immigration—there were plenty of portraits at hand. But he wanted to represent 900 people, the ancestors of many present Oregonians; so he did not include any actual persons. His material was obtained mostly from the recollections of Jesse Applegate.

The smaller murals are entirely symbolical and self-explanatory, though it might be mentioned that an actual scene in the Hood River valley is shown in the one exemplifying the fruit and grain industries.

There will be two more murals. Faulkner is preparing the one for the house chamber, depicting the historic Champoege scene; and Schwarz the one in the senate chamber, representing the bringing of the news of statehood to Salem.

Just a final word about the artists; they are unassuming, pleasant, conscientious men who have done painstaking work, with a high regard for Oregon's heritage of history and spirit, who through their outstanding craftsmanship have transferred that spirit to canvas as it has never been done before. What more can we ask?

Lifelike Murals Add Final Touch to Interior of Capitol



OUTSTANDING INCIDENTS in the history of the northwest are depicted in lifelike manner in the mammoth murals placed within recent weeks upon the walls of Oregon's new capitol. For the reason that the capitol was planned throughout as a monument to Oregon's pioneers, and with the art work in mind in all of the planning so that the murals are integral parts of the completed structure, the effect is all the more striking and appropriately harmonious. The four largest murals portray especially notable events in the exploration and settlement of the northwest. Depicted above is the landing of Captain Gray at the mouth of the Columbia. His discovery of the river in 1792 marked the beginning of northwest exploration. The mural was painted by Barry Faulkner of New York. (All cuts on this page by courtesy of The Oregonian.)



THE OREGON of today is also symbolized in a series of murals now in place upon the walls of the new capitol. The far-flung wheat and fruit industries are exemplified in this mural by Faulkner. The two artists were selected on the basis of their achievements and standing in the art world rather than competitively, the capitol commission and the architects feeling that such a method of selection would result in decorations of the best quality.



UNITED STATES claims to the Oregon country, based upon the first land exploration and actual occupancy, date back to the expedition of Lewis and Clark, 1803-'06. In this mural by Frank Schwartz of New York, Meriwether Lewis and William Clark are pictured together with the members of their party, including the Indian woman guide, Sacajawea. Both of the mural artists, Schwartz and Faulkner, devoted many months to historical research before beginning their work and the pictures, though idealized, are historically accurate as to persons and dress.



TWO OF OREGON'S earliest industries, sheep raising and mining, both susceptible to treatment suggestive of the ruggedness and simplicity of life on this "last frontier" and of the natural resources still abundant, are exemplified in this mural by Schwartz.



DR. JOHN McLOUGHLIN, director at Fort Vancouver for the Hudson's Bay company, is shown greeting early American settlers at his post on the banks of the Columbia river near what is now Vancouver, Wash. The earlier white occupants of the territory were trappers and fur traders. This mural was painted by Faulkner. The murals are of varying dimensions to fit the wall spaces, but these larger ones are approximately 150 square feet in area.



THE DAIRY industry, now highly developed in Oregon, and the cattle industry, which still thrives with much of its typical "wild west" setting unaltered, are symbolized in this mural by Schwartz. The nine murals, two of which are not reproduced here, cost the state \$80,000 and complete the interior of the capitol, with the exception of some minor decorating and the purchase of some furniture and similar equipment.



THE COVERED WAGON period. A typical wagon train in camp for the night, already in the Oregon country but not yet arrived at its goal; a mural, by Schwartz, which represents the real "winning of the west" by homeseekers. Faulkner and Schwartz were commissioned to paint the murals in the spring of 1936 when it was found that funds available were sufficient to include the art work, in view of the fact that the bids on construction of the capitol were lower than expected. They began actual work on the paintings in April, 1937.

Year of 1938 Sees Oregon's New Capitol Building Complete



The OLD CAPITOL served Oregon for 60 years that spanned from covered wagon days to the present. Authorized by the legislature of 1872, it was completed in 1876 at a cost of \$325,000. It was built almost entirely of brick with sandstone and limestone facing and trimming.

Originally it was without a dome, being built in the shape of a great cross in a parklike setting of native Oregon trees. The copper dome, most striking feature of the building, which rose several feet higher than the top of the new capitol, was added in 1888, bringing the total cost of the structure to \$450,000. The porticoes on the east and west sides were also not a part of the original structure, having been added in 1888.

The burnished copper dome, flashing in the sunlight, was a landmark to traveler and resident alike, visible for several miles on all sides of Salem. A stairway led to the cupola on top, a favorite mecca for sight-seers who could look over a large part of the Willamette valley and see several peaks in the Cascade range.

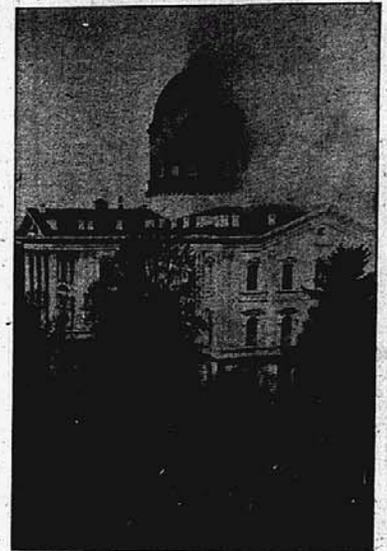
This famous old structure was loved by the citizens of Oregon for sentimental reasons and was maintained in as good condition as many old capitol buildings of other states. However, at the time it was built Oregon had a population of but 90,923, and was on the threshold of tremendous growth to over a million persons at the present time.

This tenfold increase in the state's inhabitants multiplied state departments and the old capitol was congested with offices by the turn of the century. In 1914, the \$320,000 state supreme court building was completed to house the overflow from the capitol. Other expansion from the statehouse's capacity soon became necessary and in 1930 the big five-story state office building in Salem was completed, in 1931 a two-story agricultural building was occupied.

In addition, a number of offices now maintain headquarters or branches in Portland, mostly in the Oregon building there. Thus it may be seen that the loss of the old statehouse, much as it may be regretted, made way for a much needed greater capitol building in a modern age and paved the way to better facilities for Oregon's state government. In fact, this statehouse also was erected to take the place of a capitol building, Oregon's first, destroyed by fire in 1854.



APRIL 25, 1935. The statehouse is burning! But Salem people, just at the evening dinner hour, were slow to realize that any fire in the substantial old statehouse could be very serious. In the twilight many sat about the lawns close to the building, as at a picnic.



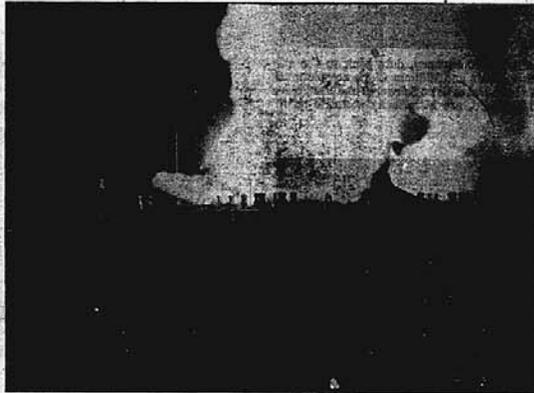
A THIN WISP of smoke reached the dome as the blaze, in the basement, found the great center well of the rotunda a perfect flue for an outlet.



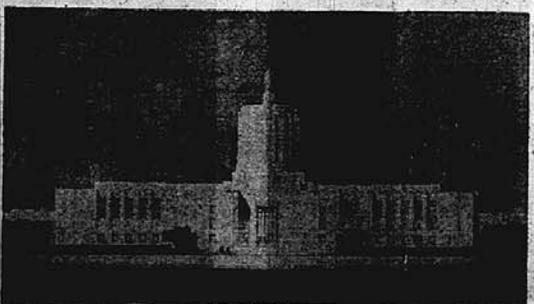
IN THE MORNING the fire was still smoldering as a pumper here keeps playing a stream of water on the ruins. Ghostly remains of the still-standing walls are all that are left to remind Oregon of its statehouse. One life, that of a firefighter, was lost and monetary loss including many valuable records was estimated at \$1,000,000.



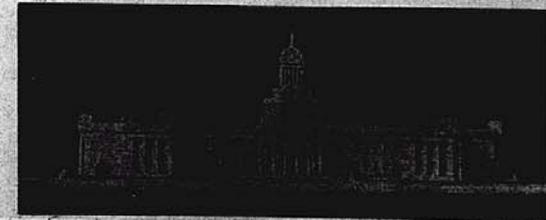
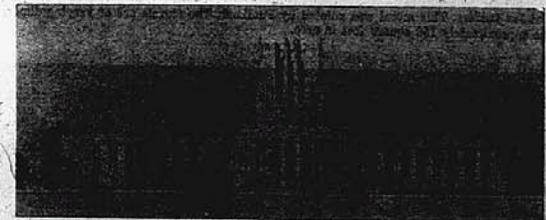
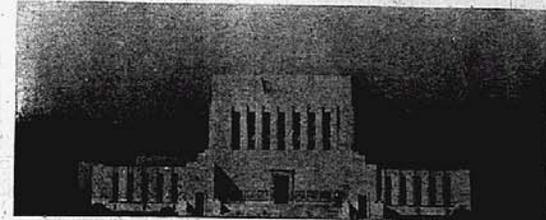
AN INFERNO enveloped the building after dark despite the efforts of the Salem fire department and two engine companies from Portland. About 11 o'clock the dome crashed inward.



DOMELESS, the blackened walls encased an inferno of twisted steel and crumbling pillars as the spectacular fire lighted up the city for blocks around.



THE DESIGNERS, Francis Keally and George W. Jacoby, associates of Trowbridge and Livingston of New York, who drew the winning plans for the structure that was selected May 25, 1938, by a jury of five authorities. Jacoby is now deceased. Right, the new capitol as it was sketched by the architects. "built for Oregon and based on early Oregon history."



DESIGNS OF ALL TYPES, ranging from tall office buildings to the conventional dome-type capitol building were submitted to the capitol reconstruction commission. Above are some of the worthy ideas for Oregon's statehouse drawn in a nation-wide competition.

How New Statehouse Rose from the Ashes Retold in Pictures



GOVERNOR Charles H. Martin broke soil for construction of the new capitol on June 8, 1936. Governor Martin is shown above with shovel. Behind him, left to right, Dr. Ernest C. Dalton of the capitol commission; W. L. Goslin, secretary to the governor; Chief Justice J. U. Campbell.



THE CORNERSTONE laying ceremonies were attended by 5000 persons June 17, 1937, at the building site where the old capitol stood. This location was chosen from several other suggested sites for the new building in Salem, notably on Candalaria Heights and Bush pasture. Inset is Associate Justice George Rossman of the state supreme court, master of ceremonies.



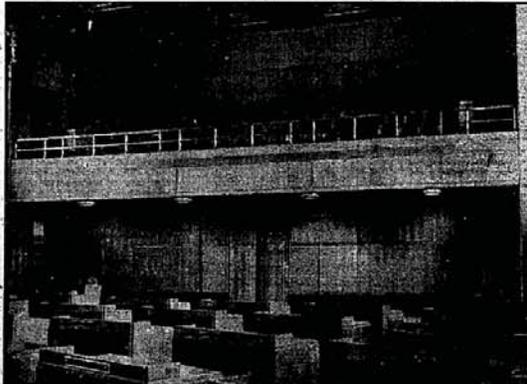
THE CAPITOL GROUP will eventually occupy all the property bounded by a line above. Some of this has already been purchased and at present a virtually completed new \$1,000,000 state library building stands to the left and front of the capitol shown in course of construction.



THE PIONEER, 22-foot figure in bronze atop the capitol dome depicts the spirit of early Oregon as the settler, axe in hand, prepares to clear land for his home. The figure was done for the capitol reconstruction commission by Ulric Ellerhusen, famed sculptor.



COMPLETED, except for the statue of "The Pioneer" atop its dome, the big white marble statehouse is striking from any angle with its simple yet impressive lines in what its designer calls "modern Greek" style. This is a view of the rear, as seen from the Willamette university campus.



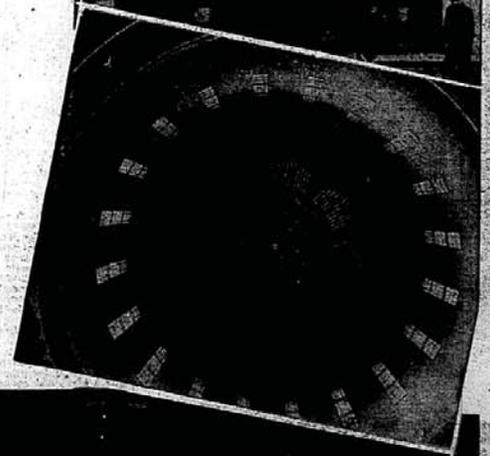
HOUSE GALLERY provides seats for scores of spectators at sessions. On the floor are some of the individual desks for members of the house. A mural now being completed will be placed in this chamber.



GOVERNOR'S OFFICE contains this map of Oregon hung above a fireplace. The governor's offices are in the center of the building close to all department offices.



BROAD STAIRWAYS lead from the main lobby to both wings of the statehouse. This is a view looking toward the senate chamber entrance.



SIMPLE BEAUTY marks the interior of the capitol. As the visitor approaches the huge central entrance, bronze set in the marble (top), he experiences an uplift of spirit that is intensified as he enters the doors and is confronted with the view upward into the dome (center) from the floor of the rotunda. The rotunda is now receiving its four great murals depicting Oregon history, executed by two of America's outstanding artists. Bottom picture shows the senate chamber with rostrum at right. On the senate floor carpet are figures of fish and grain, denoting state industries.