

A YANKEE ON PUGET SOUND: Pioneer Dispatches of Edward Jay Allen, 1852–1855

By Karen L. Johnson and Dennis M. Larsen

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Reviewed by Susan Badger Doyle.

A Yankee on Puget Sound is a sequel to the authors' *Our Faces are Westward: The 1852 Oregon Trail Journey of Edward Jay Allen* and covers Allen's experience in Puget Sound in 1852–1855.

While he was in Washington Territory a relatively short time, Edward Jay Allen had a significant impact on Pacific Northwest history. The primary source for *A Yankee on Puget Sound* is a scrapbook of letters Allen wrote to his brother William, which were published in the *Pittsburg Daily Dispatch*. Additional sources include other letters from and to Allen and a manuscript he wrote in about 1908. This book interweaves descriptive narrative with Allen's letters and writings.

Allen left his home in Pittsburgh at age twenty-two and traveled with three friends to Oregon to improve his health. After a brief stay in Portland, he began traveling north on the Cowlitz Trail to Olympia. His trip was interrupted when he was drafted as a delegate to the Monticello Convention of 1852, which led to the separation of Washington Territory from Oregon Territory. When the convention was over, he resumed his journey to Olympia, arriving in December 1852. He stayed at a friend's cabin until he established a donation land claim three miles north of Olympia in early 1853. He immediately built a cabin and planted a garden. During the spring he cut timber and squared logs for sale. He wrote long letters describing the Puget Sound area, his cabin and domestic life, and his interactions with local Indians.

While his two years at Olympia were filled with a wide range of activities, the heart of Allen's story is his involvement with building the Naches Pass wagon road. In May 1853 Allen