

PART II

Population

Where Washington's People Live

Because of the influences of topography, climate, accessibility and recent industrialization, Washington's population is distributed unevenly throughout the state. Over two-thirds of the people live in the western portion, concentrated largely in the industrial cities of Puget Sound. The Olympic Mountains and Willapa Hills of the Coast Range and the Cascade Mountains stand out as sparsely populated areas in western Washington. The Willamette-Puget Sound Lowland, extending from Vancouver on the Columbia River northward to Bellingham near the Canadian border, is the major population belt of the state. It contains a fairly well-distributed rural population on its river deltas and rolling, glacial drift plains.

The mountains, hills, plateaus, irrigable valleys and dry climatic conditions cause a generally clustered pattern of population settlement in eastern Washington. Mountainous areas including the eastern Cascade Mountain slope, the Okanogan Highlands, the Blue Mountains and the Selkirks have but few people. Dryland and upland areas which cannot be irrigated, such as large portions of the Waterville Plateau, the Channelled Scablands and the hills of Yakima County, are thinly settled. Both rural and urban population is concentrated in the irrigated Yakima, Kittitas, Wenatchee, Okanogan and Walla Walla Valleys and in the Pasco and Quincy Basins. In the far eastern section--the Palouse Hills--the uniform soil, topography and moderate rainfall permits a more evenly distributed population. The industrialized Spokane metropolitan area and the rich agricultural Yakima Valley are the major population clusters of eastern Washington.

Growth of Population

Washington was explored by Spanish, Russian, British and American expeditions between 1592 and 1805, but no settlement occurred until 1810. Ownership of the area was disputed by America and Great Britain. A compromise, the Joint Occupancy Treaty of 1818, permitted both American and British fur traders and settlers to live north of the Columbia River. British interests (the Northwest Company and the Hudson's Bay Company) established fur trading posts at Spokane and Walla Walla in 1810 and 1818. American claims were strengthened by the Lewis and Clark Expedition (1804-1805) and by the settlements at Fort Spokane, Okanogan and Astoria by the Pacific Fur Company. The British increased their influence as they established agricultural settlements at Fort Vancouver and Fort Misqually between 1824 and 1833. Settlement by Americans north of the Columbia, although permitted by treaty, was discouraged by the Hudson's Bay Company which desired to maintain its fur trade monopoly.

A growing tide of American land settlers over the Oregon Trail during the 1840's changed the balance of control in favor of the United States. Most of the Americans settled in the Willamette Valley of Oregon. Unhindered by the British, several hundred American settlers moved northward across the Columbia into the Puget Sound country and soon outnumbered the British fur traders.

The conflict of interests was solved by the Oregon Treaty of 1846, which gave the United States the present area of Washington and established the Canadian boundary as it exists today. Oregon Territory (including all of the present state of Washington) was created in 1848 by Congress, with its capitol in Salem, Oregon. Settlers north of the Columbia met in 1851 at the Monticello Convention in present Longview, Washington, and asked for a separate territorial government. Washington Territory was created March 2, 1851, with a capitol at Olympia on Puget Sound. Isaac I. Stevens was appointed as Governor.

Population growth was slow before 1860. Lack of roads, the long distance from the East, and the difficulty of clearing the dense forests of the Puget Sound country kept immigration to a minimum. Indian hostility prevented settlement in most of eastern Washington prior to 1858, and that tended to slow movement into the Puget Sound Basin. The Washington population was only 11,594 according to the 1860 Census.

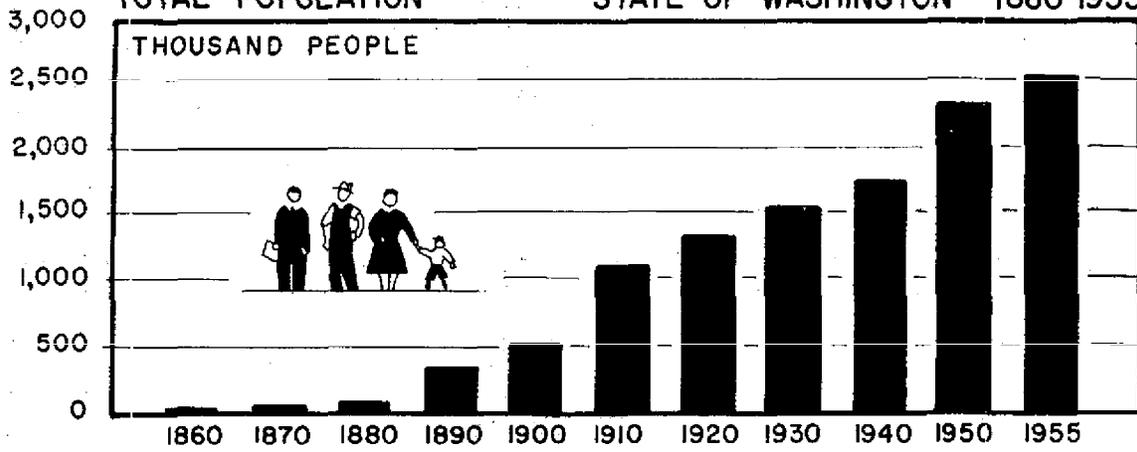
In 1863, the Washington territorial boundaries were changed to the present state lines by the creation of Idaho Territory. The Census of 1870 was the first to follow the present boundaries, and it enumerated a population of 23,995.

Population grew rapidly from 1870 to 1890. New transcontinental railroads brought large waves of immigrants from the East and Europe. The completion of the Union Pacific to the Columbia River brought new settlers into southeastern Washington. When the Northern Pacific reached Spokane in 1880 and was continued on toward Puget Sound, settlers occupied the Palouse and Big Bend wheat lands and the Yakima Valley. In 1883, six new counties were created in eastern Washington. Expansion of coastwise shipping and lumbering built up the cities on Puget Sound and at Grays Harbor. Washington Territory was admitted to the Union as a state in 1889. The population at that time was 350,000.

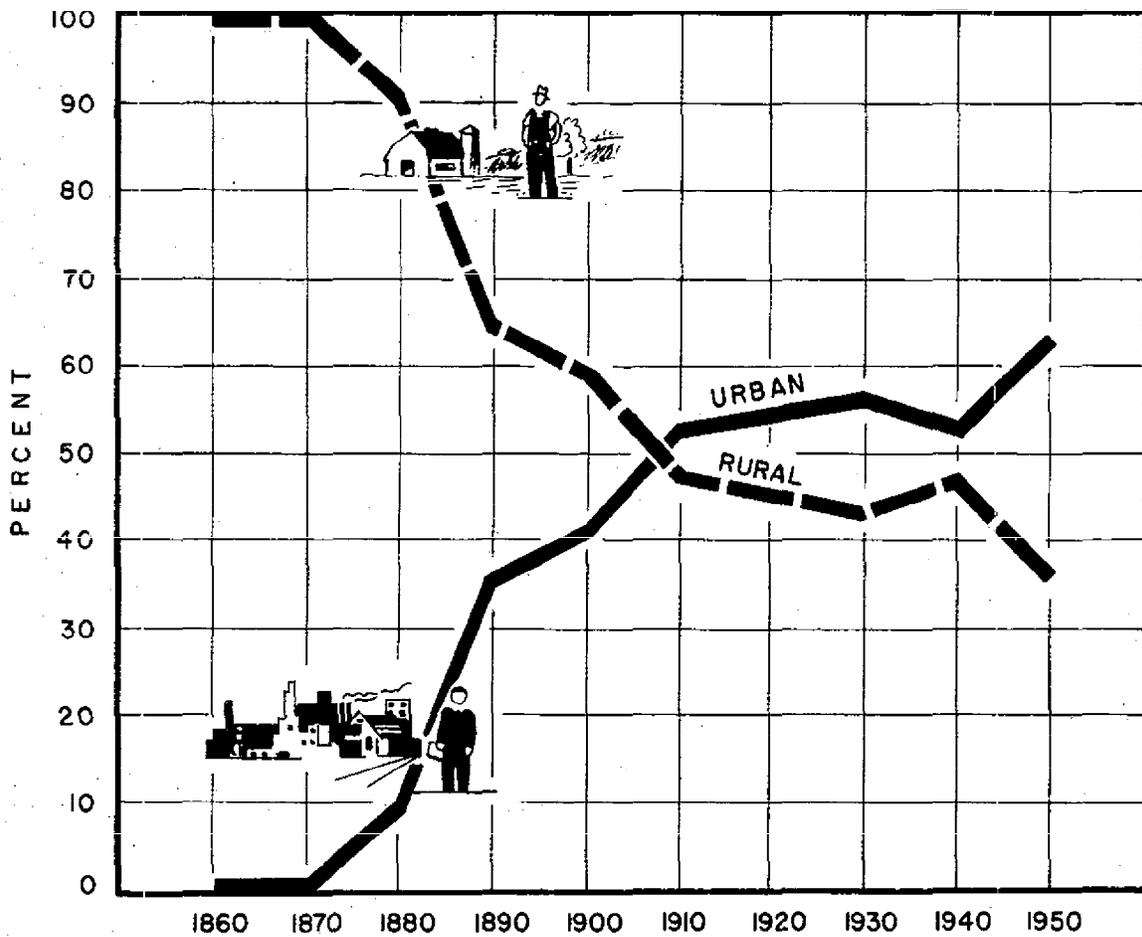
The period 1900-1910 was a decade of rapid growth in which the state gained 621,000 persons, more than doubling to 1,111,990. Two other railroads, Great Northern and Chicago, Milwaukee and Saint Paul, reached Puget Sound in 1893 and 1909, respectively. The lumber industry and agriculture supported more people; land and timber seekers homesteaded free public domain lands in the mountainous areas. The Alaskan gold rush doubled Seattle's population within a decade. Railroads and ships brought large numbers of people from Europe, who took up lumbering, fishing, mining and agriculture. Ranked numerically according to the 1920 Census, the largest foreign-born groups in the state were Canadians (42,000), Swedes (35,000), Norwegians (34,000), English (23,000), Germans (22,000), Italians (18,000), Finns (12,500), Russians (11,000) and Irish (9,000).

Between 1910 and 1940 population grew at a slower but steady rate. The increase was about 20,000 per year. The lumber industry began to decline after 1929. Reduced employment and a growing scarcity of land were reflected in a slower rate of population growth. However, during the 1930's, many farmers from the Great Plains drought areas moved overland to Washington seeking farming opportunities.

TOTAL POPULATION STATE OF WASHINGTON 1860-1955



RURAL AND URBAN POPULATION WASHINGTON 1860-1950



SOURCES OF DATA: U.S. Census 1860-1950; Washington State Census Board, Estimate - 1955.

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The 1940-1950 decade brought the greatest increase in Washington history. Primarily an overland movement of laborers to new defense industries, it resulted in an increase of 642,772 in ten years, raising the state population to 2,378,963 in 1950. Most of the new growth was in the industrial metropolitan districts in King, Pierce, Kitsap, Clark and Spokane Counties and at the Federal atomic works in Benton County.

Urban and Rural Population

In 1870 the entire population of Washington was living in rural areas--in villages and on farms. By 1900, 211,477 of the population of Washington, or 40.8 percent, were living in urban areas. In 1950, according to the Census definition of "urban" which includes residents of towns of 2,500 and larger, 1,503,166 persons, or 63.2 percent, were living in urban areas. And over 52 percent lived in three standard metropolitan areas comprised of Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane and their surrounding suburban cities and towns. This trend follows the national pattern.

Table 1.- Population of Washington
1860-1955

Year	Population
1860	11,594
1870	23,955
1880	75,116
1890	357,232
1900	518,103
1910	1,141,990
1920	1,356,621
1930	1,563,396
1940	1,736,191
1950	2,378,963
1955	2,580,000

Sources: U.S. Census, Population; Washington State Census Board, April 1, 1955 Estimate.

Bellingham (35,700), Everett (43,100), Bremerton (32,200), Walla Walla (25,400) and Longview (23,500).

Population of Klickitat County

Klickitat County ranked thirty-first among the 39 Washington counties in total population in 1955. With an estimated 12,600 residents, Klickitat was tied with Douglas.

Population trends are closely related to agriculture and to recent expansion in construction and forest products employment. From 1860 to 1900 stock raising and wheat farming supported only a sparse population. Increased fruit growing and the development of small farms in western Klickitat County brought about a steady growth between 1900 and 1910. World War I low wheat prices and some abandonment of farming caused a slight decline between 1910

The rural population is predominantly rural nonfarm, consisting of 602,026 persons who live in the country, but do not operate farms. The rural farm population decreased about one-fifth between 1940 and 1950, and numbered only 273,771 or 11.5 percent of the state's total 1950 population of 2,378,963. As a result of the farm-to-city trend in Washington, about one person in ten is living on a farm and about six persons out of ten are living in a town or city larger than 2,500.

According to the 1955 estimates of the Washington Census Board, the ten leading cities of Washington ranked as follows: Seattle (555,000), Spokane (182,000), Tacoma (156,000), Yakima (43,000), Vancouver (41,950),

and 1920 but it started back up between 1920 and 1930. Lumbering and construction work on Columbia River projects at The Dalles and John Day and the Bonneville and McNary Dams contributed to growth between 1930 and 1955. This increase was primarily in cities and villages and population reached a peak in 1955.

Population per square mile is relatively sparse because of extensive land areas in the forested Cascade Mountains in the west and dryland in the Simcoe Hills and Horse Heaven Plateau in eastern Klickitat County. There are approximately seven persons for every square mile of land within the county's boundaries contrasted with Yakima County's 34 persons per square mile.

Table 2.- Population of Klickitat County
1860-1955

Census Year	Population	Percent Rural	Percent Urban
1860	230	100	0
1870	329	100	0
1880	4,055	100	0
1890	5,167	100	0
1900	6,407	100	0
1910	10,180	100	0
1920	9,268	100	0
1930	9,826	100	0
1940	11,357	100	0
1950	12,049	100	0
1955	12,600	100	0

Source: U. S. Census, Population

According to Census classification, Klickitat County population is entirely rural since there are no cities or villages with over 2,500 residents. In terms of residence and occupation, the population is predominantly nonfarm. Over two-thirds of the inhabitants live in cities, villages or in country residences and are supported by nonfarm occupations. In 1950 the Census reported rural nonfarm population at 8,378 and rural-farm population at 3,671. Percentagewise, Klickitat County is 70 percent rural nonfarm and 30 percent rural-farm. In farm population Klickitat County ranks twenty-fourth in the state.

About one-third of the population lives in three incorporated places-- Goldendale, White Salmon and Bingen. Each of these has grown during the last 35 years. Goldendale, county seat and largest city, grew from 1,100 in 1930 to 2,200 in 1957 as an administrative and trade center. Location on a major interstate highway and servicing a productive farming region contributed to Goldendale's growth. White Salmon has grown rapidly since 1930 as a trade center for western Klickitat County and from increased employment in construction and lumbering. An interstate bridge across the Columbia River between White Salmon and the Hood River Valley of Oregon also stimulated activity at White Salmon. The tourist and outdoor recreation business grew after highway 830 on the north bank of Columbia River Gorge was improved to attract heavier cross-state traffic. This highway has also made it possible for workers to

commute to the industrial area of Vancouver and Camas. Bingen, a more recently incorporated place, has grown for the same reasons as White Salmon, increasing from 365 persons in 1930 to a peak of 736 in 1950.

Table 3.- Population of Incorporated Places
Klickitat County, 1910-1957

Incorporated City or Town	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950	1957 ^{1/}
Bingen	---	---	365	600	736	678
Goldendale	1,203	1,274	1,116	1,584	1,907	2,200
White Salmon	682	619	798	985	1,353	1,470

^{1/} Populations for 1957 are estimates of the Washington State Census Board.

Source: U. S. Census, Population.
Washington State Census Board.

Typical of many counties in the western United States, Klickitat farm-lands and villages were settled by a mixture of immigrants from many states and foreign lands. In 1890 about one-eighth of the inhabitants were foreign-

Table 4.- Foreign-Born White Population, Klickitat County
1890, 1920 and 1950

Country of Birth	1890	1920	1950
England and Wales.....	77	79	44
Scotland.....	34	20	13
Northern Ireland.....	---	---	---
Ireland (Eire).....	60	38	9
Norway.....	22	38	22
Sweden.....	29	83	29
Denmark.....	41	38	22
Netherlands.....	2	13	28
Switzerland.....	54	37	---
France.....	2	7	6
Germany.....	154	137	56
Poland.....	1	12	2
Czechoslovakia.....	---	---	1
Austria.....	4	8	9
Yugoslavia.....	---	2	---
Russia (U.S.S.R.).....	93	5	6
Finland.....	---	74	19
Italy.....	1	2	3
Canada-French.....	---	6	3
Canada-Other.....	71	96	97
All other countries...	16	46	46
Totals	611	711	415
Percent foreign-born..	12.4	8.0	3.4

Source: U. S. Census, Population

born but by 1950 foreign-born persons made up only 3.4 percent. Under restrictive immigration laws, the arrival of settlers and workers from other countries decreased sharply after 1924. In 1890, the main immigrant groups from Europe were Germans (154), Scandinavians (92), Irish (60) and Swiss (54). German and German-Swiss were prominent in the settlement of Bingen, named after a city in Germany on the Rhine River. European immigrants were also prominent in developing agriculture in the White Salmon and Klickitat Valleys.

Other population groups include American Indians and American Japanese. American Indians have decreased, numbering only 191 in the Census of 1950. Prior to 1858, when they moved onto reservation and treaty land in Yakima County, there were an estimated 3,000 living in a village at Wishram. American-Japanese numbered 56 in 1950.

Agriculture is the second most important field of employment in Klickitat County. In the most recent Census about 25 percent of all wage earners and self-employed persons worked in agriculture. Manufacturing is the leading type of employment, principally lumbering. Service trades, work in retail and wholesale stores, transportation and construction were other secondary fields of employment. Much of manufacturing and agricultural labor is seasonal in nature. Some migratory labor is used in fruit and wheat harvesting.

Table 5.- Employment of the Population
Klickitat County, 1950

Types of Employment	Male Workers	Female Workers	Total Workers	Percent of Workers
<u>Total employed workers</u>	3,620	704	4,324	100.0
Agriculture.....	1,023	69	1,092	25.2
Forestry and fisheries.....	31	--	31	.7
Mining.....	5	--	5	.2
Construction.....	207	4	211	4.9
Manufacturing.....	1,120	23	1,143	26.4
Transportation.....	408	43	451	10.4
Retail and wholesale stores.....	320	175	495	11.4
Miscellaneous services.....	250	300	550	12.7
Public administration (government employment).....	83	46	129	3.0
Other employment.....	173	44	217	5.1

Source: U. S. Census, Population.