Chapter 1: 1890-World War II

"Assimilation and Remarkable Stories"

The origin of Whitworth College, first as an idea in the mind of George Whitworth in the 1850s, and then as an educational institution in the 1880s and '90s, emerged in a context of profound racial conflict. While Whitworth College's establishment was not built directly on overt exploitation of the labor of enslaved persons or discrimination toward persons of color, nevertheless, racist attitudes and practices against Indigenous tribes, Asians, Hawai'ians and African Americans were so pervasive in the milieu of the time that they surely influenced the early culture of the college.

The underlying assumption that motivated those who established Whitworth as well as the first several generations of administrators and faculty was that they were providing an excellent Western or "English" education. Based on the classical liberal arts, that education was grounded in the belief that Western Civilization and its American expression were superior to all other civilizations and that a white western form of Christianity was the one true religious faith. For the handful of students of color who found their way to Whitworth during the first seventy-five years, the clear expectation was that they would accept those assumptions and assimilate

into the campus culture. Yet, an unexpected and often untold part of the story is the number of students of color who attended Whitworth prior to World War II who not only overcame obstacles at Whitworth, but after graduation made remarkable contributions to their respective communities.

This story begins with the remarkable life of George Whitworth. In several ways, he exemplifies attitudes and practices toward race throughout much of the nineteenth century in America. Born in 1816 in Boston, England, Whitworth arrived in the United States with his parents when he was twelve years old. Shortly after they came to America, the Whitworths migrated first to Ohio and then to Indiana. In Indiana at that time, the principal political policy focused on coercing Indigenous tribes to sign treaties ceding their lands to the United States. During the 1830s, the government engaged in forced removal of tribal members who refused to leave the region voluntarily. George Whitworth's father, Matthew, was a harness maker and thus he may not have homesteaded land directly acquired through treaty from one of Indiana's many tribes. Yet the Whitworths certainly benefitted from the removal of Indigenous individuals from the land. While we have no record of what young George Whitworth thought or how he experienced these events, it is reasonable to assume that he accepted the widely-held view that Native Americans should be removed from territory that white settlers wished to occupy.[1]

George Whitworth's formative years also coincided with a crucial period relative to the issue of slavery. By the time George matriculated at South Hanover College in 1834, tensions in Indiana over the extension of slavery were in full swing. Located in southeast Indiana, just across the Ohio River from Kentucky, the Hanover community was most likely opposed to the extension of slavery. Indiana had outlawed slavery in 1816 and many Indiana residents participated in the Underground Railroad.

No evidence remains that reveals what George Whitworth thought about slavery before he ventured west. His expressed interests focused more on Christian missionary efforts in the Far West. Inspired by missionaries Marcus and Narcissa Whitman, Henry and Eliza Spalding, who had settled in the Pacific Northwest in the 1830s, Whitworth began dreaming about being a part of the movement.[2]

Christian missionaries played a major role in paving the way for white settlement in what would later become Oregon and Washington. The original objective for individuals such as the Whitmans and the Spaldings had been to convert Indigenous individuals to Christianity. Eventually, Christian missionaries attempted to replace not just religious beliefs among Native Americans but also to impose other western cultural expressions, from language and dress to agricultural methods to patterns of social and economic organization. Symbolized by the admonition to Native Americans to accept "the Bible and the Plow," missionaries assumed that if Native Americans continued to live in and among white settlers they would have to assimilate fully into white culture; this meant becoming western-style farmers and accepting Christianity.

Aware of the murders of the Whitmans in 1847, Whitworth may have been at least indirectly inspired to carry on with their purposes, as many others were motivated by their deaths, although he does not mention this specifically in any of his writings. He surely would have seen the Whitmans as victims, and not as individuals who participated in a westward movement that expropriated territory inhabited for up to ten thousand years by Indigenous peoples.

In fact, Whitworth's earliest inquiries about Puget Sound focused not on the conversion of Indigenous peoples but on the prospect of establishing a settlement for white migrants. In 1852, the Presbyterian Board of Home Missions authorized him to be a missionary to the Puget

Sound region. In that same year, five years after the Whitman deaths near Walla Walla, George Whitworth published his plans to form a Presbyterian colony in the Far West that would include "a good parochial school for the benefit of the children and youth." This is believed to be his first expression of the idea that later became Whitworth College.[3] One can hardly overstate the importance of Whitworth's Presbyterian identity. The Protestant denomination, rooted in the theology of John Calvin, believed fervently in the importance of formal education. Whitworth was part of a vast effort on the part of the denomination to establish schools and colleges across North America.

Another reason for the Whitworths' embarking on the Oregon Trail was Congressional passage of the Oregon Donation Land Act in 1850. A precursor to the Homestead Act a decade later, the Donation Act entitled a white male to 320 acres if he would stay on the land and make improvements over four years. Notably, this same legislation prohibited Black and Hawaiian individuals from making land claims. This legislation began the process of extinguishing Native title to the land in Oregon Territory and establishing white supremacy in the Far West.

How much these circumstances motivated Whitworth is difficult to ascertain, but it is clear that his intention was to form a colony in the region. In 1853, George Whitworth, his wife and children, as well as a small number of other families set out on the Oregon Trail. Whitworth kept a diary and records several encounters with Native Americans along the way. The party did not suffer any harm due to the periodic engagement with various tribes, but there were several difficult moments. Most notably, Whitworth had to barter with a Sioux chief who wanted one of Mrs. Whitworth's nieces to be his wife. However, Whitworth's diary does not reveal any specific statements regarding his general attitudes toward Native Americans. Eventually, the

Whitworths made their way first to Portland and then, in 1854, near present-day Olympia where George filed a claim under the Donation Act.[4]

Shortly after their arrival in the Pacific Northwest, wars broke out between new settlers and several Indigenous tribes. Most native resistance occurred as a result of treaties that tribes either had not signed, or had been signed by some but not all the factions in a particular tribe. No evidence remains of exactly what Whitworth thought, but he did serve as secretary for the territory's Indian Department for a short time in the 1860s. As secretary, his signature appears on the second treaty with the Nez Perce in 1863, which continued to reduce their land holdings.

Over the next two decades, Whitworth established as many as twenty Presbyterian churches in communities in western Washington. Lack of a consistent income led Whitworth to explore a number of pursuits. At various times he served as a government clerk, surveyor, deputy collector of customs as well as superintendent of schools in Thurston and King counties. Whitworth became involved in the coal mines east of Lake Washington at Newcastle. Most notably, the board of regents of the newly formed University of Washington (1861) selected Whitworth to serve two short terms as president from 1866–67 and 1874–76. The historian of the University of Washington credits Whitworth, in the midst of significant financial pressures, with instituting significant changes in the curriculum, organizing the military department, and professionalizing the administration.[5]

It was not until the 1880s that George Whitworth turned his attention to his original dream of establishing an educational institution under the aegis of the Presbyterian church. In 1884, he and several other like-minded Presbyterians founded an academy in the small town of Sumner, Washington, just north and east of Tacoma. Six years later, in February 1890, the

academy was incorporated into Whitworth College, four months after Washington entered the union as the 42nd state.

As the Sumner Academy and subsequently Whitworth College took root, the racial climate in the Pacific Northwest took another dark turn. As the opportunity to construct transcontinental railroads to Seattle and Tacoma emerged in the 1870s and 80s, the major railroads eagerly encouraged Chinese immigrants to come to North America with the promise of employment. An estimated 17,000 Chinese helped construct railroads in the Pacific Northwest. However, racial tensions between white settlers and Chinese workers began to increase. In September 1885, in Issaquah, not more than 30 miles from Sumner, three Chinese were killed and three wounded in a gunfight. Two months later, a mob of some three hundred white Tacoma residents decided that the "Chinese must go!" The mob drove roughly 700 Chinese out of Tacoma in wagons. In Seattle, anti-Chinese riots broke out in February 1886 with the intent of driving the Chinese out. While a few individuals stood up to the vigilantes, racism against Chinese permeated the social environment of the Northwest.[6]

No records exist to illuminate how these events were interpreted or influenced attitudes or shaped behavior at Whitworth College. However, it seems plausible that most students and faculty were caught up in the wave of anti-Chinese sentiment.

Attitudes toward African Americans are also difficult to document in Whitworth's early history. However, it is possible to identify some of the dynamics that existed west of the Cascade Mountains in the period when Whitworth was established as an academy and then as a college.

While the Oregon Trail made it possible for George Whitworth to emigrate to the Northwest, it also provided the means by which a small number of African Americans migrated to Oregon and Washington territories. White Oregonians proved particularly hostile to the presence of African Americans. In addition to the Donation Land Act in 1850 which prohibited African Americans from making land claims, Oregon settlers passed laws intended to prevent Black individuals from residing in the territory altogether. When Oregon applied for statehood in the 1850s in the run up to the Civil War, the Oregon Constitution prohibited slavery, but it also prohibited African Americans from permanent residency. Although generally unenforced, the laws helped create a culture of white supremacy in Oregon.

No such laws existed in Washington territory and as a result, more African Americans settled north of the Columbia River. Yet numerous opinion editorials in Washington's newspapers before the Civil War opposed abolitionism. For example, the *Pioneer and Democrat,* published out of Olympia, stated "no force of argument can dislodge the simple but powerful fact, that the abolition of slavery . . . could confer no blessings on the white or colored race in American."[7]

Many white settlers in emerging communities north of the Columbia sent signals to discourage African Americans from coming to the area. As a result, few Black settlers came. Nevertheless, the African Americans who did migrate to the Northwest, many of whom had been enslaved prior to the Civil War, or had been a part of Reconstruction governments in the South, attempted to establish new lives in the territory. Some newly arrived Black individuals started their own businesses; many others worked as Pullman porters on railroads and in mines on the east side of Lake Washington. Still, employment opportunities remained limited, though budding Black communities did establish Baptist and African Methodist Episcopal churches in

Seattle and Tacoma. While there were few formal efforts to deny Seattle Blacks civil rights, prevent their use of public accommodations, or restrict them to certain parts of the city, nevertheless a culture of white supremacy emerged.[8]

Three years after its incorporation in 1890, Whitworth College, like all colleges and universities, staggered under the economic depression that gripped the country beginning in 1893 and lasting until the end of the century. The college survived, but trustees began to look for other locations that might provide greater economic stability. They found a stunning mansion as well as several other buildings on land in Tacoma. With a spectacular setting and views of the Olympic and Cascade Mountains, as well as Puget Sound, the college moved to Tacoma in 1899 with high hopes.

The newly relocated Whitworth College gained momentum over the first decade of the 20th century, with athletics proving to play an important part in campus life. In 1908, the college football team's roster featured two students of color—William Paul and Ernie Tanner. A Tlingit Indian from Sitka, Alaska, William Paul had attended Carlisle College for Native Americans in Pennsylvania. Carlisle's founder, Richard Henry Pratt, had intended a Carlisle education to eliminate all vestiges of Indigenous culture. Pratt famously stated that the purpose of a Carlisle education was to "Kill the Indian and Save the Man." Surely this made a significant impact on Paul as he abandoned his native language, dress, and religion in favor of English and Christianity. A part of his education at Carlisle included learning how to play football like his fellow student and Olympic athlete-to-be, Jim Thorpe. Paul returned to Alaska and then found his way to Whitworth, where he played football, basketball, and baseball. He also helped edit the student newspaper and became president of the Criterion Literary Society.

Paul clearly assimilated into both American culture and specifically Whitworth's culture. However, Paul was not so assimilated that he abandoned his identity as a native Alaskan. He became aware of the extent to which Indigenous Alaskans had lost their rights to white settlers and later attended law school in preparation for his return to Alaska to fight for Native rights. He used his law degree and presumably some parts of his Whitworth education as foundation for becoming one of the most prominent Native rights activists in Alaska. Over the course of his career, Paul attacked school segregation in Alaska and played a prominent role in securing citizenship rights as well as the right to vote for Indigenous communities. Known for his fight to protect salmon fishing, Paul was elected Alaska's first territorial Native legislator. He helped build the Alaska Native Brotherhood, which was the nation's first Native American civil rights organization. In many ways, Paul is one of the most distinguished of all Whitworth graduates and was awarded an honorary doctorate by Whitworth in 1973.[9]

Ernie Tanner appears to have been the first African American to attend Whitworth. His parents moved to Tacoma in 1900 when Tanner was eleven years old. His mother was a nurse and his father a trapeze performer. He attended Tacoma high school, which later became known as Stadium high school, and had an outstanding athletic career. At Whitworth, he played football and baseball. According to the *Oregonian* newspaper, he was the first African American to play football at the college level in the Pacific Northwest. After attending Whitworth, Tanner went on to a spectacular career in the Negro Leagues in the Northwest and was labeled by some the "Black Jim Thorpe." During the 1920s, he played on what was the best all-Black team in the region, the Tacoma Little Giants. Eventually he became a leader in the International Longshoremen's Association. Tanner's great moment came during the 1934 west coast Longshoreman's strike when he was the only African American on the Tacoma strike committee.

His role in Pacific Northwest Labor history led the University of Washington to establish on its Tacoma campus the Ernest C. Tanner Labor and Ethnic Studies Center.[10]

While Paul and Tanner attended Whitworth, the two of them helped build the tiny school (fewer than 50 male students were enrolled at the time) into something of a football powerhouse, at least for a couple of seasons. In 1908, in the most noteworthy football game in Whitworth's early history, and in some respects its entire history, Tanner, along with Paul, played major roles in defeating the University of Oregon, 16-10. The only loss of the year came at the hands of the University of Washington.

It is difficult to know how Paul's and Tanner's experience went at Whitworth. It seemed both students were generally well received, particularly Paul. However, for Tanner, it likely was more difficult. Racial attitudes of students and faculty were largely shaped by the prevailing attitudes of the day. In the early 20th century, attitudes throughout the country were extremely racist toward African Americans. Among the most racist cultural expressions were the black-faced minstrel shows, which caricatured African Americans by appealing to negative stereotypes. White actors would use burnt cork to assume the "black-face" persona and then proceed to portray African Americans as dumb, lazy, or conniving. During the first decade of the 20th century, black-face minstrel shows were the most popular form of entertainment in America. On the Whitworth campus, black-face minstrel shows were performed on several occasions. In February 1905, the *Whitworthian* (student newspaper) recounted that Professor Schutz spent hours working with students to perfect their routines. "Whitworth's leading young men with blackened faces and grotesque attire in the midst of beautiful state setting were liberally remembered by their friends in the audience . . . with choice bouquets of alfalfa, turnips, beets and other vegetables."[11]

It is difficult to imagine how hateful American culture was toward African Americans during the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. National publications such as the *Atlantic Monthly* and *Harper's Weekly* consistently described African Americans as lazy, stupid, beastly, and degenerate. Racist imagery could be found in advertising, literature, and all forms of entertainment. All of this suggests, at the very least, an insensitivity to African Americans like Tanner, and at most, a blatant expression of white supremacy and Black inferiority in the midst of Whitworth's student and faculty cultures.

In addition to Tanner and Paul, during the Tacoma years, particularly from 1908 to 1914, a handful of Japanese students attended Whitworth. Almost all of them appear to have come through contact with Presbyterian missions in Japan. In addition, it appears that only one student claimed China as his home. Records also indicate that several Native Alaskan students, including William Paul, as well as a few other Indigenous students from surrounding tribal reservations enrolled at the college. While no existing records indicate that these students were discriminated against, and Paul's experience suggests that some of them may have had good experiences, it seems likely that these few students of color faced a more challenging environment compared to their fellow white students and had no choice but to accommodate to Whitworth's predominantly white social culture.

In 1913, responding to financial difficulties at the college, trustees accepted an offer from the Spokane Presbytery and local entrepreneur Jay P. Graves to move 300 miles east to Spokane. The Spokane Tribe had lived on the land for over a thousand years; in 1887, however, they were forced to vacate the land to the United States government. In 1891 and 1892, two homesteaders took possession of the land and in 1904, Graves purchased the land. In 1913, nine years later, he offered the land to Whitworth trustees. In total, Graves provided 640 acres. Forty acres would

be set aside for the campus and another forty would be immediately sold to provide money for a building fund. The remaining acreage would eventually be platted and sold for the purpose of securing additional resources for the college.[12]

Grandiose plans were formulated to build a great campus on the land that Graves donated, but world events and continued shortage of funds made those plans largely unobtainable. In 1914, school opened in the fall with McMillan Hall being built in the same year, and Ballard Hall followed in 1915. However, World War I led to the draft of significant numbers of men, so the college closed for the 1918-1919 school year for lack of students. Once reopened, the college struggled to regain its footing.

Meanwhile, one disturbing sign at Whitworth that social attitudes toward immigrants, Catholics, and persons of color carried nativist and racist overtones was the fact that an advertisement from the Ku Klux Klan appeared in Whitworth's 1925 yearbook. The Klan had emerged in the Northwest as part of a national rebirth of the Klan in the 1920s. More prominent in Oregon, the Klan also surfaced in most communities in Washington state including Spokane. In the Northwest, the Klan was most proactive in condemning Catholics, but its general racist views toward African Americans were well known. Whitworth did not have any Black students (nor likely any Catholics) during the 1920s, but it is probable that values underlying white supremacy were pervasive.

The 1930s witnessed an increase in the size of the student body. On average, Whitworth had only roughly 100 students each year in the 1920s; that number increased to roughly 200 per year in the 1930s. Still, only an occasional student of color matriculated at the college during these decades.

However, three individuals of particular note attended Whitworth in the 1930s. The first two, Nell E. Holtzclaw and her son Jack (name also appears in places as Holsclaw) enrolled in 1936. Ms. Holtzclaw had grown up in Oklahoma. Details of the Holtzclaws' early lives are sketchy, but Nell (maiden name Evangeline Glasse) moved to Spokane before marrying Charles Holsclaw in 1915. Shortly thereafter, her name began to appear in Spokane newspapers for her leadership in the local Federation of Colored Women's Organizations. In addition, during World War I, she played an active role in the Colored Red Cross. Charles and Nell had a son, Jack, in 1918. Even after son Jack was born, Nell continued during the 1920s to assume positions of leadership that led her to speak at events across the state.[13]

The Holsclaws raised Jack in Spokane and lived in the West Central neighborhood. Jack turned out to be an excellent student and athlete. He became the first African American to earn the Eagle Scout badge in Spokane. Jack Holsclaw graduated from North Central High School and enrolled at Whitworth in the fall of 1935.[14]

Jack attended Whitworth for only one year, but during that year he served as class treasurer and lettered on the basketball, baseball and tennis teams.[15] His athletic success attracted the attention of baseball coaches at Washington State College, and he transferred the next year. Following graduation, he became a licensed chiropractor as well as a licensed pilot. After World War II broke out, Holsclaw enlisted in the army and entered the all-Black flight school at Tuskegee, Alabama (the military was still segregated). He soon began flying with the 100th Fighter Squadron which had the nickname "Red Tails." He flew 68 combat missions and received the Distinguished Flying Cross before being promoted to captain.[16]

Nell, Jack's mother, also began attending Whitworth through its extension college in the early '30s and earned an undergraduate degree in 1936. Nell appears to be the first African

American to graduate from Whitworth. She continued in the Master of Arts program and earned a second degree in 1940--the only student period to be awarded the Master's degree that year. Her thesis, under the supervision of Laverne Bowersox in history, was on "The History of Negro Education in Oklahoma." Her research for this nearly 100-page thesis was tied both to her experience teaching in all-Black schools in Oklahoma and to extensive research in Oklahoma libraries. She apparently taught off and on for nearly twenty years in Oklahoma. How she managed to teach in Oklahoma during these years is unclear. At the very least we can say that this African American woman overcame countless obstacles to earn two degrees at Whitworth as well as pursue a professional teaching career.[17]

Another African American student of note to attend Whitworth during this period was Eleanor Barrow Chase. Born in 1918, during the midst of a global pandemic, Eleanor Barrow was the granddaughter of Peter Barrow, one of Spokane's most famous early African American civic leaders. Born enslaved in Virginia, once emancipated, Peter Barrow fought in the Civil War and served in the Mississippi State legislature during Reconstruction. He made his way west in 1886 and farmed near Deer Lake, north of Spokane. In 1890, He helped found Calvary Baptist Church in Spokane. Granddaughter Eleanor graduated from Lewis and Clark High School. She started college at Washington State, but transferred to Whitworth where she excelled in music as both a pianist and a vocalist.

After graduating in 1941 from Whitworth, she married James Chase in the following year. The couple joined the NAACP. After raising their son, Eleanor became active as a social worker for the Spokane office of the State Department of Public Assistance from 1954-1970. James Chase embarked on a career in local politics. Spokane citizens elected him to be the first African American on the city council in 1975, and in 1981, he became Spokane's first Black

mayor. Eleanor served on many boards, including the YWCA and the Race Relations Council in Spokane. In addition to her work in the community, she later served as a trustee for both Whitworth and Eastern Washington University.[18]

One curious story has surfaced regarding another African American female student at Whitworth during this era, Lillian Christian Stokes. Growing up in Spokane, Lillian graduated from North Central High School. She entered Whitworth in 1942, and for reasons still unclear, she appeared that same year on the cover of the national magazine for the NAACP, *The Crisis*, over the title article, “Negroes of India,” by Harry Paxton Howard.[19] No reference in the magazine is made to the reason she was chosen although she was a member of Whitworth’s International Relations Club and seems likely to have had a connection to India before coming to Whitworth.[20] Stokes attended Whitworth for the next three years, but did not graduate.

Another African American, Robert Ross Johnson matriculated to Whitworth beginning in fall 1939. Growing up in Spokane, and graduating from North Central High School, Johnson early on declared his intention to study for the ministry. During his four years, he emerged as one of Whitworth’s most popular students. He developed a reputation for his outstanding singing. The student newspaper noted occasions when he performed songs in area churches.[21] The college yearbook identified him as the student with “Whitworth’s most widely known personality.” He served as manager of the Whitworth chorus, secretary of the “W” club (Whitworth’s letterman’s club) and a member of the pre-ministerial Philadelphians.[22]

After graduating from Whitworth in 1943, Johnson entered Colgate-Rochester Divinity School in New York where he graduated in 1946 and was subsequently went into the ministry. Johnson became the first African American graduate from Whitworth to be ordained. Colgate-Rochester, at the time, accepted only four African Americans each year, but was known as one

of the most prestigious institutions in the country for training Black pastors. Prior graduates from Colgate-Rochester included nationally-known Howard Thurman and Mordecai Wyatt Johnson who became the first Black president of Howard University.

Johnson became the pastor of the Second Baptist Church in Le Roy, New York, and co-minister of the interracial South Congregational Church in Chicago. He was the founding pastor of the St. Albans Congregational Church in 1953. The building itself was designed by the renowned architect, Frank Lloyd Wright. Johnson preached in that pulpit until 1990. His obituary in the *New York Times* highlighted multiple achievements which included being one of the founders of York College in New York City, the founding director of the Queens Inter-Faith Clergy Council, the director of the NAACP and YMCA boards and his membership in the National Conference of Christians and Jews.

Johnson led St. Albans' parishioners in the 1960s to be engaged in the fight for civil rights. Arrested for his involvement in a protest over the lack of employment of African Americans in New York construction projects, Johnson led his congregation in protests and demonstrations as well as organized a bus caravan of members to attend the March on Washington in 1963 to hear Dr. King give his "I Have a Dream" speech.[23]

Conclusions about the general climate and race relations on the Whitworth campus during the 1930s and early '40s are difficult to discern. The student body was drawn primarily from Spokane and from small towns east of the Cascades and west of the Rockies. It is likely that few white students had any previous exposure to African Americans. Robert Johnson and Eleanor Barrow Chase seem to have had positive experiences on campus and it appears likely that Jack Holsclaw's one year was a good one as well, given that he played multiple sports and that his mother continued to attend after he left. Nevertheless, the first fifty years of the history

of race relations remains opaque. One has to assume that from the time the college was founded on the frontier in western Washington just following statehood, prevailing racist attitudes of the day permeated the culture of the college. The presence of Black-face minstrel shows as well as the yearbook ad from the Ku Klux Klan suggest an insensitivity, if not open hostility, toward students of color.

On the other hand, the presence of William Paul, a Tlingit Indian, as well as Ernie Tanner, the first Black football player at any school in the Pacific Northwest, suggests a degree of openness to students of color. In general, the few African American students who attended Whitworth during the first fifty years of its history (1890-1940) accepted the idea that a Whitworth education might provide them a way forward. These were still years in which the population of African Americans in the Pacific Northwest was quite small. However, one can see through the experiences of the Holtzclaws and Barrow-Chase that Black organizations off campus were important sources of community and identity. Nell Holtzclaw clearly valued the opportunity to serve in an African American women's organization, which also reflected a level of segregation that existed in Spokane. Eleanor Barrow grew up in Calvary Baptist, one of two principal African American churches in town. Despite opportunities provided by an education, and connections with specific faculty, they surely encountered expressions of racism during their time at Whitworth and in Spokane, though the specifics will likely remain unknown.

In spite of obstacles on many levels, the stories of Paul, Tanner, the Holtzclaws, Barrow and Johnson are remarkable. They all seem to have been determined and purpose-driven people. How each of them dealt with experiences of racism both on and off campus is difficult to say. It is clear, however, that they succeeded as each of them went on to make significant contributions to the communities in which they later lived.

World events would soon overtake the small college in north Spokane. The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor quickly brought into focus issues of race on the campus in new ways. The war unleashed a ferocious prejudice against Japanese American citizens. Shortly after the United States entered the war, more than 100,000 individuals, 70,000 of whom were American citizens, were incarcerated simply because of their racial identity in one of the most controversial acts in all of American history. At the same time, the entire West Coast would soon see a significant migration of African Americans coming west in hopes of securing wartime employment. These factors would influence racial attitudes and dynamics going forward on the Whitworth campus.

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[1] Al Gray, *Not by Might: The Story of Whitworth College, 1890-1965* (Whitworth College: Spokane, WA. 1965), 11-22; Laura Arksey, "George F. Whitworth" *History Link*, 2007.https://www.historylink.org/File/8113

[2] Gray, *Not by Might*, 13.

[3] Gray, *Not by Might,* 13.

[4] Gray, *Not by Might,* 15.

[5] Charles M. Gates, *The First Century of the University of Washington, 1861-1961* (Seattle: University of Washington Press,), 35-36.

[6] David J. Jepsen and David J. Norberg, *Contested Boundaries: A New Pacific Northwest History* (Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley and Sons, 2017), 177-178.

[7] *Pioneer and Democrat* (Olympia), March 2, 1860, p. 2.

[8] Quintard Taylor, *In Search of the Racial Frontier: African Americans in the American West 1528-1990* (New York: Norton, 1998); Quintard Taylor, *The Forging of a Black Community: Seattle's Central District from 1870- through the Civil Rights Era* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1994).

[9]William Paul, "Archives Facility to Be Named for Tlingit Hero William L. Paul Sr.," Oct. 15, 2014 **https://www.sealaskaheritage.org/content/news101514**

[10] Dale Soden, "Ernie Tanner," BlackPast.org; Ty Phelen, "Ernie Tanner: Washington's Black Jim Thorpe" https://negroleagueshistory.com/ernie-tanner/

[11] *Whitworthian* 1905, Gray, *Not by Might*, 70.

[12] Gray, *Not by Might*, 88.

[13] *The Spokesman Review,* April 2, 1917, p.2; *Spokane Chronicle*, May 25, 1917, p. 3.

[14] https://spokanehistorical.org/items/show/865?tour=25&index=17; SR Feb 28, 2018 https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2018/feb/28/landmarks-from-spokane-he-flew-into-history-north-/

[15] *Spokane Chronicle,* May 30, 1936, p. 3.

[16] *The Spokesman Review*. August 13, 1944 p. 37; *Arizona Daily Star* (Tucson. Arizona), April 19, 1998, p. 12.

[17] *Spokane Chronicle*, June 5, 1940, p. 18; Nell Evangeline Holtzclaw, "The History of Negro Education in Oklahoma," Master of Arts Thesis, Whitworth College, 1940. Whitworth University Library.

[18] Elizabeth Barrow Chase https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/chase-eleanor-barrow-1918-2002/

[19] Lillian Christian Stokes (cover photo), *The Crisis*, December 1942.

[20] Whitworth 1943 Yearbook (*Natsihi*), p. 41, Whitworth University Library.

[21]*Whitworthian*, November 28, 1941.

[22] Whitworth 1943 Yearbook (*Natsihi*), p. 24, Whitworth University Library.

[23] Wolfgang Saxon, "Reverend Robert Ross Johnson, 79, First Pastor of Queens Church," *New York Times*, April 6, 2000; Johnson's legacy made such an impact on his church and community, that in April 2024. nearly 25 years after he passed away, the city of Queens, New York, co-named the street adjacent to St. Albans, "Robert R. Johnson Boulevard." *Queens Chronicle* (Southeast edition), May 2, 2024, p. 6. https://www.qchron.com/editions/eastern/beloved-reverend-s-legacy-lives-on-in-st-albans/article_20e75d78-0829-11ef-ae3f-bb767ac306a2.html