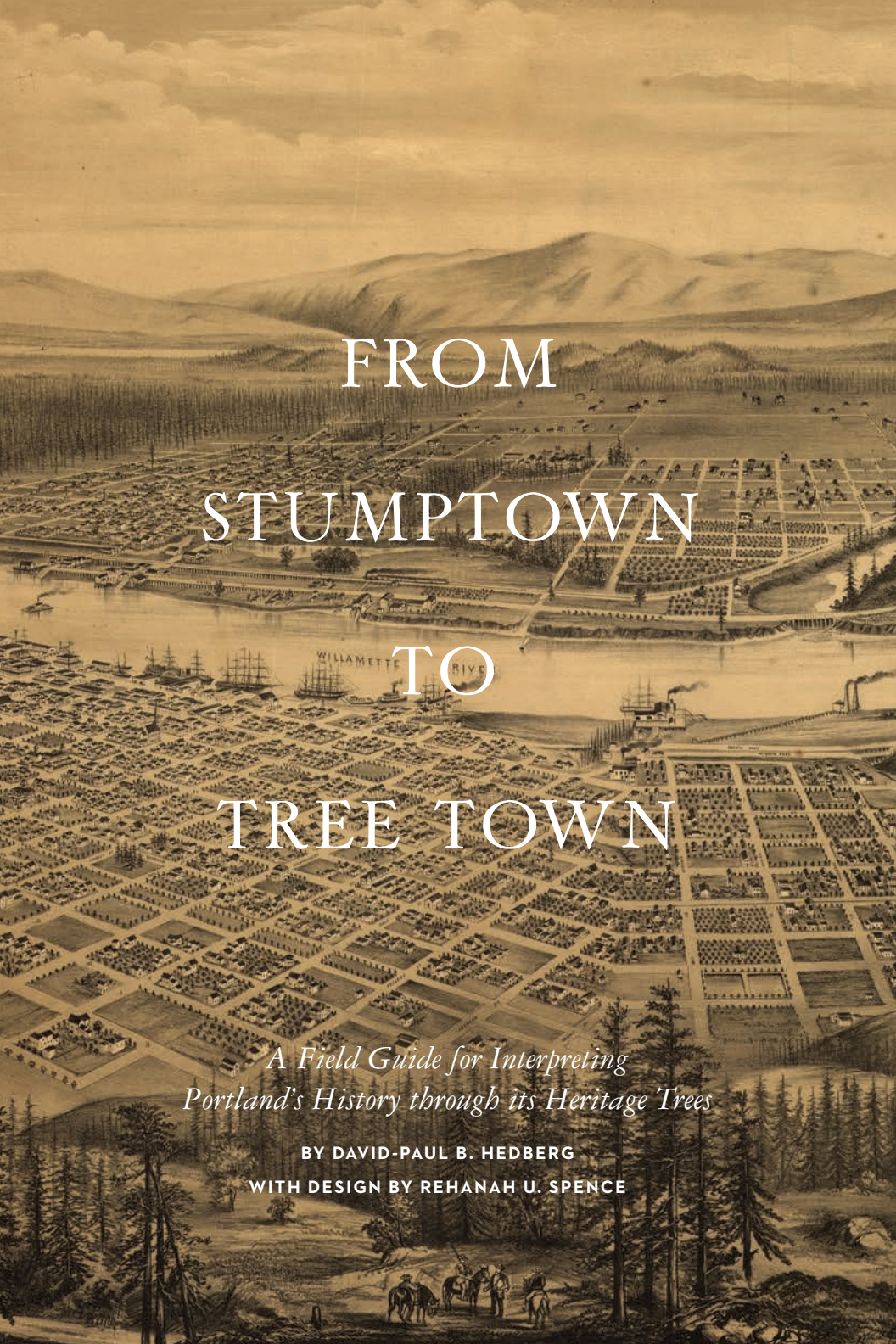


FROM STUMPTOWN TO TREE TOWN

A Field Guide for Interpreting Portland's History through its Heritage Trees

BY DAVID-PAUL B. HEDBERG

WITH DESIGN BY REHANAH U. SPENCE

PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE PROGRAM

In 1993 a group of concerned citizens succeeded in convincing the Portland City Council to pass the Heritage Tree code. Heritage Trees have special importance to the city "because of their age, size, type, historical association or horticultural value." Under the code, the Urban Forestry Commission is responsible for recommending future Heritage Tree nominations to the City Council, which makes the final decision. However any citizen can nominate a tree; in fact, the method to do so is included in the back of this guide. Portland's Heritage Tree program is somewhat unique to other cities because the designation is affixed to the property title for the life of the tree—even when the property is sold. Because of this, property owners must consent to Heritage Tree nomination and a qualified arborist must first certify that the tree is healthy and has enough space to grow to maturity. Since the program began over twenty years ago, the City Council has listed over 300 Heritage Trees on private and public property.

COVER IMAGE *"Portland Oregon, Looking East to the Cascade Mountains" by Eli Sheldon Glover, 1879. Courtesy of Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C.*

PREVIOUS PAGE *The heritage plaque on the Farrell Planetree; Portland's second heritage tree. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE
LONDON PLANETREE
Platanus x acerifolia
Planted 1880 for Sylvester Farrell
Designated by Portland City Council 1975

INTRODUCTION TO THE GUIDE

We celebrate and preserve historic buildings. We construct and protect scenic landscapes. We honor and memorialize figures in our past. Heritage Trees embody our ideals, actions and environments at a given time in the past. Some of Portland's Heritage Trees predate the founding of Portland, representing millennia of land use by Indigenous peoples. Others are relatively new plantings that represent unique species and cultivars from around the globe. Some were planted as memorials for prominent individuals, others by everyday citizens as personal investments, and still others were planted for now unknown reasons. In every case Heritage Trees have a connection to history. Both then and today, Portlanders have celebrated trees in the city—although not always for the same reasons. As these factors change with the passage of time, trees grow and mature in the same place, affording us an opportunity to explore and ask questions about the past.

BELOW *As you can see in this print, people in the nineteenth century considered trees to be a noteworthy feature of the Portland landscape. "Portland, Oregon—the metropolis of the Pacific Northwest" by C.L. Smith, c. 1888.*

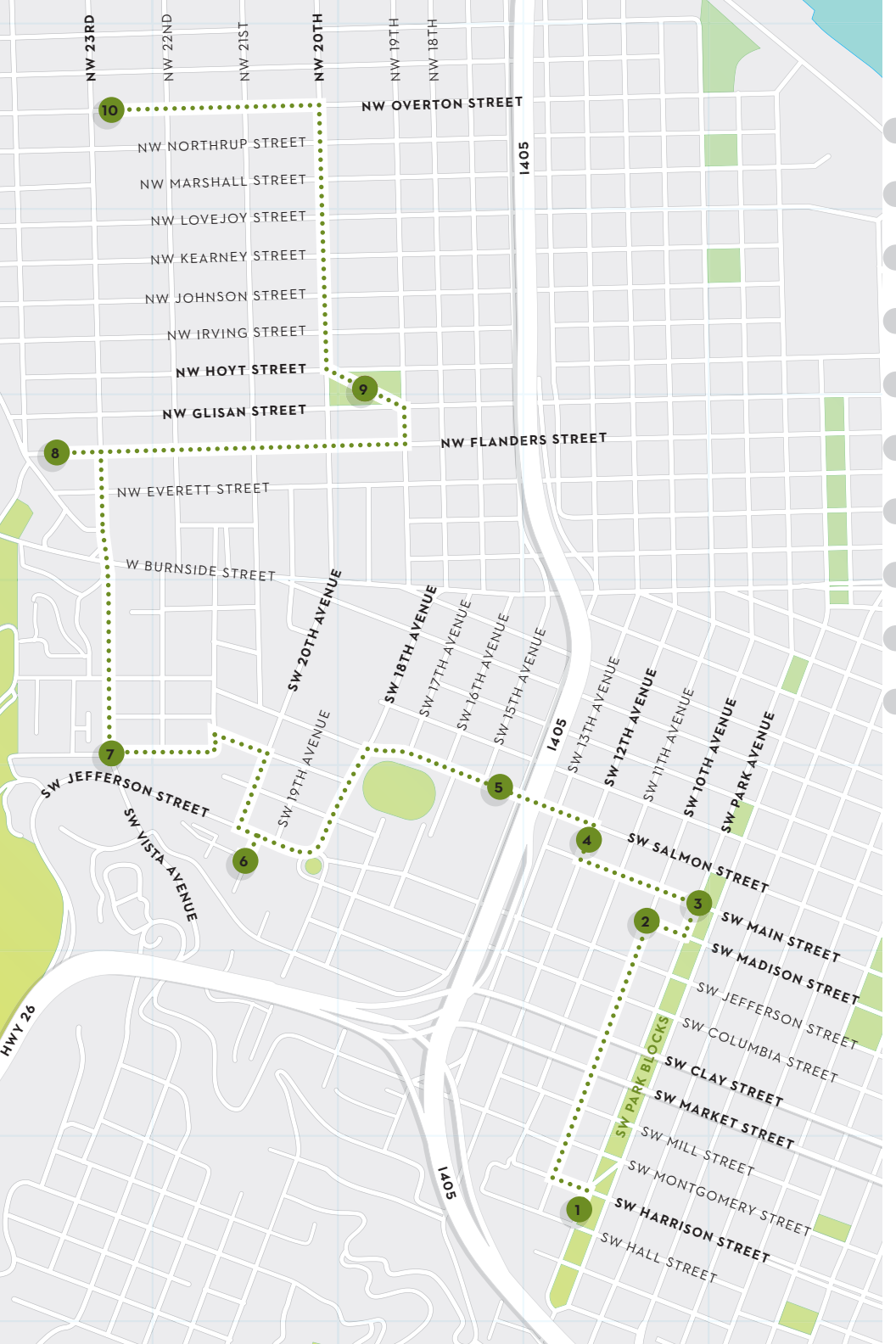
Image courtesy of Library of Congress, Prints & Photographs Division, lc-dig-pga-03320.

This guide is a ten stop walking tour that features seventeen of Portland's Heritage Trees. The tour route can be divided into two one mile walks, or you can complete the ambitious two mile, one-way, trek from the Portland State University Library to NW 23rd and Overton. The routes are conveniently designed to begin and end near city light-rail and streetcar lines and there are several restaurants, cafés, and cultural institutions along the way. The maps and directions are simply suggestions as there are many ways to reach each tree. The historic and contemporary photos help us see how the trees have grown and how places have often dramatically transformed over time. You can use this guide along with you in the field, or as a primer before you head out and explore our historic urban forest. However you choose to use the guide, the point is to get outside and see history in the real world.

Because a tree's lifespan far surpasses our own, they are some of the oldest living evidence of our past. In this regard, trees are tangible resources that help us directly relate to our intangible past. This guide uses an interpretive approach to explore Heritage Trees, with references provided in the back of the guide for further reading and resources.[1]

Given the limited focus on ten stops, this guide is not a comprehensive history of the urban forest or Heritage Trees more generally. The hope is that the guide will be just the beginning, and that others will continue to appreciate, research, and understand Heritage Trees as both cultural and natural resources. In other words, Portland's urban forest is rooted in the city's history, and this guide will help us understand these roots. One of the goals of this guide is to blur these lines between natural and man-made landscapes and between nature inside and outside the city. Today there is hardly a place on earth that is untouched by humans. Interpreting the meaning of past environments in an urban setting is one of the most direct ways to engage nature and history.

NOTES ON PLANTING DATES: *It is incredibly difficult to place exact dates on the planting of many Heritage Trees. I only give exact dates for trees when I found archival evidence for a specific date or year of planting. Otherwise, I determine dates by consulting land records, photographs, and general size/age estimates of Portland Heritage Tree expert Phyllis Reynolds.[2] In these cases, I give only approximate dates, sometimes within a few years.*


NW 23RD
NW 22ND
NW 21ST
NW 20TH
NW 19TH
NW 18TH
NW OVERTON STREET
NW NORTHRUP STREET
NW MARSHALL STREET
NW LOVEJOY STREET
NW KEARNEY STREET
NW JOHNSON STREET
NW IRVING STREET
NW HOYT STREET
NW GLISAN STREET
NW FLANDERS STREET
NW EVERETT STREET
W BURNSIDE STREET
I405
SW 20TH AVENUE
SW 18TH AVENUE
SW 17TH AVENUE
SW 16TH AVENUE
SW 15TH AVENUE
SW 13TH AVENUE
SW 12TH AVENUE
SW 11TH AVENUE
SW 10TH AVENUE
SW PARK AVENUE
SW 19TH AVENUE
SW JEFFERSON STREET
SW VISTA AVENUE
SW SALMON STREET
SW MAIN STREET
SW MADISON STREET
SW JEFFERSON STREET
SW COLUMBIA STREET
SW CLAY STREET
SW MARKET STREET
SW PARK BLOCKS
SW MILL STREET
SW MONTGOMERY STREET
SW HARRISON STREET
SW HALL STREET
HWY 26
1
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10

Our tour begins at the Portland State University Library. I suggest taking the MAX or Streetcar here, as parking is often a challenge. As you approach the library take a moment to enjoy the South Park Blocks and the many trees around you.

TREES ARE EXCELLENT ARCHITECTURAL INVESTMENTS

European Copper Beach
Fagus sylvatica f. *purpurea*

LISTED 1995, PLANTED C. 1890
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #54

This impressive European Copper Beech now stands as the centerpiece to the Portland State University Library. While its towering presence provides shade and a natural setting to library patrons, the tree itself dates back to the 1890s and has experienced numerous changes to its surroundings. Although this is an impressive tree botanically, the history of this tree is a fine example of how trees are some of our best long-term architectural investments in the city.

NEXT PAGE *The European Copper Beach as it appears today in front of the PSU Library. Photo courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

ABOVE *The Watson's family home with the Beech tree in the upper right, Park and Hall Streets. Houses for condemnation, September 16, 1965, University Archives, Portland State University Library.*

Joseph Franklin Frank Watson, a Massachusetts based merchant, arrived in Portland in 1871 and quickly established himself as one of Portland's entrepreneurs. A partner in Smith & Watson Iron Works, his firm produced many of the city's cast iron storefronts and fire hydrants that are still in use today. He also was a partner in the Columbia River Shipbuilding Company and a president of the Merchants National Bank of Portland. [3]

Around 1890 Frank, his wife Mary Whalley Watson, and two children moved into their newly constructed home on the corner of Hall and Park. Around the same time one, of them planted this beech tree—the start of an investment that continues to mature some 120 years later. [4]

As the Watson family moved out of the house and others moved in, the tree still remained, growing taller and taller each year. You can see the tree in the right corner of the picture above from 1965 when Portland State College purchased the house and demolished it to build the college library. For still unknown reasons, PSU saved the Beech tree and it became a center feature of the grassy area in front of the library.

Critics attacked the library's design almost immediately after the completion of the construction in 1968. College President Gregory Wolf thought the campus's new modernist buildings, designed by the world-renowned firm Skidmore, Owings, and Merrill, were "architectural blobs" and

ABOVE *Crowd on lawn in front of Library, copper beech tree, June, 1975, University Archives, Portland State University Library.* **BELOW** *The Copper Beech tree in the upper left. Students in Park Blocks, hot dog stand, Library, September 29, 1975, University Archives, Portland State University Library.*

ABOVE *The Watson's beech tree is now a prominent architectural element of the PSU library remodel. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

"distressing evidence of Stalinist cubism." According to Wolf, "the only beautiful thing on this campus is what God put on the Park Blocks." Wolf apparently did not realize that Portlanders planted the trees in and around the park blocks, including this Beech tree, less than two generations before. Actual Portland citizens made the investment in trees that had created the beauty Wolf saw on campus.[5]

Indeed, the Beech tree in front of the library had become an important feature to the campus. Two pictures from 1975 on the previous page show the prominence of the tree in relationship to campus student life. A 1972 *Oregonian* article by Jane Sansregret is the first known historic interpretation of the tree's significance. In addition to crediting the Watsons for planting the tree, she also noted the ancient tradition of letter writing on beech bark, and the relationship of the word "beech" to "book."[6]

By the 1970s, the growth of PSU signaled a need for a larger library. Instead of cutting the tree down, the second phase expansion of the library incorporated the tree in the design. It is not clear if the architects were inspired by the popularity of the tree, its historical value, or its aesthetic quality. Nonetheless they made a choice to build around it, further maximizing its potential as a defining architectural feature.

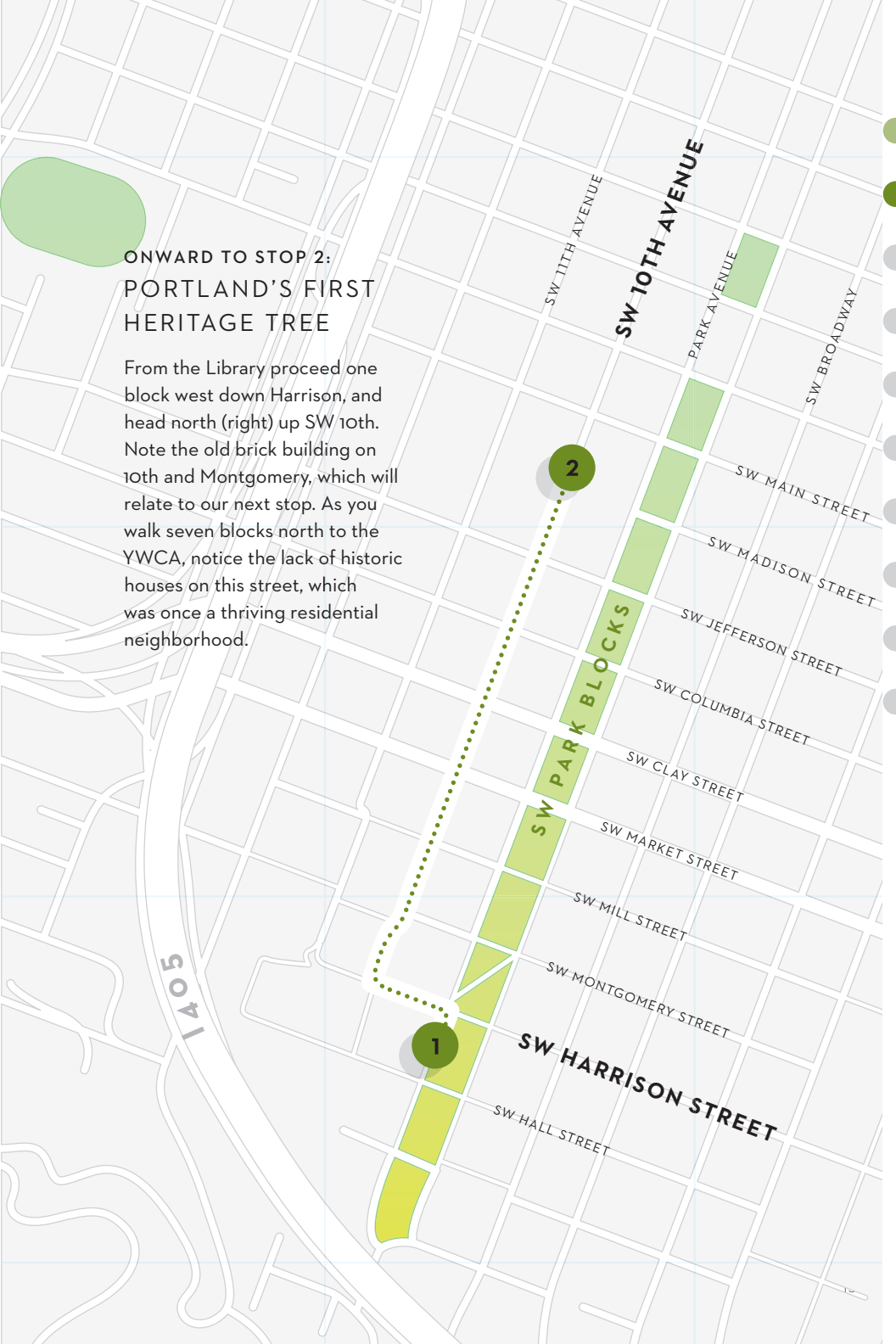
While a lot has changed over 120 years, the people of Portland have continued to benefit from the Watson's tree. Today the tree is our only existing link back to the first period of development on this block. In 1995, it became a Portland Heritage Tree, ensuring that this investment will benefit generations to come.

When we plant a tree, we are making an investment that will take generations to mature. Imagine what the trees will look like in your neighborhood generations from now.

ONWARD TO STOP 2:

PORTLAND'S FIRST HERITAGE TREE

From the Library proceed one block west down Harrison, and head north (right) up SW 10th. Note the old brick building on 10th and Montgomery, which will relate to our next stop. As you walk seven blocks north to the YWCA, notice the lack of historic houses on this street, which was once a thriving residential neighborhood.



2 THE BURRELL ELM: PORTLAND'S HISTORIC LANDMARK TREE

American Elm
Ulmus americana

LISTED 1973, PLANTED C. 1870
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #1

Take a moment and admire the size and shape of this tree; its branches reach out to provide shade and shelter. Now look around at all the modern buildings, and the many smaller trees that surround the Elm. In addition to being a unique landscape feature on this block, this American Elm is one of the last tangible connections to a neighborhood that was once full of homes and gardens. More specifically, this tree helps us remember one of Portland's important socially minded families.

NEXT PAGE *The Burrell Elm as it appears today on SW 10th Avenue. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

YWCA

MRS. ROSA F. BURRELL

PREVIOUS PAGE ABOVE *Mrs. Rosetta F. Burrell's garden, with the elm tree to the right, OHRI 36967, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.* PREVIOUS PAGE BELOW *View of the Knapp, Burell & Co. Building in Old Town. City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon, A2004-002.3622.* ABOVE *The Martha Washington Hotel, now used as PSU dormitories. Image courtesy of the author.*

The tree was planted on the property of Martin and Rosetta F. Burrell around 1875, and was part of the family's garden, which extended from the side of the house into the middle of what would have been Madison street. During this time, the Burrell's home would have been in a neighborhood on the edge of Portland, a nineteenth-century suburb if you will.

Martin was a notable businessman with investments in the Oswego Iron Works, Portland finance, river shipping, and an agricultural implement firm located near the New Market Annex in present day Old Town. In part, Martin's fortune came from the golden grains of Eastern Washington wheat, which historically has been sent to market through Portland.

Rosetta Frazer Burrell, Martin's wife, made many important social contributions to the city. She was an active member of the First Unitarian Church and the League of Women Voters. In 1887 she was instrumental in founding the Portland Women's Union, and donated $10,000 of her own money to build the Martha Washington Hotel: a boarding house for single mothers that also provided educational training.

Over the years the Burrell's suburban home became part of the downtown core. The gardens, greenhouses, and stables were cleared to make room for more dense development. By 1973, all that remained of the Burrell's property was the Elm tree. That year, a member of the Oregon Historical Society had an idea: If the city of Portland could preserve historic buildings, why not a historic tree?

ABOVE *The Burrell Elm as it appears today. Image courtesy of the author.*

By spring 1975, the city's Historical Landmarks Commission approved the Burrell Elm as the first landmark tree in the city. [7]

As a historic landmark, it's no surprise that this tree was first on the list when the city created the Heritage Tree Ordinance in 1993. Now legally protected, any construction or development that could affect the tree requires approval of the City Forester.

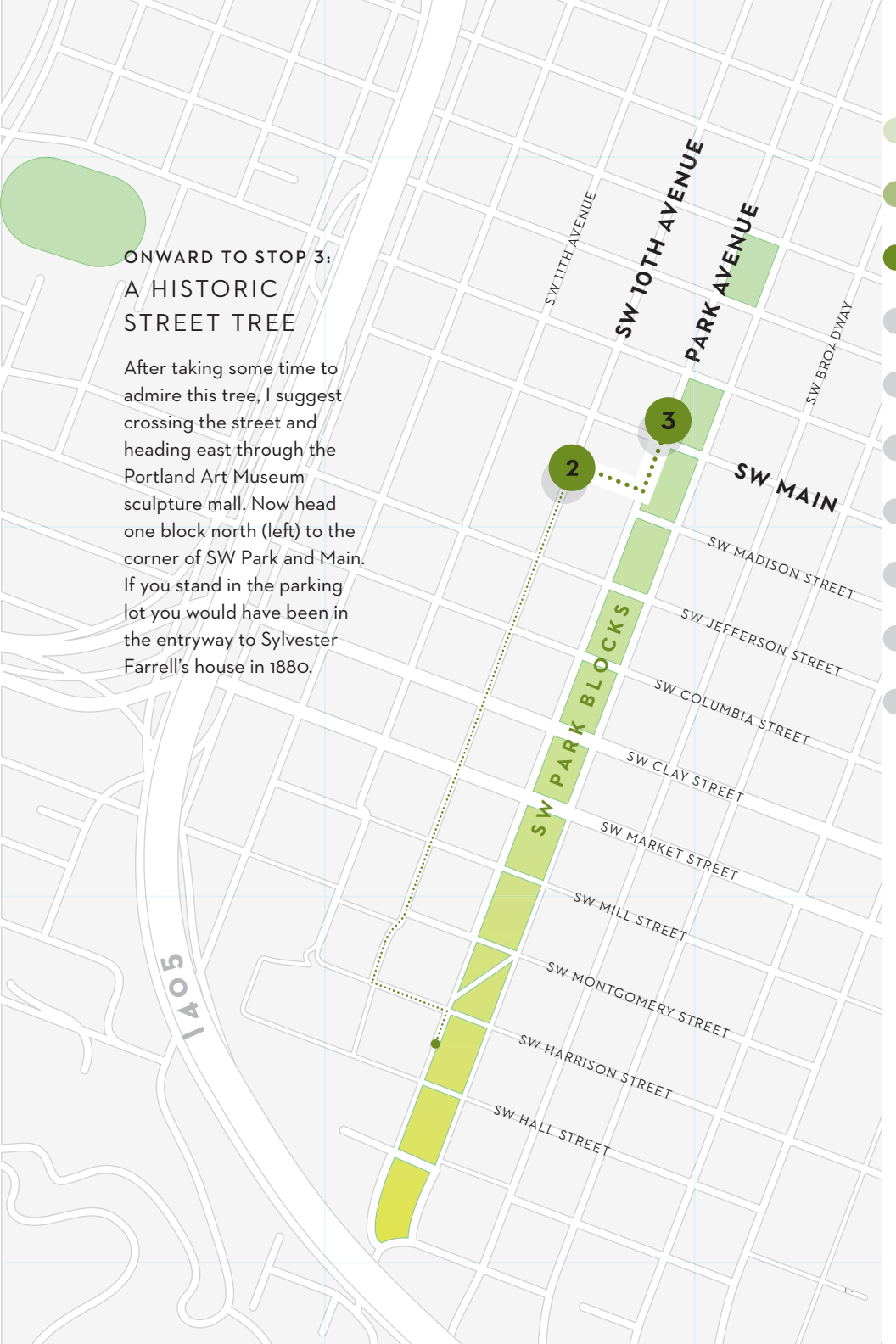
Take a look at the sidewalk and patio around the tree. Notice how it was built around the tree? This was done in close consultation with the Heritage Tree committee and arborists from Urban Forestry.

The tree is an excellent cultural resource because of its association to the Burrells and the fact that it remains as the only connection to the historic neighborhood. It provides us with a physical connection to the past. Why is it important to have physical reminders of our past?

ONWARD TO STOP 3:

A HISTORIC STREET TREE

After taking some time to admire this tree, I suggest crossing the street and heading east through the Portland Art Museum sculpture mall. Now head one block north (left) to the corner of SW Park and Main. If you stand in the parking lot you would have been in the entryway to Sylvester Farrell's house in 1880.



3 NINETEENTH-CENTURY PORTLAND VALUED STREET TREES

London Planetree
Plantanus x acerifolia

LISTED 1973, PLANTED C. 1880
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #2

In addition to helping us remember the life of Sylvester Farrell, this old London Planetree (erroneously called a Sycamore) is an excellent example of how early Portlanders cared for their street trees.

NEXT PAGE *The Farrell Planetree as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

ABOVE *View of Sylvester Farrell House SW Park and Main with the Planetree on the corner. Built between 1875–1880 ORHI 84646, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.* **NEXT PAGE ABOVE** *Settlers cleared the land of trees, leaving only stumps behind. Stumptown, Lorenzo Lorain, 1857. Oregon History Project, ORHI 5487, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.* **NEXT PAGE BELOW** *This artistic representation of Portland's Park Blocks in 1882 nicely shows the young planted street trees with the sparse logged hillsides in the background. From West Shore Magazine, July 1882. Image courtesy of Portland Parks & Recreation.*

Like many of Portland's historic trees, this tree was planted by a prominent business owner. Sylvester Farrell operated a feed and grocery store on Front and SW Alder with his business partner Richard Everding.[8] They later expanded into commercial Salmon canning on the Columbia, Puget Sound, and Alaska. Mr. Farrell also served on the Portland City Council, and contributed to several civic minded organizations. The Farrell's three-bedroom home on SW Park and Main overlooked the city's park blocks, but today the location of the house is a parking lot. The Farrell family planted the tree you see today—which was allegedly a gift from U.S. Senator J.N. Dolph—in the planting strip. Here, you can see the young tree in this 1880 photograph, and what the house would have looked like before it was torn down to become a gas station and then a parking lot.[9]

Perhaps you have encountered the city's popular name "Stumptown?" The name points to a popular mythology of the early days of Portland. When the first merchants arrived, they cut and cleared the forest, leaving a town of only mud and stumps. While many trees were indeed cleared for the city, the legend of Stumptown overshadows a much more important story: Almost immediately upon arrival, many nineteenth-century Portlanders planted trees. This 1882 artistic representation shows the city's already maturing urban tree canopy in the Park Blocks. If Portland was Stumptown, it quickly became Treetown!

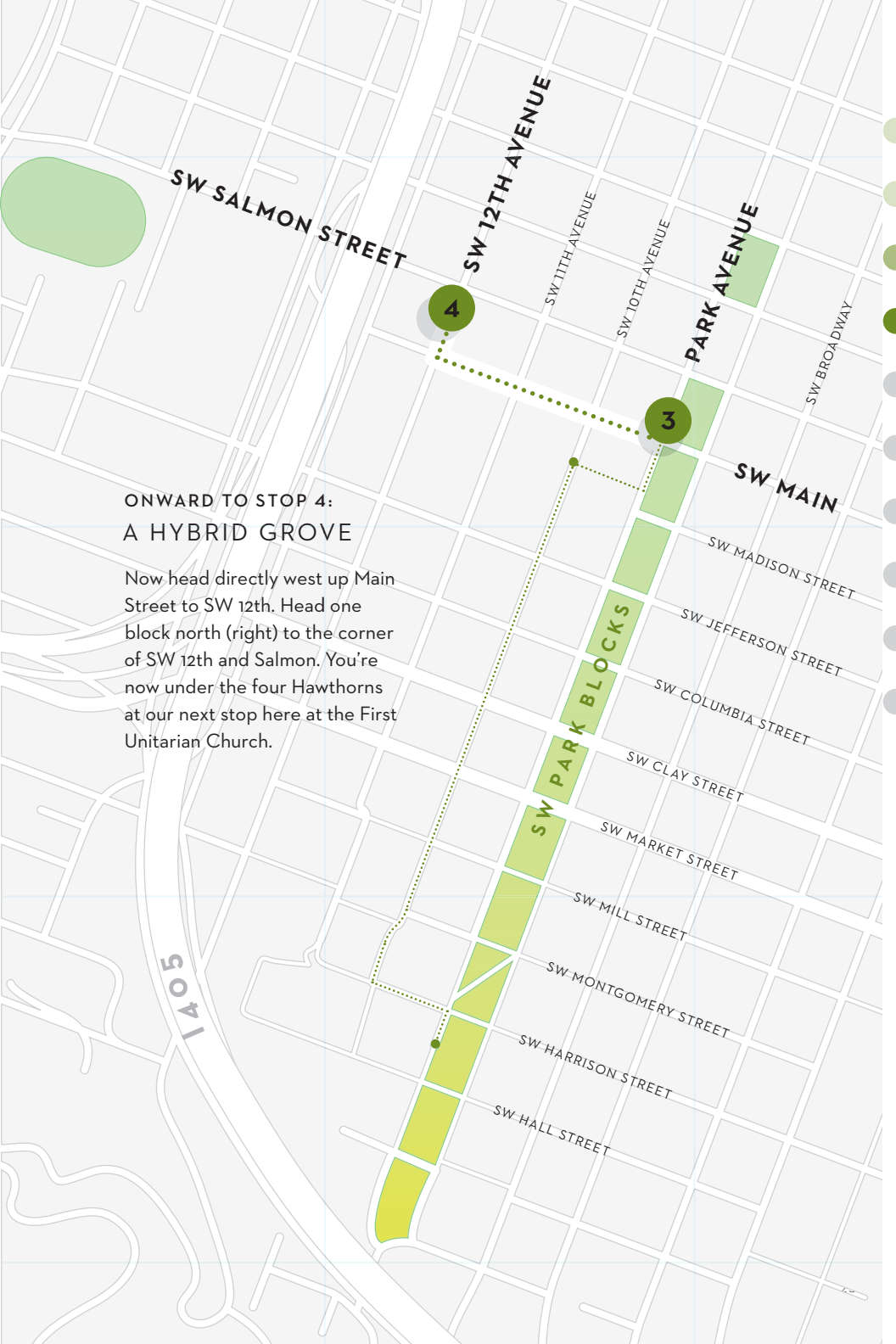
section shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor
and upon conviction thereof before the Police
Judge shall be subject to a fine of not
less than five dollars nor more than twenty
dollars, or by imprisonment not less
than two days nor more than ten days.
Passed the common council April 7th 1880
R. L. Durham
Auditor & Clerk
Approved
April 9th 1880.
D. P. Thompson
Mayor

ABOVE *Portland's 1880 tree ordinance gave strict punishments for not following its protections. An ordinance to amend ordinance no. 2060 entitled "An ordinance providing for the location of shade trees in the public streets and for the care thereof." 1880, City of Portland Archives, Oregon.*

Back in 1855, the very young city of Portland passed its first ordinance to regulate and promote the planting of trees in the city. Over the years the council amended and redefined the ordinance as more clarification was needed. By 1880, the city's tree ordinance made it illegal to "destroy or injure any growing or living shade or ornamental tree" including hitching animals to trees. It was a misdemeanor offence to violate the city's tree ordinance, and fines of "five to one hundred dollars" or "two to ten days in jail" indicate how serious the city took the growth of its street trees. Imagine, ten days in jail for cutting down a tree![10]

The Farrell tree, like the Burrell Elm, was also protected as a Portland Historic Landmark in 1973 and it became a Heritage Tree in 1993. As a cultural resource, this tree provides a tangible link to one of the city's leaders. It also is an important example of a street tree that has survived in part because the city government valued trees and very early on wanted to turn Stumptown into a beautiful Treetown.

Why would nineteenth century Portlanders want to encourage planting trees in the city?



ONWARD TO STOP 4:

A HYBRID GROVE

Now head directly west up Main Street to SW 12th. Head one block north (right) to the corner of SW 12th and Salmon. You're now under the four Hawthorns at our next stop here at the First Unitarian Church.

4 TREES PRESERVE MEMORIES AND MEANING

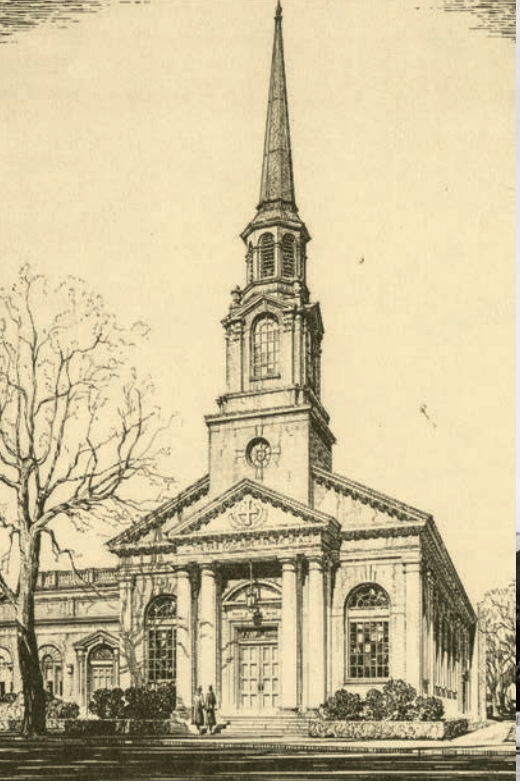
Lavalle Hawthorns
Crataegus x lavallei

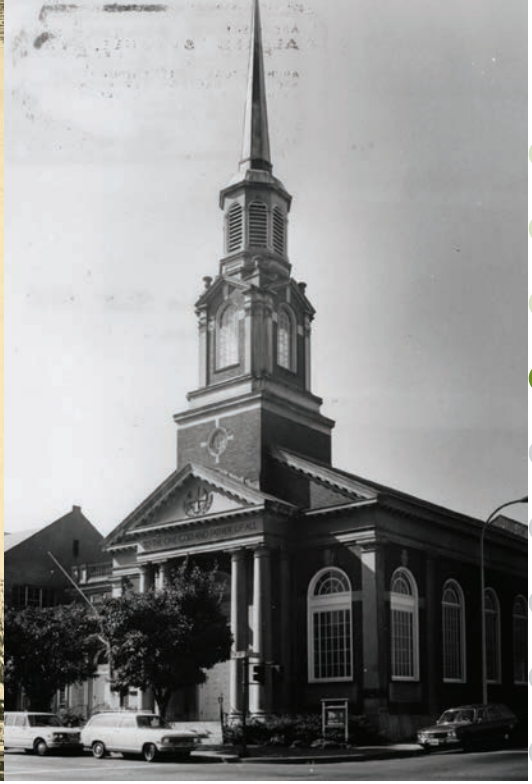
LISTED 1996, PLANTED 1966
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREES #109 – #112

Have you been to a Portland park or school, the art museum, Multnomah County Library, or visited one of the city's humanitarian organizations? Even today, nearly every Portlander directly interacts with the work of the Rev. Thomas Lamb Eliot and the congregation of the First Unitarian Church of Portland.

Eliot is arguably the city's most influential citizen, serving as church minister from 1867–1893. Through his tenure he directed social programs for women and children, art and library associations, and was an active outdoorsman and mountaineer—in fact, the Eliot glacier on Mt. Hood is named for him.[11]

NEXT PAGE *The four Hawthorns as they appear today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*





ABOVE LEFT *The First Unitarian Society of Portland's 50th anniversary bulletin of 1974 featured this lithograph of how the church looked in 1924. Note the absence of the Hawthorns. Burrell Genealogy, Vertical File, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.* **ABOVE RIGHT** *The First Unitarian Church with young Hawthorn trees, 1974. Photographed by Alfred Staehli, National Register of Historic Places Inventory Form. Courtesy of Oregon State Historic Preservation Office.*

The Rev. Eliot inspired people. Beyond his work, the congregation of the First Unitarian Church made many of their own civic and social contributions throughout Portland's history. Mrs. Rosetta F. Burrell, of the Burrell Elm, was a member of the church. While the church has moved several times from downtown to its present location, its members' commitment to Portland has remained constant. In 1924, Jameson Parker—who interestingly married the granddaughter of Rosetta F. Burrell—designed the building you see today.

After a 1965 fire that devastated the church, the congregation decided to remain and remodel in the present location. During the remodel process, church member Barbara Fealy redesigned the front landscape and planted the four Hawthorn trees in 1966.

Fealy is an important landscape architect because she often incorporated the use of native plants and landscapes into her designs— the Salishan Lodge on the Oregon Coast is one of her notable works from this period.

ABOVE *The four hawthorns as they appear today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

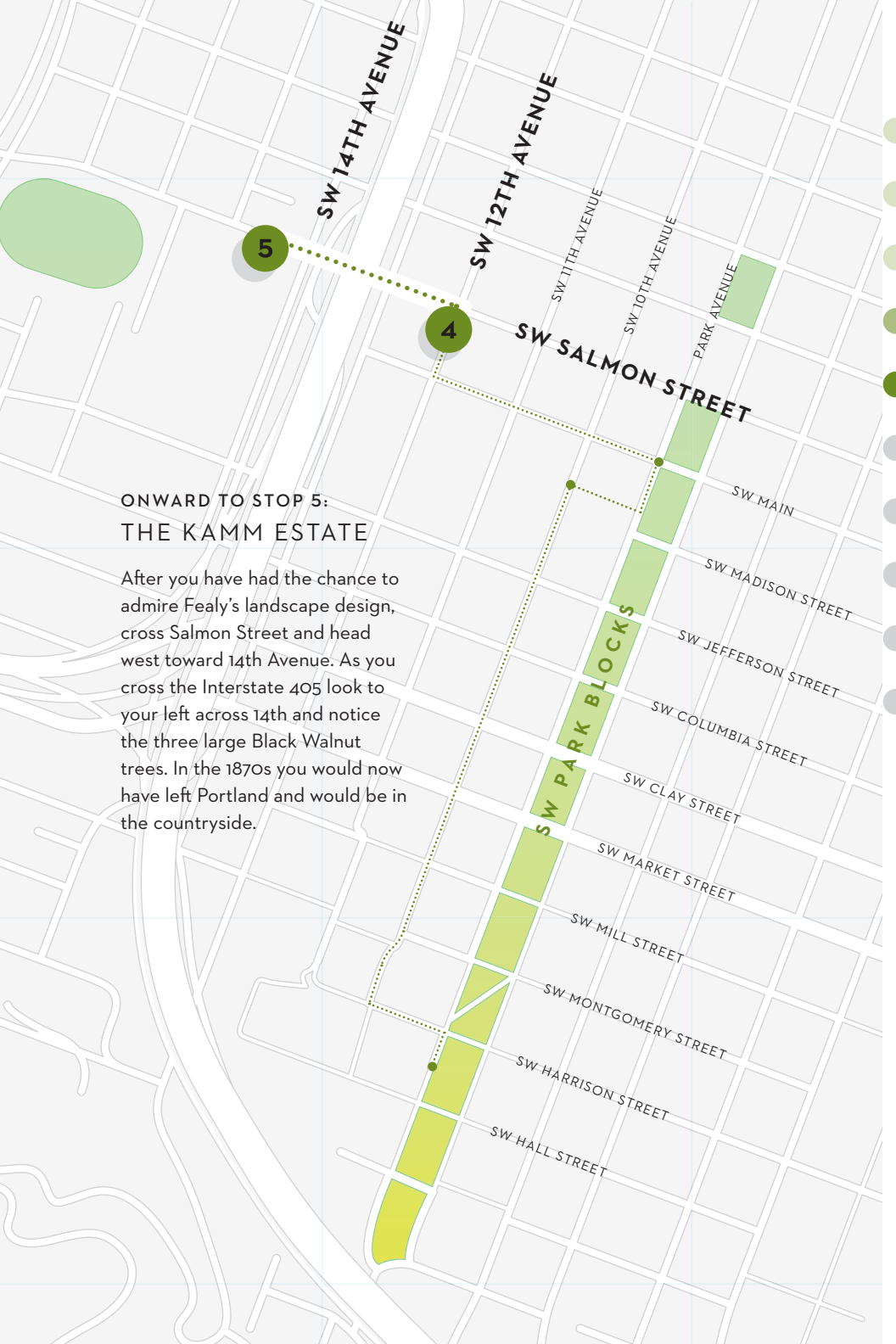
Though her landscapes were often for private homeowners, her larger projects included: the Catlin Gabel School, Oregon School of Arts and Crafts, Evergreen Aviation, and Sokol Blosser Winery.[12] In 1984 the Portland Garden Club awarded Fealy for her "sensitive use of plant material and excellence of landscape design."[13] By considering the natural world into her designs, Fealy found beautiful and simple solutions that featured the wet climate of the Pacific Northwest. She designed truly hybrid landscapes. Her foundational work in incorporating, and working with, the natural world has many parallels to current urban restoration efforts.

ABOVE LEFT *Thomas Lamb Eliot, minister of First Unitarian Church in Portland, Oregon. From Earl Morse Wilbur, A History of the First Unitarian Church, of Portland, Oregon. 1867-1892. Image courtesy of OSU Special Collections and Archive Research Center.* **ABOVE RIGHT** *Barbara Fealy, an important Pacific Northwest landscape architect. Photo courtesy of Carol Mayer-Reed, PSU walk of Heroines.*

The landscaping in front of the church is certainly manicured, and not natural in the sense that it's untouched by humans. But it's doubtful that she wanted to design such a landscape here. What is more likely is that she redesigned the church's entrance to fit the character of the building and the church's much longer history in Portland. Interestingly, the Lavalle Hawthorn is a cultivar from France, a hybrid of two other trees. Fealy's use of the hybrid trees complimented her hybrid landscape. They now provide ample shade and accentuate the entrance to the Eliot Chapel, and you might have even thought they were original features of the building. This subtle touch links the current church to its history in Portland. Barbara Fealy, Jameson Parker, and the Rev. Eliot all were from different times in the city's past, but all three were Unitarians who made subtle contributions that are still visible and influential in Portland.

What tangible evidence of other communities can you still see today?

BELOW *Barbara Fealy's landscape design provides a formal and understated environment in the heart of downtown. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*



ONWARD TO STOP 5:

THE KAMM ESTATE

After you have had the chance to admire Fealy's landscape design, cross Salmon Street and head west toward 14th Avenue. As you cross the Interstate 405 look to your left across 14th and notice the three large Black Walnut trees. In the 1870s you would now have left Portland and would be in the countryside.

5 AN ANCHOR TO UNDERSTAND A HISTORIC SEA OF CHANGE

Black Walnut
Juglans nigra

LISTED 1994, PLANTED C. 1880s
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #35

Ask a graduate of Lincoln High School about this large Black Walnut and you'll likely get a story. Trees help us center our memories. They can be anchors to the past, especially in places that have undergone significant change.

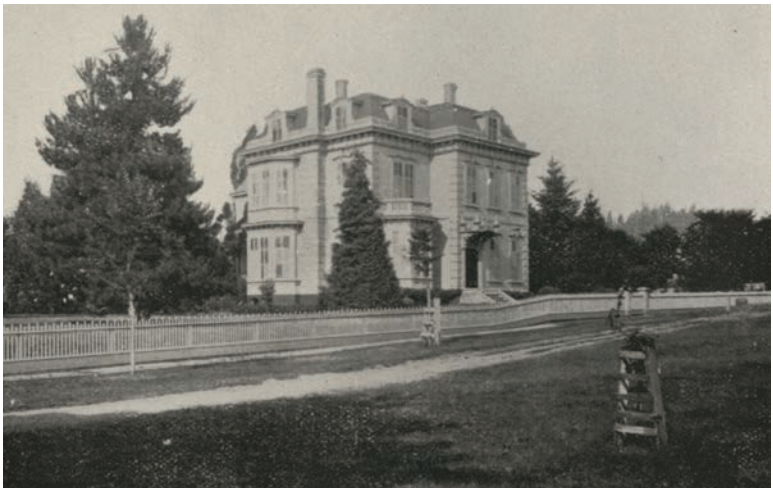
NEXT PAGE *The Black Walnut as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

ABOVE *The backside of the Kamm's estate ran into Tanner Creek Gulch, now called Goose Hollow. In the late nineteenth century this site was the home of many Chinese vegetable gardeners. This image is looking west at the intersection of today's SW Salmon street and 18th Avenue. Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon, A2004-002.2544.*

LEFT *Caroline A. Kamm* **RIGHT** *Jacob Kamm, from Joseph Gaston, Portland, Oregon, Its History and Builders, 1911. Both images courtesy of OSU Special Collections and Archives Research Center.*

As you look at this tree, let's try to imagine what the landscape would have looked like in the late nineteenth century. As we go back in time, the freeway next to you disappears, the homes and apartments become less dense, and the school before you has yet to be built. Let's stop sometime around 1871, when this tree was planted on the north corner of the newly constructed home of Jacob Kamm. At this time the Kamm's mansion was more an estate, stretching fourteen-acres around you, with

BELOW *The Kamm house and gardens in 1892. Looking northwest down Fourteenth Avenue. Note the small Walnut trees along the fence. The final in the right corner is likely Heritage Tree #35. Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon, A2004-002.3180*



gardens, orchards, vineyards, and stables: a home in the country on the edge of Portland.[14]

Jacob Kamm, an immigrant from Switzerland, was a steam ship engineer on the Sacramento River during the California gold rush of 1849. In 1850 he moved to Oregon, serving on the Lot Whitcomb, one of the first steamships in the state. His growing desire to control shipping and transportation in the region pushed him and several investors to form the Oregon Steam and Navigation Company. Jacob made a fortune in transportation and trade, allowing him build the exquisite mansion in the French Second Empire style. His home, gardens, and groves of trees all signaled his wealth and status in Portland Society. [15]

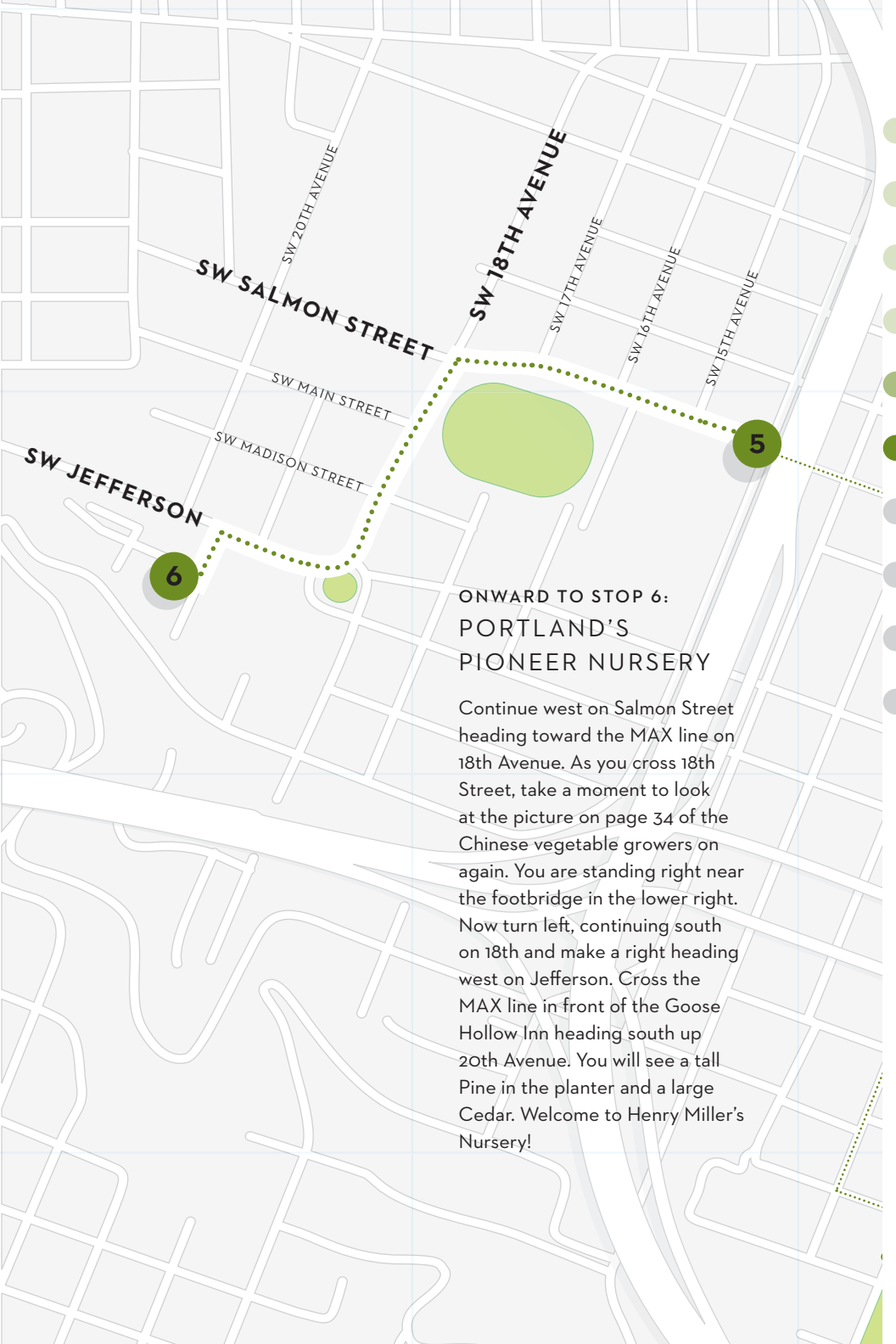
But there is more to the story of the Kamm family. His wife Caroline Agusta Gray had grown up as one of the first missionary families among the Nez Perce Indians in Idaho. She and her family played a pioneering role in education in the Northwest. It's somewhat fitting that in 1910 the Kamms sold their property on the Park Blocks for the construction of Lincoln High School, now Lincoln Hall on the PSU campus.[16]

By 1950 the city had developed up around the Kamm estate. The Victorian age had long passed and so too had the age of steam transportation. Car culture and trucking now defined this era. With a booming population, Portland Public Schools looked to the remaining property of the Kamm estate for the site of the current Lincoln High School.[17]

ABOVE *Architect Hollis Johnson retained some of the Kamm's trees in his design for the new Lincoln High School in 1952. Image courtesy of University of Oregon Libraries Special Collections.* **BELOW** *The Black Walnut as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

Through the work of Eric Ladd, an early Portland historic preservationist, the house was saved and moved to its current home on SW 20th. However, the trees of the Kamm estate could not be moved. Heritage Tree #35 and the neighboring trees are the last remaining evidence of the Kamm estate. It's important to note that architect Hollis Johnston decided to keep the trees in his design of the new Lincoln High School. You can see the trees in the background of this sketch.[18]

By the late 1960s the front of the school would face the I-405 freeway, and be surrounded by taller and taller buildings. Even still, the Black Walnut on the corner helps us remember a different era in the city—one where we would have been in the lush oasis of the Kamm estate on the edge of town. Take a moment and listen. Imagine what would it sound like when this was the edge of town.



ONWARD TO STOP 6:

PORTLAND'S PIONEER NURSERY

Continue west on Salmon Street heading toward the MAX line on 18th Avenue. As you cross 18th Street, take a moment to look at the picture on page 34 of the Chinese vegetable growers on again. You are standing right near the footbridge in the lower right. Now turn left, continuing south on 18th and make a right heading west on Jefferson. Cross the MAX line in front of the Goose Hollow Inn heading south up 20th Avenue. You will see a tall Pine in the planter and a large Cedar. Welcome to Henry Miller's Nursery!

6 PORTLAND'S TREES ARE FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD

Austrian Pine Tree
Pinus nigra

LISTED 1993, PLANTED C. 1870s
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #5

Cedar of Lebanon
Cedrus libani

LISTED 1993, PLANTED C. 1870s
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #6

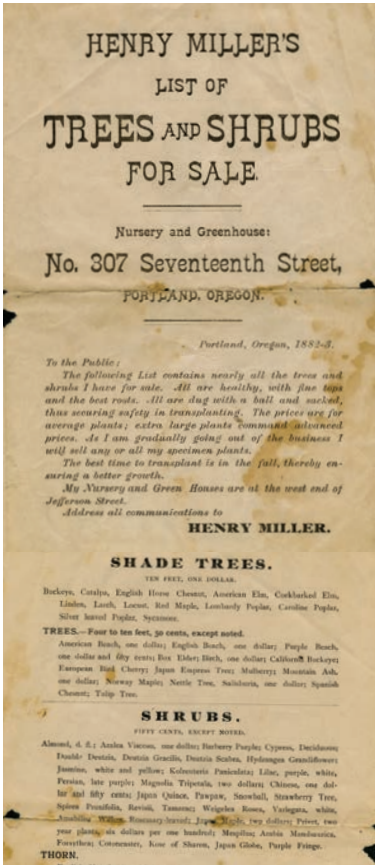
London Plane Tree
Plantanus x acerfolia

LISTED 1999, PLANTED: UNKNOWN
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #218

Where would you go to purchase a tree in nineteenth-century Portland? People then, just like today, would often go to a nursery. In the 1870s Goose Hollow, formerly called Tanner Gulch, was well outside the city and the location of Henry Miller's nursery, seed farm, and floral supply. Although much has changed since the time of Miller's nursery there are several trees that were likely imported and planted on the property of Portland's first florist.

NEXT PAGE *The Austrian Pine tree as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

ABOVE *Miller's nursery plots are in the lower left. Portland panorama from West Hills, 1894. City of Portland Archives, Oregon, A2004-002.634.* **BELOW** *Henry Miller's home by the 1950s. His very lush gardens and plantings had almost engulfed the house. Henry Miller Home Collection, ORHI 61958, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.*



HENRY MILLER'S

LIST OF

TREES AND SHRUBS

FOR SALE.

Nursery and Greenhouse:

No. 307 Seventeenth Street,

PORTLAND, OREGON.

Portland, Oregon, 1882-3.

To the Public:

The following List contains nearly all the trees and shrubs I have for sale. All are healthy, with fine tops and the best roots. All are dug with a ball and sacked, thus securing safety in transplanting. The prices are for average plants; extra large plants command advanced prices. As I am gradually going out of the business I will sell any or all my specimen plants.

The best time to transplant is in the fall, thereby ensuring a better growth.

My Nursery and Green Houses are at the west end of Jefferson Street.

Address all communications to

HENRY MILLER.

SHADE TREES.

TEN FEET, ONE DOLLAR.

Buckeye, Catalpa, English Horse Chestnut, American Elm, Cockleshell Elm, Linden, Larch, Locust, Red Maple, Lombardy Poplar, Carolina Poplar, Silver leaved Poplar, Sycamore.

TREES.—Four to ten feet, 50 cents, except noted.

American Beach, one dollar; English Beech, one dollar; Purple Beech, one dollar and fifty cents; Box Elder; Birch, one dollar; California Buckeye; European Bird Cherry; Japan Empress Tree; Mulberry; Mountain Ash, one dollar; Norway Maple; Nettle Tree, Salisburia, one dollar; Spanish Chestnut; Tulip Tree.

SHRUBS.

FIFTY CENTS, EXCEPT NOTED.

Almond, d. f.; Azalea Viscosa, one dollar; Barberry Purple; Cypress, Deciduous; Double Deutzia, Deutzia Gracilis, Deutzia Scabra, Hydrangea Grandiflora; Jasmine, white and yellow; Koelreuteria Paniculata; Lilac, purple, white, Persian, late purple; Magnolia Tripetala, two dollars; Chinese, one dollar and fifty cents; Japan Quince, Pawpaw, Snowball, Strawberry Tree, Spiræa Prunifolia, Revisii, Tamarix; Weigelea Roseu, Variegata, white, Amabilis White, Rosemary leaved; Japan Maple, two dollars; Privet, two year plants, six dollars per one hundred; Mespilus; Arabia Mandsuarica, Forsythia; Cotoneaster, Rose of Sharon, Japan Globe, Purple Fringe.

THORN.

ABOVE *Henry Miller's List of Trees and Shrubs For Sale, 1882. Henry Miller Papers, MSS24, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.*

Miller, an immigrant from Germany, arrived in the United States in 1833. He made his way to Oregon on one of the early wagon trains of 1853. The Miller family settled in what later became Waverley Heights and Sellwood (keep an eye out for Miller Street next time you're there). Henry worked with the Lambert family in a large fruit orchard for many years, notably selling apples in San Francisco for a dollar a piece—a high price for the 1850s! Through his orchard work, Henry became quite skilled at plant cultivation and importation.[19]

In 1870 Henry sold his interest in the orchard and relocated to the Goose Hollow area where he operated his nursery and seed farm. He imported and sold plants from all over the world. The Cedar you see today is indigenous to central Asia and the Middle East, the Austrian Pine is native to the Southern Alps and Northern Africa, and the London Planetree is a cultivar from England. This particular Planetree is too small to have been planted by Miller, but it could have been planted by one of his descendants. Nonetheless, the tree still relates to Miller as an importer of plants from all over the globe. In this c. 1883 flyer, you can see a sampling of what was available at Miller's nursery—including London Planetrees (then called Sycamores).[20]

Descriptions of the Miller house note the extensive and lush gardens of Bamboo, Camellia, flowers, and many trees. In fact the house was featured in an *Oregonian* article in 1950 and most of Miller's original plantings were still growing—nearly enveloping the house. Of the thirty-five species of trees on the property, only one was native to Oregon. Today many of the plants Miller sold are now considered invasive, but he had no idea that plants like English Ivy, Himalayan Blackberry, and Empress Trees would spread so easily and cause the widespread issues we face today.

ABOVE *The large Cedar of Lebanon in the left. View to the southwest at the intersection of 20th and Howards Way where preservationist Eric Ladd moved this replica of Abraham Lincoln's home. Photo by Alfred A Monner, 1961, The Colony Photographs Collection, OHRI 101747, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.* **BELOW** *Today the tree and remnants of this retaining wall are all still visible. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

ABOVE *The London Planetree was likely planted by Miller's family sometime in the twentieth century. Here it is in front of a composite home, which featured part of Millers original home. Photo by Frank Stourett, Henry Miller Home Collection, OHRI 47039, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.* **BELOW** *Today, only the tree remains, encased by apartments. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

Many of Millers plants were imported from Asia. Bamboo, Gingko, Camellia, and several other plants and bulbs were all featured at Henry's greenhouses.[21] Interestingly, just down the street (on 18th and Salmon) Chinese vegetable farmers cultivated their plots and sold products door to door. While Henry could have bought and sold plants and seeds to his Chinese neighbors, the historic record suggests he first imported plants from Asia because of his association with Judge Denny, the U.S. Consul General to Shanghai.[22]

Today the neighborhoods of Goose Hollow and King's Hill hardly resemble the landscape at the time Miller lived here. But they still contain many plants first imported and grown by him. While we can't say for certain that the three Heritage Trees on the current property were planted by Miller, we can make a connection to Miller's reputation as an importer of many exotic trees and the fact that many of the city's early trees were likely purchased here. While Miller's home is now gone, there were attempts to preserve it. In the 1960s and 1970s, historic preservationist Eric Ladd moved the Jacob Kamm House onto the property, along with several other relocated properties. His "colony" of historic Portland homes aimed to tell the stories of foundational figures like Miller. Regretfully, only the trees and the relocated Kamm house remain today. Despite the enormous changes in the development of the area, our connection to one of Portland's early nursery owners remains in the still living trees and shrubs that Henry Miller once sold.[23]

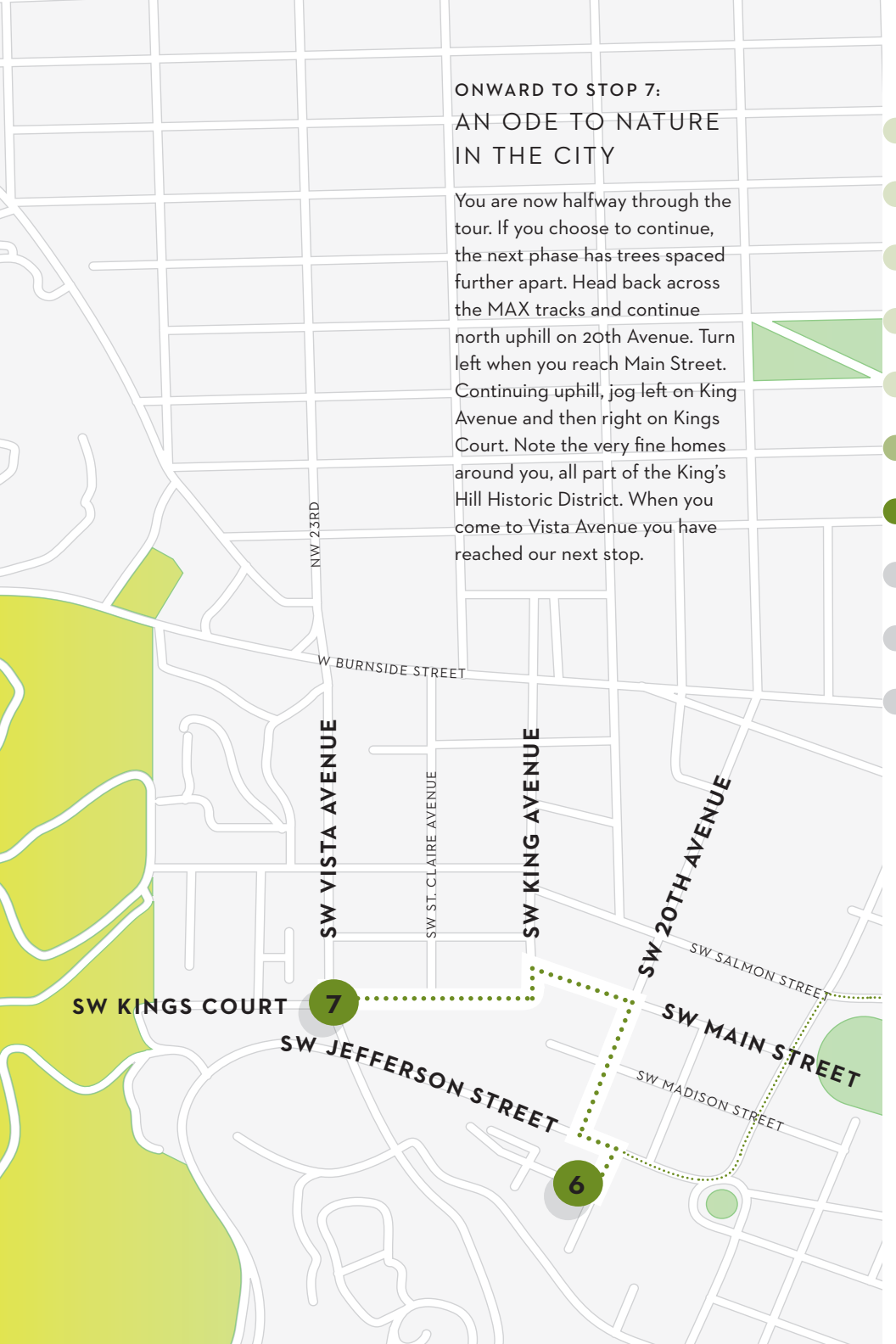
Think about other individuals who might have brought plants from their travels near and afar. Can you see issues in how we define invasive and exotic plants?

BELOW *A view of Jacob Kamm House, Portland, Oregon, 1959. You can see the Cedar of Lebanon and the Austrian Pine in to the right. Image courtesy of Architecture & Allied Arts Library, University of Oregon Special Collections.*

ONWARD TO STOP 7:

AN ODE TO NATURE IN THE CITY

You are now halfway through the tour. If you choose to continue, the next phase has trees spaced further apart. Head back across the MAX tracks and continue north uphill on 20th Avenue. Turn left when you reach Main Street. Continuing uphill, jog left on King Avenue and then right on Kings Court. Note the very fine homes around you, all part of the King's Hill Historic District. When you come to Vista Avenue you have reached our next stop.



7 CONSTRUCTING NATURE FOR HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

Katsura
Cercidiphyllum japonicum

LISTED 1997, PLANTED 1954
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #159

Has anyone told you to "go outside and get some fresh air" for your health and well-being? This popular statement itself has an interesting history that in a way relates to Portland's parks and gardens. The Katsura tree in front of the Portland Garden Club (PGC) nicely embodies this history and the still popular belief in the health benefits of "going outside."

NEXT PAGE *The single Katsura tree as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

ABOVE *Edith Schryver and Elizabeth Lord, 1929. Used with permission of the Lord and Schryver Conservancy.*

Katsura trees are native to Japan. PGC members Elizabeth Lord and Edith Schryver planted this tree in front of the clubhouse in 1954. Originally, there were three Katsura trees planted out front, but two were removed to make room for the middle tree we see today. This tree is a fine exemplar of Lord and Schryver's landscape architecture, which also ties to the history of the PGC and growth of the city's parks and gardens.[24]

Lord and Schryver were both educated at the Lowthorpe School of Landscape Architecture for Women in Massachusetts. They met on a field study of European gardens in 1927. Their style is often characterized as "informal formality" because they chose to mimic formal lines of European style gardens while also embracing the use of native and imported plants and the informal lines and preexisting natural features. Over 40 years of collaboration, their Salem based firm designed some 250 landscapes throughout the Pacific Northwest and was foundational to the history of Northwest landscape design. The two women joined the club in an era when many landscape architects brought nature into not only private yards, but also public spaces and parks.[25]

Although distinct in its own right, the Portland Garden Club is one of the many national clubs and professional organizations that coincided with the City Beautiful Movement around the turn of the twentieth century. [26]

NEXT PAGE ABOVE *In 1914 a city booster guide called Macleay Park "Portland's 'Natural' Play Ground," and noted its quick access from street car. This one hundred year old image still bears resemblance to the park today because of PGC's work to protect it. Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon, A2004-001.7632.* **NEXT PAGE BELOW** *View of Portland and Mt. Hood, 1912. Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon, A2004-002.2266.*

PORTLAND-OREGON
COPYRIGHT 1912
R.B.SOLOMON

ABOVE *Printed postcard C. 1929. The Portland Garden Club helped establish the International Rose Test Garden as an iconic feature of the city landscape. Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon, A2004-002.8100.* **BELOW** *The garden club in 1956, you can still see the three Katsura trees a few years after they Lord and Schryver planted them. Image courtesy of Portland Garden Club and Phyllis Reynolds.*

Defined broadly, the movement sought to design and create parkways and gardens to inspire and promote social progress. The mostly upper and middle class social reformers who made up the movement believed that city beautification could be a tool in addressing social issues, with an added benefit to city boosters.[27]

After its founding as a chapter of the Garden Club of America in 1924, some of PGC's first projects were hiring a curator for the Rose Garden—a defining feature of Portland today. Additionally, the club lobbied for the donation of nineteen acres for what later became Macleay Park—"Portland's 'Natural' Play Ground," as a 1914 visitor's guide proclaimed.[28] The club also led public plantings for Hoyt Arboretum, the Portland Art Museum, Dunaway Park, and numerous other public landscapes.[29]

The growth and popularity of Portland's parks and gardens are products of the Club's activism. By 1943, the Club was still without its own meeting space. That year, the children of prominent Portlander and author C.E.S Wood donated their parent's property to the club, and in 1954, the Club moved into its new home. John Storrs designed the clubhouse in his distinctive Northwest Regional Style. At the same time, Lord and Schryver worked with many of the existing landscape features of the Wood's property. In fact, before 1900, Mrs. Nanny Wood planted the Holly Hedge, European White Elm, and Lace-Leaf Beech, all of which are still visible on the club grounds today.[30]

In a way, the Katsura tree represents a watershed moment in Portland's history. It helps us remember the history of the Portland Garden Club, its many public landscape projects, and the many parks and greenspaces in Portland. It also symbolizes the work of two very important landscape architects and club members that created a new design style. The majority of Lord and Schryver's projects were private gardens, and many of the Portland Garden Club's projects were public. Both represent beauty and the effort to bring more gardens and parks to the city.

What other benefits can you think of for having many parks and green spaces in the city?

ABOVE *Three freshly planted Katsura trees in front of the newly constructed Portland Garden Club in 1954. Image courtesy of the Architecture & Allied Arts Library, University of Oregon Libraries.* BELOW *The single Katsura tree as it appears today. Image courtesy of the author.*

ONWARD TO STOP 8:

THE FLANDERS STREET ELMS

After admiring the Katsura tree, head north downhill on SW Vista Avenue. In about two blocks you will see an enormous Coastal Redwood Tree on the east side of the street. While this is not a Heritage Tree, it does have a mysterious history. Henry Miller, who incidentally sold "giant trees of California" in his nursery, could easily have sold or planted it on this property. Continue north on Vista and cross Burnside. Vista becomes NW 23rd Avenue. At NW Flanders Street turn left and head about halfway up the block where you will see the next two trees.

8 TREES ARE SURVIVORS OF HUMAN AND NATURAL OBSTACLES

English Elm

Ulmus minor var. *vulgaris*

LISTED 1994, PLANTED 1902–1903
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #36

Dutch Elm

Ulmus x hollandica

LISTED 1995, PLANTED C. 1900
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #46

So far we've looked at trees that relate to stories about humans. For these two trees, on the other hand, the forces of nature play a more central role to the story. Their survival represents how trees are resilient and persistent survivors of both human and natural obstacles. These two impressive Dutch and English Elms are the last remaining Elms on this block of Flanders Street to survive the 1962 Columbus Day Storm. This was the most devastating natural disaster in Oregon's recorded history, causing up to $5 billion (in 2013 figures) in damage and the death of 50 people.

NEXT PAGE *The two Elms as they appear today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

ABOVE *Columbus Day Storm, Tree Fallen on Car. City of Portland Archives, Oregon, A2012-005, 1962.* **BELOW** *Wind Damage on South Park Blocks. City of Portland Archives, Oregon, A2012-005, 1962.*

The storm reached the power of a category 3 hurricane, with Portland recording wind speeds of 116 miles per hour and 145 miles per hour at Cape Blanco on the coast. Rain and wind blew over about 15 billion board feet of timber. The Northwest's forests, including Portland's urban forest, were devastated by the storm. It is no small feat that these two trees survived![31]

A year later, human development posed a far greater risk to the Dutch Elm on the south side of the street. The property owner in front of the planting strip wanted to cut it down because he was afraid of root intrusion into his building. Several groups of concerned citizens organized to protest the tree's removal, and the debate to save the tree made news in the *Oregonian* for several months. Neighborhood architect Lewis Crucher parked his car right next to the tree to prevent a crew from cutting the tree down. Responding to Crucher's public protest, Mayor Terry Schrunk placed a moratorium on the permit to cut the tree until the city engineer and foresters could submit reports on the situation.[32]

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 1963 64 PAGES PRICE FIVE CENTS

Old Elm Escapes Executioner, At Least Until Permit Issued

Landmark Saved As City Insists On Cut License

By WILLIAM SWING
Staff Writer, The Oregonian

A death sentence long delayed was almost carried out here Wednesday until the city told the executioner to switch off his chain saw.

The reprieve was granted to an old elm tree on the south side of NW Flanders Street between NW 23rd and 24th avenues — a tree whose base was girdled by concrete.

One of its limbs was already lopped off and sliced up on the pavement when Officer R. M. Olson informed James E. (Jim) Smith of Jim's Tree Service to halt the execution.

The tall timber — stately to some people, wretched to some others and perhaps just another tree to a casual passerby —has been the center of a mini-or cause celebre for a few years.

War Rages 3 Years

Since 1960 the elm has been visited by numerous municipal officials, tree lovers, property owners and just plain curious folk.

A call of "save the elm" was heard in the city and the Portland Beautification Society and the "Neighbors of the Tree" organization stalked the City Council chambers. The tree was condemned as a public hazard. It was sentenced to be chopped down. It was reprieved. It was sentenced again and reprieved again. The dispute simmered.

On Wednesday the conflict came to a boil, again, when Harry Mittleman, owner of the property contiguous to the city property where the elm stands, sought to have it brought down.

Some officials at City Hall said the tree was a nuisance and a peril to life and limb and it must fall beneath the woodchopper's ax.

Roots Rule Plumbing

They said the tree's roots had cracked a city sewer and some plumbing in Mittleman's building — the Flanders Medical Center Building.

Injury to the building and some X-ray equipment cost an estimated $4,500 and broken sewer lines cost an estimated $1,800, the city reported.

A scontime huddle of Mayor Terry D. Schrunk, City Commissioner Ormond R. Bean and City Engineer L. H. Rosenthal ended when Schrunk said the tree may fall when the tree surgeon secures a bona fida permit.

INNOCENT OF a three year controversy that has bubbled around beneath its limbs, this old elm tree almost fell Wednesday morning when its future was in doubt.

RILEY STEVENS (left) told James E. (Jim) Smith Wednesday that an elm tree on NW Flanders St. that withstood the 1962 Columbus Day windstorm should live.

ABOVE *For several months the fate of the Flanders Street elm was headline news in Portland's Oregonian. Above is an early article by William Swing on November 21st 1963. © Oregonian Publishing Co. Reprinted with permission.*

During the moratorium, advocates for saving the tree continued to step forward. Using history as a justification to save the Elm, Dr. Eugene W. Rockey wrote a letter to the *Oregonian* reminiscing how his father planted the tree in front of their newly constructed home in 1900. He wrote, "It was a nursery sapling and I well remember the wooden slat guard placed about it to keep his buggy horse from nipping it." The tree received a public memorial service, a poem published in the *Oregonian*, and finally, the Tree Lovers of Portland considered taking out a Lloyds of London insurance policy on the tree from any damage it might cause in the future.[33]

Portland's Tree Lovers Schedule Last Rites Beneath Mighty Elm

Ancient Elm Given Hope

The aging, often attacked but never destroyed elm tree at NW 23rd Avenue and Flanders Street may be given another chance to live.

Portland City Attorney Alexander Brown told an informal session of the City Council Tuesday that Lloyd's of London had agreed to issue an insurance policy covering injuries resulting from the tree. The policy would provide $50,000 property damage coverage and $50,000 personal liability coverage.

The cost would probably have to be paid by the Tree Lovers of Portland, architect Lewis Crutcher's hastily organized citizens committee which has fought to save the twice condemned tree.

But the insurance offer is only an offer and may not save the Dutch Elm. City commissioners indicated that they might still consent to the removal of the tree if the insurance coverage still does not satisfy the property owner Dr. William Rosenbaum.

ABOVE *Portland citizens worked together to save the Elm. Seen here are two exemplary headlines written by William Swing on December 7th 1963 and January 8th 1964 respectively. © Oregonian Publishing Co. Reprinted with permission.*

Public pressure and the coverage in the press all helped save the tree. The City Forester and Parks superintendent both agreed that the tree was safe and healthy and that it had not caused the alleged sewer damage, and so the permit to cut the tree down was denied.

Just a fews years later, the City issued a permit to cut a smaller Elm just up the street. It too had survived the Columbus Day Storm, and the pressures of development. This tree was one of many that could not survive a far more deadly obstacle: A fungus called Dutch Elm Disease. The disease is spread through the Elm Bark Beatle, an inadvertent biological exchange brought to the Americas from Asia by European traders. Today the City and volunteers inoculate many of our Elm trees as an attempt to prevent the spread of this devastating disease.[34]

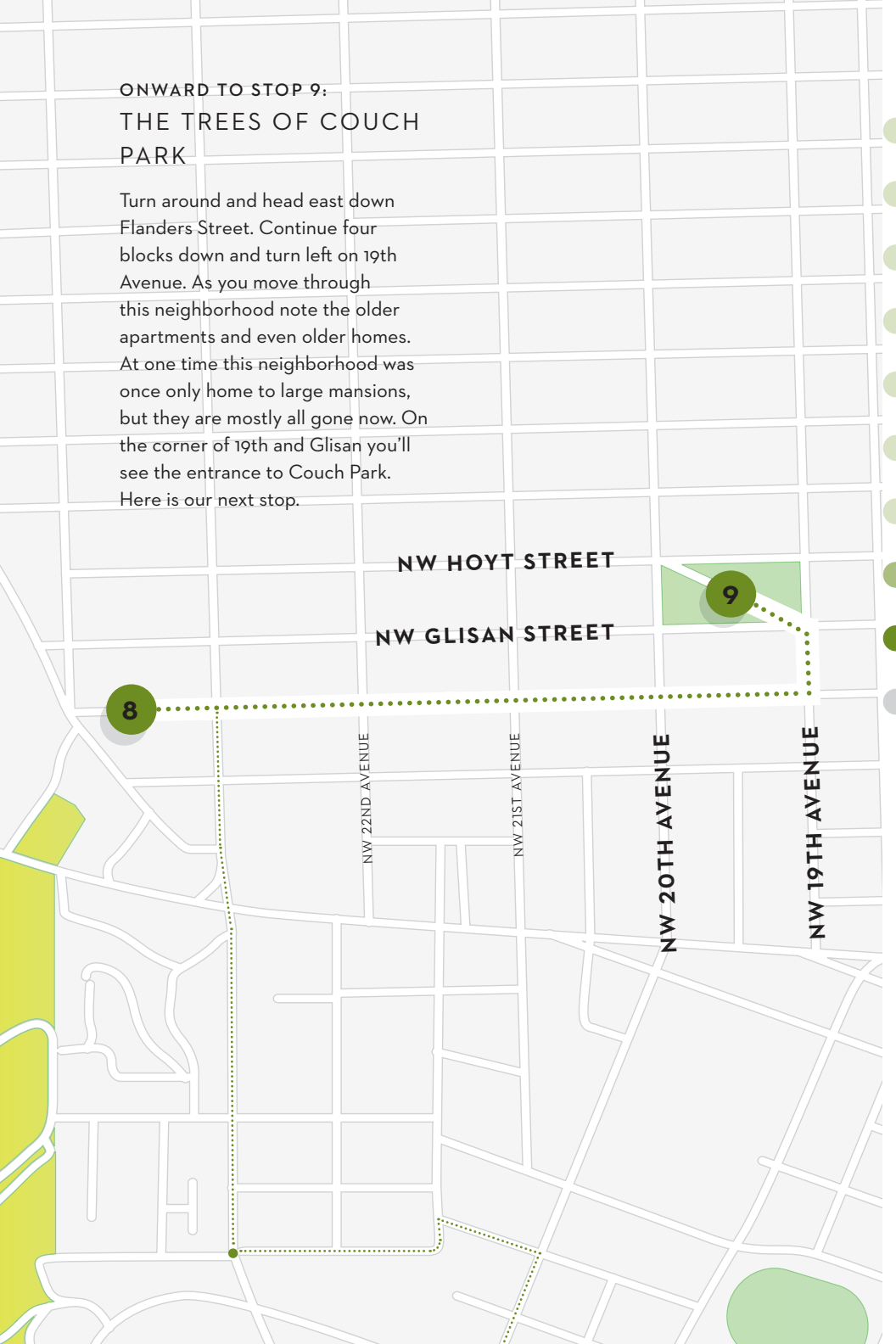
When you look at these Elm trees think about how much they have survived. The street abuts the trunks, the sidewalks flare around them, they have survived the pressures of human development. But they have also survived because individuals stepped in to save the trees. Whether it was disease brought by humans, development caused by humans, or extreme weather, these trees are survivors—humans can't take all the credit.

What is the diference between a human-caused and natural obstacle? How much influence do we have on nature?

ONWARD TO STOP 9:

THE TREES OF COUCH PARK

Turn around and head east down Flanders Street. Continue four blocks down and turn left on 19th Avenue. As you move through this neighborhood note the older apartments and even older homes. At one time this neighborhood was once only home to large mansions, but they are mostly all gone now. On the corner of 19th and Glisan you'll see the entrance to Couch Park. Here is our next stop.



9

ARRIVING BY SEA: PORTLAND'S MERCHANTS AND THEIR TREES

Cucumber Tree

Magnolia acuminata

LISTED 1994, PLANTED C. 1880
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #14

Empress Tree

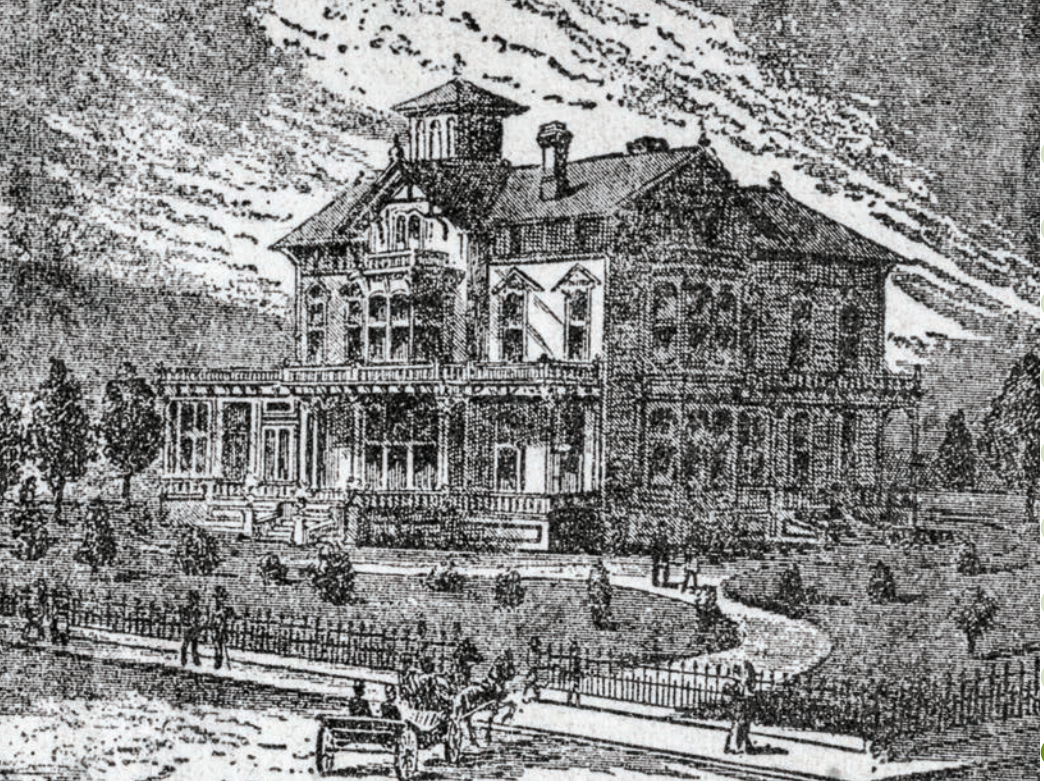
Paulownia tomentosa

LISTED 1995, PLANTED C. 1880s
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #51

Out of 113 trees here in Couch Park, 110 all share something in common: they are all non-natives brought here from somewhere else. The Cucumber Tree on the southeast corner and the Empress Tree on the northwest corner of the park both came here in the process of global trade between two oceans. So the trees help tell the story of Portland's early merchants and maritime trade, all part of what made the city we see today.[35]

NEXT PAGE *The Cucumber Tree as it appears today. Image courtesy of the Author.*

PLAY
GROUND



ABOVE *This artistic representation of the C.H. Lewis residence shows its prominence as the only home on the block. The Cucumber Tree would be on the right corner. Cicero Hunt Lewis residence photograph collection, OHRI 804, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.*

Let's try and imagine this block in the nineteenth century. Captain John H. Couch (of Couch Park and Street), a Massachusetts based maritime trader, was one of many American and British sailors engaged in a Transpacific and Transatlantic trade network. Couch sailed up the Willamette in 1842 and saw major potential for an international deep-water port along the banks of the Willamette River. So in 1846 he filed for a large 640-acre donation land claim; that claim made up what later became most of northwest Portland—including the park we are standing in![36]

Portland's international seaport allowed early merchants to become some of the city's wealthy establishment class. Unlike overland Oregon Trail emigrants, maritime merchants could make several trips from the Atlantic to the Pacific coast in a single year. In many cases maritime merchants left after overland emigrants, and arrived in Portland to be open for business when the overland families arrived. It's not surprising that these merchants made a fortune here in early Portland.

Cicero Hunt Lewis, a New Jersey merchant, was one of the city's first merchant elite. He came to Portland in 1851 and operated one of the city's first grocery stores. He married Clementine Couch in 1859, which solidified his position in one of the city's most elite families. By the 1880s Lewis, like most of the establishment class, displayed their wealth and power in fine homes and gardens.[37]

Using part of Captain Couch's land claim, Cicero and Clementine moved their family into a large home right here on 19th and Glisan—it was the only home on the block. Although the Lewis's home was demolished in 1915, the grounds and garden became Couch Park and School (now called Metropolitan Learning Center) that we see today. Although we don't know for certain, it is likely that the Cucumber Tree on the corner was planted by the Lewis' gardener at this time.[38]

Cucumber Trees are native to the East Coast and we can speculate that C.H. Lewis might have it brought over on one of his merchant supply ships—perhaps to remind him of his New Jersey beginnings. Regardless, at the time the tree likely came here on a ship. At the same time, just north of the Lewis home stood the mansion of Henry Hewitt, a successful maritime insurance broker.

ABOVE *Some of the young trees planted on the grounds of the Lewis family home. Many of these trees are still living today. Cicero Hunt Lewis residence photograph collection, OHRI 11086, Oregon Historical Society Research Library.*

BELOW *The Cucumber Tree as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

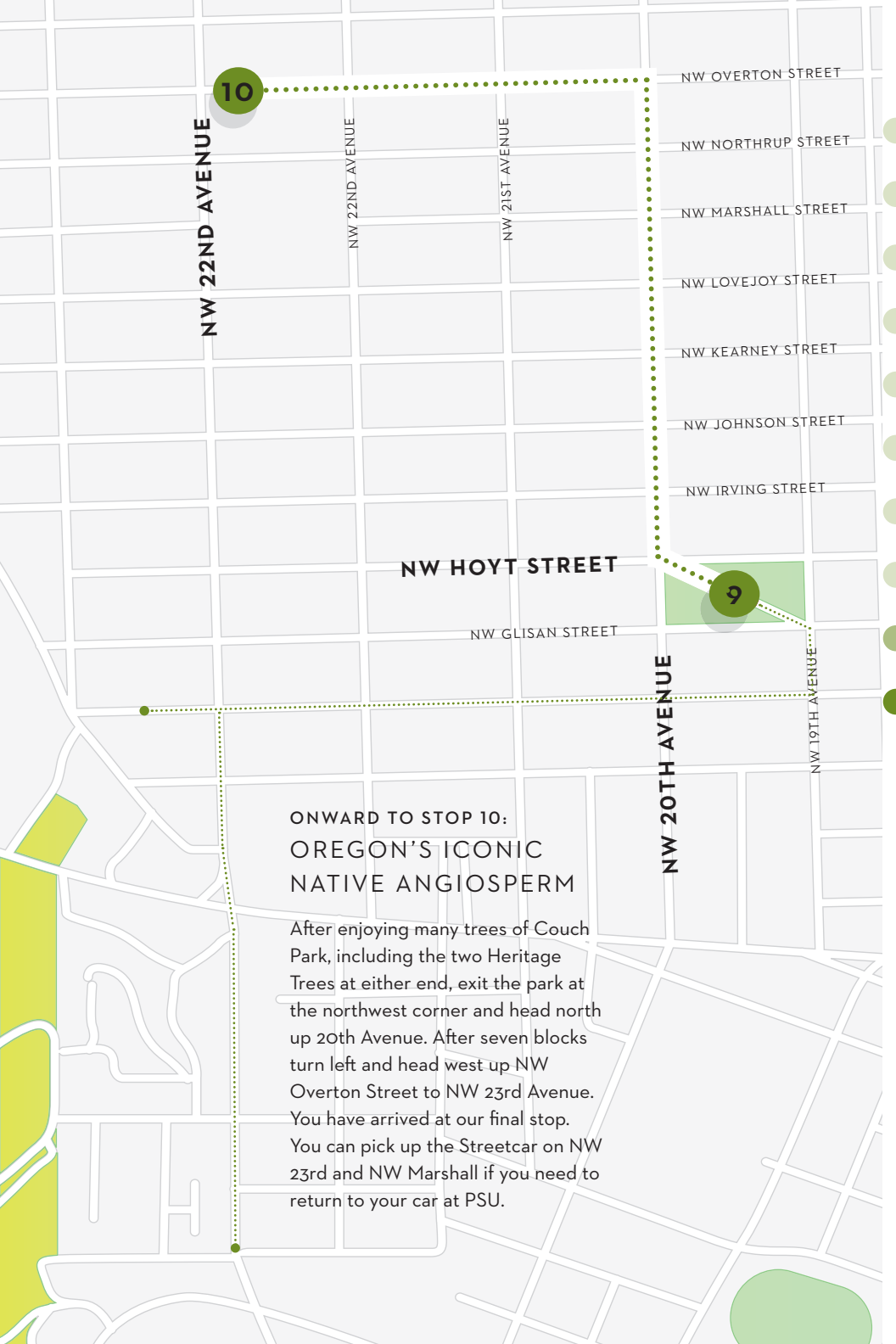
ABOVE *The Empress Tree as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

Hewitt made a fortune in the Pacific maritime trade and later sold his property to Levi White, who also made a considerable fortune in Pacific shipping, insurance, and merchandise.[39]

The distinctive Empress Tree likely dates to when White lived here. Empress trees are native to China and were brought to the United States by maritime merchants and perhaps Chinese laborers. In the nineteenth century, Empress Trees were well-liked as an ornamental tree—recall that Henry Miller sold them. Their seedpods were also a popular packing material in shipping containers— a sort of natural packing peanut if you will. Because of their association with trade and shipping, Empress Trees and seeds quickly spread along railroad corridors of the East Coast. Although popular then, the trees are now considered an invasive species here and in the East Coast because they grow and spread with such vigor.[40]

Indeed, both the Cucumber and Empress trees relate to the city's merchant elite who bought and sold goods across the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans. It's common for history to celebrate the prominent and fortunate. C.H. Lewis assisted many Portland institutions like the Library, Water Bureau, Good Samaritan Hospital, and Port of Portland. But elites like Lewis, White, and Hewett are also complicated figures. They made fortunes in ventures that often exploited Chinese laborers and profited from the U.S. Army's Indian Wars. These trees are also a way to remember that despite the legacies, Portland's maritime merchant trade did not bring equal profits to all engaged.[41]

What other communities could be better represented in Portland's Heritage Trees? Why do we often celebrate only the prominent figures from our past?



ONWARD TO STOP 10:

OREGON'S ICONIC NATIVE ANGIOSPERM

After enjoying many trees of Couch Park, including the two Heritage Trees at either end, exit the park at the northwest corner and head north up 20th Avenue. After seven blocks turn left and head west up NW Overton Street to NW 23rd Avenue. You have arrived at our final stop. You can pick up the Streetcar on NW 23rd and NW Marshall if you need to return to your car at PSU.

10 TREES REPRESENT INDIGENOUS LAND MANAGEMENT

Oregon White Oak
Quercus garryana

LISTED 1994, GERMINATION LIKELY PREDATES THE CITY
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #10

This Oregon White Oak is the only native tree on the tour, and while we are not completely certain of the tree's age, its size suggests that it is older than the city itself. In 1843 William Overton and Asa Lovejoy landed their canoe on the banks of the Willamette at "the clearing," where they determined this place would be a fine site for a town. Later they obtained land claims to the clearing, which became the city of Portland.

NEXT PAGE *The canopy of the Oregon White Oak tree as it appears today. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

STOP

ABOVE *Chinookan Plankhouses, like these lined the banks of the Lower Columbia, were part of an extensive trade network. Sketch by James G. Swan, Northwest Coast, 1857.*

It's very likely that in 1843, the oak we see today was just a sapling. More importantly, this tree and the clearing that became Portland represent the direct actions of Indigenous people who cleared the land to promote and manage their own agricultural economy. In other words, this tree speaks to a much larger process of Indigenous land management, which made this place a hub of trade well before European Americans founded the city.[42]

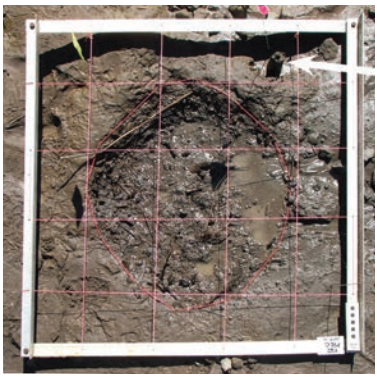
Then and today, Native Americans of the Willamette Valley intentionally set fire to the grassy oak savannahs to promote the growth of traditional foods like camas, tarweed, berries, and acorns. When Native Americans set these fires it effectively kept down conifers and shrubs that would compete for oak habitat. Fires also "shocked" oaks, encouraging a bumper crop of acorns, which natives gathered and processed for consumption and trade.[43]

ABOVE *Profile of an experimental acorn-leaching pit constructed in an aquarium lined with hemlock boughs. Water was pumped though the model for five months to remove tannic acid from the acorns. Image courtesy of Dr. Dale Croes.*

If you ate an unprocessed acorn it would make you sick. Acorns are full of bitter tannic acids and must be processed before they can be consumed. Just a few miles downriver, Archaeologists have discovered an extensive prehistoric acorn processing site that demonstrates a rather innovative method for acorn processing. Indigenous people placed gathered acorns into cylindrical pits lined with Western Hemlock boughs and then buried them for some period of time. The placement of these 100 acorn pits is in the intertidal zone, meaning that twice a day the pits would receive a "flush" of water with the ebb and flow of the tide.[44]

Indigenous people of the Portland Basin understood how to use fire to increase the acorn yields and how to use the rising and lowering water table of the riverbank to process them, both requiring detailed ecological knowledge. But what is even more impressive is that acorns still were only a portion of the population's diet. This was a place of abundance. Acorns were gathered, processed, and traded as a delicacy, and there were plenty of other foods in the local cuisine. The abundance of acorns became a trade surplus, with processed acorns, or "Chinookan Olives" being traded to groups up river and throughout the larger region.[45]

ABOVE *Archaeologists excavating the extensive complex of acorn leaching pits along the Willamette river bank. Image courtesy of Dr. Dale Croes.*



ABOVE *Example of an acorn leaching pit found down river. The white arrow points to a wooden marker, which Indigenous people used to locate various pits. Image courtesy of Dr. Dale Croes.*

Portland has more Oregon White Oaks than any other species on the Heritage Tree registry by far, which speaks volumes about the trees themselves and even more about how humans have and continue to revere them. Portland author Phyllis Reynolds calls this tree "the most courageous oak in the city," because of its ability to survive in the dense urban setting of NW 23rd.[46] This tree is also courageous because it helps us relate to the prehistoric Indigenous management, processing, and trade of acorns in the region. Oregon White Oaks were a central component of Indigenous trade ecology in this place—they made it a port long before it was called Portland.

What are other ways we can see the history of this place before it was Portland?

EPILOGUE: REMEMBRANCE, MEMORIALS, AND HERITAGE TREES

Swamp White Oak
Quercus bicolor

LISTED 1994, PLANTED 1918, REMOVED 2011
PORTLAND HERITAGE TREE #13

When I first presented my research in the fall of 2014 an audience member asked me: "Are Heritage Trees still Heritage Trees after they're gone?" I quickly answered yes, and explained that Heritage Trees are often memorials. I've thought about this question more and would like to reflect on the meaning of one last tree history, this time of one that no longer lives.

NEXT PAGE ABOVE *Station three crews cleaning the Campbell Memorial at West Burnside and 19th Ave in 1948. City of Portland Archives, Oregon, A2001-083.* NEXT PAGE BELOW *The current state of the Campbell memorial with a replacement sapling planted. Image courtesy of Rehanah Spence.*

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On October 2011, after a series of windstorms and limb failures, which had created a serious hazard, Portland Parks & Recreation staff cut down Heritage Tree #13. The Swamp White Oak in Fireman's Memorial Park was a distinctive feature on southwest Burnside and 18th for nearly one hundred years. The Portland Fire Department planted the tree in 1918 to memorialize David Campbell, Portland's Fire Chief from 1893 until his tragic death in 1911. Campbell was influential in modernizing the city's fire department maintaining a city alarm system, purchasing the first automobile for the department, and establishing Fire Boats on the Willamette.

On June 26th 1911 Campbell rushed to a large fire at Union Oil plant on southeast Salmon and Water streets. *The Oregonian* reported that every fire company rushed to extinguish the fire to no avail. One hour later Campbell heroically entered the building to ensure all firefighters had retreated, when an explosion collapsed the roof trapping him inside. Campbell's funeral was one of the largest in the city and plans quickly developed to dedicate a memorial to Portland's Fire Chief.[47]

The Swamp White Oak was the first step in the memorial. Architect Paul Cret incorporated the tree into his limestone memorial design, while sculptor Avard Tennyson Fairbanks used the tree to frame his bronze depiction of Campbell. All three elements of the memorial: the tree, the limestone, and the sculpture, were dedicated by the city in Campbell's memory in 1928. A distinctive feature of the neighborhood, the three elements of the memorial ensured that Portland would continue to remember its fire chief.[48]

And it worked, the city still remembers David Campbell. In fact there is currently a new memorial to all fallen firefighters being designed on the Eastside Esplanade under the leadership of the David Campbell Memorial Association. Although it was the first element of the memorial, the Swamp White Oak is no longer living but it is still part of how we remember. When the city removed the Swamp Oak in 2011, they planted a new tree in its place. Should we make this new tree a Heritage Tree? In a way when anyone plants a tree, they are making and preserving history.

What are some other ways we preserve memories?

PREVIOUS PAGE ABOVE *Portland Fire Department in front of Lewis and Clark Exposition fire house, 1905. Seated in front center in uniform is Chief David Campbell. Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon, A2001-083.*

PREVIOUS PAGE BELOW *Streetcar with David Campbell Memorial at left side of photograph, 1939. Image courtesy of City of Portland Archives, Portland, Oregon,*

CONCLUSION

We have explored how trees are features of our past, how they embody our aspirations for the future, and connect us to places that have, or have not, changed over time.

We have looked at trees from all over the world that made their way to Portland. We have examined the contexts in which they traveled and were planted by individuals. Today some of these trees are revered, while others are reviled, but that is our way of seeing the world today. We can't blame people in the past for importing trees we now consider invasive. Instead we need to see trees historically and understand their roots in the past. Likewise, we need to remember that Portland has always cared about trees, just for different reasons than we do today. By understanding and valuing trees historically, we are better equipped to make future decisions and avoid some of the unexpected consequences inherited from our past.

Along this walk, we have seen that every tree can have a many meanings to different people. Contextualizing and understanding change over time can help us find the historic roots of these different meanings.

NEXT PAGE *View of SW Portland looking northeast with young, but maturing urban forest, 1886. City of Portland Archives, Oregon, A2004-002.*

When we interpret the history of trees and their meaning to people in the past, we should be open to new perspectives. This guide only touches the surface of the history of our city's Heritage Trees. Very few of our current Heritage Trees tell the story of our city's minority, marginalized, or underrepresented communities. It is my hope that we can nominate more trees to the registry that point to the experiences of the city's less famous but equally monumental figures; from business owners to community leaders and artists to engineers.

There are many more trees that reveal fascinating stories just waiting to be discovered and shared, and there are many more which need further research. You are far more likely to know about an important figure, theme, or event in your community than an outside researcher.

Lastly, I hope that you plant trees in your community, and document when and why you are doing it. When you do, you will not only be making history but will also be initiating an investment that will benefit generations to come.

RESOURCES

I encourage you to research a tree and to nominate one in your own neighborhood. Below are some pointers for researching tree histories in your own backyards.

Once you have identified a tree you would like to reasearch, you can begin by looking at these local resources:

START IN YOUR COMMUNITY

If you are researching a tree on your property, your family photo album is likely the best resource! I suggest talking to your neighbors and long-term residents. Researching trees in your neighborhood is a great way to foster community, get to know others, and learn about your local history.

CITY OF PORTLAND ARCHIVES

1800 SW 6th Ave, Suite 550
Portland, OR 97201
(503) 865-4100

The City of Portland Archives is an excellent place to research your neighborhood's history. Their online catalog can help you find records and historic photos.
PortlandOnline.com/auditor/index.cfm?c=26978

VINTAGE PORTLAND

The City of Portland Archives hosts a blog called Vintage Portland, which contains many wonderful images that are digitized. It's a fun resource that is constantly being updated.
VintagePortland.Wordpress.com

MULTNOMAH COUNTY LIBRARY

If you want to find historic Government Land Office maps or Sanborn Fire Insurance maps, you can use your Multnomah County Library card and access them online. These are particulary helpful in understanding when your neighborhood developed and who the early residents were.
www.Multcolib.org/research-tools

HISTORIC OREGON NEWSPAPERS

If you are looking for historic newspaper articles, be sure to search the Oregon Digital Newspaper Program, hosted by the University of Oregon Libraries. This resource is free and keyword searchable.
OregonNews.uoregon.edu

OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

The Oregon Historical Society Research Library has many wonderful sources you could use. They have an extensive collection of images and photographs of historic Portland and a very helpful staff.
OHS.org

OREGON ENCYCOLOPEDIA

If you are looking for a quick overview on a topic or figure, the Oregon Encyclopedia is an excellent online resource with peer-reviewed and fact checked content.
OregonEncyclopedia.org

OREGON HISTORIC SITES

If you are interested in researching a tree associated with a historic home or district, be sure to use the Oregon Historic Sites Database. This online resource features an interactive state-wide map with information on historic properties.
HeritageData.prd.state.or.us/historic

HISTORIC LITERATURE

You can find many out of print books on early Portland history and biographies of notable Portlanders on Google Books or *Archive.org*. There were many of these "booster" materials printed and they are not always the most accurate or objective, but still a great way to see how people thought about Portland and its founders.

UNIVERSITY ARCHIVES

Oregon's public universities all have university archives and special collections housed in their libraries, many with extensive digital content. You can search their records individually or though a collective search engine.
NWDA.orbiscascade.org/index.shtml

TREE IDENTIFICATION

Oregon State University Department of Horticulture hosts a wonderful tool for identifying trees including a bit of natural history.
OregonState.edu/dept/ldplants

DON'T GIVE UP. ASK AROUND!

Lastly, ask your local librarian about other books or materials you could use. Research is all about collaboration!

NOMINATE YOUR TREE

Now that you have done your marvelous tree history detective work, consider nominating the tree as a Portland Heritage Tree. Be sure to include the discoveries from your research!

Learn how to nominate a Heritage Tree at: *PortlandOregon.gov/parks/heritagetrees*

PORTLAND PARKS & RECREATION URBAN FORESTRY

1900 SW 4th Avenue, Suite 5000
Portland, OR 97201
Phone: 503-823-TREE (8733)

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Portland State UNIVERSITY

THE OREGON HISTORICAL SOCIETY
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Portland's urban forest is rooted in the city's history. This guide is the first of its kind to use historic literature, archival collections, and living trees as evidence to interpret Portland's history. Trees are some of our city's oldest living artifacts and this guide will show you some of the many ways to see and interpret both history and nature in Portland.

DAVID-PAUL B. HEDBERG
David has a background in environmental history and cultural resource management. As a graduate student in the Public History program at Portland State University, he developed this Heritage Tree Guide during an internship for Urban Forestry in 2014. David is a fourth generation Oregonian and lives in Portland, Oregon.

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