Men on Boats

Sam Houston State University
Written by Jaclyn Backhaus
Directed by Victoria Lantz

Casebook by Ambree Feaster
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Hello Everyone!

Here is the casebook for our production of *Men on Boats*. It contains information about the world in which *Men on Boats* takes place along with character information, information on the playwright, and some production history. There is also a glossary of words from the script and a sources list. *Men on Boats* has so many layers to it. There is a lot to talk about when it comes to the characters, the setting, the historical context, and the intentions of this play. If you ever feel like there is something important that needs to be discussed that is not in the casebook, I’d love to hear about it! During the rehearsal process, I will be continuously reading and researching everything relevant to Men on Boats and can add to this casebook when needed. If you have any questions about anything, feel free to reach out to me! Men on Boats is a high energy, super physical and fun show and I’m excited to start this process with y’all! Let’s make a fantastic show!

Your Dramaturg,

Ambree Feaster
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Bio

Jaclyn Backhaus is a Punjabi-American playwright and educator. She grew up in the suburbs of Phoenix, Arizona. Her father is a German American from New Jersey and her mother is from Yuba City in NorCal. She had an interest in playwriting at a young age, writing her very first play when she was only 8 years old. Her parents were very supportive of her artistry and encouraged her to pursue theatre. She graduated from NYU Tisch with a BFA in Drama and now teaches at the institution. She sits on the board as secretary at Fresh Ground Pepper. She is also a member of the Kilroys, a collective of playwrights, directors and producers in NYC and LA. She married director Andrew Scoville and they have a son named Ernie. She currently resides in Queens, NY.

Other Works

- Wives
- Folk Wandering
- India Pale Ale
- You on the Moors Now

Awards

- Tow Fellowship at Clubbed Thumb (2016)

Influences

Jaclyn Backhaus is interested in people who “sail their own way”. As a writer she wants to “create dynamic worlds that connect to lost past, illuminate untold present, and envision infinite future”

Jaclyn Backhaus and Men on Boats

Men on Boats started as a want to write a piece that had high physicality and a feeling of adventure and survivor tactics. Jaclyn Backhaus began writing Men on Boats in 2014 when she came across the journals of John Wesley Powell and knew it would be a good adaptation piece. Jaclyn Backhaus wanted to write characters who she normally couldn’t
She wondered how the play would be if she wrote the characters in a way that differed from the historical figures. She did a lot of research for the play. Her father had a copy of the Lewis and Clark Journals and John Wesley Powell’s “The Exploration of the Colorado River and Its Canyons”, a book full of records from Journals of John Wesley Powell’s Expeditions. She enjoyed the vivid imagery and words of the writings.

More about Backhaus’ *Men on Boats* process:

(516) In Process: Jaclyn Backhaus - YouTube

Playwright Jaclyn Backhaus - SpeakEasy (speakeasystage.com)

More from Jaclyn Backhaus:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PHO4EGUWG3o Playwriting Master class with Jaclyn Backhaus

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u26st01CreU Backhaus on her play *Wives*
Men on Boats Production History

*Men on Boats* was first performed at Clubbed Thumb’s Summerworks Festival. It ran from June 19, 2015 to June 29, 2015. Then in 2016, Clubbed Thumb in collaboration with Playwrights Horizon produced another run of *Men on Boats* with the same cast and crew. It ran from July 20 to August 21. Both productions were directed by Will Davis.

**Cast**
- Jocelyn Bioh
- Hannah Cabell
- Danielle Davenport
- Danaya Esperanza
- Donnetta Lavinia Grays
- Birgit Huppuch
- Elizabeth Kenny
- Layla Kosch
- Kelly McAndrew
- Kristen Sieh

**Creative Team**
- Arnulfo Maldonado
- Asta Bennie Hostetter
- Solomon Weisbard
- Jane Shaw
- Erin Giola Albrecht

**Reviews**
- [‘Men on Boats’ Review: Clubbed Thumb, Playwrights Horizons Co-Produce - Variety](nytimes.com)

**Scene from the Production**
- [Scene from Men On Boats - Trailers + More : Playwrights Horizons](nytimes.com)
Other Productions

Main Street Theatre in Houston

- Directed by Philip Hayes
- Link to Houston Press article: https://www.houstonpress.com/arts/review-men-on-boats-at-main-street-theatre-10199470

Open Stage Theatre Production

- Performed at Lincoln Center Magnolia Theatre
- Directed by Denise Burson Freestone
The World of Men On Boats

Bending Gender Norms

Men on Boats intentionally goes against the Cis, White male historical figures the play focuses on and calls for actors that are diverse in Gender, race, ethnicity etc. It is important to understand why this choice was made and the message it conveys.

Our understanding of gender is finally evolving. Gender theory asserts that gender is only a social construct that for a long time has been restricted to roles, characteristics, and expectations fabricated by society. Gender identity does not necessarily correlate with biological sex and the number of genders is not limited to the two society has created and deemed acceptable. Gender is a wide spectrum and gender expression comes in many forms. Historically, cis men have been the ones with power. They have been able to thrive because of the opportunities that their sex presents.

The philosophy that Cis white men are superior has shaped how we tell stories and whose stories get to be told. The way history is told in the United States and most of the Western world leaves out identities that are non-white, non-male, and non-gender conforming. Men on Boats draws attention to these identities. This play brings attention to the stories of people that are not told by placing them in a role of historical significance and power that they would otherwise not have.

“What HAMILTON does so well is that it has erased the preciousness of who’s allowed to tell stories, and that acts as a gateway to ask not only, ‘who’s allowed to tell the stories,’ but also ‘whose story are we telling?’ I think that’s what is really exciting about HAMILTON – and what I hope my piece is doing too – is that all of the sudden, you realize there is a gaping hole among our collective consciousness as far as our own history goes. It presents the question, “what men and women and people do we want as part of our collective history?" And, I hope that kind of question will spur a deeper look into people who have largely been forgotten.”

---Jaclyn Backhaus

The USA in the Western Expansion Era

The early to mid-1800s was an era of growth and migration in the United States. Migration and exploration are major themes of this decade. Thousands of people took advantage of the expanding west. Families migrated to escape hardships they were facing in their home region. Adventurers and scientists were eager to explore and map the unknown territories. Those looking to get rich jumped at the opportunity of cheap land and an abundance of gold. Geology was a growing science and led to government sanctioned expeditions in the West that mapped the terrain, identified valuable resources, and removed Native Americans from their land. There was also major advancement in transportation and infrastructure. Advancements in railroad transportation made getting around easier than ever before in the United States. On the tail end of this era, we have the beginning and ending of the Civil War, which changed the societal structure of the country and would continue to affect politics and social issues for years to come.
Population

1800: 5,308,483  
1870: 38,558,371


Major Elements/Events of Westward Expansion

**Louisiana Purchase**: In 1803, 828,000 square miles of land was purchased from France. The US acquired present day Arkansas, Iowa, Missouri, Oklahoma, Nebraska, South Dakota, Kansas, Montana, Colorado, parts of Minnesota, parts of Wyoming, parts of New Mexico, Louisiana west of the Mississippi River, and Northern Texas. The Louisiana Purchase doubled the size of the US and was a huge step towards the fast growth of the west we will see in later years.

**The Oregon Trail**: The trail connected the Missouri to Oregon, stretching about 2,000 miles. It was one of the main trails, the other being the Santa Fe trail, used by settlers, fur traders, and missionaries. Between 1840 and 1860, around 400,000 people used the Oregon trail. It took six months to get from one end of the trail to the other. A lot of the trail passed through land occupied by Native American lands so conflict with Natives would arise. When the Transcontinental railroad was finished, the Oregon Trail became obsolete. An image heavily associated with the Oregon Trail is the covered wagon used by travelers to carry supplies, food, and clothes.
The Mexican-American War: Lasted from April 1846 to February 1848. This conflict between the United States and Mexico resulted in the US gaining territories in Texas, New Mexico, Utah, Nevada, Arizona, California, and West Colorado.

California Gold Rush: Occurred between 1848-1857 and was the largest mass migration in the US, bringing to California around 300,000 people. Gold was found by a man named James W. Marshall and the news spread globally. People from all over the world, mainly the US, Europe, China, and Latin America, came to California in search of fortune. Because of the gold rush, California developed fast, and this led to California becoming a state in 1850.

Homestead Act: Abraham Lincoln signed this into law on May 20, 1862. To encourage migration to the west, settlers could own 60 acres of land in exchange for five years of cultivating the land through farming. Settlers could also purchase ownership of the land for 1.25 an acre after six months of living on it. 80 million acres were given out by 1900.

Transcontinental Railroad:
Also known as the Pacific Railroads, the Transcontinental Railroad connected the railways of the east to the growing west. The journey from the East to the West is around 3,000 miles and the new railroad cut down the time it took to travel this from months to
weeks. The railroad aided the fast development of the western part of the United States by making travel across the continent more convenient and allowing goods to travel a further distance faster than before.

The 1860s

The expedition Powell led in the play took place at the end of the 1860s. What’s going on in the USA during this decade?

- Population: The population in 1860 was 31,444,321 and by the end of the decade was 38,558,371.

- Presidents

  Abraham Lincoln
  
  Abraham Lincoln was president from 1861-1865. He was most known for signing the Emancipation Proclamation that freed the slaves. He also signed laws that pushed westward expansion and pushed natives from their land. He was assassinated in 1865 by John Wilkes Boothe.

  Andrew Johnson
  
  Andrew Johnson became president in 1865. He was a southern democrat who favored the confederate south and was lenient towards their betrayal of the country. He had no interest in the protection of freed slaves and even vetoed the civil rights act of 1866 and was against the 14th Amendment. Congress attempted to impeach him in 1868, but he was exonerated.

  Ulysses S Grant
  
  Ulysses S Grant became president in 1869. He commanded the union army in the civil war and fought in the Mexican American war. His goal in the white house was to foster peace between the north and the south as well as moving along reconstruction.

- The Pony Express was established and was short lived (1860-1861)
- Abraham Lincoln has defeated other presidential candidates for the presidency which would then cause states to secede and form the confederacy (1860)
- Jefferson Davis made president of the confederacy (1861)
- Southern States secede from the union (1861)
• The Civil War begins (1861)
• Kansas becomes a state (1861)
• Homestead act signed into law by Abraham Lincoln (1862)
• The Emancipation Proclamation is issued (1862)
• Nevada becomes a state (1864)
• The Civil War ends (1865)
• Reconstruction begins (1865)
• The 13th Amendment bans slavery (1865)
• Abraham Lincoln is assassinated (1865)
• Andrew Jackson becomes president (1865)
• The Black Codes, restrictive laws for freed slaves (1865)
• The Ku Klux Klan was founded (1866)
• Civil Rights act (1866)
• Alaska is sold to the United States (1867)
• The 14th Amendment is passed (1868)
• The typewriter is invented (1868)
• The Transcontinental Railroad is completed (1869)
• Women in the Wyoming territory are allowed to vote (1869)

Manifest Destiny

The phrase “Manifest Destiny” first appeared in an 1845 issue of The Democratic Review and it summed up the mindset held by the US in the 19th Century. It was the idea that the country had a God given right to expand across the continent and that expansion was inevitable. Manifest Destiny as a concept was used as justification for claiming new territories, such as California and the Oregon Country, for the US. The same justification would later be used when encountering foreign affairs, such as annexing Hawaii. It’s rooted in the philosophy that White Americans were racially superior and were doing the work they were called to do by “civilizing” other peoples with their way of life.

Expeditions

Expeditions were justified by explorers and the government as collecting geological samples from the western terrain and mapping the mostly uncharted land. Findings from exploration informed the government of the amount of valuable resources on the land, how arable it was, how many native tribes were inhabiting the lands, etc. Governments were more eager to fund the expeditions of geologists if they were exploring a land the government thought could be commercialized.
Other US Expeditions

- **Lewis and Clark (1804-1806):** This expedition was a huge part of American exploring history and probably the most well-known. The Louis and Clark expedition explored much of the Louisiana Purchase. About 140 maps of the land resulted from this expedition. Observations and recordings of Native Americans and their way of life also came from this expedition.

- **Joseph Reddeford Walker (1833-1834):** A fur trading expedition that went through Nevada, Utah, the land that is now the Yosemite national park, and California

- **John C Fremont Expedition (1833-1834):** Explored parts of California, the Kansas river, the great Salt Lake in Utah, and Oregon.

- **Ashley (1825):** William Henry Ashley was a frontiersman, fur trader, and a politician. He is known for his innovations of the fur trade. In 1825, he and his crewmen travelled to a certain point in the green river before having to retreat back upstream, likely due to strong currents. Many of his crewmen drowned during this encounter. John Wesley Powell discovered Ashley’s name on a rock on his 1869 expedition. Powell writes in his journal:

  ““Ashley 18-5.” The third figure is obscure--some of the party reading it 1835, some 1855. James Baker, an old-time mountaineer, once told me about a party of men starting down the river, and Ashley was named as one. The story runs that the boat was swamped, and some of the party drowned in one of the canyons below. The word "Ashley" is a warning to us, and we resolve on great caution. Ashley Falls is the name we give to the cataract.”

- **Washburn Expedition (1870):** Explored lands in Wyoming

- **Hayden Geological Yellowstone Survey (1871-1872):** Ferdinand Vandaveer Hayden was a geologist that explored Northwestern Wyoming, the area now known as Yellowstone park. The main mission was to record the topography of the
snake and Missouri rivers, but the expedition also ended up with a large amount of animal and plant specimens

- **Clarence King Surveys (1879-1881)** - Clarence King was the first director of the US geological survey, the American government’s biological and natural science agency. He explored the Sierra Nevada mountain range and land in California.

More Info and More Expeditions: [https://naturalhistory.si.edu/research/botany/about/historical-expeditions](https://naturalhistory.si.edu/research/botany/about/historical-expeditions)

**Women in the Westward Expansion Era**

Just like most eras of history, women in the US in this time had a limited number of rights and were held to oppressive societal norms. Women were supposed to be meek, pleasant, loving, quiet, and submissive to their husbands. According to the ideas at the time, this was the natural order of things. However, when settlers started moving to the West, women started taking on some of the same workload as their husbands, mostly when it came to labor on family farms. Women also played the main role in social affairs of the west by organizing church groups, hosting gatherings, and creating activities for settlers to partake in. Creating a homey social environment was an important task in this part of the country to make the new land feel like home. In this time period, it wasn’t common for women to travel without a male companion, so most women of the West were there because of their male family members who decided to go. This means the number of men greatly outnumbered the number of women. As time went on however, we did see more single women moving west to find work, mainly as seamstresses, laundresses, teachers, nurses, and sex workers. There were also women who went against the societal expectations and found more opportunities to be authors, landowners, artists, gamblers, and actresses than they could in the Eastern part of the country. Though for women of color, these luxuries weren’t really available to them. The increased amount of opportunity mainly went to middle to upper class white women.

Later in the period, the Civil War somewhat shifted the roles women could play in society. Many women served as nurses and cooks to soldiers. There were societies women formed to aid the war that made uniforms, canned food, gardened, and did laundry for soldiers. Women were of course restricted from fighting on the frontlines of the war but that didn’t stop some. It’s estimated that up to 1,000 women fought as soldiers in the war. Women were also recruited as spies for both the union and the confederacy. We also see more single women travelling without a chaperone. Some women were able to attend university in the 1860s…but only because there was a shortage of men. By the time the
war ended in 1865, just about every woman in the United States had experienced a major loss, whether it be a husband a brother, a son, or a father.

Impact on Indigenous Lands and Tribes:

We can’t talk about Westward Expansion and expeditions without acknowledging the consequences for Indigenous tribes and people. As Americans migrated West, Indigenous tribes lost more and more of their land. Some tribes formed treaties with the white settlers as an attempt of compromise but, these treaties were often broken and disregarded by the settlers. Other tribes resisted the occupation of their lands, which more often than not resulted in bloody massacres and conflicts, Indigenous people making up the majority of the casualties. Expanding and going on expeditions West was completely backed by the United States Government so laws restricting the land occupation, mobility, and human rights of Indigenous peoples passed with little push back. The government would even cut off their access to water and food sources. The goal was to completely get rid of these tribes because they were seen as an obstacle to settlers.

The Loss of Native American Land Year by Year (1784-1907):

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zadq5dl2G8Q

Major Impacts to Natives

- **Indian Removal Act** - This act was signed by Andrew Jackson in 1830. It required natives west of the Mississippi River to give up their land that to white settlers. Many tribes tried to fight the law but eventually were forced to travel west on what we know as the Trail of Tears.

- **Trail of Tears**: Between 1836 and 1840, tens of thousands of Native Americans were forced to walk the trail of tears. The trail was 5043 miles long and went through the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Illinois, Kentucky, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, and Tennessee. Thousands of Creek and Cherokee people died before they reached designated indigenous land.

- **Extermination of buffalo herds**: Over the 19th century, the slaughtering of buffalo increased in order to deplete the food source of the Native Americans who
lived in the great plains. The goal was to create a reason for natives to have to leave their land and be forced onto reservations. Encouraged by the US government, hunters would hunt buffalo for their tongues or even just for sport. Between 1865 and 1872 alone, 8 million buffalo were killed. There were over 50 million buffalo in America in the early 1800s and only 7 million by 1872.

- **1st Fort Laramie Treaty** - The first Laramie treaty was signed in 1851 and it involved nine Native American tribes and the US government. The treaty stated that lands in Montana, the Dakotas, Nebraska, and Wyoming belonged to the tribes that claimed them. In exchange for 50 thousand dollars a year for fifty years, the US could build forts along their territories. This treaty was broken by the government in 1858 when gold was discovered on native lands. The conflicts that would ensue because of this broken treaty would lead to the Sand Creek massacre along with other tragedies.

- **Indian Appropriations Act** - Signed in 1851, this act created the Native American reservation system. Natives were forced to live on land that the government confined them to, heavily limiting their ability to access traditional foods through hunting, fishing, gathering. Natives were not allowed to leave their reservation without permission from the government. This act ignored the diverse cultures, tribes, and backgrounds of the native peoples so feuding tribes were put together, natives who were hunters had to become gatherers or farmers, some natives were forced to adapt to a new climate, and the list of problems goes on. Missionaries also pushed their clothes, religion, and language onto the natives.

- **The Sand Creek Massacre** - In November of 1864, hundreds of army militia attacked the Cheyenne and Arapaho tribes in Colorado. Around 500 native Americans were slaughtered, most of which were women and children fleeing from American soldiers.

**All About Boating**

There were four boats on the expedition. All four were Whitehall crafted. The Maid of Canyon, No-name, and Kitty Clyde’s Sister were 21-foot, round bottom row boats. They were made of oak and double ribbed. The boat Powell sailed on, the Emma Dean, was a 16-foot lightweight rowboat made out of pine. Powell’s boat was smaller and faster so he could scout ahead. All the boats were sleek and deeply hulled. Each boat had three watertight compartments for storing food, supplies, and scientific instruments.
While sailing, the boats would have 1 or 2 boat operators facing upstream and paddling. The currents of the rivers were intense. Because these boats were not meant for navigation through rocky, shallow rapids, portaging was needed. Portaging means carrying the boats from one body of water to another or going around an obstacle in the water. It took four men to carry one boat.

From Powell’s Journal: “Here we shall be compelled to make a portage; so we unload the boats, and fasten a long line to the bow of the smaller one, and another to the stern, and moor her close to the brink of the fall. Then the bowline is taken below and made fast; the stern line is held by five or six men, and the boat let down as long as they can hold her against the rushing waters; then, letting go one end of the line, it runs through the ring; the boat leaps over the fall and is caught by the lower rope.”

Boating terms:

- **Bow**- Front of the boat
- **Stern**- Back of the boat
- **Starboard**- Right side of the boat
- **Port**- Left side of the boat
- **Mooring**- to secure the boat to a fixed object
- **Line**- Ropes tied to secure the boat
- **Stern line**- A line at the back of the ship
- **Bowline**- A line at the front of the ship
- **Brink**- The edge at the top of a steep slope or cliff

*More boating terms in the glossary*
Powell’s 1869 Expedition

Powell’s 1869 expedition began in May and ended in August. It explored the land around parts of the Green, Colorado, and Virgin rivers. This expedition was the first to pass through the Grand Canyon and mapped lands in current day Colorado, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, and Wyoming. The expedition resulted in detailed descriptions of an area of the United States that was previously uncharted by the government. Powell led 9 men with varying backgrounds on the journey. At first Powell’s expedition didn’t have much support from the government because they deemed the land he was going to explore as useless and having no commercial value. But eventually, with a lot of pushing, Powell’s expedition got a lot of support behind it from the Chicago Academy of sciences, the Illinois State Natural History Society, and the Illinois Industrial University. The US congress even authorized US army rations to be given to the men for the expedition.

Timeline of the Expedition: http://www.kaibab.org/kaibab.org/powell/powexp.htm

Although the journey started out well and the men were in high spirits, the expedition proved to be a rough one. It was hot, humid, and it could get rainy. The men had little to no shelter and they got lucky if they found even a cave to shield them from the elements of the outdoors. Their clothes were raggedy. The terrain was rugged and rocky. There were tons of cliffs. The rapids of the rivers were fast and navigating them was life threatening. One tragic day, when the men were sailing the river, OG either missed a signal from Powell or Powell never made the signal to pull ashore and portage around an obstacle in the water. This miscommunication caused the No-Name to crash into a rock and split in half. This area would later be named disaster falls. After crashing the No-Name, months’ worth of rations were gone and a lot of the food not lost in the crash spoiled during the journey. The men had to survive on a small amount of food and the occasional successful hunt. Later in the expedition, the Emma Dean also suffered major damage. In the crashes, they also lost scientific tools and charts of the land.
26 days into the journey, Frank Goodman decided he had enough adventure and made his way back to a Mormon settlement. He was the first to leave the expedition. Powell wrote about Goodman:

“Frank Goodman informs me this morning that he has concluded not to go on with the party, saying that he has seen danger enough. It will be remembered that he was one of the crew on the "No Name" when she was wrecked. As our boats are rather heavily loaded, I am content that he should leave, although he has been a faithful man.”

In the tail end of the expedition, the men encountered what seemed like the biggest rapid they had seen on the trip (later named Separation Falls by the crew). Powell writes:

“We are now ready to start on our way down the Great Unknown...Our boats, tied to a common stake, chafe each other as they are tossed by the fretful river... What falls there are, we know not; what rocks beset the channel, we know not; what walls rise over the river, we know not... With some eagerness and some anxiety and some misgiving we enter the canyon below and are carried away by the swift water through walls which rise from its very edge.”

For William Dunn and Seneca and Oramel Howland, the voyage became too dangerous and they would have rather risked their chances with going back to the Mormon settlement and making their way back home. Dunn and the Howland brothers left the expedition in late August. After their departure, they were never seen again. There are multiple stories about what happened to them. The most agreed upon story is that the three men were killed by the Shivwits, an indigenous tribe. Weeks after the closing of the expedition, it is said that Powell went to the tribe to confirm for himself and found out that the indigenous tribe did kill some men they had mistaken to be the assaulters of a woman from their tribe. Despite this, some historians argue that the men were killed by Mormons or just died from the harsh conditions of the terrain. These three men were mostly wiped from the glory and praise of the success of the expedition, but Powell paid them his respects by naming buttes in the Grand Canyon after them.

When the men made it passed separation falls, about 700 miles from where they started the expedition, they were greeted by pioneers who were developing a town in the area. Powell learned that him and his men had been reported lost weeks before their arrival through the canyon. After the men were confirmed alive, news spread about the successful voyage. Printed in newspapers were details about Powell’s adventure and soon
the Grand Canyon became a natural wonder in the United States. Although the 1869 Expedition didn’t yield as many scientific results and findings as Powell wanted, Powell went on to be the first to complete a scientific survey of the Grand Canyon region in his future expeditions. Others over the years after Powell’s expedition even tried to emulate the journey, many of which died in the process. Today, John Wesley Powell is something like a folk hero in Arizona and Colorado. River runners today look at Powell as a grandfather figure.

Powell and his crew were exploring had of course been inhabited by Indigenous tribes long before they even set foot on the terrain. Although Powell himself had some respect for Native Americans and even befriended some, it’s safe to say that his expedition aided in the loss of land faced by native tribes.

Lands the Expedition passed through:

- Ute
- Havasupai
- Pueblo
- Navajo
- Hualapai
- Southern Paiute
- Hopi

Native Tribes Claim to Land in the Grand Canyon
Expedition Landmarks

Disaster Fall Painting

Separation Canyon

Flaming gorge

Gates of Lodore, Lodore canyon

Bright Angel's Creek

Howlands Butte

Dunn’s Cliff
The Men on the Boats (Characters)

Powell

John Wesley Powell was born on March 24, 1834 in Mount Morris, New York and died in September 1902. He was geologist, a teacher, a lover of natural science, and an abolitionist. He was the fourth child of his parents’ nine children. His father Joseph Powell was a Methodist preacher, and his mother Mary Dean was a Missionary. His family moved a few times in his life. They moved from New York to Ohio in 1838, then to Wisconsin in 1846, and then they finally settled in Illinois in 1851. In the 1850s, Powell attended Illinois Institute, Oberlin College, and Illinois College. However, he never earned a degree from these schools. He became a schoolteacher in 1853. Powell started self-funding expeditions in the 1850s and one of his expeditions explored the Mississippi and Ohio rivers. In 1861, he married Emma Dean Powell, the daughter of his mother’s half-brother. Powell enlisted in the Civil War as a union soldier and was eventually promoted to 2nd Lieutenant and then Major by the end of the war. His arm was shattered by a lead bullet in the battle of Shiloh in 1862 and it had to be amputated. His wife was granted special permission to come along with him during the war to act as his “second arm”, even though women were normally not permitted to be that close to the war. Despite Powell’s injury, he still participated in battles. After the war ended, Powell became a natural sciences professor at Illinois Wesleyan University. He is the most known for his expeditions down the Colorado river and through the Grand Canyon, which he embarked on in 1868, 1869, and again in 1871. His book containing all of his expedition records called Canyons of the Colorado was published in 1875. During all of his exploring, he learned about a good amount of native tribes and their cultures. Powell served as director of the US Geological Survey from 1881 to 1894 and in this time, he led surveys of the Rocky Mountains. He died in Maine at his family vacation home and was granted full military honors.

Powell and Native Americans

During his explorations, Powell came across with many Native American cultures and even made friends with some of their people. For example, he took time to learn enough of the language of the Ute tribe to communicate with them and traded goods with them. He was very interested in Native American cultures and wrote a lot about them in many of his accounts of exploration. In 1891, he created an intensive linguistic study on the languages of North American Native American tribes called Indian Linguistic Families of America, North of Mexico. However, Powell still had an ignorant view of Native Americans. He like many other Europeans believed that it was their job to “civilize” the Natives. About the Utes, Powell said
“... next to teaching them to work, the most important thing is to teach them the English language. Into their own language there is woven so much mythology and sorcery that ... the ideas and thoughts of civilized life cannot be communicated to them in their own tongues.”

Sumner

From Powell’s Journal: “He is a fair-haired, delicate-looking man, but a veteran in experience, and has performed the feat of crossing the Rocky Mountains in midwinter on snowshoes. He spent the winter of 1886-87 in Middle Park, Colorado, for the purpose of making some natural history collections for me, and succeeded in killing three grizzlies, two mountain lions, and a large number of elk, deer, sheep, wolves, beavers, and many other animals.”

John Colton “Captain Jack” Sumner was born May 16, 1840 and died July 5, 1907. He was a western frontiersman and was familiar with exploring lands in his own right. He served as a guide for Bayard Taylor during his 1866 expedition. He guided Powell in Colorado in 1867 and 1868, then served as the lead guide on Powell’s 1869 expedition. Sumner even continued down the Virgin River after Powell finished the expedition. He made it to the Rio Colorado mouth that emptied into the gulf of California, making him and Andy Hall, who travelled with him, the first to journey from the Green River to that point. 30 years after the 1869 expedition, Sumner cut off his testicles in an act of grieving the losses of the Howlands and William Dunn.

Old Shady

From Powell’s Journal: “He is silent, moody, and sarcastic, though sometimes he enlivens the camp at night with a song. He is never surprised at anything, his coolness never deserts him, and he would choke the belching throat of a volcano if he thought the spitfire meant anything but fun.”

Walter Henry Powell was born in 1841 and died in 1915. He was given the nickname “Old Shady” because of the ballad by Handy Inas he liked to sing. He was the brother of John Wesley Powell and was actually the youngest of the two. He attended Illinois Institute AKA Wheaton College. Like his brother, he became a school teacher. Old Shady joined the home guard in the Civil War in 1862 and moved to the artillery unit. In 1864, he was captured by confederates at the Battle of Atlanta and was held prisoner at camp sorghum, where he developed a high
fever and mental health issues. He was able to escape when he had the opportunity at the prison hospital but was recaptured. He wasn't released until 1865. The trauma he faced from his imprisonment made him moody, impatient, and hot-tempered. However, he proved to be a competent crew member on Powell’s expedition. After the expedition, his mental state did not get any better. It became impossible for him to sustain work and he had to go live with his sister and brother and law. Thankfully his sister, Ellen Thompson, showed a great deal of care and understanding towards him. After the death of his sister, he was admitted to a military hospital, where he lived out the rest of his days.

**Dunn**

From Powell’s Journal- “He dresses in buckskin with a dark oleaginous luster, doubtless due to the fact that he has lived on fat venison and killed many beavers since he first donned his uniform years ago. His raven hair falls down to his back, for he has a sublime contempt of shears and razors.”

William Henry Dunn worked as a hunter and trapper. He served as a Union soldier in the Civil War.

**Bradley**

From Powell’s Journal- “He is scrupulously careful, and a little mishap works him into a passion, but when labor is needed he has a ready hand and powerful arm, and in danger, rapid judgment and unerring skill. A great difficulty or peril changes the petulant spirit into a brave, generous soul.”

George Young Bradley was from Newbury, Massachusetts. He was the son of English immigrants. He enlisted in the civil war as a union soldier in 1862. Just weeks after joining, he was wounded in the thigh in a battle. After this incident, he became a reservist until he decided to try his luck as a druggist. When this didn’t work out, he reenlisted as a solider in the frontier, where he spent most of his time protecting engineers working on the Transcontinental railroad. In 1869, Bradley was happy to accompany Powell on his expedition because he would have done just about anything to get out of the army. Bradley and Powell met in 1868 when Bradley was at an outpost on the green river. He was a valuable member of Powell’s crew. He was a quick thinker and hardly complained. Though he may have been a little moody. After the expedition, he settled in San Diego, California on a fruit growing ranch. In poor health, Bradley died in 1885.
OG

From Powell’s Journal - “When busily employed he usually puts his hat in his pocket, and his thin hair and long beard stream in the wind, giving him a wild look, much like that of King Lear in an illustrated copy of Shakespeare which tumbles around the camp.”

Oramel G. Howland was born in 1833 and died in 1869 when he left the expedition. He and Powell met through a mutual friend at The Rocky Mountain News where OG worked as a Printer. He was also the Vice President of the typographers’ union. At the time of the expedition, he was 35 years old, making him the oldest crew member. OG was intelligent and the most literate of Powell’s crew. He was in charge of making maps and taking notes on the expedition. He even got to pilot one of the boats.

Seneca

From Powell’s Journal - “Seneca Howland is a quiet, pensive young man, and a great favorite with all.”

Seneca B. Howland was born in 1843 and died in 1869 after leaving the expedition. Seneca was a union soldier in the Vermont regiment of the civil war. Seneca and OG were half-brothers, sharing a father. He and his brother grew up in Pomfret, Vermont. Seneca helped his father tend the family’s 60 acres of land before heading to the west with his brother to find some excitement there. At the time of the 1869 expedition, Seneca was 26 years old.

Hall

From Powell’s Journal - “Young as he is, Hall has had experience in hunting, trapping, and fighting Indians, and he makes the most of it, for he can tell a good story, and is never encumbered by unnecessary scruples in giving to his narratives those embellishments which help to make a story complete. He is always ready for work or play and is a good hand at either.”

Andrew “Andy” Hall was born in 1851. He was of scotch decent, and his family lived in Pennsylvania. Before he met Powell, he had spent years on the US plains as a bullwhacker, a native American scout, and a mule driver. He had a lot of experiences with fighting Native Americans. He was also a skilled boatman. In fact, Powell met him
while he was with a boat and oars that he made himself. Hall was only 18 when he went on the expedition. He was known as “the character”. He had a good sense of humor and was good at lifting the spirits of the men. While riding on a stagecoach, three robbers shot at him, knocking him off the vehicle. The robbers thought he was wounded and stole his rifle. However, he was not as hurt as they thought and Hall went after them which unfortunately led to the robbers shooting him five times, killing him in 1882.

**Hawkins**

From Powell’s Journal: *“He is an athlete and a jovial good fellow, who hardly seems to know his own strength.”*

William Rhodes Hawkins was born in Missouri in 1841. He was a mountaineer. He had many nicknames, one of which being “Missouri” and for a while, he travelled under the name Billy Rhodes. He enlisted as a union soldier in 1863. He was discharged for an unrecorded disability in 1865. While in the army, he may have had a conflict with the law. Powell’s crew even suspected him of being sort of outlaw. However, he was very loyal to Powell and his two Colorado expeditions. He served as a cook on Powell’s expedition for $1.50 a day. After the expedition he became a farmer in Arizona and raised a large family. He died in 1919.

**Goodman**

From Powell’s Journal: *“Goodman is a stranger to us--a stout, willing Englishman, with florid face and more florid anticipations of a glorious trip.”*

Frank Goodman’s date of birth, date of death, and pretty much anything about his life is unknown. Goodman had been exploring the United States when he came across Powell on the train to prepare for his expedition. He was untrained and unskilled in comparison to the rest of the crew, but he had a thirst for adventure. When he left the expedition 26 days in, the crew was not too disappointed.
Glossary

Bank: A bank is the land alongside or sloping down to a river or lake. When a boat is banking, it is tilting sideways to make a turn.

Barometer: An instrument used to measure atmospheric pressure, normally to forecast the weather or determine altitude.

Bear Grylis: A famous British adventurer. He was on the show man vs wild

Bouilliabase (bouiliabaisse): A rich stew made of various fish

Bronte Sisters: Charlotte, Anne, and Emily Bronte are well-known poets and authors who lived in the early to mid-19th century.

Caulked up: Sealed; Tight against water and leaks.

Churning: moving with or producing or produced by vigorous agitation

Coffer: A small chest for holding things

Corncake: A round bread made from cornmeal and flour

Crest: The top of something, normally a hill or wave

Eddies: currents of water or air running contrary to the main current

Gulch: a narrow and steep passage that marks the course of a fast stream

Gunwhale: Upper edge of the boat

Halcyon: Calm, peaceful

Hewn: Chopped or cut, normally wood or coal

Hug the Wall!- Get as close as you can to the wall

Hurdy Gurdy: A stringed, musical instrument.

John Baker: He was a trapper, frontiersman, solider, and hunter born in 1818. He was prominent in the fur trade. He’s explored the green river, the Laramie Plains, the Missouri river, and more areas of the West.

Lakelet: A small lake

Lam: The term “on the lam” means running away, normally in the context of running from the law.

Marseille: A city in the south of France situated in Provence, a historical province in France. Marseille is one of the oldest cities in the country.

Mealy: Something resembling a grainy, dry, soft texture.
Muscadet: A French white wine

Pooling: Happens when liquid accumulates and forms a small body or pool.

Portage/ Portaging: The carrying of a boat or its cargo to navigable waters

Provence: A historical province in France.

Ravine: A deep, narrow passage with steep sides

Rounding: Rounding-up is a phenomenon that occurs in sailing when the person steering the boat is no longer able to control the direction of the boat and it heads up (or "rounds up") into the wind, causing the boat to slow down, stall out, or tack

Sextants: An instrument used for measuring angled distances between objects.

Shifting: Changing place or position

Sieve: A mesh screen

Sturm and Drang: An artistic movement that happened in Germany in the 18th century. It is characterized by expression of emotional unrest and stress.

Swelling: A swell, also sometimes referred to as ground swell, in the context of an ocean, sea or lake, is a series of mechanical waves that propagate along the interface between water and air under the predominating influence of gravity, and thus are often referred to as surface gravity waves.

Sublime: Excellent, Splendid

Trapper: Someone who trap’s wild animals

White water: Whitewater forms when a river’s gradient changes enough to generate so much turbulence that air is trapped within the water. This forms an unstable current that foams, making the water appear opaque and white.

Wuthering Heights: A book by Emily Bronte. It is a tragedy that centers around a farmhouse called “wuthering heights” and its inhabitants.

Yorkshire: A county in Northern England. There are many historical castles, a lot of greenery, and more historical sights in Yorkshire.

Yukon: A river that flows through Alaska
**For Fun!**

**Oregon Trail**

The Oregon trail is a simulation video game series that was meant to portray the real harsh lives of 19th century pioneers travelling the Oregon trail for a chance at a better life. The goal of the game is to get your group of pioneers from Missouri to Oregon city in one piece... or something close to that. Along the way, the player deals with chances of disease, animal attacks, weather disasters, crossing deep rivers, and other hardships. These randomized events can lead to the loss of supplies, food, ammunition and... people. The Oregon Trail is also a board game with the same concept. Try your luck like Powell and his Men and see if you can survive the West.

You can play here→[https://www.visitoregon.com/the-oregon-trail-game-online/](https://www.visitoregon.com/the-oregon-trail-game-online/)

**Pioneer Recipes (mostly sweets because I love sweets lol)**

Taken from: [https://www.chroniclesoftheoldwest.com/chuckwagon.shtml#jerky_gravy](https://www.chroniclesoftheoldwest.com/chuckwagon.shtml#jerky_gravy)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SCOTCH COOKIES</th>
<th>JERKY GRAVY</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scotch Cookies</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 cup sugar</td>
<td>Jerky, ground or chopped fine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¼ cup molasses</td>
<td>Little Fat or Grease</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 beaten egg</td>
<td>Flour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>¾ cup melted shortening</td>
<td>Salt &amp; pepper</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tsp ginger</td>
<td>Milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 tsp cinnamon</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 tsp baking soda</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 cups flour</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mix well; roll into balls.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roll balls in sugar and bake at 350 degrees for 8 to 10 minutes</td>
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</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FRIED APPLES</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fry 4 slices of bacon in a Dutch oven.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Remove bacon.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peel and slice 6 to 8 Granny Smith apples.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Put apples in Dutch oven with bacon grease,</td>
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<tr>
<td>cover and cook down the apples, but not to mush.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Serve topped with butter or cream and crumbled bacon.</td>
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The amount of each ingredient depends on how much gravy you want.
MORMON JOHNNYCAKE

Here is a form of cornbread used not only by the Mormon immigrants, as the name indicates, but quite often by most of the immigrants traveling west. Because of the inclusion of buttermilk, a source of fresh milk was a necessity.

2-cups of yellow cornmeal
½-cup of flour
1-teaspoon baking soda
1-teaspoon salt
Combine ingredients and mix in

BOY IN BAG
2 cups raisins
1 cup chopped walnuts (black walnuts are fine)
1 cup dark brown sugar, firmly packed
1 cup chopped suet
2 teaspoons baking powder
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon nutmeg
1 teaspoon allspice
1 teaspoon salt
2 cups flour
1 ½ cups milk
1 cup chopped dried fruit of any kind.

Chop suet into small pieces no pieces being larger than a bean. Combine with raisins, nuts, brown sugar, and chopped dried fruit. Then mix flour, spices, and salt with baking powder. Add gradually to fruit mixture with milk, beating well. Put in flour sack or tie in large square of cloth. Put in kettle of boiling water and boil 3 hours, always keeping enough boiling water, and put on cloth to drain. After about ½ hour, untie cloth and turn pudding onto dish. Let chill. Slice and serve with hard sauce.

BAKED APPLE PUDDING
The recipe below was brought out west in the 1800’s by the ancestors of Audrey Crandell of Linden, Arizona.

Large apples, grated
1 cup sugar
1 cube butter
1 cup nuts
1 egg
1 cup flour
1 tsp baking soda
1 tsp baking powder
1 tsp cinnamon
1 tsp nutmeg

Beat egg, sugar and butter. Add apples and mix well. Add dry ingredients. Bake 30-40 minutes at 350 degrees. Serve with cream or a white sauce.
Sources

The Playwright


Production History


The USA in the Westward Expansion Era


Women's Rights Before the Civil War, people.loyno.edu/~history/journal/1984-5/donnaway.htm.

**All About Boating**


“The ‘No Name’, ‘Kitty Clyde’s Sister’ and ‘Maid of the Canyon’ Preparing for Launching at Lees Ferry. Margaret Marston Sits in Front of the Craft.” Calisphere, Huntington Library, 1 June 1959, calisphere.org/item/3fbf016ef90b1c72337c056613332eaf/.

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**Powell’s 1869 Expedition**


**Bending Societal Norms**


Characters


“Frank Goodman.” Symon Sez, symonsez.wordpress.com/tag/frank-goodman/.


