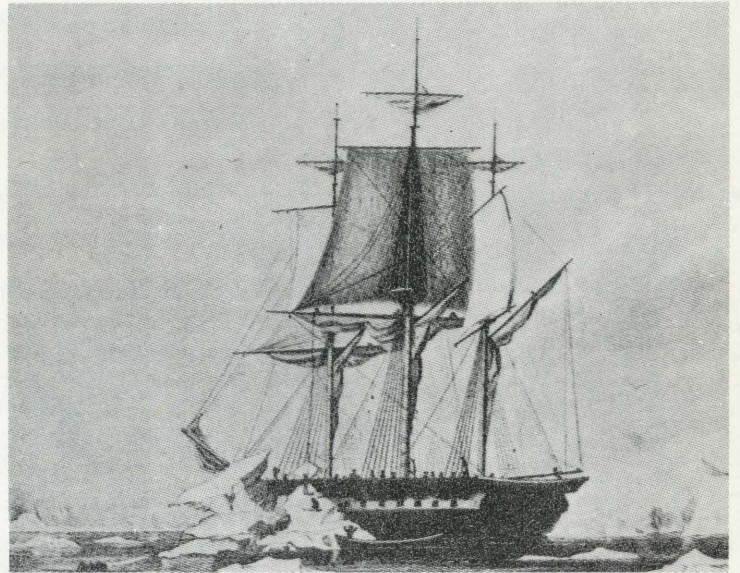


BLACK HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES IN THE PACIFIC NORTHWEST

Up until 1788 the Pacific Northwest region was occupied mainly by Native Americans and a few British and French fur traders. The first American explorer of the region, Captain Robert Gray, sailed around Cape Horn, at the tip of South America, to make his way to the Pacific Northwest Territories. A trickle of explorers started to arrive in the area in the early 1800s, followed closely by settlers interested in farming the fertile land north and south of the Columbia River. By the late 1800s there were several thriving towns, including Olympia, Centralia, Tacoma and Seattle, all vying for access to the railroad that became the area's lifeline for growth and prosperity.



The ship Columbia commanded by Captain Robert Gray.

The black population grew along with the development of the state of Washington. Black explorers gave way to black settlers, and finally black urban pioneers made their mark on the development of many cities and towns in Washington, particularly in Seattle.

The Explorers

Captain Robert Gray set out for the Pacific Northwest fueled by stories told by hunting and fur trading adventurers about the richness of game in the region. Trade with China was the ultimate goal of his first expedition, and to that end he sailed from New England around the Horn of South America to reach the Pacific Ocean. Finally, he landed in what is now Tillamook, Oregon, in late summer of 1788. Accompanying Captain Gray was a young man named Marcus Lopez, a native of Cape Verde Island near West Africa. Lopez started off as a cabin boy and was promoted to crew member by the time the sloop "Lady Washington" pulled into shore.



*Captain Robert Gray
American Trader and
Explorer.*