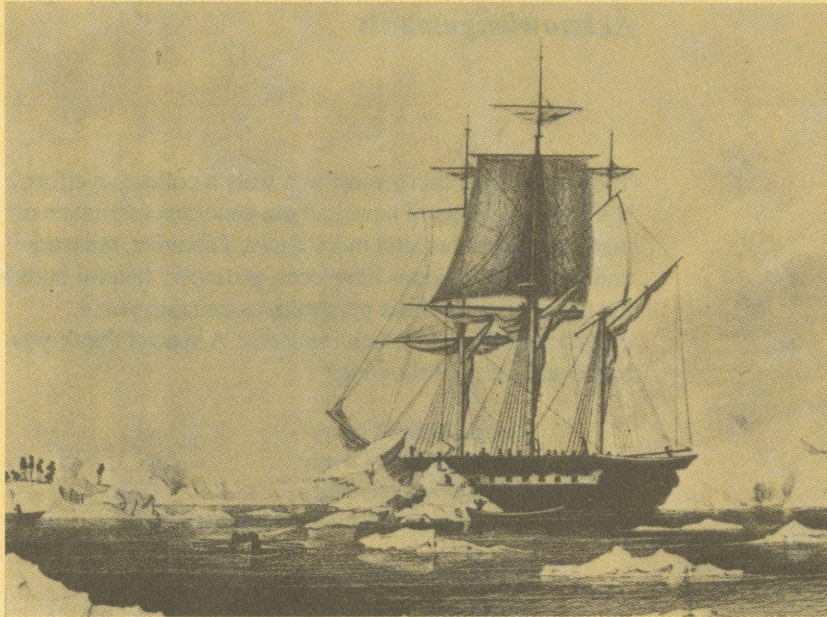

Black Historical Perspectives In The Pacific Northwest



*The ship Columbia commanded by
Captain Robert Gray*

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 1800's, followed closely by settlers interested in farming the fertile land north and south of the Columbia River. By the late 1800's 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 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 and Tacoma.