

**Father Peter Hylebos,
St. George's Indian
School and Cemetery
by
Dick Caster**



**Prepared for the
Historical Society
of
Federal Way**

**Revised
July 9, 2009**

This is a revised and expanded version of the November 8, 2004 monograph. The portion on St. Claire's Mission Church has been removed and can now be found in the article on Native American Presence in the Federal Way Area, www.federalwayhistory.org.

Copyright © 2004, 2009 by the Historical Society of Federal Way.

Cover photo: Father Peter Hylebos, probably in the mid 1890s. (Courtesy Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle.)

Father Peter Hylebos, St George's Indian School and Cemetery

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	2
Father Peter Hylebos Background	2
Move to Tacoma	4
First Catholic Church in Tacoma	4
Second St. Leo Church	5
Third St. Leo Church	5
First Trip to Rome.....	6
Father Hylebos and the Chinese Riots	6
The Trial, Conviction and Freeing of Salvador Picani	9
Father Hylebos and the Northwest.....	9
Early Tacoma Hospitals.....	10
Father Hylebos and Education	11
Indian Boarding Schools.....	11
Early Indian Schools in the Tacoma Area	11
Early Muckleshoot Schools	13
Father Hylebos and Indian Education.....	13
St. George's Indian School Construction.....	15
Opening of St. George's Indian School	16
Costs of Operating St. George's Indian School.....	18
Controversy over St. George's Indian School	18
Clearing Bee Work Parties.....	19
Additional Construction at St. George's Indian School.....	19
Closing of St. George's Indian School	20
Naming of Hylebos Creek	22
St. George's Cemetery	22
Hope to become a Monsignor	24
Father Hylebos' Retirement.....	24
St. Leo's School	25
Father Hylebos' Death	25
Fire Destroys Third St. Leo Church.....	28
Pronunciation of Hylebos	28
King County Chinook Building	28
Hylebos Washington.....	29
Conclusions.....	30

Father Peter Hylebos, St George's Indian School and Cemetery

Introduction

This article is intended to discuss the importance of Father Hylebos to the Federal Way area. It is also intended to show that there is a documented Indian presence for the area. This will be done by discussing Father Hylebos himself, St. George's Indian School that was just north of the King County–Pierce County line, and St George's Indian Cemetery at the same location.

Father Peter Hylebos Background

Hylebos is a name familiar to all who live in the Federal Way area. Most have heard of West Hylebos Wetlands Park and Hylebos Creek. In Tacoma, there is the Hylebos Waterway and the Hylebos Bridge going across it. Several other lesser-known places, such as Hylebos Hill¹ and a few businesses also bear this name.

Peter Francis Hylebos was born in Graumont, Belgium on December 27, 1848, the son of a mercantile merchant, James Hylebos and Dorothy Stuart Hylebos.² He was one of twelve children in the family.³ Peter Hylebos had a twin brother who died young.⁴ One of his sisters, Mary, spent five years in Tacoma with Father Hylebos but she returned to Belgium prior to World War I and married.⁵

Hylebos graduated from the University of Louvain in 1870. He was ordained a Catholic priest on June 12, 1870.⁶

He left for North America in September 1870 after feeling he had a mission to carry out here. He landed in Quebec. He immediately boarded a series of trains for the “long and hazardous journey to San Francisco.” His account of that trip tells of the great herds of antelope and buffalo that stared at the strange iron monster crossing their plains or else they ran in fright.⁷ From San Francisco he journeyed north to Portland by boat. The boat went between San Francisco and Portland every three weeks. The young priest was fortunate in arriving at San Francisco one day ahead of the date the boat left for Portland. The fare from San Francisco was \$92 and the trip required six days.⁸ He crossed the Columbia River and was settled in Vancouver, Washington by October 25, 1870.⁹

¹ Hylebos Hill is the large hill located slightly north of the King-Pierce County line just west of Pacific Highway.

² John Arthur, Thomas Huygins and J. M. Cawce, Committee on Memorial, “Memorial to Rev. Peter Francis Hylebos,” (Tacoma: Washington State Historical Society, 1919) p. 1.

³ Erna Bence, “Why Named Hylebos?” *Tacoma News Tribune*, September 18, 1949, p. not known.

⁴ Marie Reed, letter to the editor, “Who was Hylebos?,” *Federal Way News*, not dated, never printed, p. 2, in the files of the Historical Society of Federal Way.

⁵ Peter Hunt, *Tacoma Its History and Its Builders, A Half Century of Activity*, v. 3 (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1916) p. 484.

⁶ Arthur, p. 1.

⁷ Bence, “Why Named Hylebos?” p. not known.

⁸ “Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.,” *The Tacoma Catholic Citizen*, February 11, 1911, p. 1. It is mentioned in the article that much of the material in the article is taken from *the Morning Ledger*, a Tacoma paper of the time. Much of the material was later used in Hunt, v. 3, pp. 483 – 487. V. G. indicates Vicar General, an assistant to a Bishop.

⁹ Arthur, p. 1.

In Vancouver he was assigned to be secretary to Bishop A. M. Blanchet, head of the large wilderness Catholic Diocese that essentially covered all of what is now western Washington and much of Oregon.¹⁰ Father Blanchet was the first bishop of the diocese then known as the diocese of Nisqually.¹¹ (This diocese headquarters was eventually moved to Seattle and expanded and is now the archdiocese of Seattle.) Father Hylebos also became president of the Holy Angel's College located in Vancouver. During this time he built two churches in Clarke County, one on the Lewis River and another at a locality then called St. John. He remained headquartered at Vancouver three years. He also built an elementary school while there.¹²

He then moved to Cowlitz Prairie, near the present town of Kelso, and lived there six and one-half years. He built a church, a school, and a parish house at Cowlitz Prairie during his stay there.¹³

Father John Baptist Brondel was the priest at the Olympia St. Michael Church when it had its official start in 1875.¹⁴ When Father Brondel was transferred from the Olympia, Tacoma area to Victoria, Father Hylebos was sent to succeed him in the mission headquartered at Steilacoom.¹⁵ In 1879 when Father Hylebos took charge of the existing mission at Steilacoom the area of coverage for this mission provided Catholic coverage as far as the present Federal Way area. In fact the territory included in the mission coverage sprawled from Carbonado to Grays Harbor, and included the smaller missions of Olympia and Tacoma. He was the only priest for the entire area. During his stay at Steilacoom, it is reported that he was constantly traveling "and was never for three days at a time in one place."¹⁶

Father Hylebos became the active pastor of the Olympia St. Michael Church. A new church was dedicated in October 1880.¹⁷ He arranged for the donation of land for a school and a hospital in the Olympia area.¹⁸ The school was opened in 1881. Father Hylebos knew the Sisters of Providence from his prior assignment at St Francis Xavier Mission at Cowlitz Prairie and asked them to operate the school in Olympia. In 1881, three sisters arrived and transformed a small building into a makeshift convent and school that was named Providence St. Amable Academy. Classes began September 18, with 35 girls who were mostly Protestant. (This is an early example of how Father Hylebos worked well with Protestants as well as Catholics.) By years end, there were 85 students.¹⁹ The hospital became St Peters.²⁰ The hospital, now known as Providence St. Peter Hospital, is still the main hospital in Olympia.

¹⁰ Arthur, p. 1.

¹¹ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1. Early sources use the spelling 'Nesqually.' I have used Nisqually, the modern spelling in this article.

¹² Arthur, p. 1.

¹³ Arthur, p. 1.

¹⁴ www.saintmichaelparish.org/page.php?id=82, p. 1, accessed May 25, 2009.

¹⁵ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

¹⁶ Arthur, p. 1.

¹⁷ www.saintmichaelparish.org/page.php?id=82, p. 1, accessed May 25, 2009.

¹⁸ "Notes on Father Hylebos," from Ilene Marckx Archives, undated, in the files of the Historical Society of Federal Way, p. 1.

¹⁹ www.saintmichaelparish.org/page.php?id=82, p. 1, accessed May 25, 2009. Additional information about the school and the growth of St. Michael Church can be found on the web site.

²⁰ "HYLEBOS, Man Behind the Name," *Federal Way St Teresa's Parish News Letter*, September 22, 1985, p. 4.

Father Hylebos is shown as a resident of Olympia in the 1880, United States Census. His age is indicated as 33. Based on well established birth date of December 27, 1848 he should have been 32 on December 27, 1880 so the interpretation of his age on the census record may be misleading. He is listed as the only member of family 274 of Olympia. His profession is shown as "R. Catholic Priest" and his birthplace as "Belgium."²¹

Father Hylebos was highly interested in the potential of the Puget Sound area. He co-authored a book entitled *Puget Sound Business Directory and Guide to Washington Territory*.²² Father Hylebos had the honor of being the last resident pastor of the Catholic mission headquartered at Steilacoom before he moved to Tacoma to form and build the first Catholic Church there.²³

Move to Tacoma

Father Hylebos moved to Tacoma in 1880, as this seemed a more logical headquarters for the south Puget Sound area. The territory covered was described as "East to Carbonado and to the coast south to Gray's Harbor."²⁴ "The first time he came to Commencement bay [*sic*] where modern merchant vessels now lie, there were to be seen some 500 or more Indians in their canoes the day he arrived."²⁵ Father Hylebos covered his territory on horseback and by boat. He purchased many tracts of land with diocese funds in and near the sites of growing cities in anticipation of establishing schools and hospitals, donating the land as the need arose.

First Catholic Church in Tacoma

The first clergyman to come to Tacoma was the Reverend George H. Greer, who in 1868 preached in a mill cookhouse. Several other Protestants and Catholics followed and preached in various buildings until the Episcopalians built the first church building, St. Peter's in 1873, in old Tacoma at what is now St. Helens Avenue and E Street. The Methodists at South C and Seventh Streets erected the first church built in new Tacoma in 1878.²⁶

In 1879 the missionary priest, Father J. B. A. Brondel founded St. Leo Church in Tacoma with a congregation of 18.²⁷ This church started construction under Father Brondel, but was finished by Father Hylebos in 1880. It was on the corner of what is now Division Street and Tacoma Avenue.²⁸ This church was considered large at 24 feet by 40

²¹ United States Census for 1880, Schedule 1 – Inhabitants in Olympia in the County of Thurston, Washington, Page No. 30, Supervisor Dist. No. 143, Enumeration Dist. No. 15, signed P. P. Couvall (this is my estimate of handwritten signature that is almost impossible to read -DC), Enumerator, June 12, 1880.

²² "Notes on Father Hylebos," p. 1.

²³ Wilfred P. Schoenberg, S. J., *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, (Washington, DC: The Pastoral Press, 1987) p. 273.

²⁴ "Notes on Father Hylebos," p. 1.

²⁵ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

²⁶ Herbert Hunt, *Tacoma Its History and Its Builders, A Half Century of Activity*, v. 1 (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1916) pp. 70 (photo caption), 221, 224. Old Tacoma can loosely be described as the area west of the water along present Rustin Way and New Tacoma was build at the general location of present downtown Tacoma.

²⁷ www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 1, accessed May 13, 2009.

²⁸ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

feet. Eighteen attended the first mass on June 1, 1880.²⁹ (Another source indicates Father Hylebos held the first mass in the church on January 1, 1880.³⁰ Based on other information about Father Hylebos' arrival in Tacoma it seems the June date is correct, but since Father Hylebos traveled throughout the area prior to 1880 the January date is possible.) Bishop Junger officially dedicated this church on November 23, 1880. It was named after St. Leo the Great.³¹

Second St. Leo Church

Father Hylebos' congregation grew rapidly requiring a larger second church to be built to replace the first. Construction was started in 1883.³² In 1884 the second St. Leo Church, 44 feet by 100 feet, was completed at South 11th Street and Market Avenue.³³ This church had Tacoma's only bell tower. The city police had a key so that they might ring the bell in times of emergency.³⁴

Third St. Leo Church

Mainly through the efforts of Father Hylebos, the Catholic congregation continued to grow until in 1903 it was necessary to build a new St. Leo Church on the present site of South 13th Street and Yakima Avenue.³⁵ In



Figure 1 – The third St. Leo Catholic Church. (Courtesy St. Leo Catholic Church, Tacoma, WA.)

1901, Father Hylebos had purchased a political hall on South 13th Street and Yakima Avenue.³⁶ In 1900, William Jennings Bryan had presented a major address in Tacoma in a huge specially constructed wooden building called the “Wigwam.” After the speech Father Hylebos bought the Wigwam and used the lumber to build the third St. Leo's Church. Some brick was added here and there to

reduce the flimsy appearance. The sanctuary could seat 2,200, which was quite impressive for Tacoma at the time. It was the largest church in the Pacific Northwest.³⁷ (In a separate reference Schoenberg indicates the

²⁹ Arthur, p. 2 and Bence, “Why Named Hylebos?” p. not known.

³⁰ “Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.,” p. 1.

³¹ Charles M. Smith, editor, *The Centenary, 100 Years of the Catholic Church in the Oregon Country; Supplement to the Catholic Sentinel*, May 4, 1939, p. 86.

³² www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 1, accessed May 13, 2009.

³³ Arthur, p. 2 and Bence, “Why Named Hylebos?” p. not known.

³⁴ Wilfred P. Schoenberg, S. J., *Paths to the Northwest: A Jesuit History of the Oregon Province*, (Chicago: Loyola University Press, 1982) p. 296.

³⁵ Arthur, p. 2 and Bence, “Why Named Hylebos?” p. not known.

³⁶ www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 1, accessed May 13, 2009.

³⁷ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 472.

church seated 2,000 people.)³⁸ Within a few years, three masses were required to meet the needs of a congregation of more than 7,000 parishioners.³⁹ By 1916, the diocese had grown to include 60 priests, assisted by 125 members of religious orders.⁴⁰

This third St. Leo's Church and its growing staff made Father Hylebos one of the better-known clerics on the west coast.⁴¹ "Hylebos became a well-known and respected man of peace and service in Tacoma's early days."⁴² Father Hylebos was a real dynamo of energy and became one of the local patriarchs with influence not only in religious areas but with immense civic influence.⁴³ (See the section on **Fire at St. Leo Church** for the 1919 total loss of this church.)

First Trip to Rome

In 1883–1884, Father Hylebos went to Rome as Secretary to Arch-Bishop Seghers, of Oregon, and attended the Assembly of Archbishops of the United States called to Rome to prepare for the third National Council of the Catholic Church in America, which was to be held in Baltimore in 1885.⁴⁴

The trip started on September 17, 1883, when Father Hylebos left by train with Arch-Bishop Seghers, of Oregon for New York. They sailed from New York on the *City of Chicago* on October 5, 1883. After a calm voyage, they disembarked at Liverpool, then spent a few weeks in England and Belgium before arriving in Rome. The first meeting of the archbishop was on November 13 at the College of Propaganda. Exactly one month later their sessions at the Vatican were completed. The prelates had an audience with the Pope on December 17. Archbishop Seghers was forced to stay in Rome for several more months as negotiations were conducted to have him become archbishop of Vancouver Island.⁴⁵

Father Hylebos and the Chinese Riots

According to a quote from an unnamed contemporary in Tacoma, "Father Hylebos would be found defending, encouraging, helping ... his fellow citizens, no matter of what creed or nationality."⁴⁶

In the 1880s, many cities in the northwest experienced violence when an attempt was made to expel the Chinese by force. An article in the *Tacoma News Tribune* provides a summary of the details of the expulsion of the Chinese from Tacoma in 1885, and the part Father Hylebos played in trying to prevent it.⁴⁷ Herbert Hunt in his *Tacoma Its History and Its Builders A Half Century of Activity*, devotes an entire chapter to the

³⁸ Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, p. 296.

³⁹ Arthur, p. 2 and "HYLEBOS, Man Behind the Name," p. 2.

⁴⁰ Hunt, v. 3, p. 486.

⁴¹ Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, p. 296.

⁴² www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 1, accessed May 13, 2009.

⁴³ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 319.

⁴⁴ Arthur, p. 2.

⁴⁵ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, pp. 294-296.

⁴⁶ "Notes on Father Hylebos," p. 1.

⁴⁷ "Tacoma Kicked Out Chinese in 1885," *Tacoma News Tribune*, June 27, 1969, p. A-5.

events leading up to the Chinese riots and eventual expulsion of the Chinese.⁴⁸ It should be understood that the desire to force the Chinese expulsion was not just in Tacoma but also in all the cities on the west coast and even in some inland areas such as Wyoming.⁴⁹ Following is a brief summary of Father Hylebos' activities in defending the Chinese.

During the 1870's, large numbers of Chinese were hired for the building of the railroad and many lived in Tacoma. As early as January 25, 1878 the Tacoma literary society had debated at its original meeting: "Resolved, The Chinese immigration has been an injury to the United States." Two reasons for the anti-Chinese feeling were given by Hunt: first, economic, as the Chinese had gained many of the laboring jobs, and second, the Chinese style of living appeared strange to many of the city's residents. Many committees were formed and many meetings were held before the actual ouster was undertaken. Many Chinese felt the undercurrent of distrust and moved out of the area. Hunt estimated that Tacoma had a Chinese population of about 700 when the trouble started.⁵⁰

Active throughout the preceding months, Father Hylebos worked behind the scene to fight against the Chinese expulsion but occasionally his activities came to the forefront.

Early in the proceedings he [Father Hylebos] saw that his opposition to the anti-Chinese part could not hope to check its determination to remove the [Chinese]. His own attitude toward the Chinese was one of strong antipathy, but he was opposed to breaking the laws to get rid of them. However, once his practical mind had embraced the true situation he resolved that his position should be one of a guide toward the greatest good in the midst of evil. In other words, if there was to be a mob and mob law, he chose for his part the elimination of the worst mobs and mob law, and very shortly he was in the counsels of the innermost circles, quietly advising caution, shrewdly distracting attention from the riotous plans, entering into the very heart of the whole conspiracy, yet smoothly robbing it of its bloody possibilities. Undoubtedly he prevented a mob from attempting to ride General Sprague and I. W. Anderson out of town on rails and it is probable that he saved Anderson's life.⁵¹

By November 3, 1885 the anti-Chinese sentiment exploded with violence and a mob invaded the Chinese settlement on the Tacoma waterfront, demanding their expulsion from the city.⁵²

Father Hylebos, at his request was deputized by the sheriff, and spent many hours walking the streets in an effort to quell the violence. He was just one of many who volunteered to be a deputy. During the mob action Father Hylebos was stationed in a section where a number of Chinese lived. Before anything got out of hand he called the marchers around him and told them to go about things peacefully and there would be no

⁴⁸ Hunt, v. 1, pp 355-383.

⁴⁹ Hunt, v. 1, pp. 356-365.

⁵⁰ Hunt, v. 1. pp. 355-357.

⁵¹ Hunt, v. 1, p. 376. Sprague and Anderson were outspoken opponents of the forced Chinese expulsion and at meetings were often chastised by those who favored the forced Chinese expulsion.

⁵² Hunt, v. 1, pp. 372-376.

trouble. Hylebos added that if anybody started anything he would have the man arrested and prosecuted.⁵³

When Sheriff Boyd appointed a number of deputy sheriffs on the day of the ouster Father Hylebos was one of them, at his own request, and he was placed on Railroad Street, between Seventh and Ninth where there were a number of Chinese houses, which it generally was understood were to be burned by the factionaries designated to visit that locality. This had come to the ears of the priest. He was at his post when the whistles screamed the signal and as the men assigned to his section came, he directed them to a vacant room nearby, saying that when all were there he desired to speak with them for five minutes. Having corralled them, he at once entered into the question of incendiarism, told the men that a fire started there might burn the entire city and forever ruin its reputation besides, while, if the shacks, which had been built by the Chinese on leased land, were allowed to remain they would revert to the white owners of the land and the community would benefit by it. He dismissed them with the assertion that he believed that, if the whites moved in an orderly manner, lifting not so much as a finger against the Chinese, the day's work would be completed happily and the Chinese menace forever disposed of. He also told them that he knew every man present; that he was there to do his duty and that he would arrest and prosecute if his orders were disobeyed. His sermon was effective.⁵⁴

The roundup of the Chinese proceeded without violence and the Chinese marched in the rain to Lakeview where they were put on passing freight trains. Despite his efforts, Father Hylebos was unsuccessful in stopping the banishment of the Chinese from Tacoma.⁵⁵

Unfortunately at about 10:30 [source does not indicate if this is AM or PM] on November 5, a fire broke out in one of the score of Chinese houses on the waterfront and within an hour or so everything in the Chinese part of town was burned.⁵⁶

The federal grand jury sitting in Vancouver, and the United States Marshal George responded to the forced expulsion and subpoenaed witnesses before the grand jury. Marshall George had warrants for the arrest of several of the instigators in the Chinese affair. The army sent 60 soldiers to ensure that order was kept and the arrests could be made. The prisoners were charged with conspiring to insurrection and riot, depriving Chinese subjects of equal protection under the law, and of breaking open houses and driving out the oriental occupants. Tacoma was denounced in the nation press for the forced expulsion. A trial held in Seattle acquitted all the conspirators. A second trial failed to come about and all 27 conspirators were free.⁵⁷

⁵³ "Tacoma Kicked Out Chinese in 1885," p. A-5.

⁵⁴ Hunt, v. 1, pp. 376-377.

⁵⁵ "Tacoma Kicked Out Chinese in 1885," p. A-5.

⁵⁶ Hunt, v. 1. p.377.

⁵⁷ Hunt, v. 1, pp. 377-382.

The Trial, Conviction and Freeing of Salvador Picani

Father Hylebos was more successful in the case of a man, Salvador Picani, who was accused of murder. Following is a brief summary. A detailed discussion of the case can be found in Peter Hunt's volume two, of his three-volume work on the history of Tacoma.⁵⁸

On March 2 1892, Salvatore Conchilla, a Sicilian fruit peddler was found stabbed to death. Several Italians were arrested but only Salvador Picani was brought to trial. Though he constantly proclaimed his innocence, Picani was found guilty of first-degree murder, and the judge sentenced him to be hanged on July 1, 1892. Picani was poor so had no qualified lawyer and he understood very little English. After studying the case Father Hylebos believed the man was innocent so helped finance a review of the evidence and arranged for an appeal to the Washington Supreme Court. Because of a lack of a qualified attorney some of the paperwork was lost and the state Supreme Court appeal failed. Several local businessmen and politicians gradually came to believe in Picani's innocence also. After several legal battles and a change of a state law allowing for the readmittance of evidence, the sentence was commuted and the man was released. Picani remained in Tacoma for the rest of his life and those who knew him felt certain he was innocent of the crime.⁵⁹



Figure 2 – Father Hylebos, probably in the mid 1890s. (Courtesy Archives of the Catholic Diocese of Seattle.)

Father Hylebos and the Northwest

In 1888 Father Hylebos was sent east by Bishop Junger to find religious orders to take charge of hospitals and schools in the then diocese of Nisqually.⁶⁰ While his work was centered in Tacoma, Father Hylebos showed interest in all areas of the northwest. In 1890, he opened a home for orphans and young women in Seattle. He also established a hospital and schools as well as a residence for women in Bellingham. He also helped establish a hospital in Aberdeen and a school in Pomeroy. Two schools were established in Tacoma, the Aquinas Academy and the Visitation Academy.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Herbert Hunt, *Tacoma Its History and Its Builders, A Half Century of Activity*, v. 2 (Chicago: The S. J. Clarke Publishing Company, 1916) pp 71-73.

⁵⁹ Hunt, v. 2. pp. 71-73.

⁶⁰ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

⁶¹ "Notes on Father Hylebos," p. 2.

Father Hylebos not only got along well with those of his own denomination, but worked with Episcopalian and other Protestant churchmen to help place a curb on the elements of gambling and loose life that were attracted to the rough and rugged new town of Tacoma. A newspaperman said of him, "Father Hylebos was a favorite with the high and the low, the good and the bad. . . . his influence grew with his acquaintance."⁶²

Early Tacoma Hospitals

Father Hylebos' interest in hospitals in the northwest can be seen in many ways. The need for a hospital in Tacoma was apparent by the 1880s. Fannie Paddock was the wife of an Episcopal bishop in Brooklyn New York. Her husband was appointed to a diocese in what seemed to her a very remote Washington Territory. Even before she left New York she began raising funds for a hospital she was sure would be needed. She never reached Tacoma as she was taken ill and died in Portland on April 29, 1881. Her idea lived on, however, and Fannie Paddock Hospital was built in 1882. It was crowded with 78 patients by the end of the year. The hospital continued to grow and in 1912, Fannie Paddock Hospital became Tacoma General Hospital.⁶³

In 1895 Fannie Paddock Hospital started Washington's first nursing school.⁶⁴

In 1888, Bishop Junger sent Father Hylebos east to induce religious orders to send representatives to the Diocese of Nisqually (now the diocese of Seattle) to establish hospitals and schools.⁶⁵ In 1890, four Catholic sisters came to Tacoma and went to work raising funds for a hospital. They chose a site at South 18th Street and Yakima Avenue.⁶⁶ Father Hylebos arranged for the purchase of the land and donated it to the Sisters of St. Francis who had arranged to staff the hospital.⁶⁷ St. Joseph Hospital was opened January 23, 1891.⁶⁸ The eastern trip that Father Hylebos had undertaken also caused Sisters of St. Dominic to establish themselves at a hospital in Aberdeen and the Sisters of St. Joseph at a hospital in Bellingham. The Sisters of the Visitation founded an academy in Tacoma in 1890 that soon became a leading educational institution.⁶⁹ On January 19, 1891, he attended the dedication of St. Joseph's General Hospital on Fairhaven Hill in Bellingham.⁷⁰

A quote from a regional newspaper stated, "Father Hylebos made extensive purchases of land in what in those days were wild woods and was told by many persons that he was crazy, and he replied that some day a great city would certainly spring up on this magnificent harbor."⁷¹

⁶² Elaine Motteler, "Father Hylebos Helped Civilize Tacoma," *Newspaper article with actual paper unknown*, date unknown, p. unknown, from the files of Marie Stowe Reed, in the files of the HSFW.

⁶³ Erna Bence, "Women Never Got Here Who Founded Hospital," *Tacoma News Tribune*, 27 June 1969, *Centennial section*, p. 31.

⁶⁴ Bence, "Women Never Got Here Who Founded Hospital," p. 31.

⁶⁵ "HYLEBOS, Man Behind the Name," p. 2.

⁶⁶ Bence, "Women Never Got Here Who Founded Hospital," p. 31.

⁶⁷ "Notes on Father Hylebos," p. 2.

⁶⁸ Bence, "Women Never Got Here Who Founded Hospital," p. 31.

⁶⁹ "HYLEBOS, Man Behind the Name," p. 2.

⁷⁰ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 375.

⁷¹ "Notes on Father Hylebos," p. 2.

Father Hylebos and Education

One of Father Hylebos' major desires for the area was for his parish to have schools.⁷² Father Hylebos knew and worked with the many Jesuits in the northwest who were actively involved with starting educational systems. He even said he would be willing for Jesuits to take over St. Leo's "because they would develop schools there, perhaps even a college." Father Hylebos was good friends with Father George Weibel of Gonzaga. Hylebos had delegated Weibel to establish a Jesuit type sodality⁷³ in the parish.⁷⁴ (See the later Section on **St. Leo's School** for the school system finally developed after father Hylebos' retirement.)

Indian Boarding Schools

In 1893, the education of Native Americans became a federal requirement. Prior to that, however, the government and private religious institutes had begun boarding schools. From the 1860s through the 1920s many young people in Washington were separated from their families and sent to boarding school to learn English and wear white man's clothes and adopt his hairstyles.⁷⁵

Early Indian Schools in the Tacoma Area

One of the promises made by the Federal Government at the Treaty of Medicine Creek in 1854, was that a free school would be provided for Indian children. The first school covered by this treaty was built on Squaxin Island. Since this site was about thirty miles west of the Puyallup Reservation it was found not to be practical for the Puyallup children.⁷⁶

Around 1860, near the intersection of East 29th Street and Portland Avenue, an Indian School was established in Tacoma. The location of the school near the Puyallup River and the low nature of the ground made it subject to severe flooding and it therefore had to be abandoned.⁷⁷ The school was moved slightly up the hill to the area where the reservation administration buildings are now located. Thomas Stoyler, presiding chief of the tribe, donated the land. Stoyler had been cultivating the land and had an orchard just

⁷² Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, p. 296.

⁷³ In the Roman Catholic Church a sodality is a lay society formed for devotional or charitable activity.

⁷⁴ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 472. Schoenberg indicates he got this information from Oregon Province Archives, St. Leo's Parish papers and Weibel correspondence.

⁷⁵ Leonard Forsman, *History of Western Washington Native Peoples*, in Robin K Wright, ed., *A Time of Gathering: Native heritage in Washington State*, (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1991), p. 24.

⁷⁶ Education: History of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians,

<http://www.puyalluptribe.com/index.php?nav=history&id=5>, p. 1, accessed March 25, 2009.

⁷⁷ Henry Sicade, *The Cushman Indian School A Brief History*, 1927, no publisher given, (copy in Tacoma Public Library Northwest Room), p. 1. This provides a short six page summary of the schools two phases from 1860 until 1917. A summary of the history of the Cushman Indian School is provided in Cary C. Collins, "Hard Lessons in America: Henry Sicade's History of Puyallup Indian School, 1860 to 1920," *Columbia, The Magazine of Northwest History*, Winter 2000-01, pp. 6, 7. Collins indicates he is summarizing Henry Sicade's original manuscript, which is housed in the Eells Collection, Special Collections Division, at the Washington State Historical Society Research Center.

coming to bear but decided the use of the land for a school would be of more benefit to the tribe. The Puyallup Indian School opened its doors as a boarding school at this new location in 1864. During the first few years the school was mismanaged by the United States government and faced closure.⁷⁸

Henry Sicade commented on the poor conditions at the school during its first few years.

. . . the boys quarters were very illy [*sic*] built. During the cold winter seasons the boys often crawled into the straw to keep warm. Usually the winter seasons were so cold it was with difficulty we managed to comb our hair and often the cold caked our hair so we could not properly comb it . . .

. . . half a day school and half a day work was the system and sometimes all work and no school. The children were always short of clothing and their parents furnished some clothing and shoes. Provisions were always short and we often went home to stock up and those who could not stockup visited some stores and cooked in the woods. When caught in the treacherous act of cooking trout salmon, we were punished or put into jail, this house illy ventilated institution being again revived to house ordinary offenders, and when the employer's stock ran low. Some pretenses werefound to jail a few to cut wood. The older indians [*sic*] were continually after the government employees for free quarters, more clothing and morefood. A bowl of cornmeal with black molasses to sweeten it and a slice of bread and sometimes two, was the usual breakfast, with plenty of water to wash it down. . . .⁷⁹

This institution operated by the United States government was expanded in 1873 and again in 1898.⁸⁰ By 1890 improved management had made this boarding school one that was noted as being one of the better boarding schools. It underwent a scandal in 1919, with the threat of closure, when an investigation of mistreatment of young women was alleged.⁸¹ Because Francis W. Cushman, a Republican congressman from Tacoma fought to stave off closure when plans were made several times to close the school, this school was known as the Cushman School after 1927.⁸² It was finally closed when it was determined by white governments (state and federal) that there were enough local public schools to accommodate the Puyallup children.⁸³

⁷⁸ Education: History of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, p. 1, accessed March 25, 2009.

⁷⁹ Sicade, pp. 2-4.

⁸⁰ Collins, p. 6.

⁸¹ Education: History of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, p. 1.

⁸² Collins, p. 7.

⁸³ Education: History of the Puyallup Tribe of Indians, p. 1.

Early Muckleshoot Schools

The first school on the Muckleshoot Reservation was organized in 1879 by Thomas Plorg and had 12 students.⁸⁴

Beginning in the third quarter of the nineteenth century, many Muckleshoot young people were taken to boarding schools, both government ones on the reservation and private ones off the reservation. They lived at the boarding schools and were released to see their families for only a short time each year. At the schools, students were forbidden to express traditional culture through dress or action. Any use of native language was punished and native religion was forbidden and derided as superstition or devil worship. Students were taught manual labor skills, though few jobs of any kind were available to Native Americans, and long absences from family life kept young people from learning life skills as fishers, hunters, basket makers, and gatherers and users of natural resources.⁸⁵

Prior to the coming of the white settlers, a child learned the language through his mother's songs and stories or his grandmother's teachings. He learned to give thanks each day for the life available to him. Through the elders, a child learned pride in his ancestry. After the white settlers came, the Native American children were taken to government schools and less of the native language was taught.⁸⁶

Maggie Barr, an elderly Muckleshoot women said, in 1980, that when she was three years old she was taken from her home, sent to Catholic school and expected to learn English. She states that this led her to not being able to speak either her Indian language or English very well.⁸⁷ The government schools also required that only English be spoken.

Father Hylebos and Indian Education

Indians played a major role in the life of Father Hylebos and he took a great interest in their welfare. So popular was he with them that in 1883 the Catholic Church put him on the Indian Commission of the Catholic Indian Bureau, Washington, D.C. A dispute was going on between the United States government and the Catholic bishops over the running of Indian schools. Father Hylebos went to Washington, D.C. and was able to help secure an amicable settlement of differences between the U.S. government and the Catholic bishops in charge of Indian schools around the country.⁸⁸ Under President Cleveland, Father Hylebos was named a commissioner to Washington, D.C., going there to represent the Indians and their claims.⁸⁹ Father Hylebos even took the time to become a master of the Indian languages of the area.⁹⁰

In 1888, the Catholics felt there was a great need for a school in addition to the government school which was located on the Puyallup Reservation. The reservation

⁸⁴ Patricia Slettvet Noel, *Muckleshoot Indian History* (Auburn: Auburn School District No. 408, 1980, revised 1985), p. 70.

⁸⁵ Watson, p. v.

⁸⁶ Noel, *Muckleshoot Indian History*, p. 6.

⁸⁷ Noel, *Muckleshoot Indian History*, p. 6.

⁸⁸ Hunt, v. 3, p. 487.

⁸⁹ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

⁹⁰ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

school provided facilities for only 80 Indian school age children. The Catholics felt that training of a more religious nature was needed.⁹¹ Collins gives an excellent discussion, summarizing Sicade's manuscript, on the inefficiency under which the Puyallup Reservation School operated. Depending on the constantly changing representative of the Bureau of Indian Affairs the students got a good education or a poor one.⁹²

Part of the differences between the Catholic Church and the United States government concerning schools mentioned above, was based on the violent resistance of Plains Tribes in the 1870s. This resistance had motivated President Grant to establish a "Peace Policy" which served to quarantine Indians to the reservations. This policy had also put most of the Indian Schools on the reservations under the control of Protestants.⁹³ The Puyallup tribe had come under Roman Catholic influence in the 1840's, but under the Puyallup Agency organized by the United States government they were supervised by Protestants.⁹⁴

Yet school training had become just at that time, more necessary than ever before to the Indian, for it was in that very year that the Indians were first given the right to vote. The temptations and responsibilities involved in the exercise of this right were increased by the fact that the country was rapidly filling up, and the Indians were being more and more brought into contact with the white settlers, most frequently, unfortunately, with those of the lowest type. Many people felt that training more religious in nature than the government school could possibly give was needed to help the Indian overcome these increasing temptations.⁹⁵

⁹¹ Elizabeth Shackleford, "The History of the Puyallup Indian Reservation," (Bachelor's Thesis, College of Puget Sound, June, 1918), p. 26. I have seen two slightly different versions of this thesis, both contain the same words, but the pages are numbered differently. Both versions are on the shelves of the Tacoma Public Library Northwest Room. I have used the version that is bound with Sicade's, *the Cushman Indian School* as this appears to be the original formatting. The other is in a folder by itself and appears to be retyped from the original and uses a newer paragraph formatting with spaces between paragraphs, hence the page numbers come out differently. Shackleford indicates she received much information from discussions with Henry Sicade.

⁹² Collins, pp. 7 – 11.

⁹³ Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) p. 112.

⁹⁴ Robert H. Ruby and John A. Brown, *A Guide to the Indian Tribes of the Pacific Northwest* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1986) p. 168.

⁹⁵ Shackleford, p. 26.

St. George's Indian School Construction

Father Hylebos was one of those feeling the need for more Indian schools. He was so convinced of the urgency of the need that in the summer of 1888, he made a trip east to seek help and money for such an undertaking. By a fortunate chance he met Miss Katherine Drexel, a wealthy Catholic woman of Torresdale, Pennsylvania, who offered to finance an Indian school. He also secured a promise of government help.⁹⁶ The Drexel's made their money as furniture manufacturers.⁹⁷ Father Hylebos scored a victory by obtaining a total appropriation of \$319,000 for support of Catholic Indian schools around the country, some of which was used for St. George's School.⁹⁸ Miss Katherine Drexel later became a nun and as Mother Katherine Drexel continued to raise money for St. George's Indian School and other Indian causes. Pope John Paul II canonized her in 2000.⁹⁹

Upon his return, Father Hylebos at once set about making preparations for St. George's School. One hundred forty two acres of land, only five or six of which had previously been cleared, were purchased from a family of Catholics named O'Lally. The land was deeded to the Bureau of Catholic Indian Missions.¹⁰⁰ (Another source states that 42 acres of land was purchased.)¹⁰¹ This land was just outside the northern border of the Puyallup Reservation. It was just north of the Pierce County–King County boundary and due east of what is now Highway 99. It generally can be considered the same area as the present Gethsemane Cemetery and the plateau just east of the present cemetery.

The original entrance was located on the east side where Interstate 5 now adjoins the property. The road was known as the upper road thru Milton.¹⁰²



Figure 3 - Side View of the three-story St. George's School, probably around 1890. It appears that a work crew made up of students and staff is cleaning up the grounds. Father Hylebos is the second from left in the back. (Courtesy Special Collections, Washington State Historical Society.)

⁹⁶ Shackleford, p. 26.

⁹⁷ Erna Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," *The Tacoma News Tribune*, April 18, 1971, p. not known.

⁹⁸ Bence, "Why Named Hylebos?" p. not known.

⁹⁹ Archives of the Archdiocese of Seattle. Record Group 1040. 1888. St. Georges Indian School. Historical, <http://www.seattlearch.org/ArchdioceseWorking/ArchivesandRecords/History/stgeorge.htm.htm>, p. 1.

¹⁰⁰ Shackleford, pp. 26, 27.

¹⁰¹ Erna Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known. Possibly Bence got the 42 acre figure from p. 26 of Shackleford where 42 acres is given for Cushman Indian School and 142 acres for St. George's Indian School. Based on Noel's reference included elsewhere in this monograph it appears the 142 acre figure is correct.

¹⁰² Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known.

During August of 1888 a three-story frame structure was built on the property.¹⁰³ In addition to the one large building, several smaller buildings were erected on the elevated plateau on the land. The lumber for these buildings had to be brought from Tacoma. Over much of the way, there was no road.¹⁰⁴

Opening of St. George's Indian School

The official name for the school was St. George's Industrial School, but it was normally just referred to as St. George's Indian School.¹⁰⁵

The first occupation was October 19, 1888 when the first teachers arrived. At this time the buildings were complete except that the doors and windows were not in place and since winter was coming on, blankets were hung over the openings. The school officially opened on October 26, 1888.¹⁰⁶ With the start of school, "the first children were brought to the school to receive the rudiments of a secular education and the germs of true Christianity."¹⁰⁷

There were six teachers available when the school opened.¹⁰⁸ Of these, four were sisters of the Order of St. Francis. They arrived directly from the Mother House of their order, Glen Riddle, near Philadelphia. The first superior was Sister Jerome.¹⁰⁹ Two of these died later at the school and were buried on the grounds (see the section relating to St. George's Cemetery). The other two after serving for a few years were transferred to other schools of their order. One of the lay teachers was Miss Esther Stevenson. Miss Drexel as part of her contribution sent Miss Stevensen. She taught up into the 1920s.¹¹⁰

The first superintendent of the school was the Reverend Charles DeDecker,¹¹¹ a young Belgian priest. Charles DeDecker was born in St. Nicolas, Belgium. He started his studies in St. Nicolas and finished his studies at the American College of Louvain. He was ordained a priest in Ghent on June 19, 1886.¹¹² Father Hylebos had met Father DeDecker two to three years previously on a visit to the American College at Louvain Belgium where Father DeDecker was being educated. Father DeDecker promised to request he would be sent to Washington when he received his final ordination.¹¹³ Father DeDecker came to the Nisqually Diocese in 1886 and remained at Vancouver attending to missions in the area and helping in the Cathedral until being appointed to St. George's.

The Right Reverend Bishop Junger appointed Father De Decker as Superintendent of St George's on September 28, 1888.¹¹⁴ Father DeDecker supervised the school up until

¹⁰³ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 343.

¹⁰⁴ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹⁰⁵ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 343.

¹⁰⁶ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹⁰⁷ *Reminiscences and Current Topics of the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon, II*, 2 (February, 1898), p. 23 as quoted in Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 344.

¹⁰⁸ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹⁰⁹ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 343.

¹¹⁰ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹¹¹ The spelling of DeDecker is found both as DeDecker and De Decker in different sources. The spelling DeDecker is used in this monograph.

¹¹² *Reminiscences and Current Topics of the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon*, p. 23.

¹¹³ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹¹⁴ *Reminiscences and Current Topics of the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon*, p. 23. The source spells the name Junger as Yunger. Junger was the longtime bishop of the Nisqually Diocese.

the 1920s. Father DeDecker also assumed responsibility for fourteen churches including those on the Muckleshoot and Nisqually Reservations.¹¹⁵



Figure 4 – Shown in front of the school in this c. 1895 photograph are Father DeDecker (back left) the school superintendent, and Father Hylebos. Also shown are about 55 Native American children in their uniforms along with staff and helpers, both Native American and white. (Courtesy Archives of the Catholic Archdiocese of Seattle.)

As was the general pattern half of each day was used for school and the other half for chores.¹¹⁶ The instruction given at St. George's School was modeled on that given in the government school so that students could transfer from one to the other. Industrial training was an important feature. The girls got domestic science training by doing the necessary cleaning and housework around the school. In the early days the boys helped with clearing of land, erecting new buildings and making roads and bridges. This was the type of work that both the boys and girls would need once they left school. Later there was a small farm established in connection with the school where the boys were trained in farming procedures. Father DeDecker emphasized academic work such as writing and copying drawings. Religious instruction was also emphasized. Protestant students were

¹¹⁵ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹¹⁶ Archives of the Archdiocese of Seattle, p. 1.

accepted as well as Catholics.¹¹⁷ The School accommodated both boarding students and day students.¹¹⁸

In its early years the school was mainly financed by Miss Drexel (later Mother Drexel.) Father DeDecker was also able to provide financial assistance using the money from the estate his wealthy parents in Belgium had left him. Father DeDecker also arranged support for the school from the members of the various church congregations he supervised. Once a year the ladies of the St. Leo's Altar Society from Tacoma visited the school and made gifts of such things as linens, carpets and clothes.¹¹⁹

Costs of Operating St. George's Indian School

The students were not required to pay anything although some did provide funds for their own support. The government paid for a part of the expense as part of their treaties with the Indians.¹²⁰ The first government subsidies were to be granted for only three years for 50 students but the subsidies were continued and sometimes expanded on an ongoing basis during most of the schools operation.¹²¹ Initially the government paid \$27 per pupil per quarter if the school was teaching fifty Washington Indians.¹²² On June 30, 1889 a second contract with the government reduced the number of students they would pay for to 25. A little later, it was required that all these twenty-five come from the Puyallup Consolidated Agency. During the first two years, the expenses of the school amounted to \$6,325, not including the cost of the land. The government paid \$4,099 of that amount.¹²³

In 1891, however, the government Indian Office cancelled this contract, owing to agitation against the Catholics and the school received no government money after that time.¹²⁴ It was claimed by the government that the Agency school on the Puyallup Reservation had ample accommodations for all the Indians¹²⁵.

The current web site for the Puyallup Tribe indicates that here are still some elders alive who remember attending this school.¹²⁶

Controversy over St. George's Indian School

When the school first opened there was bitter rivalry between it and the reservation boarding school. The first year St. George's Indian School had opened a few months after the reservation school. Some of the Indians who had already entered the reservation school were withdrawn by their parents and sent to St. George's Indian School. One Indian, Louis LeClair, was only allowed to transfer after an appeal was made to the

¹¹⁷ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹¹⁸ "Notes on Father Hylebos," p. 2.

¹¹⁹ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹²⁰ Shackleford, p. 27.

¹²¹ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 343.

¹²² Shackleford, p. 27.

¹²³ *Reminiscences and Current Topics of the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon*, p. 23 and Sicade, p. 27.

¹²⁴ Shackleford, p. 27. *Reminiscences and Current Topics of the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon*, p. 23, states that the contract was ended in late 1889.

¹²⁵ *Reminiscences and Current Topics of the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon*, p. 23

¹²⁶ <http://www.puyalluptribe.com/index.php?nav=history&id=5>, p. 1, accessed March 25, 2009.

Commissioner of Indian Affairs.¹²⁷ Some Puyallup parents pleaded with the reservation schools to allow their children to attend non-reservation schools. In 1892, 104 Puyallup Reservation residents declared, "We are citizens of the United States . . . and we demand our rights as citizens" in this case to send their children to the school of their choice.¹²⁸

For most of the life of the school, the capacity was eighty and it was always full.¹²⁹ In addition to Indians, a few whites and blacks were from time to time admitted. The age for initial admission was six to sixteen. Once admitted a student could stay as long as he or she desired. As a rule they would leave at about nineteen when the boys went to work and the girls got married. The school was in operation long enough that many pupils were the children of former students.¹³⁰

At the turn of the century many Indian children attended school, but almost as many did not.¹³¹ This was not that different from whites.

Clearing Bee Work Parties

Another interesting series of event in the history of the school were the "Clearing Bees" that were held in the summers of 1894 and 1895. The general feeling against Catholics in the Tacoma area was bitter and many Catholic men were out of work. At the suggestion of the rector of St. Leo's Church, some of the out of work men donated their time to St George's School to help clear the land. They received board and lodging at the school. Every Monday morning, at 7:30, a hired wagon left from in front of St. Leo's for the school. Normally the men would remain until Saturday. Some worked in this manner throughout the entire summer. Between twelve and twenty-four men would do this each week. Because they were dedicated to the cause as well as getting room and board it was felt they accomplished more then if they were just hired workers.¹³²

Additional Construction at St. George's Indian School

Even though the government was no longer helping with the costs by 1890 new construction was undertaken. In 1890 a laundry and play hall were added for the girls. These buildings were financed with some of the estate money inherited by Father DeDecker.¹³³

Toward the end of September 1890, a new building 62 x 16 feet, one story high was erected. It contains a laundry, a small room for strangers and a bakery with an additional shed containing the bake oven. In August 1892, a woodshed 60 x 18 feet was built. In September 1893, a 400 pound steel bell was placed in the little belfry which ornaments the top of the roof.

¹²⁷ Shackleford, p. 28 and Alexandra Harmon, *Indians in the Making* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998) p. 152.

¹²⁸ Harmon, p. 152.

¹²⁹ Shackleford, p. 28

¹³⁰ Shackleford, p. 28.

¹³¹ Harmon, p. 153.

¹³² Shackleford, p. 28.

¹³³ Shackleford, p. 28.

Gradually the land is cleared of the heavy timber, about 20 acres being now under cultivation and two acres in orchard.¹³⁴

According to Shackleford a church was added in 1905.¹³⁵ Bence reported in a newspaper article that she checked with the chancery records at St. James Cathedral in Seattle, where records were kept and the date for the chapel addition was 1904. This church became the area Catholic Church until one was built in Fife.¹³⁶

In 1924, the several units of the growing institution acquired a central heating system.¹³⁷ Even though the depression was on some other improvements were made between 1930 and 1935.¹³⁸

In 1935 the original 1888 unit was torn down and a dozen separate buildings including the chapel were connected together in one large 30 foot by 230 foot main structure consisting of two stories with three wings. Girls occupied the north wing, boys the south wing, and the chapel and sisters quarters were in the central wing.¹³⁹



Figure 5 - This photograph is of the new 1935 construction. (Courtesy Special Collections, Washington State Historical Society.) This photo is also used on the Puyallup Tribe web site but the actual building use or date is not described (www.puyallup-tribe.com/index.php?nav=history&id=5, accessed March 30, 2009.)

Closing of St. George's Indian School

St. George's Indian School was closed in 1936 and the 142 acres fell into disuse and deterioration. Apparently, in the middle of the depression, the school found it hard to raise money for support. Beginning in 1915, local Indian children were allowed to attend regular public schools, but not many did.¹⁴⁰ Also in the late 1920's, the Federal reservation schools around the country were being closed with the states taking over the

¹³⁴ *Reminiscences and Current Topics of the Ecclesiastical Province of Oregon*, p. 23

¹³⁵ Shackleford, p. 28

¹³⁶ Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known.

¹³⁷ Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known.

¹³⁸ Archives of the Archdiocese of Seattle, p. 1.

¹³⁹ Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known.

¹⁴⁰ Noel, p. 72.

education of all Indian children.¹⁴¹ The Cushman Government School had been closed in June 1920.¹⁴² The last Indian Bureau School in Washington State was closed in 1932 with the students being put into public schools.¹⁴³

During the Second World War, the land and buildings were used to build St. George's Apartments, which were intended to ease the housing shortage.¹⁴⁴ For a short period of time the apartments were full. Then after the war ended other apartments and homes became available and the stalwart remains of St. George's Indian School stood empty, abandoned and the buildings deteriorated. For over twenty years a fading "For Rent" sign stood at the entrance off Highway 99. The remainders of the school buildings and apartments building were razed in 1971.¹⁴⁵ The Seattle Catholic Archdiocese in 1971 plotted the acreage for a cemetery.¹⁴⁶ Today nothing remains of the school facilities. Only several small signs on the grounds of the present Gethsemane Cemetery mark the site of the former school.

The existence of the school demonstrated what the Catholic Church felt was a need to educate the Indians both in a secular way and into the Catholic faith. Similar schools had existed in other parts of Washington as well as Idaho and Montana. "It bore witness to the concern of the church for Indian children at a time and in a place where no one seemed to care."¹⁴⁷

But there was something anachronistic about St. George's: it was too little too late. The Indians along the coast by this time had little or no tribal identity. With rare exceptions, their collective existence in or near population centers of the West had ceased to be, at least temporarily. During this very decade, in fact, the Indian population of the United States reached its lowest point in history.¹⁴⁸

Bence reported that more than 3,000 had attended the school during its 48 years of operation.¹⁴⁹ Overall the school had a very successful existence. It had been filled to capacity most of the time and those in attendance received more than a superficial education.

¹⁴¹ Harmon, p. 318n53.

¹⁴² Collins, p. 11.

¹⁴³ Noel, p. 72.

¹⁴⁴ Ernie Olson, a member of the Historical Society of Federal Way, lived in these apartments for a short time.

¹⁴⁵ Erna Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known.

¹⁴⁶ Nathalie Weber, "A century of history," *Federal Way News*, October 10, 1979, p. A-3

¹⁴⁷ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 345.

¹⁴⁸ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 343.

¹⁴⁹ Erna Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known.

Naming of Hylebos Creek

The original Indian name for Hylebos Creek was haxtl'. This derived from an Indian fishing village, shaxtl'abc, located on the present Hylebos Waterway on the Tacoma tide flats.¹⁵⁰ It is interesting how Hylebos Creek got its current name. It is said a surveyor friend of Father Hylebos engaged in the mapping work around St. George's Indian School indicated the name Hylebos Creek on his maps. Previous to this the name the Indians around St George's School used "Koch Creek," as the name for the creek. The name Hylebos Creek thus became the name used for the creek.¹⁵¹

He [Father Hylebos] finished lunch and spread open the map. He studied it for a minute. Then he noticed the creek wound through a section of his parish which included the mining districts of Pierce and King County. The creek rose near the St. George's Indian Mission that he, Father Hylebos, had founded, and ran downward to empty into Commencement Bay.

This was the creek his Indian friends call "Koch." But what was written on the map in large letters alongside of the winding creek? The letters spelled out HYLEBOS CREEK. "It seemed our surveyor friend has given the creek that I know so well – my name now." Father Hylebos chuckled with satisfaction.

"Eh Bien! He would do such a thing!"¹⁵²

This led to the arm of Commencement Bay into which the creek flows, to be called Hylebos Waterway. When the bridge over this area was built, it became Hylebos Bridge. As a final development, the wetlands that contribute to the origin of the creek have now become the Federal Way West Hylebos Wetlands Park.

St. George's Cemetery

Adjoining St. George's Indian School there had been a cemetery. Today there is some evidence to indicate that a cemetery existed in connection with St. George's School. It is estimated that at one time about 250 persons were buried there. Records indicate that Indians, nuns and pioneers were buried in the cemetery until the early 1920's.¹⁵³ The exact burial plot location and the identity of most of those interred is sketchy at best. Often Indians assumed European surnames because the Indian names were too difficult for the white man to pronounce. Those European surnames frequently were inscribed on the gravestones shading the true identity of the person buried.

Most of the graves were moved to a Tacoma Cemetery many years ago. Vandals have heavily damaged those that remain.

Today the small hillside is marred by gaping holes – the calling card of trashers who excavated the graves in search of Indian treasures- and the

¹⁵⁰ Marian W. Smith, *The Puyallup-Nisqually* (New York: AMS Press, 1940; 1969) p. 10.

¹⁵¹ "HYLEBOS, Man Behind the Name," p. 3.

¹⁵² "Father Peter Francis Hylebos," *Tacoma News Tribune*, August 15, 1965, p. not known.

¹⁵³ Weber, p. A-3.

mostly broken and toppled headstones.¹⁵⁴

When Interstate 5 was built, part of the east side of the school property just outside the cemetery was sold for Interstate 5.¹⁵⁵

In 1971, after the final school buildings were razed, the Catholic Church began constructing the present Gethsemane Cemetery.¹⁵⁶ St. George's Cemetery is on land just a few hundred feet east of the present cemetery space.

By 1979 the St. Georges Cemetery site, "was overgrown by ferns and blackberry vines, only a few headstones remain, most of them toppled by vandals. . . . The oldest grave identified in the mission cemetery is marked 1889, the year after Catholic Missionary Peter Hylebos opened St. Georges Indian mission. . . ." ¹⁵⁷

In June of 1980 the Catholic Church donated the land that they owned, which covered the original St. George's Cemetery, to the Puyallup Tribe.

I am delighted to be able to offer to you and your Indian brothers and sisters on behalf of the Church of Western Washington, a gift of property of approximately 17 acres abutting your original reservation, including a portion of Hylebos Creek and all of St. George's Cemetery.¹⁵⁸

It appears that the Catholic Church had been concerned about keeping the creek area in a pristine condition and in keeping St. George's Cemetery maintained.

Being able to make a gift, knowing the deep historical significance of the property to your tribe, gives all of us in the Catholic Church a special pleasure. We, too, have much of our history associated with this land. We will welcome you as neighbors knowing your plans to pursue projects utilizing the land in an environmentally sensitive and meaningful manner. . . . [It] is our intention to encourage your use of the portion of Hylebos Creek located on the other part of our Gethsemane property. The Catholic Church is totally in accord with your desire to maintain the creek in its natural state and to establish fishery enhancement projects wherever possible.¹⁵⁹

The original St. George's Cemetery area was unfortunately not cleaned up from the earlier vandalism and is not currently being maintained by either the Gethsemane Cemetery staff or the Puyallup Indian Nation. Access is almost impossible as the area is overgrown in spring and summer and very muddy in fall and winter.

¹⁵⁴ Weber, p. A-3.

¹⁵⁵ Bence, "Time, Wreckers Vanquish Old Indian School," p. not known.

¹⁵⁶ Weber, p. A-3.

¹⁵⁷ Weber, p. A-3.

¹⁵⁸ Raymond G. Hunthausen, Archbishop of Seattle, letter to Puyallup Indian Nation, June 24, 1980, p. 1., in the files of the Historical Society of Federal Way.

¹⁵⁹ Hunthausen, p. 1.

Hope to become a Monsignor

In addition to his work among the Indians and to his duties as pastor of St. Leo's, Father Hylebos held the office of vicar general of the diocese of Seattle for 25 years. He went to Rome in 1910 and was accorded a personal interview with the Pope. During the trip to Rome he also visited his home and family in Belgium, but soon returned to Tacoma.¹⁶⁰

When the founder of the church in Seattle, Father Prefontaine, was promoted to monsignor, it was natural for Father Hylebos, the founder of the church in Tacoma to expect the same honors. Father Hylebos was disappointed that nothing was offered so he took action himself. In 1910 he made a voyage to Belgium under the guise of visiting relatives. He appeared to have other plans however as he continued on and visited Rome. His confidante later noted that he "had an audience with the Holy Father [and] saw the Rector of the French Belgian College at Rome with a view of securing a monsignorship for himself.... The final answer from the Roman correspondent was that nothing could be done except through the Ordinary, Rt. Rev. Bishop Odea."¹⁶¹

Father Hylebos returned to Tacoma in December 1910. In early 1911 he was called to Seattle by Bishop Odea who apparently was not happy with Father Hylebos' breach of the chain of command.¹⁶² "A stormy scene occurred – it ended with Fr. H. writing out his resignation at the suggestion of the Bp."¹⁶³

Bishop Odea reportedly called or telegraphed Father Weibel, who had substituted for Father Hylebos, while he was in Europe, and said, "If you want St. Leo's, Tacoma, see me immediately."¹⁶⁴



Figure 6 – Father Hylebos, probably around 1915. (Source unknown, in the files of the HSFW.)

Father Hylebos' Retirement

Father Hylebos resigned as pastor of St. Leo's in early February 1911. He had served as the leader of the Catholic Church in Tacoma for 31 years. During his pastorate, St. Leo's had grown from 18 communicantes to 7,000. At the time of his retirement St. Leo's was entirely free of debt.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁰ "HYLEBOS, Man Behind the Name," p. 3.

¹⁶¹ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 472. Schoenberg states he got this material from Oregon Pvince Archives, St. Leo's Parish papers and memorandum on St. Leo's by Father George Weibel, S.J.

¹⁶² This is my assumption as the actual reason Odea met with Hylebos was never made public.

¹⁶³ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 472. Schoenberg indicates this information came from Weibel, probably contained in memorandum on St. Leo's by Father George Weibel, S.J.

¹⁶⁴ Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, p. 296.

¹⁶⁴ Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, p. 296.

¹⁶⁵ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

Rev. Father George C. Van Goethem, who came to Tacoma in late 1910 from St. Mary's in Sedro-Woolley, Washington, as assistant to Father Hylbos was named by Bishop O'Dea to be the acting pastor. Rev. Father Ignatius Vasta, S. J., was named as the new assistant. Father Hylebos retained his office as vicar general of the diocese of Seattle and remained available to perform such duties as the bishop assigned him.¹⁶⁶

In 1911, St. Leo Church came to be officially managed by the Jesuits when John Cunningham, S. J. became pastor.¹⁶⁷

Father Hylebos lived in what he felt was a humiliating retirement. He lived in a little home near the church he had built and each morning he offered Mass on a small side altar.¹⁶⁸

For a time in 1914 Father Hylebos served as an assistant priest at the new St. Martins Abbey in Olympia. (This later developed into St. Martin's College.) Father Hylebos' function was mostly honorary but it shows he had good relations with the Benedictines.¹⁶⁹

St. Leo's School

Father Hylebos' desire for a school system was vindicated in 1912. Father John Cunningham, S. J., the first Jesuit Pastor to be officially connected with St. Leo's arrived a few weeks after Father Hylebos' resignation in 1911 and was determined to justify Father Hylebos' desire for a parish school by building one.

On September 17, 1912 the new St. Leo's Grammar and High School was opened to its first students. Bishop Odea dedicated the seventeen hundred student capacity building on November 17, 1912. Happily the venerable old founder of the parish, Father Peter Hylebos was there to see it.¹⁷⁰

In 1926 two brothers, Fathers David and John MacAstocker, came to St. Leo Catholic Church. Shortly thereafter they built Bellarmine Preparatory and moved the boys' high school there.¹⁷¹ Bellarmine opened in 1928 in one remote building on its present site. In 1974 the St. Leo High School for girls consolidated with Bellarmine as a co-ed high school.¹⁷² The grade school remained open until 1976.¹⁷³

Father Hylebos' Death

An influenza epidemic infected the Tacoma area in the fall of 1918. Father Peter Hylebos died of influenza on Thanksgiving Day, November 28, 1918. He was 69 at his death. He had been scheduled to speak that afternoon at the Rialto Theater at an ecumenical Thanksgiving service. Both Catholics and Protestants felt a great loss.¹⁷⁴

¹⁶⁶ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

¹⁶⁷ www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 1, accessed May 13, 2009.

¹⁶⁸ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 473.

¹⁶⁹ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 489, 490.

¹⁷⁰ *Northwest Progress*, November 1912, no page number and Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 473.

¹⁷¹ www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 2, accessed June 29, 2009.

¹⁷² www.bellarmineprep.org/page.php?id=9, p. 1, accessed June 29, 2009.

¹⁷³ www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 2, accessed June 29, 2009.

¹⁷⁴ "Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.," p. 1.

From the very first Father Hylebos was an enthusiastic Tacoman [*sic*]
And his faith in the city never wavered. He made extensive purchases
of land in what in those days were wild woods and was told by many
persons that he was “crazy,” and replied that some day a great city
would certainly spring up on this magnificent harbor.¹⁷⁵

Father Hylebos is buried at Calvary Cemetery in Tacoma. (This was another tract of
land which he had purchased and donated).¹⁷⁶ Calvary Cemetery, located at 5212 70th
Street W, Tacoma, WA 98467, consists of 55 acres and was formed in 1905.¹⁷⁷ Father
Hylebos has a large outdoor monument erected in his honor over the site of his burial.
The monument appears to be made of concrete and stone. The base is approximately
sixteen feet by sixteen feet. There are three steps up to a platform that has a full size altar.
On top of the altar is a ten-foot cross with a full size Jesus. Around the foot of the cross
are full size depictions of John and the two Mary's. Overall I estimate the monument to
be about nineteen feet high. Father Hylebos is buried beneath the altar. On the back of the
altar are the words:

IN MEMORY OF
VERY REV. P. F. HYLEBOS, V G
1ST RESIDENT PASTOR OF TACOMA
R.I.P.
BORN DEC. 29TH 1848 – DIED NOV. 28TH 1918
ERECTED MAY 30TH 1921

Note that the date of birth given on the monument is December 29, 1848. Most sources
such as the Memorial read at his funeral, give the birth date as December 27, 1848.¹⁷⁸

Father Hylebos is buried in the center of the section called the Sisters Plot. The Sisters
Plot represents the burial of about 100 sisters around Father Hylebos' monument (all died
after Father Hylebos.) The Sister's Plot was installed around Father Hylebos as a
memorial to his effort to bring various groups of sisters to the area to work in the schools
and hospitals he helped found.

The internment records of the cemetery indicate Father Hylebos died of lumbar
pneumonia. The records indicate he was buried on December 2, 1918. The records
indicate that Cassidy and Allen were the morticians.¹⁷⁹ The receptionist at the cemetery
told me that this is now the Gaffney Funeral Home.¹⁸⁰

At the time of his death he controlled for the Catholic Church investments in real estate
worth about \$80,000.¹⁸¹

¹⁷⁵ “Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.,” p. 1.

¹⁷⁶ “Notes on Father Hylebos,” p. 2.

¹⁷⁷ “Calvary Cemetery,” brochure, no date.

¹⁷⁸ Arthur, p. 1.

¹⁷⁹ Calvary Cemetery Internment Record for Father Peter F. Hylebos, no date.

¹⁸⁰ Discussion with receptionist, Calvary Cemetery, October 8, 2003.

¹⁸¹ “Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.,” p. 1.

Upon his death the Washington State Historical Society prepared a memorial in honor of Father Hylebos. In part it reads as follows:

Your Committee on Memorials regrets to have to report that on Thanksgiving Day, November 28th, 1918, the well-beloved Rev. Peter Francis Hylebos departed this life in the city of Tacoma, with whose history he was intimately connected for almost thirty-nine years. . . . His enthusiasm for the city was an inspiration to newcomers, and with his many lovable qualities, made him one of the most popular men that ever lived in Tacoma. His protestant friends could be numbered by the thousand, many of whom were on the most intimate terms with him and constant visitors at his Parochial home. He was so open-hearted, so full of human sympathy, so cheerful, and so liberal and tolerant in all matters, that his loss will be keenly felt. As a member of the Society, your Committee suggests that this brief memorial be spread upon our Minutes, and that the rendition of further tribute to his memory be committed to our worthy Secretary.¹⁸²

In 1990, Ilene Marckx, representing the Wetlands of West Hylebos organization, recommended that the Federal Way School District consider naming the new West Campus Elementary School for Father Hylebos.

[Father Peter Francis Hylebos was] a man who undoubtedly had more beneficial influence on the early people of Federal Way than any other person. . . .

The name "Hylebos" derives from that of a well-known and much loved figure of the last quarter of the last century and the first quarter of this one, both in Tacoma and the future Federal Way.

In addition to his church and community duties, he organized and had built a school for the children of native Americans in the Spring Valley area as well as guiding and helping the entire native population. . . . Father Hylebos was regarded as a great man in his own life and times.

On his death nearly every newspaper in the state carried a prominent write-up, editorial and eulogy. . . . Could an elementary school in the area of his early labors do less than recognize him? . . .

My husband and self in donating the original acreage for a local State Park have refused all suggestions that it be named for us preferring instead that this early day priest and teacher be memorialized in this way. My having been a teacher for many years played no small part in this.¹⁸³

The Federal Way School District did not name the new school after Father Hylebos.

¹⁸² Arthur, pp. 1 – 3.

¹⁸³ Ilene Marckx, letter to Federal Way School District, March 14, 1990, in the files of the Historical Society of Federal Way, p. 1.

Fire Destroys Third St. Leo Church

St. Leo's Church, the huge wood structure built by Father Hylebos in 1903, with the remnants of Bryan's Wigwam was completely destroyed by fire on Monday afternoon, December 1, 1919. More than five thousand people witnessed the conflagration. The loss was said to be \$75,000.¹⁸⁴ All that was left of the church was the charred foundation.¹⁸⁵ A temporary church was improvised as soon as possible by using the basement with the addition of a new roof, altars, and pews.¹⁸⁶

The parishioners planned to rebuild a new permanent church but the formal rebuilding was delayed because of debts on the school. The school, which fortunately was not damaged in the fire, was an overly crowded building that housed both grade and high schools. A new school for boys was urgently needed. Some of the parishioners insisted that the church must come first while others insisted the new school should come first. In actuality there was no money for either and little likelihood of getting any since the mortgage on the original school was still unpaid.¹⁸⁷ The people of St. Leo's Parish worshipped in the school gym as a temporary church until 1921 when they started using the restored church basement. Over the years several building and renovation projects have again made St. Leo a thriving church congregation. This church basement is still used today as part of the Fourth St. Leo Church. Today 730 families from 62 zip codes make up the faith community at St. Leo's.¹⁸⁸

Pronunciation of Hylebos

Some of Father Hylebos' relatives came to the Tacoma area in 1989.¹⁸⁹ The reason they came was to help celebrate the one hundredth anniversary of St. Joseph's Hospital in Tacoma that Father Hylebos had helped found.¹⁹⁰ They agreed that the French-Belgium name is often mispronounced. The correct way is "HYLA-BOE." They indicated however that "HYLE-BUSS" would be acceptable.¹⁹¹

King County Chinook Building

In 2007 the King County government built a new office building in Seattle. Each of the county council members selected a name for one of the floors in the office building in honor of someone important in their district. On January 18, 2008, King County Council member Pete von Reichbauer announced that the seventh floor of King County's

¹⁸⁴ Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 507.

¹⁸⁵ Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, p. 349.

¹⁸⁶ *Tacoma Daily Ledger*, December 2, 1919, page number not known and Schoenberg, *A History of the Catholic Church in the Pacific Northwest*, p. 507.

¹⁸⁷ Schoenberg, *Paths to the Northwest*, pp. 349, 350. The boys' high school, now known as Bellarmine Preparatory School, was finally built and opened on September 4, 1928 after much quarreling and some scandal. Schoenberg discusses the events surrounding the building of Bellarmine on pages 350-355.

¹⁸⁸ www.stleoparish.org/about/history.htm, p. 1, accessed May 13, 2009.

¹⁸⁹ Marckx, letter to Federal Way School District, p. 1.

¹⁹⁰ Email, Cathy Bunger to Dick Caster, "Father Hylebos," July 4, 2000.

¹⁹¹ Marckx, letter to Federal Way School District, p. 1.

Chinook Building would be named in honor of Father Peter Hylebos. The building and floors were dedicated on Friday, January 25, 2008. The Chinook Building is located at 401 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle.¹⁹²

A plaque placed on the seventh floor summarizes Father Hylebos' accomplishments.

Floor 7: Father Peter Francis Hylebos (1848 - 1918) - Advocate on behalf of Tacoma's Chinese residents who faced persecution in 1885. He supported underprivileged Native American communities near the present day Muckleshoot Reservation and built churches, hospitals, orphanages, and schools across the South Sound region. Hylebos Creek near the former St. George's Indian School just north of the county line is named in his honor. The wetlands that contribute to the origin of the creek are now known as the West Hylebos Wetlands. Named by Council member Pete von Reichbauer.¹⁹³

Hylebos Washington

In February 2009, a post card was found on eBay that showed a postmark for Hylebos Wash., dated Dec 21, 1923. Up until this discovery a town or post office by the name Hylebos was not known by the author. Since the post card was discovered, it has been learned that the Hylebos post office operated from 1916-1933 in Pierce County.¹⁹⁴ The Tacoma Public Library Washington Place Name Database indicates that Hylebos was the name of a post office at St. George's Indian School.¹⁹⁵ The post office named for Father Hylebos began operation two years before his death in 1918, and stayed in operation until shortly before the school closed.

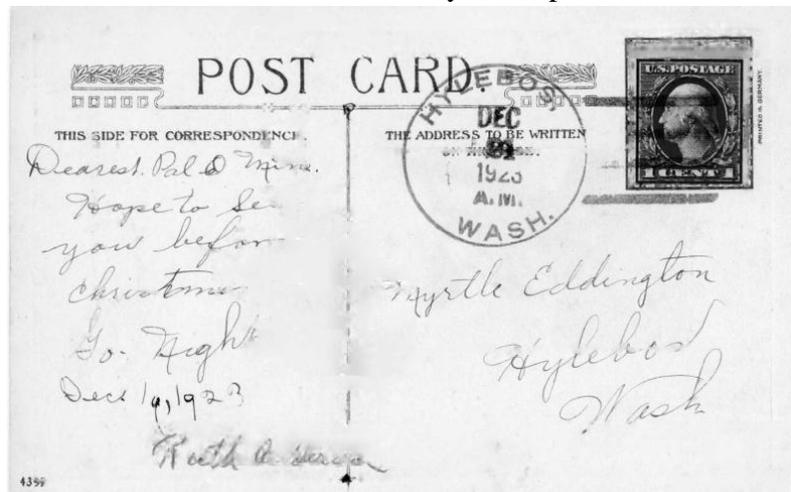


Figure 6 – Post card showing postmark Hylebos Wash. (In the files of the HSFW.)

¹⁹² www.kingcounty.gov/council/news/2008/January/PvR_Chinook.aspx, pp. 1, 2. accessed June 6, 2009.

¹⁹³ www.kingcounty.gov/council/news/2008/January/chinook.aspx, p. 2, accessed June 29, 2009.

¹⁹⁴ www.postalhistory.com, accessed May 19, 2009.

¹⁹⁵ <http://search.tacomapubliclibrary.org/wanames/browsewpn.asp>, accessed June 20, 2009.

Conclusions

Father Peter Hylebos was a great influence on the western half of the state of Washington during the late 1800s and early 1900s. He would start with relatively nothing in an area and build churches, schools and hospitals. He had a great knack of getting people to donate to causes both with money and labor. He mixed well in both the religious and secular worlds and was able to work with Protestants as well as Roman Catholics. He helped the Indians as well as whites and helped minorities such as the Chinese when needed.

“Father Hylebos [had] never been the pastor of a church he did not build and he never left a place where he built a church with any debt behind him.”¹⁹⁶

He is now recognized by Catholics and non-Catholics as one of the real builders of Tacoma, the Puget Sound region and the Federal Way area.

Hunt summarizes Father Hylebos' career as follows:

It is not alone in the development of the material resources of a new country that courage, determination and perseverance are displayed, for these heroic qualities are as marked in the lives of the pioneer representatives of the church as among any other class of men whatsoever. Moreover, they must add to those characteristics a deep insight into the spiritual needs of men and a never flagging zeal for their faith. Such a man the Rt. Rev. Father Peter Hylebos has proved himself to be and in addition he has manifested administrative ability of a high order, wisely directing the interests under his care as they grew with the development of the village into the metropolitan city [area] of today. . . . He has gained not only the honors in his church and the sincere affections of those of his faith throughout the diocese but has also won a high place in the esteem and warm regards of the people of Tacoma [and the area] without regard to creed or church affiliation.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹⁶ “Biography of the Rt. Rev. Father Hylebos V. G.,” p. 4.

¹⁹⁷ Hunt, v. 3, pp. 484, 485.