



Stev Ominski

5170,





*My father and grandfather used to tell me how it was before the white men came, when Indians from all over would gather every year for the annual salmon fishery. It was beautiful then, thousands coming for many miles.*

*You could hear them shouting welcomes as they arrived, the dancing, the singing, the trading, the games, the races, always the hearty hugs – and the FISH!*

*The fish were sometimes so thick that it seemed that they filled the river.*

Spokane elder Alex Sherwood 1973

Gustavus Sohon 1854



James Madison Alden 1860: Falls of the Spokane Private Collection



*The number of fish ascending the river is perfectly extraordinary. The water seems perfectly alive with them, and as many as a dozen have been counted in the air at one time*

Lt. Charles Wilson, 1860



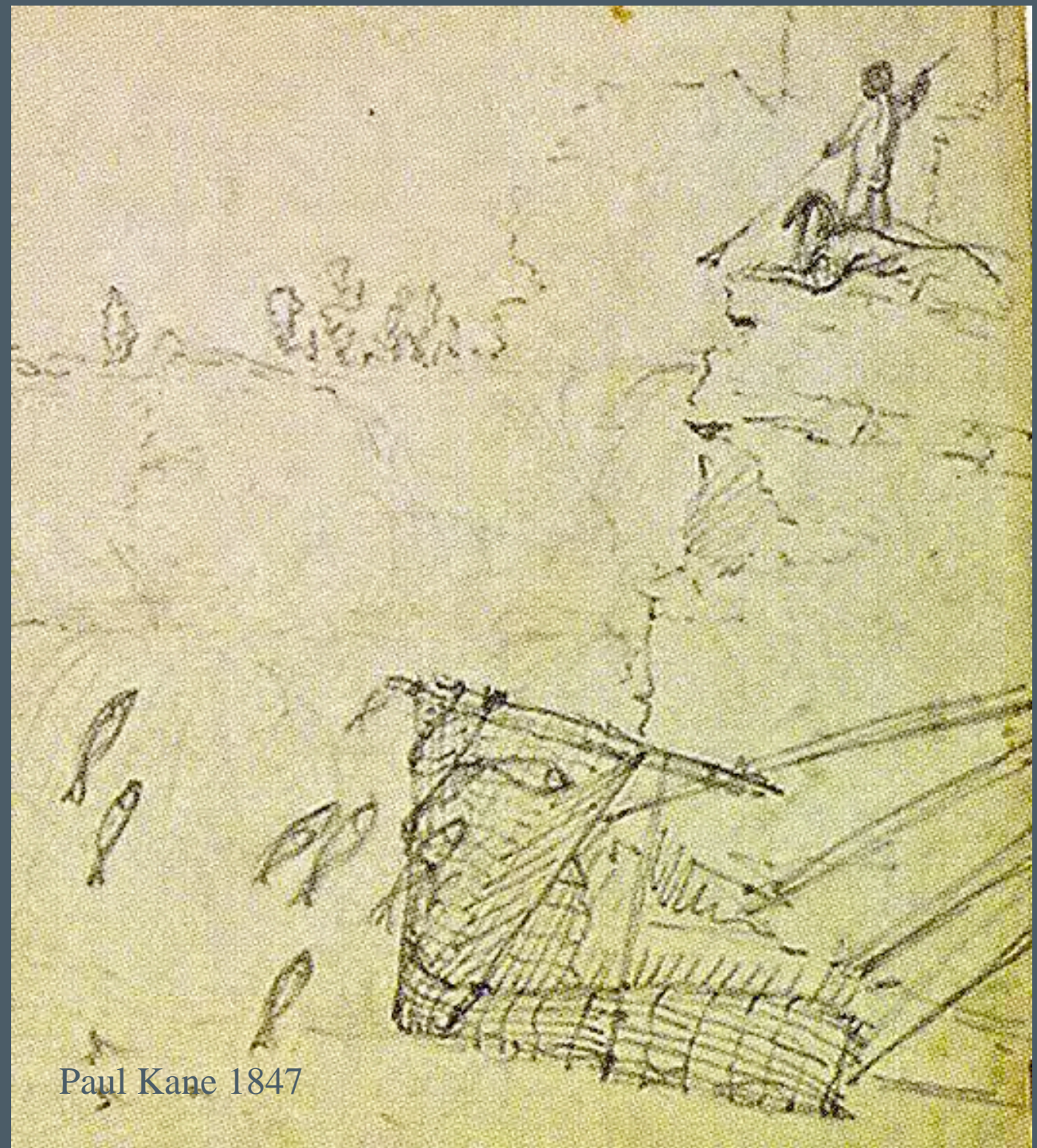
Paul Kane 1847



*Salmon are caught in a large wicker basket, suspended from the rocks at one end of the falls and projecting lightly into the water. At the foot of the rock there is an eddy, and the salmon here make their chief effort to leap the falls.*

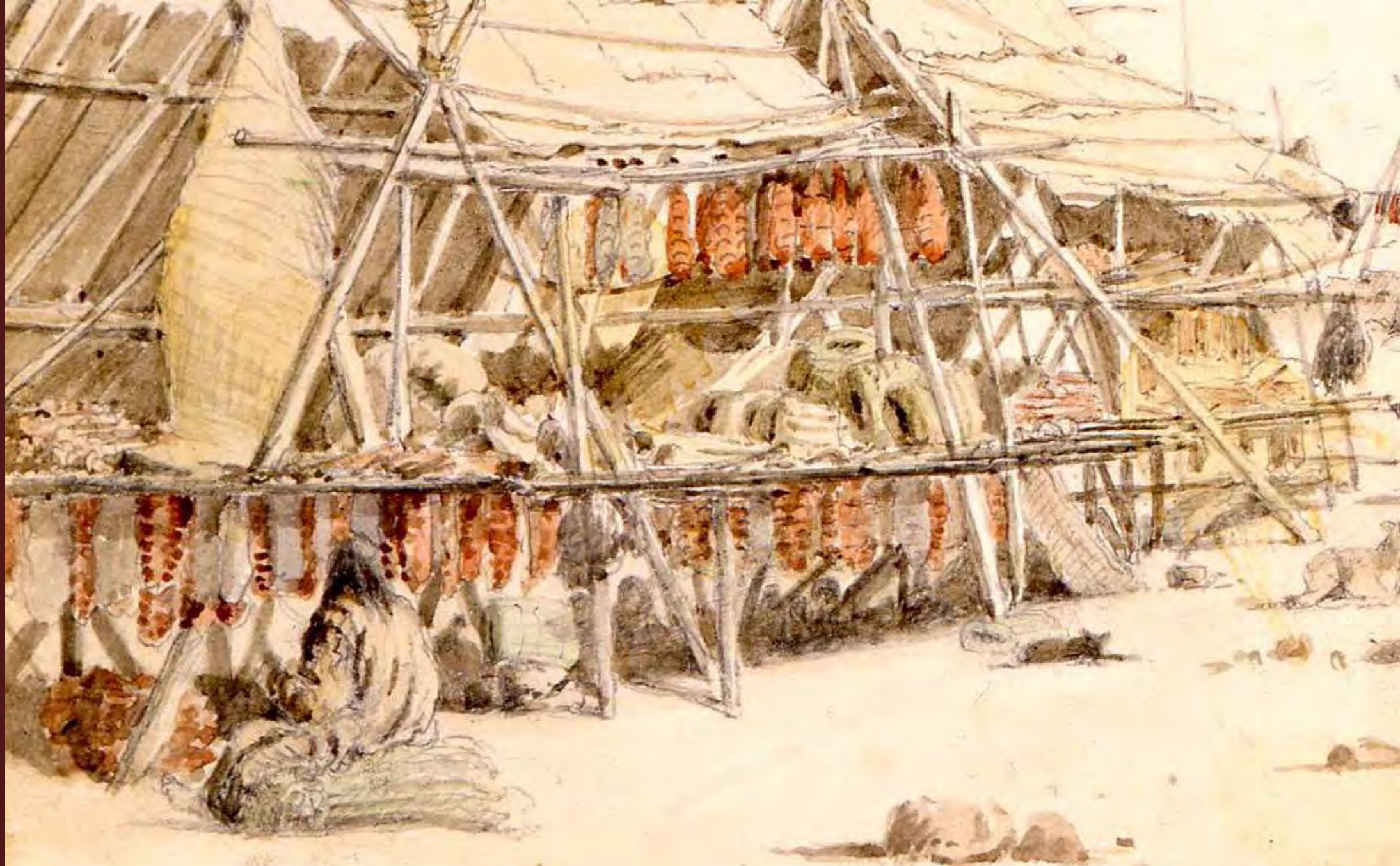
*The greater number fail to clear the rock, may leap right into the basket, while others strike their noses against the rock and fall back helplessly into the trap below.*

Charles Wilson



Paul Kane 1847





Paul Kane 1847



*In the early 1800s there were many large trees, tall grass, prairie chickens, ruffed grouse, and snowshoe hares found near Hangman Creek. Serviceberry, willow and cottonwood trees lined the banks, cooled the stream and brought salmon, trout and whitefish up Hangman Creek. The Coeur d'Alene Tribe needed these fish to help them survive the winter months.*

Coeur d'Alene elder Felix Aripa



Lower Hangman Creek



*The Indians took the fish out at a shoal near the flat at the mouth of Hangman Creek. They had traps set there and besides they would spear the fish and hook them out in all sorts of ways.*

*They would build high scaffolds of willow limbs and dry the fish without salt. The Indians who came in from outside packed their fish and took it home.*

James N. Glover 1873

Paul Kane 1847





*Then you come up to where the  
Little Spokane and Spokane River  
come together, and that's where the  
big fishing place is, because on  
account of the two rivers.  
The Little Spokane is known for  
steelhead fishing there, and the  
main river is salmon.*

Alex Sherwood 1968

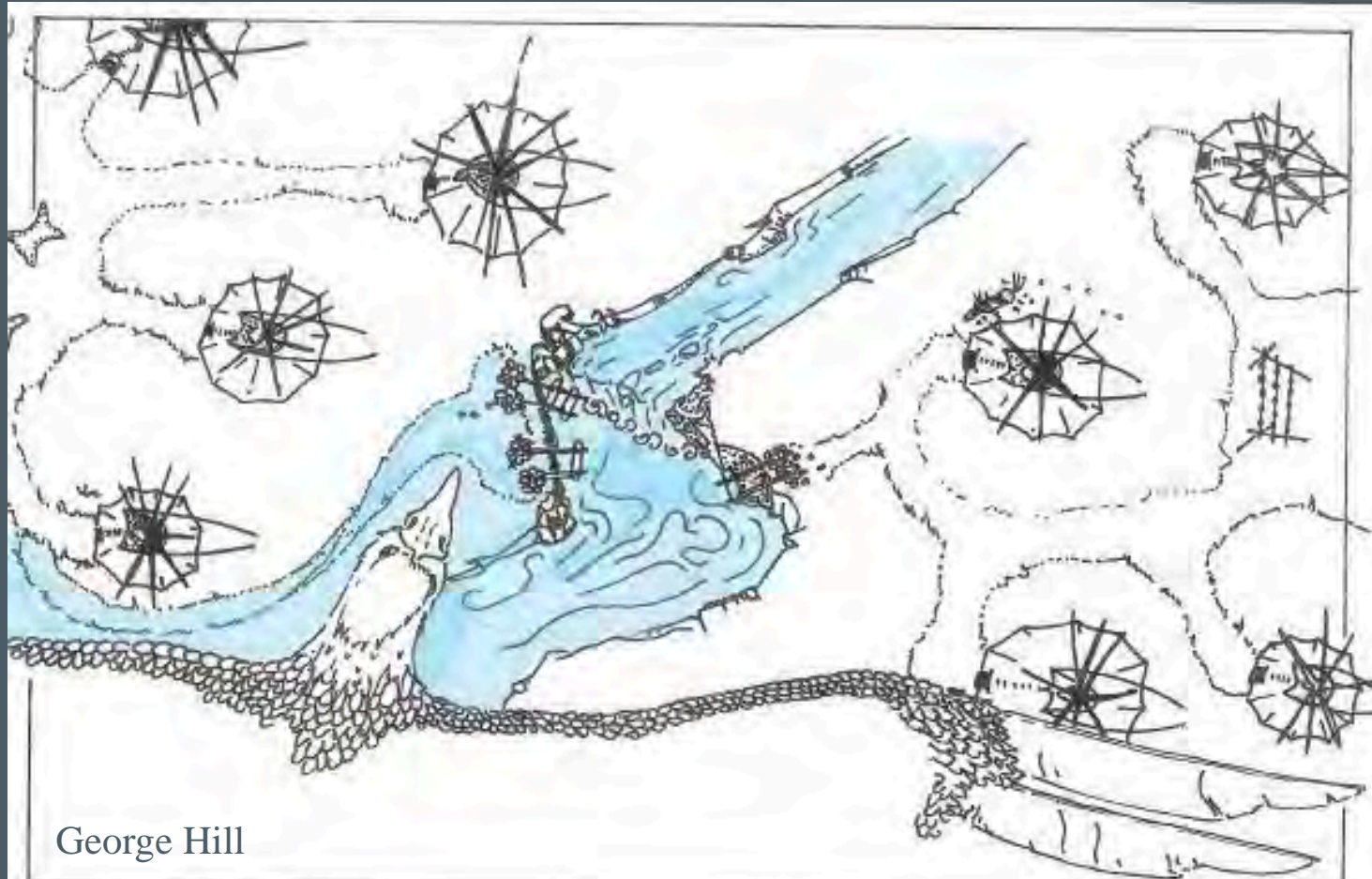




*The flat between the two rivers was a great meeting place for Indians—Spokane, Colville, Pend Oreille, Coeur d'Alene, Moses' and Nez Perce tribes. They met and camped here in the greatest friendship.*

*During the summer season there was from one hundred to a thousand Indians camped on the flats by the river catching and drying fish.*

George Heron



George Hill

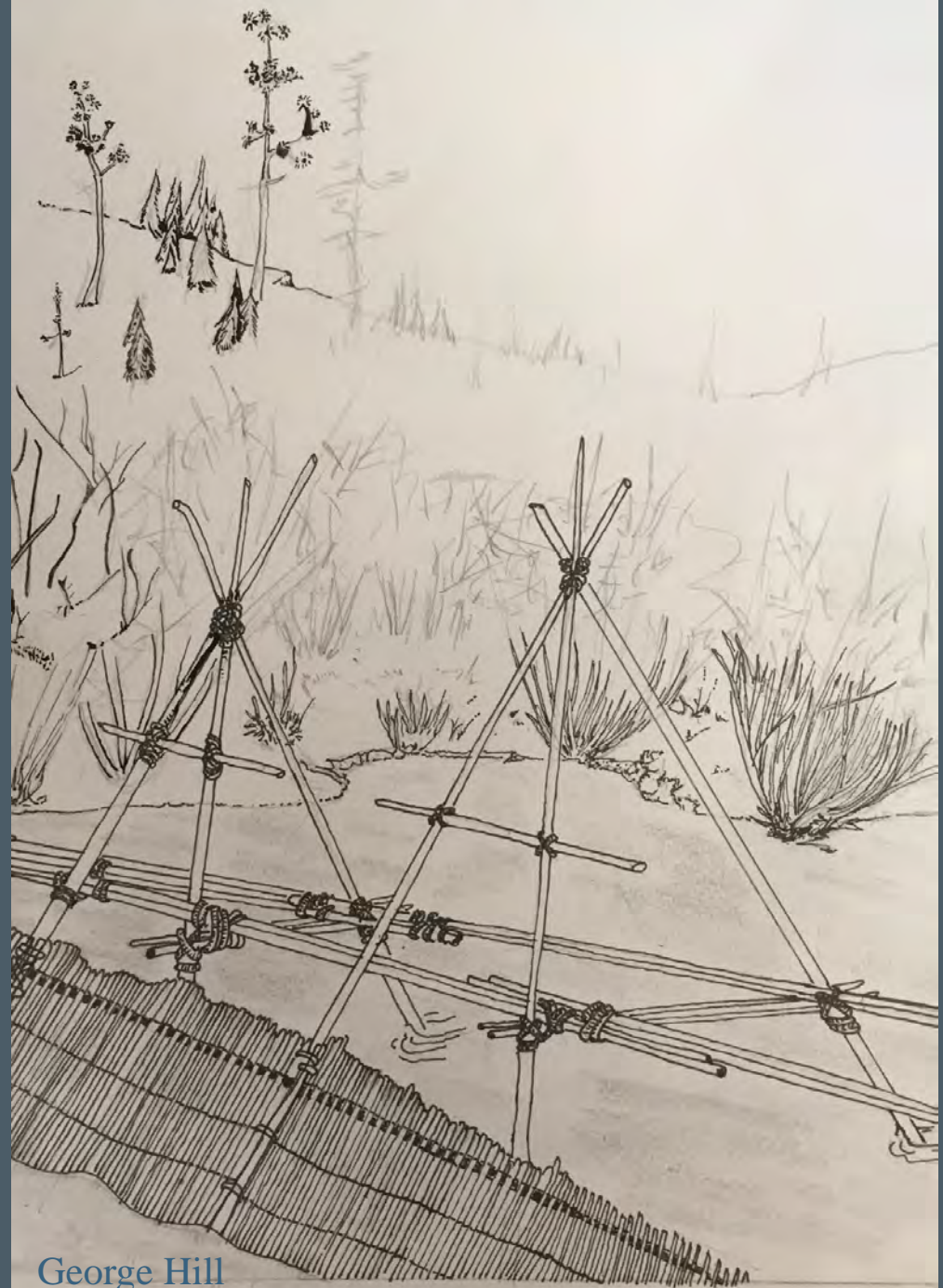


*The principal trap was maintained in the Little Spokane a short distance above the mouth.*

*It was made by setting up piers across the river, formed of poles erected on the form of a teepee.*

*Horizontal poles were lashed across to these piers, and a basket work of willows bound on them.*

George Heron



George Hill



*If I judged correctly, I saw there at one time near 1000 persons, and the number was increasing rapidly. From four to eight hundred salmon were taken in a day weighing forty pounds apiece.*

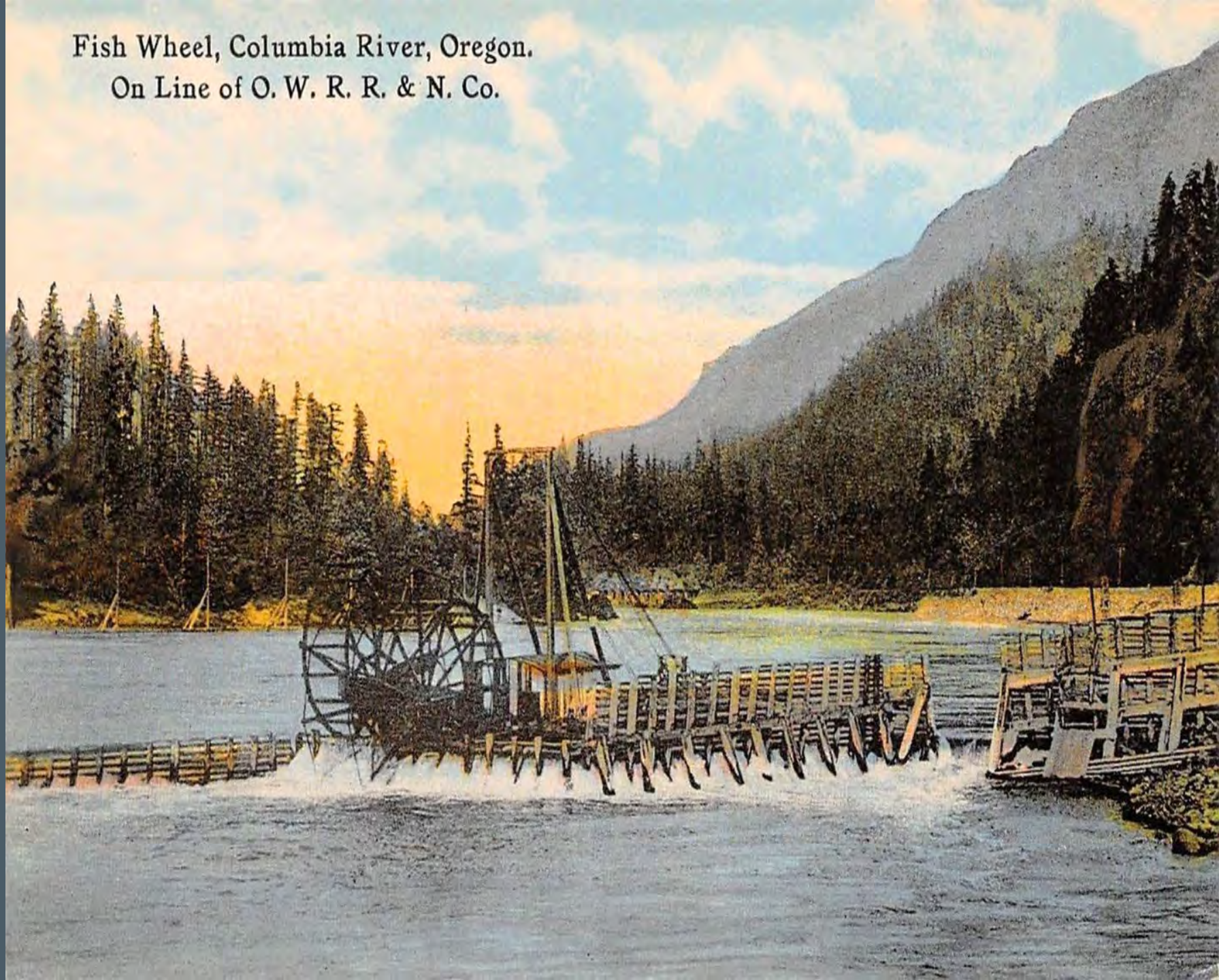
Cushing Eels 1840



Paul Kane 1847



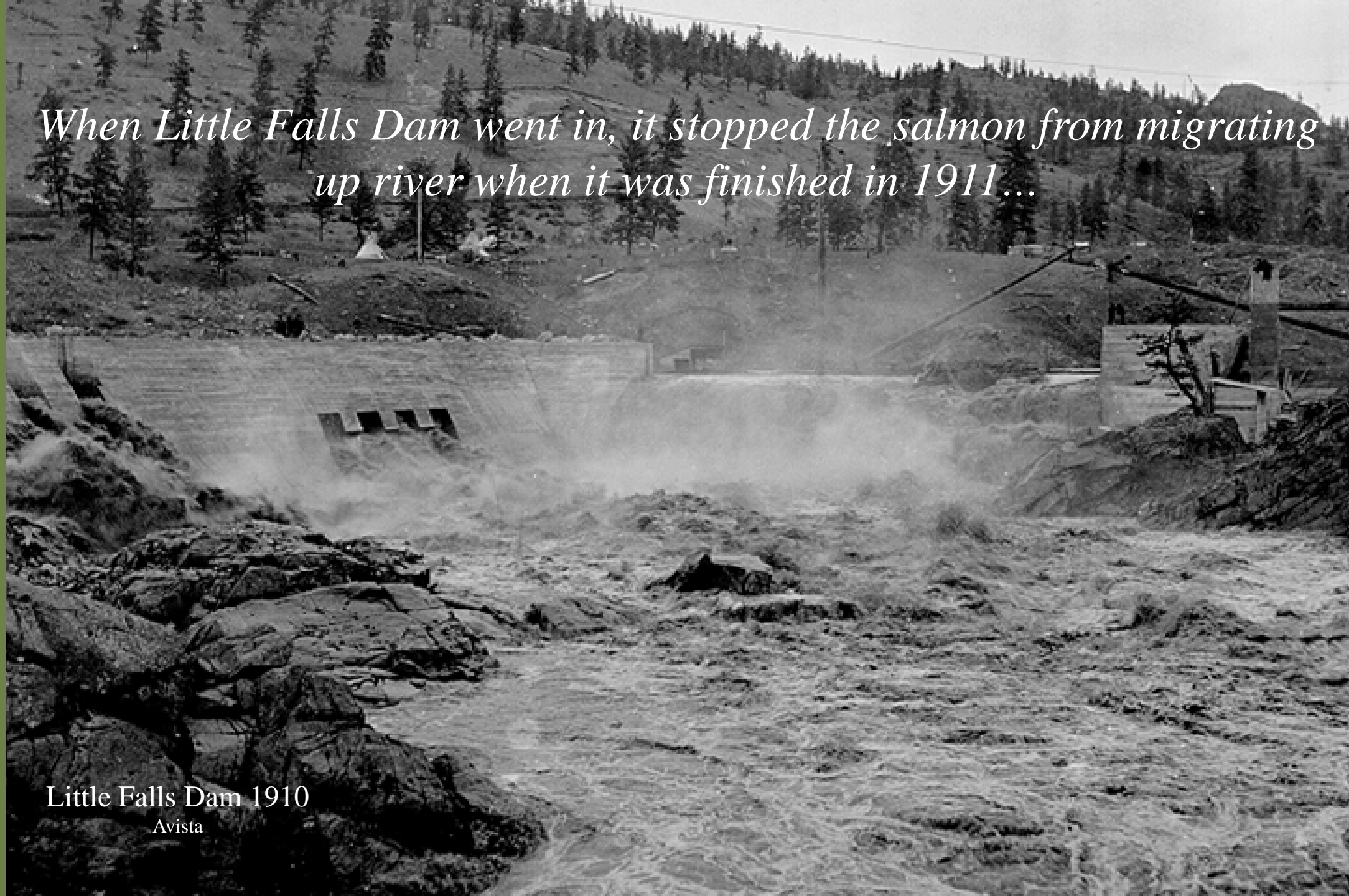
Fish Wheel, Columbia River, Oregon.  
On Line of O. W. R. R. & N. Co.

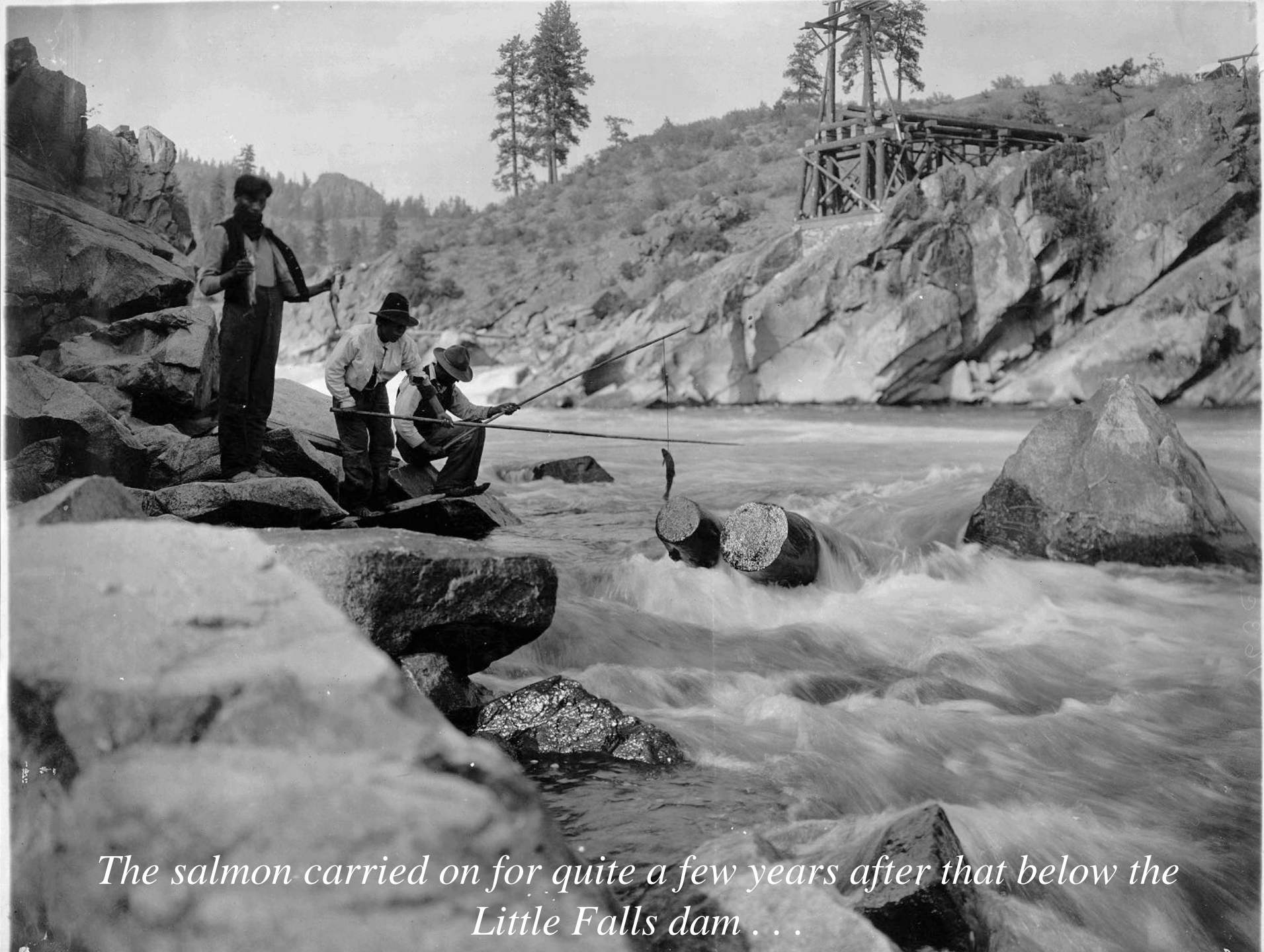




*When Little Falls Dam went in, it stopped the salmon from migrating up river when it was finished in 1911...*

Little Falls Dam 1910  
Avista





*The salmon carried on for quite a few years after that below the  
Little Falls dam . . .*



*until Coulee Dam went  
in and that was the  
end of it.*

Alex Sherwood



Vanessa Helder 1937  
Grand Coulee Dam  
Northwest Museum of Arts and Culture







Lake Roosevelt  
drowning  
Spokane Arm  
1941







Salmon release on the Little Spokane River 2021