



RESEARCHING A FAMILY LEGEND

The Intersection of Legal Research and Genealogy



Lee Van Duzer

- Law Librarian, Washington County, 2015-present
- Branch Librarian, U.S. District Court, San Jose, CA, 2009-2015
- MLS, University of Arizona, 2008
- JD, Franklin Pierce Law Center, 2005

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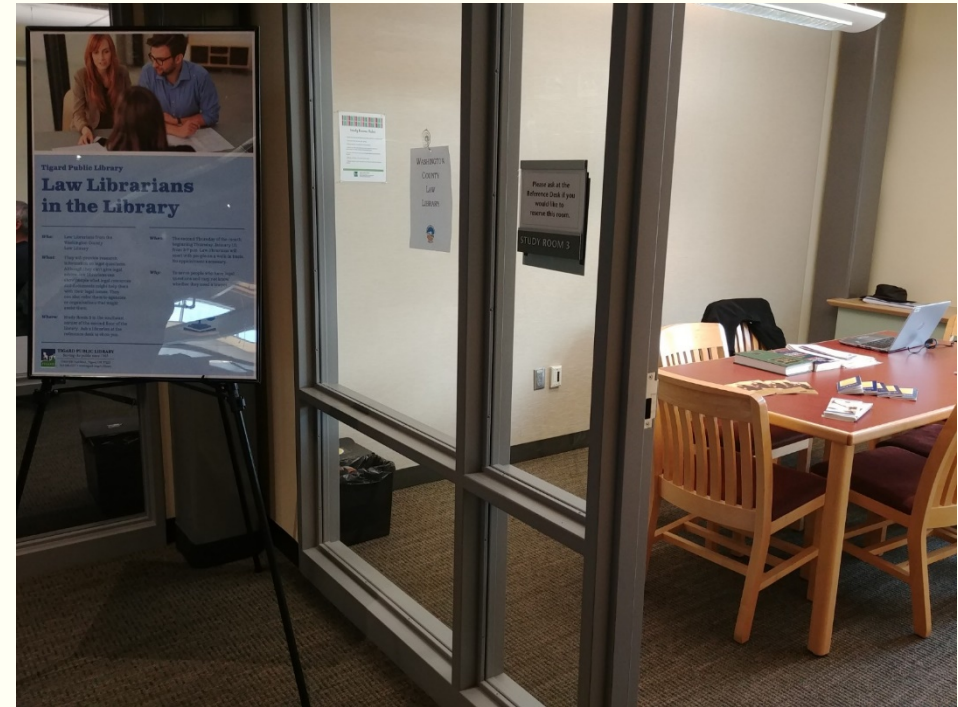
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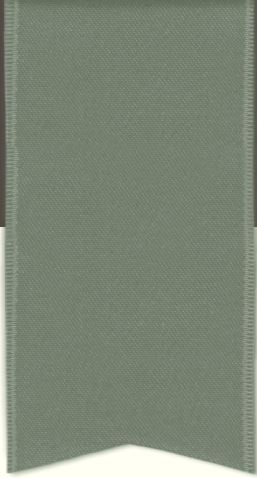
- Beaverton and Tigard city libraries
- Each one evening per month

“I’m trying to find information on my relative Frederick Wonn who sued the government and won.

It was about the flooding of his orchard by the grand coulee dam.”



Tigard Public Library



LEGAL RESEARCH

Searching for a name

Fred! /3 Wonn

- ! = root expansion (Fred / Frederick)
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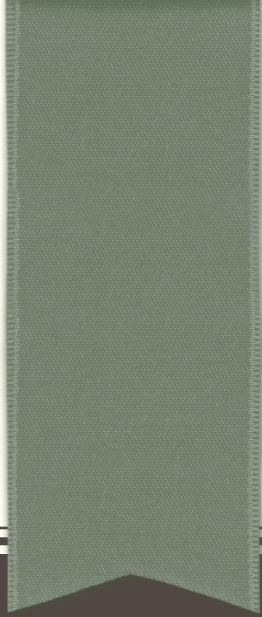
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GENEALOGY

Breakthrough

Semi-weekly Spokesman Review, Spokane, WA

EGGS—Extras, 22c; standards, 19c.

\$125,000 ORCHARD IS SOLD

240-Acre Tract Goes to Puyallup Box Manufacturer.

COULEE, Wash., Feb. 12.—The Columbia Basin orchards, owned by the Interstate Fruit Growers, Inc., has been sold to F. W. Wonn, Puyallup, Wash. Mr. Wonn has lumber and box factory interests at Puyallup. The orchard is one of the largest and best bearing in Grant county, has its own irrigation plant, serving the 240 acres from a single spring. Mr. Wonn expects to make improvements. The consideration was \$125,000. R. E. McIntyre, former manager, will continue for the new owner. The orchard shipped about 75 cars of apples and pears in 1930.

February 13, 1931

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Orchardists Seeking Relief.

The owners of a large fruit orchard that ultimately will be drowned when Grand Coulee reservoir fills, are in Washington trying to negotiate a quick sale of their property to the government. But they are up against a law that seems to prohibit government purchase of their property at this time.

Willis Mahoney and F. W. Wonn, owners of a large orchard near Grand Coulee, contend that the reclamation service, during some of its preliminary work, impaired their water supply by draining a spring from which their orchard was watered. They would like to sell their land to the government, and also want to be reimbursed for past damages.

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March 30, 1947

Semi-weekly Spokesman Review, Spokane, WA

\$26,757 ESTIMATE ON BASIN LAND
Appraiser Is Called in Trial Over Condemnation.

Testimony of Stephen J. McDonnell of Soap Lake, an appraiser, was heard in federal court yesterday in a jury trial before Judge Sam M. Driver to determine the value of 562 acres of land four miles north of Coulee City, condemned last year by the government.

The land, once operated by Columbia Basin Orchards, Inc., with Fred W. Wonn, Seattle, as president, is in an area to be flooded by a 27-mile-long equalization reservoir as part of the Columbia basin project.

Property Described.
Questioned by Attorney Hart Snyder, who is representing the government, Mr. McDonnell in his testimony described the property in detail, including estimates on the value of buildings, the irrigation plant and fixtures. He also gave his opinion as to the condition of the orchard in 1945 when he surveyed the property and had a map made up showing the condition of the trees on the land.

When asked what he considered a "fair market valuation, considering its highest and best use" for the property, he said \$26,757. The valuation on buildings was placed at \$9395 by Mr. McDonnell. He said that any increment or price rise caused by government construction in the vicinity was eliminated from his estimates.

When asked by Defense Attorney Charles L. Powell, "Does it have value as a commercial orchard?" Mr. McDonnell replied, "No."

Apple Tonnage Discussed.
He explained that the trees on the property were too badly scattered, operations were too costly and that the net tonnage in apples was too low. He said that 450 boxes of apples per acre would be necessary to make the orchard show a profit and a commercial orchard.

In an effort to discredit the witness' testimony, defense attorneys made a motion that valuations placed by the appraiser be stricken from the record on the grounds that he had arrived at the figures by placing values on separate elements comprising the property and then adding them up, and not on of the property as a whole. Judge Driver denied this motion.

Advantages Listed.
The defense continued efforts in the late afternoon to show that the Columbia Orchards, Inc., was located where there was a favorable labor market, that there were advantages in its isolation, that the by ownership had planted such varieties of fruit-bearing trees that a continuous harvesting season resulted and that production costs were low. These advantages were discussed.

Speaking and insurance: Leslie Carthy, criminal law, public speaking.
An attorney: Jerry O'Melveny, introductory law.
Clare B. Turner, legal bibliography, business associations, negotiable instruments, damages, current decisions and tax at 1000 N. Michigan.

At State Reclamation



H. Maurice Ahlquist (right), president of the Washington State Reclamation Council, yesterday, chats with Republican Senator chairman of the senate public lands committee, Mr. Ahlquist is the Spokane club.

CITY APPROVES \$46,389 IN BIDS
Work on Ray for \$29,640 Goes to Inland Asphalt.

Bids totaling \$46,389 on public works projects were accepted and third contracts awarded by the city council yesterday. Largest contract, going to Inland Asphalt company, was for the grading, curbing at \$3 and paving of Ray, Seventeenth to Twenty-ninth, at \$29,640.

Weller Brothers will install the Rosemeade sanitary submain sewer and at its low bid of \$10,589. Inland Asphalt company won another paving contract of \$2885 to pave Regal, Pacific to Fifth, and Logan & lower streets.

pointed out to strengthen the defense case in showing the higher value of the land than set by the government. The case will be continued today.

10-DAY-OLD TOT SAVED.
A fire department inhalator crew administered oxygen to 10-day-old John Kroker, son of Mr. and Mrs. Don Kroker, 4148 Providence, who was unable to breathe due to a congested windpipe. The crew administered oxygen until the condition was relieved, they reported.

Testimony of Stephen J. McDonnell of Soap Lake, an appraiser, was heard in federal court yesterday in a jury trial before Judge Sam M. Driver to determine the value of 562 acres of land four miles north of Coulee City, condemned last year by the government.

The land, once operated by Columbia Basin Orchards, Inc., with Fred W. Wonn, Seattle, as president, is in an area to be flooded by a 27-mile-long equalization reservoir as part of the Columbia basin project.

September 19, 1947

Semi-weekly Spokesman Review, Spokane, WA

CONDEMNED LAND CASE NEAR CLOSE

Testimony in the land valuation suit of the United States against Columbia Basin Orchards, which began a week ago Monday, is expected to be completed in federal court tomorrow.

The jury must determine the value of 562 acres of land near Coulee City the government has condemned and which will be flooded by the waters of the balancing reservoir from Grand Coulee dam.

Government witnesses have testified the fair market value on the land is approximately \$25,000. Fred Wonn, owner of most of the orchard company stock, yesterday testified the property was worth \$250,000.

Emmett J. McKanna, Yakima real estate dealer, a defense witness, testified the property, 200 acres of which is in orchard, was worth \$185,020.

September 24, 1947

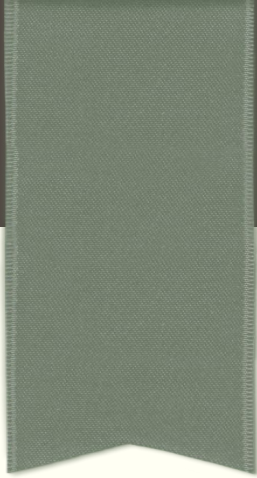
ORCHARD'S VALUE SET AT \$70,000

COULEE CITY, Wash., Sept. 26. —A federal jury in Judge Sam M. Driver's court in Spokane yesterday set a valuation of \$70,000 on the 562 acres formerly owned by the Columbia Basin Orchards.

The property involved, four miles north of Coulee City, and incorporated by Mr. and Mrs. Fred Wonn, includes approximately 200 acres in orchards. It was condemned by the government June 4, 1946, the acreage to become part of a reservoir in the Columbia basin irrigation system.

During the trial a wide variation of appraisals were given by expert witnesses called to the stand. Their estimates ranged from \$25,000 to \$250,000 for the land and extensive improvements.

September 27, 1947



LEGAL RESEARCH

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- Keyword
- Judge
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Jan 01, 1950 to Dec 31, 1965

Cases (8)



- 1. **Columbia Basin Orchard v. United States**
US Court of Federal Claims, Claims Court & Court of Claims Cases | United States Court of Claims | Jul 12, 1955 | 132 Ct. Cl. 445
- 2. **Columbia Basin Orchard v. United States**
US Court of Federal Claims, Claims Court & Court of Claims Cases | United States Court of Claims | Mar 06, 1950 | 116 Ct. Cl. 348
- 3. **California v. United States**
9th Circuit - US District Court Cases | United States District Court for the Northern District of California, Northern Division | Apr 18, 1957 | 151 F. Supp. 570
- 4. **Nadler Foundry & Mach. Co. v. United States**
US Court of Federal Claims, Claims Court & Court of Claims Cases | United States Court of Claims | Jul 16, 1958 | 143 Ct. Cl. 92
- 5. **North Counties Hydro-Electric Co. v. United States**
US Court of Federal Claims, Claims Court & Court of Claims Cases | United States Court of Claims | May 08, 1957 | 138 Ct. Cl. 380
- 6. **B Amusement Co. v. United States**
US Court of Federal Claims, Claims Court & Court of Claims Cases | United States Court of Claims | Jan 20, 1960 | 148 Ct. Cl. 337
- 7. **Atl. Crushed Coke Co. v. United States**
US Court of Federal Claims, Claims Court & Court of Claims Cases | United States Court of Claims | May 08, 1957 | 138 Ct. Cl. 505
- 8. **Collins v. Greenville**
SC Supreme Court Cases from 1867 | Supreme Court of South Carolina | Nov 05, 1958 | 233 S.C. 506

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columbia basin orchard



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Columbia Basin Orchard v. United States

132 F. Supp. 707 - [Court of Claims](#), 1955 - Google Scholar

On June 4, 1946, defendant filed in the United States District Court for the Eastern District of Washington a declaration of taking of title to some 560 acres of land within the boundaries of the Grand ...

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Columbia Basin Orchard v. United States

88 F. Supp. 738, 116 Ct. Cl. 348 - [Court of Claims](#), 1950 - Google Scholar

Plaintiffs say this water flowed down into **Orchard** Lake, which helped to flood the lake and to cause its waters to become commingled with the waters of a spring which plaintiff used to irrigate ...

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United States Court of Claims

The **Court of Claims** was a federal court that heard claims against the United States government. It was established in 1855, renamed in 1948 to the **United States Court of Claims** (67 Stat. 226), and abolished in 1982. Then, its jurisdiction was assumed by the newly created **United States Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit** and **United States Claims Court** (96 Stat. 25), which was later renamed the **Court of Federal Claims**.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Court_of_Claims



without a jury, to determine issues of law and fact. The general jurisdiction of the court, described in 28 U.S.C. § 1491,^[1] is over claims for just compensation for the taking of private property, refund of federal taxes, military and civilian pay and allowances, and damages for breaches of contracts with the government. The court also possesses jurisdiction over claims for patent and copyright infringement against the United States, as well as over certain suits by Indian tribes.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Court_of_Federal_Claims

U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida
<https://www.flsd.uscourts.gov/federal-courts-teachers-students-and-lifelong-learners>



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Results



Timeline

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- Blogs 0
- Exp. Witnesses 0
- Constitutions 0
- Jury instr. 0

Results 4

Sort by: Relevance

1. [Petition of Clinton Water Dist. of Island County, 218 P.2d 309, 36 Wn.2d 284 \(Wash. 1950\)](#)

Case May 3, 1950 Cited Anywhere: 12 Cited Here: 0

..., if any, if the taking or damaging of those rights can be determined in a future legal action. In my view, it is not necessary nor possible to decide this question on the present record. With respect to respondents W. E. Braicks and **F. W. Wonn**, trustees for Pomerelle Company...

2. [Henricksen v. Braicks, 137 F.2d 632 \(9th Cir. 1943\)](#)

Case Aug 11, 1943 Cited Anywhere: 6 Cited Here: 0

... we can come to the bank and borrow money and do it; he said yes." Later the appellant stipulated that if Mr. Witherspoon and **F. W. Wonn**, vice president of the new company, had taken the stand, they would have substantially corroborated Mr. Braicks' testimony in this respect. [137 F.2d 636] The appellant can hardly assert...

3. [Benson v. Wonn, 275 P. 77, 151 Wash. 134 \(Wash. 1929\)](#)

Case Mar 11, 1929 Cited Anywhere: 0 Cited Here: 0

... Department 2. Appeal from Superior Court, Pierce County; Fred G. Remann, Judge. Action by M. A. Benson, V. Gattavara, and Ed Maines, individually and as trustees, against **F. W. Wonn**, Howard Jones...

4. [1929-1930 Washington Attorney General Reports and Opinions v \(1929-1930\) Report \(HeinOnline ...\)](#)

Atty. Gen. Op. Cited Anywhere: 0 Cited Here: 0

.... 825. In re **F. W. Wonn**. Claim of \$667.73 for industrial insurance. Pending. 826. In re Jewett Bros. Claim of \$138.17 for industrial insurance. Pending. 4902. Before State Board of Law Examiners. In re disbarment of Theodore B. Bruener, an attorney at law. Disbarred by supreme court. Pending on petition for rehearing. 4915. Before State Board of Law Examiners...

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Fastcase includes the United States Code, United States Supreme Court and Court of Appeals Cases; and cases, statutes, regulations, court rules, constitutions, attorney general opinions, and session laws for Oregon, Alaska, Arizona, California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, and Washington

- **Legal Information Reference Center (EBSCO) and Nolo books**

The Legal Information Reference Center is a great starting point for researching your legal issue. Available to all Oregonians this resource provides access to full-text legal reference publications. A majority of the reference books are provided through Nolo, a respected provider of legal information for consumers and small businesses.



KeyCite Yellow Flag - Negative Treatment

Called into Doubt by [Hansen v. U.S.](#), Fed.Cl., April 11, 2005

132 F.Supp. 707

United States Court of Claims.

COLUMBIA BASIN ORCHARD,

Seattle Association of Credit
Men, Perham Fruit Corporation

v.

The UNITED STATES.

No. 48674.

|

July 12, 1955.

Synopsis

Action by orchard owners and holders of mortgages thereon against United States to recover compensation for destruction of fruit trees. The Court of Claims, Whitaker, J., held that where government bureau in connection with testing work pumped water into the lake at same time that unusually heavy rainfall occurred and lake flooded and contaminated orchard irrigation spring and thereafter fruit trees were killed by contaminated water from spring, contamination of spring was unforeseen and action of government did not amount to the taking of property.

Petition dismissed.

Opinion

WHITAKER, Judge.

On March 6, 1950, we dismissed plaintiffs' petition on the ground that their right of action was barred by the statute of limitations. [88 F.Supp. 738](#), [116 Ct.Cl. 348](#). Thereafter, Congress passed an Act on May 21, 1954, [68 Stat. Part 2 **708 p. A53](#),¹ conferring *448 jurisdiction on us to hear plaintiffs' claim 'notwithstanding the lapse of time * * *,' and the case is now before us on the merits.



LEGISLATIVE HISTORY, FEDERAL

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- + Bremer-Kovacs Collection: Historic Documents Related to the Administrative Procedure Act of 1946
- Brennan Center for Justice Publications at NYU School of Law
- Canada Supreme Court Reports
- Civil Rights and Social Justice
- Code of Federal Regulations
- COVID-19: Pandemics Past and Present
- Criminal Justice & Criminology
- Early American Case Law
- English Reports
- European Centre for Minority Issues
- Executive Privilege
- Federal Register Library
- GAO Reports and Comptroller General Decisions
- Gun Regulation and Legislation in America
- + Law Academy Project
- Legal Classics
- + LGBTQ+ Rights
- Manual of Patent Examining Procedure
- Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory
- + Military and Government
- + Open Society Justice Initiative
- Pentagon Papers
- Revised Statutes of Canada
- Slavery in America and the World: History, Culture & Law
- Statutes of the Realm
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Vol. AbbreviationPage

68

Stat. ▼

53

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AN ACT

May 21, 1954
[H. R. 2033]

To confer jurisdiction upon the Court of Claims to hear, determine, and render judgment upon certain claims of the Columbia Basin Orchard, the Seattle Association of Credit Men, and the Perham Fruit Corporation.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That jurisdiction is hereby conferred upon the Court of Claims, notwithstanding the lapse of time or any provision of law to the contrary, to hear, determine, and render judgment upon all claims of the Columbia Basin Orchard, the Seattle Association of Credit Men, and the Perham Fruit Corporation (all corporations of Washington) against the United States arising out of the flooding, during the period beginning June 1, 1939, and ending April 30, 1940, of certain real property owned by the said Columbia Basin Orchard in Grant County, Washington, insofar as such flooding was the result of certain drilling operations carried out by the Bureau of Reclamation in the course of its investigations preliminary to the construction of a dam and an equalizing reservoir in the Grand Coulee: *Provided, however, That nothing contained in this Act shall be construed as an inference of liability on the part of the United States Government.**

Columbia Basin
Orchard and
others.

SEC. 2. All claims against the United States within the purview of the first section of this Act shall be forever barred unless action is begun thereon within one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

Approved May 21, 1954.

Legislation

Legislation Text

Committee Reports

Congressional Record

Nominations

House Communications

Senate Communications

Treaty Documents

Words & Phrases

Examples: trade sanctions reform, small modular reactor

Allow quotes and boolean operators

Congress

- 86 (1959-1960) ▲
- 85 (1957-1958)
- 84 (1955-1956)
- 83 (1953-1954)
- 82 (1951-1952) ▼

Legislation Numbers

Examples: hr5, h.r.5, sjres8, s2, 90stat2495

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1.

132 Ct. Cl. XXI (1955)

Court of Claims. Reports

Table of Statutes Cited [index]

[Turn to page](#)

A92; Wilcox ----- 559 1951, October 25; 65 Stat. 655; Wales ----- 765 1952, July 19; 66 Stat. 792; Hebern ----- 344 1954, May 11; 68 Stat. 81; Johnson ----- 645 1954, May 21; **68 Stat. A53**; Columbia Basin ----- 445 XXII #12;

+ All Matching Text Pages (1)

2.

2 Federal Reclamation Laws Annotated: A Chronological Compilation of Public Statutes of the United States Enacted through the 79th Congress (2d ed.) III (1947-1958)

Table of Contents (ARRAY(0x55c3872d1848))

[Turn to page](#)

A46) Private Law 350 ----- 278 May 11, 1954 (68 Stat. 81) Public Law 356 ----- 279 May 17, 1954 (68 Stat. 100) Public Law 362 ----- 280 May21, 1954 (**68 Stat. A53**)

FEDERAL RECLAMATION AND RELATED LAWS ANNOTATED

VOLUME II OF THREE VOLUMES
THROUGH 1958

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Rogers C. B. Morton, *Secretary*

OFFICE OF THE SOLICITOR

Mitchell Melich, *Solicitor*

BUREAU OF RECLAMATION

Ellis L. Armstrong, *Commissioner*

Richard K. Pelz, Editor

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Legislative History. H.R. 2033, Private Law 370 in the 83d Congress. H.R. Rept. No. 32. S. Rept. No. 1253.



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COLUMBIA BASIN ORCHARD AND OTHERS

APRIL 26 (legislative day, APRIL 14), 1954.—Ordered to be printed

Mr. LANGER, from the Committee on the Judiciary, submitted the following

R E P O R T



[[To accompany H. R. 2033]]

The Committee on the Judiciary, to which was referred the bill (H. R. 2033) to confer jurisdiction upon the Court of Claims to hear, determine, and render judgment upon certain claims of the Columbia Basin Orchard, the Seattle Association of Credit Men, and the Perham Fruit Corp., having considered the same, reports favorably thereon, without amendment, and recommends that the bill do pass.

Attached hereto and made a part of this report is a letter from the Department of Interior submitted in connection with an identical bill of the 82d Congress.

Legislative History

- 83rd Congress, 2d Session, Senate Report No. 1253
 - "Court of Claims to hear claims of Columbia Basin Orchard and others," U.S. Congressional Serial Set (1954): 1-6
- 83rd Congress, 1st Session, House Report No. 32
 - "Court of Claims to hear claims of Columbia Basin Orchard and others," U.S. Congressional Serial Set (1953): 1-4



4. [House Journal, 82nd Congress, 2nd Session \[House Journal-1\]](#)  

U.S. Congressional Serial Set v. 11565 (1952)

[+ Document Summary](#)

[Turn to page](#)
A bill to confer jurisdiction upon the Court of Claims to hear, determine, and render judgment upon certain claims of the **Columbia Basin Orchard**, the Seattle Association of Credit Men, and the Perham Fruit Corp.; without amendment Rept.

[+ All Matching Text Pages \(5\)](#)

5. [House Journal, 82nd Congress, 1st Session \[House Journal-1\]](#)  

U.S. Congressional Serial Set v. 11485 (1951)

[+ Document Summary](#)

[Turn to page](#)
A bill to confer jurisdiction upon the Court of Claims to hear, determine, and render judgment upon certain claims of the **Columbia Basin Orchard**, the Seattle Association of Credit Men, and the Perham Fruit Corp.; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Hindsight

JOURNAL OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE UNITED STATES

EIGHTY-SECOND CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION

BEGUN AND HELD AT THE CITY OF
WASHINGTON : : JANUARY 3, 1951

IN THE ONE HUNDRED AND SEVENTY-FIFTH YEAR
OF THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE UNITED STATES

By Mr. HOLMES:

H. R. 4398. A bill to confer jurisdiction upon the Court of Claims to hear, determine, and render judgment upon certain claims of the Columbia Basin Orchard, the Seattle Association of Credit Men, and the Perham Fruit Corp.; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

82^D CONGRESS, 1ST SESSION
BEGINNING JANUARY 3, 1951

OFFICIAL CONGRESSIONAL DIRECTORY

FOR THE USE OF THE
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WASHINGTON

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2. Henry M. Jackson

3. *Russell V. Mack*
4. *Hal Holmes*

5. *Walt Horan*
6. *Thor C. Tollefson*

FOURTH DISTRICT.—COUNTIES: Adams, Asotin, Benton, Columbia, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Kittitas, Klickitat, Walla Walla, Whitman, and Yakima (12 counties). Population (1940), 244,908.

HAL HOLMES, Republican, of Ellensburg, Wash.; born February 22, 1902; attended the public schools of Washington; was graduated from Whitman College, Walla Walla, Wash., with bachelor of science degree, doctor of laws degree, honorary, and from Columbia University, New York City, with master of arts degree; former professor of economics and business, dean of men, head of department of social studies at Central Washington College of Education; interested in livestock ranching and operations; married to Margaret Coffin Holmes; member of Grange, Farm Bureau, and Phi Beta Kappa; past northwest district governor of Kiwanis; elected on November 3, 1942, to the Seventy-eighth Congress; reelected on November 7, 1944, to the Seventy-ninth Congress; reelected on November 5, 1946, to the Eightieth Congress; reelected on November 2, 1948, to the Eighty-first Congress; reelected on November 7, 1950, to the Eighty-second Congress.

What happened?

“I’m trying to find information on my relative Frederick Wonn who sued the government and won.

It was about the flooding of his orchard by the grand coulee dam.”

- Email to patron included:
 - Cases
 - Statute
 - Legislative history
 - Newspaper articles
 - Short summary



Source: Bureau of Reclamation, via [Wikimedia Commons](#)

The Less Successful History Question

- My relative was involved in a lawsuit against the guy who founded Girard, CA, now Woodland Hills, CA, Victor Girard. Can you find anything about that?
- Short answer: no.
- State trial cases typically difficult to find
- Valley Relics Early History: Scandals of the 1920s
 - The phony town of Girard, CA, founded by Victor Girard

Links

- [Research Resources: Law and Government – Washington County Cooperative Library Services \(WCCLS\)](#)
 - [Access HeinOnline](#)
- [Congress.gov - 1954 H.R. 2033](#)
- [scholar.google.com](#)
- [Law Library of Congress](#)
 - [Research Guides](#)
 - [Recent Webinars - YouTube](#)
 - [Webinars – Website](#)
 - [How to Conduct Research in the U.S. Serial Set Online](#)
- [Directory of Oregon County Law Libraries](#)
- [State of Oregon Law Library](#)
 - [Nolo books online and Fastcase](#)
- [Handouts](#)

Thank you!

