

Washington Iron Works Founder Revolutionizes early west coast Logging Industry: John M. Frink's Legacy Explored

The Legacy of a Seattle Businessman and Philanthropist. Discover the history and impact of the Washington Iron Works founder John M Frink

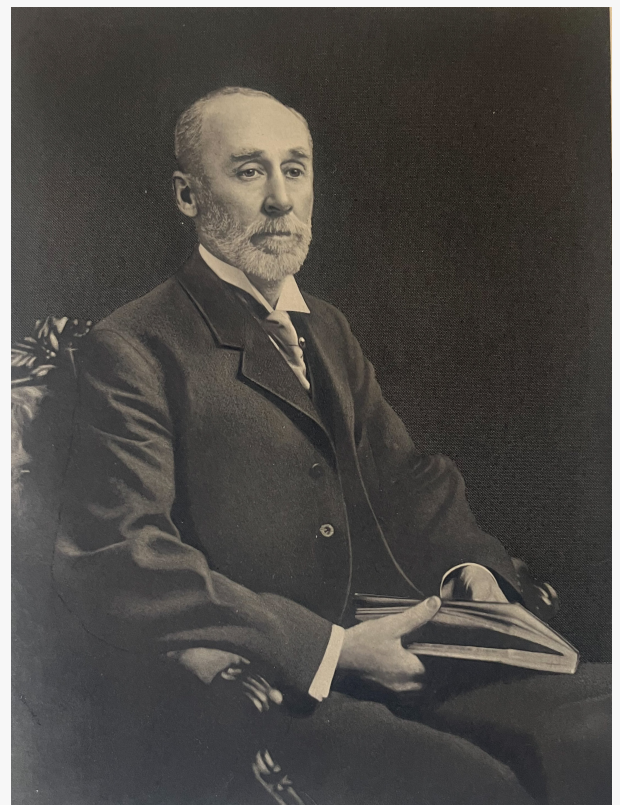
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON , USA, May 9, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- John Melancthon [Frink](#) was an early Washington state politician and businessperson who made significant contributions to Seattle's growth and development. Born on January 21, 1855, in Pennsylvania, Frink attended Washington College in Topeka, Kansas. He began his career as a teacher in Kansas before moving to Seattle in 1874.

Upon his arrival in Seattle, Frink worked as a teacher and principal at Belltown School, taking advantage of the city's rapid growth to establish a successful foundry business, Washington Iron Works. Frink's iron works was a vital part of Seattle's early industrial growth, producing everything from iron and steel products to mining equipment.

Frink's success in the iron industry allowed him to expand his business interests into other areas. Frink established the first west coast power company, Seattle Electric Company, which eventually became the city's primary source of electric power. He also served as a director of the Seattle Savings Bank, one of the city's oldest financial institutions.

Frink was an active member of the Republican Party and served as a Washington State senator for several terms representing the 25th legislative district. In 1900, he made a bid to unseat John Rankin Rogers as Governor of Washington State but lost in the general election.

In addition to his business and political pursuits, Frink was also a dedicated philanthropist. In 1906, he donated the property that would become Frink Park to the City of Seattle. The park



John M Frink 1912

spans more than 17.2 acres today and is located on the beautiful shores of Lake Washington, offering stunning views of the water and surrounding landscape. It features miles of hiking trails, picnic areas, and other amenities for visitors to enjoy year round. Frink joined the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners the same year he donated the property to the city. Frink eventually served as the president of the Seattle Board of Park Commissioners cementing his foot in the local Seattle community.

The [Friends of Frink Park](#) is a non-profit organization dedicated to preserving, maintaining, and enhancing Frink Park for future generations to enjoy. They work closely with the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department to ensure that the park remains a vibrant and welcoming green space in the heart of the city. The Friends of Frink Park hold regular events and volunteer work parties to help keep the park in top condition. They also advocate for park improvements and engage the community in park-related issues. Without the dedication and hard work of the Friends of Frink Park, this beautiful urban oasis would not be the thriving public space that it is today.

Frink's legacy lives on in Seattle's Pioneer Square neighborhood, where the Washington Iron Works headquarters still stands. The building, also known as the Frink Building and the Washington Shoe Building, is a designated landmark and an iconic part of the city's skyline.

Despite his success and accomplishments, Frink's life was not without its struggles. In 1914, he passed away at the early age of 59. His death was a blow to the community, and many mourned the loss of a leader and a friend. Frink is buried in Lake View Cemetery, Seattle, alongside many other prominent figures in the city's history.



Frink building Seattle's Pioneer Square neighborhood, Washington State



Washington Iron Works Skidder Patented Logging Equipment

Frink's story is a testament to the power of hard work and determination. He started as a teacher and worked his way up to become a successful entrepreneur and politician. His contributions to Seattle's growth and development helped shape the city into the vibrant and thriving metropolis it is today.

One of Frink's most significant accomplishments was his patent for the [Washington Winch](#), which revolutionized the logging industry in the Pacific Northwest. The Washington Winch was a mechanical device used to lift and move logs, making the process faster and more efficient than traditional methods. Frink's invention helped establish the region as a major player in the global lumber trade and contributed to the growth of Seattle's economy.

John M. Frink's impact and legacy continue to endure long after his passing. His grandson, and my grandfather, John Frink McGillis, was a distinguished Naval Academy graduate of the Class of 1934. John Frink McGillis, went on to serve as the captain of the USS Walke, a destroyer that was commissioned in January 1944. The construction of the USS Walke was a testament to Frink's lasting influence on Seattle and its people, as the ship was built using steel from the Bath Iron Works in Maine and other Iron works from across the country, including Washington Iron Works, Seattle. The same company founded by John M Frink, over 50 years earlier.

Through his entrepreneurial endeavors and contributions to the iron and steel industry, Frink left an indelible mark on the city of Seattle and the country as a whole. His dedication and hard work inspired his family to continue his legacy, as demonstrated by his grandson's distinguished 30 year Naval career in the United States Navy. Frink's lasting impact on his community and his



U.S.S Walke Commissioned: 21 JAN 1944 Captain John Frink McGillis and Family Sister-Mary Macdonald, Mother-Athena Frink, Wife-Helena Perram Children-Gloria, Cissy, John



Frink Park 398 Lake Washington Blvd S, Seattle, WA 98144-2553

family is a testament to his enduring legacy and the significant contributions he made to the world.

John M. Frink was a remarkable figure in the history of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. He played a vital role in the region's early industrial growth and helped establish Seattle as a major player in the global economy. His contributions to the city's political and philanthropic landscape helped shape the community into what it is today. John M. Frink's enduring legacy can be seen in the landmarks that bear his name today, including the Frink Building and Frink Park. These structures stand as a testament to his enduring impact on the city of Seattle and the state of Washington. Frink's contributions to the growth and development of his community will always be remembered and celebrated.

As an entrepreneur and a leader in the iron and steel industry, Frink played a significant role in shaping the landscape of Seattle and the Pacific Northwest. His dedication and hard work laid the foundation for the growth of the region, and his name has become synonymous with progress and innovation. Today, the Frink Building and Frink Park stand as symbols of his enduring legacy and the important role he played in the development of his community.

Frink's contributions to Seattle and Washington State will continue to be celebrated for generations to come. His lasting impact on the region is a testament to his vision, his hard work, and his commitment to making a positive difference in the world around him.

Journalist Alan Merritt

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