

who seemed aloof and superior to them; 3) the missionaries attempt to permanently change the Indians' basic way of life; 4) frequent conflicts over the control, ownership, and use of the land and water rights; 5) Indian confusion about the teachings of different Christian missionaries; 6) the fundamental differences between the competing missionaries — Catholic versus Protestant; 7) the killing of a Walla Walla chief's son; and 8) the Indians associating Dr. Marcus Whitman with the ever increasing flow of settlers traveling on the Oregon Trail into the Pacific Northwest.

As noted in Chapter Four, the Indians often killed their medicine man or shaman if his patient died. It is highly probable that the Cayuse Indians held Dr. Whitman responsible for the numerous Indian deaths during the measles epidemic. Thus, from the Cayuse point of view, their actions were justified.

The significance of the Whitman Massacre was not so much the event itself, but the regional and national reaction. This massacre had a profound and prolonged impact upon the region. The brutal murders at the Whitman Mission and the abuse of 45 hostages shocked Americans from coast to coast.

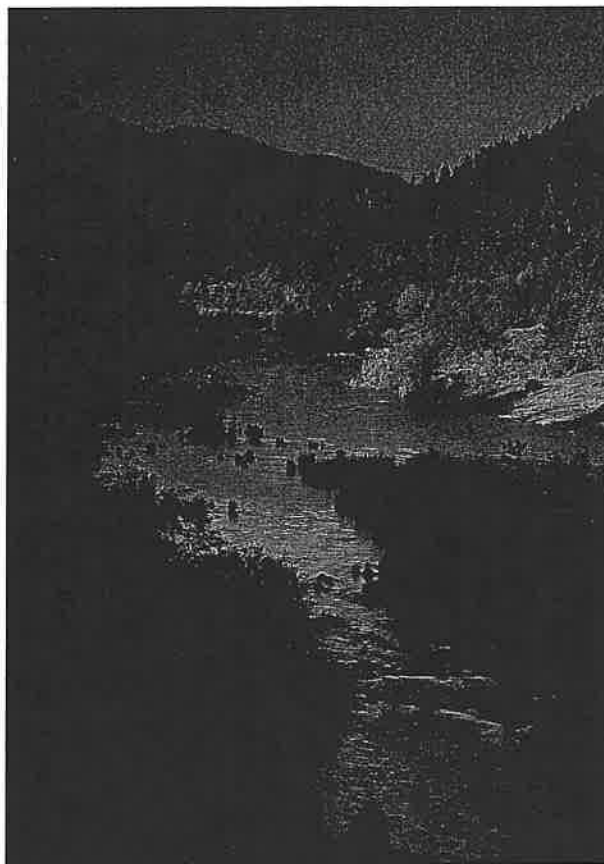
The Cayuse War

Americans demanded immediate action to protect all missionaries and settlers living in the Oregon Country. They also wanted the quick capture and punishment of those Cayuse Indians responsible for the murders. Although the United States had recently acquired Oregon in 1846, it was not an incorporated territory. Thus, federal governmental action was not available.

In 1847, only a Provisional Government of Oregon had the legal authority to respond to this tragic event. The Provisional Government quickly organized. It sent a newly formed militia of 300-500 men, led by Joe Meek, to capture the rebellious Cayuse Indians.

The Cayuse War lasted nearly two years. The leaders of the Whitman Massacre — Tilaukait, Tomahas, and three other Cayuse were captured. After a long trial, Tilaukait, Tomahas, Kiamasumpkin, Iaiachalakis, and Klokomas were executed on June 3, 1850 for their roles in the massacre.

As a direct result of the American public's outrage over the Whitman Massacre, the Congress of the United States granted Oregon full territorial status on August 14, 1848. Now the United States



Coquille and Umpqua Indians attacked gold miners and settlers in Oregon's Rogue and Umpqua river valleys. (John Marshall Photo)

military could legally protect the Oregon territorial residents. In addition, the Whitman Massacre closed the missionary era and opened the era of Indian wars.

Indian Wars

The Whitman Massacre opened a 30 year period of violent Indian Wars that spread across the Pacific Northwest. During the era from 1847 to 1877, there were many minor conflicts and several major wars. These violent wars dramatically slowed both economic and population growth in the region.

The Rogue River Wars

From 1851 to 1856, widespread violence between miners, settlers, and local Indians ravished southwestern Oregon. Settlers moving south from the Willamette River and gold miners moving north from California converged on the Rogue River area.

PACIFIC NORTHWEST INDIAN WARS (1775-1879)

Timeline 10-1

July 14, 1775	Seven Spaniards killed by Quinault Indians
July 1787	Charles Barkley lost several men at Hoh River
August 12, 1788	Tillamooks kill Marcus Lopez, black member of Gray's crew
1790-1792	Spanish fight Makahs in two minor skirmishes
April 2, 1792	John Boit destroys approximately 200 Nootka houses
August 1811	Captain Jonathan Thorn and the <i>Touquin's</i> crew killed by Nootkas
November 29, 1847	Fifteen killed at Whitman's Waiilatpu Mission by Cayuse Indians
1851-1856	Violent Rogue River Wars in southwestern Oregon-Coquilles
1854-1855	Five Coastal treaties negotiated and signed
May 21 - June 11, 1855	Walla Walla Council — three Plateau treaties signed by Stevens
1855-1858	Yakama Wars in Washington Territory — East and West
December 7, 1855	Walla Walla Chief Peopeomoxmox killed at Frenchtown
January 26, 1856	Chief Leschi of the Nisqually attacks the Seattle blockhouse
March 1856	Yakama Chief Kamiakin attacks small town, Cascades
February 9, 1858	Chief Leschi found guilty of murder and executed
May 16-17, 1858	Colonel Steptoe defeated at Rosalia, retreats to Fort Walla Walla
September 8, 1858	Plateau tribes defeated by Colonel Wright at Spokane Plains
1864-1868	Snake Indian Wars in southern Idaho
1864-1873	Modoc Wars in southern Oregon and northern California
October 3, 1873	Captain Jack of the Modocs executed
June 17, 1877	First Nez Perce victory at White Bird Canyon
July 11-14, 1877	Second Nez Perce victory at Clearwater
August 9, 1877	Third Nez Perce victory at Big Hole
August 19, 1877	Camas Meadows
Sept. 14-15, 1877	Fourth Nez Perce victory at Canyon Creek
Sept. 30 - Oct. 5, 1877	Nez Perce defeated and surrender at Bear Paw Mountain
1878-1879	Bannock, Northern Paiute, and Sheepstealers wars (OR and ID)



— Major Indian War Battlefields in the Pacific Northwest (Map 10-1)

Hostilities broke out between the Umpquas and Coquille tribes and miners soon after gold was discovered in the Rogue River valley. After two years of nearly constant attacks and frequent killings, the Treaty of Table Rock was signed in 1853.

In 1854, these same tribes again attacked settlers in the region. In 1856, the two tribes attacked the settlers at Gold Beach. They killed 25-30 people, including the local Indian agent, Benjamin Wright. Enos, an Indian leader, cut out and ate Wright's heart — to gain Wright's courage.

The survivors of the Gold Beach attack fled to a nearby blockhouse for safety. The Umpqua and Coquille besieged the blockhouse for 35 days. Finally, United States soldiers from Fort Humboldt, California put down the Indian rebellion.

Enos, the leader of the uprising, escaped and the remaining Umpqua and Coquille were placed on the Grande Ronde-Siletz reservations. Southern Oregon remained peaceful for only a short period before the Modoc Wars started in the 1860s.

Peace Treaties

In 1853, only five years after Oregon had achieved territorial status from the United States government, the Washington Territory was organized. The Washington Territory included the present states of Washington, Idaho, the western section of Montana, and a small portion of Wyoming.

The first appointed territorial governor of the new Washington Territory was Isaac Stevens. Governor Stevens' first task was to negotiate peace treaties with the tribes of the territory. In one year, Governor Stevens negotiated 12 major treaties with the principal Coastal and Plateau tribes.

Governor Stevens negotiated peace treaties with several of the Coastal tribes in late 1854 and 1855. The five major treaties were: 1) Medicine Creek Treaty of December 26, 1854; 2) Muckleteoh Treaty of January 1855; 3) Point No Point Treaty of January 26, 1855; 4) Neah Bay Treaty of February 1855 and; 5) Quinault River Treaty of July 1, 1855.

These treaties with the Coastal tribes were relatively easy to negotiate; they seemed fair to both the Coastal tribes and the settlers. Note that today, the terms of these treaties are being judicially reviewed, especially concerning the fishing rights and property rights of both groups.



Aleiya, or Lawyer, a Nez Perce chief, signed a treaty with Governor Isaac Stevens in 1855. (Suzzallo Library, University of Washington Photo)

The Walla Walla Council

Governor Stevens and Joel Palmer, Indian agent for the Washington Territory, challenged the Plateau Indians to come to the negotiation table. The interior tribes proved a more difficult challenge.

Governor Stevens, Palmer, and 43 soldiers arrived at Mill Creek on May 21, 1855, six miles east of Waiilatpu Mission, for an impressive peace treaty conference. Most interior tribes were represented, except for the Palouse and Spokane tribes. By May 28, there were nearly 5,000 Plateau Indians attending the Walla Walla Council. Some of the most important Native American leaders attended, including Spokane Garry, Peopeomoxmox, Lawyer, Looking Glass, and Kamiakin. The Council was completed within 13 days!

Perhaps the most significant event was the rumored attempt by the Yakama, Cayuse, and Umatilla tribes to kill Stevens and all of his delegation. Stevens was most likely saved by some

2500 Nez Perce warriors who encircled Steven's camp. They provided a deterrent to any coup attempt.

By June 11, 1855, three separate peace treaties had been negotiated and signed. Not too surprising were the very favorable terms given to the friendly Nez Perce. The final terms established three reservations, paid a lump sum of cash to each tribe, and paid annual salaries to the chief of each tribe for the next 20 years.

The Nez Perce Reservation included 7,694,270 acres of northeastern Oregon and western Idaho. The main portion of the reservation was located in the Wallowa and Blue mountains. The Nez Perce tribe received \$200,000 plus a \$500 annual payment to each tribal chief. Eventually the Nez Perce Reservation was reduced to only 756,968 acres. This led to the Nez Perce Retreat in 1877.

A second treaty was signed by the tribal leaders of the Cayuse, Walla Walla, and Umatilla tribes. They received an 800 square mile (512,000

acre) reservation in northeast Oregon along the Umatilla River. They received a \$150,000 cash payment plus \$500 annual stipend to each tribal chief.

The third major treaty of the Walla Walla Council was with the 14 tribes of the Yakama Nations. The Yakamas controlled most of the central section of Washington, but their reservation was greatly reduced from 10 million acres to only 1.25 million. It was located from the Yakima River to the Cascades. It also included a small six square mile area 25 miles up the Wenatchee River — a vital salmon fisheries spot. The Yakamas also received \$200,000 cash and \$500 annually for each chief.

Upon the conclusion of the Walla Walla Council, Governor Stevens had three treaties signed and nearly 22 million acres of free land. Of course, there were several very disgruntled Indians, especially bitter were the Yakama tribes of eastern Washington.

Other Treaties

After the Walla Walla Council, Washington Territorial Governor Stevens sought peace treaties with Idaho and Montana tribes. He negotiated with northern Idaho tribes and western Montana tribes at the Hell's Gate Council.

Meanwhile Stevens sent Palmer to negotiate with eastern Oregon tribes. Palmer achieved an agreement with the Wasco, Tyigh, Wyam, and Dock-Spus tribes that these "Middle Oregon" tribes would live on a small reservation of only 464,000 acres.

Eventually the Flatheads, Kalispels, and Kutenais signed the treaty creating the Jocko-Flathead Reservation covering 1,242,969 acres. Stevens and several Indian chiefs traveled eastward to negotiate with the feared Blackfeet. No land was set aside, but the Blackfeet promised to maintain the peace.

The Yakama Wars

A series of battles between 1855 and 1858 were called the Yakama Wars. The Plateau Indians fought both the settlers and the United States Army. The Yakama Wars were so widespread, and presented such danger to the settlers in eastern Washington, that the territorial government closed the region to all settlement. The Yakama Wars were a major factor in the 36 year delay in Washington gaining statehood.

Why did the Yakama Wars start so soon after the signing of the Walla Walla Council? Some of the

Chief Garry of the Spokane Indians represented his people at the Walla Walla Council, though the tribe did not attend. (University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Negative NA582)

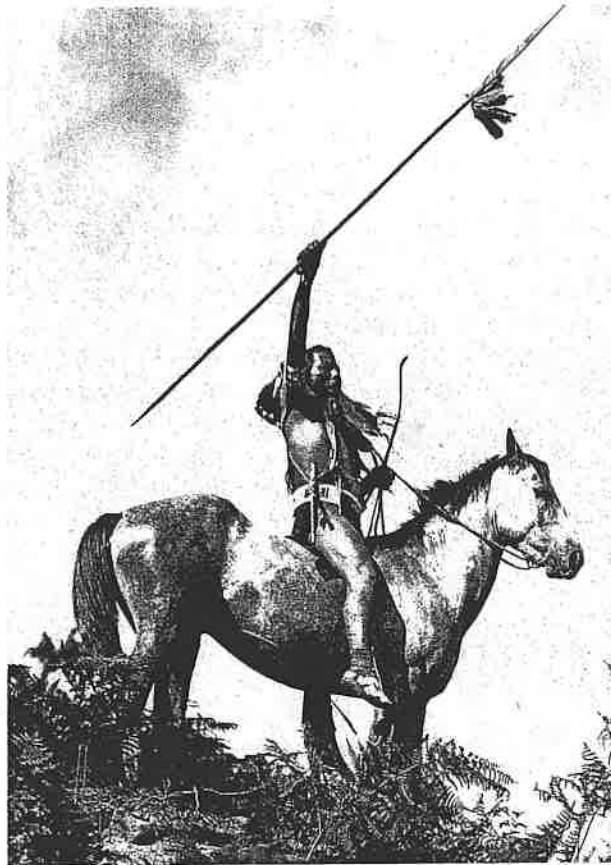


most obvious reasons were the misunderstandings about the terms of the treaty, broken promises, and the poor reservation conditions. With the discovery of gold, confrontations resulted between the newcomers and the Plateau Indians, led by Yakama Chief Kamiakin. Once fighting erupted, the Yakamas quickly swept the valley of settlers.

The violence spread west over the Cascades into the Puyallup and White river valleys in January 1856. The Nisqually Indians, led by Chief Leschi, attacked the blockhouse in Seattle on January 26, 1856, but were driven off by cannon fire from the United States' ship, *Decatur*. Fighting in the Puget Sound region lasted from October 1855 to March 1856. For his role in these conflicts, Chief Leschi was found guilty of murder and executed at Fort Steilacoom on February 19, 1858.

The second major battle of the Yakama Wars was fought in the Walla Walla Valley. Walla Walla Chief Peopeomoxmox led his warriors in an attack

This is the only known photo of the famous Yakama Chief Kamiakin. Kamiakin was the aggressive leader of the Plateau tribes during the Yakama Wars (1855-1858) in eastern Washington. He escaped to Canada to live the remainder of his life. (Washington State University Library Photo)



"The Challenge" shows the Indian warrior's horsemanship and anger toward the settlers. (Washington State Historical Society Photo)

on the old Fort Walla Walla, which they burned down. In December 1855, a group of Oregon volunteers led by Lt. James Kelley pursued the Walla Walla. Chief Peopeomoxmox was captured, killed, and scalped by these volunteers at the battle of Frenchtown. The Walla Walla lost their chief and were defeated.

The Cascades Attack

In March 1856, Chief Kamiakin led the Yakama, Cascade, and Klickitat Indians in a surprise attack on Cascades. Cascades was a small town where goods traveling down the Columbia River were portaged around a series of waterfalls and rapids.

Kamiakin's objective was to gain control of the eastern point of the Columbia Gorge where the Columbia River cuts through the Cascade Mountains. Kamiakin's success would have meant the isolation of eastern Washington. If he could have prevented the soldiers from easily entering



— The Colville Indian Reservation, Nespelem, Washington

Kayme Clark Photo

eastern Washington, the settlers east of the Cascade Mountains would have been trapped by the Plateau Indians. Kamiakin's plan was to unite all Plateau tribes against the settlers in the Puget Sound and Willamette River Valley areas. Although a brilliant plan, it did not work. Kamiakin's warriors were driven off by the Cascades settlers. Reinforcements were summoned by two riverboats. The *Mary* and the *Wasco* escaped both up and down the river, carrying news of Kamiakin's attack.

The Battle of Rosalia

The Fort Colville region in the northeastern part of the Pacific Northwest was the site of violence between Native Americans and gold miners. In the summer of 1855, several gold miners who were trespassing on reservation land were killed.

Things were relatively quiet during 1856 and 1857 in the Fort Colville region, but still the Native Americans, miners, and settlers disagreed over their rights and the interpretation of the various treaties. The United States Army finally ordered Colonel Steptoe and 157 soldiers to go to Fort Colville. Steptoe was to establish peace and

protect the settlers and miners in the area.

On May 16, 1858, Colonel Steptoe and his detachment found themselves surrounded by 1,000 warriors of the Palouse, Spokane, Coeur d'Alen , and Nez Perce tribes. Steptoe and his men were trapped in a ravine. The Colonel wisely asked for a parley with the chiefs. They told him not to cross the Spokane tribe's land.

Outnumbered four to one, Steptoe chose to withdraw. The Indians were ready to fight, though, and harassed the soldiers, trying to start a battle. The soldiers camped near a lake and the next morning began a retreat toward Fort Walla Walla (Rosalia - May 17, 1858). Colonel Steptoe was again surrounded by the Indian warriors and a running battle began. Harassed and humiliated, and with several of his men killed or wounded, Steptoe retreated. The detachment was again surrounded but escaped during the night while the warriors celebrated their victory in the valley below (Pine Creek - May 18, 1858). Steptoe and his men marched south to the Snake River, which they crossed without further harassment. They finally reached the safety of Fort Walla Walla.



— The Battle of Spokane Plains Memorial Marker

Kayme Clark Photo

The Battle of Spokane Plains

During the early stages of the Yakama Wars, General James E. Wool was in charge of the United States Army in eastern Washington. He was reassigned after it became clear that new tactics were needed to stop the tribal uprisings. General Wool was replaced by Brigadier General Newman S. Clarke in 1857. Early in 1858, General Clarke met with Colonel Steptoe and Colonel Wright to plan a new campaign against the Plateau Indians.

General Clarke's plan sent Major Garnett up the river valleys on the eastern slope of the Cascade Mountains. While Major Garnett drove the hostile Plateau Indians north and east, Colonel Wright and his troops would push north toward Spokane and Fort Colville.

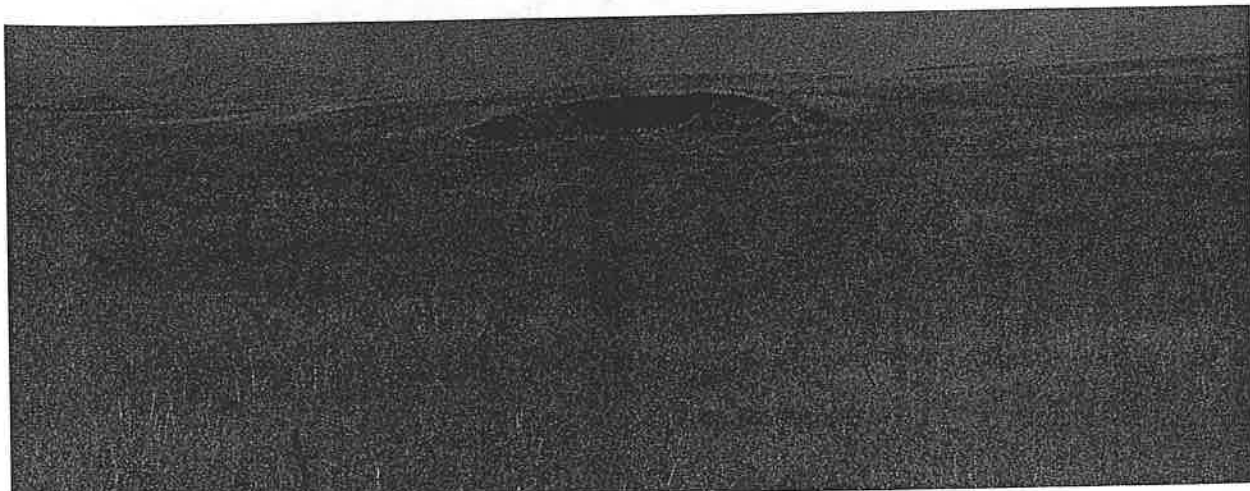
Reinforced with artillery and infantry from California and Oregon, Garnett quickly cleared the Yakima Valley, driving the Indians toward Spokane. Colonel Wright met with stiffer resistance, but the soldiers were equipped with the new long-range



— The Battle of Spokane Plains Memorial

Kayme Clark Photo

Sharps rifle. Therefore, the Indians could not get close enough to the troops to do much damage. Refusing to accept Colonel Wright's terms for unconditional surrender, the Indians gathered for battle on the plains 16 miles east of Spokane Falls. The soldiers won the decisive Battle of Spokane Plains and, what is more important, they captured and slaughtered nearly 900 Indian horses. Without their horses, the warring Indians lost their mobility and their ability to fight effectively. In the weeks that followed the September 8, 1858 battle, many warring tribes surrendered. Their leaders were captured and executed with the exception of Chief Kamiakin, who escaped to Canada.



— Spokane Plains Battlefield, Spokane, Washington

Kayme Clark Photo

The Modoc War

After the Battle of Spokane Plains, the hostilities in Washington were basically over. Two other major conflicts took place in Idaho and Oregon respectively — the Modoc War of 1864-1873 and the Nez Perce Retreat of 1877.

The Modocs, who lived along the Oregon-California border, were very hostile toward the settlers. Several times the Modocs had ambushed wagon trains around Tule Lake. Once, in 1852, the Modocs killed all but one of 65 people in one wagon train.

Finally, in 1864, the United States government placed the Modocs on the Klamath Indian Reservation. The Modocs and the Klamath were historically bitter enemies. Now they were told to live on the same reservation! Almost immediately, the Modocs, led by Captain Jack, illegally fled the Klamath Reservation to the Lost River area of northern California.



Above: Captain Jack, leader of the Modocs, was responsible for the death of General Canby and the long fight against the United States Army in the Lava Beds. (Oregon State Historical Society Photo)

Below: Rugged terrain of the Lava Beds National Monument along the Oregon - California border. (Kayme Clark Photo)





Chief Joseph's band lived in White Bird Canyon of the Wallowa Mountains of northeastern Oregon. White Bird Canyon was the first battle site where the Nez Perce routed a United States Army attack on June 17, 1877. (John Marshall Photo)

In 1869, a meeting was set up between United States government officials and the Modoc leaders, Captain Jack and Scarface Charlie. The army attacked the Modocs. So, Captain Jack led his band back to the Lost River.

In November 1872, the United States Army attacked the Modocs, who sought refuge in the Lava Beds. After several soldiers were killed, another conference was held. General Canby, on April 11, 1873, attended the peace conference, but he and Reverend Eleazar Thomas were shot and killed by the Modocs Captain Jack and Scarface Charlie.

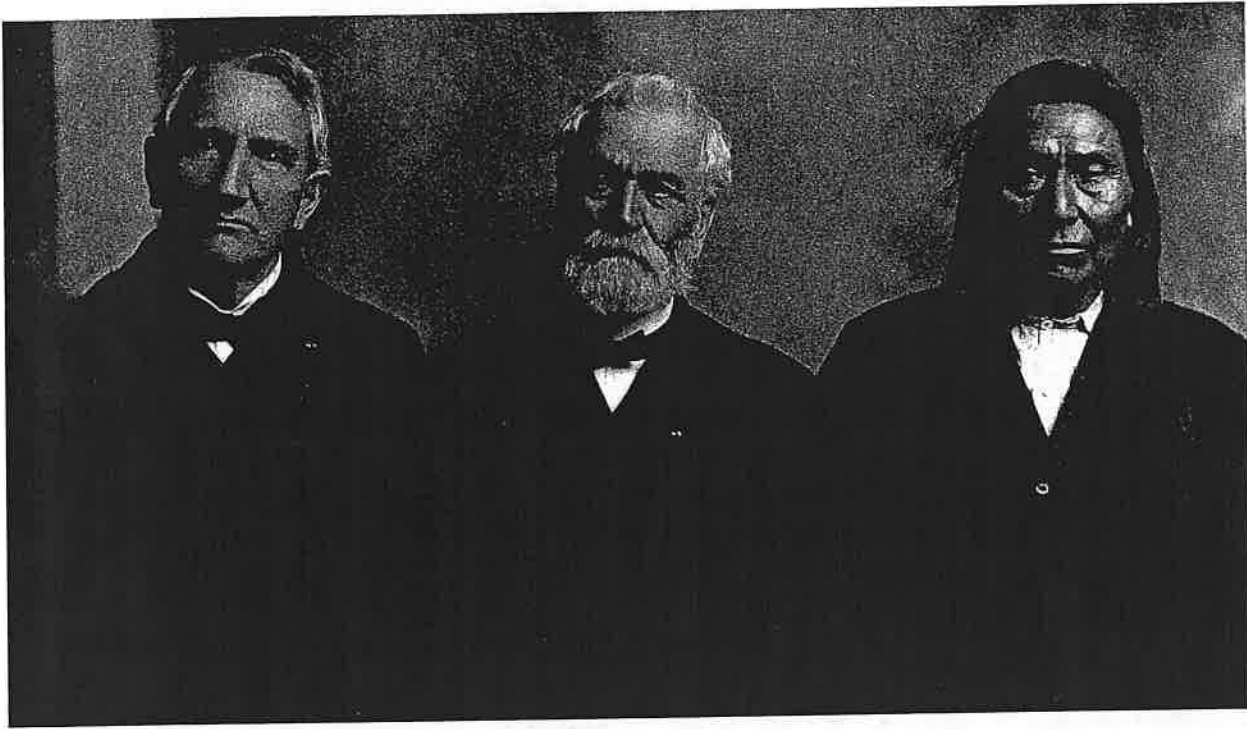
The final stage of the Modoc Wars was set. General William T. Sherman, of Civil War fame, ordered the destruction of those remaining Modocs hiding in their Lava Beds fortress. For nearly five months, the meager 60 man Modoc band had held off an Army 20 times its size. Under constant attack by General Sherman's forces, the Modocs escaped from the Lava Beds. Finally, on June 1, 1873, Captain Jack and his followers surrendered. The Modocs were transported 100 miles to Fort Klamath to

stand trial. After a controversial court proceeding on October 3, 1873, Captain Jack and three other leaders were executed for killing General Canby and Reverend Thomas.

The Nez Perce Retreat

For nearly 30 years after the Whitman Massacre in 1847, war and violence were common events throughout the Pacific Northwest. The Nez Perce Retreat tragically closed this era of conflict between the white settlers and the region's Native Americans.

Historically, the Nez Perce had been the largest and friendliest Indian tribe to the region's explorers, fur traders, missionaries, and settlers. There had never been any violent conflicts between these two groups. The Nez Perce aided the Lewis and Clark Expedition in finding their way through the Rockies to the Columbia River, provided protection to the Spaldings during the Whitman Massacre from the warring Cayuse Indians, and



Pictured are as follows: Colonel Pratt (left), "One-Armed-Soldier-Chief" General Howard (center), and Chief Joseph (right). The Nez Perce and Chief Joseph eluded the soldiers for three months in 1877, while trying to reach the Canadian border. The flight ended at Bear Paw Mountain. Surrendering, Joseph said, "From where the sun now stands, I will fight no more forever." (University of Washington Libraries, Special Collections, Negative NA609)

they encircled Governor Isaac Stevens at the Walla Walla Council — protecting the governor and his people from a plot to kill him by the Yakamas and Cayuse in 1855.

It was widely believed that the Nez Perce had never been responsible for the death of a single white person. Tragically, this positive relationship between whites and Nez Perce was severely harmed by the bloodshed, violence, and warfare during Chief Joseph's Nez Perce Retreat in 1877.

In 1877, General Howard was sent to the Pacific Northwest to move the Lower Nez Perce, led by Chief Joseph, from the Wallowa area to the Lapwai Reservation. He gave Chief Joseph's band only one month to collect and move all their possessions and all members of the tribe to Lapwai.

During that month, a small band of Nez Perce warriors attacked and killed four settlers. The United States Army, in direct retaliation, immediately began taking the Nez Perce land and possessions. As a direct result of this agreement violation, Chief Joseph refused to go to the Lapwai Reservation.

Chief Joseph and the members of his tribe

began their arduous 1,300 mile journey through the Rockies toward Canada and their eventual freedom (refer to Map 10-1, page 206). During this military campaign, Chief Joseph earned the respect of not only his people, but also his adversaries. Chief Joseph earned the reputation as a brilliant military strategist and tactician.

Chief Joseph and his small band of warriors defeated the United States Army in four major battles during the several month retreat of 1,300 miles. These four victories included the battles of White Bird, Clearwater, Big Hole, and Camas Creek. In each case, Chief Joseph was outnumbered, but not outsmarted by his opponent General Howard. Chief Joseph brilliantly used the natural environment and timing to his advantage!

General Howard soon realized that he needed additional help if he was to defeat Chief Joseph. He requested the aid of General Miles. With Howard in pursuit, General Miles closed in from the east hoping to cut off Chief Joseph's escape route north to Canada.

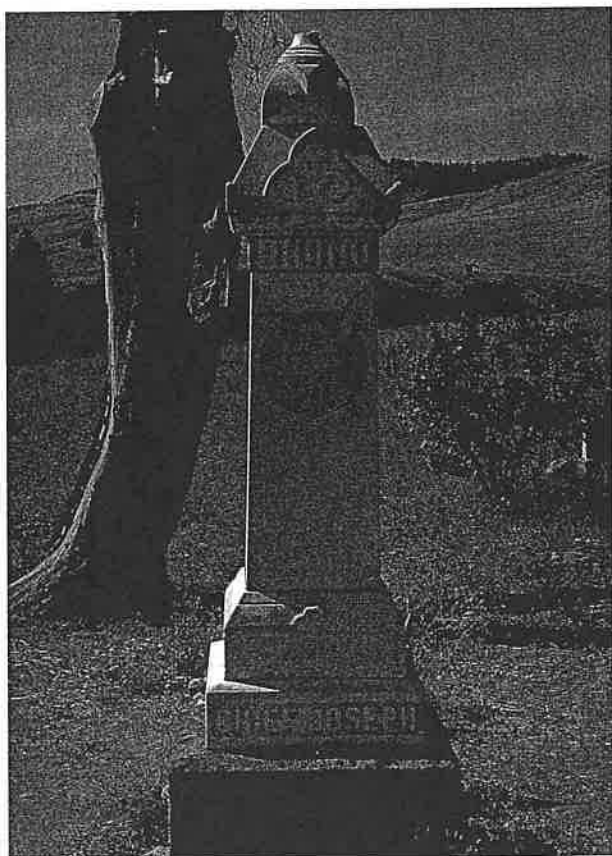
Just 30 miles from freedom in Canada, Chief Joseph's tribal members stopped to rest near Bear Paw Mountain. His people were exhausted

physically, and yet excited about nearing their goal. Unknown to Chief Joseph was the arrival of General Miles' army from the east. A battle ensued. The Battle of Bear Paw Mountain was a clear cut victory for the United States Army generals Howard and Miles. It was a crushing defeat for Chief Joseph and the Nez Perce.

Bear Paw Mountain ended one of the most famous military campaigns in American history. The defeat of Chief Joseph in 1877 in all practicality ended nearly 30 years of warfare between the settlers and Native Americans in the Pacific Northwest.

Chief Joseph and his Nez Perce followers were sent by the United States government to a reservation in Oklahoma. Finally in May 1885, those Nez Perce remaining alive were allowed

One of America's most famous and well known American Indian leaders, Chief Joseph of the Nez Perce tribe was considered to be one of the finest military leaders in United States history. Actually this military genius was not a war chief, as he was responsible for protecting the women and children during the 1877 Nez Perce Retreat. Chief Joseph's humble burial site is located in Nespelem, Washington on the Colville Reservation. Luckily he was not buried in Oklahoma and sadly he was not buried in his beloved Wallowa Mountains in northeast Oregon. (Kayme Clark Photo)



The famous Nez Perce Chief Looking Glass poses near two hide covered teepees in the background. Looking Glass was killed at the Battle of Bear Paw Mountain, Montana in 1877. (Idaho Historical Society Photo)

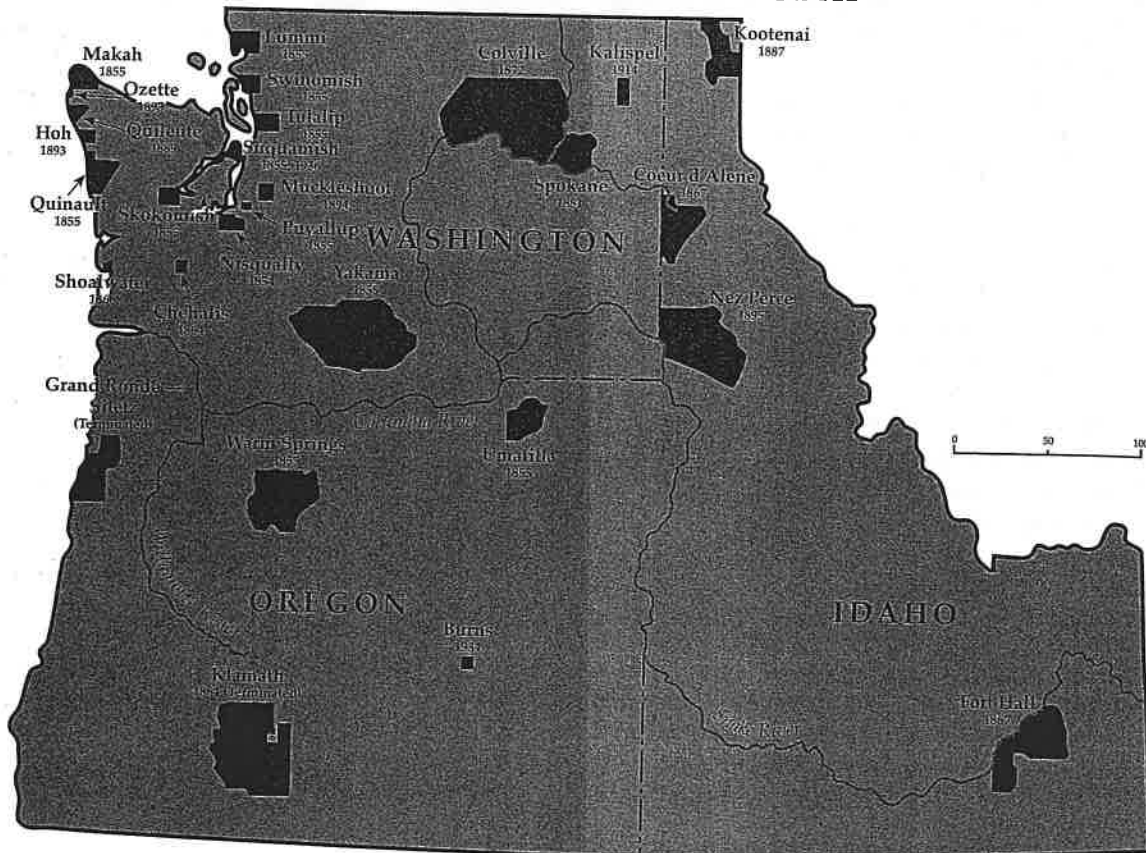
to return to their Pacific Northwest to live on the Colville Reservation. Chief Joseph died in 1904 near Nespelem, Washington.

Bannock-Paiute Wars

During the 1860s and 1870s, perhaps the most dangerous areas to live were those isolated areas of eastern Oregon and southern Idaho. Bannock, Snake, and Shoshoni Indians ravaged supply trains and isolated farmers in southern Idaho. The Northern Paiute freely roamed eastern Oregon attacking isolated ranchers, farmers, miners, and wagon drivers. It was a period of marauding, looting, and killing. Both the various Indian bands and white settlers lost hundreds to bloodshed, starvation, disease, and the environment.

Indians attacked whites and whites attacked Indians. Each side pursued the other with vengeance showing no mercy. Indians took scalps and the whites and their Indian scouts claimed

INDIAN RESERVATIONS TODAY



Map 10-2

bounties. No place from the Cascades to the Rockies was safe. The area is dotted with historic markers and gravestones telling of the violence and death.

Life was very difficult for any Native American living on a reservation. Hunger and starvation forced many Indians to leave. United States Army troops, volunteer militia, and paid Indian scouts relentlessly pursued those renegade Indians of the Bannock, Snake, and Paiute who would not be confined on reservations. By the end of the 1870s, the Bannock and Snake wars in southern Idaho had ended and the Paiute had been defeated in eastern Oregon. Even the Sheepeaters of the Central Rockies of Idaho had surrendered. A dangerous, violent period in the history of the Pacific Northwest had ended. The land and the Native Americans were now under the control of the white man.

Aftermath

By the 20th century, the Coastal and Plateau

tribes were either living on Indian reservations or they were trying to assimilate into a new culture. The Native Americans had lost control of their own destiny and forfeited their lands to the white settlers. Over a century later, 271,844 Indians currently live in the Pacific Northwest, most of whom reside on one of the many reservations in the region. They are the descendants of those Native Americans who fought so fiercely to protect their way of life.

